no light. When held before the flame of a candle several of them prove a considerable amount of chemical knowledge, as when three or four colours are put on, one over the other, each fusing at a different temperature. Much skill also must have been employed in manipulating the glass, in those cases in which very fine strings or threads have been introduced.

A very difficult part of this inquiry is now reached. In paper No. 1 I stated that what are called celts of stone and bronze, one a fac-simile of the other, * had been found, and the question was to determine whether the stone had been made in imitation of the brass, or had preceded it. The same difficulty arises in our present inquiry. Beads of stone are frequently found which seem no older, so far as can be judged from the circumstances connected with their discovery, than those of glass. Were these the originals of the new handsome bead? I think not. They were more probably the ornaments of persons too poor to procure the more costly material. This of course is only an opinion for which I have no reason to offer.

ON THE MATERIALS FOR THE HISTORY OF THE TWO COUNTIES, AND THE MODE OF USING THEM,—PART II.

By John Robson, Esq.

(Read 29th March, 1855.)

In the paper which I had the honor of reading to the Society two years ago, on the Materials for the History of the two Counties,† we came down to the commencement of the fifth century, and I ventured to express an opinion that there was no real ground for the common belief that the inhabitants of Lancashire and Cheshire had been at any time Welsh or Celtic; that in fact the Celtic tribes, at the earliest historic period, were confined to the western parts of the island; that the extent of their dominions may be traced by the Celtic names of places, both in Wales and Cornwall; and that the rest of England was occupied by a Teutonic race, as it is at the present time. We have now to ascertain how far our subsequent materials confirm or invalidate this statement, and whether in following out the tracks left us, few and indistinct enough, we may not get a more trustworthy survey than we had before.

* See also Volume v. p. 129.  † Volume v. p. 199.
It may be right to say, that I use the words *Britanni*, *Picti*, *Saxones*, and others taken from the Latin writers, in the original language. By the *Saxena* I mean the inhabitants of the south-eastern part of the island, including Kent, Essex, Middlesex, Sussex, and the old kingdom of Wessex, the Litus Saxonicum of the Roman Empire; and by the *English*, the rest of England, excluding of course the Celtic tribes already named, and including the Anglians, Mercians, Hwiccas, and Northumbrians, or as they are often called in Welsh documents Lloegrians. I must add that the history of the two counties, during the 5th, 6th, and 7th centuries, merges in the general history of the country, there being no authenticated remains, that I am aware of, and no mention of either of them in the records left to us.

In investigating the history of the two centuries following the expulsion of the Romans, important as they are to the Archeologist, the Historian, and the Legislator, we find our most able writers utterly bewildered. Mr. Kemble says, "It must not be forgotten that we have no trustworthy event of English history previous to the arrival of Augustine (A.D. 597). Whatever precedes that great epoch, by whom soever, and at what period soever related, is nothing more than tradition, and liable to all the accidents by which tradition is affected, nay, which themselves constitute tradition."* And again, "In all that these, the earliest historians of England, have left us, we have evidence of what unsatisfactory materials they had to deal with. A majority of the kings recorded in their pages are mythic heroes, common both to England and Germany; while the constant recurrence of particular numbers in the dates of their reigns, are equally convincing proofs of mythic tradition. History has nothing to do with them, they fall into the circle of mythology. Even of those who approach somewhat nearer to historical periods, little more than the names has survived; and it is often doubtful whether even those are or are not names of men; it may be fairly questioned whether we know the name and rank of Aethelberht's grand-father."† I am sure that I need say no more to bespeak your indulgence, in attempting to throw some light upon the period in question, and that you will allow me to quote a passage in a late number of the Quarterly Review, written, however, upon a totally different subject, but which seems most appropriate to our own. "Let us premise, before we plunge into the

* Kemble, Codex Diplom., vol. i, p. 5. † Ibid. p. 58.
mare magnun before us, this one 'caveat' for the reader's sake, viz., a great deal more may always be said on what we do not know than on what we do. Truth is a grain, error a mass; but the mass often encloses the precious particle, which is discovered only by him who will patiently sift it, throwing nothing aside until he is satisfied of its worthlessness."

As far as number is concerned there is no want of works relating to this portion of our history, but unfortunately their value is very small. First we have the Welsh authorities—the bards, the triads, Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth; then we have Saxon Remains, and Norman Chronicles; but none of these have any authenticity for the affairs of the fifth and sixth centuries. Beda, Asser, Ethelward, are equally wanting in authority, and the only actually contemporary evidence is that of Gildas.

The influence that the Welsh writers have had on subsequent historians is very singular, and not easily understood. The Welsh themselves swallow with perfect good faith the most astounding relations, and if a statement is made in genuine Cymraeg, it is neither doubted nor doubtful. Even if we were inclined to admit the existence of such individuals as Aneurin and Taliesin, the poems which we have under their names would still be of little value, as we have no evidence that at that period the Welsh language had been reduced to writing, and the earliest manuscripts are five or six hundred years later. But more than this, in the collection edited by M. Hersart de la Villemarqué there is not a single fact recorded that can be made available for historical purposes, and the attempt to do this has utterly failed. Thus, the first poem in the collection is one said to be by Llywarch Henn, on the death of Gerent, son of Erbin. This Gerent, says the poem, was born in the glorious time of Britain, and a Christian, he was the foe of the Sais or Saxons, and a friend to the saints. "At Longport I saw tumult, corpses in blood, and men red before the assault of the foe. At Longport I saw carnage, corpses in great number, and men red before the assault of Gerent." The poet had seen at Longport men who had drunk wine out of sparkling glasses, suffering want and privation after plenty: there was blood in the valleys, and a fearful conflagration. At Longport, Gerent the brave, warrior of the wooded Deuvnent, (Damnonia, Devonshire,) was slain, with the valiant soldiers of Arthur, the chief in war." Now in the Saxon chronicle we read, "501. This year Port and his two

*Quarterly Review, No. 191, p. 98.
sons, Bieda and Mægla, came to Britain with two ships, at a place which is called Portsmouth, and they soon effected a landing, and they there slew a young British man of high nobility:” and both the French editor and Sharon Turner state that the Welsh ode has reference to this very event. But it is quite evident that Longport (wherever it may be) is described as in a state of siege, and probably, for it is by no means clear, had been attacked by Gerent; neither is there anything to show that the Saxons were there at all. There is a long poem attributed to Aneurin called the Gododin, which describes the battle of Cattraeth, at which the poet was present. Where and when the encounter took place is not known, and yet it is represented as the most important of all the engagements with the Saxons.

As to the triads, as specimens I may offer the 45th and 46th, as they belong to our immediate subject, though the precise year is wanting.

“45. The three disgraceful traitors who enabled the Saxons to take the crown of the isle of Britain from the Cambrians. The first was Gwrgi Garwlwyd, who, after tasting human flesh in the court of Edelfled, the Saxon king, became so fond of it that he would eat no other but human flesh ever after. In consequence of this, he and his men united with Edelfled, king of the Saxons; and he made secret incursions upon the Cambrians, and brought a young male and female, whom he daily ate. And all the lawless men of the Cambrians flocked to him and the Saxons, where they obtained their full of prey and spoil taken from the natives of this isle. The second was Medrod, who, with his men, united with the Saxons, that he might secure the kingdom to himself, against Arthur; and in consequence of that treachery many of the Lloegrians became as Saxons. The third was Aeddan, the traitor of the north, who, with his men, made submission to the power of the Saxons, so that they might be able to support themselves by confusion and pillage, under the protection of the Saxons. On account of these three traitors, the Cambrians lost their land and their crown in Lloegria; and if it had not been for such treasons, the Saxons could not have gained the island from the Cambrians.

“46. The three bards who committed the three beneficial assassinations of the isle of Britain. The first was Gall, the son of Dysgyvedawg, who killed the two brown birds of Gwendoleu, the son of Ceidiau, that had a yoke of gold about them, and that daily devoured two bodies of the Cambrians for their dinner, and two for their supper. The second was Ysgavnell, the son of Dysgyvedawg, who killed Edelfled, king of Lloegria, who required every night two noble maids of the Cambrian nation, and violated them, and every morning he killed and devoured them. The third was Difedel, the son of Dysgyvedawg, who killed Gwrgi Garwlwyd, that had married Edelfled’s sister, and committed treachery and murder in
conjunction with Edelfled upon the Cambrians. And this Gwrgi killed a
Cambrian male and female every day and devoured them, and on the
Saturday he killed two males and two females, that he might not kill on
the Sunday."

I have taken this from "The Ancient Laws of Cambria, * * to
which are added the Historical Triads of Britain; Translated from the
Welsh by William Probert. London, 1823." The translator was certainly
a man of learning, for I find in his translation that the laws, as far as I have
compared them, are often in the very words of that published by government.
He has a foot note upon the first triad which ought always to go with
it—"This and the following triad are the only instances upon record of
cannibalism in the island; and it is worthy of notice that these savages
first tasted human flesh in the Saxon court. What shall we say to this
fact?"

I am not going to say anything to Mr. Probert's fact, but see if we may
not make something out of the triads. It must be remembered that a very
remote antiquity indeed is claimed for most of the triads, and whether there
are any referring to a later date than these two may be doubted, so that with­
out making any question about the males and females provided for these
gentlemen of prodigious appetite, and the christian scruples of the one who
would not kill on Sunday, we are told that many of the Lloegrians became
as Saxons; and this is a fact which we shall use hereafter.

With reference to Nennius, who is said to have lived in the eighth
century, the difficulties in every form and on every side are so great, that I
am sure you will excuse me occupying your time now in attempting to
remove them.

How any one in these days could be taken in with Geoffrey of Monmouth
is inconceivable, but as he is of a period far removed from the times which
we are concerned with, we may easily and fairly put him aside. How
much of his history, subsequent to the death of king Arthur, is corroborated
by other evidence, has yet to be examined.

We come now to the Saxon authorities, and here again we have poems
professing to belong to the fourth and fifth centuries; but even allowing
their genuineness, we get nothing in the shape of history from them. There
are two poems of this class more especially remarkable, Beowulf and the
Traveller’s Song. That Beowulf in its present form is of much later date,
is proved from its repeated allusions to Christianity. It exists in a single manuscript, which is said to be of the first half of the eleventh century, and we have no reason to think that a poem written then would at all represent the language spoken 500 years before. I should rather suppose that it was a selection or compilation of ballads originally composed in honour of some of the Danish chieftains who had settled in East Anglia, and handed down through successive generations of minstrels or gleemen, each one modernizing and adapting both incidents and language to his own time; and finally committed to writing, like many other ballads of later times, by some learned Clericus, (who, however, they say was no great Saxon scholar,) for the benefit of posterity.

The Gleeman's or Traveller's Song has had precisely the same fortune. We cannot conceive a minstrel even, travelling to every part of Europe, over Africa and a great part of Asia, visiting every court, and recording the valuable presents he received, and this for a period of eighty years, in the disturbed state of the fourth and fifth centuries. I take it as a part of the regular stock of a minstrel, an introduction wherever he went, complimentary to himself and instructive to his hearers. The copy which we have was no doubt the latest edition, with all the additions that had been made for generations before, as each might add his fresh knowledge to the general stock. The Engla, Sexna, Danes, and Welsh had alike their bards or minstrels, who were continued down to a late period: but no one would attempt to write a history of Robin Hood from the ballads, and give it to the world as authentic. Genuine historical documents commence about the seventh century, and appear in the form of chronicles, which seem to have been made in the monasteries; they gradually become more full and important, and contain letters and charters. They are numerous on the continent, but with the exception of our own Saxon chronicle and the Brut y Tywysogion are all written in Latin.

Having thus cleared the ground before us, we may now turn to the actual materials of history, and detail the events which preceded the expulsion of the Roman governors.

In the year 364, Ammianus Marcellinus tells us that the Picti, Saxones, and Scoti harassed the Britannii with perpetual attacks: and in 368 the emperor Valentinian, on his route from the Ambiani to the Treveri, was overwhelmed with the serious intelligence that Britain was reduced to the
last extremity by a barbarian conspiracy; that Nectaridus, the count of the maritime district, was slain, and that Fullofaudes, the duke, had been cut off by the snares of the enemy. The news of this barbarian conspiracy was listened to with great horror, and after various appointments having been made and superseded, on account of the many and fearful things which continued to be rumoured regarding the island, Theodosius was at length sent there. The historian adds that he had already, to the best of his ability, described Britain, but unfortunately the book is lost. "At this time," he says, "it will be sufficient to state that the Picti, then divided into two tribes, (the Dicaledones and the Vecturiones,) the Attacotti, a warlike nation, and the Scoti, wandering about committed many ravages." He had carefully distinguished this barbarian conspiracy from the revolts of the soldiers in favor of some candidate for the purple; and he continues, "but the Franci and Saxones ravaged the Gallican districts to which they were next neighbours by sea and land, wherever an attack might be made, spoiling and burning, murdering and making captives."

The Gallican districts can only mean the land opposite Gaul, for Theodosius sailed with his troops from Boulogne, and no intimation is given that the French coast was at all disturbed; so that these Franci and Saxones were acting in concert with the Picti and others of the barbarian conspiracy. The Roman general landed without opposition at Richborough in Kent, and marched to London, which had afterwards the name of Augusta. He divided his troops and attacked the wandering predatory bands of the enemy, loaded with spoil and driving away cattle, and captives in chains, he released the prey which the wretched tributaries had lost, and except a small portion assigned to his weary troops, he gave back the whole. He entered London in triumph, a city which had been so lately overwhelmed with difficulties, but now at once was made over again. He here learnt from prisoners and deserters that such a people, cruel and fierce, and of various families, could only be reduced by deeper schemes and sudden attacks. He proclaimed an amnesty, and summoned the deserters, as well as those who were absent on leave, to actual service; many obeyed the summons, and Civilis was appointed governor of Britain as Pro-Prefect, while Dulcitius was made the duke.

Theodosius himself collected his forces, and took every opportunity of preventing the barbarians making head again. He shared in every danger,
overthrew and put to flight the various nations who, in fostering security, insolently attacked the Roman powers; restored the cities and fortresses which had suffered from many injuries, though built for a period of lengthened peace. He also nipped in the bud a conspiracy that had originated in his own camp, and having rebuilt, as before mentioned, the cities and garrison fortresses, he protected the boundaries with guards and advanced posts. The province, which had been completely in the power of the enemy, was recovered, and restored to its former state, and by the will of the emperor was then called Valentia. Finally, we are told that Theodosius removed the Areani from their stations, a body of men formed of old time for the purpose of conveying intelligence through long distances of what was passing in neighbouring states to the Roman chiefs. They had been bribed with promises of booty, and betrayed the Roman affairs to the barbarians. The manuscripts are deficient at this point, and *Areani* is a bad reading, but the reference is clearly enough to the *Curiosi* or *Agentes in rebus*, described in my former paper.*

This revolt was put down in 369. It appears to have spread over the whole island, the portion which belonged to the Engla had for a time established its freedom, and the history is particularly valuable for the insight which it affords us into the state of parties at the time; the Britanni representing the Roman party in the island, and opposed to them the barbarian or native party, including the Picti, Saxones, Scoti, and Attacotti.

The Attacotti are named again only by St. Jerome, and in the Notitia as embodied in various imperial cohorts. St. Jerome tells us that when he was very young, *adolescentulus*, he had seen in Gaul, the Attacotti, a Britannic tribe, eating portions of human bodies, which they considered the most delicate of all kinds of food. Of the locality of these Attacotti we have no information.

The Scoti are first named in the latter half of the fourth century; they are said to have been originally settled in Ireland, and then passed over into Scotland and gave it their own name. St. Jerome says that they, as well as the Attacotti, had no marriage laws, but his statements are entitled to little credit.

* Amm. Marcell. 26, 4; 27, 8; 28, 3.
I believe that the Picti were not a particular tribe or clan, located in some special part of the island, but that the name was applied to all who opposed the Roman power in the middle and north, or English district. In fact all these parties merge in the Engla and Sexna, and in the year 408 they ejected the Roman prefects, and established a free and independent state for themselves. It must not be supposed, however, that this was done at once. It is easier to overthrow a government than to build one up, and during this period of rebuilding there will be evident danger if a strong party is in the field. The immediate cause of the revolution in 408, was the removal of the Roman troops to the continent. But we conclude from subsequent events that the Britanni, i.e. the Roman provincials, including the great land-holders, the office-bearers, descendants of the Roman soldiers and settlers, officials of all kinds, and those connected with them by interest, blood, and other ties, were not inclined to give up their position at once; and the history which we have now to examine will be of the struggle between these two great parties,—the Engla and Sexna on the one hand, and the Britanni on the other, when the Roman legions were no longer at the command of the latter. The central points of the Roman party were the cities, which would have the advantages of wealth, official experience, unity and organization; and we learn from Zosimus that Honorius, in 410, wrote letters to the cities in Britain advising them to look after themselves.*

This was excellent advice, but of no great use; the cities were gradually either destroyed or deserted, and the Britanni were, as well as the rival party the Picti, in the course of three or four centuries extinct. But disastrous as the contest was to the Roman party, it seems quite certain that some cities continued in prosperity, and others were rising up and assuming an independence of their own. Indeed I believe that London retains portions of the old laws of the Roman city, and that York also participates in this antiquity. Probably Chester also may be reckoned another of these centres of civilizing influences. They were then, and for centuries afterwards, rich and powerful governments in themselves, defying alike Engle, Sexe, and Norman. Of the five burhs Lincoln and Leicester were also Roman cities, and Roman towns were at no great distance from the other three, Stamford, Nottingham, and Derby. The Britanni made twice applications to Rome for assistance, which was granted, and we are

* Zosimus, lib. 6, c. 5, 10.
told that with their help they overcame their enemies. But a single legion of a thousand men could be of little effectual service, and the Roman towns were deserted, and if not destroyed at once, left to the slow but sure effects of time and the elements.

It is singular that we have no account of the siege or capture of any city, but when the whole of the rural districts are in the hands of an enemy, the cities must of necessity be deprived of supplies, and we may suppose that the more they depended upon the surrounding district only, the sooner their destruction would be effected. Those provincials who could, emigrated to the continent, others made peace with their copatriots, as we learned from the triads,* and others being in a state of serfdom were merely transferred to new masters; some might be reduced to bondage by the stronger party. It must be borne in mind, however, that this fact, which comes out of the subsequent enfranchisement of the serfs 400 years after, refers entirely to the Teutonic people. They belonged to, and were transferred with, the estates.

But the barbarians had triumphed, and in the tun, or ham, or thorpe assumed that individual freedom and independence which is so peculiarly characteristic of the race. Whether Christianity had made any great progress amongst them may be doubted, and it is certain that as a nation they returned to their old religion, laws, and kings. Of their religious ceremonies, buildings, or belief, we know little or nothing, but I should not hesitate to assign the mysterious erection of Stonehenge to the fifth century. While clearly not Roman it has marks of Roman influence about it, and what so likely as a great national temple to inaugurate afresh their newly recovered liberty. As yet they were rich in the spoils of the defeated Britanni, and the influence of Roman skill, science and taste would be lingering amongst them. The account in Beda of the destruction of the heathen temple near York is exceedingly curious, and it seems to have been an open inclosure like Stonehenge.

As to their kings, we have no information respecting their position, their power, or revenue. The Saxon chronicler is especially careful to carry back the pedigree of each to a divine origin; they were leaders of armies, and perhaps presidents of the national assemblies; but the people seem

* Medrod and Aeddan became as Saxons. See above.
to have treated them with little ceremony, and laws of succession appear to have been unknown. They may have come from the islands at the mouth of the Elbe, which Meginhard says were peopled by the inhabitants of Britain who had fled from the Romans—invited as their natural leaders, and quite in accordance with the proceedings of the times; they arrived with their immediate followers in two or three vessels, and this would give the finishing blow to the Roman party, as all that the barbarians wanted was unity and leaders.

We have now to examine the only contemporary work left us, "Gildas on the Destruction of Britain," and I am sorry to say that it very imperfectly fulfils the expectations suggested in the title. Of the author we know nothing, except what he tells us himself, but we may gather from his account that he was an ecclesiastic, that he was of the Britanni or Roman party, and that he must have lived at any rate into the latter half of the sixth century. He acknowledges that his history is composed "not from the writings of his country, or the memorials of authors, for these (if any such had ever existed) were either consumed by the fire of the enemy, or carried abroad by the exiled citizens, but from foreign relations which are necessarily imperfect and interrupted." This statement proves that Gildas had seen no such records, and was not aware that any such were in existence, and it is confirmed by the internal evidence of his own work, which exhibits a degree of ignorance not easily matched. Learning must have been at a very low ebb, and the British clergy and monks seem to have made no pretension to it. But it was undoubtedly in the cloister that our early chronicles originated and were kept, and upon this point we are quite justified in taking his assertion literally.

This history in the "Monumenta Historica Britannica," is divided into twenty-six sections, the last fifteen of which have the following titles:—


To fill up this sketch as shortly as possible, the two conquering nations
were the Picti and Scoti, who from beyond the sea, commenced their ravages as soon as the troops had withdrawn from the island. The citizens applied to the Romans for succour, and this aid soon sent the invaders back to their own country. On the return of the legion however, the enemies made their second appearance; there was a second application for aid, and another rout and dispersion of the barbarians. A second wall was built, for the former legion had made one across the island of turf. This was made of stone—and then the Romans left the island to return no more.

Now, in all this, the narrative is at utter variance with established facts. The Scoti and Picti did not come from beyond the sea, did not carry away their prey by sea every year, as he also asserts; and the wall, which under these circumstances could have been of no use, was built 200 years before. But to return to Gildas.

The Romans exhorted the citizens to arm and defend themselves, and besides the wall in the north, they built towers on the south coast where the enemy’s ships came, and where the fierce barbarian boats were dreaded. But the third devastation followed the departure of the troops; the invasion being again by ships; the same destruction and ravages were repeated, and to these calamities were added famine and civil war.

It was then that they wrote their pitiful supplication,—"The groans of the Britanni to Agitius. The barbarians drive us into the sea, the sea drives us back upon the barbarians." But their application was in vain; and then, trusting in God and not in man, they gave to slaughter the spoilers who had been so many years in the country. The enemy retired from the citizens, but the citizens did not forsake their sins. Then came a sudden rumour that they were about to return, to destroy, and to take possession of the whole country, but this rumour was disregarded: a terrible pestilence followed, and a council was held to determine the best means of repelling the frequent and cruel attacks of the foe. Then the councillors, with the proud tyrant Gurthrigernus dux Britannorum,* were all so blinded as to invite the Saxons to their assistance. "And this flock of cubs from the den of the barbarian lioness, burst forth in three vessels, in their language called cyulis, in ours long ships. They sailed with prosperous omens and auguries, and a sure prophecy that they should possess the land for

* This dux seems to have been the successor of the Roman dux or duke.
300 years, and that for 150 they should frequently ravage it." The same country, finding that the previous body had succeeded, sent out a fresh company: they asked for provisions, and not being satisfied with what they got, threatened, and deeds followed the threats. They had landed on the east side of the island, and began by attacking the cities and country next them, but ended not till the whole land to the western ocean was consumed. The pillars were overthrown with battering-rams, all the colonists, with the bishops of the church, priests, and people were given to the sword.

Then as before, some fled to the mountains and woods, some beyond the sea, some submitted to the conqueror, till at length the fierce robbers returned home, and the miserable remnant assembled once more from their places of refuge under Aurelius Ambrosius: they make head, attack their conquerors, and by God's help gain the victory. Aurelius Ambrosius is described as of Roman descent, his parents (by which we may understand his family,) having been clothed with the purple, but all had been slain in the previous devastations.

"From that time, sometimes the citizens, sometimes the enemy had the advantage,"—"Till the year of the siege of Mons Badonicus, which is near the mouth of the Severn, when the last and not the least slaughter of the hangdogs was made. One month of the forty-fourth year since then has just passed, as I know from its being also the year of my birth. External wars are now over, but civil wars continue, and the cities still remain deserted and destroyed." The generation which witnessed these changes, kings, public officers and private persons, priests and ecclesiastics, conducted themselves with due regard to their order. But after their departure all these mercies were forgotten, hardly a trace of the previous religious and right feeling was left, and few indeed did the reverend mother the church behold in her bosom, in comparison with the mighty multitudes which were daily rushing down to Tartarus.

Throughout the history, the distinction is kept up between the cives and hostes, the citizen and the enemy. He sometimes uses the term Britones, but in the letter to Agitius we have the Britanni and Barbari as in Marcellinus. The accounts in the Saxon chronicle of this period are of little value. According to it the king Wyrtgeornes invited Hengist and Horsa into the island in 449. Two battles were fought with the Brettas in 455 and 457; after the last the Brettas forsook Kent, and fled in terror.
to London. Ella landed in Sussex in 477. It was not till 519 that Cerdic
and his son Cynric obtained the kingdom of the West Sexna, and not till
547 that Ida ruled the Northumbrians. Except the kings of Wessex, who
pushed their conquests to the Severn in 577, the others seem to have had
little trouble in establishing themselves. In no instance is the capture of
a large town recorded till 577, when Gloucester, Bath, and Cirencester fell
into the hands of Cuthwin and Ceaulin. Not a single contest is mentioned
as having occurred in England proper, including the Angles, Mercia, and
Northumberland.

It is curious, too, that we find in the chronicle the same restriction of
names as in the Latin writers. The Britanni are sometimes called Brettas,
sometimes Walas, and sometimes Bretwalam. The Teutons to this day call
the Italians Welsch, and this is the appellation applied to the Romans in
the dark period of the empire. The other names are more uncertain. We
have Angle, Engle, Angela, also Saxe, Sexna, and Saxna, and I am in­
clined to think that there were originally, distinct names for the continental
and insular tribes, which were confounded when reduced into Latin forms.

But there is another work of Gildas besides his history,* which is in one
respect most important, as it gives an account of the then state of Britain,
and of five kings who are all addressed as being in the height of power and
wickedness. "Britain," says he, "has kings, but they are tyrants; she
has judges, but they are unrighteous ones, they prey on the innocent, and
favour the robber. The crowd of prisoners in the gaols are there by
treachery, not for crimes;" perjury and various great sins are represented
as universal.

Constantine, whom he calls the tyrannical whelp of the unclean lioness
of Damnonia, is accused of having murdered at the holy altar, and in their
mother's arms, two royal youths, with their two servants, the very year
in which he was writing. Aurelius Conanus is bid to remember the vain
and idle fancies of his parents and brethren, together with the untimely
death that befel them in the prime of their youth. He is said to be
swallowed up in the filthiness of horrible murders and other crimes, and
worse even than Constantine. Vortiporius, the foolish tyrant of the
Demetians, the South Welsh, whose head is now growing grey, the
wicked son of a virtuous king, is seated on a throne full of deceits, and

from the bottom to the top stained with murders and other sins. Cuneglasus, the tawny butcher, (as in the Latin tongue the name signifies,) amongst other titles is called a bear, and the guider of the chariot which is the receptacle of the bear. He had raised a great war against his own countrymen; he had driven his wife away, and taken her sister, who it seems had before taken the vow of chastity. But the worst of the lot is Maglocunus, who is thus addressed:—“O thou dragon of the island, who hast deprived many tyrants as well of their kingdoms as of their lives, and though last mentioned in my writing the first in mischief, exceeding many in power, and also in malice; more liberal than others in giving, more licentious in sinning; strong in arms, but stronger in thy own soul's destruction, &c.” He had at the beginning of his youth oppressed his uncle and his brave soldiers with sword, spear and fire; and at a later period he appears to have felt or feigned a wish to become a monk, but this was not to be. “Oh, how great a joy would the preservation of thy salvation have been to God, the father of all saints, had not the devil, the father of all castaways, as an eagle of monstrous wings and claws, carried thee captive away against all right and reason, to the unhappy band of his children!”* He had murdered his own wife and his nephew, and married the wife of the latter, at whose suggestions these crimes had been committed; and yet this king had had the most eloquent teacher of all Britain. Lastly, he says, there are priests, but they are unwise; very many that minister, but many of them impudent; clerks, she hath, but certain of them are deceitful ravenous; pastors as they are called, but rather wolves prepared for the slaughter of souls; † * * instructing the laity, but showing withal most depraved examples, vices and evil manners; * * violently intruding themselves into the preferments of the church; * * wallowing in the puddle of wickedness after they have attained the seal of the priesthood or episcopal dignity, &c., &c.†

As a historian, Gildas shews himself miserably deficient, and his History is of little value. But in the Epistle we find him in another character, and bitter as his language is, and fierce as are his denunciations, he here speaks the truth fearlessly, and gives us a vivid picture of a most awful period. He warns as an old prophet might have done, king and priest, noble and citizen, of the terrible judgment that was coming upon them. The wicked-

ness that overwhelmed the Roman empire pervaded Britain, as well as every other portion of it, but the wickedness was essentially Roman; neither Engla, Sexna nor Celts, except with those limitations already pointed out, those who had made themselves parcel of the Roman government, had anything to do with it but to sweep it away from the face of the earth which it had polluted so long. Two of the kings are named as being of the Devonians and South Welsh, the others might belong to North Wales, Cumberland, and Strathclyde; but the people of the two last were of Teutonic blood. Whoever will read the 7th book of Salvianus of Marseilles, De Gubernatione Dei, will have no doubt that these cives Britones or Britanni, were the Roman provincials, the Romani of Salvianus.

We have seen in 369, that a Roman legion was sufficient, with the help of the Britanni, to put down the native party. At a later period, three ceols, which would hardly contain fifty men each, were enough to destroy utterly the Roman provincials. The Picti had already assumed their national appellations of English and Sexe, and the Britanni were soon lost in the primitive Cymry. The Roman empire was in a state of rapid and inevitable dissolution, and England had this advantage over the states of the continent, that her own children achieved her independence and nationality, and even then the foundations of her future greatness were laid.

**ON THE SNOWS AND SNOW CRYSTALS OF THE WINTER 1854-55, AS OBSERVED AT WARRINGTON.**

*By Thomas Glazebrook Rylands, Esq.*

(Read April 26th, 1855.)

My wish in preparing the following communication has been two-fold: to lay before you certain observations I have made during the past winter; and to attract more general attention hereafter to the richness and variety of what, with little license, may be called the "treasures of the snow."

I know no class of objects so easily accessible by every one, which at the same time offers equal attraction, and is capable of affording so large an amount of gratification to all classes of observers. At the hands of the British meteorologist, at least, this subject demands, as it deserves, a much more careful investigation than it has hitherto had. So few have been the snow observations made in this country, that it is impossible to say whether