

man, woman, and child. Some were stabbed in their beds; some were cut down as they stood at the plough; some were slain in the streets and workshops; and trembling crowds, who fled into the churches, were put to death at the altar steps.

II.

6. Among those who fell on St. Brice's Day, was a fair and noble lady named **Gunhild**. Though she was own sister to Sweyn, king of Denmark, her noble birth could not save her. She saw her dear husband and her darling boy dragged out, and slain before her eyes; but she told her murderers, with her dying lips, that her brother of Denmark would avenge her death.

7. And so he did. When news flew to Denmark that Gunhild had been slain, **King Sweyn**, "of the forked beard," swore to pluck the crown from the brow of Ethelred. He put out to sea with a mighty fleet, and landed a host of warriors on the shores of England. For three years, the Danes carried fire and sword from one end of the land to the other; and their path could be traced by ruined churches, blazing villages, and all the horrors of a bloody war.

8. Now Sweyn had a son, a famous warrior, named **Canute**; and Ethelred, too, had a son, so hardy and brave that they called him **Edmund Ironside**. So Canute and Ironside—for Ethelred had fled across the seas—fought for the kingdom. It was a hard fight; the men of the east sided