

**SKETCHES OF CHURCH
AND STATE IN THE
FIRST EIGHT CENTURIES**

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Sketches of church and state in the first eight centuries by William Armitage

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WILLIAM ARMITAGE

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IN THE

FIRST EIGHT CENTURIES

BY THE REV.

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PREFACE.

THE facts of the following pages have been given on the authority of the *Ecclesiastical Histories* of Eusebius and the Venerable Bede; the *Antiquities* of Josephus; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Hallam's *Middle Ages*; Maclear's *History of Christian Missions*; Biunt's *History of the Church of the First Three Centuries*; Bishop Browne's *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion*. The object in writing them has been to bring into a popular form some of the leading persons and events, parties and movements, in the Church and the world, during the first eight centuries of the Christian era; and where observations have been made or inferences drawn, it has been with a desire to keep within the sanction and authority of our own Church of England.

The records of the early Church should be known, that we may see and understand the

historic position of our own Church, and her close affinity with the early Church in constitution, government, and doctrine. It is necessary that the early history of the Church of England should be circulated as freely and widely as possible, if she is to resist with success the assaults made upon her, and if she is to win the affectionate esteem and firm adherence of the masses, whose influence has now become predominant for good or for evil.

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CHAPTER I.

EXTENSION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE INTO BRITAIN.

“OUT of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” So spake the Prophet Isaiah. Accordingly the Church of Christ was first established in Jerusalem, by the miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. From them shone forth the rays of Gospel light, which soon reached the shores of Britain. The cities and countries first visited were those nearest to the centre of light—Palestine, Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Gaul, Antioch, Ephesus, Athens, Alexandria, Rome. All these, notwithstanding their extent and distance from one another, were included within one grand Empire, and bound together by one elaborate system of government, of which the headquarters were at Rome, and chief was an Emperor entitled Augustus.¹ Within the Empire every facility was

Prophecy
and its ful-
fillment.

¹ “Augustus was therefore a personal, Caesar a family distinction. The former should naturally have expired with