

The Ancient Church of Britain

*The following is an extract from **Ecclesiastica Celtica** by Sabine Baring-Gould, first published in the 1914 edition of his 16 volume **Lives of the Saints** and re-published by Imagier Publishing in 2014. It is a mine of information concerning the ancient British Church that challenges many established assumptions about the early Church in Britain.*

“When Christianity appeared among the Celts, who did not live in towns, and had not been citizenised and divested of their native character, it was compelled to assume an attitude and to adopt methods consonant with the Celtic constitution. The only possible mode in which it could make way was by winning the consent of the chief of the clan. No tribesman could profess Christianity without the permission of his chief, whom he was bound to obey in religious matters as in military. Consequently the first missionaries at once applied to the chiefs of the tribes, and if they did not convert them, they induced them to surrender to them a patch of land on which to settle. The inducement was fear. The chieftains feared the new medicine-men, and trembled lest their curses should prove more efficacious than the blessings of the Druids. The princes conciliated these new sorcerers with grants of land, in the hope that their incantations, in consort with those of the Druids, would render themselves invulnerable in a fray, and the tribe victorious in all its aggressions.

When the missionary had obtained a plot of land, he threw up an embankment enclosing a circular or oval space, and planted a stockade on top. Within he erected huts: if among Brythons, of wood and wattle; if among Goidels, of stone, circular, and these accommodated the population that accrued to him – slaves given by the chief, outlaws seeking refuge, bastards who had no claim on the tribal inheritance. Thus originated the Tribe of the Saint, a population

subject to the missionary as chieftain, but also owing military service to the head of the secular tribe.

By slow degrees the Druids fell into disrepute, and their land and serfs were usurped by, or granted to, the saints. Thus it came about that side by side with the Tribe of the Land was to be found the Tribe of the Saint. Moreover, the missionary settlements soon outgrew their bounds, and swarmed, as did the members of the Tribe of the Land, when not repeatedly thinned by war. Consequently we hear of the early saints wandering about in an apparently aimless manner, but always seeking to found fresh colonies, usurp lands that had been granted to the discredited medicine-man, found new churches, and extort fresh grants.

These saintly establishments were counterparts of such as were secular. They consisted of households comprising men and women, and they multiplied naturally. All the householders looked to the saint as their head, just as in the secular tribe all the members looked to and obeyed the chief. But the members of the ecclesiastical tribe were not wholly independent of the head of the secular tribe; they still owed to him military service, whether laymen or clergy. Even in Ireland the women were not exempt. Doubtless the ecclesiastics were called out to curse the enemies of the chief, and if their curses proved ineffectual, they suffered deprivation.

In Ireland it was not till 804 that monks and clergy were exempt from bearing arms against the foe of the chief, and then they by no means relished their release. Women were not relieved of their obligations to arm and fight in the ranks till the Synod of Drumceatt (A. D. 500), and then only on the urgency of S. Columba. Moreover, just as one secular tribe fought another, because of some quarrel between the chiefs, or because one wanted the lands of the other, or out of mere wantonness, so was it with the religious tribes. The monks regarded themselves as bound together into one tribe under an abbot, and they envied other monastic settlements. In 672 a battle was fought between the rival monasteries of Clonmacnois and Durrow, and Dermot Duff, leader of the men of Durrow, fell before the monks of Clonmacnois, together with two hundred of his followers. In 816 no

less than four hundred men were slain in a battle between rival monasteries. In 700 the clergy of Ireland attended their synods sword in hand, and fought those who differed from them in opinion, leaving the ground strewn with corpses. S. Columba stirred up a fratricidal war between the men of the South and those of the north of the clan of Neill merely because he was not allowed to retain a copy of a book he had made, and this cost the Meath men no fewer than three thousand slain. If we may trust Gildas, British churchmen were not much better. In time the chiefs themselves founded religious settlements and placed over them sons, sometimes in orders, sometimes not, so that ecclesiastical as well as political supremacy might be in their families.

“In Ireland,” says Dr. Todd, “the land granted in fee to S. Patrick, or any other ecclesiastic, by its original owner, conveyed to the clerical society, of which it became the endowment, all the rights of a chieftain or head of a clan; and these rights, with the rights of the secular chieftains, descended in hereditary succession. The conarb or co-arb, that is to say, the heir successor of the original saint who was the founder of the religious society, whether bishop or abbot, became the inheritor of his spiritual and official influence in religious matters. The descendants in blood, or founder’s kin, were inheritors of the temporal rights of property and chieftainship, although bound to exercise those rights in subjection or subordination to the ecclesiastical co-arb.”

At Iona, out of eleven immediate successors to S. Columba, there was but one who certainly did not belong to his family, and one other, of whose parentage we have no information. Phelim was bishop and chief of Cashel in the middle of the ninth century. In 850 he fell upon Armagh, slaying priests and bishops wherever he caught them. The kingdom of Munster was held by chiefs who combined the ecclesiastical with the secular power, and were bishops as well as princes. Armagh was hereditary bishopric for eight generations to 1129. It is often asserted that these archbishops were lay intruders, but this is disputable. To hold the saintship and bequeath it to a son was quite in order, according to Celtic ideas. In Wales the same principle prevailed; bishoprics, canonries, and parochial benefices passed from

father to son, or were retained in one family for generations. Where an ecclesiastic had, say, four sons, he divided the ecclesiastical inheritance among them, for each had a right to his share if born after his father had become bishop or priest, but if he had been born earlier, then he had no claim on the ecclesiastical inheritance. Giraldus Cambrensis mentions one benefice that was held by two brothers, one a layman, the other in orders. Benefices in Wales and in parts of England with more than one rector, as, for instance, Tiverton, which had five till quite recently, owe their origin to this custom.

Should the tribe of the saint be without a head, and there was no one available in the family of the chief of the land to take the place of saint, or chief of the ecclesiastical tribe, then some one not of his blood was appointed to be the saint; but if so, he was required to give securities that he would resign the saintship as soon as there was one of the prince's family qualified to assume it.

How splendid and influential the position of the saint or head of an ecclesiastical settlement was, may be judged from the *Life of S. Cadoc*. The author thus describes his power at Llancarvan. "He daily fed a hundred clergy and a hundred soldiers, and a hundred workmen and a hundred poor men, with the same number of widows. This was the number of his household, besides servants in attendance, and esquires and guests, whose number also was uncertain. Nor is it strange that he was a rich man and supported many, for he was abbot and prince."

When the chieftain of the land did not absorb also the chieftainship of the ecclesiastical tribe, then continual frictions existed between the head of the land and the head of the Church; the former not only exacted military service from the members of the ecclesiastical establishment, but also an annual tax and contributions in kind. If the tax were not paid, he distrained and carried off the cattle of the saint, who had no other means of redress than to curse, and this he did freely. If any disaster followed, this was at once attributed to the virtue of the curse; and on the whole, the spiritual heads got their own way. S. Beuno cursed a chief, and he dissolved into a puddle; S. Cadoc cursed his servant because he was clumsy in lighting a fire, and

the flame leaped forth and consumed the man; some men who offended him had their beards and half the hair of their heads removed, and the ears of their horses sliced off. Men on whom the curses of the saints fell were drowned, smothered in bogs, turned into stone, melted into lumps of wax, stricken with lightning. Even after S. Cadoc was dead, the corpse roared like a bull because the coffin was jostled.

The first stage in Ireland, Wales, and perhaps Scotland, was that indicated above, where the ecclesiastical tribe contained the professional believers, that is to say, the saint and those who owed to him tribal allegiance, that allegiance extending to the profession of his religion. In this stage the stockaded settlement contained men and women, households of those dependent on the saint; all working for him and for themselves, and paying a tribute in kind and service to the chief of the clan of the land. But when the faith spread and was universally professed, then the condition of affairs altered. All the members of the clan could not pass into the saintly tribe, nor would the chieftain of the land tolerate the saintly tribe becoming too populous and powerful. A readjustment of arrangements took place. Either, as in Armagh, the chieftain constituted himself ecclesiastical head, and so resolved the double tribe into one under one head, temporal and spiritual at once, or else, and that more commonly, he withdrew from the tribe of the saint all its lay retainers, and the establishment resolved itself, or was compulsorily resolved into, a monastic society, comprising only clerics and monks, into which no women were admitted; or the saintship was given to a daughter of the ruling house, with sisters and monks and bishops under her. When we read of the great monasteries of Bangor Iscoed, Bangor in Ireland, Llancarvan, Llantwit, Clonmacnois, &c., with their thousands of monks, we hear of them in their second stage. Nevertheless, the hereditary principle remained in force, and the superior, the abbot, or saint was almost always of the family of the founder.

A peculiarity of this arrangement was that ecclesiastical jurisdiction was in the hands of the abbot or saint, who might be a layman, but who was very often not a bishop. Not only so, but where

the headship was in the hands of a woman, she exercised jurisdiction over the entire district occupied by the tribe to which she belonged. In this case one, perhaps a dozen, in some cases a score, of bishops were members of the community, ranking just above the cellarer, exercising no jurisdiction, but kept in stock for the purpose of ordaining and consecrating in obedience to the orders of the abbot. The union of jurisdiction with the special grace of power to confer orders is a matter of ecclesiastical arrangement only, and in the Celtic Church did not exist, except perhaps among the Romanised Britons.

The term “saint” was applied at first very much as is the later term “religious” now. It signified no more than that the saint was the head of the religious tribe, and it may be, and probably was, applied indiscriminately to these heads, irrespective of their moral fitness for their position, or their position, or their conduct as ecclesiastical chiefs.

When the Bollandists began to compile the *Acta Sanctorum* they were vastly perplexed how to deal with the thousands of Celtic saints of whom they read. For instance, Bishop Gerald of Mayo was related to have ruled over 3300 saints – in this case saint meant no more than monk. In the Isle of Bardsey as many as 20,000 saints were said to have laid their bones. The Bollandists say: “The Irish would not have been so liberal in canonising dead men in troops whenever they seemed to be somewhat better than usual if they had adhered to the custom on the Universal Church, and given that honour to martyrs only.”

But the Bollandist writer did not understand the case. It was not one of canonisation at all, but of alteration in the signification of a word. The Apostle spoke of the saints at Corinth and Ephesus, but some of these were exceedingly immoral persons. A “religious,” as a Latin would term him, would by a Celt in those days be designated a “saint”. In the second stage the term came to be limited to founders of settlements and churches. It may be remarked that only noble and princely families produced saints, for indeed none not well born could become head of an ecclesiastical tribe. At the same time, it is observable that a very discreditable origin is given to a good many

Celtic saints; that was due to the fact of the headship of a religious settlement being given as a means of provision for the princely bastard.

If a woman of one tribe went astray with a member of another tribe, her child had no rights in her tribe, none in that of the father. But if that woman was, as in the case of the mothers of S. David and S. Kentigern, of a princely house, then their fathers or brothers found a means of providing for these illegitimates by making them saints. It has caused perplexity to account for the number of children attributed to some of the founders of saintly families. Brychan is given twenty-four sons and twenty-five daughters, in all forty-nine children, and of these half were saints. The explanation is that these saints were of the kin of Brychan, and so were appointed to monasteries or ecclesiastical settlements that fell to his share by right of conquest. When a prince looked about him to settle his family he brought up as many to be warriors and the rest to be saints.

It has provoked some comment that nearly all the saints of the Welsh Church were foreigners, i.e., members of invading and conquering families. The three saintly families of Wales were respectively those of the Irish Brychan, conqueror of Bresknock, the Pict Cunedda, who invaded Wales from the north, and the Northern Caw, who came from Albany. The fact was that these invaders turned out the native chieftains from their headship in the land and in the Church, and gave all places of authority to their children and clansmen.

To return once more to the separation that prevailed in the Celtic Church between jurisdiction and the Episcopal office. A territorial distribution and jurisdiction over a see was given to bishops because the Roman civil organisation showed the way, but where, as in the Celtic world, there was a different sort of organisation, that which was tribal, with now shrinking then expanding confines, the Church had to accommodate herself to those conditions with that elasticity which belongs to her. In the Celtic world the tribe was the only constituted entity, and the land changed hands as the tribes fought and wrested soil from one another; not for ages were the

boundaries fixed. But in the Roman world the districts were mapped out, and the people subjected to rulers over these districts, to whatever race or clan they might belong.

The ecclesiastical jurisdiction was first of all in the hands of the founder, a missionary saint, but then it passed by the principle of heredity to whoever represented him in blood, or to the nearest kin to the chief of the land. At Kildare, S. Bridget had bishops under her direction and orders. So had S. Ninnoch in Brittany. In Iona, S. Columba in priest's orders ruled over Bishop Etchen. There was no parochial system; there could be none when the land was parcelled up and distributed among different members of the tribe every few years. The ecclesiastical foci were settlements of the saints. These were permanent, for the land about them was in the permanent possession of the saint for the time being. When a member of a religious establishment became restless or restive he went off, taking with him some likeminded saints, and established a new settlement.

When the Saxon, Angles, and Jutes first invaded Britain they almost exterminated the British people; those whom they did not enslave they drove back to North and West. Apparently the Church of the Romano-British had been hitherto fully occupied with the conversion of the people of the same race elsewhere. If we hold that S. Patrick came from Strathclyde, then the conversion of Ireland was due to it; certainly so also was that of the Goidelic people in the North and West. After Ireland was brought to the faith by Patrick it relapsed, and its reconversion was due to Welsh missions. Hosts of saintly evangelists, moreover, sallied forth from Ireland a little later and overran Western Europe, England, Scotland, Brittany, France, Alsatia, Lorraine, and penetrating into Bavaria, Rhhætia, Helvetia, Germany, and even Italy, founded settlements after the native type.

All that part of the British Isles now called Scotland owed its Christianity to the mission of Columba from Ireland; so did the great Northumbrian Church, where the invaders of German blood were brought to the worship of Christ through the missions from Iona. Wales and Cornwall, were Christian long before Augustine was born. "By armies of monastic missionaries," says Mr. Haddan, "and next by

learned teachers – first attracting pupils to Irish schools from all Christian Europe north of the Alps and the Pyrenees, and next, by sending forth men to become the founders of schools, or monasteries, or churches abroad – the churches of St. Patrick and S. Columba stand out, from the sixth century forward, as the most energetic centres of religious life and knowledge in Europe; the main restorers of Christianity in paganised England and Roman Germany; the reformers and main founders of monastic life in Northern France; the opponents of Arianism, even in Italy itself; the originators in the West of the well-meant, however mistaken, system of the Penitentials; the leading preservers in the eighth and ninth centuries of theological and classic culture, Greek as well as Latin; the scribes, both at home and abroad, of many a Bible text; the teachers of psalmody; the schoolmasters of the great monastic schools; the parents, in great part, as well as the forerunners, of Anglo-Saxon learning and missionary zeal; the senders forth of not the least bright stars among the galaxy of talent gathered by Charlemagne from all quarters to instruct his degenerate Franks, . . . down to the very Normanising of the Celtic Churches in the entire British Isles in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.”

Maccald, a native of Down, became Bishop of Man in the fifth century, S. Donan was the apostle of Uig, S. Maelrubb, of Skye. In fact, the Christianising of the whole of the north-west of Scotland and the adjacent isles was due to S. Columba. Irish monks pushed as far as the Faröe Isles and Iceland. S. Brendan thrust his vessel towards the setting sun, seeking lands to conquer for Christ. S. Aidan, the apostle of Northumbria, whose diocese extended from the Humber to the Firth of Forth, was an Irishman from Iona. Diuma, the first bishop of the Mercians, and his successor, Ceallach, were both Irishmen. S. Fursey, another, preached the Gospel in Suffolk. Mailduff established a mission centre among the West Saxons. S. Bega laboured in Cumberland. From the beginning of the sixth century they overspread Europe, and Irishmen for their distinguished piety were elected to fill sees even in Italy.

The Celtic Church had other peculiarities beside that of dissociating jurisdiction from the Episcopal office. It observed Easter on a different day from the Latin Church, but this was due to an error occasioned by its isolation, very similar to that in which the Eastern Church is now involved from the same cause – adhering to an antiquated system of calculation. In reckoning the date of Easter, every year, the Roman Church had followed the Jewish cycle for eighty-four years, while the Alexandrian Church used the metonic system of nineteen years. This led to great inconvenience, and in the year 387 some observed Easter on March 21st, others on April 18th, others again on April 25th. This became intolerable, and Pope Hilary employed Victorinus to frame a new cycle, which was thenceforth followed in the Latin Church. But the invasions of barbarians had cut off the Celtic Churches from communication with the rest of the Christian world so that they were ignorant of this change, and continued to follow the Jewish cycle, as observed at Rome and in Gaul previous to the change, of which they had not heard.

Nothing could exceed the indignation and disgust of Augustine and his followers when they ascertained that the British Church observed Easter on a different day from themselves. Instead of inquiring into the cause, and dealing gently by argument with the bishops and abbots of Britain, they heaped on them epithets expressive of loathing, termed the Quartodecimans, which they were not – but an ugly name answered their purpose – and denounced them as schismatics and heretics. This unhappy miscalculation about Easter proved a grievous cause of weakness in the Celtic Church, for those of her saints who travelled to Gaul or Italy were forced to admit that their native Church was in error, and returning home formed a party which laboured for the abandonment of the old computation. Another peculiarity was the tonsure assumed by the clergy. Cutting the locks in a certain fashion was a symbol of belonging to a tribe, just as puncturing the ear marks a horse turned loose on downs as the property of certain owners.

An illustration occurs in the life of S. David. His missionary work was bitterly opposed by the Irish settler Boia, the remains of

whose castle are still traceable half a mile below S. David's, on the Allun. But more hostile to the saint than the chief was his wife. In order to propitiate the gods and induce them to destroy the saint, this woman resolved on a sacrifice. The best and most efficacious that could be offered would be a child of her womb, but she had none. Therefore she called to her a daughter-in-law named Dunawel, retired with her into a hazel grove, placed the girl's head on the lap that she might cut and braid her hair, such an act betokening adoption into the family. Then the woman with a sharp knife cut her throat, and offered the expiring life to the gods.

The peculiar shaving and shearing of the hair adopted by the Celtic clergy betokened their adoption into the family of God, the ecclesiastical tribe. This peculiarity was also laid hold of by Augustine and his followers, and denounced in furious terms as the tonsure of Simon Magus, as the badge of perversity and diabolical heresy. There were other differences, as that Episcopal consecration was administered by a single bishop instead of by three, as decreed by the Council of Arles; but as Gregory the Great had told Augustine that in case of need he might dispense with coadjutors in the conferring of Episcopal orders, this point would not have been pressed had not Augustine and the Latin missionaries gone out of their way to find occasion against the native Church. In fact, these points served as excuses for insulting and repudiating the Church of the Britons. Augustine was angry to find that he had been forestalled, and that there was an Apostolic and Catholic Church of at least three centuries growth in the island, which he had entered figuring as its apostle. He might, indeed, have swallowed his spleen had he found the British bishops ready to cast themselves at his feet and become his humble henchmen. As they would not consent to this, he and his Latin clergy, and their successors, covered them with obloquy.

At the bottom of all the differences lay the independence of the Celtic Churches, which owed no allegiance to the Papal chair, had organised themselves, expanded, and evangelised, had manifested extraordinary vigour, and produced great sanctity in their independence. There was a robustness and healthiness about their

churches that the Latin missionaries did not relish. In Episcopal constitution, derivation of orders from the Apostolic fountain-head, in unity of doctrine, in liturgical forms, the Celtic Churches were one with the Catholic Church throughout the world, whether Eastern or Western. They were ready to acknowledge a certain primacy in the Roman see, as S. Columbanus said, later, "next to Jerusalem," but such a half admission would not satisfy those who were, before all things, missionaries to extend the Papal authority. Every sort of false accusation, malignant insinuation, and open outrage was offered to the ancient British Church. Its orders were ignored, its ministrations flouted, the orthodoxy of its prelates disputed. Those British Christians who visited Rome, or were for a while in Gaul, returned intensely Romanised, and threw in their lot with the anti-national party, much as some young clergy of the present day after a visit to the Continent return enamoured with some fantastic ceremony they have witnessed abroad and endeavour to thrust it on their reluctant congregations at home, and who maintain that what is done in Latin churches must be right. The temper of mind in which the Celtic bishops and abbots regarded the Popes may be judged from the letters of S. Columbanus. The position assumed by him towards the Pope substantially amounted to this: an acknowledgment of the Bishop of Rome as a true bishop of the Church of Christ, but as one having no jurisdiction over himself; and a claim to criticise freely, and from the independent standpoint of an equal, the character and conduct of the Roman pontiff.

The language which he addressed to Boniface IV is not that of a subordinate to a sovereign in the Church, but is couched in terms of great freedom. He laments over the infamy that attaches itself to the chair of S. Peter in consequence of the miserable squabbles that rage in Rome. He warns the prelate not to forfeit his dignity by perversity, for his power depends, says he, on his maintaining right judgement in all things, for that only such a one can be regarded as a holder of the keys of heaven who opens the doors to the good and shuts to the bad. He exhorts the Pope to cleanse his see from error, for it would be a lamentable thing for the Apostolic See to lapse from the Catholic

faith. He upbraids the Roman Church for making exaggerated claims to authority and power other than what was possessed by other Churches, and he allows to the see of Rome a high position of honour, second only to that of Jerusalem.

If it were the general relation in which the British Churches stood to the Papal See, no wonder that Pope Vitalian, in 667, wrote to King Oswy to choose an arch-bishop for Canterbury who should root out the tares from the whole island, alluding thereby to the clergy of the National Church. The peculiarity in the observance of Easter was abandoned by the Church in the south of Ireland in 634, by the Northumbrian Church in 664; the Britons of Strathclyde submitted in 668, the northern Scots in Ireland in 697; in 704 a Roman party was formed in Iona itself. The British of the eastern portion of the West Welsh in Devon and Cornwall accepted the Roman computation in 710. The change took place in Wales between 768 and 777. Llandewennec, in Brittany, retained the Celtic tonsure till 817.

There exists at Canterbury a copy of a letter written by Kenstec, or Kenstet, bishop-elect of the Cornish Britons, in which he professes his obedience to the see of Canterbury, then ruled by Ceolnoth, who was archbishop between 833 and 870. In 884 a Saxon see was constituted at Exeter, with jurisdiction given by Canterbury over Cornwall. In 905 the Pope having complained to King Edward the Elder and to Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, that the great see of Wessex had been vacant for seven years, Edward and Plegmund together divided the see into five: Winchester, Framsbury, Sherborne, Wells, and Crediton, and to Crediton were assigned three estates in Wales, i.e. Cornwall, to be under the authority of the Bishop of Devon, because hitherto the Cornish had been without awe of the West Saxons. The bishop was of course a Saxon, Eadulf. Moreover, an order was made that the bishop should pay an annual visit to Cornwall "to extirpate their errors, for formerly they resisted the truth, and did not obey the apostolical decrees," that is to say, they clung to their traditional observances and to the independence of their Church, all which was hateful in the eyes of such men as Plegmund.

An interesting letter by Archbishop Dunstan has been recovered, in which he says that the Cornish had their own bishop, Conan (Cunan), and that he lived in the reign of Athelstan, 925-940. But under Eldred, 945-955, there was another, Daniel, whose bishop's stool was at S. Germans. But Edgar bade Dunstan consecrate Wulfsige, a Saxon, whose signature remains in 980 and 988. The Cornish see seems to have been transferred from S. Germans to S. Petrocks (Bodmin) some time after Daniel's consecration, and was brought back in 981. The Cornish see of S. Germans was extinguished, and jurisdiction over the West Welsh was given to the Saxon bishop of Crediton, 1042, and was transferred to Exeter in 1050.

The method adopted by the Saxon kings, partly in their own interest, partly in that of Rome, was to quell all religious as well as political independence in the Cornish, and this policy was pursued also by the Danish and Norman kings. The process followed was this: *First*, the British bishops and clergy were subjected to a torrent of abuse as heretics and schismatics, till they yielded their peculiarities and adopted the correct Easter computation, the Latin tonsure, and territorial in place of tribal organisation in the Church. *Secondly*, Saxon bishops were intruded in place of native Cornish rulers. Then, *thirdly*, the Episcopal throne was withdrawn from Cornwall wholly, and placed, first in Crediton, then in Exeter, away from all association with Celts; for, be it recalled, Athelstan had expelled the British from Exeter. And this was done with Papal approval, for it was the stifling of ecclesiastical independent life in the Celtic race in the Domnonian peninsula. This will be more apparent when we give the list of bishops as far as is known:-

KENSTEC, Bishop at Dinnurrin, in Cornwall, submitted to Canterbury, 833-870; a Briton

EADULF, Bishop (Saxon) at Crediton, was given three manors in Wales beyond the Tamar – a foothold among the pure Britons, 905.

CONAN, Bishop at S. Petrocks (Bodmin), 931-940; a Briton, but retained much about the court of Athelstan, and apparently more there than in Cornwall.

DANIEL, Bishop of S. Germans, 945-955; probably a Briton.

ATHELSTAN, an intruded Saxon, 955-959.

COMOERE, Bishop at S. Germans, 959-966; probably a Briton.

WULFSIGE, an intruded Saxon, 966-988.

EALDRED, an intruded Saxon, 993-997.

BURHWOLD, an intruded Saxon, 1002-1020.

LYVING, Saxon Bishop of Crediton, having already three manors in Cornwall, now obtained the abolition of an independent Cornish bishopric, and the subjection of the whole of Cornwall to the see of Crediton, 1026-1038.

LEOFRIC, 1046-1071, had the see of Crediton, together with jurisdiction over Cornwall, removed to Exeter.

Not till 1877 was a bishop's stool restored to the West Welsh, with Truro as the cathedral, and not yet has a Cornishman been given the pastoral staff to hold spiritual rule over his brother Cornishmen. In Wales a somewhat similar process was pursued. Elbod, or Elfod, Bishop of Bangor, in 768 induced North Wales, and in 777 South Wales, to adopt the Roman Easter; and the process of transforming the organisation of the Church from one tribal into one that was in conformity with the Latin usage, proceeded gradually.

It was possibly due to Armorican influence that the Welsh Church abandoned its peculiarities. As Mr. Borlase happily puts it, "We can readily imagine that the native would adopt changes from their brethren in Armorica, while the Saxons might strive in vain to force them upon them. The Briton was stubborn and unbending, and he is so to this day. He might be led, but he would never be driven. His errors, if they were errors (and this we may be quite sure he did not admit), would be dearer to him than an orthodoxy enforced by the

conquerors, and thereafter to be worn by him as one of the badges of his vanquished race.”

In 871, on the death of Einion, Bishop of Menevia, Hubert, a Saxon, was intruded upon the throne of S. David, and again a Lambert, consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 874, unless, as Haddan and Stubbs suppose, Lambert and Hubert are identical, in which case the delay in consecration was probably due to the resistance of the clergy to having an alien forced on them. At the same time another Welsh see was filled with bishops consecrated at Canterbury, Llandaff, to which first Cymelliauc and then Lliliau were ordained. According to the *Book of Llandaff*, some bishops of that see and also some of S. David’s were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the close of the tenth century; but the statements are in a condition of such hopeless inconsistency, that it is advisable to reject them.

In its struggle for independence the archiepiscopal see of S. David’s claimed its rights as derived from Jerusalem, and the story was invented that S. David had been consecrated and given supremacy over the British Church by the Patriarch and successor of S. James of Jerusalem. By this assumption the see of S. David pitted S. James against S. Peter. But although it is possible that S. David may have visited Jerusalem, it is not probable that he was there consecrated. It was not till the Norman conquest of Wales that the independence of the Welsh Church came to an end.

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