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DEAN AND CHAPLAIN OF WHITELANDS COLLEGE.

THE CHURCHES IN BRITAIN BEFORE A.D. 1000

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THE CHURCHES IN BRITAIN BEFORE A.D. 1000

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OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD

VOL. I

LONDON: ROBERT SCOTT
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MCMXI

TO

MY BROTHER CHARLES,

WHOSE WORK
IS A SURE HELP
TO ALL WHO LABOUR
IN THE SAME FIELDS.

EDITOR'S GENERAL PREFACE

IN no branch of human knowledge has there been a more lively increase of the spirit of research during the past few years than in the study of Theology.

Many points of doctrine have been passing afresh through the crucible; "re-statement" is a popular cry and, in some directions, a real requirement of the age; the additions to our actual materials, both as regards ancient manuscripts and archaeological discoveries, have never before been so great as in recent years; linguistic knowledge has advanced with the fuller possibilities provided by the constant addition of more data for comparative study, cuneiform inscriptions have been deciphered and forgotten peoples, records, and even tongues, revealed anew as the outcome of diligent, skilful and devoted study.

Scholars have specialized to so great an extent that many conclusions are less speculative than they were, while many more aids are thus available for arriving at a general judgment; and, in some directions, at least, the time for drawing such general conclusions, and so making practical use of such specialized research, seems to have come, or to be close at hand.

Many people, therefore, including the large mass of the parochial clergy and students, desire to have in an accessible form a review of the results of this flood of new light on many topics that are of living and vital interest to the Faith; and, at the same time, "practical" questions—by which is really denoted merely the application of faith to life and to the needs of the day—have certainly lost none of their interest, but rather loom larger than ever if the Church is adequately to fulfil her Mission.

It thus seems an appropriate time for the issue of a new series of theological works, which shall aim at presenting *a general survey* of the present position of thought and knowledge in various branches of the wide field which is included in the study of divinity.

The Library of Historic Theology is designed to supply such a series, written by men of known reputation as thinkers and scholars, teachers and divines, who are, one and all, firm upholders of the Faith.

It will not deal merely with doctrinal subjects, though prominence will be given to these; but great importance will be attached also to history—the sure foundation of all progressive knowledge—and even the more strictly doctrinal subjects will be largely dealt with from this point of view, a point of view the value of which in regard to the "practical" subjects is too obvious to need emphasis.

It would be clearly outside the scope of this series to deal with individual books of the Bible or of later Christian writings, with the lives of individuals, or with merely minor (and often highly controversial) points of Church governance, except in so far as these come into the general review of the situation. This detailed study, invaluable as it is, is already abundant in many series of commentaries, texts, biographies, dictionaries and monographs, and would overload far too heavily such a series as the present.

The Editor desires it to be distinctly understood that the various contributors to the series have no responsibility whatsoever for the conclusions or particular views expressed in any volumes other than their own, and that he himself has not felt that it comes within the scope of an editor's work, in a series of this kind, to interfere with the personal views of the writers. He must, therefore, leave to them their full responsibility for their own conclusions.

Shades of opinion and differences of judgment must exist, if thought is not to be at a standstill—petrified into an unproductive fossil; but while neither the Editor nor all their readers can be expected to agree with every point of view in the details of the discussions in all these volumes, he is convinced that the great principles which lie behind every volume are such as must conduce to the strengthening of the Faith and to the glory of God.

That this may be so is the one desire of Editor and contributors alike.

W. C. P.

LONDON, *Autumn*, 1911.

PREFACE

A VERY considerable portion of the contents of these volumes has already appeared in the pages of *The Churchman* (April, 1910, to August, 1911) under the title of "Some Chapters in the History of the Early English Church"; and the writer was asked to put these chapters together, with or without alteration, as might seem best, and expand them into a book. The present volumes are the result. For the most part, the articles in *The Churchman* will be found in it with little or no alteration; but in some portions there is difference of form. The expansions are more considerable. Not only have the papers which have already appeared been made much more full, but one important topic, which, to the writer, at any rate, is one of the most interesting, did not appear in the published articles at all. The series ended with "The Revival under Alfred," which makes a fairly good terminus, but not the best. The revival of the English Church under King Alfred was a very real thing, and our gratitude to him for it cannot

easily be excessive; but it was very incomplete. His most beautiful and fruitful life came to end before he was able to do anything approaching to what he desired to do. The revival under Dunstan in the next century was far more complete. In some things Dunstan succeeded where Alfred had failed, not because he was a better or more capable man than Alfred was, but because the conditions in which he laboured were more favourable to the attainment of those aims which both he and Alfred had in common. Dunstan not only carried on what Alfred had so well begun to a higher stage of development; he added to that work some elements which Alfred would have added if he had had Dunstan's opportunities. From this point of view the end of Dunstan's life is a better stopping-place than the end of Alfred's. It has also the advantage of bringing us close to the end of the tenth century.

The publication of a book is not sufficiently justified by the fact that it was produced in answer to a request. It must have some definite aim, and it must give evidence of being an intelligent attempt to reach what is aimed at. The writer can determine for himself whether he has a definite end in view, and whether he has tried to attain to it: his readers must decide whether the attempt has been in any degree successful.

The aim of the present volume is to give those who have only a very general knowledge of the history of Christianity in Britain down to the year A.D. 1000 more exact ideas on two or three points which are still very imperfectly grasped by a large number of English people. They are not all of equal importance, but they are all of sufficient importance to make it worth while to take a little trouble to have a clear conception of what is historically true.

There are still educated people who think that "the British Church" and "the English Church" are different names for the same thing, and that it does not much matter which expression one uses; who think that what is true of the one is true of the other, and that therefore what they read respecting the British Church may be asserted respecting the English Church or (if one prefers the expression) the Church of England. In some cases this confusion is merely the result of insufficient knowledge, and is therefore innocent, although unfortunate. But in other cases the wish is father to the thought. The British Church is several centuries older than the English Church; and when evidence of antiquity is desired, it is convenient to treat the British Church as identical with the English Church. Moreover, no one knows the origin of the British Church, and it is probable that it did not owe its origin to the Church of Rome; there-

fore, when there is a desire to show that the Church of England is, and ought to be, independent of the Church of Rome, it is again convenient to treat the British Church as identical with the English. Beyond all question, the English nation was converted by missionaries from Rome; and the organization of the first English Christians into a Church with ministers of its own was the work of persons sent by Rome for that purpose. The fact, if it be a fact, that the British Church was for centuries independent of Rome proves nothing as to the independence of the Church of England. That must be established on other grounds. But it cannot be established by contending that the greater part of the work of converting the English to Christianity was done by missionaries from the Scottish Church of Iona. It is doubtful whether this contention is true; and, even if it were true, the indisputable fact would remain, that the form of Christianity which quickly and permanently prevailed in England was not that of Iona, but that of Rome.

Still more common than the error of confusing the English Church with the British Church is that of supposing that the English Church was at some time founded by the English State, and that therefore the State has the rights of a founder over that which it once created. This is a strange inversion of historical truth. The English Church existed

long before the English State. English Christians were organized as Churchmen under one archbishop long before they were organized as subjects under one king. Our ecclesiastical Constitution under archbishops, bishops, and parochial clergy, is centuries older than our civil Constitution under king, lords, and commons; and the Church unity was the direct parent of the civil unity.

If this work helps any readers to have more accurate ideas respecting these matters, it will have attained its object: and it is hoped that it may lead some to study these subjects in more substantial works, and in at least some of the original sources. An Index to the complete work will be given in the second volume. Among the works of which large use has been made by the writer are the following:—

W. Bright, *Chapters of Early English Church History*, Oxford, 1878.

E. A. Freeman, *The Norman Conquest*, Oxford, 1867. *Old English History for Children*, 1869.

J. Lingard, *History of England*, Vol. I., London, 1855. *The History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, London, 1845.

A. W. Haddan, *Remains*, edited by A. P. Forbes, Oxford, 1876.

Haddan & Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, Vol. III., Oxford, 1873.

C. Plummer, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, Oxford, 1892. *Baedae Opera Historica*,

Oxford, 1896. *The Ford Lectures for* 1901, Oxford, 1902. *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, Oxford, 1910.

J. Stevenson, *The Church Historians of England*, London, 1853.

W. Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England*, Vol. I., Oxford, 1874. *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*, edited by A. Hassall, Oxford, 1902. *Lectures on Early English History*, edited by A. Hassall Oxford, 1906.

Numerous articles in the

Dictionary of Christian Biography;
Dictionary of National Biography;
Encyclopædia Britannica.

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VOL. I.

CHAPTER I

THE BRITISH CHURCH

OUR knowledge of the history of Christianity in the British Isles during the first centuries of its existence is very meagre. We know something of it before the year A.D. 400; and we know a great deal of it after A.D. 600. But about its origin we know nothing, and about the two centuries which followed the departure of the Roman legions in 409 we know very little. Let us look at the twilight which precedes their departure before attempting to penetrate the darkness which followed it.

The subject lies outside the scope of this chapter; but one who lives in the county which contains the famous Kent's Cavern at Torquay and the similar cavern at Brixham, may perhaps be pardoned for reminding his readers that there is abundant evidence of the existence of man in these islands thousands of years before the dawn of history. Implements which must have been

fashioned by human hands have been found underneath a stalagmite floor which, geologists tell us, must have taken 12,000 years to have reached such a thickness, and may easily have taken 100,000 years.[1] Whence came these artificers, who could make implements of flint and bone, and these artists who could draw vivid pictures of reindeer and other animals? And when the great Ice Age had extinguished this race, whence came the more clever artificers, but utterly inartistic people, who have left their traces above the stalagmite floor and in other places away from caves and rocks? Then came, in two separate waves, immigrations of Kelts from the Continent, the first knowing the use of bronze, and the second knowing the use of iron, and therefore able to drive the first immigrants before them. And then, with a far better knowledge of the use of iron, came the Romans. Julius Caesar landed in the summer or the autumn of 55 B.C., and in less than two centuries the frontier of the Roman Empire had been pushed northwards to the river Tyne, and secured by the great wall extending right across from the Tyne to the Solway. This brings us well within the Christian era, and perhaps within the scope of this chapter: for the question at once arises, When did Christianity reach the British Isles? And that involves the

[1] *A Memoir of William Pengelly of Torquay*, Murray, 1897, pp. 303–14 and *passim*.

further questions, Who brought the Gospel hither? and, Who were the first to receive it?

These are questions which the student of the history of the British Church cannot avoid asking: but, like so many questions of great interest and importance, it is impossible to find an answer to them. Not because no answers exist. Hundreds of years ago these same questions were raised; and, because no answers were known, interesting guesses were made. The guesses were thought satisfactory, for they gratified curiosity and vanity, and they were accepted as historical fact. We can see now that these guesses are not supported by any trustworthy evidence, and that they are intrinsically improbable. They are therefore abandoned, and we humbly confess our ignorance of the date and the manner of the first preaching of the Gospel in Britain.

That the British Church can claim Apostolic origin, whether through St. Paul or any one of the Twelve, is a magnificent conjecture without anything but its audacity to recommend it. The earliest authority for the utterly improbable statement that St. Paul visited Britain is the voluminous writer, Sophronius, who was Patriarch of Jerusalem A.D. 633–7. That is much the same as if the earliest authority for Augustine's visit to Britain were William of Malmesbury. When Eusebius, follow-

ing Origen, traces in his *Ecclesiastical History* (III i) the fields in which the Apostles laboured, he says nothing about any of them having preached in Britain.

The attractive story of Joseph of Arimathaea being sent by St. Philip to Britain and founding Glastonbury first appears in the twelfth century, and William of Malmesbury relates it merely as what people say (*ut ferunt*). Neither Gildas nor Bede know anything of it.

Something a little more substantial, but less fascinating, may be got from Tertullian's treatise *Against the Jews* (vii), where he speaks with enthusiasm about the spread of the Gospel, and talks of places in Britain, which the Romans could not reach, but which had yielded to Christ. There is nothing incredible in the statement that Christianity was well established in Britain before A.D. 200; but Tertullian is so fond of oratorical flourishes, that we cannot be sure that he had evidence for the statement. It may be only a picturesque way of saying that the Gospel had spread far and wide. Irenaeus (I x 2), who wrote a little earlier than Tertullian, mentions Germany, Iberia, and the Kelts; but says nothing about Christians in Britain.

If the indefinite boast of Tertullian does not prove that there were Christians in Britain in A.D. 195, still less does the silence of Irenaeus prove that there were no Christians in Britain in A.D. 185.

But it is not improbable that it was between these two dates that the Christian faith reached these shores. Nothing positive, however, can be asserted.

Thus far we have the worthless statement about St. Paul, which cannot be traced earlier than the seventh century; the equally worthless statement about Joseph of Arimathaea, which was an idle tale in the twelfth century; and the possibly correct, but possibly baseless, statement of Tertullian near the end of the second century. There remains a highly interesting and very circumstantial narrative, which comes to us on no less authority than that of the Venerable Bede (*H.E.* i 4). He says—

"In the 156th year from the Incarnation of the Lord, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the 14th from Augustus, succeeded to the Empire with his brother, Aurelius Commodus. In whose time, whilst Eleutherus, a holy man, was Bishop of the Roman Church, Lucius, King of Britain, sent a letter to him, entreating that by his command he might be made a Christian; and the fulfilment of his pious request soon followed. And the Britons embraced the faith, and preserved it inviolate and entire in peaceful tranquillity, till the time of the Emperor Diocletian."

Thus Bede writes about A.D. 725. Nennius, writing about 850, gives the story a Welsh turn, and states that in "A.D. 164 Lucius, the British king, with all the chieftains of the whole of Britain, re-

ceived baptism, in consequence of a mission sent by the Emperors of the Romans and by the Roman Pope Eucharistus." Three centuries later the imaginative Geoffrey of Monmouth (who has done so much for the embellishment of the dry bones of history, and for the supply of fiction where facts were not to be had) gives us the pedigree of King Lucius, the names of the missionaries, and other wonderful details. He can tell us that it was the fame of miracles which induced Lucius to send emissaries to Rome; and that when the holy doctors, Faganus and Durandus arrived in Britain in answer to his request, he and multitudes from all countries were baptized. Temples were turned into churches, and flamens into bishops, archflamens into archbishops, and so forth.

It is quite evident that Nennius, Geoffrey and Monmouth, and others merely reproduce Bede, with variations and additions of their own. Then, what was Bede's source of information? His chief authorities in the early part of his History are Orosius (*c.* 416) and Gildas (*c.* 550). But neither Orosius nor Gildas say anything about any such incident. The earliest authority for the story is the *Catalogus Felicianus*, which is an interpolated edition of the *Liberian Catalogue*. The original Catalogue was made about A.D. 354, and it has merely the name of Eleutherus and the length of his episcopate. The interpolated Catalogue was made nearly 200 years later (*c.* 530),

and it says of Eleutherus, that he received a letter from Lucius, King of Britain, asking him to give directions for making Lucius a Christian; and this, in all probability, is Bede's authority. Now we can trace the growth of the story. In the latter part of the *second* century there was a Bishop of Rome called Eleutherus: that is the one grain of fact in the whole narrative. In the *sixth* century there is a vague tradition of a British king seeking Christianity, and it is connected with Eleutherus. In the *eighth* century Bede reproduces this story, tries to give dates, and gets them wrong; for Marcus Aurelius succeeded in A.D. 161; his brother (Lucius Verus) died in 169; and Eleutherus certainly did not become Bishop of Rome until 172, and perhaps later. Then Geoffrey of Monmouth and other writers invent various details. Evidently, we are dealing with fable, and with a fable which would be very likely to be forged in Rome in the fifth or sixth century, in order to show that the British Church owed its origin to the Roman See. Similar fabrications, with similar objects, are common enough. Of course a king of Britain in the second century is impossible; and Lucius is not a very likely name for a British chief. But the story may be taken as evidence of a tradition that there were Christians in Britain about the time when Tertullian vouches for them, viz. before the year 200. All that we know for certain is, that there was a British Church with bishops of its own

soon after A.D. 300, and probably for some time before that; for there were three British bishops at the Council of Arles in 314. No doubt other bishops, and probably more than three, were left behind in Britain while these went to Arles; and a Church with more than six bishops is likely to have been established for some time.

But it is too much to say that Christianity "must have become the dominant religion" in Britain before A.D. 300. The fact that during the fourth century the British Church produced the notable heretic Pelagius (born *c.* 370) does not prove as much as that; and the spread of Christianity on the Continent in the third century is but weak evidence as to what was going on in so remote and isolated a province as Britain. Respecting Christianity on the Continent at that period we have plenty of evidence; and respecting paganism in Britain at that period we have plenty of evidence; but, respecting Christianity in Britain during the time of the Roman occupation, that is, down to the beginning of the fifth century, the evidence is strangely meagre. In the multitude of altars, statues, inscriptions and coins which have been found, and are still being found, in England, we have abundant proof of heathen worship at this period, and not merely the worship of the ordinary deities of Rome, such as Jupiter, Neptune, Mars and Bellona, but also of various strange gods, who may

represent Keltic divinities, such as Belatucader and Anociticus. Mithra worship also, which had flowed from the Orontes into the Tiber, had evidently flowed also from the Tiber into the Tyne: and the custom of making gods of the Roman Emperors, whether dead or alive, is amply illustrated. Sepulchral inscriptions begin with the customary dedication to the *Dii Manes*, the deified spirits of the departed; and so forth. All this is familiar to those who are moderately acquainted with the contents of our numerous local museums. But we can make no such list of the archaeological vestiges of Christian belief and worship during the period of Roman occupation. All that has been discovered in the whole of Britain would make but a poor show in a large museum. It would be rash to infer from the paucity of Christian remains which date from the Roman occupation that during the whole of that period there were but few Christians in Britain; but perhaps we may infer with safety that not very many of those who had wealth and power had embraced Christianity.

The scanty evidence which we possess respecting this early British Church tends to establish three points as probable.

1. This British Church derived its origin from the Christians of Gaul, and remained to a large extent dependent upon them.

2. It was confined almost exclusively to the Roman

settlements and did not spread much in those parts of the island where the legions did not penetrate. Tertullian's boast, that places which the Romans could not reach had yielded to Christ, is not likely to have had much foundation in fact even much later than the time of Tertullian.

3. Even if its numbers were not small, its members were not very distinguished.

Let us look a little more closely at each of these three points.

1. That Britain should derive its Christianity from Gaul, rather than from Rome or from Palestine, is in itself highly probable, owing to the frequent intercourse between the countries, although it is nothing more than a conjecture. But the conjecture is confirmed by the relation between the Churches. The British Church is found to be frequently drawing on the Gallic, and it rarely shows independence in any matter of importance. When St. Ninian undertook his mission to the Picts beyond the Forth about A.D 400, he did so in connexion with St. Martin of Tours, with whom he stayed on his way back from Rome, and who is said to have let him have some masons to help him to build churches after the Roman method. St. Patrick stayed in Gaul for thirty or more years under St. Germanus of Auxerre before undertaking his mission to Ireland about A.D. 440. Pelagius the heretic, one of the few famous persons whom the Keltic Church pro-

duced, apparently could not find scope for his energy in Britain, but lived and studied and argued on the Continent and in the East. And when Pelagianism began to spread in Britain in the fifth century, the British Church had no teachers competent to deal with the difficulty and sent to Gaul for help. A Gallic synod sent two bishops, Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes; and Germanus is said to have received a commission not only from the Gallic synod but also from the Roman see. These two Gallic divines, both of them disciples of the school of Lérins, confuted the British Pelagians in open debate, a debate in which, as Bede (i 17) says with characteristic sympathy, "on the one side was piety, on the other pride." Soon after this theological victory, these two Gallic prelates contributed to what is known as the Alleluia Victory. They encouraged the British to withstand an attack of Picts and Saxons, and joined the British in their march. It is worth noting, in connexion with what was said just now about the number of Christians in Britain, that we are told that at this crisis, Lent 430, the majority of the British army were pagans. But Germanus and Lupus converted them; they were baptized on Easter Eve, and soon afterwards put their foes to flight with their shouts of Alleluia. Germanus and Lupus left Britain, and then Pelagianism again began to assert itself. Again the British teachers were helpless, and sent for help

from Gaul. In 447 Germanus once more returned, this time with Severus, Bishop of Treves, who was a disciple of Lupus. This time the Pelagian teachers were sent to the Continent that they might there be better instructed than they could be at home.

It is further evidence of the connexion between the British and the Gallic Churches that sacred buildings in Britain are so often dedicated to Gallic saints—St. Martin, St. Hilary, and St. Germain. And the intellectual superiority of the Gallic Church is shown by its literary productiveness. We know of only one Christian writer in Britain, the semi-Pelagian Bishop Fastidius, and he wrote only one book. He is not mentioned as the bishop of any see; but in the Keltic Church it was not uncommon to have bishops unattached, ready for any episcopal duties.

Under this head a word must be said about the peculiar British custom respecting the keeping of Easter. It is sometimes supposed that the Keltic custom was a continuation of the old Quarto-deciman practice of the Church of Ephesus, and that this is evidence that the British Church derived its Christianity from Asia Minor. Whether or no Christianity came to Britain from the East, the Keltic custom about keeping Easter is probably quite independent of the fact. It seems to have been a mere blunder. The Keltic cycles for calculating the time of Easter were old and faulty, and

they produced incorrect dates different from those observed by Rome and the rest of the Church. The Paschal customs of the British Church in no way weaken the reasonable conjecture that it derived its origin from Gaul.

2. We pass on to the second point—that Christianity in Britain does not seem to have taken much root except where there were Roman settlements.

The sees of the three bishops from Britain who attended the Council of Arles in 314 were Roman headquarters. This is quite certain with regard to two of them, York and London, and highly probable with regard to the third; but about the name of the third there is uncertainty.[1] The names of the British martyrs, Albanus and Julius (if we may regard them as historical), are Roman. Among the very rare Christian remains of this period we have sepulchral inscriptions which are obviously Roman, such as *Vivas in Deo* or *Spes in Deo;* and these rare traces of early Christianity have been found in places which are known to have been Roman stations, such as Canterbury, Dover, Richborough, and Porchester.[2]

[1] *De civitate Coloniae Londinensium* (? *Lindensium* = Lincoln; *Legionensium* = Caerleon, "the camp of the Legion").

[2] Altars dedicated "to the old gods" (*Dibus Veteribus* or *Deo Veteri*) are not uncommon in the north of England, almost always at military stations. They imply that Christianity had become dominant at the time when they were erected.

This brings us to the third point. (3) The rarity of antiquarian remains of British Christianity seems to indicate that British Christians, during the time of the Roman occupation, were certainly not wealthy and perhaps not very numerous. Otherwise how can we account for the abundant remains of Roman paganism side by side with the extreme paucity of remains of Roman or British Christianity? We infer that Christian buildings were neither numerous nor substantial. At Silchester a small building, which is believed to be the remains of a Christian Church of the basilica type, has been discovered; and perhaps we may get something more of the kind in the excavations at Manchester. But the earliest British churches were of a very unsubstantial character, wattle-work plastered over with earth. Later they were built of timber, and finally of stone. But by the time that stone was used for Christian buildings the British Church had been driven into the Western half of the island; and the English Church —newly born among the heathen invaders from the Continent—was rapidly taking its place. One conjectures that a Church which had such poor buildings must have consisted of members who themselves were poor. And with regard to that conjecture we have another piece of evidence. At the Council of Rimini in 359 Constantius offered to pay out of the treasury the expenses of all the bishops who attended. Out of more than 400 bishops, only three availed

themselves of this offer, and they were the three bishops from Britain. They were so poor that they asked for their travelling expenses. And they seem to have been persons of little influence. Neither at Arles nor at Rimini do the British bishops seem to have made any show. The Keltic Church no doubt did good missionary work, but it seems to have had little influence in Western Europe. Its peculiar customs with regard to the Paschal cycle and the form of tonsure, about which Bede thinks so much, and its peculiar Latin version of the Bible, were probably mere results of its isolation. It did not deliberately adopt them in opposition to other Churches. Nowhere do we find much evidence of either originality or power; and we know that, after the isolation of Britain became more complete owing to the departure of the Roman legions, a grievous demoralization in the British Church took place. This demoralization is painted in very strong colours by Gildas and Bede, and is perhaps somewhat exaggerated; but in the fifth century the clergy are said to have taken the lead in vice, and in the sixth century the state of Christian society is worse rather than better. "Britain has priests," he says, "but they are foolish." Simony was rife, and bad men tried to whitewash their characters by buying some ecclesiastical office. There were a few good pastors, whose value was above price. But even those who lived respectably them-

selves, were cowardly in regard to rebuking sin. As for the chieftains in the purely British districts, they did what they pleased, and seemed to think that the guilt of any sin could be cancelled by liberal almsgiving.

It was stated above that by the time that the British Christians had begun to erect substantial stone churches, the newborn English Church was beginning to take its place. This refers, of course, to the conversion of the Saxons and the Angles (who may be conveniently spoken of as English), largely through the instrumentality of the Roman missionary, Augustine. It seems right to add here a word of caution against the common confusion between the British Church and the English Church. This mistake is still made, even by persons who undertake to instruct others, and therefore are specially bound to endeavour to be accurate; and this particular inaccuracy is not a mere slip, which any one might pardonably make, but a rather serious error, which it is quite easy to avoid. In the period with which we are dealing—viz., Britain in the first ten centuries of the Christian era—the British Church and the English Church were quite distinct, and had very little to do with one another, although at a much later date they became united. As we have already seen, it is impossible to say when the British Church began: but it was in existence, and possessed bishops, A.D. 300. But to cite the

fact of *British* bishops attending the Councils of Arles and of Rimini as evidence of the antiquity of the *English* Church is preposterous. At that time there was Britain, but there was no England, for the English had not yet reached these shores. The ancestors of English Churchmen were then heathen tribes on the Continent. The history of the English Church begins with the episcopate of Archbishop Theodore, A.D. 668, "the first Archbishop," as Bede (iv 2) says, "whom all the English Church obeyed." Or, if we like, we may date its beginning from the landing of Augustine, A.D. 597: but that is the very earliest date that is possible. By that time the British Church had been almost destroyed by the heathen English, and the remnant of it refused to assist Augustine in the work of converting these heathen destroyers. In that great work the Scottish Church of Ireland and of West Scotland rendered a great deal of help; but the British Church stood aloof. Bede tells us that down to his own day (673–735) British Christians still treated English Christians as pagans. We must carefully avoid using the expression "English Church" of anything that existed earlier than 597. By that means we shall keep our own ideas more clear, and shall perhaps avoid confusing the ideas of other people. It is, no doubt, a great matter to be able to see clearly that the English Church was not brought into existence by Henry VIII. and Cranmer, and that it is

not only as old as the kingdom of England, but still older than it. Yet we must not mar a good and glorious claim by exaggerating it, and by attempting to give to the Church of England an antiquity which is unreal and can be easily disproved. The error may be said to be a venerable one in point of antiquity. It is remarkable how many of the Lives of St. Alban speak of him as the "proto-martyr of the English," "proto-martyr *Anglorum*." The martyrdom, if it took place at all, must be dated near the year given in the Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 283, at which time there were no Angles or English in Britain.

In the course of this chapter various authorities have been mentioned as sources of the information upon which the history of this period is built. Before continuing our examination of the period, it will be useful to have some idea of these authorities and of the kind of information which they give us. Those already mentioned are Orosius, Gildas, Bede, Nennius, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and William of Malmesbury ; and to these we shall have to add a few more.

Paulus Orosius was born at Tarragona in Spain before A.D. 390, and he died later than 417. He was a pupil of St. Augustine of Hippo, and he visited Jerome at Bethlehem about 415. He returned to Africa in 416, and there, at the request of Augustine, wrote the historical work which afterwards received

the curious title of *Ormista*.[1] It is a sort of sketch of the history of the world, derived from the Old and New Testaments, and from a variety of profane writers, chiefly Latin. It was written in about a year, and therefore we are not surprised to be told that it abounds in mistakes. But it comes down to the year 416, and therefore the concluding portion is contemporary evidence. As it was written under the sanction of Augustine, and was the one history of the world which was written by a Christian, and a Christian of orthodox belief, it became very popular, and was quoted largely by later writers, including Bede. King Alfred made a free translation of it for the use of his people. In the sixteenth century it was translated into German and Italian.

Our earliest native historian is the perplexing British ecclesiastic named Gildas, who is a person even more puzzling than the Presbyter John. In the latter case we have only to make up our minds, if we can, whether there were two Johns, the Apostle and the Elder, or only one. In the other case we have the offer of two, three, four, or even six persons, all bearing the name of Gildas, and capable of being confused with one another. There is good authority for the convenient view that we need believe in only one Gildas, and therefore that we need

[1] Various conjectures have been made as to the origin of the title. Perhaps the least improbable is that it is *Orosii mundi historia* contracted into one word.

not discuss which of them wrote the historical work with which we are concerned. He was a monk of Bangor, who wrote about A.D. 550. His work is commonly spoken of as one treatise, "A Book of Lamentation on the Ruin of Britain"[1]; but it is perhaps better regarded as two—"The History of Gildas," and "The Epistle of Gildas." The former is a record of the events of British History from the arrival of the Romans down to Gildas's own time. The latter is a querulous book of lamentation in the form of a letter addressed to the Britons, reproaching kings, priests and people with grievous and numerous crimes. The writer wrings his hands over the tyranny of the rulers, the avarice, ignorance, and idleness of the clergy, and the general immorality of the population. It is the irreligion of the Britons that has brought upon them the terrible visitation of the English invaders, whose barbarities to the Britons are described. If instead of weeping over the wickedness, which he possibly exaggerates, Gildas had simply told us what he had seen himself, and what he had heard from older men, his work would have been invaluable. But he does supply some useful information; and his work has received the recognition of England's first great scholar, Bede, who adopted the latter part of Gildas without hesitation, and incorporated it in his own His-

[1] *De Excidio Britanniae Liber Querulus.*

tory. In the Homilies attributed to Archbishop Wulstan of York, written in 1012, a leaf is taken out of Gildas's work, in order to rebuke the English, who in their turn have become wicked and ought to take warning from the punishments which their forefathers inflicted on the Britons. Wulstan says: "There was a prophet of the people in the time of the Britons called Gildas. He wrote about their misdeeds, how they so angered God, that at last He caused the army of the English to conquer their land and utterly destroy the strength of the Britons. And that came about through the irregularity of the clergy and the lawlessness of the laity. Come, then, let us take warning by such, and sooth it is that I say. We know of worse deeds done among the English than we ever heard of among the Britons." Is it professional tenderness for his own order which makes the Archbishop speak of the "*irregularity*" of the priests; they broke their rules; but of the "*lawlessness*" of the people?[1] The moral which Gildas drew has always been a favourite one, from the time of Job's friends onwards. The heathen English had mingled the blood of the Christian Britons with their sacrifices; therefore, the Britons must have been exceptionally wicked. But turned as Wulstan turned it, it yields a valuable lesson. Those who persist in wickedness

[1] "Regolbryce" and "Lahbryce."

have reason to fear the severe judgments of God.

We pass from a not very attractive British writer to a most attractive English one. The *Ecclesiastical History* of the Venerable Bede is our next source of information. It is the earliest that we possess of really first-rate importance for our national history, and it is scarcely possible to over-estimate its value. It was finished in the year 731, just four years before his death; and it was written when he was in his prime, not yet sixty years of age. It consists of five Books, of which the first takes us from the landing of Julius Caesar, 55 B.C., to the landing of Augustine, A.D. 597. The opening portion is mainly a compilation from Orosius, Eutropius, Gildas, and others; although Bede, according to the common practice of his time, does not, as a rule, mention the name of the author whom he is adopting. The second Book takes us from the arrival of Augustine in 597 to the arrival of Paulinus in 633. This brings us within forty years of Bede's own time; and it is the three remaining Books, treating of the century between the arrival of Paulinus and the completion of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, which are of such priceless value. These three Books tell us of what rests on Bede's own personal knowledge, or on that of the previous generation with which he conversed.

Let us see what that means; and a few facts will help to illustrate the meaning. As a child, the

present writer has talked with Louis Philippe, the "Citizen" King of the French, who was born October 6, 1773. If the child had had the wit to question him, he could of course have told a great deal about his father, the wretched Philippe Égalité, who joined the Revolutionists and took part in the murder of Louis XVI, but was himself guillotined November 6, 1793; and he could have given many personal recollections of the leaders in the great Revolution of 1789.

A friend of the present writer, H. G. Keene, C.I.E., when he was a young man, sat at luncheon in 1846 next to an old lady who told him that he reminded her of Goldsmith, the author of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, who died April 4, 1774. This lady was Mrs. Gwatkin, better known to students of the eighteenth century as Offy Palmer, the younger niece of Sir Joshua Reynolds. She kept house for the famous portrait-painter after he moved to the house in Leicester Fields, and has been immortalized in his picture of "The Strawberry Girl." Sir Joshua's house was the rendezvous of many of the literary lights of that time; and Mrs. Gwatkin could give personal recollections of a number of them.

Another instance is even more remarkable. A Mr. Fraser,[1] who was alive in January, 1907, and

[1] Letter in *The Times*, January 11, 1907. In *The Times* of January 26, 1907, was a letter from H. B. G., who as a child had known an old lady at Redbourne near St. Albans,

may be living still, had, as a boy, known a Mrs. Butler in Edinburgh, who had witnessed the entry of Prince Charles Edward into Holyrood after the Battle of Prestonpans on September 21, 1745, and had afterwards seen him ride up and down the Canongate. So that well within the twentieth century we have a person who had heard from an eye-witness, what took place in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Now let us apply these illustrations to the case of Bede. He was born in 672 or 3. As a boy he may easily have talked to people who were born before 600. It would have been just possible for him to have known a person that had known St. Columba, who died June 9, 597, and very easy for him to have known one that had known St. Columban, who died in 615. He probably had seen Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, who wrote the Life of Columba (iii 4; v 15); and he may have talked to persons who had seen Pope Gregory the Great, and still more possibly to persons who had seen some of Gregory's successors, Boniface IV, V, Honorius I,

who had seen the Duke of Cumberland marching with the Foot Guards through Redbourne to fight the Pretender. This would be in November, 1745, for the Duke reached Stone December 3, and the invaders reached Derby December 4. They began their retreat December 6, before the Duke could get back to them. He defeated them at Culloden April 16, 1746. Many more "Links with the Past" were given in *The Times* during 1910.

and others. In short, Bede and the generation which he knew cover the whole of the seventh century and the first third of the eighth. The three last Books of his chief work are history at first hand.

We must not suppose from its title of *Historia Ecclesiastica* that it is what we should call Church History nowadays. It contains a great deal of purely secular history as well as Church matters. In those days the Church was the centre of history. It contained very often the ablest men of affairs as well as the most learned scholars. The chief statesmen and the chief legislators were frequently enough ecclesiastics. Hence the history of any period was of necessity, to a large extent, *ecclesiastical* history, not merely because the persons who had culture enough to write history were monks or clerics, but because so many of the people who made history were ecclesiastics. When Bede calls his History of the English Nation *Ecclesiastical History*, he does not so much mean to *limit* the field that he is going to traverse as to insist upon its *importance*. The epithet "ecclesiastical" is opposed, not to "secular," but to "trivial"; it does not intimate that he intends to avoid secular history, but that what he records is of the highest interest. He wishes to tell us all that is best worth remembering about the land that was his birthplace and his home, down to his own day.

We cannot, many of us, study original sources of history. Most of us must be content to take our history at second or third hand. This is specially the case of the later periods, about which the sources are so abundant as to be bewildering. But every educated Englishman who aspires to a knowledge of the early history of England should not only know something of Bede, but read him for themselves.

Not only is Bede amply worth reading for his own sake, but he is a valuable check upon the statements of other and later writers. A study of Bede will often show that what later writers give as history is simply copied from Bede, and has no other source whatever. So that to have mastered Bede is to have mastered a good deal of later writers as well. Of the period treated of by Bede in his last three Books, two-thirds, or more, of what we know comes from him. If he had never written, our knowledge would have been meagre indeed.

Next to Bede in importance must be placed what is sometimes called the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but should rather be called the Saxon or the English Chronicles, for there are several of them. We probably owe them to the wise patriotism of Alfred the Great. There had been local chronicles before his time; but he seems to have had the grand idea of a National Chronicle, and to have

caused it to be executed, himself perhaps contributing some of the entries about his own wars. And, just as he sent copies of his own translation of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care* to all the bishops, to assist them in what Gregory himself calls "the art of arts, the care of souls," so Alfred appears to have sent copies of his National Chronicle to different religious houses to be preserved and kept up to date. The chief home of the Chronicle was Winchester; but there were other places, and at each the Chronicle would be likely to develop in a different way. It is the early part of the Chronicle, as collected by Alfred, which chiefly concerns us; for his work ended in 892, and our period ends rather more than a century later. These English Chronicles have no equal in literature. Great as is their value as sources of historical information, they are perhaps even more valuable as a unique monument of language, exhibiting the changes through which it passed from what is called Anglo-Saxon to what is known as Early English. Their general truthfulness is proved by their agreement with evidence which cannot lie; the evidence of names, and of archaeological remains, such as surviving camps, roads, forts, dykes, and barrows. They represent the historical demands and literary taste of many generations from the crudest ideas of history to something which, if still simple, is worthy of the name of literature.

The *Historia Britonum* of Nennius seems to have existed in several editions, the chief one of which was written about 796. Nothing is known of the writer; and indeed we are not certain that his name was Nennius: but for convenience we continue to call him Nennius. This History of the Britons is mainly confined to Wales; and, though it was written after Bede, it does not reach even to A.D. 700. It contains some valuable quotations from a much earlier writer who described the struggles between the English and the Britons in Wales between 547 and 679.[1] It is in this portion that the name of King Arthur is found. In Nennius's own work tales about enchanters and dragons are given as serious history, and the chronology is absurd.[2] Is King Arthur to be swept into the region of fable, along with the dragons and enchanters? We must settle that question with Nennius, for there is no earlier authority for Arthur's existence. The later writers who tell us so much about King Arthur had no other source of information than Nennius, and they enlarged and embellished Nennius just as they pleased. On the whole, it is probable that there was such a king as Arthur, and that he was a brave and able leader in war. "Then did Arthur fight against the Saxons along with the chiefs of the Britons, but he himself was leader of the wars." This

[1] Nennius lvii–lxv, "The Genealogies of the Kings."

[2] He makes our Lord to have been born A.D. 183.

may be a quotation from "The Genealogies of the Kings," or may be Nennius's own remark.

It is to Geoffrey of Monmouth that the popularity of the legends about King Arthur, and of many other legends, is mainly due. He lived between 1100 and 1154, and was probably a Benedictine monk. Hence his love of literature and his literary skill. He was over fifty years of age when he was ordained priest on February 16, 1152. Eight days later he was consecrated Bishop of St. Asaph; but he died in 1154, without having visited his diocese. His influence as a writer has been immense. His *Historia Britonum* is important, not so much as a source of historical truth as of historical romance. It consists mainly of fiction. It is based upon Nennius and a book of Breton legends, which is no longer extant. But we need not doubt that it existed, or that it came from Brittany. At that time the Welsh and the Breton languages were almost identical, as like one another as the Yorkshire and Devonshire dialects of to-day.

Geoffrey's *History of the Britons* had two great results, one literary and the other political. The literary result was, that, in less than fifty years, the romances of King Arthur and the Round Table, the Holy Grail, Sir Perceval, Sir Lancelot, etc., partly based upon Geoffrey, became current; and Geoffrey's stories of Merlin and King Arthur spread not only to England and France, but to Germany

and Italy. His writings had an enormous circulation, and the later chroniclers down to Holinshed treated Geoffrey as an historical authority. From him the mediaeval poets drew much of their material, and there is scarcely a tale of European chivalry down to the sixteenth century which does not owe something to Geoffrey of Monmouth.

The political result of his romances was a very happy one. These fictions did a great deal towards softening the bitterness of race-hatred between British, English, and Norman elements in the population of the island. All of them, according to Geoffrey's stories, had a common ancestry: they were descended from Trojan fugitives, who had taken refuge in Britain after the destruction of Troy by the Greeks. There was not one word of truth in this legend; but, thanks to Geoffrey, the legend became widely known and was accepted as history: and political results, as we all know, depend, not upon what is true, but upon what is believed. Who would wish to quarrel with a romantic tale which did much to hasten the unification of the people of England?

William of Malmesbury was contemporary with Geoffrey of Monmouth (1095–1148), but he was a very different kind of writer. He is no mere chronicler, but, like Bede, he is an historian. He groups events, and tries to account for them. He was a learned Benedictine, with wide and intelligent sym-

pathies. His father was a Norman and his mother an Englishwoman; and he has affinities with both races, but his affections are with his father's nation. His *De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum*, from the mission of Augustine to A.D. 1123, is the basis of the early ecclesiastical history of England on which nearly all subsequent writers have relied. He also wrote *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, extending from A.D. 449 to 1128. He seems to have read and used almost everything that he could lay his hands on; but many of the writers whose works he uses are known to us. Chief among these are Bede and the Chroniclers. To these we may add Alcuin, Ethelwerd, Eadmer, and William of Poitiers. He is, however, much more valuable for the period near to his own time than for that with which we are at present concerned.

Henry of Huntingdon is another contemporary, for he was still living in 1154. He also relies chiefly on Bede and the Chronicles, but he has preserved some early traditions and songs. He is remarkable as being a secular cleric who wrote history at a time when nearly all literature was produced by monks. Oddly enough, he is found to be less valuable as he gets near to his own time.

Yet another writer who lived about the same time is Simeon of Durham, who died in 1130. He relies much on Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and *Life of St. Cuthbert*, and he makes use of three

different recensions of Asser's *Life of Alfred*. But he is an important authority for the history of Northumbria, especially in the tenth century.

Florence of Worcester is one more chronicler whose work carries us down through our period into the twelfth century, viz. to A.D. 1116. He uses the Chronicles and Marianus Scotus, who himself was a mere compiler from Bede and the Chronicles, and died 1086. It is not until the eleventh century that Florence becomes an independent authority; but he is generally worthy of being consulted. Marianus Scotus worked from good MSS., and therefore is sometimes valuable for deciding what was the true reading of the sources which he used. Florence also made use of Asser's *Life of Alfred*, and he very often enables us to get the true text of Asser, which has been grossly corrupted by editors. Florence died in 1118.

At this point we may make a rough summary of the materials that have been mentioned.

Orosius brings us down to 416; Gildas to 560; Nennius to 688; Bede to 731; the Saxon Chronicles and subsequent writers carry us to the end of our period and far beyond it.

These sources of information are supplemented by letters, especially those of Gregory, Boniface, and Alcuin, and by various biographies, which are chiefly Lives of Saints. Some of these are of great value. The Life of St. Germanus, who died in 448, was written

by Constantius, a presbyter of Lyons, some thirty or forty years later (*Life of St. German*, in *Lives of the English Saints*). There is also a metrical Life by a monk called Hereric in *Acta Sanctorum*, July 31, which claims to give facts that had been omitted by Constantius.

More important than this is the *Life of St. Columba*, who lived between 521 and 597, written by Adamnan, who, after an interval of eighty-two years, succeeded Columba as Abbot of Iona, a position which he filled from 679 to 704. Of this work we shall have to take more account in a later chapter. Bede has left us biographies of six abbots of his own monastery at Jarrow and Wearmouth, and also a *Life of St. Cuthbert*, respecting which more will be said hereafter.

The *Life of Aldhelm* by Faricius, a monk of the monastery of Malmesbury, was written early in the eleventh century, but was rather soon almost superseded by William of Malmesbury, who in the fifth book of his *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum* rewrote the Life by Faricius, with additions from Aldhelm's own writings and from local tradition. We have *Letters* and also *Poems* by Aldhelm himself, and they are of historical importance. He is said to have been the first Englishman (that is, the first about whom we have adequate evidence) "who cultivated classical learning with any success, and the first of whom any literary remains have been preserved."

Leutherius, who was Bishop in Wessex 670 to 676, made Aldhelm Abbot of Malmesbury; and when the vast diocese of Wessex was divided in 705, Aldhelm became Bishop of Sherborne, and Daniel became Bishop of Winchester. They were both of them enthusiasts for education, and founded schools in Wessex which did excellent work; but Aldhelm died in 709, whereas Daniel lived till 745. Bede mentions Daniel (*H.E.* iv. 16). After stating that it was not until all the provinces of Britain had embraced the faith of Christ that the Isle of Wight did so, he adds that, "no man there received the degree of the ministry or the see of a bishop, before Daniel, who is now Bishop of the West Saxons." The schools founded by Aldhelm and Daniel produced Boniface and other missionaries. We still have letters, between Daniel and Boniface (*Monumenta Moguntina*, Vol. III. of Jaffé's *Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum*).

The *Life of Wilfrid* by Eddi (Aeddi, Haede, or Eddius), who knew Wilfrid well, was used by Bede, who also knew Wilfrid personally. It has been called by Hardy "the first independent piece of genuine biography in our literature." It is earlier than Bede's *Life of Cuthbert*, although not earlier than the Lindisfarne *Life of Cuthbert* which Bede used. It was written at the request of Wilfrid's friends, and a biography written by a friend for friends is not likely to be impartial. But impar-

tiality is one of the first requirements in writing the Life of such a man as Wilfrid. Somewhat later, Frithegode of Canterbury wrote Wilfrid's Life in verse, and Archbishop Odo wrote a preface to it. Eadmer wrote a third Life, making use of the two earlier ones.

We mention next that intricate literary puzzle which is known as Asser's *Life of Alfred*. It cannot be placed later than 974. It "is an authority to be used with criticism and caution; partly because we have always to be alive to the possibility of interpolation, partly because the writer's Celtic imagination is apt to run away with him. But that there is a nucleus which is the genuine work of a South Walian contemporary of Alfred, I feel tolerably sure, and I know no reason why that contemporary should not be Asser of Menevia." [1]

All these authorities, whether histories or chronicles or biographies, show us by direct quotation and in other ways that there was a great deal of material which was known to the producers of these writings, but has not come down to us. And while we rejoice at having received so much that is of value, and in one or two cases, so much that is excellent, it is impossible not to lament that so much has perished. And it may have been the case that the popularity of some of the writings which have just

[1] *Ford Lectures for* 1901, p. 52.

been named have caused other writings, perhaps more valuable but less popular, to fall into neglect and then to perish. Popularity does not always depend upon excellence, but at least in one case it did, viz. in that of the *Ecclesiastical History* of Bede: and it is possible that, just as Grote's brilliant *History of Greece* caused Thirlwall's very valuable History to be set aside soon after it had been published, so Bede's work, by its conspicuous superiority, may have driven other writings of real merit out of the field. The difference between the two cases is this, that Bede's rivals were extinguished, and are lost to us; whereas Thirlwall's *History of Greece* still survives to instruct all who care to read it. A more complete parallel is the effect produced by the Canonical Gospels. The many narratives known to St. Luke have perished, owing to the relentless law of the survival of the fittest.

It remains to mention our chief authorities for the long and important career of Dunstan, during which so much of the ecclesiastical history of England previous to the Norman Conquest was made. These are chiefly *Lives of Dunstan* by various writers. The most important is *Vita auctore B.*, a nameless writer who tells us that he was a "Saxon" priest, which may mean a priest from the old Saxon land. He knew Dunstan personally. Adelard, a monk of Ghent, wrote another Life for Archbishop Aelfheah or Alphege, who was murdered by the Danes

in 1012. He had contemporaneous information, and his work, which was intended to supply readings for the Canterbury monks, shows how very quickly legends began to grow up respecting Dunstan. Osbern, a monk of Canterbury, who was a friend of Lanfranc, wrote both a *Vita Sancti Dunstani* and also a *Liber miraculorum Sancti Dunstani*, and it is he who is the first to tell the story of the saint catching the evil one by the nose. He was followed by Eadmer and William of Malmesbury, each of whom wrote a *Life of Dunstan* because the Life by Osbern did not seem to be satisfactory; and Eadmer, like Osbern, added a *Book of Miracles;* but Eadmer, who was the friend of Anselm, as Osbern was of Lanfranc, has the credit of being less fond of miracles than most monkish writers are. It is, however, as the historian of his own times that Eadmer is chiefly valuable.

Materials for history now become abundant, and guidance as to the principal sources may be found at the end of articles on the leading persons and writers in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* and the *Dictionary of National Biography*; also in the *Introduction to English History* by Gardiner and Mullinger.

CHAPTER II

THE CONQUEST OF BRITAIN BY THE ENGLISH, AND THE CONQUEST OF THE ENGLISH BY THE GOSPEL

DURING the fifth and sixth centuries Britain was invaded and conquered by Teutonic tribes whom we commonly speak of as Jutes, Saxons, and Angles. Of these three peoples, Tacitus mentions only the last. But a good deal of what he tells us respecting other German tribes is likely to be true of these three also. Of the history of them between Tacitus and Bede we know very little. But two important points may be regarded as established.

(1) The Teutonic invasion of Britain was emigration, and not mere conquest: it was a surplus population, or a disturbed population, seeking a new home, not a casual horde of marauders seeking fresh plunder. Such national migrations were not uncommon in the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ; e.g. that headed by Alaric. Moreover, we know enough of the condition of central Europe

in the fifth century to understand that it was likely enough that Teutonic tribes would be set moving. In the twenty years between 432 and 452, the Huns, led by the terrible Attila, were a scourge and destruction to many and a horror to all; and the force which had set the Goth and the Burgundian in motion may easily have shaken German tribes from their ancestral hills and forests, and have sent Jutes, Saxons and Angles across the North Sea to seek a new home in Britain.

(2) These emigrants came from a country which already had a definite organization of its own; they were not mere robbers with no other government than that to which they were willing to submit at the hands of a capable leader. Consequently, when they landed in Britain, they would be likely to renew on the banks of the Thames and the Humber the institutions which had been familiar to them on the banks of the Weser and the Elbe. They were neither a swarm of barbarians who had the first elements of civilization yet to learn; nor yet a handful of colonists, who gradually multiplied and developed a polity of their own. They were a tribe or nation moving *en masse*, and bringing a ready-made polity with them. They had merely to shake themselves out over the new territory, and then go on with the same religious rites, manners, and customs, which they had had before they set themselves in motion. Their organization, such as it

was, with regard to property and the administration of justice, was transplanted whole. No doubt it developed, and perhaps quickly developed, in the new home, in a manner which would have been very different had they never moved; and we can easily believe that the leader who had brought them safely across the sea, and led them by conquest into the possession of new territory, would become a more powerful person than the chief who presided over them in Germany. He might develop into a new kind of king, and might found a dynasty.

(3) These emigrants did not all come at one time; and those who came later had reached a stage of development in customs and language somewhat different from those who had migrated earlier.

This emigration commenced even before the Romans had completed the evacuation of Britain, and perhaps increased after their departure. The rapidity of the conquest was great at first; but it went on much more slowly afterwards, and at last was checked entirely. By about 550 these sturdy emigrants from Germany had become possessed of the Eastern half of England; say, all that lies East of a line drawn from Berwick-on-Tweed to Salisbury. Cumberland and Westmorland, or Strathclyde, as that part of the island was then called, was not subdued till late in the seventh century;

and Devon and Cornwall, or West Wales, as these counties were then named, did not become English till the ninth century. Wales proper, which lies between the Keltic kingdom of Strathclyde and West Wales, was never conquered at all. We need not be surprised at the victorious progress, whether rapid or slow, of the English. Very few of the Britons had become Romanized. Instead of learning arts of war from the Romans, they had let their own arts of warfare fall into disuse, through relying upon the Romans to protect them. The Romans, when they left the island, left behind them a people which had become unaccustomed to defend itself, and which had in other ways become weakened. Various calamities had reduced the population, and some Britons had followed their Roman masters into Gaul, where they gave the name of Brittany to the Armorican peninsula. The old jealousies between tribe and tribe, which had been kept under by the Romans, came again to the surface. Just those Britons who were best able to appreciate Roman organization had left the country, and there was now no check upon the feuds between the tribes. Thus weakened by misfortune and emigration, and disunited among themselves, the Britons had but a poor chance of success against their vigorous assailants. It is said that some British chiefs even invited the English to come over, hoping to make use of them in vanquishing

rival chieftains. Other chiefs conceded territory to the invaders, hoping by this means to buy off active hostility. But either by invitation, or concession, or conquest, the English obtained a firm foothold on the greater portion of the Eastern half of the island. The comparative slowness with which further advance took place may be explained in various ways. The invaders, for a time, had got as much territory as they could occupy, and had to devote themselves to the development of their settlements. The flat country along the Eastern coast would be more easily conquered than the more mountainous West. The Britons, when driven to bay, would fight more vigorously; and those who had invited the strangers, or made concessions to them, would find out that, after all, they must fight, if they would avoid extermination. And it may easily have been the case that the British tribes in the West were more energetic and warlike than those which had been so quickly conquered in the open, alluvial country to the East; but this last point is a less certain conjecture than the others.

The Teutonic conquest of Britain by the English was unlike all other Teutonic conquests in Europe. In Gaul, in Spain, and in Italy, it was Teutons who were already half Romanized that overran the countries. And the countries which they overran were provinces of the Roman Empire,

in which the language of Rome prevailed. Consequently, these Teutonic conquerors gradually gave up more and more of their own language, adopted that of Rome, which was not wholly unfamiliar to them, and in time became lost among the mass of Roman and Romanized inhabitants. In the case of Britain not one of these facts is found. The Teutonic tribes who crossed from Germany to Britain had not come under Roman influence, and brought no elements of Roman thought or language with them. They found in Britain a country which had indeed been an extreme portion of the Roman Empire, but one from which the legions had been withdrawn, and in which Roman influences were expiring. Instead of falling under the spell of such remains of Roman organization as still survived, they helped to extinguish them; and, instead of surrendering their own language for that of Rome, they imposed their own language upon the country which they invaded. The Britons had not acquired very much of the language of Rome, but, where they were not exterminated, they had to acquire the language of their new conquerors. The language which in the end prevailed was neither British, nor Roman, but English.

There is yet another contrast, and it is a very melancholy one, and of still greater importance for our subject. A little later we shall find the contrast in the matter of language of great import-

ance for the history of the English Church, when Augustine had to raise the question whether the services of the Church were to be conducted in Latin, as in Italy, Spain, and Gaul, or in English. But the point of contrast which lies immediately before us is of greater moment even than that; and it is this. Elsewhere in Europe, the Teutonic tribes, when they invaded, were either Christians already, or soon became Christians, after they had settled awhile in Roman territory. They augmented or accepted the Christianity which already existed in their new homes. In Britain it was far otherwise. Christianity was dominant in Britain before the Teutons came, and the Teutons went a long way towards extinguishing it. This English conquest of Britain was distinctly a heathen conquest. It was not merely a conquest by invaders who were themselves heathen; the Roman conquest had been that. It was a conquest by invaders who manifested a savage animosity against all signs of the Christian religion. For a century and a half after their first landing, Christians, their clergy, and their shrines were the special objects of English hostility, and they were ruthlessly attacked and destroyed. We see exactly the same thing a century or two later, when the English, now become Christian, are persecuted in like manner by the heathen Danes. In both cases, difference of faith embittered a struggle which in itself was already

deadly. What we know respecting the violence of the heathen Danes helps us to see that the statements in Gildas respecting the violence of the heathen English, although perhaps somewhat highly coloured in order to make his homily more telling, are likely to be substantially true.

The struggle between the Britons and the English was bitter and internecine; and this bitterness had a very great effect upon the development of Christianity among the conquerors; but we need not think of the conquest as one of absolute extermination, wherever the invaders got possession of the territory. The entry in the Chronicles under the year 491, so graphic in its terseness, has sometimes been seriously misunderstood. "This year," says the chronicler, "Aella and Cissa besieged Andredscester,[1] and slew all that dwelt therein, so that not a single Briton was there left." This is not given as the normal course of events, but as something highly exceptional. There is no similar entry elsewhere in the Chronicles. The siege had been a long one, and the besiegers were exceptionally severe in their treatment of the captured town, and the chronicler makes a note of the fact. We may be sure that, as a rule, British wives and daughters were spared to be the wives of the conquerors; British slaves were spared to become English slaves; and it is probable that not a few

[1] Perhaps Pevensey.

British land-owners were at times admitted to some kind of endurable service under the English who had dispossessed them. Some of the English of to-day have Keltic blood in them.

Let us gather up some of the main features of the conquest of Britain by the English.

1. It was a conquest by sea, by tribes moving *en masse* and bringing their own polity with them.

2. It was a gradual conquest, spread over several centuries, and becoming slower as it spread.

3. It was an incomplete conquest, which allowed the vanquished to remain comparatively undisturbed in the Western and Northern extremities.

4. It was a radical conquest, where it did prevail; displacing laws, customs, and language.

5. It was a heathen conquest, expelling Christianity from territory in which it had been long established.

We may regard the capture of Chester by Ethelfrid as the last great victory of heathen English over Christian Britons. Ethelfrid was king of the Northumbrians, 593–617, and he was a heathen, so strenuous in war that he won for himself the title of "the Fierce." Bede, the Northumbrian, who had no doubt often heard of the doings of this fierce Northumbrian king, says of him: "In these times the Kingdom of Northumbria was ruled by Ethelfrid, a most powerful king and very greedy of glory; and more than all the chiefs of the English,

he ravaged the nation of the Britons: so that it would seem fitting to compare him with Saul, king of the Israelite nation; excepting only this, that he was ignorant of the Divine religion. For no ealdorman or king made a greater extent of British territory either tributary to the English nation or open to them for their possession, whether by expelling or subjugating the British inhabitants. So that what the patriarch said, in blessing his son and anticipating the deeds of Saul, could be rightly applied to him; Benjamin is a ravening wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and in the evening he shall divide the spoils" (*H.E.* i. 34). In 603 Ethelfrid repelled an inroad of the Scots with such crushing success, that Bede says: "from that time no king of the Scots durst come into Britain, to make war to this day"; that is, for nearly thirty years. The crushing defeat of the Britons by Ethelfrid took place about ten or twelve years later. Whether the Britons provoked this chastisement, or Ethelfrid smote the traditional foe because he felt himself strong, is unknown to us. But the Northumbrian King collected a great host, and marched across from York to the city on the Dee which the Romans had known as Deva two centuries before, and which was still called, in memory of their occupation, "The Camp of the Legions."[1] And the

[1] *Civitas Legionum* = Legeceaster = Caerleon. Bede and the Chronicles use all three names.

name still survives in Chester, which means " camp." And whereas other places that have been Roman camps have " chester " as part of their name, as Lanchester, Manchester, and Chester-le-Street, Chester alone is known still as simply Chester ; not *a* camp, but *the* Camp.

To this Roman camp, now become a British stronghold, Ethelfrid led his Northumbrians, and the British chief, Brocmail, came out to oppose him. Before the battle began, Ethelfrid noticed some hundreds of men in strange dress, who were grouped apart from the British host, and he inquired who they were, and what they were doing. They were monks from the immense monastery at Bangor, who had come to aid their fellow-countrymen with their prayers. " Well, then," said Ethelfrid, " if it is to oppose us that they are crying to their God, most certainly they too, though they carry no arms, are fighting against us, for they oppose us by assailing us with curses." And he ordered the first attack to be on the monks. Twelve hundred of those who had come to pray are said to have been slaughtered, while only fifty escaped. The British army was routed, and the city was captured and destroyed. For more than two centuries Chester seems to have remained a waste.

Bede expresses no sorrow for this destruction of a Christian army by a heathen host, led by a heathen king. He has some pity for the slaughtered

monks; but for the rest—they are the "impious forces" of a "perfidious nation."[1] They deserved all they got, for they failed to protect the praying monks. And, moreover, their doom was predicted by the saintly Augustine, who had long since gone to his rest. These perfidious men had rejected his counsels of eternal salvation, and he foretold that they would have to experience temporal destruction. If they would not preach the way of life to the English, at the hands of the English they would suffer the vengeance of death.

To such lengths can prejudice carry even so gentle and loving a Christian as Bede. We can sympathize with the very human touch which causes a Northumbrian to take pride in a Northumbrian victory, even though it be a victory of pagans over Christians. Did not some of us feel the same when our allies, the heathen Japanese, got the better of the Christian Russians? But besides this pardonable sympathy with men of his own race and kingdom, there is the religious prejudice against those whom Bede regards as Christians indeed, but as obstinate schismatics, holding to their own customs about Easter and the tonsure, in defiance of the regulations of Rome and of the rest of the Western Church. Yet we may believe that the chief cause of his strong feeling against the Britons was

[1] *Nefanda militia . . . gentis perfidae.*

this, that, to quote his own words, "among other most wicked actions, which their own historian Gildas mournfully takes notice of, they added this—that they never preached the faith to the English who dwelt among them" (i. 22).

This great victory of the English was decisive. The Britons might still resist, but they would never recover. Up to 577 they held in one unbroken line the whole of the Western part of England from the Clyde to Cornwall. In that fateful year, by the capture of Bath, Cirencester, and Gloucester,[1] the English broke this line into two. The British were pushed back past the Bristol Channel, and West Wales was separated from Wales proper. Wales still remained united to the Keltic kingdom of Strathclyde, but West Wales was cut off. In 613 or a little later the great victory of Ethelfrid at Chester pushed back the British line past the estuary of the Dee, and Strathclyde was separated from Wales proper. The Britons were now divided geographically into four divisions, not one of which was in touch with any other. Strathclyde was cut off from Wales, Wales was cut off from West Wales, and West Wales was cut off from Brittany. It was scarcely credible that there could ever be recovery after such mutilation as that.

It was said above that Ethelfrid's victory at

[1] *Aquae Solis, Corinium, Glevum.*

Chester was the last great victory of heathen English over Christian Britons. But that victory, regarded as one of paganism over Christianity, was not at all decisive. On the contrary, the tide had already begun to turn as regards the religion of Britain. The time of heathen conquest was drawing to a close: a conquest of another kind was beginning. The Roman legions had long since been withdrawn; but Roman missionaries had known how to find admission. The Christian faith had made a new entry into the island and was beginning to win back its old homes. As yet only a beginning had been made, but it had been successful. Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, Sussex, and East Anglia were still in the darkness of Teutonic heathenism; but Kent and Essex had again become Christian. The altars of Woden were honoured at Winchester and York; but Christ was once more worshipped at Canterbury and London. Not that we need suppose that Christianity had been absolutely extinguished throughout all the territory occupied by the English. A few islets of Britons were left unmolested, because scarcely discovered, in the wild spots of Northumbria and Mercia; and among these Christianity would still in some cases survive. Among the Britons along the West coast of the island of course it survived. But, wherever the newcomers had settled, heathenism had prevailed, and the worship of Tiw, of Woden, of Thor, and of Frigga

had taken the place of the worship of Christ, and their names still survive in the names for the days of the week.

As already stated, no attempt had been made by the British Christians to convert the invaders, and perhaps race-hatred and dread of their terrible conquerors were the chief causes of this grievous abstention. But we may also surmise that, if the Britons had preached to the English, it would have been little use, and that the Britons excused themselves from making the attempt, because they were convinced that it would be no use. We might as well expect the downtrodden Armenians to preach to their oppressors the Turks, or hope that negro ministers would succeed among godless American colonists. No missionaries coming from so despised and detested a source as the Britons would have obtained a hearing among the victorious invaders.

It was otherwise when Christianity was offered to the English by a nation which was not hostile, and which could not but command respect. When the acknowledged head of Western Christendom sent emissaries direct from the great capital of the West to invite the English to a higher form of belief, the emissaries obtained a hearing.

The conversion of the English to Christianity of course forms an epoch in the history of England. It is the beginning of the history of the Church of

England. But it also forms an epoch in the history of Christianity. It was the first distinctly *foreign* mission of the Western Church. Hitherto the Gospel in the West had not spread beyond the limits of the Roman Empire. The Teutonic tribes in North Germany and Scandinavia, which had never been part of the Empire, and in Britain, which had ceased to be so, were heathen. As a matter of fact, if not of principle, one might almost have said, that outside the Empire there was no salvation. By the mission of Augustine, this lamentable, but not unnatural, condition of things was broken. Probably those who initiated the movement did not see the significance of what they were doing. To them the attempt to convert the heathen English seemed much the same as the attempt to convert the heathen in Spain or in Gaul. But we can see that the coming of Augustine was the first act of a series of missionary enterprises, by means of which the whole of Europe was at last won over to Christianity; the first act of one of the most glorious movements in history.

And it was not only the first act, it was the most important one; the one which led to most of those which followed. England itself became a missionary centre, and through it Germany and Scandinavia became Christian. Nor was this all.

By the conversion of the English an indissoluble bond was created between this island and Euro-

pean civilization. A bond had been created before by the entrance of the legions, and by the admission of Britain into the Roman Empire. But this bond had been severed by the departure of the Romans and by the extinction of Christianity by the English in just those parts of the island which could most easily keep in touch with the Continent. Since then, Britain had been shut off from Europe. Nothing seemed to penetrate the mists which hung about the North Sea and the Channel. Continental writers of the fifth and sixth centuries know little more of the British Isles than that they exist. Britain is the land about which any marvellous tale may be told without fear of contradiction, because no one has been there.

Writing in the middle of the sixth century, Procopius tells some wonderful things about Britain "It is divided into two parts by a wall built by the men of old." That, of course, is true; we have all heard of the Roman Wall, and some of us have made a pilgrimage along it. But Procopius fancies that the wall runs North and South, down the middle of the island. On the Eastern side of the wall, he says, there is a delightful climate, fertile soil, a flourishing population. On the Western side of the wall there is a dreadful desert, abounding in serpents and other venomous beasts, and with an air so pestilential that no human being can live there for half an hour. If any man crosses the

wall, he never comes back alive. And Procopius has another strange tale to tell us about Britain. Thither are taken the spirits of the dead by the fisherfolk who live on the shore of the Channel opposite to Britain. They are summoned by a mysterious voice. They go down to the sea and find ships ready. They enter them, and push off; and at once the ships sink down to the water's edge with the weight of an unseen cargo. They cross to the British shore; and forthwith the ships rise once more, and they return to their own shore. For this service they are excused tribute.

With the reintroduction of Christianity into Britain, all this isolation and consequent ignorance came to an end. Intercourse between England and the Continent, and not only the Continent, but the very centre of Western civilization, became common. English people went on pilgrimage to Rome, sometimes more than once in a lifetime. Britain once more became an integral part of European life and culture, and it can never again be separated from it, until Macaulay's New Zealander sits on the banks of the Thames to sketch the ruins of London.

The religious prejudices of some English people may lead them to regret that it was Roman rather than British or Scottish Christianity which eventually prevailed in England, and that, however we may divide the work of converting the English

between St. Augustine and St. Aidan, it was the Christian religion in the form in which it was introduced by St. Augustine which in the end swallowed up the work of St. Aidan and other missionaries of the Keltic Church. As Protestants, some may regret that this was so. But, as Englishmen, we ought to rejoice at it. The Christianity of the Kelts meant the Christianity of an insular and stunted civilization. The Christianity of Rome meant the Christianity of culture, and perhaps the highest culture then known. Literature and organization, arts and manufactures, all came with Christianity from Rome. We must not confound Rome, the enlightener of the nations in the sixth century, with Rome, the corrupter of the nations in the sixteenth.

Christianity first landed in England—we are talking of England now, not of Britain—where almost everything of which we know the history made its first landing, on the shores of Kent. Kent is nearest to the Continent: in fine weather it is within sight and almost within hearing. That Kent was somewhat less shut off than the rest of the island from the Continent is perhaps marked by the fact that, at the close of the sixth century, we find the Kentish king married to a Frankish princess. She was a Christian, and she had at least one Christian priest, Bishop Liudhard, with her. But we read of no efforts made either by her or her chaplain

to make the faith known among the heathen English. That does not prove that no efforts were made by them; the record of them may have perished. But they may have been timid or indifferent. Or again, they may have thought that they ought not to embark upon such an enterprise without some authority higher than their own. It would be very interesting to know how many Christians came over with Bertha, and how long they had been in Kent when Gregory sent Augustine and his companions to England.

It was about the year 575 that Gregory, who had been a layman of high position, became a Benedictine, an Order which had been founded not long before he was born. It is said that soon afterwards he set out to the North as a missionary, with the thought of preaching in Britain. But he was recalled by the Pope for other work. The Roman populace implored the Pope to recall him. He was sent to represent Rome at the court of Constantinople. He returned to Rome, and, on the death of Pelagius II. in 590, was elected Pope.

There is no need to tell again the beautiful story about "Angles" and "Angels." Gregory's first effort for the conversion of England is not so often told. He ordered the steward of the papal estates in Gaul to buy up as many English slaves as he could of the age of seventeen or eighteen, with a view to having them planted out in monasteries and taught

the Christian faith. They would then be ready to return to England as missionaries. This is very much the plan that is still adopted in some modern missions, as in that to Melanesia and the Universities' Mission to Central Africa. Perhaps we may infer from Gregory's plan, that English slaves were common in Gaul, and this would mean that they had been captured in war between the two countries. We should be very glad to know how this excellent plan worked; how many English lads were thus brought up and educated; and what success they had when they returned to work among their heathen countrymen. But the record of their doings has been lost. Their missionary labours, whatever they may have been, attracted little attention, compared with the momentous mission of Augustine.

It was mentioned above that the Frankish Bishop Liudhard, who acted as chaplain to Queen Bertha in Kent, and may have had other clergy with him, seems to have done nothing for the conversion of the English. Gregory evidently was aware that neither the British clergy in the island nor the Frankish clergy on the Continent ever went as missionaries to the English. Among the many letters which he wrote to facilitate the journey of Augustine and his companions is one to the two boyish kings of the Franks, Theodoric and Theodebert. In this letter he says: "It has come to our knowledge that

the nation of the English is desirous, through the mercy of God, of being converted to the Christian faith, but that the priests in their neighbourhood neglect them, and are remiss in kindling their desires by their own exhortations. On this account therefore, we have taken thought to send to them the servant of God, Augustine, the bearer of these presents, whose zeal and earnestness are well known to us, with other servants of God. And we have also charged them to take with them some priests from the neighbouring parts, with whom they may be able to learn the disposition of the English."

As Theodoric and Theodebert were only children, Gregory writes also to their grandmother, Queen Brunichild or Brunhild, who acted as guardian to Theodebert. He says to her very much the same. He has heard that the English wish for Christianity, but "the priests who are in their neighbourhood have no pastoral solicitude with regard to them." Whom does Gregory mean by the priests in the neighbourhood of the English? Jeremy Collier understands him to mean the Frankish clergy. But it may also mean the British clergy, and probably includes both. It almost certainly includes the Franks, otherwise Gregory would hardly tell both Queen Brunichild and her grandsons that he has charged Augustine to take with him "priests from the neighbouring parts." That is evidently a hint to them to help Augustine in finding such

priests, and they could not help him to find British priests.

Augustine and his companions set forth early in 596, certainly with obedience, and perhaps with enthusiasm. But before they had gone very far their hearts began to fail them. They heard of the fierceness of the English; and then there was the difficulty of the English language. They had perhaps got as far as Marseilles, when, as Bede says, "struck with a sluggish timidity" (*timore inerti*), they unanimously decided that it would be safer to return, and they sent back Augustine to implore Gregory to release them from their onerous and perilous commission.[1] It was not very heroic, but it was very natural; and perhaps the only strange thing about it is that they should have supposed that a man like Gregory would listen to such a request. But at any rate their conduct is evidence of their confidence in Gregory's *sympathy:* they were not *afraid* to ask for tender consideration.

Gregory sent Augustine back to them with a letter which is remarkable in more ways than one. It is a model of Christian tact. He is neither indignant nor contemptuous. He rebukes with ten-

[1] We have to guess how far they had got, from the persons to whom Gregory sent letters by Augustine, when he started the second time; among these were the Archbishop of Arles, the Bishops of Lyons, Vienne, Aix in Provence, and others. They may have got as far as Arles, when Augustine went back to Rome.

derness, and encourages them to go forward. With such a leader as Augustine they will overcome all difficulties. And the greater the difficulty, the greater the eternal reward. He wishes he could share their labours, but he cannot; yet he does hope, in the heavenly country, to share in the joy of their reward; and they must not rob him of that. "God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons." That is the conclusion of the letter, not counting the date.

And the beginning also is remarkable: "Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord." [1] Gregory was the first Pope to style himself "the servant of the servants of God." He adopted the title in reproachful contrast to that which had been so proudly assumed by the Patriarch of Constantinople, who had styled himself Universal Bishop. Gregory was not the first to make use of the expression, and he only occasionally uses it in his correspondence; but he appears to have been the first to adopt it as a title of the Bishop of Rome. How empty of meaning it became, the history of the Papacy has shown. As Edmund Burke says: "Kings and nations were trampled upon by the foot of one calling himself the 'servant of servants,' and mandates for deposing sovereigns were sealed with the signet of 'the Fisherman.'"

[1] *Servus servorum Dei servis Domini nostri.*

Strengthened by Gregory's letter and the messages brought by Augustine, the missionaries resumed their journey. They wintered in Gaul, and did not cross the Channel till after Easter, which in 597 fell on April 14. They landed on what is still called the Isle of Thanet, and which was then actually an island,[1] and we must each imagine for ourselves what would be their thoughts when they first saw, and first set foot upon, the island of which they had heard so much, the inhabitants of which had so often been the object of their fears and of their prayers. Nearly two centuries before this Rome had deserted Britain and had left it helpless, exposed to the attacks of pitiless heathen foes. Now Rome was returning to Britain again, not to deprive those foes of what they had won, but to rescue them from their heathenism. By means of the Gospel of peace conquerors and conquered were at last to be united. The missionaries probably landed at Ebsfleet, where Hengist and Horsa are said to have landed.

Augustine at once sent a courteous message to King Ethelbert. He had brought interpreters with him from the nation of the Franks, and therefore was able to communicate his proposals at once. It is perhaps quite possible that Franks and English could at that time converse without much diffi-

[1] The island was formed by a bifurcation of the river Stour. Its ancient name was Ruim, and hence the name Ramsgate, which is at one of the entrances.

culty. His message was to this effect. He and his companions (there were about forty of them) had come from Rome, and they came peaceably, bearing a joyful message, which, without doubt, assured to all who took advantage of it the everlasting joys of heaven and a kingdom that would never end, in the company of the living and true God.

Ethelbert was not unfriendly; his wife's religion would secure that; but he was cautious. He would not commit himself hastily. He ordered them to remain in the island on which they had landed, where the necessaries of life would be supplied to them. He himself would take time to consider what should be done with them.

A little later Ethelbert came to visit them and proposed a conference, which he arranged to have in the open air, fearing trickery or magical arts, which he thought could be practised more easily in a house. We know that the English themselves practised augury and dealt in charms and incantations, and the Kentish King, no doubt, feared similar practices on the part of the Christian missionaries. They came to the conference singing litanies, and Ælfric tells us (*Hom.* ii. 128, in Haddan and Stubbs, III. 11) that Augustine preached "how the merciful Saviour by His own passion redeemed this guilty world, and opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers." The

king gave them this answer: "Your words and promises are fair; but they are new to us and of uncertain import; and I cannot approve them so far as to forsake that which I have followed for so long, together with the whole English nation. But because you strangers have come from far into my kingdom, and are desirous to impart to us things which you believe to be true and very beneficial, we will not molest you, but rather give you favourable entertainment. And we do not forbid you to preach and make as many converts as you can."

The missionaries then went in procession to Canterbury, where the king assigned them a residence; and as they went they sang a litany which had been sung in churches in Gaul for a century or more, especially on Rogation Days, and which they had perhaps heard in Lyons or elsewhere the previous year. It is based on the prayers of Daniel (ix. 16): "We beseech Thee, O Lord, for Thy great mercy, let Thine anger and wrath be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house; for we have sinned. Alleluiah." The little church, dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, which had been erected for Queen Bertha and her chaplain, became their centre of work—the starting-point for the conversion of the English nation.[1] It is this

[1] It is difficult to account for the very great popularity of St. Martin, especially in France and England. In England we have about 160 churches dedicated to him, without count-

fact which made Dean Stanley pen the remark, that the view from the present church of St. Martin is "one of the most inspiriting that can be found in all the world." In that little church there are lines of Roman brick-work, which may have been part of the original building, or even of something which was demolished to make room for it. At any rate, the site is the same, and the country all round it is the same—the spot where Augustine turned the private oratory of a queen into a place of public worship for her and her subjects, in order to bring, not merely the Kingdom of Kent, but the whole English Nation, into the Kingdom of God. Here the missionaries dwelt, fashioning their lives, says Bede, after the model of the primitive Church; giving themselves to prayer and fasting, and preaching to as many as they could; receiving maintenance from those whom they instructed, and taking care that what they taught to others they observed themselves. Bede, who is fond of dwelling upon the efficacious preaching of a holy life, sums up thus: "What need to say more? Some believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their blameless life and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine."

ing those which are dedicated to him in conjunction with some other saint. Few saints, outside the circle of the Apostles, have had so many miracles attributed to them. He became the patron saint of Norway after Norway (c. 997) received the Gospel.

Before long, and (according to a Canterbury tradition) it was before the following Whitsuntide, the King himself, "influenced by the unspotted life of these holy men, and by their delightful promises," professed the Christian faith and was baptized—of course, at Pentecost, if the tradition is true. But, however soon it may have taken place, it was certainly a providential thing that this friendly ruler of the Kingdom of Kent was Bretwalda at the time of Augustine's mission. As such, his supremacy over other English kings and chiefs extended to the Humber. The precise amount of authority possessed by the Bretwalda is not known to us now, and was probably undefined then. Much would depend upon the character of the king who was recognized as holding the office. The title perhaps means "Britain-wielder" (*Brytenwealda*); i.e. wielding the power of English Britain. This is doubtful. But it gives us some idea of the Bretwalda's rather vague powers to find that, under the protection of a safe-conduct granted by Ethelbert, Augustine was able to travel through heathen Wessex, in order to confer with the British clergy on the confines of Wales.

Before undertaking this fateful journey, Augustine had to make his own position complete. Gregory had made him abbot over the monks of his company, but he would not consecrate him bishop, with the possibility that he might be rejected by

the English, and thus be a bishop without see or flock.[1] If he was accepted by the English, he was to return to Gaul and seek consecration there. This was done. He travelled to Arles, where the Archbishop, acting under Gregory's instructions, consecrated him "Archbishop to the English nation" (*Archiepiscopus genti Anglorum*). This was probably in November 597.

It is a magnificent title, and we are not surprised that Augustine quickly found that it involved very grave responsibility. A number of questions soon cropped up which he did not like to decide for himself, but which he sent to Rome for Gregory's consideration. They are a curious collection. With regard to some of them, we wonder how any reasonable Christian, with a moderate knowledge of Scripture, could be in any doubt. With regard to others, our wonder is given to Gregory's admirable answers.[2] Let us take an example of each. Augustine asks

[1] Such bishops were common enough in the Keltic Churches in Ireland and Scotland; and in the English Church we have occasional instances in Cedd, possibly in Chad between York and Lichfield, and in Dunstan, before Worcester fell vacant. The missionary Boniface had at first no see or fixed flock.

[2] It is obvious that missionaries in a strange country would be confronted at times with questions for dealing with which no precedent existed. St. Boniface had to consult Gregory II and Gregory III about various matters, and his second visit to Rome (723) was paid in order to obtain the directions of the former. In a similar way, Roman governors consulted the Emperors, and the imperial replies sometimes acquired the force of decrees, as did the replies of Popes.

whether two brothers may marry two sisters; and Gregory says, "Of course they may." Augustine asks whether men may marry their stepmothers; and Gregory says, "Of course they may not." Surely Augustine might have spared the Pope the trouble of answering such questions as these. But here is a more reasonable inquiry. "Seeing that the faith is one, can there be different customs in different Churches? Can there be one custom of masses in the holy Roman Church, and another in the Gallican?" That kind of question is with us still: how does Gregory deal with it? He was what we might call an expert in the matter, and might be expected to have very strong views in favour of some particular use. He had himself revised the "Sacramentary" of his predecessor Gelasius, and had ordered the Eucharistic ceremonial in the way which he regarded as most edifying and correct. Many a man in his position, with a natural predilection for his own careful work, would have replied, that, of course, the use of the Roman Church must be followed. But that is not Gregory's way: he is no ritualistic pedant. He agrees with Francis Bacon: "They be two things, Unity and Uniformity." He says to Augustine: "You know, my brother, the custom of the Roman Church, in which you were brought up. But it is my wish, if you have found anything, either in the Roman, or the Gallican, or any other Church, which may be

more acceptable to Almighty God, that you carefully select, and sedulously impart to the Church of the English, whatever you have been able to collect from various Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Select, therefore, from each Church whatsoever things are excellent, and when you have arranged them as a whole, give them to the English to be observed." [1]

It is tempting to examine other questions and answers; but we must draw to a close. It has been necessary to dwell upon the details of the mission of Augustine, because of its immense importance and interest in the history of the English nation and of the English Church. The details of the work of conversion in the different kingdoms cannot, in the space that is at our disposal for this purpose, be treated in much detail. For the present it must suffice to say, that the *way* in which England was won over to Christianity is a credit to those whose work it was. The conversion was gradual, and for the

[1] In answering the question, How ought the offerings of the faithful to the altar to be divided? Gregory quotes the Vulgate rendering of Luke xi. 41, *quod superest, date elemosynam, et ecce omnia munda sunt vobis.* He has been accused of taking what is really an adverbial phrase translating the πλήν of the original as if it meant "the surplus." But in the Vulgate *verum tamen* is the translation of πλήν, and this Gregory omits; *quod superest* is a very faulty translation of τὰ ἐνόντα, which in other Latin texts is rendered *quae sunt*, or *quae habetis.*

most part peaceful. The difference between Christianity and paganism often made war more bitter; but the Gospel was not preached by the sword, and was never offered as the only alternative to death. Unlike the spread of Christianity by the fishermen of Galilee, it spread from above rather than from below. The King was won over, then his chiefs, and then the people followed the lead of those whom they were accustomed to obey. The mass of the population were converted probably less by argument than by example. This was one of the characteristic features of the conversion of the English; it was a conversion from above, beginning with kings and nobles and descending to the people. In France and Spain the Christianity of the conquered worked upwards to the conquerors. In Britain, the conquered stood aloof. Outsiders converted the victorious kings, and through them the people. These saw their rulers abandoning the old faith, and they thought that it might be best for them to abandon it also. But there was not much force used to hasten conviction. Ethelbert expressly abstained from putting pressure upon his subjects; for he said that "he had learned from his teachers that the service of Christ must be a voluntary thing, and not a matter of compulsion."

Of course, all did not run smoothly. There were mistakes, and there were misfortunes. Sometimes a preacher or a ruler was wanting in judg-

ment. A Christian king might be followed by a heathen son, and the relapse of the royal house into paganism commonly meant the relapse of a good many of its dependants. But in the course of less than two centuries all English kingdoms became, like the Roman Empire itself, professedly Christian; and the great work which the British Bishops had refused to touch, which the Roman missionaries began, and the Scottish missionaries helped to cherish, was consolidated by that "wise man from the East," Theodore of Tarsus (668–690).

It is worth while to get a clear view of the quickness with which the leaven of the Gospel began to work. Using round numbers for the sake of clearness, we may say that the settlement of the English in Britain began about A.D. 450; and by about A.D. 600 their conquest of the Western half of the country south of the Tweed was fairly complete. The conversion of the different tribes began about the same time, A.D. 597; and in less than 100 years the organization of the English Church was fairly complete. From A.D. 600 onwards the influence of the Christian Church upon the laws and customs of the new nation is manifest. The earliest English laws that are known to us are those of Ethelbert, the first Christian king; and how the influence of the Gospel told on such customs as the wergild and compurgation will be pointed out in a subsequent chapter.

The rapidity of the process is all the more remarkable because the time of Christian development was for the most part a time of war. Until the reign of Edgar the Peaceful (958–75) there was not often a period during which there was not warfare in some part of the island. These frequent wars of course made the spread of Christianity less rapid than it might otherwise have been. They also made the type of Christianity which prevailed very imperfect. The Anglo-Saxon had some of the heroic virtues, such as courage and self-reliance: but he lacked self-control. There was probably not much discipline in the armies of those days, and still less in private life. The best examples of discipline in the seventh century were the monasteries; and we must not forget that the missionaries who converted the English were monks, and that this was another characteristic feature of the evangelization of England.

CHAPTER III

THE KELTIC CHURCH OF IONA; COLUMBA AND AIDAN

IN studying the Lives of the Saints which have come to us from very early ages in the Church down to quite modern times, we must remember that for centuries they filled a place in literature which is now filled quite otherwise. They were the novels of all ranks of society. There never was an age which devoured so many novels as we do. And, if consumption may be gauged by production, there is no nation which reads so many novels as the English do. A glance at Mudie's catalogue or that of *The Times*' Book Club will show us the difference between the amount of fiction which is in circulation and the amount of solid literature. And the thoughts to which such a fact gives rise are not altogether cheering.

Can we imagine ourselves transferred to a state of society in which there were no novels? Of course, if we were transferred, we should greatly feel the loss of what we had once enjoyed. But,

even if we had been born in such an age, we should find that at times we needed something more than the daily experiences of life, with which to fill our time and occupy our thoughts. All of us, even the most prosaic, must have some food for our imagination; and from ages before the dawn of history people have loved to listen to tales, not merely of what has actually taken place, but also of what—for all they knew to the contrary—might have taken place. Imaginary men and women, and imaginary monsters, have from the earliest times been food for men's minds. Literature of this imaginative character abounded at the time when the Gospel was first preached to the world.

But a great deal of this literature was saturated with polytheism. Gods and goddesses, nymphs and satyrs, were the common ingredients; and thus, not merely paganism, but often paganism in its foulest forms, contaminated the imaginative literature that was current throughout the civilized world. What attitude was Christianity to take in reference to writings, which, always as regards religion, and often as regards morality, were of a thoroughly un-Christian and even anti-Christian character? Many Christian teachers thought that the only safe course was to forbid the perusal of such literature altogether. This was specially the case in Western Christendom, where the leaders of the Church took a very rigid and unsympathetic

line with regard to the whole of pagan literature, even that portion of it which was free from taint, and which, as some of the teachers in the Churches of the East were able to see, had been, in a very real sense, a preparation for the Gospel. But it was the stricter view which prevailed, especially where the Latin rather than the Greek language prevailed. Consequently, converts from heathenism, after joining the Church, found themselves cut off from almost all the literature to which they had been accustomed, and especially from what we should call "works of imagination." In fact, they were in the condition in which we just now tried to suppose ourselves. They were suddenly transferred to a state of society in which there were no novels.

The change was a violent one; but, as a rule, the situation was loyally accepted. People abstained from what was forbidden, and which they knew had not been forbidden without reason. But loyalty to new prohibitions does not put an end to the craving for what was prohibited. These Christian converts did not want stories about gods and goddesses; still less did they want indecent stories about them. But they did want stories. They did want something different from the familiar experiences of their own uneventful lives. And they quickly had this want supplied by the production of countless stories of saints; and not

unfrequently these stories were worked up into complete biographies, beginning with the saint's birth and ending with the death. These Lives of the Saints were eagerly devoured, and for that reason were frequently produced, for they ministered to a natural and constant craving: and of course they were capable of being made not only interesting, but instructive and edifying.

They are of every kind of merit. Some of them are very valuable material for the historian. Others contain a good deal of valuable material which can be sifted by criticism from what is doubtful or worse. Others again are pure fiction from beginning to end. No such person as the saint whose life is described with so much detail ever existed at all: he or she has been invented to explain a name, or a custom, or some existing statue or other object.[1]

A love of the marvellous is a common characteristic of mankind, and consequently these Lives of the Saints abound in wonders. But a love of the marvellous is not the only explanation that we need in order to account for the miracles with which

[1] The Bollandist, Père Delehaye, S.J., in his *Légendes Hagiographiques*, classifies Acts of Saints in six categories, the two last being imaginative romances, in which the saint himself is the creation of the writer, and fictions deliberately invented with the object of deceiving the reader. There is not much difference between the two classes. A translation of the book by Mrs. Crawford was published by Longmans, 1907, *The Legends of the Saints*.

these biographies often abound. For many centuries it was commonly believed that a holy life was sure to bear fruit in the power to work miracles. A saint was a person endowed with supernatural powers, and it would be almost a contradiction to suppose that persons could be of exceptional holiness and yet not possess this exceptional gift. Therefore, to write the Life of a Saint without recording any miracles, would come very near to denying that there was anything saintly in the life. With regard to other details of the Life, when the writer had no materials, he guessed at what was probable; of course he must do the same with regard to miracles. His object was to interest and to edify his readers; and the Life of a Saint without miracles would be very unedifying.

This is really not so very different from the practice of writers of historical novels at the present day. They make very free with events and with chronology. Indeed, we admit a good deal of imaginative construction into what is given to the world as history. But, with regard to the miraculous element in the Lives of the Saints, there is another consideration to be remembered. There is sometimes no invention—perhaps not even any exaggeration—but only a wrong point of view. Something extraordinary took place, and it was wrongly regarded as miraculous. With us, when anything very extraordinary takes place, a mir-

acle is the very last hypothesis to which we resort in order to explain it. We would perhaps sooner leave it unexplained than adopt such a solution. But, for many centuries of the Church's life, a miracle was the very first hypothesis to be suggested as the explanation of what was surprising. It was not only the easiest solution, but to many people it seemed to be the most reverent solution.

We have then these three causes at work. The love of the marvellous; the feeling that miracles are appropriate to a holy life; and the belief that, because God is Almighty, He is constantly manifesting His power by changing the course of nature.

Are we then to reject all miracles as incredible, excepting those recorded in Scripture—and perhaps some of them? That would be a needlessly rash position to adopt, and even Dr. Schmiedel does not adopt it. He holds that "it is not right to deny unconditionally that miracles are possible," though he refrains from committing himself to the belief that they have taken place. He points out that, even if we could examine all the miracles that have ever been reported and be able to trace these to natural causes, "we should be powerless to prevent an event taking place to-morrow which we should be obliged to recognize as a miracle, and nothing would then be gained by the statement that there are no such things as miracles. A scientific caution therefore bids us in no case to make

this statement a guiding principle" (*The Johannine Writings*, p. 88). But first, what do we mean by a miracle? Not a violation of law: the laws of God's Universe cannot be violated (1 Cor. xiv. 33). But it may well be the case that, for sufficient reason, God sometimes produces a result which cannot be explained by any laws that are known to us. Yet, even in such cases, we may be sure that the highly exceptional event is the outcome, not of lawlessness, but of law. On God's side, we believe that such exceptional events depend upon the sufficiency of the reason for them; on our side, the belief in them depends upon the sufficiency of the evidence. Miracles, as Huxley has taught us, are simply a question of evidence.

Let us then, in studying the Lives of the Saints, try to approach this question with caution and without prejudice. The assumption that miracles are impossible is as unscientific as the assumption that they must have taken place. What we have to consider is, whether the occasion seemed to require a special manifestation of Divine power, and whether the reported manifestation seems to be worthy of the Divine Wisdom and Goodness. These two considerations will lead us to the conviction that vast numbers of reported miracles are quite incredible. But, when we have satisfied ourselves upon these two points, we have further to ask, whether the reported marvel really took place, and, if so,

whether it cannot be explained by the operation of known laws. These two additional considerations will lead us to reject, or at least to be doubtful about, a good many more of the reported miracles. When these two pairs of tests have been applied with critical acuteness and fairness, will any alleged miracles remain as materials for history? The present writer, speaking only for himself, answers that question unhesitatingly in the affirmative: but all that he cares to insist upon here is, that a miracle is not a violation of law, and that the occurrence of miracles is simply a question of evidence.

The *Life of Cuthbert*, by the Venerable Bede, will illustrate a good deal of what has been stated above. Bede was considerably in advance of his age, both in the critical principles which he adopted and in his efforts to carry them out in practice. He knew that evidence must be sifted, and he knew the superiority of contemporary evidence, and of evidence at first hand, over mere tradition and hearsay; and he took pains to obtain the best evidence that was within his reach. He tells us, at the end of his *Ecclesiastical History* that, in editing the Hieronymian Martyrology he inserted the names of all the martyrs of whom he could find definite information as to the kind of sufferings which they endured or the judge who condemned them. This seems to imply that he would not insert the names of those about whom nothing was known: he pre-

ferred to leave the days blank, rather than insert what lacked evidence. But Bede's work was enlarged by subsequent editors; and, as only the enlarged work has come down to us, we are in doubt as to the precise character of Bede's critical work. What he tells us seems to imply a sound critical principle, yet we cannot be sure of the way in which he applied it. But in his *Life of Cuthbert* we are on surer ground. He dedicates it "to Bishop Eadfrid[1] and to all the Congregation of the Brethren who serve Christ in the Island of Lindisfarne," and this in itself is some guarantee that it was written with care. But in the dedicatory letter he thus assures them, and other readers who may not have their knowledge of the facts which he relates: "I have ventured, neither to write any circumstance relating to so great a man, without the most sure research, nor to give out for general transcription the things which I have reduced to writing, without the most scrupulous examination of indubitable witnesses. Indeed, it was not till I had investigated the beginning, progress and end of his most glorious life and conversation *from those who had known him* that I ventured to reduce anything to writing. I may add that I have also thought it right to mention here and there in the course of

[1] Eadfrid was Bishop of Lindisfarne A.D. 698–721, and was the artist who wrote and illuminated the famous Lindisfarne Gospels.

my work *the names of my authorities*, as unquestionable proof of the acknowledged truth of my narrative. Moreover, after I had digested my little work, I kept it back in manuscript, and showed it frequently to Herefrid the priest,[1] when he came here, as well as to several others who, from having long dwelt with the man of God, were thoroughly acquainted with his life, that they might correct or expunge, as they thought advisable. Some of these amendments I carefully adopted; and (all scruples having thus been removed) I ventured to commit the result of this careful research to these few sheets of parchment. And whilst, by God's aid, I was so occupied, my little work was read before the ancients of your congregation; and, after every part had been carefully examined, it was found unnecessary to alter a single word."

Could any modern critical writer have taken more pains to be accurate? He has got his information from those who knew Cuthbert personally, and he gives the names of his principal authorities. He has shown his narrative to various other persons who knew Cuthbert well, and has got them to suggest corrections. He has then made a fair copy and has submitted this to a number of people, who can find nothing that requires

[1] He was the intimate friend of Cuthbert, and it was from him that Bede got the beautiful account of Cuthbert's death (chapters 37 to 39).

alteration. And what is the result? There was an earlier *Life of Cuthbert* written by a monk of Lindisfarne, which was one of Bede's authorities. This *Life of Cuthbert* has come down to us, so that we are able to compare the two; and the latest editor of Bede's Historical Works tells us that Bede in re-writing it "shows a marked tendency to exaggerate the ascetic and miraculous element" (C. Plummer, *Baedae Opera Historica*, I. p. xlvi.). That probably means, that when Bede's informants told him these wonderful particulars, he readily admitted them as in the highest degree probable—indeed, as certain to have occurred in the experiences of so holy a man as Cuthbert. The headings of the chapters give plenty of examples: "How he was crippled through a painful swelling in his knee, which was cured by an Angel"; "How the wind was changed at his prayer"; "How he saw the soul of St. Aidan carried up to heaven by Angels"; "How he foretold that he should receive a supply of food by the ministry of an eagle, and did receive it"; "How by prayer he extinguished the flames of a house on fire"; "How he cast out a devil from the Prefect's wife, before he had even seen her"; "How the Abbess Aelfred and one of her nuns were healed by his girdle"; "How he cured an Earl's wife by water which he blessed and sent by his priest"; "How by tasting water he gave it the flavour of wine"; and so forth. Assuming that the evidence

was in many of these cases good, then mere coincidence, exaggeration, suggestion, telepathy, and the operation of other laws, which are known now but were unknown then, will explain a great many of these wonders and other mediaeval miracles. A writer in that age is not to be condemned as untrustworthy in everything, because he freely admits such stories as these. Lives of Saints may contain very valuable historical material, although they abound in details which criticism cannot accept as miraculous, and very often cannot accept as true.

In the first chapter we used the expression "British Church," because we were speaking of the Christians in those Keltic tribes whose home was in Britain, and especially in that part of Britain which is south of the Tweed. In this chapter we use the wider term "Keltic," rather than "British," because we have chiefly to do with the Christians in that Keltic people, whose home was first in Ireland, and then both in Ireland and on the West coast of Scotland.[1] They were known in

[1] The Scots were the ancient inhabitants of Ireland, but their original home is unknown. Scotia was another name for Hibernia. The time at which Scoti migrated to Caledonia and settled North of the Clyde is uncertain; perhaps about A.D. 500. They fought sometimes against the Picts, sometimes with them against a common foe; and, if there had been no Saxons and Angles to oppose them, they would

the fourth century and for many centuries afterwards as Scots; and this has caused much confusion in history and even about property. These Scots from Ireland in process of time gave their name to Scotland; and hence the name "Scottish," which had been used quite correctly by early writers of Scots in Ireland, came to be misunderstood as meaning the Scots in Scotland, or perhaps even as meaning inhabitants of Scotland who in origin were not Scots at all. In order to avoid this confusion, it will be better to employ the term "Keltic."

These Keltic Christians were great missionaries, and for a century after the arrival of Augustine in England, while Roman missionaries were constantly passing through Gaul to England, Keltic missionaries were constantly passing by various routes across Europe, and founding Keltic centres of Christianity and learning on each side of the Alps, as at Luxeuil in the Vosges, St. Gallen and Reichenau in Switzerland, and Bobbio in North Italy. St. Columban (Columbanus) was one of these missionary leaders. He was born and educated in Ireland about 543, visited Britain on his

probably have come much further south than the Tweed. The Picts seem to have been lost in the Scots, who gave their name to the whole of Caledonia. Some writers place the migration from Ireland much earlier and represent Scots as joining Picts and Saxons in opposing the Romans in the fourth century.

way to the Continent in 585, and went on to Luxeuil, where he founded a large monastery and a new order of monks, which at once became very popular, and for a time rivalled the Benedictine order. After twenty years of work, he was imprisoned, because, like the Baptist, he boldly rebuked vice in high places. He escaped, and finally settled at Bobbio, where he founded another monastery, in which, November 21, 615, he died. He had not much connexion with the English Church; but he is mentioned here, partly as a great example of Keltic energy in spreading the Gospel, and partly in order to distinguish him from another Keltic saint of similar name, St. Columba. As the lives of the two men were nearly contemporary, Columba being about twenty-two years older than Columban, as both were born and educated in Ireland and then worked elsewhere, and as both were monks and missionaries, and became abbots of famous monasteries that were of Keltic origin, confusion between the two is quite possible. Let us now leave Columban, whose great work was done on the Continent, and direct our attention to Columba, whose work lay in the British Isles.

Of Columba we have a great deal of information from various sources, especially the Life of him by his successor in the great monastery of Hy or Iona, Adamnan. This Life of St. Columba ranks with that of St. Cuthbert by Bede, and that

of St. Wilfrid by Eddius, as one of the most valuable biographies of a saint that has come down to us. It has been edited, in a way that has won universal admiration, by Dr. Reeves, Bishop of Down, 1857, and more recently, 1894, and very admirably, by Dr. J. T. Fowler of Durham, who has had the great advantage of coming after Bishop Reeves. Moreover, his edition is cheap and is easily obtained, whereas that by Bishop Reeves is neither. But Adamnan's Life of Columba is not a biography in the ordinary sense; and for some reasons we might wish that it were more biographical. It is rather a collection of the cases in which the saint manifested the possession of supernatural powers. It is, in short, hagiology rather than history, and it has been pronounced to be the most precious piece of hagiology in existence. Its psychological interest is great, as giving a point of view which was a matter of course then, but which we are unable to take now; and, besides this, there are many incidental statements which help us to understand Keltic monasticism, and the way in which the Gospel spread from Ireland to Scotland.

Of the introduction of Christianity into Ireland we know no more than of its introduction into Britain. We find it there in the time of St. Patrick who landed in Ireland about 432, and we must not stay to speculate about its origin. But there had been no Roman occupation of Ireland, and there

was no invasion of the English. Ireland escaped the civilizing influence of the one and the disturbing influence of the other. As distinguished from Britain, which was called "the Roman island," it was known as "the barbarous island." But this barbarous island had among its pagan inhabitants three orders of what we might call learned or cultured classes, the Druids, the Bards, and the Brehons, a threefold division which may have had something to do with the subsequent threefold division of saints into seculars, monks, and hermits.

Columba was born in Ireland about 521, and was educated in various places, chiefly monastic schools, and in due course was ordained. The "yellow plague," which devastated various parts of Europe in 543, caused schools to be broken up; and Columba then began to found monasteries himself. He founded one at Derry in 545, another at Durrow in 553, and several more between then and 562. The most celebrated of these was that of Kells, from whence came the famous Book of Kells or Great Gospel of Columcille, now in Dublin. It is one of the most beautiful specimens of ancient illumination that has come down to us.

It was a dispute about a book which led to Columba's departure from Ireland. Columba had secretly copied a book belonging to St. Finnian. Finnian claimed the copy, as being the child of a book which

he had brought from Rome, and a copy made without his leave. Columba claimed the copy, as being his own work. King Diarmait decided for Finnian: the man that owned the cow owned the calf. About this and other things there was a battle between the friends of each, and Columba's friends, backed by the saint's prayers, won. But there was bloodshed; and Columba, perhaps because he was conscience-stricken, perhaps because public opinion was against him, went into exile to Britain.

It was in 563, and the forty-second year of his age, that Columba settled in the island of Hy or Iona, which is about three miles long and a mile or more broad, separated from the Mull of Ross by a mile of sea. He was satisfied with it, when he discovered that from it Ireland, the scene of his late troubles, was not visible. It was on the borders, both of the Scots, who had migrated previously from Ireland, and also of the Picts, who had been there for ages, and was an excellent centre for missionary work. There is no hint that Columba either asked or received any sanction from Rome for this undertaking, any more than Columban did for his missionary work on the Continent. Columban's independence is the more remarkable, as his missions were nearer to Rome.

Of Columba's monastery at Iona nothing remains, and it is not certain that the existing mediaeval

ruins are on the same site. But in the Isle of Saints (*Eilean na Naoimh*), where he founded a second monastery, are some beehive cells and other stone buildings which may be his. Columba was the first Abbot of Iona, but he was often absent, leaving the monastery to be ruled by one of the elder brethren. Just as St. Patrick attacked the heathenism of the Irish at the court of King Laoghaire, and St. Augustine attacked the heathenism of the English at the court of King Ethelbert, so St. Columba attacked that of the Picts at the court of King Brude. At first, the King of the Picts closed his gates against him; but Columba made the sign of the cross, and the gates opened of their own accord. The Druids, like Elymas the sorcerer with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, tried to turn away King Brude from the faith: but Columba in the end prevailed. A Druid named Broichan had been the king's tutor, and he was very hostile. He got some Druids to lay wait for Columba and his company, as they came from the royal residence to sing evensong. But Columba, with his stentorian voice, began to chant, "My heart is inditing of a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made unto the king"; and the Druids were afraid to molest him; all the more so as the people were interested in the new singing. Broichan then by his incantations raised a storm against Columba on Loch Ness, but the saint sailed away against the

wind. Columba told Broichan to set free an Irish maiden whom he held captive, and the Druid refused. Columba told him that it would cost him his life; and when Broichan fell ill, he sent to Columba to say that the girl should be freed. Columba blessed a pebble, and told the messenger to put it in the water that Broichan drank, and said that then, if the maid was set free, the Druid would recover. All which came to pass. When King Brude was ill, the pebble could not be found, and the king died. He was succeeded by a Christian, who was friendly to the mission.[1]

At a famous convent at Drumceatt in 575 Columba rescued the ancient order of Bards from extinction. They had become very unpopular, owing to their abuse of their privileges, especially their right to hospitality. Columba pointed out that they were very useful in preserving national traditions, and the Bards were mended, instead of being ended. Their numbers were reduced, and their privileges curtailed. The chief Bard, in gratitude, composed a poem in Columba's honour, and it is still extant. At this same convention Columba got a decree passed exempting women from military service. It would have been well if there could have been a decree to forbid monks from fighting.

[1] It is said that a belief in pebbles, as charms against illness, is still found among Irish peasants.

We read of two more battles in which Columba was interested; but we do not know how far he was responsible for them.

In 593 Columba believed that he was dying; angels had been sent for his soul. But, at the prayers of the Churches, they were recalled, and four years were added to his life. When the four years had expired, as the saint returned from the barn to the monastery, his old white horse came and laid his head on him and shed tears. His attendant would have driven the weeping animal away. "Leave him alone," said the saint; "you, who are a rational being, do not know, without my telling you, that I am about to die; but to this dumb creature its Maker has in some way made known, that its master is going to leave it." Not long afterwards he began to transcribe the Psalter, and got as far as xxxiv. 10, "The lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good." There he stopped, went to the church, gave the brethren his blessing, and died. This was just after midnight, between June 8 and 9, 597, the morning of Trinity Sunday, and a week after Augustine had baptized King Ethelbert at Canterbury. The work of the Keltic missionary to the Picts and Scots in North Britain ended as the work of the Roman missionary to the English in South Britain began.

It was in the monastery founded by Columba

at Iona that Oswald, afterwards King of Northumbria, took refuge, when his father Ethelfrid was defeated and slain at the river Idle by Redwald in 617. (Ethelfrid, we may remember, was the last king who won a great victory for heathen English over Christian Britons.) While Oswald was in exile at Iona, he was converted and baptized, along with some young nobles who had come with him. In 634, after Oswald had defeated the treacherous Britons who had murdered his elder brother Eanfrid, he succeeded to both the Northumbrian kingdoms, established his court at Bamborough, and sent to Iona for a bishop to come and preach to his subjects; for, although the Roman missionary Paulinus had previously made many converts (625–633) there had been a considerable revival of heathenism under Eanfrid, who himself apostatized. The first bishop who was sent from Iona was not a success, and he returned disgusted and discouraged. This Keltic enthusiast could not get a hold on the rough English of Northumbria. "It is of no use," he said to the monks of Iona, "to attempt to convert such people." One of the monks remonstrated. "Perhaps you forgot the Apostle's maxim about milk for babes. Perhaps you dealt too severely with untrained hearers; gave them teaching that was too high for them and expected fruit from them too soon." The speaker was Aidan. The other monks, who had been sitting silent said, "Let Aidan

be sent." At the end of 635 Aidan set out to be Bishop to the Northumbrians, and the choice proved to be a very happy one.

Once more we have the happy union between a Christian missionary and a converted king. Oswald himself acted as interpreter, when Aidan preached. And Aidan, true to the traditions of Iona, fixed upon a small island near the Northumbrian coast as the place for his church, and became the first Bishop of Lindisfarne. One may walk across to it from the mainland at low tide, and therefore it was much more accessible than Iona. As it is close to Bamborough, Aidan and Oswald could keep in constant touch with one another, and the intercourse between the Keltic missionary Bishop and the English King is among the most beautiful episodes in Church History. Each was so single-hearted, so bent on living the Christian life, and on making the joys and hopes of it known to others. What Aidan advised, Oswald endeavoured to carry out. Either invited by them, or attracted by tidings of the good work in Northumbria, monks from Iona came over to Lindisfarne, which perhaps already began to be called "Holy Isle," and placed themselves at the disposal of Aidan. Churches were built, and the Christianity introduced by the Roman missionary Paulinus, and preserved from extinction by James the Deacon, was revived and extended. It spread along the Tweed to Mel-

rose, where Boisil founded a monastery, and there became the trainer of St. Cuthbert.

Oswald has been compared by Bishop Lightfoot to Josiah.[1] What the Son of Sirach says in Ecclesiasticus (xlix. 1–3) of Josiah may be said, word for word, of Oswald: "The remembrance of him is sweet as honey in all mouths, and as music at a banquet of wine. He behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of the people, and took away the abominations of iniquity. He set his heart right toward the Lord: in the days of wicked men he made godliness to prevail." He succeeded two apostate princes, his cousin Osric and his brother Eanfrid. He found the Church in Northumbria desolate and disorganized. After a reign of eight years, he left it, thanks to Aidan and his fellow-workers, well-ordered and vigorous.

As was mentioned just now, Oswald began his reign with a battle, in which he conquered the Britons who had slain his brother. This was at Heavenfield, north of the Roman wall, near Hexham (634). The British King Cadwalla, though a Christian, had allied himself with Penda, the heathen King of Mercia, whom he exceeded in ferocity. The two allies thought to destroy the Northumbrian kingdom, Cadwalla because it was English, Penda because it was Christian, and both of them because

[1] *Leaders in the Northern Church*, pp. 22 f.

they coveted the Northumbrian territory. Oswald marched out to meet Cadwalla, and before the battle he believed that St. Columba appeared to him and said, "Be of good courage, and play the man." Oswald then erected a cross, which he held up himself, while his soldiers made it fast in the ground. Then he addressed his small army. "Let us all kneel, and together beseech the true and living God Almighty, that in His mercy He will defend us from a proud and fierce enemy; for He knoweth that we have undertaken a righteous war for the salvation of our race." The prayer was heard, and Cadwalla, the victor in a hundred fights, was defeated and slain.

Oswald, says Bede (iii. 6), brought under his dominion peoples of the four tongues spoken in Britain, Britons, Picts, Scots, and English. He counts him as the sixth Bretwalda, and Adamnan calls him "Emperor of the whole of Britain." Evidently his superiority was recognized by Cynegyls, King of Wessex. When Cynegyls was baptized at Dorchester in Oxfordshire (A.D. 635) Oswald stood godfather, and joined with him in granting Dorchester to the Roman missionary Birinus as his episcopal see. Birinus had been sent by Pope Honorius I., and by his pious labours, says Bede, many churches were built and many peoples called to the Lord. It was perhaps at the time when the King of Wessex was baptized, that King Oswald

married his daughter, Cyneburh. But we must return to the work in Northumbria.

There can be little doubt that the main cause of the success of Oswald and Aidan in restoring the Christian faith was the self-denying simplicity of their own lives. Without ostentatious or morose austerity, they showed that they were indifferent to worldly pleasures, and cared for wealth only as a means of spreading the Gospel. Aidan seems to have been one of those energetic men to whom idleness is misery, and who find their recreation in a change of work. He divided his time between study, teaching, and the services of the Church. He travelled about his huge diocese on foot, and would never ride, unless driven to do so by necessity; and he was always on the look-out for opportunities to do good to rich and poor alike; if they were believers, to strengthen them in the faith; if they were heathen, to win them over to it. He would give entertainment, but never gifts, to the rich; and whatever he received from them he spent either on the poor or in ransoming those who had been sold as slaves. And "it was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men, that he taught no otherwise than he and his followers lived."

Not very often did he find time to visit the court at Bamborough; but when he did do so and dined with the king, he and the two or three clergy who

accompanied him would rise early from table to read and study, or chant the Psalms. On one of these occasions there was an incident which caused it to be remembered and recorded. It was the Easter festival, and Aidan was sitting at Oswald's table. A silver dish with royal dainties was placed before the king, and they were about to say grace, when the king's almoner entered, and said that there were many poor people sitting in the street, asking for alms. Oswald ordered the food to be taken out to them, and had the silver dish cut into small pieces and distributed among them. Aidan, delighted at this benevolence, seized the king's right hand and exclaimed, "May this hand never grow old." And when Oswald's right arm was cut off in the battle in which he was slain, it was placed in a silver shrine and preserved in St. Peter's Church at York, where it was believed to be entire and uncorrupted in Bede's own day, nearly a hundred years later.

For Oswald's reign ended, as it began, with a great battle; but on this field he won, not an earthly crown, but a heavenly one. The place was Maserfield, which may be the same as Oswestry, or Oswald's Tree; and this perhaps means that Oswald again set up a cross. The first battle was against Cadwalla, the Christian King of the Britons. The last battle was against Cadwalla's heathen ally, Penda, King of the Mercians; and here the pagan conquered.

The "most Christian King" (*Christianissimus rex*) Oswald was surrounded and slain by the heathen. This time also his prayer on the field of battle has been preserved, and they were his dying words: "O God, have mercy on their souls,"—words which afterwards passed into a proverb. It was noticed that he died on his birthday, August 5. For years afterwards the monks of Hexham used to visit the scene of his first battle, in order to celebrate there the anniversary of his last. Penda cut off his head and arms and stuck them upon stakes in derision. The arms were afterwards taken to Bamborough, the uncorrupted right arm being eventually taken to York. The head was placed in the coffin of St. Cuthbert, and at last found a resting-place, with Cuthbert's body, in Durham Cathedral. The greater part of the coffin may still be seen there in the Chapter Library. And what is believed to be King Oswald's skull was seen by many of us a few years ago, when last the tomb of St. Cuthbert was opened. The skull has a cleft in it, showing plainly where the blow that proved fatal fell.

King Oswald's defeat and death took place in 642. Penda pressed his advantage, and it looked as if Christianity might again be seriously injured in Northumbria. He advanced to Bamborough, and failing to take it by assault prepared to burn the defenders out. He piled wood and straw against it, waited for a favourable wind, and then fired it.

From one of the Farne islands opposite Bamborough Aidan saw the danger, and prayed earnestly that the evil which Penda designed might be averted. The wind changed, and the fire and smoke were blown back upon the heathen besiegers.

Aidan remained as close a friend of Oswald's successor Oswin as of Oswald himself. Oswin was so dutiful to him, that Aidan predicted that so humble a king was too good to live long. And not very long afterwards Oswin was murdered. Aidan was broken-hearted at his royal friend's death; and twelve days later he died himself, August 31, 651. In these last days he had a hut built for himself against the outer wall of Bamborough Church; thither he retired to die. About the time that he passed away, Cuthbert, tending sheep on the Lammermoor hills, saw some shooting stars. After he heard of Aidan's death, he said that what he saw must have been angels carrying Aidan's soul to heaven. And he thereupon entered the monastery of Boisil at Melrose.

It has been claimed for Aidan that he was the apostle of England. A pen of great authority has written, "Augustine was the apostle of Kent, but Aidan was the apostle of England." William Bright, late Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, who has made this early period of English Church History peculiarly his own, says with great truth that this "uncritical antithesis" has done

great mischief to "historical proportion." It is one of those crisp, easily remembered sayings, which have enough truth in them to prevent them from being speedily rejected, but also enough error to cause them to be seriously misleading. Moreover, it is a *dictum* which plays only too surely into the hands of those who think that every argument is to be adopted which tells against Rome. It cannot be denied that Augustine *began* the conversion of the English; but Protestant prejudices, and perhaps English prejudices, make us willing to cut down the work done by Augustine to a *minimum*. Augustine came from Rome, and he had no previous connexion with the British Isles; therefore, we do not like to admit that he did so very much for what has become the Protestant Church of England. Aidan owed nothing to Rome; and in some matters, which were then of great moment, maintained the customs of his own Church against those of Rome. Moreover, although not English, he was at any rate British, and he worked in close conjunction with English kings. Therefore, we are willing to attribute the conversion of the English and the founding of the English Church mainly to Aidan.

But, even as a matter of policy, this is a perilous line to take. The Roman controversialist, who is well acquainted with the history of the period, can easily show, that a great deal more must be

assigned to Augustine, and a great deal less to Aidan. And this is the real objection to the telling antithesis; not that it is controversially dangerous to the side that uses it, but that, whoever uses it, it remains historically untrue. No one supposes that it was written in the interests of Protestant prejudice: it was written because the writer was convinced that it was true, and perhaps because the subject which he was treating led him to give a generous estimate of one who was a "leader in the Northern Church." But it is rightly condemned as "uncritical."

No one can deny that Augustine was an apostle. This epigram admits that he was the apostle of Kent. He was the first to preach the Gospel in Kent and the first to preach the Gospel to the English. But Aidan was not an apostle at all, not even the apostle of Northumbria. Let us be overflowing in our gratitude for all that he did for the English, whether Christian or pagan, who lived north of the Humber. He was indefatigable as a restorer of what had been laid waste, and as a winner of souls that had hitherto not been won; and apparently he was more successful in his sphere of work than Augustine was in his. His was a nobler type of the missionary spirit. He had more sweetness and breadth of character; was less punctilious, less anxious about details, better able to take a wide and sympathetic view He knew how to be trust-

ing and even adventurous, without sacrificing discretion. "This grace of discretion," says Bede, "marked him out for the Northumbrian mission; but when the time came, he was found to be adorned with every other excellence": and, in his untiring activity, he was "a strange contrast to the slothfulness of our own age." Bede, though he strongly disapproved of Aidan's Keltic independence as to the Easter cycle, and other ecclesiastical usages, is yet full of sympathetic admiration for Aidan's character and work; and we may readily believe that every word of the praise bestowed by this English writer, who was devoted to Rome, upon the Keltic missionary, who took no account of Rome, is as justly, as it is generously, bestowed.

But, when all is said about the greater attractiveness of Aidan as compared with Augustine, about the wider extent of his work and its greater permanence—the fact remains, that Augustine was an apostle, and that Aidan was not. He did nothing for the English beyond the limits of Northumbria, and to the Northumbrians he was not their first evangelist. In that field he entered upon the labours of Paulinus, who had opened out the way for him. That he was a better worker than Paulinus, we can well believe; and it may be that he was a better man. But no such disasters disturbed his work as those which overwhelmed the work of Paulinus, and he had an enormous advantage over his pre-

decessor in having the monastery of Iona to draw upon. From Aidan's old island-home devoted clergy were always to be had. But let as little as you please be made of the work of Paulinus, the fact is incontrovertible that in the mission to the Northumbrians he, and not Aidan, was first in the field. Paulinus, and not Aidan, is the apostle of Northumbria: and, in the end, the Keltic form of Christianity, introduced and established by Aidan, passed away, and the Roman form, as first preached by Paulinus, prevailed.

Before leaving the subject of the great work done by Aidan, it is necessary to point out one very remarkable feature in it. As has been already indicated, his mission was altogether independent of Rome, and was initiated and cherished by Iona. At that time there were two great ecclesiastical influences acting upon the English, one coming from Rome and the other from Iona; and for a time it might seem doubtful which of the two would prevail and drive the other out of the field. We may be thankful that the victory was with Rome. There is no question as to the chief source of influence on the Roman side: it was of course the Bishop of Rome. Augustine was sent by Pope Gregory and he referred the questions which perplexed him to Gregory for decision. It was Gregory who sent Mellitus, the first Bishop of London and third Archbishop of Canterbury, with a second band of

missionaries to reinforce Augustine in 601; and he wrote various letters to bishops and kings on the Continent, to facilitate the journey of Mellitus to England, just as he had done in the case of Augustine. He also sent with them "all things necessary for divine worship and the service of the Church." Among those whom Gregory sent with Mellitus were Laurentius, who had come with Augustine and had by him been sent back to Rome with a letter to Gregory, and whom Augustine named as his successor in the see of Canterbury, and also Paulinus, who became the apostle of the Northumbrians. Another of the same company was Justus, who became first Bishop of Rochester and the fourth Archbishop of Canterbury. He received the pall from Pope Boniface V., and it was he who consecrated Paulinus bishop to go in 625 to Northumbria. Paulinus, after converting King Edwin, established his see at York. But, after the overthrow of Edwin in 633, Paulinus returned to the South and became Bishop of Rochester. As he did not receive the pall from Pope Honorius I. until he had left York, it is doubted whether he is to be counted among the Archbishops of that see. And, as we have seen, it was Honorius I. who sent Birinus as a missionary to Wessex. These details are mentioned (and others might be added), in order to show that it was the Bishop of Rome who was the source of influence on the Roman side, and also to show how

great was the share which the Roman missionaries had in the conversion of the English.

But who was the source of influence at the other centre, the centre of Keltic Christianity in North Britain? It was the Abbot of the Monastery of Iona. And the remarkable thing to which attention should be given is, that the Abbot of Iona was not a bishop. He was only a presbyter; and yet he had bishops who were apparently under his jurisdiction. It was he who got Aidan consecrated and sent to Northumbria; and it would seem as if Keltic Bishops applied to him in difficulties and perhaps even for direction in their work. This rather strange reversal of positions will appear less strange to us when we remember two facts. First, the immense amount of respect that was paid to the memory of St. Columba, a respect which breathes through every chapter of Adamnan's Life of him and the traditions respecting him. Nothing is too wonderful for him to have done, or to have had done to him, through the power of God. That such a man as he should direct bishops, would seem to be only what was in accordance with the fitness of things. And, just as Romanists hold that much of the apostolic authority of St. Peter is continued to each Bishop of Rome, so the Keltic clergy, and especially those who had been trained at Iona, may have thought that much of Columba's authority ought to be conceded to whoever sat in Columba's seat.

Secondly, we must remember that in the Keltic Church there were, as a rule, no diocesan bishops. Among the Scots of Ireland and of Scotland, as well as among the British Christians in Strathclyde and Wales, bishops were attached to tribes rather than to districts or cities. Keltic bishops had no episcopal sees. The system of sees and dioceses was the Roman system: but it had no place among the Kelts. It would have seemed a surprising thing to one who was accustomed to the Roman system that a bishop of a diocese should be in any degree under the direction of a presbyter, and of a presbyter outside his diocese. But to the tribal bishops of the Keltic Church it may not have seemed at all unnatural that they should accept direction from the successor of St. Columba.

But when we are considering the respective claims upon our gratitude which can be urged for Augustine and for Aidan, or (as it is perhaps better to say) for the Roman Church and for the Keltic—the important thing to remember is, which system, in the end, swallowed up the other. It is perhaps rather invidious to try to strike a balance between the Roman missionaries and the Keltic missionaries, as to the amount of service which they rendered in converting the English nation to Christianity; although those who are specially interested in the Roman missionaries have nothing to fear, when such a balance is drawn. It is certain that the

Roman missionaries were first in the field, and also that the Keltic bishops in Wales refused to help them. But there is a third thing which is certain, and it is that which is decisive. The work of the Keltic missionaries, which they had accomplished quite independently of Rome, was re-modelled according to the Roman fashion. It was the Roman type of Christianity, and not the Keltic, which became dominant in England. We shall be able to consider that point more fully in the next chapter. The present chapter may conclude with a notice of a few of the points which distinguished the Keltic system, some of which help us to be thankful that it did not prevail and come down to ourselves.

It would perhaps be an exaggeration to call it a barbarous form of Christianity; but it was rude and simple in the extreme.[1] Its sacred buildings were devoid of ornament, whether architectural or pictorial. Often they were of timber, or even less substantial materials; and there seems to be no evidence that the Keltic timber churches ever attained to the beauty of the old timber churches of Norway. They appear to have been small and very regular, with neither aisles nor apse. The cathedral church at Lindisfarne was of wood thatched with reeds. The one ecclesiastical art which grew to perfection was that of illuminating; but such

[1] "Rustic simplicity" is the expression which Bede puts into the mouth of Wilfrid at Whitby (iii. 25).

glorious examples of this art as the Book of Kells, which has been attributed to Columba himself, is thought now to belong rather to the age of Bede. Even here, however, the limitations of the Keltic character seem to come in. There is extraordinary minuteness of finish and richness of colouring. There are endless tracings of fine lines, "as firm as if drawn by a machine," and yet often requiring a magnifying glass to follow them. "But, when the human figure or historical scenes are attempted, the effect is poor and often barbarous, and even flowers and trees were avoided" by these artists.[1] Here, as in so many other things, the bent of the Keltic religious feeling seems to have been regularity rather than freedom. They would confine rather than copy nature. The Keltic Church seems to have remained uninfluenced by the ecclesiastical developments on the Continent, and to have disliked what may be called religious civilization.

We may well believe that the Kelts in Ireland and Scotland did not give a welcome to Roman civilization when they came across it: and they did not often come in contact with it. Even the influence of Roman Christianity did not often extend beyond the limits of the Roman Empire: and the power of the legions had only for a time extended into Northumbria, and had never extended into Ireland. Consequently, Keltic Christianity was of aboriginal

[1] Madan, *MS. Books*, v.

growth; very independent and very insular. This of course involved not a little narrowness, but it did not involve selfish indifference to all outside their own Church and nation. These Scots of Ireland and Scotland did not exhibit the race-hatred which disfigured the Christianity of the British in Wales. The British in Wales not only abstained from trying to convert the heathen English; they refused to have anything to do with them when other people had converted them. Bede tells us that in his day the Britons still treated the English as pagans. It was far otherwise with the more generous Kelts of Ireland and Iona. They streamed across, not only to Northumbria, but to the Alps and even across the Alps, seeking for fields in which to win souls for Christ. The spirit which breathed in many of them was that which is expressed in the words of Mochonna, son of the provincial King of Ulster. He was devoted to Columba, and announced his intention of accompanying him when he went into exile. Columba represented to him that his parents and his country had claims upon him, and that such claims ought to be respected. "Who are my parents?" was the reply, "and what is my country? It is thou who art my father; it is the Church that is my mother; and my country is where I can gather the largest harvest for Christ." It was that spirit which gave Iona to Scotland; and it was that spirit which gave Lindisfarne to North-

umbria. We ought to be very thankful that there were such men as these to bring so many of our forefathers into the Christian Church. And our gratitude need not be diminished by the further thought, that we ought also to be thankful that the kind of Christianity which they introduced had very soon to make way for something better.

CHAPTER IV

THE EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH; WILFRID AND BEDE

IT is an historical fact of great importance, which still, however, needs to be constantly repeated, that the English Church was not created by the State, but, on the contrary, that the English State was created by the English Church. There was a united Church of England before there was a united Kingdom of England, and it was the union of the dioceses of England under one archbishop which was the main cause of the union of the kingdoms of England under one king. But we have not yet reached the time when this important fact can be regarded as an historical truism, which every one knows, and no one would dispute.

In order that it may not be supposed that prejudice in favour of the Church of England makes one assert the priority in time of the English Church to the English State, one can quote the words of one of the chief of the English historians who are still left to us. Stubbs, Freeman, Bright, Creighton,

and many others have passed away; but among those who still remain is the historian of *Italy and her Invaders*, *The Dynasty of Theodosius*, *The Life of Theodoric*, and *The Life of Charles the Great*. Dr. Thos. Hodgkin is not a member of the Church of England, but of the Society of Friends. He need not, therefore, be suspected of bias in favour of the English Church.

In his recent work (1906) on *The History of England from the Earliest Times to the Norman Conquest* he pauses at the point which we have reached, a little after the deaths of Oswin and Aidan, and remarks thus: "From this brief review of the relations of the various English kingdoms to one another towards the close of the seventh century, it will be abundantly evident how far we yet were from anything like national unity. There does not even seem to be any dawning feeling of fellowship of race. Angle wages with Angle and Saxon with Saxon a long and embittered warfare; and more than once a Mercian or West Saxon king avails himself of British help to win the victory over his kinsfolk. If Anglo-Saxon unity was at length obtained—and we know that it was not till far on in the tenth century that it was even approximately realized—this result was due undoubtedly to two great causes: *the influence of the national Christian Church*, and the necessity of self-defence against the Scandinavian invaders. With the first of these causes alone

we have here to deal. It cannot be doubted that zeal for their newborn Christian faith was already in some measure drawing the English kings together. When Oswald of Bernicia stood sponsor for West Saxon Cynegils, when his brother Oswy persuaded East Saxon Sigebert to forsake the follies of idolatry, a moral bond of union was formed, which might be developed into a political relationship. The consciousness of common interest in the Kingdom of God might well become, and eventually did become, a consciousness of fellow-citizenship in one great country" (p. 179).

But, if the newborn Church of the English was to become a model of unity to the English nation, it was necessary that it should first become united in itself, and that was very far from being the case. As we have seen, two influences were at work in converting the English nation, one issuing from Rome, and the other from Iona; and, although these two were entirely in agreement as to the essentials of the Christian faith, yet they differed considerably in externals—in liturgy, in the time for keeping Easter, and in the form of the tonsure. Some of these points of difference, and especially the last, seem to us to be very trivial, and to belong to those things which Gregory himself had told Augustine need not be in all Churches the same. Nevertheless, there was very serious inconvenience when Christians of the same nation and locality differed

about such things; and all experience shows that great religious bitterness may be generated by differences about usages or tenets which in themselves are unimportant. It was destructive of Christian sympathy and decency that at the same court, the king [1] and his followers should be keeping the Easter festival according to the Scottish usage, while the queen,[2] who had lived in Kent under the Roman system, was still keeping the fast of Holy Week. On the whole, the differences among the English ran as follows. Kent and East Anglia closely followed Rome. Wessex, which had been largely converted by the Roman missionary Birinus, for the most part did the same. The two Northumbrian kingdoms were, in the main, decidedly Scottish, although owing to the earlier influence of the Roman Paulinus, which had been kept alive by his follower James the Deacon, the Roman system was not unknown there. Mercia and Essex, owing to the influence of Northumbrian missionaries, seem to have been at least partly Keltic in their Christianity.

We are not surprised that Oswy, King of Northumbria, should be impressed by the intolerable divergence between himself and his queen as to the right time of keeping Easter. Both could not be correct, and the question ought to be settled; so in

[1] Oswy, King of Northumbria.
[2] Eanfled.

664 he summoned a synod at Whitby, where St. Hilda, formerly abbess of Hartlepool (649–657), had established a religious house for both monks and nuns, over which she presided (657–680). This house must for ever be dear to lovers of English literature as having been the home of the first English poet, Caedmon. The temptation to linger over him is very great, but we must pass on. Although Hilda had been baptized by Paulinus at York, on a day which has been called "the birthday of the Northumbrian Church," April 11, Easter Eve, 627, she had afterwards come under the influence of Aidan, and had become attached to the usages of Iona; and at the Whitby synod she gave her support, which was powerful, to that side of the controversy. The leading advocate, in pleading before King Oswy, was Colman, third Bishop of Lindisfarne (661–664). The leading advocate on the other side was the presbyter Wilfrid. Wilfrid had been under both influences. He had been a novice in the monastery at Lindisfarne, and had gone to Rome with Benedict Biscop in 653. He had returned to England in 658 and had entered the monastery at Ripon, where he was ordained priest shortly before the conference at Whitby. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Roman usage.

It is worth while to understand the question at issue and the chief arguments used. Both sides agreed that Easter Day must be a Sunday, and

that the Sunday must be so many days after a particular new moon. The Keltic usage was to take the first Sunday *on* or after the *fourteenth* day of the moon; the Roman usage was to take the first Sunday on or after the *fifteenth* day. Thus the Keltic usage allowed Easter Day to fall on the fourteenth day and excluded the twenty-first day; while the Roman excluded the fourteenth and admitted the twenty-first. That was the question; now for the arguments.

Colman appealed to the authority of St. John, who, it is said, with the Quarto-decimans who followed him, began the Paschal feast on the fourteenth. But the Quarto-decimans' custom was really quite different from the Keltic. They had kept the fourteenth day, whether it was a Sunday or not. In short, they had simply followed the Jewish passover. This custom had been universally condemned. The whole of Christendom, the Keltic Church included, had agreed that Easter Day must be kept on a Sunday. Wilfrid appealed to the authority of St. Peter. Rome had received its rule from him and had never varied. This plea was as worthless as the other. It may be doubted whether St. Peter ever laid down any rule about Easter; and it is quite certain that the Roman rule had changed. Having found out from experience that its Easter cycle was vicious, it had adopted a better one. Colman appealed to the miracles wrought by Columba

and his successors : was it likely that men who had such marks of Divine favour were in error about the chief Christian festival ? To which Wilfrid made the insolent rejoinder : " Concerning your father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rules you observe, which have been confirmed by signs from heaven, I might answer, that when many at the Day of Judgment shall say to our Lord, that in His Name they prophesied, and cast out devils, and wrought many wonders, our Lord will reply, that He never knew them." This was not the way to win conscientious men over to a better way. But he was willing to admit that Columba and others were saints. Nevertheless, was it reasonable that two tiny islands like Iona and Lindisfarne should set up customs at variance with the rest of Christendom ? Here was a solid argument at last ; but it was not the decisive one. Wilfrid returned to the authority of " the most blessed prince of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ; and to thee I will give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."

King Oswy turned to Colman and asked him, whether these words were spoken by our Lord to Peter. Colman admitted it. " And can you show any such power given to your Columba ? " No, he could not. " Do you *both* agree that the keys of the

Kingdom of Heaven were given to Peter by our Lord?" They both answered, "We do." Then said the king, "I cannot have him as an adversary who is admitted to have the keys." The majority agreed with the king, and the Roman rule was adopted. Hilda accepted it loyally, but Colman and the clergy who held to him returned to Iona.[1]

Bishop Agilbert of Dorchester was at this conference, and was on the Roman side. Why was the dispute with Bishop Colman left to the presbyter Wilfrid? That question leads to an interesting fact respecting language. Bishop Agilbert was a Frank, and he had not acquired the English language. These two Teutonic languages had a common origin, and seventy years earlier Augustine had used Franks to interpret to the English. During these seventy years, each language had diverged more and more from one another, so that now a Frank could not usefully take part in an English debate, and Agilbert asked to be excused.

The decision respecting Easter carried with it a similar decision respecting the tonsure and other matters, and in a comparatively short time conformity with Rome was established in all English dioceses, although a few even of the English clergy preferred to migrate to Iona. Fifty years later (710) the northern Picts conformed, and Iona itself

[1] See *Dict. of Christian Biography*, I, pp. 61, 599; IV., pp. 1179f.

in 716. The Britons in Wales were the last to give way: they yielded, however, in 768, and then all Christians in Britain kept Easter at the same time.

The conference probably met in Lent, in order to have the question about Easter settled before the festival. Soon after Easter, this year (664) was marked by a total eclipse of the sun, and this was connected with the outbreak of a virulent disorder called the "yellow pest," which began in Kent about midsummer, and went steadily north, carrying off multitudes. Just as on the Continent in the fourth century those who still held to paganism declared that the grievous calamities of the age were caused by the wrath of the old gods, who were punishing men for the desertion of their temples, so in some parts of England this yellow pest was attributed to a similar cause, and many of the English in Essex returned to the worship of their fathers. Perhaps they were confirmed in their belief that Christianity was the cause of the pestilence, when they noticed how specially fatal the plague was in monasteries, whether of monks or nuns. This special fatality is very intelligible, if only the numbers gathered together in a small enclosure be considered. But we must also remember the entire ignorance and neglect of sanitary precautions; and also the fact that it was the custom in monasteries to sleep in the clothes in which one had been working during the day. Nor was this all. Abstention

from washing was a common form of asceticism; and there were many who allowed themselves the luxury of a bath only three or four times in the year. Indeed, one has read of an ascetic who never washed any part of her body, excepting the tips of the fingers with which she received the Eucharist. Monasteries, therefore, were hot-beds ready for the plague; and it is in no way surprising that some religious houses lost all their inmates. But it must have seemed a telling argument for the pagans and apostates, that precisely the strongholds of the new religion were the places which suffered most from the scourge, which, as they maintained, had been sent by the wrath of Woden and Thor.

When Colman resigned the see of Lindisfarne after his defeat at Whitby, Tuda, an Irishman who accepted the Roman Easter, was consecrated as his successor. Tuda was soon carried off by the yellow pest; and then the Northumbrian kings with their council of wise men chose Wilfrid, the victor at Whitby, to succeed him. Wilfrid begged to be allowed to go to Gaul for consecration, in order to secure that none of his consecrators should have any taint of the Keltic heresy. Leave was granted, and he was consecrated with great magnificence, such as he dearly loved, at Compiègne, perhaps early in 665. Twelve bishops were present, among them Agilbert, formerly Bishop of Dorchester, who had let Wilfrid take the lead at Whitby, and who was

now Bishop of Paris. Wilfrid made the grave mistake of staying on in Gaul, we know not why: but the fine churches and vestments and music may have attracted him. He did not start for England till the spring of 666, and he then took 120 men with him. A storm drove the vessel ashore on the coast of Sussex, which was still heathen. A thick belt of forest at that time cut off Sussex from the rest of England, and this natural barrier had not yet been penetrated by the missionaries. A band of Sussex wreckers came down on the distressed crew, hoping to make a prize of the richly laden vessel. Wilfrid tried to buy them off with some of his treasures "All is ours," they cried, "that the sea brings us." A heathen priest stood by and uttered incantations against Wilfrid and his party. One of them felled the enchanter with a stone. This discouraged the wreckers. The stranded vessel was got off the beach, and Wilfrid got safely away, with the loss of five men.

When Wilfrid at last reached Northumberland he found troubles of another kind awaiting him. Though the party whom he had defeated had accepted the Roman Easter, they had not been eager to accept the man who had deprived them of their old usages. His long absence gave them a chance of getting rid of him, and when Wilfrid got back he found another Bishop appointed and consecrated. This was Chad, one of the most beautiful characters

in early English history. The see had been moved from Lindisfarne to York, and Chad, consecrated by Wini of Winchester and two British Bishops, was established as Bishop of York. Wilfrid went off to Ripon, and there and at Hexham he devoted much time to building a fine basilica. At both places crypts, which may be his, remain, but nothing of his work survives above ground.

We have now reached March, 668. On the fifth Sunday in Lent, March 26, Pope Vitalian consecrated Theodore of Tarsus to be Archbishop of Canterbury.[1] Both Deusdedit, the late archbishop, and the man who had been elected to succeed him, had been cut off by the pestilence. In May, 669, the second Sunday after Pentecost, this very capable Oriental, brought from the Eastern Church to Rome, and sent from Rome to the extreme limits of Western Christendom, was enthroned on the seat of St. Augustine; a momentous day for England.

Tarsus had produced a St. Paul to found churches at the extreme East of Europe; and it produced a Theodore to consolidate newly founded Churches at the extreme West. The Apostle and this organizer were very unlike one another in many things;

[1] Benedict Biscop was then in Rome, and Vitalian commissioned him to escort Theodore to Canterbury. They travelled slowly through France, and spent some months with Agilbert, Bishop of Paris, who could give Theodore valuable information about the dioceses in Britain.

but both of them had great gifts for the work which God required them to do. Omitting comparisons, let us confine our attention to Theodore.

He was sixty-six, and he knew that, in the rough climate to which he was so unused, the night in which no man can work might come very soon. If he was to accomplish the great commission which had been entrusted to him, he must labour strenuously; and he set to work at once. As it proved, he had a primacy of twenty-one years before him; but that no one could have expected when he arrived.

It was an excellent omen that he was heartily welcomed by both kings and people, and it must have increased the interest in him that he came from the far East. But his great advantage was that he had been sent direct from Rome and had been consecrated by the Bishop of Rome himself. The greatest advantage of all had to be discovered by experience of him, for it lay in his own strong personal character. He was masterful and determined; perhaps we may say despotic; with a clear head and a strong will: and these were just the qualities which were needed for the work which he had to do. He came to a Church which lacked unity, organization, and culture. The English nation had been converted piecemeal, from a variety of centres, and by missionaries whose ecclesiastical systems did not agree. Five years had passed since the Roman system had conquered the Keltic at

Whitby in 664; but general uniformity had not been reached. With just one bishop to each kingdom, the dioceses were far too large, and the work could not be effectually done. There were still heathen scattered up and down the kingdoms; and Sussex and the Isle of Wight, separated from the rest of England, the one by its belt of forests and the other by its belt of sea, were still mainly heathen. Moreover, in spite of the learning which some missionaries had brought from Iona or Ireland or Rome, there was a very low condition of education among the clergy. Many no doubt had been too busy to study.

After going through the dioceses and regulating what called for immediate attention, Theodore developed a great school at Canterbury, where Latin and Greek were taught to such purpose that, as Bede says, some came to know these languages as well as their native tongue. Not only theology and other ecclesiastical subjects were taught, but astronomy, music, and medicine. Theodore himself taught, and was aided by Hadrian, whom Vitalian had selected as archbishop, but who had begged that Theodore might be chosen instead. He did not want to shirk, he said; he would gladly go to England and work, but he did not feel equal to going as archbishop. He was Theodore's very competent helper in many things.

Then came the question of unity and organization;

and Theodore made a great advance towards this in summoning a synod to meet at Hertford in September, 673. Of his six suffragans, four came; and Wilfrid (who was now established as Bishop of York, Chad having retired to Lichfield) sent persons to represent him. Many teachers came with the bishops, but only the bishops were regarded as members of the synod. It was a very notable assembly. The English parliament has been called "the mother of parliaments," other nations having copied us in this. *But the synod at Hertford was the mother of the English parliament.* In it the English Church met for the first time as a single body; and at that time the English Church was the only representative of the English nation. The synod at Hertford was the first of our national assemblies; and it decreed that a synod should be held annually, on the first of August at Clovesho. Theodore proposed the division of the dioceses; but there was so much opposition that he did not insist. He was able, however, to bring this about in particular cases, first in East Anglia and then in Mercia.

Then, in a high-handed way, without consulting Wilfrid, he divided Northumbria into four dioceses, leaving Wilfrid at York, but taking Bernicia, Deira, and Lindsey, from that see. Wilfrid protested; Theodore persisted; and then Wilfrid appealed to Rome, and left the country to plead his own cause—the first instance of an appeal to Rome in the his-

tory of the English Church. In his absence, Theodore, without assistant bishops, consecrated three bishops for the three new dioceses. Pope Agatho called a council to consider the matter. Fifty bishops assembled in the great basilica of the Lateran, and their decision was a very wise one. Wilfrid had been irregularly deprived of the greater part of his diocese, and the bishops who had been violently intruded must be expelled. *But*—Theodore had done the right thing, though he had done it in the wrong way. Wilfrid must hold a council at York, and with the council's concurrence select bishops to assist him. He must choose men with whom he could work peaceably, and then present them to Theodore to be consecrated. Thus each side got what was essential—Wilfrid that his rights as Bishop of York should be respected; Theodore that so huge a diocese should have more than one bishop.

Wilfrid regarded the decision as a triumph; and he found the attractions of Rome so great that he stayed on there till the next Easter (680), and was much delighted when the Pope invited him, as Bishop of York, to take part in a Council of 150 Bishops, to consider the case of the Monothelites. His satisfaction received a rude shock, when at last he reached home. He had forgotten that not only Theodore, his Metropolitan, but Egfrid, his king, were committed to the arrangement which Rome had con-

demned. He had forgotten, or had never known, that by no means all Englishmen had the same love for Roman decrees that he had. They revered the Bishop of Rome, and regarded him as the leader of the Church. They would probably not have disputed his authority. But they had the dislike, which Englishmen have shown all through history, of having the affairs of the nation settled by a power outside the nation, by "outlandish" jurisdiction. It did not matter whether the outside power was a Pope, or a King of Denmark, or a Duke of Normandy, or a King of Spain, or a King of Hanover. What they thought fair and fitting was, that English affairs should be determined by English rulers in Church and State. Consequently, when Wilfrid came and waved in their faces the decree of a Roman Bishop and Council, upsetting the arrangements made by their own archbishop and king, they at once concluded that such a decree must have been either forged, or obtained by bribery. The Bishop of Rome would never have issued such a decision unless swayed by evil influences. No one seems to have raised the question, whether the Bishop of Rome had any *right* to decide such a question.

For two or three centuries (350–650) the Western Church had been steadily moving in the direction of greater centralization. Slowly, but surely, it had been developing into a vast monarchy. The

monstrous claims of later Popes were not yet heard: but the germs of such things were there. The seat of the Papacy was the centre of the old Roman Empire, and this at once prepared men's minds for the theory of a great ecclesiastical authority in the same historic centre. The barbarian tribes, conscious of the weakness caused by their own internal divisions, welcomed the idea of a central source of unity. The personal ability of some Popes, the sanctity of others, and, as times grew worse, the grasping ambition of many more, all contributed to make the theory of a universal episcopate a growing fact. Those who were sent out from Rome to convert the nations and consolidate the Churches stated the authority of him who sent them with the confidence of men who believe that what they say is indisputable. And this confidence was contagious. Converts were not prone to question claims which were always stated as unquestionable. We need not wonder, therefore, that the Northumbrians did not at once raise the question, What right has the Bishop of Rome to decide matters about the Bishopric of York?

But they put Wilfrid in prison as an impostor: and when at last he was released, he went off in 681 to convert his recent assailants, the heathen savages in Sussex. As Bede says, though Wilfrid's own diocese was closed to him, "he could not be restrained from the ministry of preaching

the Gospel." There was a famine in Sussex, and Wilfrid taught the people how to catch fish, before himself becoming a fisher of men. The king gave him 250 people as slaves. He taught them, baptized them, and set them free. This is the most beautiful part of Wilfrid's life, and we will leave him at this work. He lived to be restored to Northumbria, to be again expelled, to appeal again to Rome, walking across Europe at the age of seventy, in order to plead once more in person. The result was a compromise. He lived five years longer, and in the autumn of 709 he passed peacefully away, just as the monks in the choir of his minster of St. Andrew at Oundle were chanting the 104th Psalm. He ceased to breathe, when they reached the verses: "When Thou hidest Thy face, they shall be troubled; Thou shalt take away their spirit and they shall die, and shall return again to their dust. Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."

We have now passed well within the limits of the lifetime of the beautiful writer, to whom nearly the whole of our knowledge of this period is due, and whose death marks the close of our period. The Venerable Bede was born in 672 or 673, and therefore he was thirty-six or thirty-seven when Wilfrid died. Almost the whole of his simple life is contained in the very brief autobiography which

he has placed at the end of his *Ecclesiastical History.* Let us have his own words:—

"Thus much concerning the ecclesiastical history of Britain, and especially of the race of the English, I, Baeda, a servant of Christ and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, which is at Wearmouth and at Jarrow, have with the Lord's help composed, so far as I could gather it, either from ancient documents, or from the tradition of the elders, or from my own knowledge. I was born in the territory of the said monastery; and, at the age of seven, I was, by the care of my relations, given to the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards, to Ceolfrid, to be educated. From that time I have spent the whole of my life within that monastery, devoting all my pains to the study of the Scriptures; and amid the observance of monastic discipline, and the daily charge of singing in the Church, it has been ever my delight to learn, or to teach, or to write. In my nineteenth year I was admitted to the diaconate, in my thirtieth to the priesthood, both by the hands of the most reverend Bishop John,[1] and at the bidding of Abbot Ceolfrid. From the time of my admission to the priesthood to this my fifty-ninth year, I have endeavoured, for my own use and that of my brethren, to make brief

[1] Of Hexham.

notes upon the Holy Scripture, either out of the venerable Fathers, or in conformity with their meaning and interpretation." Then he gives a list of his works, so far as they had been written at that time (731), and he ends with this prayer: "And I pray Thee, good Jesus, as Thou hast graciously granted to me sweetly to drink the words of Thy knowledge, so Thou wouldst also mercifully grant me to attain one day to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom, and to appear for ever before Thy face." A fitting prayer still, for all Christian students.

No one knows the origin of the epithet "Venerable," but it is said to have been applied to Bede as early as the ninth century: and that it rightly describes him, no one who knows his character can doubt. If there are any among the race of mankind who are worthy of our veneration, assuredly Bede is one of them. As William of Malmesbury says of him, he was "a man whom it is easier to admire than to extol as he deserves." And yet, though it is indeed easy to admire him, it is easier still to love him. In the whole of our national history, from the time when the English first landed on this island, down to our own day, there is no character more truly lovable than Bede.

Yet, well as the epithet "Venerable" suits him, it has one disadvantage. People think of him as a very old man. J. R. Green speaks of "the old man laying down his pen" at a time when Bede was

only fifty-eight. Dr. Hodgkin calls him the "aged saint." And the stained window at Jarrow, which professes to depict his death, represents him as a man of eighty or ninety; and yet Bede was only sixty-two or sixty-three when he died.

In order to do justice to the beautiful story of Bede's life, it is necessary to take account of the condition of England at the time when he was born into the land to enlighten and ennoble it. The mere fact that Bede was living then would have made the close of the seventh century an epoch in the history of England. But there are other great landmarks besides the life of the father of English History, and some of these landmarks have already been indicated.

In his birth and in his education, in his work and in his death, Bede was pre-eminently a "son of peace." Yet, not only was the son of peace there labouring for peace, but God's peace was beginning to find a home in the English nation and in the English Church.

The struggle between the English and the Britons had come to an end. We may date the close of it from the day when King Oswald defeated Cadwalla at Heavenfield in 635; for, from that time onwards, no British prince waged serious war against the English nation.

And *the confusion* which of necessity had prevailed *in the newly-founded English Church had*

just come to an end also. The light of the Gospel had spread from different and not quite harmonious centres; and, when the circles of light met and overlapped, some disorder was the result. But, under the strong and firm direction of Theodore of Tarsus, whose long pontificate of over twenty years (669–690) gave him great opportunities, order was brought out of the confusion, and the whole was consolidated as one Church. It was early in the pontificate of Theodore that Bede was born, probably in the year 673, the very year of the Council of Hertford. The birthday of Bede, therefore, coincides with the birthday of peace between the British and English nations, and the birthday of peace and order in the English Church.

It also coincides with *the birthday of English literature.* The literature of England, like that of most countries, has its source in poetry and religion. A thousand years before Milton wrote his great poem on the fall and redemption of man, Caedmon, the servant of Hilda's monastery at Whitby, anticipated the great republican poet, by singing the sacred narratives of the Old and New Testament in English verse, just a few years before Bede was born. It was thought so divine that men said that he had received it direct from heaven. "Others after him," says Bede, "tried to make religious poems, but none could rival him, for he learned the art of poetry not from men, but from God." The

birth of English prose brings us to Bede himself, and it also has its source in religion. The first piece of English prose-writing that is known to us is Bede's translation of the Gospel of St. John, in completing which he died.

Once more, the birthday of Bede coincides with that of *organized learning and culture* in England. Archbishop Theodore and his friend Hadrian had founded the great school at Canterbury, and their well-trained scholars had spread as far as Northumbria and won the admiration of Bede himself.

Such, then, were some of the features of the age into which Bede was born. It had seen the dawn of peace between the two irreconcilable nations in the island. It had seen the beginnings of order and organization in the new-born English Church. It had seen the birth of English literature in the sacred poems of Caedmon. And, in Theodore's school at Canterbury, it had seen the first attempt at a permanent centre of English education. As compared with the age which preceded it and the age which followed it, it was a time of general peace and hopefulness, though not without some signs of the corruption which too often accompanies peace, and which grew darker during the latter part of Bede's life. But, during the earlier part, it was a time when a son of peace might live and work with contentment. To study the life of Bede in its proper chronological position, between the con-

quests of the English invaders which preceded it and the conquests of the Danish invaders which followed, is like reading the Book of Ruth between the Book of Judges and the Books of Samuel and of Kings. It is a bright and peaceful idyl between two stern and stormy epics; a beautiful episode, upon which the student of history, bewildered by rapid changes and wearied by the din of countless battlefields, lingers with singular pleasure. The anarchy of the days in which every man did what was right in his own eyes has passed out of view: the inroads of the Philistines and Syrians have not yet begun.

In the far too brief sketch which Bede gives of his own career, we have, in a few simple touches, the clear outlines of a beautiful life—a life spent in quietude, in intelligent self-culture, in veneration for the past, in sympathy with the present in large-hearted usefulness to man, in profound devotion to God.

Nor can we add much to what he himself has told us. The traditions which other writers have added may, for the most part, be set aside as wholly incredible, or as wanting in satisfactory evidence. In all probability, he never went outside Northumbria, and, excepting one visit to Lindisfarne, and one to York, never very far from his home. His life was spent almost entirely in his beloved monastery of Wearmouth and Jarrow (for, in Bede's eyes, the

two houses were one); and, therefore, stories of his having studied at Cambridge, and having gone, at the Pope's invitation, to Rome, may be left out of account. The latter tradition, however, is of interest, for it testifies to the European reputation which Bede at once acquired. It was thought probable that the Pope might have sent for the far-famed teacher at Jarrow, to consult him respecting certain difficult questions which were perplexing the Head of Western Christendom.

We can, nevertheless, fill in, here and there, the outline of Bede's life, sometimes from other passages in his own works, and sometimes from other trustworthy evidence.

When he was seven years old, he tells us, he was given by the care of his relations to be educated in the monastery at Wearmouth under Benedict. "By the *care* of my relations," he says. It never occurs to him that his relations were freeing themselves from care by getting rid of him. He never doubts for a moment, nor probably did they, that in consigning him to the care of these excellent monks, they were doing the very best thing possible for him, both as regards this world and as regards the world to come. Such dedications of children, like that of the little Samuel, were common in those days. These relations were probably not his parents, otherwise he would have mentioned them. The yellow pest may have carried

off his parents; for there were one or two returns of pestilence after the great visitation of 664. In one of these, the monastery at Jarrow[1] (to which Bede had been transferred from Wearmouth) was attacked with such virulence, that every inmate who could take part in the choral services of the monastery was carried off, excepting the abbot Ceolfrid and one little chorister. But these two, in spite of the sobs which would break out at times, kept the services up at the canonical hours. At first they dropped the antiphons, as beyond their strength; but that seemed so miserable, that, after a week, they restored them and got through as best they could, till the gaps in the choir could be filled. Is not that a lovely picture? And there is not much doubt that the little chorister here mentioned was Bede himself.

The Northumbrian writer Alcuin, who was born at York the year that Bede died, and was educated there in the school founded by Archbishop Egbert, gives us another charming anecdote about Bede. It shows (what, indeed, is abundantly evident from Bede's own works) that the devotion to the services of the Church, which he exhibited as a boy during the plague, was retained by Bede in later life—a fact which is by no means always found in

[1] *Anonymous History of the Abbots*, § 14; not *Bede's* History of the Abbots, as Green says.

the careers of exceptionally religious boys. Alcuin spent the last twenty-three years of his life (781–804) almost entirely on the Continent in the service of Charlemagne; but he wrote many letters to his friends in England, and in one of these to the monks of Wearmouth, he says: "It is told that our master and your patron the blessed Bede said: 'I know that angels visit the canonical hours, and the congregations of the brethren. What if they do not find me among them? Will they not say, Where is Bede? Why comes he not to the prescribed devotions with the brethren?'" We find the same thought, about the angels being at the daily services of the Church, in Bede's own Commentary on St. Luke: "Whenever we enter the Church and draw near to the holy mysteries, we ought to approach with all humility and fear, as well because of the presence of the angelic powers, as of the reverence due to the sacred oblation." And those who in their travels are fond of visiting churches may care to hear what Bede says of such a practice. In commenting on St. Mark's account of our Lord's visiting the Temple after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, he remarks: "So we, when we come to any town or village, in which there is a house of prayer dedicated to God, first turn aside to this, and, when we have commended ourselves to God in prayer, then go about the worldly business for which we came."

Let us return to Bede's autobiography. "Amidst

the observance of monastic discipline and the daily charge of singing in the Church it has been ever my delight to learn, or to teach, or to write." There, in a single sentence, you have the life of the Christian scholar. There, in all its simple dignity, you have the career of one who has consecrated his life to study; and to study, not for the mere excitement of learning "some new thing," not for the miserly accumulation of knowledge; but to study for the sake of imparting knowledge, and of leaving the world wiser and brighter than he found it; to study that he might be a help to those who survived him, being dedicated to God and blessed by Him. Bede lived for his scholars; for his hearers in that generation, for his readers in generations yet to come. As he reads, his thought is of them; as he writes, his thought is again of them; and, as he lies on his death-bed, almost his last thought is of them. In his last sickness, he insisted on going on teaching and dictating. "I don't want my lads to read what isn't true," he said, "and to spend their labour for nothing, when I am gone." And, a little nearer his end, he would sometimes interrupt his teaching to say, "Learn quickly, for I know not how soon He who created me may take me away." No wonder that, when he was in health and strength, his enthusiasm and skill in teaching attracted hundreds of students. Some say 600; but, in Latin, "600" sometimes means simply

"very many"; yet it may have been literally true.[1]

The causes of Bede's success as a teacher are not difficult to discover. First, it is scarcely too much to say that he had gradually *accumulated all the knowledge of his time.* All that was best worth knowing in every department of learning he was at pains to acquire. His works, which consist of more than sixty distinct treatises, may be called an encyclopedia of the knowledge of Western Christendom in the eighth century. As we might expect in one who, as he says, "devoted all his pains to the study of Scripture," the majority of his works are on Biblical subjects. The remainder are treatises on astronomy, chronology, arithmetic, medicine, philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, poetry, and music; biographies of saints and other famous men; a book of hymns and a book of epigrams; and, chief of all, the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation. Bede had great advantages, besides his personal endowments of ability and character. Thanks to the abbots Benedict and Ceolfrid, the libraries at Wearmouth and Jarrow were excellent, and Bede's love of reading was insatiable. Benedict had made no less than five journeys to

[1] This usage may *possibly* have arisen from the original number of a cohort being 600 men. Cicero writes to Atticus (VII. ii. 3): *venio ad epistolas tuas, quas ego sexcentas uno tempore accepi.* In his letters, Cicero frequently has this use.

Rome,[1] and had brought back many precious books, and this collection was added to by Ceolfrid. Among those given by Ceolfrid were three copies of the revised translation of the Bible made by Jerome, commonly called the Vulgate, and one copy of the *old* Latin translation. Bede in his commentaries often compares the two versions. When Ceolfrid went on a pilgrimage to Rome, which he did not live to complete, he took with him one of the copies of the Vulgate. This has come down to us and has been identified as the famous *Codex Amiatinus*, our best authority for the readings of the Vulgate.[2] Besides this advantage of libraries, Bede had that of good instructors from various schools, Scottish, Roman, Gallican, and English. From Trumbert, the disciple of St. Chad, and from Sigfrid, who was "thoroughly skilled in the knowledge of the Scriptures," he would learn Biblical interpretation as it was understood in Ireland and Iona. Acca, Bishop of Hexham and pupil of St. Wilfrid, would teach him much of the learning of the Roman school,

[1] He had visited Rome six times; but the third visit (667) was from Lérins, not from Britain.

[2] Dedicatory lines are prefixed which originally stated that this copy of the Vulgate was written by Ceolfrid to be given to the Pope. They have been tampered with, but De Rossi and Hort discovered the original wording. It is not improbable that the MSS. from which this copy was made at Jarrow or Wearmouth were brought from Rome by Theodore of Tarsus. See Kenyon, *Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, p. 192.

and perhaps something of music, in which he was skilled. Acca and Bede corresponded on Scriptural questions, and Bede dedicated some of his Commentaries to Acca. It was at Acca's suggestion that Bede wrote his History, and Bede sometimes quotes Acca as his authority for certain statements (iii. 13; iv. 14). Bede's monastic learning was of Gallican origin. With the great English school at Canterbury he corresponded, and it is highly probable that some of Bede's own teachers and assistants received their training there. He may have borrowed books from Canterbury, and still more probably from Hexham.

But we must also take account of a serious *dis*-advantage under which Bede laboured. Many monasteries had a *scriptorium*, a large room set apart for the multiplying of books, with a number of monks trained in the art of copying MSS., or of writing from dictation. There was nothing of this kind at Jarrow. In the preface to his St. Luke Bede tells us that, in addition to all his monastic duties, he had to be his own dictator, and shorthand-writer, and copyist. That meant very slow work, especially as unwarmed rooms in a cold climate often made writing impossible during the winter. At Lindisfarne there was a good writing school, derived from Iona; and at Canterbury there was another, derived from Rome. The beautiful Lindisfarne copy of the Gospels, now in the

British Museum, was made during the life-time of Bede. He may have seen it, when he visited the island.

Another cause of Bede's great success was his *enthusiastic love for his work and his power of kindling enthusiasm in others.* To learn, and to teach, and to write, he says, were always a delight to him. Hence his refusal of the dignity of abbot; for, he said: "The office demands household care; and household care brings distraction of mind, which hinders the pursuit of learning." His industry was immense. Consider the difficulty of correspondence in those days, and then think what it must have been to have collected the materials for his *Ecclesiastical History*, while he was studying, and teaching, and commenting on Old and New Testament at Jarrow. He had correspondents, who were collecting information for him in Lindsey, in East Anglia, in Mercia, in Wessex, in Kent, and in Rome. This fact, and the gradual dispersion of his scholars, as they completed their education and went out into the world, fully explain the fame which Bede had acquired in many parts of Europe even during his own lifetime. He was a man under whom, and with whom, and for whom it was a gain, and an honour, and a delight to work.

Lastly, and above all, Bede succeeded, because *all his work was done in a spirit of profound devotion.* It was work honeycombed and penetrated through

and through with prayer. He was not one who thought that time spent in praise and prayer is just so much time lost for the work of life. "Amidst the observance of monastic discipline and the daily charge of singing in Church," to quote his own words once more, his reading and teaching and writing were done. Nor was he one who left his religion behind him on the doorstep, when he returned from service in the Church to work outside. His reading and teaching were to him a religious service; and his chief delight was in the spiritual progress of his pupils. The joy of teachers is made full, he tells us in his Commentary on the First Epistle of St. John, when by their teaching many are brought to the communion of the Church and of Him by Whom the Church is strengthened and increased. And the work thus done for God and God's children is done also in humble reliance on God's blessing. He has a sure hope that what God has helped him to accomplish will, by God's bounty, be blessed to himself and to his readers. And he entreats all who hear or read his *History* to offer frequent supplications for him to the throne of grace.

There is very much more that might be told about Bede's works and his surroundings, about the monastic life in his day, and about the condition of England and of Europe at the time when he was living this life at Jarrow; but this sketch of his life must come to a close.

The beautiful story of Bede's death has been often told, and may be found in various books.[1] Those who have never read it yet, will assuredly be glad to be induced to do so. He passed away on the evening before Ascension Day, which in 735 would be May 25. He had just dictated the last sentence of the part of the Gospel of St. John which he had been translating. Then, lying on the floor of his cell, and with his head raised so as to look towards the place where he used to pray, he sang, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," and the rest, and thus breathed his latest breath.

It will be a sad day for the Church of England when none of its members draw either instruction or inspiration from the life and death of Bede.

[1] In the Preface to Joseph Stevenson's translation of *The Historical Works of the Venerable Bede*, pp. xvii-xix; in the Preface to Whelock's *Beda*; Leland's *Collect.* iii, 84; Mabillon, *Acta SS. ord. S. Bened.*, III, i, 500; Baronius, *Annal.*, A.D. 731, § 20; and other works cited by Stevenson. By English writers about Bede the letter of Cuthbert to Cuthwin which gives the account is commonly much abbreviated.

CHAPTER V

MONASTICISM

THE life of Bede leads naturally enough to a consideration of two tendencies which mark the history of the Western Church during the time that the English nation was being converted, and the English Church was being organized; for to both of these tendencies Bede's life contributed a good deal. From the fifth to the seventh or eighth century, Western Christendom had been moving in two directions, which were not altogether unconnected; or (perhaps we should say) towards two points, which to a large extent might be reached by travelling along one and the same road; it had been becoming more distinctly monastic in spirit and organization, and it had been steadily developing into a vast monarchy (see p. 128). The influence of Bede told quite decidedly in furthering both these movements. By precept and example he showed how salutary and how happy the monastic life could be; and by precept and example he taught that the one safe centre of Church order and discipline was Rome.

And the two movements aided one another. The Popes supported monasteries, even when they came into conflict with regular ecclesiastical organization; and the monasteries naturally enough supported the claims of the Popes who favoured them.

It is not difficult to criticize monasticism. There is much in it which is not only contrary to modern ideas of what is good for the individual and for society, but which is at variance with human nature itself. It takes men away from those who have a claim upon their sympathy and services, and it prevents them from fulfilling the ordinary obligations of man to his fellowmen. It directly opposes some of the strongest among the original emotions of human nature, the affection between husband and wife and between parent and child. In the place of these natural duties and relationships it substitutes a number of artificial duties and relationships, the transgression or neglect of which constitutes equally artificial offences. For the bracing atmosphere of the outside world it substitutes that of a hothouse, which may possibly be more pure—although this is not always the case—but is certainly more enervating.

All this, and a good deal more, is true. Nevertheless, monasticism must have substantial advantages to set against these real and manifest defects. It is not to be supposed that a system which is so ancient and which still survives, which has arisen

in religions of such very different character and has spread so widely in each of them, and which, in spite of monstrous and notorious failures,[1] has been so persistently renewed, is unable to show that it answers to some elements in human nature and can do some real good to mankind. A mode of life that has been tested by such very different kinds of men through so many centuries, and still survives and flourishes, cannot be merely a gigantic blunder. It must offer something that many human beings crave. We may go further than that and say that, as a matter of fact, it offers gratification at one and the same time to two apparently opposed cravings, one of which is often very powerful, while the other always is so. These two are, aspirations for self-sacrifice and love of self. The monk and the nun were self-sacrificing, for they surrendered all those things which to most of us make life worth living—wealth, rank, fame, the joys of family life, and the inclinations of one's own will. But this manifest and far-reaching self-sacrifice, which often involved long and violent struggles for its accomplishment, was in reality self-seeking. It was often, if not commonly, thoroughly selfish in motive and in aim. The monk and the nun entered the monastery in order to escape distraction and temptation in this life, and in order

[1] These have been most frequent and most fatal among the Latin races.

to secure eternal happiness in the life to come. It is no sufficient answer to this to say that the selfishness that leads people to enter a monastery is not worse than the selfishness which prevails among those who remain outside: religious selfishness is certainly more subtle, and is probably harder to cure. Selfishness is bad wherever it is exhibited, and it is not easy to balance one kind against another. It is more easy to see that a monk is not necessarily a bad citizen because he retires from the discharge of ordinary social duties. That depends upon the condition of the society from which he retires. In an age in which the selfishness of ordinary men is exhibited in bestial sensualism, pitiless greed, and ruthless oppression of the weak, a striking example of rigorous self-control in all these things is an immense gain to society, and those who set such example may be rendering as great a service as the soldier who fights its battles or the trader who supplies its needs. Granted that the example would be all the more fruitful if it were exhibited in the world outside rather that in the seclusion of the convent; yet it is better that it should be manifested in the convent than not at all. Monks and nuns represent, not the highest life that is attainable by human beings, but a life which, among other uses, may at least serve as an emphatic protest against some of the worst features that disfigure and defile the outside world.

But, however we may strike the balance between the merits and demerits of monasticism, whether we regard it as a good thing which human frailty has almost invariably depraved, or as a system which is radically wrong in principle and only accidentally, under exceptional conditions, produces good results, it must always be reckoned as one of those influences which have taken a leading part in shaping the history of Christianity and of civilization. And it is not of Christian origin. Like Orientalism and Hellenism, it has come in from the outside, and, having been admitted into the Christian Church and been greatly modified by it, has in turn had a great effect upon Christian thought and organization.

In considering monasticism, as we find it in Britain after the conversion of the English, we may pass over the three stages through which it commonly passed elsewhere. These were: the *hermit* period, of solitaries living entirely apart in the desert; the *laura* period, of hermits' cells grouped round the cell of some one who had a reputation for special sanctity and spiritual wisdom; and the *monastery* period, in which buildings, with a definite plan in accordance with definite regulations, are substituted for the unorganized group of separate dwellings.[1] The monastic system which existed in Britain before

[1] Kirsopp Lake, *The Early Days of Monasticism on Mt. Athos*, pp. 4 f; Lingard, *The Anglo-Saxon Church*, I, pp. 147 f.

the coming of Augustine, and the system which he brought with him from Rome, had each of them already reached the third of these periods, and we need not ask when and where and to what extent it had passed through the other two. Our knowledge of both these types of monasticism is very incomplete. From the biographies of different saints we learn a good deal about the one,[1] and from scattered notices in Bede we learn something of both, and he tells us that in his time the period of decline and corruption had already begun. Augustine and his companions had come from a monastery founded by Gregory the Great in Rome, and it is likely enough that the Pope had drawn up the rule under which the monks lived. This is perhaps implied in the letter of his successor Honorius to Archbishop Honorius, June, 634 (Bede, *H.E.*, ii, 18) in which he speaks of the Archbishop's love in following *magistri et capitis sui sancti Gregorii regulam.* But we do not know any particulars of this rule, or whether it differed materially from other monastic rules, especially, whether it was very different from the Benedictine rule which eventually succeeded it The Benedictine rule in the end superseded, not only whatever rule Augustine may have brought with him to England, but also the Scottish rule of

[1] See e.g., *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, edited by Charles Plummer, especially Vol. I., pp. cxi–cxxix, and *Adamnani Vita S. Columbae*, edited by J. T. Fowler, pp. xxxvi–lvi.

St. Columba, which was afterwards brought from Iona to various centres in Northumbria and elsewhere. We may believe that, as in the case of the struggle between the rule of Benedict and the rule of Columban on the Continent, the victory of the former was a survival of the fittest.

Authorities are not agreed as to who it was that introduced the Benedictine system into England. Some say that this was due to Wilfrid, who had been brought up under the Scottish system at Lindisfarne, but had seen the superiority of the other rule in his travels on the Continent and especially at Rome. Others attribute it to Benedict Biscop, who travelled to Lyons with Wilfrid in 653 and went on to Rome without him. In his six pilgrimages to the tombs of the Apostles he may often have stayed in Benedictine monasteries. Others again attribute the introduction to Augustine himself, an hypothesis which assumes that the monastery on the Caelian from which he came had a rule which was essentially that of Benedict. There is yet another view, that the true Benedictine rule never existed in England at all until the revival of monasticism under Dunstan, and this may safely be adopted as correct. The only fact that is of much importance is that it was this rule which ultimately prevailed in England, as on the Continent.

The increase of monasteries had everywhere been enormous. It is said that the names of 1,481, founded

before A.D. 814, are known. The number of those whose names are not known must be very large. We have some idea of the increase in England from a statement that is made by Bede in his famous letter to Bishop Egbert of York. Having pointed out (§ 7) that there are many villages in out-of-the-way places which for many years have never been visited by a bishop, he suggests that the King of Northumbria, Ceolwulf, should be asked to co-operate in increasing the number of bishops. There is, however, this difficulty (§ 9) that " by means of the foolish donations of former kings, it is no easy matter to find a vacant place for the foundation of an episcopal see " ; for all the suitable places are already in the possession of some monastery or other. Bede therefore advises that the Great Council, with the Archbishop and the King, should decree that one of the monasteries be made an episcopal see ; and he thinks that the monks would consent to this, if they were allowed to elect the bishop either from their own body or from persons in the diocese.[1] If funds should be wanted for the maintenance of the bishop-

[1] We have an instance of this policy being adopted in the case of the Abbey of St. Martin at Tours. Pope Hadrian I. in 786 granted permission to the abbot and brethren to elect a bishop of their own, who was to have jurisdiction over the territory held by the monastery, and was to be wholly independent of the Metropolitan of Tours. The latter was to have no authority over the priests of the monastery, and no right to officiate in it.

ric, then he trusts that the revenues of some of the less satisfactory monasteries may be taken for this purpose.

In connexion with this last suggestion Bede makes known to us a monstrous abuse of the principle of monastic foundations. The abuse became possible through what may be regarded as an evasion of one of the chief rules in monastic discipline. The three primary duties of the monk were obedience, chastity, and poverty. In course of time it was argued that the poverty of the individual did not involve the poverty of the corporation. Although each member of the community was unable to call even a sandal his own, yet the community as a whole might be rich in buildings, lands, and any kind of endowment. Private property was forbidden, but corporate property might be acquired to any extent. This, of course, opened the door to indefinite relaxation of the rigours of monastic discipline, especially when study and teaching and the practice of various arts had taken the place of manual labour as the proper occupation of a monk. But the evils consequent upon the abandonment of the rule of poverty did not end there. A door was opened for the foundation of sham monasteries. Land granted for the foundation of a monastery was secured as the property of the monastery in perpetuity. Persons of influence obtained grants of land on the plea that they were about to found a monastery, bribed

the king to grant them a charter (which was confirmed by ecclesiastical and civil authority), and then founded what they called a monastery, but what was really a home for dissolute persons. This abuse, Bede says, was very common: instances of it were frequent; so much so, that it was difficult to find land for discharged soldiers and other deserving persons. And the abuse was not confined to one sex; there were convents of sham nuns as well as of sham monks. For this evil there is only one remedy—expulsion from the boundaries of the Church by episcopal authority, which, however, is not easy to get, for there is a good deal of episcopal connivance in the matter.[1] Thus, while the property of some of the genuine monasteries in which discipline had become very lax was to be taken for the maintenance of additional bishoprics, the sham monasteries were to be simply abolished, and their lands set free for any good purpose, ecclesiastical or civil. In these suggestions of Bede we have a remarkable anticipation of the treatment of the monastic houses under Henry VIII., as it was planned by Wolsey, rather than as it was carried out by Cromwell. Bede has been criticized for suggesting that the monastery that was chosen by the Council as an episcopal see should be allowed to elect one of

[1] This seems to mean that the king was not the only person who took bribes in this nefarious business.

their own monks, or some one in the diocese, to fill the see. Would it not have been better to allow them to elect the best man, wherever he was to be found? No doubt: but we must remember that Bede's object is to anticipate and overcome possible opposition. The monks would be less likely to oppose the erection of an episcopal see in their monastery, if it was suggested to them that they themselves might fill it, and indeed were expected to fill it, with some one who was well known to them. They were not bound to look further and elect an eminent stranger. Yet Bede may have been prejudiced in the matter. The founder of his own monastery, Benedict Biscop, was very much opposed to the policy of bringing an outsider from one monastic house to rule a house in which he was a stranger. Ceolfrid, before starting on the journey to Rome which he did not live to accomplish, charged the brethren to "choose one of the more efficient of their own number as their father." Such precedents (and they did not stand alone) would seem to Bede to be decisive. But the success of Theodore of Tarsus as Archbishop of Canterbury was a precedent for a more liberal policy. He, however, had the advantages of coming from the East, from the home of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and of having been consecrated for his difficult post by the Bishop of Rome himself. Bede may have thought that so unique a combination of favourable con-

ditions could not be a precedent for the appointment of an outsider.

These abuses were not the only thing which led to the almost total extinction of monasticism in England before the end of the ninth century. Monks were originally laymen who desired to fly from the temptations of the world. They required priests to minister to them, but becoming a monk was a different thing from taking orders. When, however, monks worked as missionaries, as was the case in England, it was found very advantageous that they should be ordained. This innovation divided monks into two classes, clerics and laymen, and the clerics regarded themselves as superior to the laymen. The proportion of clerics gradually increased, and they became a college of canons separate from the true monks, though continuing to live side by side with them. They were intermediate between the monks and the secular clergy outside. They lived together under rule, and so far were like the monks; but unlike the monks, and like the secular clergy, they mixed rather freely with the world. In some cases the monastic rule was formally abandoned, and the position of *canonici*[1] was adopted,

[1] See Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, I, pp. 222 f. He quotes from the legatine councils of A.D. 787: *Ut episcopi diligenti cura provideant quo omnes canonici sui canonice vivant et monachi seu monachae regulariter conversentur*; and he remarks that this is the first time that the word *canon* occurs in an English document.

with the consent of the whole body; and they called themselves monks or canons, just as they pleased. There is little doubt that this revolution took place in England as well as on the Continent, for somewhat later we find Alfred and Dunstan labouring to restore the monastic rule in its integrity.

We do not know the details of this early mixture of monks and canons, but what took place in the case of cathedrals was something of this kind. Some of these, as Canterbury, were originally monastic. Others, as York, were originally secular. When a bishop who was not a monk was appointed to a monastic see, his secular clergy did not live in the monastery, but with the bishop in his own house; they did parochial or missionary work, while the monks kept up the services in the cathedral church. When a bishop who was a monk was appointed to a secular see, he acted as a bishop in the cathedral church, but as an abbot in his own house. At Canterbury there was the monastery of St. Augustine side by side with the monastic cathedral, and we are not surprised to find that the latter gradually became more and more of a metropolitan cathedral and less and less of a monastery.[1] The Chronicle, under year 870, tells us how Archbishop Ceolnoth (833–870) admitted seculars, because pestilence had reduced the monks to five, and he could not get monks

[1] Stubbs, *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*, pp. 372 f.

to fill the vacancies; and under 995 the story is repeated, when the expulsion of the seculars by Elfric is narrated. The latter passage is a Latin insertion in the Chronicle and of dubious authority. By some the expulsion of the seculars is attributed to Siric, who was translated from Ramsbury to Canterbury in 990, and who advised what William of Malmesbury calls the "infamous precedent, utterly unworthy of men" of buying off with money the Danes whom they could not repel with the sword. But the story may be taken as good evidence of two things: first, of the existence of a mixture of monks and clerks in some monasteries, and secondly, of Dunstan's moderation in not expelling the clerks. The expulsion, at any rate, is not attributed to him. He died May 19, 988.

The abuses which Bede and other writers reveal as disfiguring monastic life in his day, and still more in subsequent times,[1] must not cause us to forget two important facts, viz. that it was to those who led the monastic life that the conversion of the Eng-

[1] We must remember that entrance into a monastery was not always voluntary, and those who were made to enter the monastic life as a penance were not likely to make good monks or nuns. Even one corrupt inmate of this kind might do an immense amount of harm. Penitentials sometimes advised or ordered that breaches of the seventh and eighth commandment should consign the offender to a monastery. In the end the corruption became such that Luther tells us of a bishop who used to say of any scoundrel: "He is no good to God or man; let him go into a monastery."

lish tribes was due, and also that in the matter of laxity and decline the English monks have a better record than their brethren on the Continent, except where continental monasteries owed their origin to English missionaries, such as Boniface and Willibrord. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the English Nation owes its Christianity entirely to those who lived the monastic life according to either the rule of Rome or the rule of Iona; and thus to the first generations of Christians among the Saxons and Angles monasticism must have seemed an essential feature in Christianity. They had no experience, and they had never heard, of Christianity apart from monasteries and monks. Consequently the monastic system had a hold upon the gratitude and affection of the people which it often lacked elsewhere. When every missionary centre was a convent and every convent a missionary centre, those who had learned the faith from its inmates, and were retained and strengthened in it by their help, had a reverence for an institution to which they owed so much, and took a pride in what seemed to be at once essentially Christian and national. And the consciousness that they were esteemed by their converts probably helped to keep the English monks from deteriorating so rapidly as did the monks of the Latin races. In them "the history of monachism is one long record of corruptions and reforms, in which constant changes and

the institution of new rules were insufficient to counteract increasing decline." [1]

The foundation of a genuine monastery was regarded as a serious work which requires much solemn preparation in the way of fasting and prayer. We find this in Bede's [2] account of Bishop Cedd's proceedings, when King Oidilwald or Ethelwald of Deira, son of King Oswald, asked him to accept some land as a site on which to build a monastery, it being the king's wish to have some place to which he could retire for devotion while he was alive, and in which he might be buried when he died. A brother of Cedd, named Caelin, had been chaplain to the king, and had brought the king and the bishop together. The site chosen was a wild spot in the mountains, like a robber's stronghold, apparently in order that the transition from desolation to consecration might be as great as possible, in accordance with Isaiah xxxv. 7 : *in cubilibus, in quibus prius dracones habitabant, orietur viror calami et junci.* The monks are to turn a howling wilderness into a garden of good works.

But this process means more than clearing the ground and erecting a building. The site is re-

[1] Stubbs, Introduction to the Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I, in *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*, p. 367.

[2] *H.E.*, iii, 23 ; see also Florence of Worcester, *Chron.*, *ad ann.* 653.

garded as not only desolate, but desecrated. It may have been occupied by wicked men, and it has certainly been the home of wild beasts. It must be cleansed from its previous pollution by fasting and prayer, in order to be made acceptable to the Lord. So Cedd asks the king to allow him to spend the following Lent in this wilderness, and this is granted. Excepting Sundays, Cedd fasts rigorously, allowing himself only one very slight meal each evening, viz., an egg, a little bread, and milk and water. This he said was the usual discipline at Lindisfarne, according to the instruction which he had received from the monks there. This means that it was Keltic discipline, for Lindisfarne was at this time a branch of the great monastery at Iona and had the same ritual as Iona: and according to Iona ritual every site which was to be used for a sacred edifice, whether monastery or church, must first be sanctified by fastings and prayers. After Cedd had fasted in this way for thirty days he was summoned to the king, who required his help in matters of business. Such a summons could not be ignored. But if he went, the necessary period of fasting would be broken, and (apparently) the whole would have to be begun again. Cedd had three brothers, all of them priests. He got one of these, named Cynibill, to take his place and continue the fasts for ten days longer, which was willingly and piously done; and as soon

as the forty days were completed the work of building was begun. This was the beginning of the convent of Laestingaeu (Lastingham), in a lonely part of the moors in North Yorkshire. As was natural in such a house, the rules were the same as those of Lindisfarne, and therefore of Iona. And it was quite in accordance with those rules that Cedd should be the first abbot.

This narrative is of considerable interest, for it illustrates several things. The idea that fastings have what may almost be called a magical effect, and that, unless the prescribed ritual is accurately carried out, the spell will be broken, is thoroughly Keltic. Fasting came to be regarded as a means of compelling the Almighty to do what was desired. If the right amount of fasting is endured, He is (so to speak) bound in honour to yield. This notion is very common in the Lives of the Irish saints, who of course shared the views that prevailed at Iona. In these Lives, fasting " is used, not merely to obtain a divine decision, but to find out the authors of crimes, and more extraordinary still, to obtain the destruction of superfluous population, or the death of a saint whose influence excited jealousy. With this are closely connected the (to our ears) blasphemous stories, in which the saints are represented as extorting terms from the Deity, and saying what they will or will not accept at His hands, or as upbraiding Him because He does not conform

to all their wishes. This is quite in the spirit of the heathen, who whips or drowns his idol if it displeases him; and the images of the saints inherit the same treatment." [1]

The narrative also illustrates the peculiar character of the Keltic episcopate noticed in a previous chapter. It was not diocesan until much later, and bishops might be under the jurisdiction of an abbot who was only a priest. Here, at Lastingham, we find Cedd in office as abbot, although he had as bishop a field of work in Essex. This required that he should be, to a considerable extent, a non-resident abbot. But during his absences from Lastingham he always had a *propositus* [2] to act for him as head of the monastery; and he seems to have appointed different persons on different occasions. Somewhat later, this officer was called a "prior." Cedd acted as interpreter between the two parties in the Synod at Whitby, which is no great distance from Lastingham. He went thither as an adherent of the Keltic tradition, but he was converted by Wilfrid's reasoning to the Roman one, A.D. 664. A visit to his monastery at Lastingham in the end proved fatal to him. He chanced to go thither in time of pestilence, and soon afterwards sickened and died.

[1] C. Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, I, pp. cxx. f.

[2] Both *propositus* and *praepositus* are found in MSS. The English "provost" and German "*probst*" come from the former, the French *prévôt* from the latter form.

This was probably soon after the Synod at Whitby, for it is known that a plague was raging in that year, and it has been pointed out already that the insanitary conditions of monastic life caused the mortality in monasteries to be great, whenever an epidemic occurred. Cedd was buried outside the church, which was probably built of wood; for Bede tells us that when a church of stone was erected in later times, the body of Cedd was placed within it, on the right hand of the altar. His death was not by any means the only one which occurred at the monastery at Lastingham. Cedd had had many of the brethren to help him in his missionary work among the East Saxons, and when they heard that Cedd had died and been buried at Lastingham, thirty of them returned thither to end their days there and be buried near their old master. They had not to wait long. With the exception of one lad, they were all carried off by the pestilence, which, from the epithet "yellow" which is often applied to it, is thought to have been some kind of typhus. The lad sickened, but, as Bede remarks, "I do not doubt that he was delivered when at the point of death by the intercessions of his father (whose affection had brought him to the body [1]), so that he might both himself escape eternal death, and also show the

[1] The use of *corpus* perhaps intimates that the father believed that his son was already dead. The son became a priest.

ministry of life and salvation to other brethren by his teaching."

It is possible that the withdrawal of this large number of missionaries from work among the East Saxons had something to do with the apostasy of a considerable number of those who had been already converted. One of the Essex kings and many of the nobles and commons forsook the worship of the Church and began to rebuild the temples and restore the old idolatry. This lapse is sufficiently accounted for by the calamity of the pestilence. Over and over again, in the history of Christianity, great sufferings, such as continual wars, famines, and pestilences, have been interpreted to mean that the ancient gods are angry with mankind because of the cessation of their worship; and this form of argument is very easy to follow and not easy to answer. Even if there had been no withdrawal of thirty missionaries from Essex, this apostasy of large numbers of the East Saxons would probably have taken place. But the withdrawal must have made the lapse of the weaker brethren more easy; and the lapse would probably have been checked sooner, but for the departure of these disciples of Cedd. We may perhaps say that their desire to end their days in the monastery near his grave illustrates the rather perverse working of the monastic spirit. It is strange that they should have thought that a return to Lastingham, a place which was then

far removed from population, was more in harmony with Christian duty than work among the East Saxons, who were sick both in body and soul. The other king of the East Saxons remained faithful, and with the help of Bishop Jaruman from Mercia succeeded in reconverting the apostates to the faith.

Cedd before his death had appointed his brother Ceadda—better known as Chad—as his successor, and Chad became the second abbot of Lastingham. If the order in which Bede gives the names—Cedd, Cynibill, Caelin, Ceadda—is the order of seniority, the youngest brother is the most famous of the four. Bede mentions as a remarkable fact that four brothers should all become celebrated priests (*sacerdotes praeclari*), and that two of them should have been promoted to the episcopate. In a conspicuous way they illustrate the growth of the English Church and especially of the English clergy ; for all of them were of English birth, and they received ordination independently of the Roman missionaries.

Cedd's appointing his own brother as abbot was no doubt an excellent measure ; a better man could hardly have been found in England ; but the danger of making such posts family possessions was one from which the English Church in the next two or three centuries did not wholly escape. We find Benedict Biscop warning the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow against it. " I tell you of a truth," he said, " that in comparison of two evils, it would be

much more tolerable for me that this whole place, in which I have built a monastery, should be reduced into an eternal wilderness (should God so will it), rather than that any brother of mine according to the flesh, of whom we are assured that he has not entered into the way of truth, should succeed me as abbot in its government." [1] Instances are quoted of monastic estates being held by a series of generations, which implies that either celibacy was not strictly observed, or that the abbots were fathers of families before they were ordained. Possibly this latter plan was deliberately adopted in order to keep the property in the family.

[1] Bede, *Lives of the Abbots*, II. In the Penitential of Theodore it is laid down, *Ipse non potest aliquem ordinare de suis propinquis.* Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, I., p. 224.

CHAPTER VI

THE ENGLISH DIOCESES

THE instructions which Gregory the Great gave to Augustine for his guidance in the establishment of Christianity in Britain seem to show that he was hardly aware of the differences between the Teutonic tribes which had settled in the island; and perhaps he was imperfectly informed as to the wide difference between these immigrants and the original inhabitants. He appears to have regarded them all as one nation. He writes to Augustine of "the English," "the Church of the English," and "the Bishops of Britain" (Bede, *H.E.*, i. 27, 29; cf. 30). He enjoins a very simple scheme as to episcopal jurisdiction. Augustine is to ordain twelve bishops who are to be subject to him, with the Bishop of London as their Metropolitan, and the Metropolitan is in future to be elected by his own synod and to receive the pall from Rome. Augustine is also to ordain a bishop for the city of York, who is in turn to ordain twelve bishops to serve under him

as Metropolitan when he has received the pall from Rome. This first Bishop of York is to be subject to the authority of Augustine, to whose care all the Bishops of Britain are committed: but after the death of Augustine the Bishop of York is to be in no way subject to the Bishop of London.[1] In other words, England is to be divided into two provinces, each governed by its Metropolitan, one at London and one at York, and each province is to have twelve episcopal sees. So long as he lives, Augustine is to be supreme; but after his death the northern province is to be entirely independent of the southern Metropolitan.

The scheme is simple and symmetrical, but it was made in ignorance of the circumstances, and it was never carried into effect. Even now, the Archbishop of York has far less than twelve suffragans, and there has never been an Archbishop of London. The fact that there were not twenty-four territorial divisions, nor any civil divisions that could conveniently be subdivided into twenty-four, was perhaps enough to cause Gregory's scheme to fail. There were not twenty-four kingdoms, or twelve, or six, but seven, to be considered. And, besides this, there was the fact that the different kingdoms had been converted to Christianity in different ways

[1] It was very natural that Gregory should name these two cities: they would be the two cities in Britain that were best known to him.

from different sources; and although the essentials of Christianity were everywhere the same, there were considerable differences of form, which might easily harden into schisms and render a uniform organization impossible. Roughly speaking, Roman missionaries had converted Kent, Essex, East Anglia, and part of Northumbria, Scottish missionaries had converted Mercia and part of Northumbria. Northumbrian missionaries had converted Wight and Sussex. And there was much confusion and difficulty until Theodore of Tarsus organized and consolidated the whole.

Meanwhile, the ecclesiastical divisions had taken a form very different from that which had been projected by Pope Gregory, for local institutions proved stronger than papal injunctions. The dioceses for the most part followed the divisions which already existed between the different kingdoms. To such an extent was that the case, that where our knowledge is imperfect, as it often is, the limits of the one are a fairly safe guide to the limits of the other. It may happen that in some instances we know the limits of the dioceses, without being sure about the civil divisions. In such cases the limits of the ancient dioceses are a good guide to the limits of the ancient kingdoms and principalities. And this historical feature is not confined to England. In other countries also the ecclesiastical map frequently follows the civil map, not only in its original

construction, but also in its subsequent modifications.

Here the Scottish Church in Ireland and Scotland, from which some of the missionaries who converted the English came, hardly comes under consideration. Bishops there had originally no territorial jurisdiction: they were bishops of tribes rather than of districts, and they were little more than officials for performing certain episcopal functions, such as ordaining. It was the heads of monasteries that had jurisdiction. The head of a monastery might be a bishop, but his being one did not increase his jurisdiction. There is, however, this much of illustration to be obtained from the Keltic Church, that when in a later age divisions of the nature of dioceses were formed, they were in the first instance coincident with the tribal boundaries.[1]

The ecclesiastical organization in Gaul is closely analogous to that which prevailed in England, but there we have to deal with cities rather than kingdoms. The episcopal seat was placed in the chief city belonging to the tribe, and the jurisdiction of the bishop coincided with the jurisdiction of the city. To a considerable extent this ancient principle still holds good, or, if there has been modification, it has been of a simple kind: a large diocese has been divided, or two small ones have been united. Virtually, the principle is the same as that which

[1] C. Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, I., p. cxiii.

originated English dioceses, viz., that ecclesiastical divisions should depend upon earlier civil divisions. And the same principle holds goods in Germany also; but there it is less easy to trace it than in France, because the changes in the civil divisions have been more numerous.

It would be interesting to consider to what extent the English dioceses have been determined by the shires, the limits of which have changed very little for many centuries. But the shires themselves are of later date than the period which we are considering. The fact with which we are concerned is that the original jurisdiction of the English sees was determined, not in accordance with the arrangement prescribed by the Pope, but by the limits of the already existing kingdoms. Each kingdom, it was thought, ought to have its bishop with as much reason as it had its king. We have seen how quickly experience proved that one bishop was quite inadequate to the work that had to be done, and how Theodore of Tarsus set himself to work to break up the larger dioceses, and how, at a later day, Bede urges Egbert of York to work for an increase in the episcopate. Nevertheless, the principle that civil boundaries are to be the guide in determining episcopal jurisdiction seems to be kept in view. It is perhaps true to say that this principle was never formally laid down: it was possibly adopted almost as a matter of course. Boundaries were wanted

for a new purpose: boundaries already existed for an old purpose, and they would serve the new purpose very well: then why think of anything different?

Theodore of Tarsus was perhaps the last instance of a foreigner obtaining one of the principal sees. Not till a later day does that become an abuse and a grievance. At first it was neither; it was a necessity. The infant English Church was unable to walk alone: it must for a time be guided by pastors brought from outside the nation, for there were no Englishmen capable of holding such responsible posts. But as soon as the English Church was able to walk alone, it was allowed to walk alone, and it continued to do so. After Theodore of Tarsus had done his work, the clergy of the English Church were almost always Englishmen, at least for some centuries.[1] And it is surely a mistake to regard this fact as evidence of the weak and temporary character of the work of Augustine. If the bishops of his succession quickly died out, we may regard that as evidence of the success of his labours. It is one of the greatest triumphs of missionary effort to be able to train up a native

[1] There had been one native archbishop before Theodores "Deusdedit, of the nation of the West Saxons," who was consecrated by Ithamar of Rochester, March 26, 655 (Bede, *H.E.*, iii., 20). In the same chapter we read of four other native bishops, Ithamar, the first of all, Thomas, Bertgils, and Damian.

ministry, independent of the original source. When Central Africa has a ministry of its own, and requires no more Europeans to supply it with clergy, will that be evidence that the Universities' Mission has been a failure? Whatever estimate we may form of the results of the mission of Augustine, we must not place the rise of an independent English clergy to its discredit.

There is yet another particular in which the scheme set forth by Pope Gregory has not been fulfilled. That London has never become a Metropolitan see, and York has never had twelve suffragans, has been already pointed out. But, besides this, the northern Metropolitan has never been wholly independent of the southern one, for York has always been in a subordinate place to Canterbury, especially in the period previous to the Norman Conquest. Only once, and for a very short time, was the dignity of Canterbury impaired and its jurisdiction very seriously curtailed; and then it was not York that gained by the temporary degradation of the see of Augustine. Offa, the vigorous and victorious King of Mercia, whose conquests had almost reduced the seven kingdoms to three, Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, and seemed likely to reduce them to one, had an ambitious ecclesiastical policy, which was no doubt intended to strengthen his political position. That he was regarded, even on the Continent, as a power to be

reckoned with is shown by the fact that Pope Hadrian I. thought it worth while to write to Charlemagne and tell him that he did not believe the rumour that Offa wanted Charlemagne to help him to depose the Pope. Hadrian calls Offa "King of the English nation," and says that he has received ambassadors from him. And Offa evidently had influence at Rome. He seems to have thought it an unfortunate circumstance for his kingdom that neither of the Metropolitan sees lay within it. Jaenbert or Jambert was then Archbishop of Canterbury (765–791), and, like Offa, was a man of strong character. It was some years after the monks of Canterbury had elected him to the vacant see that Offa began his conquest of Kent, in which struggle he was opposed by the Archbishop. When Offa's success was complete, and Jaenbert had become by the law of conquest his subject, Offa determined to have a Metropolitan see in the kingdom of Mercia. The see on which he fixed was Lichfield, and he desired to make the Bishop of Lichfield a Metropolitan, with jurisdiction from the Humber to the Thames. To this scheme Pope Hadrian gave his consent. He may have thought Offa was a person whom it was worth while to gratify: or he may have acted on the principle, *Divide et impera;* two rival Metropolitans would more easily be kept under Roman influence than one with undivided jurisdiction. And it is possible that

he really thought the plan a good one on its own merits. He certainly gave it his sanction. In 786 he sent two legates to Jaenbert and Offa, and after hearing their views, one of them, George, Bishop of Ostia, went on a visitation tour to York, and with Archbishop Eanbald held a council at which Alcuin was present. The other, Theophylact, Bishop of Todi, visited Offa's dominions. Somewhat later both legates attended a council at Chelsea, which for obvious reasons is called in the Saxon Chronicle "the contentious synod." Such seems to have been the order of events, but there are chronological and other difficulties. In spite of the strenuous opposition of Jaenbert and his supporters, sanction was given to the promotion of Lichfield to be a Metropolitan see, to which was assigned authority over seven dioceses in Mercia and East Anglia, while Canterbury was left with only five, viz., London, Winchester, Rochester, Selsey and Sherborne. Higbert, the Bishop of Lichfield, was to continue to hold the see under these new conditions, but he had to wait until he received the pall from Rome before he could assume the new title. This evidently arrived in 788, for in that year he signs one charter as bishop and another as archbishop; and in 789 there is again a synod at Chelsea, which is presided over by Archbishop Jaenbert and Archbishop Higbert. Offa, in gratitude to the Pope, promised an annual tribute to

Rome of 365 gold mancuses, one of which, with *Offa Rex* on it, is still in existence,[1] It has been thought that this tribute was the origin of "Peter's Pence," but that is by no means certain. It is more probable that the *Romefeoh* or *Romescot* did not originate before the reign of Alfred or of his son Edward, and it is in connexion with Edward that the word *Romefeoh* first occurs: Bede never mentions it. When 830 Saxon silver pennies were found in Rome some thirty or more years ago, they were with high probability assumed to be a remittance of Peter's Pence. Of Alfred there were three, of Edward 217, of Athelstan 393, of Edmund 195; which gives one some idea of the time when this remittance was sent. Be this as it may, Offa's tribute to Rome did not secure the permanence of his new archbishopric. After about sixteen years (787–803), Higbert had to resign; Canterbury recovered its rights, and there never again was an Archbishop of Lichfield.[2]

In what has been said above no account has been taken of the diocesan divisions which may have existed in Britain before the conversion of the Eng-

[1] A silver *mancusa* was equivalent to thirty silver pence; a gold one was worth nearly ten times as much.

[2] This conflict between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the King of Mercia about Lichfield is the chief among the very few instances of quarrels between Church and State before the Norman Conquest. Archbishop Jaenbert died about 792, and therefore did not live to see the restoration of the rights of Canterbury.

lish. It may be doubted whether there were any. What we know of the Keltic Church in Ireland and Scotland would lead us to the conclusion that the British Bishops had no dioceses in the strict sense of the term. But the signatures of the British Bishops at the Council of Arles in A.D. 314 rather point in the other direction. What is certain is that we do not know what the limits of episcopal jurisdictions, if they existed, were. The conquest by the English invaders obliterated all such divisions, and civil divisions took their place—the civil divisions which served to determine the limits of the English dioceses, when they arose. See below respecting the seven British Bishops.

Stubbs (*Const. Hist.*, ch. viii.) has pointed out what a blessing it was that the English Church was thus prevented from inheriting any traditions from Romano-British Christianity, such as those which had infected the Christian Church in France and in the Rhineland. Our insular position probably contributed to this happy result. There was nothing of Roman imperialism mixed up with our ecclesiastical organization. Bishops in England were not compelled, as they often were in France, to accept the position of civil magistrates and other secular offices, and they were rarely local potentates, as German Bishops often were. This feature in English ecclesiastical organization is illustrated by the places which were selected as episcopal sees.

Sometimes, no doubt, the chief town of the kingdom was chosen, and this was specially likely to be the case at the outset, when the conversion of the king led to the conversion of his subjects. In the cases of Canterbury, London, York, Rochester, and Winchester, we have the chief town as the seat of the bishop. But Dunwich, Elmham Selsey, Sherborne, Lichfield, Hereford, and Hexham were villages. So also were Crediton, Ramsbury, and Wells, the sees created by Edward the Elder. Perhaps Lindisfarne may be taken as another example; but that may have been chosen because, like its parent, Iona, it was an island, rather than because it was not a centre of population. In this way English Bishops escaped a great deal of political entanglement. They did not become dukes or counts, and were able to keep free from court intrigues. This was less true of the two Metropolitans than of the rest; for the fact of their having jurisdiction in several kingdoms brought them necessarily into secular relationships with civil rulers, and sometimes into rivalry with them. First Canterbury and then York assumed the right to coin money, and the pieces bore the Metropolitan's name and likeness. In the great find of silver pennies at Rome, mentioned above, there were six of Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury. The promotion of Higbert to be Archbishop of Lichfield, and his resignation or deprivation (both of them appar-

ently for political reasons), are rare examples of anything of the kind. In short, by being outside political struggles and remote from courts, they were able to do spiritual work in a more spiritual manner; and when they did act as counsellors to princes, or intervened as peacemakers between combatants, they were able to do so without being at once suspected of being influenced by party motives. A few centuries later the influence of the world upon the Church had increased, and England had to reconcile itself to the fact that not only were its bishops obliged to be statesmen, but that sometimes the secular office caused the spiritual office to be neglected and almost forgotten.

It was remarked above that the Keltic Church in Ireland and Scotland had no bishops with territorial jurisdiction, and that this may possibly have been the case in the British Church before the conversion of the English nation. This is to some extent illustrated by the case of Cedd, who was a bishop of the East Saxons and also abbot of a monastery in Northumbria (see above p. 165). He was an Englishman by birth, but he had been brought up and ordained at Lindisfarne, the offshoot of Iona. Florence of Worcester, under the year A.D. 621, states that "Cedd, the brother of Ceadda (Chad), succeeded Mellitus in the bishopric of London." This is almost certainly a mistake; but from what Florence himself tells us under the year

A.D. 653 we can see how the inaccuracy has arisen. One of the Kings of the East Saxons, while on a visit to the King of Northumbria, was converted to Christianity and baptized by Finan, Bishop of Northumbria; and on his return to Essex he took with him Cedd, who was then only a priest, to preach to his people. His success was great, and Finan suggested to Cedd that he should return to Northumbria and be consecrated bishop, in order to be more efficient among the East Saxons; and this was done. Thus, neither did the King of the East Angles appoint Cedd to be bishop in his kingdom, nor did the bishop of any southern see consecrate him. It was (so to speak) by a private arrangement between Finan and Cedd that the latter worked among the East Saxons as a bishop rather than as a priest. He was a missionary bishop in Essex.[1] But seeing that London was in Essex, and that Cedd was working in territory which was afterwards in the diocese of London, Florence of Worcester not unnaturally, although inaccurately, speaks of him as Bishop of London. He appears as such in no lists of the Bishops of London, and probably never had what could be called a diocese. He had merely a field for missionary labour.

[1] A little later we find in Wessex shire-bishops without any see; and Dunstan seems in the first instance to have been consecrated by Odo as a chaplain-bishop to King Edgar, before Worcester became vacant by the death of Kynewald.

Consecration by a single bishop was not uncommon in those times, and it must often have been difficult to secure more than one consecrator. It appears to have been specially frequent in the Keltic Churches. Roman authorities seem to have regarded it as irregular, but valid. Augustine asked Gregory this very question, and the reply was, "In the English Church, while you are its only bishop, you cannot consecrate save in the absence of other bishops. For when do bishops come over from Gaul, to attend as witnesses in the consecration of a bishop?"[1] The rule that three bishops should take part in consecrating a bishop is ancient, but its object seems to have been to avoid surreptitious consecrations about which the Church knew nothing, and also to make sure that the consecrator himself had been properly ordained. It would be most improbable that all three consecrators were men about whose episcopal authority there were serious doubts; but this might be the case with regard to one.[2] It will be noticed that Gregory in his reply to Augustine does not mention the possibility of getting Keltic Bishops to assist Augustine in consecration. This may be a mere oversight, but it is perhaps

[1] This is Bede's text: *qui testes adsistant* (*H.E.*, i., 27), which makes better sense than the reading in the Benedictine Gregory, *illi adsistent*, "when bishops come over, they will attend, etc."

[2] See Bright, *Early English Church History*, p. 59; C. Plummer, *Bede*, II., p. 49.

deliberate. Gregory would regard them as schismatical on account of their defective Paschal cycle and other peculiarities. But the Keltic Bishops of Iona and its offshoots had no such feeling, and therefore Finan, when he consecrated Cedd, got two other bishops, who would be either British, or (more probably) Scottish, to assist him. This shows that, however common consecration by one bishop may have been among the Keltic Churches, it was not the rule, otherwise Finan would not have taken the trouble to find others to help him in consecrating Cedd. The important point, however, for our purpose is that Finan, whether with or without the assistance of other bishops, could not give Cedd any *jurisdiction* in Essex. Cedd was not Bishop of Essex, and still less was he Bishop of London. He had no diocese, but only authority to discharge episcopal functions.

Nor can we get anything with regard to dioceses in the British Church out of the fact that "seven bishops of the Britons" (Bede, *H.E.*, ii., 2) met Augustine in the disastrous conference at Augustine's Oak. There has been much discussion as to who these bishops were, whether they had sees, and, if so, where the sees were. Those who care to make guesses under good guidance may read what Haddan and Stubbs (*Councils*, III., 41) and Bright (*Early English Church History*, pp. 75 f.) have written on the subject. The conclusion of

the former discussion is that "there is no trustworthy evidence to show who these bishops were"; of the latter, that "we cannot identify these bishops."

Very little also can be made of the statement which Wilfrid is said to have uttered in the address which he gave at the consecration of the basilica which he had erected at his beloved Ripon. The exact year of the dedication is not known, but it was probably in or soon after A.D. 671. To this great ceremony he invited the Kings of Deira and Bernicia and a great many persons of high rank, both ecclesiastical and civil. In the address to the people, Wilfrid is said to have read a list of the lands which kings and princes and others had given for the good of their souls. Among these lands, he stated, were the sacred places which the British clergy had relinquished, when they fled in terror before the English invaders. This statement, if it can be trusted, gives us the interesting fact that Wilfrid had been able to secure Church lands, which had previously belonged to the British Church, for the benefit of the English Church; but it tells us nothing as to whether these possessions of the British Church had been part of a British diocese. The recovery by the English Church of property that had been given to the British Church, and then deserted by it, is a bit of history worthy of note; but it gives no help in clearing up the doubts as to the existence of a territorial episcopate in

Britain previous to the conversion of the English (see Eddius, *Life of Wilfrid*, 22). It illustrates Wilfrid's great influence that he was able to accomplish all this and to get together such a distinguished company for the dedication of his great church at Ripon. And it perhaps explains some of his subsequent difficulties; for kings and princes may have been not unwilling to get so powerful a person out of the way. The ceremony at Ripon may be regarded as the most brilliant point in his very chequered career, and it throws light on what preceded and what followed it.

It has been narrated already how Wilfrid, after being chosen to fill the see of York, went to Gaul to seek consecration. He wanted to have at least three consecrators, and he did not want to have among them any bishop who was tainted with the Keltic error about the keeping of Easter. Boniface of Dunwich was free from this taint, but it was not easy to find two others. It has also been narrated how Wilfrid's enemies caused Chad to be appointed to the see of York during Wilfrid's long absence in Gaul. Chad was sent by King Oswy to Canterbury to be consecrated. But, owing to the death of Deusdedit, the see of Canterbury was vacant. So also were the sees of Lindisfarne and Rochester. But Boniface at Dunwich was available, and it is not known why Chad passed him by and took the longer journey to Winchester. Boniface might have

seemed preferable, for he had been consecrated by Honorius of Canterbury, whereas Wini of Winchester owed his consecration to Gallic prelates. However, Wini was chosen ; and, in order to secure three consecrators, he adopted the highly interesting course of getting " two bishops of British race "—probably from Devon or Cornwall—to assist him in consecrating Chad for the see of York. This was a meritorious step in the direction of removing the barrier between the British and English Churches, and it is evidence that Wini did not think that differences about the Paschal question and the tonsure ought to produce a schism. Thus an Englishman who had been consecrated in Gaul to an English see joined with two bishops of the British Church in consecrating one who had been brought up in the traditions of the Scottish Church of Iona in its offshoot at Lindisfarne. This was altogether a happy combination ; but to those who held that Keltic differences of usage as to Easter and the tonsure *were* schismatical, it gave an opening, which was afterwards used, for objecting to the validity of the consecration of Chad.[1] Bede himself had this

[1] There was yet another objection, viz., that Chad had been consecrated to a see that was not vacant. There could not be two Bishops of York. Bede says that Theodore persuaded Chad not to give up the episcopal office, and then himself completed his consecration afresh (*denuo*) in the Catholic manner. This must mean reconsecration. Eddius and Malmesbury say that Chad was re-ordained through all the grades. See Bright, pp. 227 f., 440 f.

feeling, for (forgetting Boniface of Dunwich) he says that at this time Wini was the only bishop in Britain who was ordained *canonice*. The date of Chad's consecration should be placed A.D. 666; for he held the see of York for three years and was deposed in 669.

When Theodore of Tarsus (A.D. 669–690) set to work to organize the young English Church, and decided that the large dioceses which were conterminous with the different kingdoms must be divided, he in the main adopted the principle which had determined the limits of those dioceses; i.e., he followed the lines of territorial or tribal divisions which previously existed. He found the following sees already in existence: Canterbury, founded A.D. 597; London and Rochester, A.D. 604; York, founded A.D. 625 and restored 664; Dunwich A.D. 630; Dorchester, A.D. 634 (afterwards Winchester); Lindisfarne, A.D. 635; Mercia, without definite see, A.D. 656, but settled at Lichfield 669.[1] East Anglia was divided according to the existing divisions of North folk and South folk (Norfolk and Suffolk): the latter retained Dunwich, while

[1] It was probably in September, 669, that Chad, retiring with characteristic humility from York, began work again as a bishop in Lichfield. Bede, however, seems to imply that Chad was reconsecrated *before* he had received any see (*H.E.*, iii., 2). In narrating how Winfrid was consecrated to succeed Chad, Bede again points out that the limits of ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction were the same.

Elmham was given to the northern people, A.D. 673. Then Northumbria was divided. Deira retained York; Bernicia in addition to Lindisfarne received Hexham, A.D. 678; and a missionary bishop for the Picts was established at Whithern, A.D. 681. Lindissi or Lindsey, the northernmost of the three divisions of Lincolnshire, received a bishop of its own with a see at Sidnacester, A.D. 678. Its inhabitants are called Lindisfari by Bede,[1] and they seem to be constantly paying the penalty of being a border folk, for they are conquered and reconquered again and again by Northumbria and Mercia. At the time when the see of Sidnacester was founded, Lindsey had been regained for Northumbria by Egfrid; but afterwards Ethelred got it back for Mercia, in or soon after A.D. 679. This change, however, did not interfere with Lindsey's being recognized as a separate diocese. Mercia itself was then divided. In addition to Lichfield, North and South Hecana received a bishop with a see at Hereford, A.D. 676; the Middle Angles received one with a see at Leicester, A.D. 680; and in the same year Worcester became a see for Hwiccia It was not until after the death of Theodore that the forest of Selwood was treated as a dividing boundary in the kingdom of Wessex. Winchester remained the see of the Eastern half, while the Western received a see at Sherborne, A.D. 705. A little later,

[1] *H.E.*, iii., 24; iv., 3, 12; v., 23.

Sussex, which was becoming absorbed by Wessex, received a missionary bishop with a see at Selsey, A.D. 709.[1]

Modern experience shows that the division of a large diocese leads to a development of work and organization in each of the parts. The same result evidently followed in the seventh and eighth centuries in England. On the one hand, country churches increased, and a parochial system with an endowed clergy gradually grew up; on the other, monasteries greatly increased; aud the latter was the larger result of the two.

This general agreement between the limits of dioceses and the existing civil divisions, combined with the fact that the same men were often members both of ecclesiastical councils and of the civil "witan," contributed to a result of great importance in the history of England. In no other country in Europe did Church and State work so harmoniously together. The same English people were ruled in one way for civil and military purposes as were ruled in another way for ecclesiastical purposes. There was no vanquished population who had been protected by the Church from oppression by the victors. And before long the Eng-

[1] See Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, I., p. 226, from which most of these details are taken. Under Edward the Elder (901–24) the policy of dividing dioceses seems to have been continued; as if each shire of Wessex was to have a bishop.

lish Church became independent of Italy and Gaul and was manned by a native clergy. It was an enormous advantage to have priests and bishops who had been born and bred in England, had English ideas, and spoke the English language. This advantage to a considerable extent counteracted the evil of having the services of the Church conducted in a foreign tongue, and it certainly gave strength to the English Church. It may have had something to do with the strength that came of this advantage that the English Church was able to give Boniface as an Apostle to Germany about A.D. 716, and Willibrord as an Apostle to the Frisians in 690, and to lend Alcuin to Charlemagne, 781 to 790, and 792 to 804.[1] If we may not say that this proves that the English Church was strong enough to spare such men, we may at least say that it was strong enough to produce them. "It was by Anglo-Saxon missionaries from the seventh to the eleventh centuries that Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland were converted to the gospel" (Stubbs, *Lectures on Early English History*, p. 16).

The Council of Hertford in A.D. 673 has been already mentioned. In 680 Theodore held his second

[1] Alcuin tells us that he was able to do his native country good service when Charles, indignant at the way in which the Northumbrians treated their princes, thought of chastising them. Alcuin interceded and softened his wrath. See Collier, *Eccles. Hist.*, I., p. 339 f.

famous synod, which met at Hatfield on September 17. Pope Agatho held a synod at Rome at Easter in this year on the Monothelite question, and Theodore probably wished to show that the English Church was at one with Rome in upholding the orthodox view. Wilfrid, as already stated, had stayed on in Rome after his own question was decided, and was present at this synod.[1] Theodore himself had been expected to attend, and it is said that the Pope postponed the meeting of the council in order to give him time to arrive. This shows that he was regarded in Rome as a prelate of great importance. In his letter to the Council of Constantinople, which was to meet soon after the Roman Synod, Pope Agatho speaks of Theodore as *famulum atque coepiscopum nostrum, magnae insulae Britanniae archiepiscopum et philosophum.*[2]

It is unfortunate that Bede, in his brief account of the historic Council of Hatfield (*H.E.*, iv., 17, 18), does not give the names, or even the number of the bishops who were present: Had he done so we should have been more sure of the exact arrangement of the English dioceses at that time. He merely quotes part of the document which Theodore

[1] Wilfrid is sometimes said to have been present at the Council of Hatfield. He had probably not yet reached England; when he did reach England he was put in prison by Egfrid. In either case, he could not have been at the council.

[2] *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, IV., p. 929.

had drawn up as a record of the proceedings, in which it is stated on September 17, 680, "Theodore, by the grace of God, Archbishop of the island of Britain and of the see of Canterbury, being [president, and the other venerable bishops of the island of Britain sitting with him," certain things were agreed to. The only other name given of those who were present is that of John the Archchanter of St. Peter's and Abbot of St. Martin's at Rome, and there is some evidence that he was sent by a council held in Rome the previous year. Bede here merely says that he had come from Rome *per jussionem papae Agathonis, duce reverentissimo abbate Biscopo cognomine Benedicto;* and in his *Lives of the Abbots* (Benedict, 6) it is more clearly stated that Benedict Biscop obtained Agatho's leave to take the archchanter back to Wearmouth to teach ecclesiastical singing.[1] One thing, however, comes out quite clearly in the scattered evidence which exists respecting the organization of the first dioceses in the English Church. The original plan of Gregory the Great of having two provinces, each under one archbishop with bishops under him, was entirely ignored by Theodore, and without any protest

[1] Bede says that at first the knowledge of Church music was confined to Kent. Putta, whom Theodore consecrated to succeed Damian in the see of Rochester, was *maxime modulandi in ecclesia more Romanorum peritus* (*H.E.*, iv., 2). James the Deacon and Eddius the biographer of Wilfrid were the first to teach music in the north.

or interference on the part of Rome. So masterful a prelate was not likely to share the jurisdiction over England with another Metropolitan; and he may have rightly believed that, for the present, at any rate, it was expedient that the whole should be under the control of one and the same ruler. There is extant a letter in which Pope Vitalian, who consecrated Theodore, writes to him, *nobis visum est . . . commendare tuae sagacissimae sanctitati omnes ecclesias in insula Britanniae positas.*[1] The letter is a forgery, but this sentence in it seems to be true enough to fact.

The last thing that we know of this great archbishop is his being reconciled to Wilfrid and restoring him to the see of York in 686. This reconciliation completed and secured the diocesan organization of the English Church, the creation of which is the grandest result of Theodore's remarkable episcopate. And, it may once more be repeated, this union of the whole English nation under one ecclesiastical organization anticipated and prepared the way for the union of the nation under one political organization. The English Church is older than, and is the direct parent of, the English State. The one ordered Church existed long before the one

[1] C. Plummer, *Bede*, II., p. 205. The passage is quoted by Ralph de Diceto in his history of the Archbishops of Canterbury.

ordered Kingdom, which it helped to bring into existence.

It is worth while to dwell upon this. It is, of course, well to remember that, although we call ourselves Britons, our right to the name depends solely on our living in Britain. By descent we are Germans. All our very mixed ancestors—Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, Danes, Norwegians, and Normans —belonged to the Teutonic race. There is very little Keltic blood in our veins, and hardly any Keltic element in our language or institutions. But this important fact must not lead us to suppose that our various Teutonic ancestors at once coalesced with one another as soon as they settled in Britain. Originally, in their primeval home on the Continent, they had had the same customs and institutions. But they had separated into different tribes, and had developed differently, before any of them invaded Britain. And, when they did emigrate to Britain, they did not all come at once. They came at very different times, and continued to develop in different ways in their new home (pp. 39 f.). They were not a horde of savages, without organization; they brought an established organization with them. But the customs and institutions of those who migrated later were not the same as the customs and institutions of those who had migrated earlier, and who had continued to develop since their settlement in Britain. There was radical resem-

blance, but there was much difference in detail. And this was the case with their language also. Each of these tribes spoke a Teutonic dialect, but the dialects were different. The elements of unity were overwhelmed by the elements of difference. Hence come the seven or eight great kingdoms, each of them independent of one another, and each having its own customs and laws; and some of the kingdoms had important subdivisions. There was sometimes a Bretwalda, who ranked above the other kings and perhaps had some authority over them; but there was no Empire of which he was Emperor, and no Federation of States over which he presided. The Bretwalda never stood, as the Archbishop of Canterbury constantly did, at the head of an organized body, the officials of which were under his control (p. 66). There was no political bond of unity whatever.

The leaven of Christianity at once introduced a unifying force. It worked through all the politically separate lumps, and made them capable of becoming spiritually one lump. We see it at work even before the arrival of Theodore, when Oswy of Northumbria and Egbert of Kent "consult together as to the state of the Church of the English," and "with the choice and consent of the holy Church of the race of the English" elect Wighard to be sent to Rome to be consecrated "Archbishop of the Church of the English" in succession to Deus-

dedit (Bede, *H.E.*, iii., 29; iv., 1). And when Theodore, by means of his organization of the dioceses under one archbishop, had brought unity into the English Church, the thing was done. As Christians, East Saxons and West Saxons, East Anglians and Mercians, were one nation already. They might be under different kings, but they were under one archbishop, and in spiritual matters they all had the same rights and the same laws, which were quite independent of the civil power. An Englishman migrating from one kingdom to another found himself under exactly the same ecclesiastical government as before. He had a different bishop, but the system was the same. Politically he might have a different status and might have to change some of his customs, but as a member of the Church there was no change. Henceforward it was very easy for kingdoms to coalesce. One kingdom might swallow up another, but that caused no great commotion in the populations. They were one nation already for religious purposes, and they did not object to becoming one nation for political purposes.[1]

The restoration of Wilfrid to the see of York is an expression which, although accurate enough in itself, might easily be misleading, if not accompanied by explanation. The bishopric to which he was restored in 686 was very different from that

[1] Stubbs, *Lectures on Early English History*, pp. 3–10; *Constitutional History*, pp. 163 f.

which he had ruled from 669 to 678; it had been immensely reduced, and therefore, by consenting to accept the reduced bishopric, Wilfrid really gave his assent to the division of the diocese upon which Theodore had from the first insisted. Lindisfarne, Hexham and Sidnacester had all of them received bishops, whose dioceses were taken out of the old diocese of York; and in addition to these three sees, there was that of the bishop for the Picts at Whithern. If Theodore conceded a good deal in offering to restore Wilfrid to York, Wilfrid also conceded a good deal in consenting to reductions which had been made without his consent.

Study of the origin of the English dioceses and of the way in which they were increased and systematized by Theodore of Tarsus has something more than mere antiquarian interest. Dr. Stubbs is not an historian who is given to exaggeration or to empty flourishes of rhetoric. This is how he sums up the matter.

"It is difficult, if not impossible, to overstate the debt which England, Europe, and Christian civilization owe to the work of Theodore. He was the real organizer of the administrative system of the English Church, and in that work laid the foundation of English national unity. He brought the learning and culture of the Eastern Empire into the West, and with the aid of Hadrian and Benedict Biscop established schools from which the scholars

and missionaries of the following century went out to rekindle the light of Christian culture in France and the recently converted parts of Germany; and thus formed a most important link between ancient and modern life. His work was, to a great extent, one of unwearied and unpretentious industry; his culture was, for the time, enlightened and tolerant, and, although he has never been canonized or even beatified, both his character and his work seem to place him among the first and greatest of the saints whom God has used for the building up of the Church and development of the culture of the world."[1]

Not only has Theodore never been canonized by authority; he has not become a saint in popular estimation. There do not appear to have been many legends about him; and those which have come down to us point rather to his reputation as a masterful ruler than as an ascetic or a saint. Thus, Theodore is said to have received legatine authority over England, Scotland, and Ireland. We do not read of miracles being attributed to him either during his lifetime or after his death. On the other hand, one hostile critic accuses him of having been bribed. The admirers of Wilfrid found it hard to be just to Theodore.

[1] *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, IV., p. 932.

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