

BOOK V

Chap. I — *Lucius dies without issue, and is a benefactor to the churches.*

In the meantime, the glorious king Lucius highly rejoiced at the great progress which the true faith and worship had made in his kingdom, and permitted the possessions and territories which formerly belonged to the temples of the gods, to be converted to a better use, and appropriated to Christian churches. And because a greater honour was due to them than to the others, he made large additions of lands and manor houses, and all kinds of privileges to them. Amidst these and other acts of his great piety, he departed this life in the city of Gloucester, and was honourably buried in the cathedral church, in the hundred and fifty-sixth year after our Lord's incarnation. He had no issue to succeed him, so that after his decease there arose a dissension among the Britons, and the Roman power was much weakened.

Chap. II — *Severus, a senator, subdues part of Britain: his war with Fulgenius.*

When this news was brought to Rome, the senate despatched Severus, a senator, with two legions, to reduce the country to subjection. As soon as he was arrived, he came to a battle with the Britons, part of whom he obliged to submit to him, and the other part which he could not subdue he endeavoured to distress in several cruel engagements, and forced them to fly beyond Deira into Albany. Notwithstanding which they opposed him with all their might under the conduct of Fulgenius, and often made great slaughter both of their own countrymen and of the Romans. For Fulgenius, brought to his assistance all the people of the islands that he could find, and so frequently gained the victory. The emperor, not being able to resist the irruptions which he made, commanded a wall to be built between Deira and Albany, to hinder his excursions upon them; they accordingly made one at the common charge from sea to sea, which for a long time hindered the approach of the enemy. But Fulgenius, when he was unable to make any longer resistance, made a voyage into Scythia, to desire the assistance of the Picts towards his restoration. And when he had got together all the forces of that country, he returned with a great fleet into Britain, and besieged York. Upon this news being spread through the country, the greatest part of the Britons deserted Severus, and went over to Fulgenius. However, this did not make Severus desist from his enterprise: but calling together the Romans, and the rest of the Britons that adhered to him, he marched to the siege, and fought with Fulgenius; but the engagement proving very sharp, he was killed with many of his followers: Fulgenius also was mortally wounded. Afterwards Severus was buried at York, which city was taken by his legions. He left two sons, Bassianus and Geta, whereof Geta had a Roman for his mother, but Bassianus* a Briton. Therefore, upon the death of their father the Romans made Geta king, favouring him on account of his being a

* Otherwise called Caracalla.

Roman by both his parents: but the Britons rejected him, and advanced Bassianus, as being their countryman by his mother's side. This proved the occasion of a battle between the two brothers, in which Geta was killed; and so Bassianus obtained the sovereignty.

Chap. III — *Carausius advanced to be king of Britain.*

At that time there was in Britain one Carausius, a young man of mean birth, who, having given proof of his bravery in many engagements, went to Rome, and solicited the senate for leave to defend with a fleet the maritime coasts of Britain, from the incursions of barbarians; which if they would grant him, he promised to do more for the honour and service of the commonwealth, than by delivering up to them the kingdom of Britain. The senate, deluded by his specious promises, granted him his request, and so, with his commission sealed, he returned to Britain. Then by wicked practices getting a fleet together, he enlisted into his service a body of the bravest youths, and putting out to sea, sailed round the whole kingdom, causing very great disturbance among the people. In the meantime, he invaded the adjacent islands, where he destroyed all before him, countries, cities, and towns, and plundered the inhabitants of all they had. By this conduct he encouraged all manner of dissolute fellows to flock to him in hope of plunder, and in a very short time was attended by an army which no neighbouring prince was able to oppose. This made him begin to swell with pride, and to propose to the Britons, that they should make him their king; for which consideration he promised to kill and banish the Romans, and free the whole island from the invasions of barbarous nations. Accordingly obtaining his request, he fell upon Bassianus and killed him, and then took upon him the government of the kingdom. For Bassianus was betrayed by the Picts, whom Fulgenius his mother's brother had brought with him into Britain, and who being corrupted by the promises and presents of Carausius, instead of assisting Bassianus, deserted him in the very battle, and fell upon his men; so that the rest were put into a consternation, and not knowing their friends from their foes, quickly gave ground, and left the victory to Carausius. Then he, to reward the Picts for this success, gave them a habitation in Albany, where they continued afterwards mixed with the Britons.

Chap. IV — *Allectus kills Carausius, but is afterwards himself slain in flight by Asclepiodotus.*

When the news of these proceedings of Carausius arrived at Rome, the senate commissioned Allectus, with three legions, to kill the tyrant, and restore the kingdom of Britain to the Roman power. No sooner was he arrived, than he fought with Carausius, killed him, and took upon himself the government. After which he miserably oppressed the Britons, for having deserted the commonwealth, and adhered to Carausius. But the Britons, not enduring this, advanced Asclepiodotus, duke of Cornwall, to be their king, and then unanimously marched against Allectus, and challenged him to battle. He was then at London, celebrating a feast to his tutelary gods; but being informed of

the coming of Asclepiodotus, he quitted the sacrifice, and went out with all his forces to meet him, and engaged with him in a sharp fight. But Asclepiodotus had the advantage, and dispersed and put to flight Allectus's troops, and in the pursuit killed many thousands, as also king Allectus himself. After this victory, Livius Gallus, the colleague of Allectus, assembled the rest of the Romans, shut the gates of the city, and placed his men in the towers and other fortifications, thinking by these means either to make a stand against Asclepiodotus, or at least to avoid imminent death. But Asclepiodotus seeing this laid siege to the city, and sent word to all the dukes of Britain, that he had killed Allectus with a great number of his men, and was besieging Gallus and the rest of the Romans in London; and therefore earnestly entreated them to hasten to his assistance, representing to them withal, how easy it was to extirpate the whole race of the Romans out of Britain, provided they would all join their forces against the besieged. At this summons came the Demetians, Venedotians, Deirans, Albans, and all others of the British race. And as soon as they appeared before the duke, he commanded vast numbers of engines to be made, to beat down the walls of the city. Accordingly, every one readily executed his orders with great bravery, and made a violent assault upon the city, the walls of which were in a very short time battered down, and a passage made into it. After these preparations, they began a bloody assault upon the Romans, who, seeing their fellow soldiers falling before them without intermission, persuaded Gallus to offer a surrender on the terms of having quarter granted them, and leave to depart: for they were now all killed except one legion, which still held out. Gallus consented to the proposal, and accordingly surrendered himself and his men to Asclepiodotus, who was disposed to give them quarter; but he was prevented by a body of Venedotians, who rushed upon them, and the same day cut off all their heads upon a brook within the city, which from the name of the commander was afterwards called in the British tongue Nantgallim, and in the Saxon Gallobroc.

Chap. V — *Asclepiodotus obtains the crown. Diocletian's massacre of the Christians in Britain.*

The Romans being thus defeated, Asclepiodotus, with the consent of the people, placed the crown upon his own head, and governed the country in justice and peace ten years, and curbed the insolence and outrages committed by plunderers and robbers. In his days began the persecution of the emperor Diocletian; and Christianity, which from the time of King Lucius had continued fixed and undisturbed, was almost abolished over the whole island. This was principally owing to Maximianus Herculius, general of that tyrant's army, by whose command all the churches were pulled down, and all the copies of the Holy Scriptures that could be found, were burned in the public markets. The priests also, with the believers under their care, were put to death, and with emulation pressed in crowds together for a speedy passage to the joys of heaven, as their proper dwelling place. God therefore magnified his goodness to us, forasmuch as he did, in that time of persecution, of his mere grace, light up the bright lamps of the holy martyrs, to prevent the spreading of gross darkness over the people of Britain; whose sepulchres and places of suffering might have

been a means of inflaming our minds with the greatest fervency of divine love, had not the deplorable impiety of barbarians deprived us of them. Among others of both sexes who continued firm in the army of in and suffered, were Alban of Verulam, and Julius and Aaron, both of the City of Legions. Of these, Alban; out of the fervour of his charity, when his confessor, Amphibalus, was pursued by the persecutors, and just ready to be apprehended, first hid him in his house, and then offered himself to die for him; imitating in this Christ himself, who laid down his life for his sheep. The other two, after being torn limb from limb, in a manner unheard of, received the crown of martyrdom, and were elevated up to the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Chap. VI — *An insurrection against Asclepiodotus, by Coel, whose daughter Helena Constantius marries.*

In the meantime Coel*, duke, of Caercolvin or Colchester, made an insurrection against king Asclepiodotus, and in a pitched battle killed him, and took possession of his crown. The senate, hearing this, rejoiced at the king's death, who had given such disturbance to the Roman power: and reflecting on the damage which, they had sustained by the loss of this kingdom, they sent Constantius the senator, a man of prudence and courage, who had reduced Spain under their subjection, and who was above all the rest industrious to promote the good of the commonwealth. Coel, having information of his coming, was afraid to engage him in battle, on account of a report, that no king was able to stand before him. Therefore, as soon as Constantius was arrived at the island, Coel sent ambassadors to him with offers of peace and submission, on condition that he should enjoy the kingdom of Britain, and pay no more than the usual tribute to the Roman state. Constantius consented to this proposal, and so, upon their giving hostages, peace was confirmed between them. The month after Coel was seized with a very great sickness, of which he died within eight days. After his decease, Constantius himself was crowned, and married the daughter of Coel, whose name was Helena. She surpassed all the ladies of the country in beauty, as she did all others of the time in her skill in music and the liberal arts. Her father had no other issue to succeed him on the throne; for which reason he was. very careful about her education, that she might be better qualified to govern the kingdom. Constantius, therefore, having made her partner of his bed, had a son by her called Constantine. After eleven years were expired, he died at York, and bestowed the kingdom upon his son, who, within a few years after he was raised to this dignity, began to give proofs of heroic virtue, undaunted courage, and strict observance of justice towards his people. He put a stop to the depredations of robbers, suppressed the insolence of tyrants, and endeavoured everywhere to restore peace.

* This king seems to be the same as the hero of the old popular ditty "Old King Cole was a Merry Old Soul" etc.

Chap. VII — *The Romans desire Constantine's assistance against the cruelty of Maxentius.*

At that time there was a tyrant at Rome, named Maxentius, who made it his endeavour to confiscate the estates of all the best of the nobility, and oppressed the commonwealth with his grievous tyranny. Whilst he, therefore, was proceeding in his cruelty, those that were banished fled to Constantine in Britain, and were honourably entertained by him. At last, when a great many such had resorted to him, they endeavoured to raise in him an abhorrence of the tyrant, and frequently expostulated with him after this manner: — “How long, Constantine, will you suffer our distress and banishment? Why do you delay to restore us to our native country? You are the only person of our nation that can restore to us what we have lost, by driving out Maxentius. For what prince is to be compared with the king of Britain, either for brave and gallant soldiers, or for large treasures? We entreat you to restore us to our estates, wives, and children, by conducting us with an army to Rome.”

Chap. VIII — *Constantine, having reduced Rome, obtains the empire of the world. Octavius, duke of the Wisseans, is put to flight by Trahern.*

Constantine, moved with these and the like speeches, made an expedition to Rome, and reduced it under his power, and afterwards obtained the empire of the whole world. In this expedition he carried along with him three uncles of Helena, *viz.* Leolin, Trahern, and Marius, and advanced them to the degree of senators. In the meantime, Octavius, duke of the Wisseans, rebelled against the Roman proconsuls, to whom the government of the island had been committed, and having killed them, took possession of the throne. Constantine, upon information of this, sent Trahern, the uncle of Helena, with three legions to reduce the island. Trahern came to shore near the city, which in the British tongue is called Caerperis, and having assailed it, took it in two days. This news spreading over the whole country, king Octavius assembled all the forces of the land, and went to meet him not far from Winchester, in a field called in the British tongue Maisuriam, where he engaged with him in battle, and routed him. Trahern, upon this loss, betook himself with his broken forces to his ships, and in them made a voyage to Albany, in the provinces of which he made great destruction. When Octavius received intelligence of this, he followed him with his forces, and encountered him in Westmoreland, but fled, having lost the victory. On the other hand, Trahern, when he found the day was his own, pursued Octavius, nor ever suffered him to be at rest till he had dispossessed him both of his cities and crown. Octavius, in great grief for the loss of his kingdom, went with his fleet to Norway, to obtain assistance from king Gombert. In the meantime, he had given orders to his most intimate adherents to watch carefully all opportunities of killing Trahern, which accordingly was not long after done by the magistrate of a certain privileged town, who had a more than ordinary love for him. For as Trahern was one day upon a journey from London, he lay hid with a hundred men in the vale of a wood, through which he was to pass, and there fell upon him unawares, and killed him in the midst of his men. This news being brought to Octavius, he returned back to Britain, where he

dispersed the Romans, and recovered the throne. In a short time after this, he arrived to such greatness and wealth that he feared nobody, and possessed the kingdom until the reign of Gratian and Valentinian.

Chap. IX — *Maximian is desired for a king of Britain.*

At last, in his old age, being willing to settle the government, he asked his council which of his family they desired to have for their king after his decease. For he had no son, and only one daughter, to whom he could leave the crown. Some, therefore, advised him to bestow his daughter with the kingdom upon some noble Roman, to the end that they might enjoy a firmer peace. Others were of opinion that Conan Meriadoc, his nephew, ought to be preferred to the throne, and the daughter married to some prince of another kingdom with a dowry in money. While these things were in agitation among them, there came Caradoc, duke of Cornwall, and gave his advice to invite over Maximian* the senator, and to bestow the lady with the kingdom upon him, which would be a means of securing to them a lasting peace. For his father Leolin, the uncle of Constantine, whom we mentioned before, was a Briton, but by his mother and place of birth he was a Roman, and by both parents he was descended of royal blood. And there was a sure prospect of a firm and secure peace under him, on account of the right which he had to Britain by his descent from the emperors, and also from the British blood. But the duke of Cornwall, by delivering this advice, brought upon himself the displeasure of Conan, the king's nephew, who was very ambitious of succeeding to the kingdom, and put the whole court into confusion about it. However, Caradoc, being unwilling to recede from his proposal, sent his son Mauricius to Rome to acquaint Maximian with what had passed. Mauricius was a person of large and well-proportioned stature, as well as great courage and boldness, and could not bear to have his judgment contradicted without a recourse to arms and duelling. On presenting himself before Maximian, he met with a reception suitable to his quality, and had the greatest honours paid him of any that were about him. There happened to be at that time a great contest between Maximian and the two emperors, Gratian and Valentinian, on account of his being refused the third part of the empire, which he demanded. When, therefore, Mauricius saw Maximian ill-treated by the emperors, he took occasion from thence to address him in this manner: "Why need you, Maximian, stand in fear of Gratian, when you have so fair an opportunity of wresting the empire from him? Come with me into Britain, and you shall take possession of that crown. For king Octavius, being now grown old and infirm, desires nothing more than to find some such proper person, to bestow his kingdom and daughter upon. He has no male issue, and therefore has asked the advice of his nobility, to whom he should marry his daughter with the kingdom; and they to his satisfaction have past a decree, that the kingdom and lady be given to you, and have sent me to acquaint you with it. So that if you go with me, and accomplish this affair, you shall with the treasure and forces of Britain be able to return back to Rome, drive out the emperors, and

* Maximus is the correct name of this usurper.

gain the empire to yourself. For in this manner did your kinsman Constantius, and several others of our kings who raised themselves to the empire.”

Chap. X — *Maximian, coming into Britain, artfully declines fighting with Conan.*

Maximian was pleased with the offer, and took his journey to Britain; but in his way subdued the cities of the Franks, by which he amassed a great treasure of gold and silver, and raised men for his service in all parts. Afterwards he set sail with a fair wind, and arrived at Hamo’s Port; the news of which struck the king with fear and astonishment, who took this to be a hostile invasion. Whereupon he called to him his nephew Conan, and commanded him to raise all the forces of the kingdom, and go to meet the enemy. Conan, having made the necessary preparations, marched accordingly to Hamo’s Port, where Maximian had pitched his tents; who, upon seeing the approach of so numerous an army, was under the greatest perplexities what course to take. For as he was attended with a smaller body of men, and had no hopes of being entertained peaceably, he dreaded both the number and courage of the enemy. Under these difficulties he called a council of the oldest men, together with Mauricius, to ask their advice what was to be done at this critical juncture. “It is not for us,” said Mauricius, “to hazard a battle with such a numerous and powerful army: neither was the reduction of Britain by arms the end of our coming. Our business must be to desire peace and a hospitable treatment, till we can learn the king’s mind. Let us say that we are sent by the emperors upon an embassy to Octavius, and let us with artful speeches pacify the people.”

When all had shown themselves pleased with this advice, he took with him twelve aged men with grey hairs, eminent beyond the rest for their quality and wisdom, and bearing olive branches in their right hands, and went to meet Conan. The Britons, seeing they were men of a venerable age, and that they bore olive branches as a token of peace, rose up before them in a respectful manner, and opened a way for their free access to their commander. Then presenting themselves before Conan Meriadoc, they saluted him in the name of the emperors and the senate, and told him, that Maximian was sent to Octavius upon an embassy from Gratian and Valentinian. Conan made answer: “Why is he then attended with so great a multitude? This does not look like the appearance of ambassadors, but the invasion of enemies.”

To which Mauricius replied: “It did not become so great a man to appear abroad in a mean figure, or without soldiers for his guard; especially considering, that by reason of the Roman power, and the actions of his ancestors, he is become obnoxious to many kings. If he had but a small retinue, he might have been killed by the enemies of the commonwealth. He is come in peace, and it is peace which he desires. For, from the time of our arrival, our behaviour has been such as to give no offence to any body. We have bought necessities at our own expenses, as peaceable people do, and have taken nothing from any by violence.” While Conan was in suspense, whether to give them peace, or begin the battle, Caradoc, duke of Cornwall, with others of the

nobility, came to him, and dissuaded him from proceeding in the war after this representation; whereupon, though much against his will, he laid down his arms, and granted them peace. Then he conducted Maximian to London, where he gave the king an account of the whole proceeding.

Chap. XI — *The kingdom of Britain is bestowed on Maximian.*

Cananoc, after this, taking along with him his son Mauricius, commanded everybody to withdraw from the king's presence, and then addressed him in these words: "Behold, that which your more faithful and loyal subjects have long wished for, is now by the good providence of God brought about. You commanded your nobility to give their advice, how to dispose of your daughter and kingdom, as being willing to hold the government no longer on account of your great age. Some, therefore, were for having the kingdom delivered up to Conan your nephew, and a suitable match procured for your daughter elsewhere; as fearing the ruin of our people, if any prince that is a stranger to our language should be set over us. Others were for granting the kingdom to your daughter and some nobleman of our own country, who should succeed you after your death. But the greater number recommended some person descended of the family of the emperors, on whom you should bestow your daughter and crown. For they promised themselves a firm and lasting peace, as the consequence of such a marriage, since they would be under the protection of the Roman state. See then! God has vouchsafed to bring to you a young man, who is both a Roman, and also of the royal family of Britain; and to whom, if you follow my advice, you will not delay to marry your daughter. And indeed, should you refuse him, what right could you plead to the crown of Britain against him? For he is the cousin of Constantine, and the nephew of king Coel, whose daughter Helena possessed the crown by an undeniable hereditary right."

When Caradoc had represented these things to him, Octavius acquiesced, and with the general consent of his people bestowed the kingdom and his daughter upon him. Conan Meriadoc, finding how things went, was beyond expression incensed, and, retiring into Albany, used all his interest to raise an army, that he might give disturbance to Maximian. And when he had got a great body of men together, he passed the Humber, and wasted the provinces on each side of it. At the news whereof, Maximian hastened to assemble his forces against him, and then gave him battle, and returned with victory. But this proved no decisive blow to Conan, who with his reassembled troops still continued to ravage the provinces, and provoked Maximian to return again and renew the war, in which he had various success, being sometimes victorious, sometimes defeated. At last, after great damages done on both sides, they were brought by the mediation of friends to a reconciliation.

Chap. XII — *Maximian overthrows the Armoricans: his speech to Conan.*

Five years after this, Maximian, proud of the vast treasures that daily flowed in upon him, fitted out a great fleet, and assembled together all the forces in Britain. For this kingdom was now not sufficient for him; he was ambitious of adding Gaul also to it. With this view he set sail, and arrived first at the kingdom of Armorica, now called Brittany, and began hostilities upon the Gallic people that inhabited it. But the Gauls, under the command of Imbaltus, met him, and engaged him in battle, in which the greater part being in danger, they were forced to fly, and leave Imbaltus with fifteen thousand men killed, all of them Armoricans. This severe overthrow was matter of the greatest joy to Maximian, who knew the reduction of that country would be very easy, after the loss of so many men. Upon this occasion he called Conan aside from the army, and smiling said: — “See, we have already conquered one of the best kingdoms in Gaul: we may now have hope of gaining all the rest. Let us make haste to take the cities and towns, before the rumour of their danger spread to the remoter parts of Gaul, and raise all the people up in arms. For if we can but get possession of this kingdom, I make no doubt of reducing all Gaul under our power. Be not therefore concerned that you have yielded up the island of Britain to me, notwithstanding the hopes you once had of succeeding to it; because whatever you have lost in it, I will restore to you in this country. For my design is to advance you to the throne of this kingdom; and this shall be another Britain, which we will people with our own countrymen, and drive out the old inhabitants. The land is fruitful in corn, the rivers abound with fish, the woods afford a beautiful prospect, and the forests are everywhere pleasant; nor is there in my opinion anywhere a more delightful country.” Upon this, Conan, with a submissive bow, gave him his thanks, and promised to continue loyal to him as long as he lived.

Chap. XIII — *Riedonum taken by Maximian.*

After this they marched with their forces to Riedonum [Rennes], and took it the same day. For the citizens, hearing of the bravery of the Britons, and what slaughter they had made, fled away with haste, leaving their wives and children behind them. And the rest of the cities and towns soon followed their example; so that there was an easy entrance into them for the Britons, who wherever they entered killed all they found left of the male sex, and spared only the women. At last, when they had wholly extirpated the inhabitants of all those provinces, they garrisoned the cities and towns with British soldiers, and made fortifications in several places. The fame of Maximian’s exploits spreading over the rest of the provinces of Gaul, all their dukes and princes were in a dreadful consternation, and had no other hopes left but in their prayers to their gods. Maximian, finding that he had struck terror into them, began to think of still bolder attempts, and by profusely distributing presents, augmented his army. For all persons that he knew to be eager for plunder, he enlisted into his service, and by plentifully bestowing his money and other valuable things among them, kept them firm to his interest.

Chap. XIV — *Maximian, after the conquest of Gaul and Germany, makes Trier the seat of his empire.*

By these means he raised such a numerous army, as he thought would be sufficient for the conquest of all Gaul. Notwithstanding which he suspended his arms for a time, till he had settled the kingdom which he had taken, and peopled it with Britons. To this end he published a decree, for the assembling together of a hundred thousand of the common people of Britain, who were to come over to settle in the country; besides thirty thousand soldiers, to defend them from hostile attack. As soon as the people were arrived according to his orders, he distributed them through all the countries of Armorica, and made another Britain of it, and then bestowed it on Conan Meriadoc. But he himself, with the rest of his fellow soldiers, marched into the further part of Gaul, which, after many bloody battles, he subdued, as he did also all Germany, being everywhere victorious. But the seat of his empire he made at Triers, and fell so furiously upon the two emperors, Gratian and Valentinian, that he killed the one, and forced the other to flee from Rome.

Chap. XV — *A fight between the Aquitanians and Conan.*

In the meantime, the Gauls and Aquitanians gave disturbance to Conan and the Armorican Britons, and harassed them with their frequent incursions; but he as often defeated them, and bravely defended the country committed to him. After he had entirely vanquished them, he had a mind to bestow wives on his fellow soldiers, by whom they might have issue to keep perpetual possession of the country; and to avoid all mixture with the Gauls, he sent over to the island of Britain for wives for them. In order to accomplish this, messengers were sent to recommend the management of this affair to Dianotus, king of Cornwall, who had succeeded his brother Caradoc in that kingdom. He was a very noble and powerful prince, and to him Maximian had committed the government, while he was employed in affairs abroad. He had also a daughter of wonderful beauty, named Ursula, with whom Conan was most passionately in love.

Chap. XVI — *Guanius and Melga murder eleven thousand virgins. Maximian is killed at Rome.*

Dianotus, upon this message sent him by Conan, was very ready to execute his orders, and summoned together the daughters of the nobility from all provinces, to the number of eleven thousand; but of the meaner sort, sixty thousand; and commanded them all to appear together in the city of London. He likewise ordered ships to be brought from all shores, for their transportation to their future husbands. And though in so great a multitude many were pleased with this order, yet it was displeasing to the greater part, who had a greater affection for their relations and native country. Nor were there wanting some who, preferring virginity to the married state, would have rather lost their lives in any country, than enjoyed the greatest plenty in wedlock. In short, most of them had views and wishes different from one another, had they been left to

their own liberty. But now the ships being ready, they went on board, and sailing down the Thames, made towards the sea. At last, as they were steering towards the Armorican coast, contrary winds arose and dispersed the whole fleet. In this storm the greater part of the ships foundered; but the women that escaped the danger of the sea, were driven upon strange islands, and by a barbarous people either murdered or made slaves. or they happened to fall into the hands of the cruel army of Guanius and Melga, who, by the command of Gratian, were making terrible destruction in Germany, and the nations on the sea-coast. Guanius was king of the Huns, and Melga of the Picts, whom Gratian had engaged in his party, and had sent him into Germany to harass those of Maximian's party along the sea coasts. While they were thus exercising their barbarous rage, they happened to light upon these virgins, who had been driven on those parts, and were so inflamed with their beauty, that they courted them to their brutish embraces; which, when the women would not submit to, the Ambrons fell upon them, and without remorse murdered the greatest part of them. This done, the two wicked leaders of the Picts and Huns, Guanius and Melga, being the partisans of Gratian* and Valentinian, when they had learned that the island of Britain was drained of all its soldiers, made a speedy voyage towards it; and, taking into their assistance the people of the adjacent islands, arrived in Albany. Then joining in a body, they invaded the kingdom, which was left without either government or defence, and made miserable destruction among the common people. For Maximian, as we have already related, had carried away with him all the warlike youth that could be found, and had left behind him only the husbandmen, who had neither sense nor arms, for the defence of their country. Guanius and Melga, finding that they were not able to make the least opposition, began to domineer most insolently, and to lay waste their cities and countries, as if they had only been pens of sheep. The news of this grievous calamity, coming to Maximian, he sent away Gratian Municeps†, with two legions, to their assistance; who, as soon as they arrived, fought with the enemy, and after a most bloody victory over them, forced them to fly over into Ireland. In the meantime, Maximian was killed at Rome by Gratian's friends; and the Britons whom he had carried with him were also slain or dispersed. Those of them that could escape, went to their countrymen in Armorica, which was now called the other Britain.

* That is, Gratian the emperor, and brother of Valentinian, not Gratian Municeps.

† This Gratian was called Municeps, because he was a citizen of Britain.