did not like his countrymen to be behind other nations through the want of an historian, and because he washed to perpetuate the record of the exploits of the Danes. His sources are partly Danish traditions and old songs, partly the statements of Archbishop Absalon, partly the accounts of Icelanders, and, lastly, some few earlier, but scanty, sources, being lists of Danish kings and short chronicles, which furnished him with some reliable chronological dates. He considered traditions as history, and therefore made it his chief business to recount and arrange these, by the help of the lists of the kings, into a connected whole. His work, therefore, is a loosely connected series of biographies of Danish kings and heroes; he dwells with predilection on those periods during which Danish kings were said to have made great conquests, and he represents these con­querors as the paragons of their times.

The first nine books comprise “Antiquity,” that is, traditions of kings and heroes of the half-mythical time up to about 950. Here we have traditions about Fredfrode, about Amleth (Hamlet) and Fenge, about Rolf Krake, Hadding, the giant Starkather, Harald Hildetann, and Ragnar Lodbrok. In this earlier history Saxo has also embodied myths of national gods who in tradition had become Danish kings, for instance, Balder and Hother, and of foreign heroes, likewise incorporated in Danish history, as the Gothic Jarmunrik (A. S. Eormenríc), the Anglian Vermund (A. S. Garmund) and Uffe (A. S. Offa), the German Hedin and Hild, &c. Frequently the narrative is interrupted by translations of poems, which Saxo has used as authentic sources, although they are often only a few generations older than himself. In the later books (x.-xvi.) of his work he follows to a greater extent historical accounts, and the more he approaches his own time the fuller and the more trustworthy his relation becomes ; especially brilliant is his treatment of the history of King Valdemar and of Absalon. But his patriotism often makes him partial to his countrymen, and his want of critical sense often blinds him to the historical truth.

Saxo’s work was widely read during the Middle Ages, and several extracts of it were made for smaller chronicles. It was published for the first time, from a MS. afterwards lost, in Paris, 1514, by the Danish humanist Christiern Pedersen ; this edition was reprinted at Basel, 1534, and at Frankfort, 1576. Of later editions may be mentioned that of Stephen Stephanius, Sorö, 1644, that of C. A. Klotz, Leipsic, 1771, and that of P. E. Müller and J. M. Velschow, Copenhagen, 1839. No complete MS. any longer exists; yet of late small fragments have been found of three MSS. The most remarkable of these is the fragment found at Angers, in France, written shortly after 1200, perhaps by Saxo himself or under his superintendence ; here several corrections are found above the lines, showing how the author varied and polished his Latin style.

SAXON DUCHIES. For the four Saxon duchies, Saxe- Altenburg, Saxe-Coburg-Goth a, Saxe-Meiningen, and Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, see those headings.

SAXONS, Law of the. See Salic Law.

SAXONY is the name successively given in German history to a mediaeval duchy in northern Germany, to a later electorate which afterwards became the present kingdom of Saxony (described below), and to a ducal province of Prussia. The last was formed directly out of part of the second in 1815, but the connexion between the first and second, as will be seen from the present article, is neither local nor ethnographical but political.

The Saxons (Lat. *Saxones,* Ger. *Sachsen),* a tribe of the Teutonic stock, are first mentioned by Ptolemy as occupy­ing the southern part of the Cimbrian peninsula between the Elbe, Eider, and Trave, the district now known as Holstein. The name is most commonly derived from “ sahs,” a short knife, though some authorities explain it as meaning “settled,” in contrast to the Suevi or “ wander­ing” people. By the end of the 3d century, when we hear of a “Saxon Confederation” embracing the Cherusci, Chauci, and Angrivarii, and perhaps corresponding to the group of tribes called Ingsevones by Tacitus, the chief seat of the nation had been transferred south of the Elbe to the lands on both sides of the Weser now occupied by Oldenburg and Hanover. The Saxons were one of the most warlike and adventurous of the Teutonic peoples,

and they not only steadily extended the borders of their home, but made colonizing and piratical excursions by sea far and wide. In 287 they assisted the Menapian Carausius to make himself master of Romanized Britain, where he assumed the title of Augustus; and on the Continent they came into collision with the Roman empire under both Julian and Valentinian, the latter of whom defeated them in 373 so far south as Deutz, opposite Cologne. Their settlements along the coast of France extended to the mouth of the Loire, and, though these were soon absorbed by the Franks, their expeditions to England finally resulted in the foundation of lasting kingdoms (Essex, Sussex, Wessex) (see England, vol. viii. pp. 268 *sq.). @@@1* About the beginning of the 5th century part of the Flemish coast became known as the *Litus Saxonium,* from the settlements of this people. The Saxons who remained in Germany (Alt-Sachsen or Old Saxons) gradually pushed their borders further and further until they approached the Rhine, and touched the Elbe, the North Sea, and the Harz Mountains. In 531 they joined their neighbours the Franks in a suc­cessful expedition against the Thuringians, and received as their spoil the conquered territory between the Harz and the Unstrut. Their settlements here were, however, forced to acknowledge the supremacy of the Franks, and from this period may be dated the beginning of the long strife between these two peoples which finally resulted in the subjugation of the Saxons. During the reigns of the weak Merovingian kings who succeeded Lothair I. on the Frankish throne, the Saxons pushed into northern Thur­ingia, afterwards known as the Alt-Mark. Pippin the Short obtained a temporary advantage over them in 753 and imposed a tribute of three hundred horses, but their final conquest was reserved for Charlemagne. At this time the Saxons did not form a single state under one ruler, but were divided into the four districts of Westphalia to the west of the Weser, Eastphalia chiefly to the east of that river, Engern or Angria along both banks, and Nordalbingia in Holstein. The gaus were independent, each having an ealdorman of its own; and they only combined in time of war or other emergency to choose a herzog, or common leader. The people were divided into the “ frilinge ” or “frone,” who possessed the land, the “liti” or “lazzi,” a semi-freed class, and the serfs, who had no rights. The “edilinge” were the chiefs, but had no political advantages over the “ frilinge.” Their religion was a simple type of northern heathenism. See Germany, vol. x. pp. 473 and 477 *sq.*

In 772 Charlemagne, induced partly by a desire to protect his kingdom from the incursions of hostile neigh­bours and partly by a proselytizing spirit, began the sub­jugation of the Saxons. The war, waged on both sides with the utmost ferocity, lasted in a series of campaigns with but brief intervals for thirty-one years. Repeatedly conquered and baptized, the Saxons rose again and again in revolt as soon as Charlemagne withdrew his troops, threw off their forced allegiance to Christianity, and under various leaders, of whom Wittekind or Widukind is the most famous, struggled fiercely to regain their independ­ence. Charlemagne was too strong and his measures too relentless. On one occasion he butchered 4500 captives in cold blood, as a revenge and a warning. Wittekind surrendered and was baptized in 785; and after what is called the Second Saxon War, which broke out in 792, resistance died away about 803. The Saxons were allowed

@@@1 Though the Saxons were not the first to effect the foundation of a Teutonic kingdom in England, they were the first to attempt it ; and hence their name was applied (as it still is) by the Celtic inhabitants of the British islands to all Teutonic settlers. A similar general use of the name survives in Transylvania, where the German inhabitants are called “Saxons,” although only a small proportion of them trace their descent from the Saxon branch of the Teutonic family.