

**PHILIPS' SERIES OF
READING BOOKS FOR
PUBLIC ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS. FOURTH BOOK**

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SERIES OF READING BOOKS

FOR

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

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FOURTH BOOK.

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FOURTH BOOK.



1.—CONVERSION OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS TO CHRISTIANITY.

chron-icle	mis-sion-aries	lit-a-nies
preach-ed	con-vert-ing	im-age
ven-er-able	bap-tize-d	heark-en-ed

Our Saxon forefathers were first brought to the Christian faith by the teaching of good men who were sent into Britain by Gregory the Bishop of Rome, in the year 597. "In this year," says the chronicle, "Gregorius the Pope sent into Britain Augustinus with very many monks, who *gospelled* God's Word to the English folk." Beda, a monk of Northumberland, who lived from 674 to 735, and who, for his learning and goodness, is commonly called the Venerable Bede, tells us a great deal more. He says the reason which made Pope Gregory so anxious to make Christians of the English was as follows:—Some time before he became Pope, he went one day through the market in Rome, where, among other things, there were men, women, and children to be sold as slaves. He there saw *some* beautiful boys who had just

been bought by a slave-merchant—boys with a fair skin and long fair hair, as English boys then would have. He asked from what part of the world they came, and whether they were Christians or heathens. He was told they were heathen boys from the Isle of Britain. Gregory was sorry to think that forms which were so fair without should have no light within, and he asked again what was the name of their nation.

“*Angles*,” he was told.

“*Angles*,” said Gregory, “they have the faces of *angels*, and they ought to be made fellow-heirs of the angels in heaven.”

Gregory then went to the Pope, and asked him to send missionaries into Britain, of whom he himself would be one, to convert the English. The Pope was willing; but the people of Rome, amongst whom Gregory was a priest, and much beloved, would not let him go. So nothing came of the plan for some time. We do not know whether Gregory was able to do anything for the poor little English boys whom he saw in the market, but he certainly never forgot his plan for converting the English people. After a while he became Pope himself. He then sent a company of monks, with Augustine at their head; Augustine was the first Archbishop of Canterbury, and is called the apostle of the English.

So Augustine and his companions set out from Rome, and passed through Gaul, and came into Britain, just as Cæsar had done ages before. But *this time Rome had sent men, not to conquer lands,*

but to win souls. They landed first in the Isle of Thanet, close to the east part of Kent, and thence they sent a message to King Ethelbert, saying why they had come into his land. The king sent back word to them to stay in the isle until he had fully made up his mind how to treat them; and he gave orders that they should, in the meantime, be well taken care of. After a little while he came himself into the isle, and bade them come and tell him what they had to say. He met them in the open air, for he would not meet them in a house, as he thought they might be wizards, and that they might use some charm or spell, which he thought would have less power out of doors. So they came, carrying an image of our Lord on the cross wrought in silver, and singing litanies as they came. And when they came before the king, they preached the gospel to him and those that were with him, telling them, no doubt, how there was one God who had made all things, and how He had sent His Son Jesus Christ to die upon the cross for mankind, and how He would come again at the end of the world to judge the quick and the dead. King Ethelbert hearkened to them, and he made answer like a good and a wise man—"Your words and promises," said he, "sound very good to me; but they are new and strange, and I cannot believe them all at once, nor can I leave all that I and my fathers and the whole English folks have believed so long. But I see that ye have come from a far country to tell us what ye yourselves hold for truth; so ye may stay in the land, and I will give

you a house to dwell in and food to eat ; and ye may preach to my folk, and if any man of them will believe as ye believe, I hinder him not." So he gave them a house to dwell in, in the royal city of Canterbury, and let them preach to the people. Many men hearkened to them and were baptized, and before long King Ethelbert himself believed and was baptized ; and before the year was out there were added to the Church more than ten thousand souls.

Freeman's " Old English History."

2.—THE ELEPHANTS' BATH.

jun-gle	re-straint	fright-en-ed
ap-par-ent-ly	bath-ing	con-se-quence
hud-dled	cau-ti-ous-ly	deer, chief

In a herd of elephants, one member of it, generally the most powerful, is, by common consent, obeyed as leader. A female, if of superior energy, is as readily obeyed as a male, and the devotion and loyalty which the herd show to their leader is something very remarkable. Those who have lived much in the jungle in Ceylon have seen instances of submission of herds to their leaders, which create a singular interest as to the means by which the chief elephant gives the orders which are obeyed with such perfect exactness. The following account is given by a gentleman of a scene he saw himself, and looked upon as showing something *much higher* than mere instinct :—

In the height of the dry season in Ceylon, you know, the streams are all dried up, and the tanks nearly so. All animals are then sorely pressed for water, and they collect, in consequence, near those tanks in which even a little remains. During one of those seasons I was encamped near a very small tank, the water of which was nearly dried up. It was the only pond within many miles, and I knew that a very large herd of elephants, which had been near us all day, must go to it at night. There was a large piece of open ground all round the tank, and on one side a thick forest, in which the elephants sheltered themselves all day. It was one of those beautiful, bright, clear, moonlight nights, when everything could be seen almost as well by night as by day, and I made up my mind to use it in watching the movements of this herd. It was a very good place to do this, and an enormous tree hanging partly over the tank gave me a safe shelter in its branches. Having ordered all camp fires to be put out early, and all my followers to go to bed, I climbed up into the tree, but I had to wait two hours before I saw or heard anything of the elephants, though I knew they were within 500 yards of me. At last a very large one came out of the cover, and advanced cautiously across the open ground to within 100 yards of the tank, where he stood perfectly still. So quiet had the elephants become (though they had been roaring and breaking the jungle all the day and evening) that not a sound was now heard. The huge animal stood still as a rock for a few minutes, and then