

BOOK II

Chap. I — *After the death of Brutus, his three sons succeed him in the kingdom.*

During these transactions, Brutus had by his wife Innogen three famous sons, whose names were Locrinus, Albanactus, and Camber. These, after their father's death, which happened in the twenty-fourth year after his arrival, buried him in the city which he had built, and then having divided the kingdom of Britain among them, retired each to his government. Locrinus, the eldest, possessed the middle part of the island, called afterwards from his name, Loegria. Camber had that part which lies beyond the River Severn, now called Wales, but which was for a long time named Cambria; and hence that people still call themselves in their British tongue Cymri. Albanactus, the younger brother, possessed the country he called Albany, now Scotland. After they had a long time reigned in peace together, Humber, king of the Huns, arrived in Albany, and having killed Albanactus in battle, forced his people to fly to Locrinus for protection.

Chap. II — *Locrinus, having routed Humber, falls in love with Estrildis.*

Locrinus, at hearing this news, joined his brother Camber, and went with the whole strength of the kingdom to meet the king of the Huns, near the river now called Humber, there he gave him battle, and put him to the rout. Humber made towards the river in his flight, and was drowned in it, on account of which it has since borne his name. Locrinus, after the victory, bestowed the plunder of the enemy upon his own men, reserving for himself the gold and silver which he found in the ships, together with three virgins of admirable beauty, whereof one was the daughter of a king in Germany, whom with the other two Humber had forcibly brought away with him, after he had ruined their country. Her name was Estrildis, and her beauty such as was hardly to be matched. No ivory or new-fallen snow, no lily could exceed the whiteness of her skin. Locrinus, smitten with love, would have gladly married her, at which Corineus was extremely incensed, on account of the engagement which Locrinus had entered into with him to marry his daughter.

Chap. III — *Corineus resents the affront put upon his daughter.*

He went, therefore, to the king, and wielding a battle axe in his right hand, vented his rage against him in these words: "Do you thus reward me, Locrinus, for the many wounds which I have suffered under your father's command in his wars with strange nations, that you must slight my daughter, and debase yourself to marry a barbarian? While there is strength in this right hand, that has been destructive to so many giants upon the Tyrrhenian coasts, I will never put up with this affront." And repeating this again and again with a loud voice, he shook his battle axe as if he was going to strike him, till the friends of both

interposed, and after they had appeased Corineus, obliged Locrinus to perform his agreement.

Chap. IV — *Locrinus at last marries Gwendolen, the daughter of Corineus.*

Locrinus therefore married Corineus's daughter, named Gwendolen, yet still retained his love for Estrildis, for whom he made apartments under ground, in which he entertained her, and caused her to be honourably attended. For he was resolved at least to carry on a private amour with her, since he could not live with her openly for fear Corineus. In this manner he concealed her, and made frequent visits to her for seven years together, without the privity of any but his most intimate domestics; and under a pretence of performing some secret sacrifices to his ods, by which he imposed on the credulity of every body. In the meantime, Estrildis became with child, and was delivered of a most beautiful daughter, whom she named Hafren. Gwendolen was also with child, and brought forth a son, who was named Maddan, and put under the care of his grandfather Corineus to be educated.

Chap. V — *Locrinus is killed; Estrildis and Hafren are thrown into a river.*

But in process of time, when Corineus was dead, Locrinus divorced Gwendolen, and advanced Estrildis to be queen. Gwendolen, provoked beyond measure at this, retired into jorwall, where she assembled together all the forces of that kingdom, and began to raise disturbances against Locrinus. At last both armies joined battle near the river Sture, where Locrinus was killed by the shot of an arrow. After his death, Gwendolen took upon her the government of the whole kingdom, retaining her father's furious spirit. For she commanded Estrildis and her daughter Hafree to be thrown into the river now called the Severn, and published an edict through all Britain, that the river should bear the damsel's name, hoping by this to perpetuate her memory, and by that ne infamy of her husband. So that to this day the river is called in the British tongue Hafren, which by the corruption of the name is in another language Sabrina.

Chap. VI — *Gwendolen delivers up the kingdom to Maddan, her son, after whom succeeds Memprius.*

Gwendolen reigned fifteen years after the death of Locrinus, who had reigned ten, and then advanced her son Maddan (whom she saw now at maturity) to the throne, contenting herself with the country of Cornwall for the remainder of her life. At this time Samuel the prophet overned in Judea, Sylvius Aeneas was yet living, and Homer was esteemed a famous orator and poet*. Maddan, now in possession of the crown, had by his wife two sons, Memprius and Malin,

* It is only necessary to compare such passages as these with the trecian or Roman Histories, and we cannot avoid perceiving the legendary haracter of Geoffrey of Monmouth's History.

and ruled the kingdom in peace and with care forty years. As soon as he was dead, the two brothers quarrelled for the kingdom, each being ambitious of the sovereignty of the whole island. Mempricius impatient to attain his ends, enters into treaty with Malin under colour of making a composition with him, and, having formed a conspiracy, murdered him in the assembly where their ambassadors were met. By these means he obtained the dominion of the whole island, over which he exercised such tyranny, that he left scarcely a nobleman alive in it, and either by violence or treachery oppressed every one that he apprehended might be likely to succeed him, pursuing his hatred to his whole race. He also deserted his own wife, by whom he had a noble youth named Ebraucus, and addicted himself to sodomy, preferring unnatural lust to the pleasure of the conjugal state. At last, in the twentieth year of his reign, while he was hunting, he retired from his company into a valley, where he was surrounded by a great multitude of ravenous wolves, and devoured by them in a horrible manner. Then did Saul reign in Judea, and Eurysthenes in Lacedaemon.

Chap. VII — *Ebraucus, the successor of Mempricius, conquers the Gauls, and builds the towns Caerebrauc, etc.*

Mempricius being dead, Ebraucus, his son, a man of great stature and wonderful strength, took upon him the government of Britain, which he held forty years. He was the first after Brutus who invaded Gaul with a fleet, and distressed its provinces by killing their men and laying waste their cities; and having by these means enriched himself with an infinite quantity of gold and silver, he returned victorious. After this he built a city on the other side of the Humber, which, from his own name he called Caerebrauc, that is, the city of Ebraucus*. About that time David reigned in Judea, and Sylvius Latinus in Italy, and that Gad, Nathan, and Asaph prophesied in Israel. He also built the city of Alclud† towards Albany, and the town of Mount Agned [Edinburgh], called at this time the Castle of Maidens, or the Mountain of Sorrow.

Chap. VIII — *Ebraucus's twenty sons go to Germany, and his thirty daughters to Silvius Alba, in Italy.*

This prince had twenty sons and thirty daughters by twenty wives, and with great valour governed the kingdom of Britain sixty years. The names of his sons were, Brutus surnamed Greenshield, Margadud, Sisillius, Regin, Morivid, Bladud, Lagon, Bodloan, Kincar, Spaden, Gaul, Darden, Eldad, Ivor, Gangu, Hector, Kerin, Rud, Assarach, and Buel. The names of his daughters were, Gloigni, Ignogni, Oudas, Guenliam, Gaudid, Angarad, Guendoloe, Tangustel, Gorgon, Medlan, Methahel, Ourar, Malure, Kambreda, Ragan, Gael, Ecub, Nest, Cheum, Stadud, Gladud, Ebren, Blagan, Aballac, Angaes, Galaes (the most celebrated beauty at that time in Britain or Gaul), Edra, Anaor, Stadial, and

* York seems to be a corruption of Ebrauc. It is first mentioned Ptolemy (ii. 3.) A.D. 120.

† Alclud or Alcluith is unknown to the classic writers: it is first mentioned by Gildas, and is thought to be the modern Dumbarton.

Egron. All these daughters their father sent into Italy to Silvius Alba, who reigned after Silvius Latinus, where they were married among the Trojan nobility, the Latin and Sabine women refusing to associate with them. But the sons, under the conduct of their brother Assaracus, departed in a fleet to Germany, and having, with the assistance of Silvius Alba, subdued the people there, obtained that kingdom.

Chap. IX — *After Ebraucus reigns Brutus his son, after him Leil, and after Leil, Hudibras.*

But Brutus, surnamed Greenshield, stayed with his father, whom he succeeded in the government, and reigned twelve years. After him reigned Leil, his son, a peaceful and just prince, who, enjoying a prosperous reign, built in the north of Britain a city, called by his name, Caerleil [Carlisle]; at the same time that Solomon began to build the temple of Jerusalem, and the queen of Sheba came to hear his wisdom; at which time, also, Silvius Epitus succeeded his father Alba, in Italy. Leil reigned twenty-five years, but towards the latter end of his life grew more remiss in his government, so that his neglect of affairs speedily occasioned a civil dissension in the kingdom. After him reigned his son, Hudibras, thirty-nine years, and composed the civil dissension among his people. He built Caerceint or Canterbury, Caergwent or Winchester, and the town of Mount Paladur, now Shaftesbury. At this place an eagle spoke, while the wall of the town was being built; and indeed I should have transmitted the speech to posterity, had I thought it true, as the rest of the history. At this time, reigned Capys, the son of Epitus; and Haggai, Amos, Joel, and Azariah, were prophets in Israel.

Chap. X — *Bladud succeeds Hudibras in the kingdom, and practises magical operations.*

Next succeeded Bladud, his son, and reigned twenty years. He built Caerbadus, now Bath, and made hot baths in it for the benefit of the public, which he dedicated to the goddess Minerva; in whose temple he kept fires that never went out nor consumed to ashes, but as soon as they began to decay were turned into balls of stone. About this time the prophet Elias prayed that it might not rain upon earth; and it did not rain for three years and six months. This prince was a very ingenious man, and taught necromancy in his kingdom, nor did he leave off pursuing his magical operations, till he attempted to fly to the upper region of the air with wings which he had prepared, and fell down upon the temple of Apollo, in the city of Trinovantum, where he was dashed to pieces.

Chap. XI — *Leir the son of Bladud, having no son, divides his kingdom among his daughters.*

After this unhappy fate of Bladud, Leir*, his son advanced to the throne, and nobly governed his country six years. He built upon the river Soar a city, called in the British tongue, Caerleir, in the Saxon, Leircastræ [Leicester]. He was without male issue, but had three daughters, whose names were Goneril, Regan, and Cordeilia, of whom he was dotingly fond, but especially of his, youngest, Cordeilia. When he began to grow old, he had thoughts of dividing kingdom among them, and of bestowing them on husbands such as were fit to be advanced to the government of them. But to make trial who was worthy to have the best part of his kingdom, he went to each of them to ask which of them loved him most. The question being proposed, Goneril, the eldest, made answer "That she called heaven to witness, she loved him more than her own soul."

The father replied, "Since you have preferred my declining age before your own life, I will marry you, my dearest daughter, to whomsoever you shall make choice of, and give with you the third part of my kingdom."

Then Regan, the second daughter, willing, after the example of her sister, to prevail upon her father's good nature, answered with an oath "That she could not otherwise express her thoughts, but that she loved him above all creatures." The credulous father upon this made her the same promise that he did to her eldest sister, that is, the choice of a husband, with the third part of his kingdom,

But Cordeilla, the youngest, understanding how easily he was satisfied with the flattering expressions of her sisters, was desirous to make trial of his affection after a different manner. "My father," said she, "is there any daughter that can love her father more than duty requires? In my opinion, whoever pretends to it, must disguise her real sentiments under the veil of flattery. I have always loved you as a father, nor do I yet depart from my purposed duty; and if you insist to have something more extorted from me, hear now the greatness of my affection, which I always bear you, and take this for a short answer to all your questions; look how much you have, so much is your value, and so much do I love you."

The father, supposing that she spoke this out of the abundance of her heart, was highly provoked, and immediately replied, "Since you have so far despised my old age as not to think me worthy the love that your sisters express for me, you shall have from me the likeregard, and shall be excluded from any share with your sisters in my kingdom. Notwithstanding, I do not say but that since you are my daughter, I will marry you to some foreigner, if fortune offers you any such husband; but will never, I do assure you, make it my business to procure so honourable a match for you as for your sisters; because, though I have hitherto loved you more than them, you have in requital thought me less worthy of your affection than they." And, without further delay, after consultation with to nobility, he bestowed his two other daughters upon the

* King Lear, the hero of Shakespeare's drama.

dukes of Cornwall and Albany, with half the island at present, but after his death, the inheritance of the whole monarchy of Britain. It pampered after this, that Aganippus, king of the Franks, having heard of the fame of Cordeilia's beauty, forthwith sent his ambassadors to the king to demand her in marriage. The father, retaining yet his anger towards her, made answer "That he was very willing to bestow his daughter, but without either money or territories; because he had already given away his kingdom with all his treasure to his eldest daughters, Goneril and Regan."

When this was told Aganippus, he, being very much in love with the lady, sent again to king Leir, to tell him, "That he had money and territories enough, as he possessed the third part of Gaul, and desired no more than his daughter only, that he might have heirs by her." At last, the match was concluded; Cordeilla was sent to Gaul, and married to Aganippus.

Chap. XII — *Leir, finding the ingratitude of his two eldest daughters, betakes himself to his youngest, Cordeilia, in Gaul.*

A long time after this, when Leir came to be infirm through old age, the two dukes, on whom he had bestowed Britain with his two daughters, fostered an insurrection against him, and deprived him of his kingdom, and of all regal authority, which he had hitherto exercised with great power and glory. At length, by mutual agreement, Maglurus, duke of Albany, one of his sons-in-law, was to allow him a maintenance at his own house, together with sixty soldiers, who were to be kept for state. After two years' stay with his son-in-law, his daughter Goneril grudged the number of his men, who began to upbraid the ministers of the court with their scanty allowance; and, having spoken to her husband about it, she gave orders that the numbers of her father's followers should be reduced to thirty, and the rest discharged. The father, resenting this treatment, left Maglurus, and went to Henwin, duke of Cornwall, to whom he had married his daughter Regan. Here he met with an honourable reception, but before the year was at an end, a quarrel happened between the two families, which raised Regan's indignation; so that she commanded her father to discharge all his attendants but five, and to be contented with their service. This second affliction was insupportable to him, and made him return again to his former daughter, with hopes that the misery of his condition might move in her some sentiments of filial piety, and that he, with his family, might find a subsistence with her. But she, not forgetting her resentment, swore by the gods he should not stay with her, unless he would dismiss his retinue, and be contented with the attendance of one man; and with bitter reproaches she told him how ill his desire of vainglorious pomp suited his age and poverty. When he found that she was by no means to be prevailed upon, he was at last forced to comply, and, dismissing the rest, to take up with one man only.

But by this time, he began to reflect more sensibly with himself upon the grandeur from which he had fallen, and the miserable state to which he was now reduced, and to enter upon thoughts of going beyond sea to his youngest daughter. Yet he doubted whether he should be able to move her

commiseration, because (as was related above) he had treated her so unworthily. However, disdaining to bear any longer such base usage, he took ship for Gaul. In his passage he observed he had only the third place given him among the princes that were with him in the ship, at which, with deep sighs and tears, he burst forth into the following complaint: —

“O irreversible decrees of the Fates, that never swerve from your stated course! Why did you ever advance me to an unstable felicity, since the punishment of lost happiness is greater than the sense of present misery? The remembrance of the time when vast numbers of men obsequiously attended me in the taking the cities and wasting the enemy’s countries, more deeply pierces my heart than the view of my present calamity, which has exposed me to the derision of those who were formerly prostrate at my feet. Oh! The enmity of fortune! Shall I ever again see the day when I may be able to reward those according to their deserts who have forsaken me in my distress? How true was thy answer, Cordeilla, when I asked thee concerning thy love to me, ‘As much as you have, so much is your value, and so much do I love you.’ While I had anything to give, they valued me, being friends, not to me, but to my gifts: they loved me then, but they loved my gifts much more: when my gifts ceased, my friends vanished. But with what face shall I presume to see you, my dearest daughter, since in my anger I married you upon worse terms than your sisters, who, after all the mighty favours they have received from me, suffer me to be in banishment and poverty?”

As he was lamenting his condition in these and the like expressions, he arrived at Karitia, where his daughter was, and waited before the city while he sent a messenger to inform her of the misery he was fallen into, and to desire her relief for a father who suffered both hunger and nakedness; Cordeilia was startled at the news, and wept bitterly, and with tears asked how many men her father had with him. The messenger answered, he had none but one man, who had been his armour-bearer, and was staying with him without the town. Then she took what money she thought might be sufficient, and gave it to the messenger, with orders to carry her father to another city, and there give out that he was sick, and to provide for him bathing, clothes, and all other nourishment. She likewise gave orders that he should take into his service forty men, well clothed and accoutred, and that when all things were thus prepared he should notify his arrival to king Aganippus and his daughter. The messenger quickly returning, carried Leir to another city; and there kept him concealed, till he had done every thing that Cordeilia had commanded.

Chap. XIII — *He is very honourably received by Cordeilla and the king of Gaul.*

As soon as he was provided with his royal apparel, ornaments, and retinue, he sent word to Aganippus and his daughter, that he was driven out of his kingdom of Britain by his sons-in-law, and was come to them to procure their assistance for recovering his dominions. Upon which they, attended with their chief ministers of state and the nobility of the kingdom, went out to meet him,

and received him honourably, and gave into his management the whole of Gaul, till such time as he should be restored to his former dignity.

Chap. XIV — *Leir, being restored to the kingdom by the help of his son-in-law and Cordeilia, dies.*

In the meantime, Aganippus sent officers over all Gaul to raise an army, to restore his father-in-law to his kingdom of Britain. Which done, Leir returned to Britain with his son and daughter and the forces which they had raised, where he fought with his sons-in-law and routed them. Having thus reduced the whole kingdom to his power, he died the third year after. Aganippus also died; and Cordeilia, obtaining the government of the kingdom, buried her father in a certain vault, which she ordered to be made for him under the river Soar, in Leicester, and which had been built originally under the ground to the honour of the god Janus. And here all the workmen of the city, upon the anniversary solemnity of that festival, used to begin their yearly labours.

Chap. XV — *Cordeilia, being imprisoned, kills herself. Margan, aspiring to the whole kingdom, is killed by Cunedagius.*

After a peaceful possession of the government for five years, Cordeilia began to meet with disturbances from the two sons of her sisters, being both young men of great spirit, whereof one, named Marganus, was born to Maglurus, and the other, named Cunedagius, to Henwin. These, after the death of their fathers, succeeding them in their dukedoms, were incensed to see Britain subject to a woman, and raised forces in order to raise a rebellion against the queen; nor would they desist from hostilities, till, after a general waste of her countries, and several battles fought, they at last took her and put her in prison, where for grief at the loss of her kingdom she killed herself. After this they divided the island between them; of which the part that reaches from the north side of the Humber to Caithness, fell to Marganus; the other part from the same river westward was Cunedagius's share. At the end of two years, some restless spirits that took pleasure in the troubles of the nation, had access to Marganus, and inspired him with vain conceits, by representing to him how mean and disgraceful it was for him not to govern the whole island, which was his due by right of birth. Stirred up with these and the like suggestions, he marched with an army through Cunedagius's country, and began to burn all before him. The war thus breaking out, he was met by Cunedagius with all his forces, who attacked Marganus, killing no small number of his men, and, putting him to flight, pursued him from one province to another, till at last he killed him in a town of Cambria, which since his death has been by the country people called Margon to this day. After the victory, Cunedagius gained the monarchy of the whole island, which he governed gloriously for three and thirty years. At this time flourished the prophets Isaiah and Hosea, and Rome was built upon the eleventh before the calends of May by the two brothers, Romulus and Remus.

Chap. XVI — *The successors of Cunedagius in the kingdom, Ferrex is killed by his brother Porrex, in a dispute for the government.*

Art last Cunedagius dying, was succeeded by his son Rivallo, a fortunate youth, who diligently applied himself to the affairs of the government. In his time, it rained blood three days together, and there fell vast swarms of flies, followed by a great mortality among the people. After him succeeded Gurgustius his son; after him Sisillius; after him Jago, the nephew of Gurgustius; after him Kimarcus the son of Sisillius; after him Gorboduc, who had two sons, Ferrex and Porrex.

When their father grew old, they began to quarrel about the succession; but Porrex, who was the most ambitious of the two, formed a design of killing his brother by treachery, which the other discovering, escaped, and passed over into Gaul. There he procured aid from Suhard king of the Franks, with which he returned and made war upon his brother; coming to an engagement, Ferrex was killed and all his forces cut to pieces. When their mother, whose name was Judon, came to be informed of her son's death, she fell into a great rage, and conceived a mortal hatred against the survivor. For she had a greater affection for the deceased than for him, so that nothing less would appease her indignation for his death, than her revenging it upon her surviving son. She took therefore her opportunity when he was asleep, fell upon him, and with the assistance of her women tore him to pieces. From that time a long civil war oppressed the people, and the island became divided under the power of five kings, who mutually harassed one another.

Chap. XVII — *Dunvallo Molmutius gains the sceptre of Britain, from whom came the Molmutine laws.*

At length arose a youth of great spirit, named Dunvallo Molmutius, who was the son of Cloten king of Cornwall, and excelled all the kings of Britain in valour and gracefulness of person. When his father was dead, he was no sooner possessed of the government of that country, than he made war against Ymner king of Loegria, and killed him in battle. Hereupon Rudaucus king of Cambria, and Staterius king of Albany, had a meeting, wherein they formed an alliance together, and marched thence with their armies into Dunvallo's country to destroy all before them. Dunvallo met them with thirty thousand men, and gave them battle; and when a great part of the day was spent in the fight, and the victory yet dubious, he drew off six hundred of his bravest men, and commanded them to put on the armour of the enemies that were slain, as he himself also did, throwing aside his own. Thus accoutred, he marched up with speed to the enemy's ranks, as if he was of their party, and approaching the very place where Rudaucus and Staterius were, commanded his men to fall upon them. In this assault the two kings were killed and many others with them. But Dunvallo Molmutius, fearing lest in this disguise his own men might fall upon him, returned with his companions to put off the enemy's armour, and take his own again; and then encouraged them to renew the assault, which they did with great vigour, and in a short time got the victory, by dispersing and

putting to flight the enemy. From hence he marched into the enemy's countries, destroyed their towns and cities, and reduced the people under his obedience. When he had made an entire reduction of the whole island, he prepared for himself a crown of gold, and restored the kingdom to its ancient state. This prince established what the Britons call the Molmutine laws, which are famous among the English to this day. In these, among other things, of which St. Gildas wrote a long time after, he enacted, that the temples of the gods, and also cities, should have the privilege of giving sanctuary and protection to any fugitive or criminal, that should flee to them from his enemy. He likewise enacted, that the ways leading to those temples and cities, as also husbandman's ploughs, should be allowed the same privilege. So that in his day, the murders and cruelties committed by robbers were prevented, and everybody passed safe without any violence offered him. At last, after a reign of forty years spent in these and other acts of government, he died, and was buried in the city of Trinovantum, near the temple of Concord, which he himself built, when he first established his laws.
