

## CHAPTER III

### THE NORMANS

1066—1154

#### 1. WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, 1066-1087

**23. The home of the Normans in France.**—About the time of Alfred the Great, a bold sea-rover from Norway, named Rolf, succeeded in winning from the king of France a strip of land around the mouth of the Seine River. Here he settled with thousands of his Northmen, who were of the same blood as the Saxons and the Danes. Because their old home was Norway, these people called their new home Normandy and themselves Normans. Rolf married a French princess and was baptized a Christian. His people also became Christians, intermarried with the French, and adopted the French language. They were quick to yield to the softening influences of French civilization, and within a hundred years they had become Frenchmen in language, customs, and religion.

**24. Edward's plan to bequeath his crown.**—When, in 1042, Edward came to the throne of England he brought with him from Normandy, where he had spent his youth, a great crowd of Norman favourites and priests, to whom he gave the best places in the government and the church. He carried his liking for the Normans so far that he even promised to give, at his death, his crown to William, Duke of Normandy. Edward was a very pious man, so pious indeed, that he was afterwards called "the Confessor," but he did not rule England for the benefit of the English, nor, when he made his promise to William, was he thinking of the welfare of his English subjects.