THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE WEST SAXONS

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INTRODUCTION

It is disappointing to find that the records of the planting of Christianity among the West-Saxons are so scanty. The region where those people dwelt was destined to play a predominant part in the life and institutions of England before the Norman Conquest; and long before the time of Alfred the Great, the influence of the Wessex Church was widespread. Not a little of its history must be left to conjecture; but we may be sure that a virile and a genuinely consecrated spirit of religion was at work in those early turbulent decades. Christianity was launched among the West-Saxons in a scene of fierce and ruthless conflicts, yet its effect upon those barbaric and illiterate men was so pronounced that soon kings resigned their crowns to undergo long pilgrimages to Rome and even to accept the tonsure, and native sons were writing verses in Latin hexameters, expressing the most pious sentiments. More striking still are the labours of those missionaries who journeyed to the continent, filled with zeal and ardour, and eager to spread abroad the gospel which they had learned in the land of the merciless Gewissas.

It is said that the Celts of Britain were ruder than their brethren of Gaul, and that they failed to reach the same degree of civilisation. They seem, however, to have resembled the continental Celts in customs and religion. The first invasion of Celtic men was very early—some five centuries before Christ. Those early invaders were of the Goidelic or northern branch; it is probable that they found two races in Britain: a small, dark-haired race, perhaps of Iberian stock, and a large, light-haired

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race of Scandinavian origin. The Goidelic Celts conquered the resident inhabitants without exterminating them; and held the land for many centuries, until a fresh invasion of continental Celts occurred. Then it was the Brythonic of Cymric Celts of the southern stock, who crossed the Channel, and dispossessed their kinsmen of the southern and eastern portion of the island. Among the tribes were the Cantii (who were the most highly civilised), the Attrebatii, the Belgae, the Damnonii, the Silures, the Trinobantes, the Iceni, the Brigantes, and others.

With the two expeditions of Julius Caesar (B.C. 55-54), the actual history of Britain begins. The effects of these Roman invasions was transitory, but the fame of the country spread. Nearly a century later (A.D. 42), Claudius began the conquest of the island in earnest; and his generals reduced the country south of the Avon and Severn. Military expeditions were pursued; the country was fortified; and Rome established colonies and tribal capitals. Scotland never came under imperial control, and Ireland was not conquered. It is possible that some traces of that Christianity which reached the island during the Roman period may have lingered in the particular territory which the West-Saxons occupied later. At least we know that some of the finest Christian influences in the early history of Wessex may be traced to those Celtic monks and teachers who clung to their pre-Saxon religious traditions.

The power of the Empire declined in Britain long before it was necessary to withdraw the legions from the distant outposts. During the Third Century, the attacks of the Picts and Scots in the North grew more and more severe, while the southern and eastern coasts suffered from the ravages of the Frankish and Saxon pirates. About the year 360, Scots from Ireland ravaged the western shore. In 410, Honorius renounced the sovereignty of Britain. The troops were needed to defend the continental borders against the barbarians; thus Britain was left to her own resources. A period of civil dissension followed, inter-

rupted by the "Alleluia Victory" over the Picts. At last the King of the Damnonii obtained the sovereignty over a large part of the island; and, as the story goes, invited the Teutons to visit Britain and set things in order. That the invaders came at first to aid the Britons against their other foes is not impossible; historians, however, put little faith in the legend of Vortigern and Rowena.

EARLY WEST-SAXON
CONQUESTS

The invaders came principally from three Teutonic tribes. The Jutes, who inhabited the northern part of Denmark, were the most advanced culturally. The Saxons, a more numerous folk, lived south of Schleswig along the Elbe and westward on the coast; they were a very barbarous and violent people. The Angles were probably from Schleswig-Holstein, north of the Saxons. They settled East-Anglia and established the kingdom of Northumbria; many of them planted themselves in the Midlands. They did not come over as tribes, but as families under various Germanic leaders; and the conquest was not sudden, but rather a long process of infiltration.

All the Germanic settlers were pagans, sharing the faith of the continental Germans; and they destroyed as far as possible all vestiges of the native religion. The Britons were soon driven and restricted to the western parts of the island, where they maintained themselves in several small states. Those lying to the east yielded more and more to Germanic influences; while the others, protected by their mountains, preserved for a considerable time a gradually decreasing independence. In the south-west, the territory of Damnonia was later limited to Dyvnaint, or Devonshire, by the separation of Cernau, or Cornwall. The districts called by the Saxons those of the Sumor-saetas, of the Thornsaetas (Dorsetshire), and the Wilt-saetas were lost to the kings of Dyvnaint at an early period, though for centuries a large British population maintained itself in those parts among the Saxon settlers, as well as among the Defnsaetas, long after the Saxon conquest of Dyvnaint.[1]

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states that in the year 495 "two ealdormen came to Britain, Cerdic and Cynric

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[1] Lappenberg, J. S., *A History of England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings* (trans. by Benjamin Thorpe; London: John Murray, 1845), I, 119-120.

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his son, with five ships, at the place which is called Cerdics-ore, and the same day they fought against the Welsh." According to the same authority, in 508 they "slew a British King, whose name was Natan-leod, and five thousand men with him. After that the country was named Natan-lead, as far as Cerdicsford (Charford)." In 514, "the West-Saxons came to Britain with three ships, at the place which is called Cerdics-ore, and Stuf and Whitgar fought against the Britons, and put them to flight." In the year 519, "Cerdic and Cynric obtained the kingdom of the West-Saxons; and the same year they fought against the Britons where it is now called Cerdics-ford. And from that time forth the royal off-spring of the West-Saxons reigned." The year 527 witnessed a fight against the Britons "at the place which is called Cerdics-lea;" and 530 was the year when Cerdic and Cynric "conquered the island of Wight, and slew many men at Whits-garas-byrg (Carisbrooke, in Wight)." The kingdom of the West-Saxons may be said to have originated with the settlement of Cerdic and his followers in Hampshire in the year 495.

Cerdic, the first King of the West-Saxons, died in 534; and Cynric succeeded his father as ruler. He reigned twenty-six years. During his rule, the English conquest of the districts now known as Wiltshire began with the victory of Cynric at Old Sarum in 552. Thereby the way was opened to the Salisbury Plain. Four years later, pushing his way through the vale of Pewsey, Cynric extended the limits of the West-Saxon kingdom to the Marlborough Downs by a victory at Beranburh (probably Barbury Hill). At that period, the district south of the Avon and the Nadder was occupied by dense woodland, the relics of which survive in Cranborne Chase; and the first wave of West-Saxon colonisation was chiefly confined to the valleys of the Avon and the Wylye. The little township of Wilton, which arose in the Wylye valley, gave the name of Wilsaetas to the new settlers.[1]

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[1] Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th ed., 1911, xxviii, 699.

Cynric's successor was Ceawlin (560-591); he raised Wessex to such power that later years entitled him to the name of the second Bretwalda (over-lord) of Britain. With him we enter upon a period of more or less reliable tradition. The dimensions of the West-Saxon kingdom were increased in Ceawlin's time by two great victories over the Welsh, mentioned in the Chronicle. In 571, at Bedcanford, the victory gained for the West-Saxons, Aylesbury and the upper part of the Thames valley. In 577, the battle of Deorham (Durham) gave them three cities—Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath. Thirteen or fourteen years after that battle, a very important alliance was made between the Britons and that branch of the West-Saxons who had occupied Gloucestershire. The alliance was made against the chief king of the West-Saxons; and they marched upon him together down the Ermine Street, a few miles east of Malmesbury, just outside the eastern boundary of the Britons. Finding him in North Wilts at Wanborough, they finally defeated him there. The battle of Wanborough made the Saxons of Gloucestershire independent of the West-Saxon kingdom; and it cemented a friendship between the Gloucestershire Saxons, known as the Hwiccas, and the Britons of the Malmesbury regions. The alliance appears to have led to an undisturbed possession by the Britons there.[1]

Ceawlin was expelled in 591, and died in 593. Little is known of his successors, Ceol and Ceolwulf. According to the Chronicle, the latter began to reign in 597; and he fought and contended incessantly against either the Angles, the Picts, or the Scots; and in 607, "Ceolwulf fought against the South-Saxons." Four years later (611) Cynegils succeeded to the throne.

The reign of Cynegils is of interest, not only because of its warlike propensities, but also because Cynegils was the first West-Saxon king to embrace Christianity. The

[1] Browne, G. F., *St. Aldhelm: His Life and Times*; London: S.P.C.K., 1903, pp. 42-43.

son of Ceol, Cynegils was involved in fighting and bloodshed from the beginning. His accession was followed by an inroad of Britons into the West-Saxon kingdom; and in the year 614, the invaders advanced as far as Beandun (Bampton?), about two miles north of the Isis. His son Cwichelm, was associated with him in the kingdom. The two kings met the Britons at Bampton, and defeated them with great slaughter.

But the rapid growth of the power of Edwin, King of Northumbria, endangered the independence of the West-Saxon monarchy. Already master of the Trent valley, Edwin, by his marriage with the sister of Eadbald, King of Kent, while threatening the dominion of Cynegils from the north, cut him off from the chance of an alliance in the south. Edwin made war on Cynegils in 626, and defeated him, compelling him to acknowledge his supremacy.[1]

About this time, Cynegils overthrew the two kings of the East-Saxons, who had succeeded their father Saeberht; both kings were slain in battle, and it is said that almost their whole army was destroyed. A fresh danger threatened the West-Saxons when Penda of Mercia established his power in the central portion of the island. In 628, the Mercian King invaded the dominions of Cynegils; and a fierce battle was fought at Cirencester. After a day's gory fighting, in which neither side gained any the Mercian King invaded the dominions of Cynegils; enemy, King Edwin, was slain by Caedwalla and Penda at Heathfield, in 633; and after that, says the Chronicle, "went Cadwalla and Penda and laid waste the whole country of the Northumbrians."

At the time of the conversion of Wessex, its territory was bounded on the south by the sea. On the east, there was a vast forest, which hedged in the South-Saxons, and was a barrier to progress eastward as far north as the latitude of Winchester. (At times the King of Wessex

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[1] Dictionary of National Biography, XIII, 371-372 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

obtained lordship over the South-Saxon kingdom.)
After the battle of Wimbledon, which added Surrey to
Wessex, the kingdom of Kent completed the eastern
boundary. "To the west, the Britons still held their own
and barred further progress; so that in the time of King
Cynegils . . . the West-Saxons had probably not passed
the eastern borders of Wilts and Dorset . . . To the
north, they had possession of Oxfordshire, and parts of
Buckinghamshire, with, it is said, even parts of Bedford-
shire; along their northern border they came in contact
with the great central kingdom of Mercia."[1]   Evidently
a kingdom so situated must have been exposed to fluctua-
tions of boundary.   All the races then in England, the
Britons, Saxons, Jutes, and Angles, were their militant
neighbours.

[1] Browne, G. F., *The Conversion of the Heptarchy;* London:
S.P.C.K., 1896, p. 41.

THE CONVERSION OF THE WEST-SAXONS

In the year 634, Birinus appeared among the West-Saxons. He had promised in the presence of Pope Honorius that he would "sow the seeds of the holy faith in the heart of the coasts of the English beyond, whither no teacher had gone before him;" and to this end he was consecrated a bishop by the hands of Asterius, Bishop of Milan. "But at his arrival into Britain and first entering among the folk of the Gewissas, whereas he found all the inhabitants in the same country utterly paynim, he thought it more expedient to preach the word there, rather than in travelling further to search for such as he should preach unto."[1]

King Cynegils became a convert in 635. He was baptised at Dorchester in Oxfordshire; Oswald, the Northumbrian King, who was about to marry his daughter, stood as sponsor.[2] After his baptism, Cynegils founded the West-Saxon see at Dorchester, acknowledging Birinus as the bishop. Oswald took part in the grant of Dorchester to the Bishop; this fact illustrates the continuance of the Northumbrian supremacy. The work of Birinus prospered throughout the remainder of Cynegil's reign; several churches were built, and many converts were made. Cynegils died in 643, and was succeeded by his son Canwalh.

The immediate consequence of the baptism of Cynegils was the first organisation of a West-Saxon Church. "From 'Dorcic' Birinus went up and down among the West-Saxons, that is, from Dorset to Buckinghamshire, from Surrey to the Severn, preaching, catechising, baptising, 'calling many people to the Lord by his pious labours,' and 'building and dedicating churches which would prob-

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[1] Bede: *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (trans. by J. E. King; London: William Heineman, 1930), book III, ch. 7.
[2] *Ibid.*

ably be mission-stations'." [1]   Cwichelm, the son of
Cynegils, was baptised at Dorchester in 636, and died
the same year. It was just ten years since he had sent
Eumer with the poisoned dagger to slay Edwin. In 639,
Cuthred, the son of Cwichelm, was baptised by Birinus,
who took him as his godson. The baptism of Cynegils
was significant as it proved the admission into the Chris-
tian Church of the head of the royal house which was
destined to obtain the kingship of the whole English
nation, as the house of Ecgbert and Alfred.

The origin of Birinus is unknown. The statement that
he was a Roman Benedictine monk is probably a conjec-
ture.[2] A recent authority has designated him "a shadowy
figure."[3] The Venerable Bede knew little about West-
Saxon history; and Birinus had no successor of his own
training to hand down the tradition of his work. As
Stenton says, "his name suggests that he was of Germanic
stock, but his mission was undertaken on the advice of
Pope Honorius I, and the Church which he founded was
presumably organised on an Italian model. He came to
Britain, intending to preach in the Midlands, where no
teacher had preceded him, and with this object he received
episcopal consecration from Asterius, Archbishop of Milan
from 630 to 640."[4]

Bishop Browne thinks that Birinus landed at Porchester,
which was "the point from which a great road ran to
Winchester."[5] Porchester was the place at which the
Gewissae had landed for the conquest of Britain. "It
lay at the mouth of the one way through impassable
forests which led to the open downs of Caer Gwent, our
Winchester."[6] The Roman mission in England had not
made progress; its work had shrunk. About the year

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[1] Bright, William, *Chapters of Early English Church History*
(3rd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), p. 171.

[2] Bright, William, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

[3] Stenton, F. M., *Anglo-Saxon England*; Oxford: Clarendon
Press, 1943, p. 117.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Browne, G. F., *The Conversion of the Heptarchy*, p. 45.

[6] *Ibid*, p. 46.

633, Honorius was Archbishop of Canterbury; but Rochester had been left without a bishop for six years and had just received the fugitive Paulinus as bishop. There was "no other bishop of the Italian mission in all England besides, only the Burgundian prelate Felix at Dunwich."[1]

It has been argued with plausibility that the mission of Birinus links the West-Saxon Church with the old Celtic Christianity. While the origins of Christianity among the West-Saxons are obscure, there is ground for the hypothesis that the earliest missionaries to them were those of the Irish Church. The mission of Birinus must have taken place not earlier than the year 636. St. Aidan arrived in Northumbria in 634; and it is improbable that the baptism of the West-Saxons took place earlier than that of the Northumbrians. Doctor J. L. Gough Meissner, M.A., M.R.I.A., Rector of Altedesert (Pomeroy), County Tyrone, makes the following observations: —

> "Bede gives Birinus an impossible field of labour; for if he went beyond the farthest inland regions of the English, he would have come to territory inhabited by Christian Britons. Bede is clearly in a difficulty to account for Birinus's presence among the West-Saxons, to whom he had not been sent by the Pope; and, as it was impossible for him to convert people who had no existence, we are given to understand that, finding all the West-Saxons pagan, he considered himself justified in disobeying the Pope's orders and choosing on his own initiative an entirely different field of labour to that for which he had been consecrated. This assumption of a flat disobedience to the Pope's commands on the part of Birinus makes it difficult to accept Bede's account."[2]

And there are other difficulties. "The fact was long overlooked," continues the same author, "that Birinus was

[1] *Ibid*, p. 42.
[2] Phillips, Walter Alison, ed., *History of the Church of Ireland from the earliest times to the present day;* Oxford University Press, 1933, I, 275.

sent on his mission to Britain by the Pope without any introduction or reference to the Roman mission already working there—that of St. Augustine in Kent, and it has been pointed out that not only were there no relations between Birinus and the Canterbury mission, but that 'the one home influence there was, in the conversion of Wessex, was that of the most devoted adherent of the Scotic Church' "—by Bishop Browne, in *The Conversion of the Heptarchy*, p. 48. "This was Oswald of Northumbria, who was a strong supporter of the Irish usages. Pope Honorius, on the other hand, wrote to the Irish adjuring them to give up their custom of keeping Easter on the wrong date, which was considered so great a sin that no dealings whatever could be permitted with those who persisted in it. It is, therefore, extremely improbable that Birinus, as the Pope's nominee, would have been found in any kind of association with those who adhered to the Celtic Easter. The fact that the two letters of this same Pope Honorius to Edwin of Northumbria and Archbishop Honorius of Canterbury, given by Bede, are both obvious forgeries, make us doubt whether Pope Honorius had anything to do with this mission of Birinus. Finally, when we find that there is no record of this bishop, or where he went or when he died, and that apparently no attempt was made to appoint a successor to him, we are forced to the conclusion that the Roman mission of Birinus is a clumsy invention."[1]

Doctor Meissner further calls attention to the fact, already pointed out, that the name "Birinus" is clearly not a Roman one, and that it has been identified with considerable probability with the Irish name "Byrne." He concludes, therefore, that "the only possible explanation . . . of the strange mass of contradictions and impossibilities in Bede's narrative seems to be that Birinus was an Irishman, who had been consecrated by Asterius of Milan at Genoa, where the latter had taken refuge from an invasion of the Lombards; that he then came to the land

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[1] *Ibid*, I, 273-276.

of the West-Saxons, and, having remained there for some time, either died or wandered away again after the fashion of so many Celtic *peregrini*."[1]

Certainly the baptism of Cynegils did not mean the conversion of the whole royal house of Wessex. Cenwalh, who succeeded his father in 643, was a pagan, perhaps under the influence of his wife, the sister of King Penda of Mercia. Soon after his accession, Cenwalh put away his wife and took another in her stead. To avenge his sister, Penda made war upon the West-Saxon king, and drove him forth. Cenwalh fled to Anna, King of the East-Angles, and tarried with him for three years. From Anna, the royal fugitive heard and received the truths of Christianity; and he was baptised by Felix, Bishop of the East-Angles. In 648, he was restored to his kingdom by the help of his nephew Cuthred, the son of Cwichelm. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us that "this year the minster was built at Winchester, which King Cenwalh caused to be made, and hallowed in the name of St. Peter.

The history of early Winchester (Winton, Wynton) is lost in legend. Tradition ascribes its foundation to Ludor Rous Hudibras, and dates it ninety-nine years before the first building of Rome. Earthworks and relics show that the Itchen valley was occupied by the Celts; and it is certain from its position at the centre of six Roman roads and from the Roman relics found there, that the Caer Cwent (White City) of the Celts was, under the name of *Venta Belgarum,* an important Romano-British country-town. The name of Winchester is linked with that of King Arthur and his knights; but its historical greatness began when, after the conquest of the present Hampshire by the Gewissas, it became the capital of Wessex. Its importance was increased by the introduction of Christianity; although it was not at first the seat of a bishop, according to the later Winchester chronicler, King Cynegils wished to build a worthy church there.[2]

[1] *Ibid, I,* 276-277.
[2] Encylopædia Britannica, 11th ed., 1911, xxviii, 705.

"AGILBERT, A FRENCHMAN BORN"

The next considerable figure in the history of West-Saxon Christianity was "Agilbert, a Frenchman born"—*nomine Agilberctus, natione quidem Gallus.* The Venerable Bede supplies the source-material for our study. He tells that when Cenwalh had been restored to his kingdom, there came out of Ireland into his province a certain prelate, name Agilbert, "a Frenchman born, yet having made long abode in Ireland for the sake of reading the Scriptures." That Bishop joined himself to the King, taking upon him of his own accord the ministry of preaching. The King, seeing his learning and industry, entreated him to receive the see of a bishopric there, and remain as bishop of his people. Agilbert consented; and ruled the same people many years with episcopal authority.[1]

Agilbert's sojourn in Ireland confirms the reputation which the Irish monasteries enjoyed—a reputation for learning and sanctity. Like many of the men who had received their schooling in that island, he wandered forth to scatter the seeds of the Gospel wherever the soil seemed fertile. His initial impression on King Cenwalh must have been favourable, as that ruler's accession had been followed apparently by a general relapse into paganism, and the royal convert must have felt that an industrious, zealous teacher was just the spiritual leader whom his subjects needed. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle gives the date of Birinus's death and Agilbert's consecration as 650. Bede was likely its source.

In the year 652, Cenwalh fought at Bradford by the Avon. William of Malmesbury must refer to this campaign when he speaks of a rising of the Welsh, and of a victory gained by the West-Saxons at a place called Wirtgernesburg. The battle of Bradford gave the West-Saxons the long strip of land extending to Malmesbury

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[1] Bede, *op. cit.*, III, ch. 7.

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which Ceawlin left unconquered. On the site of Cenwalh's victory stands the little church built by St. Aldhelm.[1]

Cenwalh fought again with the Welsh in 658. He defeated them at "Pens," and drove them as far as the Parret, making that river the western boundary of West-Saxon conquest, instead of Ceawlin's frontier, the Axe. The renewed energy of the West-Saxons seem to have excited the jealousy of Wulfhere, King of the Mercians, who may well have feared lest they should attempt to recover the lost territory of the Hwiccas. Wulfhere defeated Cenwalh in 661, and ravaged the land as far as Ashdown.[2] Cenwalh's gains, however, must have brought him closer to the realm of British Christianity and its influence.

After a decade's acquaintance, Cenwalh, who knew no tongue but his own, grew weary of the foreign speech of Bishop Agilbert. Without consulting him, he invited into the province another Bishop, Wini, who had been consecrated in Gaul. He divided the province into two dioceses, giving Wini his see in Winchester. Agilbert, "being highly displeased because the King did this without his counsel, returned to France; and after he had received the bishopric of the city of Paris, died in the same place an old man and full of years."[3]

In Agilbert, Doctor Meissner recognises another example of the close connection between Celtic and West-Saxon Christianity. Bede's account seems strange to him. "A bishop suddenly appears among the West-Saxons; he comes from Ireland, and of his own accord assumes the ministry of preaching; he is then asked to remain and exercise episcopal functions among the West-Saxons. No one appears to have sent him; he just wanders into the province. We have been told, however, that he came from Ireland, and when a wandering bishop from Ireland, subject apparently to no authority, suddenly appears in

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[1] Dictionary of National Biography, IX, 423-424 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Bede, *op. cit.,* III, ch. 7.

this fashion, we naturally conclude that he had received episcopal orders in Ireland, for in no other country did the episcopate occupy such a peculiar position, and in no other country were bishops consecrated in such numbers. The fact that Agilbert was a Gaul does not affect this argument; for St. Ecgbert, though an Englishman, was also a wandering Irish bishop, and the fact that Agilbert presumably came from the south of Ireland, where at the time the Roman custom in the matter of Easter was already observed, is sufficient reason why his orders were not called in question and he was able eventually to become bishop of Paris. The great line of division, at this time, between the Celtic and Roman Churches was the question of the keeping of Easter, and there was as yet no question of denying the validity of the orders of those Irish who had accepted the Roman Easter. In later years, it was, of course, different; for, less than two centuries later, these wandering clerics had become such a trouble to the English authorities that most drastic legislation . . . was passed against the Irish. Agilbert, therefore, was a Gaul, who had gone to Ireland for the purpose of study, had received episcopal orders, in all probability in that country, and did not come into collision with the Roman authorities, because he duly observed Easter at the proper time."[1]

[1] Phillips, Walter Alison, ed.: *op. cit., I,* 276-277.

WINI

Wini, a "bishop of (Cenwalh's) own language," presumably an Englishman and probably a West-Saxon by birth, had received episcopal consecration in Gaul. We have already learned that King Cenwalh made him Bishop of the West-Saxons, with his see at Winchester, though Agilbert already held the West-Saxon see of Dorchester; and that, offended by the intrusion, Agilbert had retired from the diocese. As a result, Wini became sole Bishop of the West-Saxons. His intrusion is given by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle under the year 660; and there it is stated that he "held the bishopric three years." There is some conflict about the dates. He was certainly holding the see in 665; and Florence of Worcester dates his expulsion at 666. Doctor Bright adopts the year 660; Bishop Stubbs, 663.[1] When Chad applied to him for consecration during a vacancy in the see of Canterbury, probably in the year 666, Wini performed the rite with the assistance of two British bishops, whom he invited to join him, in spite of their holding to the Celtic Easter.

By the consecration of Chad for the see of York—a ceremony which took place at Winchester—Wini took the first step towards effecting a union of the British and English Churches, says Doctor Bright, "while at the same time he showed himself careful to observe the requirement of the 'three' consecrators by obtaining the co-operation of 'two bishops of British race,' most probably from Cornwall . . . who, it need not be said, were maintainers of the Celtic Easter—and who, therefore, by laying their hands on the head of the new Northumbrian bishop, unintentionally supplied the party which resented his appointment with an argument against the 'regularity' of his consecration . . . In other respects, the combination of agents in the scene then witnessed by the Churchpeople of Winchester was especially interesting and appropriate.

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[1] Dictionary of National Biography, LXII, 194 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

A prelate consecrated in Gaul joined with himself two prelates of a different rite, representing the old Church of Alban and Restitutus, of Dubricius and David, in the consecration of one who had sat at Aidan's feet, and had but very lately, it would seem, given up the British and Celtic observances—and who was to shine forth, in a brief but beautiful episcopate, as one of the truest and purest saints of ancient England."[1]

Chad's consecration belongs to the history of West-Saxon Christianity; and deserves attention in our narrative. The Venerable Bede recounts that King Oswy sent into Kent "a holy man, of virtuous behaviour, sufficiently learned in reading of Scriptures, and a diligent performer in deed of that he had learned in the Scriptures should be done, to be ordained Bishop of the Church of York" —Chad, brother of the most reverend Bishop Cedd, and Abbot of the monastery which is called Lastingham. "And the King sent him his priest, Eadhed by name, who, after in the reign of King Egfrid, was made prelate of the Church of Ripon. Arriving in Kent, they found that Archbishop Deusdedit had died and no other had been appointed in his place. "Whereby they strode over to the province of the West-Saxons, where Wini was bishop; and of him the foresaid Chad was consecrated bishop, having with him to assist and accompany him at the ordination two bishops of the British race, who celebrate the Lord's Easter day, as hath often been said before, contrary to the canonical order from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon. For there was not at this time, beside this Bishop Wini, any bishop canonically ordained in all Britain. Chad then being consecrated bishop began shortly to be zealous in care for ecclesiastical truth and purity of doctrine; to apply his heart to lowliness, abstinency, and study; to visit continually the towns, country places, cottages, villages, houses, for the sake of preaching the Gospel, not making his journey on horseback but

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[1] Bright, William, *op. cit.,* pp. 245-246.

going on foot as the Apostles used. For he was one of Aidan's scholars . . ."[1]

The Archbishop of Canterbury, whose demise had made recourse to Wini expedient, was himself a native of Wessex. Archbishop Honorius had died on the 30th of September, 653; "and when the see had been vacant a year and six months, Deusdedit, of the nation of the West-Saxons, was chosen the sixth Archbishop of Canterbury." Ithamar, Bishop of Rochester, consecrated him, March 26th, 655; and he ruled nine years, four months, and two days. He died, it is believed, on the 14th of July, 564; and was buried at Canterbury in St. Peter's porch, obtaining, afterwards, a place in the calendar— July 15th.[2]

At this period there were eight bishoprics in the heptarchy: two in Kent (at Canterbury and at Rochester), one among the East-Angles, one over the Northumbrians at Lindisfarne, one among the East-Saxons, one in Mercia, and the two West-Saxons' sees (Dorchester and Winchester). The magnitude of these bishoprics for the most part, as compared with the Canterbury diocese or even with all the kingdom of Kent; the circumstances of their being nearly all filled and vigorously worked by bishops of Celtic or foreign consecration, unconnected with Canterbury in their origin or in their working with one another, show how slight consolidation existed in the Church or churches of England, and prove how much in the shade the successor of St. Augustine must have been. No fewer than six or seven of the consecrations of the time of Deusdedit were by Celtic or French bishops, and only one by the Archbishop of Canterbury. When Wilfrid was to be consecrated, he went to Gaul; Chad sought consecration in Kent, but the Archbishop had passed away. The South-Saxons, Deusdedit's immediate neighbours, were the only nation without a bishop or a Church, and it does not appear that the Archbishop took any measures

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[1] Bede, *op. cit.,* III, ch. 28.
[2] Bede, *op. cit.,* III, ch. 20; Dictionary of Christian Biography (edited by William Smith and Henry Wace), I, 821.

for their conversion. But it should be noted that Damian, the only bishop of Deusdedit's consecration, was a South-Saxon.[1]

We return to Cenwalh and to the Bishop whom he had chosen for the see of Winchester. For reasons unkown, Wini was expelled by the King; and the West-Saxons were left without a bishop. Wini betook himself to his former King's enemy, Wulfhere, King of the Mercians, and brought from him the see of London. Little is known of his remaining years. He was not present at the Synod of Hertford, held by Theodore in 672. Rudborne preserves a legend that, repenting of his simony, he retired to Winchester, and lived there in penitence for the last three years of his life.[2] This is improbable, however; Bede states that he remained Bishop of London until his death (675?).[3]

The constant attacks of his enemies led King Cenwalh to reflect that, by keeping his kingdom without a spiritual head, he was depriving it of divine protection. Therefore he despatched messengers to Gaul, praying Agilbert to return. The Bishop responded that he could not leave his see; but he sent over his nephew Leutherius (Hlothere), who was a priest, in his place. Cenwalh and his people received Leutherius with honour; and he was ordained to the episcopate in the year 670.[4]

Cenwalh died in 672. On his death, "his under-rulers took upon them the kingdom of the people, and dividing it among themselves, held it ten years.[5] The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Henry of Huntingdon say that his Queen Sexburh reigned for a year after him. Cenwalh is said by William of Malmesbury to have been a bene-

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[1] Dictionary of Christian Biography, I, 821.

[2] Anglia Sacra, I, 192.

[3] Dictionary of National Biography, LXII, 194 (article by the Rev. William Hunt); Bede, *op. cit.*, III, ch. 7.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Bede, *op. cit.*, IV, ch. 12.

factor of Glastonbury; but the charter which claims to have been his is spurious.[1]

As early as Cenwalh's time, the Isle of Avalon had passed into English hands, and received the English name of Glastonbury. "Legends, sacred and profane, connect the island and its monastery with Joseph of Arimathea, King Arthur, and other famous names," says Hunt; "and though the early history of the house has been involved in so many myths that it is impossible to say what amount of truth, if any, underlies the fables, it is fairly certain that Glastonbury has a special interest for us as one of the few links between the British and the English Churches."[2] The monastery certainly existed in the time of King Ina; the story, by no means well-established, is that it had been a British sanctuary, and that the conquerors found there a little church originally made of wattle, which they preserved. Ina is said to have built a church of stone east of it, and to have endowed the monastery, which was destined to attain great historical renown.

[1] Dictionary of National Biography, IX, 423-424 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

[2] Hunt, William, *The English Church from its foundation to the Norman Conquest* (597-1066); London: Macmillan, 1907, p. 86.

CONTACTS WITH CELTIC CHRISTIANITY

Cenwalh's victory of 658, which opened the way through to the occupation of Somerset, brought into the West-Saxon realm a territory which had felt the influence of Celtic and Welsh Christianity. "The Welsh of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries came to regard Christianity as their distinguishing mark, which, together with their love of bardic music and poetry, enabled them still to feel superior to the Saxon savages who were exterminating them from the plains and confining them to the hills and moorlands of 'wild Wales.' . . . A similar development of Celtic Christianity took place in the remote peninsula of West Wales or Cornwall. On its tin-bearing moorlands and beside its woody streams running down to coves of the rocks, a race of local saints unknown to the rest of Christendom lived their lives and left their names to the villages of Cornwall, memorials of those stirring times when British civilisation perished and British Christianity found creative vigour under the ribs of death."[1]

The Welsh had waged their conflict with the English in the spirit of crusaders. Britons and Englishmen were forbidden to have dealings with each other; and the mutual suspicion and hostility thus engendered brought it about that no effort was made by the older inhabitants of the island to convert the newcomers to Christianity. "Where the Englishman planted his foot, it was held that there was no place for missionary effort." One of the canons attributed to the Synod of the Grove of Victory, quoted by an eminent historian of Wales, lays bare the animus of those days of strife.

> "He who acts as guide to the barbarians, let him do penance for thirteen years, that is, if there does

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[1] Trevelyan, George Macaulay, *A Shortened History of England;* London, New York, Toronto, 1944, p. 37.

not ensue a slaughter of Christian folk and the shedding of blood and lamentable captivity. When these follow, let the man abandon his arms and spend the rest of his life in penance."[1]

For a century and a half prior to the coming of St. Augustine (597), there had been no intercourse between the Christians of the British Isles and those of the Continent, with the exception of that carried on through Brittany. The British colonists appear to have had almost as little to do with their Frankish neighbours as had the insular Britons with their English foes. From the isolation which was the state of the Christianity of the island, the Celtic Churches had not shared in the general movement of Western or Latin Christianity, but had travelled their own path. "Conservative in some respects, they had innovated in others, and their successful breaking of new ground, their conversion of the heathen Picts, the fame of their seats of learning, had given them confidence in themselves and made them little disposed to give up at the bidding of an outside authority customs and institutions which had come down from the early ages of Christianity."[1]

The monastic life, as led by the monks of Ireland, Scotland, and Britain, had many unique features. The monks did not inhabit a single building, but lived in separate huts or cells, which were surrounded by a wall or rampart, after the pattern of that which girt the various buidings of a royal court or "llys." This was the "lan" or enclosure. Within it were the church, the abbot's cell, the hospice for entertaining visitors, and necessary outhouses. The buildings were not of stone; the church was of wood.

Entrance into the community was through the monastic vows, which were taken in the church on bended knee.

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[1] Lloyd, John Edward, *A History of Wales from the earliest times to the Edwardian Conquest* (3rd ed.; London, New York, Toronto, 1939), I, 171.

[2] *Ibid*, I, 172.

The man became one of the "brethren"—a body of comrades among whom there was complete equality, but all owing unquestioning obedience to the abbot. Other officers relieved the abbot of certain duties, such as a priest who offered the Eucharist, the cook or steward, the teacher, and the scribe. The abbots were elected by the monks.

At first the monks were entirely supported out of the lands attached to the monastery: these they tilled with their own hands. The early monks engaged in agriculture and the care of cattle. They spent a long day in the fields, to return at nightfall for the one set meal of the day. This was of the plainest, consisting of such food as bread, butter, cheese, eggs, milk, and vegetables; but meat and beer were not altogether excluded, save in the monasteries of the most rigid austerity. Much time was given to the study of Scripture and to writing. A regular succession of services was held in the church. The Psalter was chanted in Latin. On Sundays and saints' days, the Holy Communion was celebrated. On holidays, labour ceased and a more generous diet was provided. Wednesday and Friday were days of fasting; and Lent was observed with rigour. Severe penalties were imposed for all lapses from monastic standards of purity and simplicity. The monastic virtues were humility, readiness to obey, almsgiving, and chastity. Penitents were even banished to distant countries.

In their relations with the outside world, the early Celtic monks resembled the friar rather than the cloistered monk of mediaeval times. Not limited to their monastery; but, subject to the authority of their abbot, they wandered on errands appropriate to their calling. They went about preaching. The monastery was regarded not as a home for pious recluses, but as the natural centre of the ecclesiastical life of the district. Therefore, monks undertook long journeys, and they often set out to found new communities.[1]

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[1] *Ibid*, I, 208-214.

West-Saxon Christianity was bound to be affected by the influences which radiated from these monasteries. Although the Celtic Churches were fighting a losing battle, so far as cherished institutions like the date of Easter and the type of the tonsure were concerned, they were destined to prove a spiritual force in the lives of the conquering barbarians. Though the old wattle-work Church of St. Mary of Glastonbury was a relic of olden times, in the language of William of Malmesbury, it "savoured somewhat of heavenly sanctity even from its very foundation, and exhaled it over the whole country; claiming superior reverence, though the structure was mean. Hence, here arrived whole tribes of the lower orders, thronging every path; here assembled the opulent divested of their pomp; and it became the crowded residence of the religious and the literary."[1]

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[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum* (trans. by J. A. Giles; Bohn Library), I, ch. 2.

LEUTHERIUS

Leutherius, the nephew of Agilbert, having been consecrated by Archbishop Theodore in 670, ruled his diocese about six years; and died during the time when Wessex was broken up among the several ealdormen.[1] Bede mentions the fact that he ruled the bishopric of the Gewissae alone—*a synodica sanctione* (which may mean the maintenance of Wessex under a single Bishop was permitted by some special synodal act). We know that Leutherius attended the Synod of Hertford in 672; there the question of subdividing the diocese was waived.[2] He was in office during a considerable part of Aldhelm's early career; and according to the biographers, he ordained Aldhelm priest, and appointed him Abbot of Malmesbury. He probably retained his episcopal see at Dorchester, where he is said, on late authority, to have been buried.[3] The ancient list given by Florence of Worcester places him among the bishops who sat at Winchester.[4]

"There is a remarkable divergence between Bede and other authorities about the course of events after Cenwalh's death in 672," says Stenton. According to Bede, the West-Saxon kingdom was divided between a number of under-kings, and so remained approximately ten years. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states that Cenwalh was succeeded by his widow, who reigned a year. She was followed by two distant members of the royal houses—Escwin and Kentwyn.[5] We quote from the Chronicle: —

> "A. 674. This year Escwin succeeded to the kingdom of the West-Saxons; he was the son of Cenfus, Cenfus of Cenferth, Cenferth of Cuthgils,

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[1] Bede, *op. cit.*, IV, ch. 12.

[2] Bede, *op. cit.*, IV., ch. 5.

[3] *Anglia Sacra*, I, 192.

[4] Dictionary of Christian Biography, III, 708 (article by the Rev. William Stubbs).

[5] Stenton, F. M., *op. cit*, p. 67.

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> Cuthgils of Ceolwulf, Ceowulf of Cynric, Cynric of Cerdic . . .
>
> "A. 676. This year, in which Hedda succeeded to his bishopric, Escwin died, and Kentwyn succeeded to the kingdom of the West-Saxons; and Kentwyn was the son of Cynegils, Cynegils of Ceolwulf."

The difference cannot be reconciled, Stenton states; and it has sometimes been considered to discredit the authority of the Chronicle for the Seventh Century. "But Aldhelm of Malmesbury, who was contemporary with Centwine, describes him as a strong king who ruled the kingdom of Wessex successfully for many years, gave large endowments to newly-founded churches, and defeated unnamed enemies in three great battles."[1]

The Synod of Hertford, which Leutherius attended, was convened 24 September, 672; and it is highly significant because of the fact that it brought representatives of the province together and expressed the mind and will of the Church. As yet there was but one province, which included North and South under Canterbury. Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, presided; he had only four suffragans present in person, with delegates sent to represent Bishop Wilfrid. The constituent members of the Council were shown a book of canons; and the Archbishop, who had marked ten chapters, entreated that they might be received by all.

> "Chapter I. That we all in common keep the holy day of Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month.
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> "II. That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another, but be satisfied with the government of the people committed to him.
>
> "III. That it shall not be lawful for any bishop to trouble monasteries dedicated to God, nor to take anything forcibly from them.

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[1] *Ibid.*

"IV.   That monks do not move from one place to another, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless with the consent of their own abbot; but that they continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

"V.   That no clergyman, forsaking his own bishop, shall wander about, or be anywhere entertained without letters of recommendation from his own prelate. But if he shall be once received, and will not return when invited, both the receiver, and the person received, be under excommunication.

"VI.   That bishops and clergymen, when travelling, shall be content with the hospitality that is afforded them; and that it be not lawful for them to exercise any priestly function without leave of the bishop in whose diocese they are.

"VII.   That a synod be assembled twice a year; but in regard that several causes obstruct the same, it was approved by all, that we should meet on the 1st of August once a year, at the place called Clofeshoch.

"VIII.   That no bishop, through ambition, shall set himself before another; but that they shall all observe the time and order of their consecration.

"IX.   It was generally set forth, that more bishops should be made, as the number of believers increased; but this matter for the present was passed over.

"X.   Of marriages: that nothing be allowed but lawful wedlock; that none commit incest; no man quit his true wife, unless, as the Gospel teaches, on account of fornication.   And if any man shall put away his own wife, lawfully joined to him in matrimony, that he take no other, if he wishes to be a good Christian, but continue as he is, or else be reconciled to his own wife."[1]

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[1] Bede, *op. cit.*, IV, ch. 5.

HEDDI

Heddi—known variously as Haeddi, Haedda, and Aetla(?)—was consecrated in London by Archbishop Theodore. He was the successor of Leutherius; and was consecrated, according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in the year 676. He fixed his see at Winchester; and probably, about 679, removed thither the bones of St. Birinus from Dorchester in Oxfordshire. Though this was not the first time that Winchester had been made the residence of a West-Saxon bishop, since Wini had resided there, Heddi's migration was final. The exact date, however, remains uncertain. While Dorchester may have continued part of Wessex for some years longer, the extension of the Mercian power rendered it no longer a suitable place for a West-Saxon see.[1]

"It is possible," says Hunt, "that Heddi should be identified with Aetla, a monk of Whitby under St. Hilda . . . who became Bishop of Dorchester, though Aetla may have given place to Heddi. If Florence of Worcester's account of the Mercian sees is correct, Aetla must have been appointed to Dorchester as a Mercian bishop in 679, and have died shortly afterwards; but it is by no means certain that Dorchester became Mercian so early. Heddi is said by William of Malmesbury to have been an abbot, which must mean abbot of Whitby; but there an abbess would seem more according to rule, and as he is described as not particularly learned, he is scarcely likely to have been one of St. Hilda's scholars."[2]

Although Theodore divided some of the English dioceses, he left the West-Saxon diocese untouched, and is said to have decreed that it should not be divided during the life of Heddi, who was evidently opposed to such a step. Heddi died in 705. There was no division until

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[1] Dictionary of National Biography, XXV, 361 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

[2] *Ibid*, pp. 361-362.

after his death. He seems to have worked well with King Ina; and he was a friend cf Archbishop Theodore. He was regarded as a man of much personal holiness, zealous in the discharge of his episcopal duties. Reckoned as a saint, his day was set at July 30th. Many miracles were said to have been wrought at his tomb.[1]

> "Hedda, Bishop of the West-Saxons, departed to the heavenly kingdom; for he was a good and just man, and exercised his episcopal duties rather by his innate love of virtue, than by what he gained from learning."[2]

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[1] *Ibid,* p. 362.
[2] Bede, *op. cit.,* V, ch. 18.

KING KENTWYN

Ethelwerd's Chronicle tells us that in 682, after two years, Kentwyn drove the Britons out of their country to the sea; and that after he had reigned two years (684) Ina became King of the western English. The first statement is a repetition of an item in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, under the same date. Like his predecessor, Kentwyn applied himself to the extension of his kingdom towards the south-west; and his driving the Britons as far as the sea perhaps marks a stage in the English conquest of Devon. "Expansion in this quarter was necessary if the kings of Wessex were to maintain their dignity and revenue, for the Mercian hold upon their northern provinces was growing stronger. Between 675 and 685 a Mercian bishopric was established at Dorchester on Thames, where the first bishops of Wessex had sat. Its life was short, but its foundation shows that Mercian authority was recognised for the time being to the north of the middle Thames."[1]

The name of Kentwyn is interesting in connection with the original foundation of the great Abbey of St. Mary of Abingdon. In the first year of his reign, Hean, nephew of the sub-king Cissa, obtained from his uncle a grant of land for a monastery amid the Bagley-wood of that period, on a spot called "Abba's hill," a name transferred some twenty years later to Seukesham, when, after many delays, the design was carried out on that ground near the river where one still sees some scanty remains of the once stately monastery which made the new "Abbendum" historically important.[2]

An early manuscript[3] gives the story of the arrival in Britain of an Irish monk named Abbennus, who received from the British King a great park of Berkshire, in which he founded a monastery named Abbendonia upon

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[1] Stenton, F. M., *op. cit.*, p. 68.
[2] Bright, William, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-299.
[3] MS. Cott. Claudius B vi. (British Museum), printed in the Rolls Series, 1858 (Joseph Stevenson, ed.), vol. II.

a hill between two streams just beyond the vill of Sunning-well. Three hundred monks, and more, joined Abbennus there; and monastic life continued on the site until the arrival of the English in Britain. The writer believed that the monastery was translated to "Sevekesham" in the time of Caedwalla, King of Wessex. Relics were found there, and the black cross *ex clavis Domini ex magna parte conflata et facta.* In honour of the Holy Cross and St. Helen, a house of nuns was founded at Helneston by the Thames, and ruled by Cille, sister of Hean, to whom the site of "Sevekesham" had been given by Caedwalla. Stenton says that "this tale belongs to the region of romance."[1] "Nevertheless," he adds, "it must be admitted that utter obscurity overhangs the history of the abbey of Abingdon in the period which precedes the re-edification of the house by Ethelwold. We are, indeed, entitled to believe than an ancient monastery existed on the site occupied by the later abbey, but no consistent narrative can be written of its history . . . No consistent tradition was preserved in the house with regard to the succession of its abbots; its foundation legend is a pious but incoherent, invention of the twelfth century. Only once does the name of Abingdon occur in a literary con-text which may be assumed to date from beyond the year 950; and in this passage the existence of a monastery there is ignored."[2]

Another manuscript—the oldest copy of the History[3]—tells us that the writer, whom Stenton identifies as a man who was a monk of Abingdon before 1117, has received "upon the authority of the ancients" that Cissa, "King of the West-Saxons," gave a place for the worship of God to one "Hean," an abbot, and to Cilla his sister; and that Caedwalla, succeeding Cissa, added twenty hides at Abingdon to his gift. For this statement, the historian

[1] Stenton, F. M., *The Early History of the Abbey of Abing-don* (Reading: University College, 1913), p. 3.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 7.
[3] MS Cott. Claudius C. ix; Stenton, F. M., *The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon,* p. 7.

vouches a fragment of a charter which is certainly spurious. He then introduces four documents which carry the history to the close of Ina's reign. Of these, Stenton regards the last as possibly a fragment of a genuine charter of Ina, with some interpolations.

Bede says that when Kenwalh was dead, *sub-reguli* assumed the kingship of the nation. They held it divided among themselves for about ten years. The "King" Cissa, to whom the first grant of lands to Haeha (Hean) is assigned, is referred by the Abingdon tradition to just this period of anarchy. "If once we believe it possible that the inmates of a religious house in the twelfth century could remember the name of its founder in the seventh, there is no reason for doubting that here again the Abingdon tradition has preserved a trace of authentic fact, and that in the traditional Cissa the true name is recorded of one of the obscure sub-reguli whose rule in Wessex is attested by the evidence of Bede."[1]

Stenton undertakes to indicate in outline the course of events attending the foundation of the Abingdon Abbey. He believes that towards the close of the Seventh Century, Cissa, an under-king in Wessex, made a grant of lands for the foundation of a monastery to one Haeha, himself a man of noble birth. Though the exact position of the lands given cannot be determined, they may presumably be represented in the large estate at Aearomundeslee confirmed to Haeha in Ina's first charter. The name of Aearomundeslee was giving place to the existing name of Appleton in the Tenth Century, when the place was given by King Eadmund to his *comes* Aethelstan; and the modern Appleton is only five miles from Abingdon. It is uncertain whether a monastery was founded immediately upon the gift of this estate by Cissa; Haeha himself undoubtedly continued in the lay world, for he bore the title of *patricius* in the early part of King Ina's reign. Before the century had closed, Haeha had received a

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[1] Stenton, F. M., *The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon*, p. 18.

further grant from Ina—lands situated twenty miles from Abingdon in the neighbourhood of Streatley and Bradfield. Finally, in or before 709, Haeha had entered the religious life and become an abbot, and the whole consensus of tradition is with us if we assume him to be ruling a monastery established at Abingdon. "Whatever uncertainty in detail must attend any discussion of the origin of the abbey, it is at least clear that it was purely a West-Saxon foundation, the reputed work of a noble of that kingdom, and associated with the name of one of its most famous rulers."[1]

Doctor Meissner finds in the Abbey of Abingdon a case of evident Irish influence on West-Saxon Christianity. The abbey was founded, he concludes, on the site of an early settlement of Irish Christians among the pagan Saxons; and he cites the tract *De Abbatibus Abbendoniae,* in which we read that in the time of that most wicked heathen Hengist, who killed so many of the nobles and rulers of Britain, the son of one of the British rulers who was slain barely managed to escape with his life. Aben was his name; and he fled until he reached a forest in what is now the south of Oxfordshire. There he lay concealed, living on herbs and roots; and God gave him a spring of water in answer to his prayers.

> "When the inhabitants of that province had heard of the holiness of that man, they flocked to him, and derived much profit from his discourses. Then they built for him a dwelling-place and a chapel in honour of St. Mary; but that holy man, not able to bear the crowds of people, secretly set out for Ireland, and there, having made a good end, rested in the Lord. But the hill where he dwelt and which he left is called by his name 'Abendum'."[2]

Doctor Meissner says that "long before the Danish inroads the hill mentioned was known as Abendun, Dun

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[1] *Ibid,* pp. 18-19.
[2] *De Abbatibus Abbendoniæ,* printed in *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon* (Rolls Series), II, 268; Phillips, Walter Alison, ed., *op. cit.,* I, 278.

Aben, 'the fort of Aben.' The chronicler was at a loss to account for Aben's presence among the Saxons at such an early period, so the Hengist story was invented, regardless of the fact that the escaped British ruler's son is suddenly turned into a Celtic saint! Then follows the statement that Aben, on account of the crowds who flocked to hear him, went to Ireland. This statement is true, for Aben is in fact none other than St. Abban of Mag Arnaide.

"If we turn to the Irish authorities," he continues, "we find that one of the great features of Abban's life was his travelling about in foreign parts. We read that

> " ' . . . On a certain day when the holy Ybar and the holy Abban, with their following of monks, were travelling about in the southern part of Britain, they came to a certain heathen community, who worshipped idols. When they went into the market-place of that state, the citizens wondered at their dress and speech. Some thought that they were spectres, but others that they were men who came from a country a long way off. Immediately tidings of them was brought to the King of that community, and he ordered them to be brought into his presence; and when they had come, he asked them whence they were, whither they were going, and what was the cause of their journey.' (*Vita S. Abbani,* ch. 13 in *Vit. Sanct. Hib.*)

Then follows a long conversation between Bishop Ybar and the heathen King, after which the narrative is resumed, and we are told that

> " 'in those days the wife of that same King was racked with great pain, and on the day in which the holy man came into the city which is called Abbaindun or Dun Abbain, she died.'

Then St. Abban performed the miracle of bringing the Queen to life. Now, in spite of the amount of what Dr. Plummer calls 'ecclesiastical whitewash' in his *Life,* it is evident that it contains primitive material."[1]

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[1] Phillips, Walter Alison, ed., *op. cit.,* I, 278-279.

We are informed who was the compiler of the original life from which the various extant recensions are derived.

> "Ego autem qui vitam beatissimi patris Abbani collegi et scripsi, sum nepos ipsius filii, quem sanctus Abbanus baptissavit, et de quo propetavit."[1]

The tradition that St. Abban preached among the Saxons in the south of Britain can be traced back to Ireland to within a short period of the saint's death. Wherefore Doctor Meissner concludes that we are "justified in concluding that Abban Dun commemorated the Irish Saint Abban, and that at some time at the close of the sixth century he founded a church at that place."[2]

The persistence and recurrence of the old Celtic Christianity cannot be treated as of mere passing interest. We must acknowledge that the ancient Britons were imparting to their foes and conquerors something unique—a deep, subjective piety which the continental evangelists, with all their zeal, did not possess. From the eastern land came missionaries imbued with ardour and sincerity, a passion for order and conformity, and qualities of leadership, but from the wandering teachers of the western regions and from the cloistered groups of simple, humble, yet studious monks there came the spirit of sacrifice and lowly service as well as a genuine penetration into the heart of things. Men of blood and death could not ignore the example and message of those whose religion was their life.

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[1] *Vita S. Abbani,* ch. 26, in *Vit. Sanct. Hib.*
[2] Phillips, Walter Alison, ed., *op. cit.,* I, 280.

KING CAEDWALLA

One of those who ended his days a pilgrim was Caedwalla, though his scruples did not forbid him to wade through slaughter to a throne or shut the gates of mercy on mankind. The son of Cyneberht and the greatgrandson of King Caewlin, Caedwalla was born about the year 659. The name "Caedwalla" is British; and the name of his brother "Mul" (mule, or half-breed) indicates that the mother may have been Welsh. Bede calls Caedwalla a young man of great energy. Expelled from Wessex, probably by a faction of leading men, he led the life of an outlaw among the forests of Chiltern and Anderida. About 681, he was brought into contact with Wilfrid, who was engaged in missionary labours among the South-Saxons. Caedwalla often appealed to him for advice; and Wilfrid lent him horses and money, and obtained considerable influence over him.

In 685, Caedwalla began to strive for the West-Saxon kingdom. As the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle notes, he ravaged Sussex with a band of lawless followers; and, notwithstanding his friendship for Wilfrid, he slew the South-Saxon King, Aethelwealh, who was an ally of Kentwyn. Two aeldormen, Berchtun and Andhun, who had been converted by Wilfrid, succeeded in driving him out, and governing the kingdom independently.

Kentwyn died or resigned in 686. He seems to have nominated Caedwalla as his successor; anyway, Caedwalla obtained possession of the West-Saxon throne. He again invaded Sussex; he defeated and slew Berchtun, and subdued the whole kingdom. After making a raid on Kent, in which his brother Mul was burned to death, he turned on the Isle of Wight, which had been conquered some years before by Wulfhere, King of Mercia, and bestowed upon his ally and godson, Aethelwealh, the South-Saxon King. The inhabitants of Wight were still heathen; and Caedwalla, though not yet baptised, vowed that, if victorious, he would devote the fourth part of

the island to God. Probably this was due to Wilfrid's suggestion. Successful in subjugating Wight, Caedwalla fulfilled his vow, by bestowing a fourth part of the island's three hundred hides on Wilfrid, who sent two priests—his nephew Bernuin and another Hiddila—to instruct and baptise the people in the Christian faith. Caedwalla put to death two sons of Arvaldus, King of Wight, who had fled for refuge to the mainland; but, at the request of an abbot of a neighbouring monastery, he permitted them first to be baptised. All this time, he was unbaptised himself; "and had not, so far as our records enable us to judge, exhibited much Christian virtue in his conduct. He had indeed bestowed many liberal gifts upon monastic houses, but William of Malmesbury (*Gest. Pont.*, p. 352) implies that he did this to obtain favour when he was ambitious of the West-Saxon throne. Suddenly, however, in 688, the fierce warrior turned into a penitent devotee."[1]

The Venerable Bede furnishes the main sources for Caedwalla's career.[2] "No reign in Anglo-Saxon history is more bloodthirsty than Caedwalla's, but his meteoric career had the merit of putting new vigour into the West-Saxons, who from this time stand out as far more determined opponents of Mercia than heretofore. Sussex, too, from this date tends to become a vassal of Wessex rather than of Mercia, and so the first move is made towards the distant goal of the ultimate supremacy of the house of Cerdic in England."[3]

Although only about thirty years of age, Caedwalla left his kingdom—probably in the summer of 688—and started on his way to Rome, there to receive baptism at the hands of the Pope. At Samer, near Calais, he donated money for the building of a church; and he was present at the court of Cunipert, King of the Lombards. On Easter

[1] Dictionary of National Biography, VIII, 202 (article by the Rev. W. R. W. Stephens).
[2] Bede, *op. cit.*, IV, ch. 15, 16.
[3] Cambridge Mediæval History, II, 560 (article by W. J. Cobbett, M.A.).

Day, 689, he was baptised at Rome in the presence of the Pope, who received him from the font, and gave him the baptismal name of Peter. After ten days he died, still wearing the white clothes of the newly-baptised. By the Pope's command, an epitaph was written for his tomb by the Archbishop of Milan, "wherein the memory of his devotion might be preserved for ever, and the readers or hearers might be inflamed with religious desire by the example of what he had done." [1] The glowing tribute embodied in that epitaph and the high praise expressed by the Venerable Bede for the King whose "pious love had brought him from the utmost bounds of the earth . . . to obtain the peculiar honour of being baptised in the church of the blessed apostles," illustrates the mental outlook of zealous and conscientious ecclesiastics in those rugged times, when human life was cheap and men's broader social sympathies had not been aroused. After twenty-four lines of laudatory verse, the inscription states : —

"Hic depositus est Caedual, qui et Petrus, rex Saxonum, sub die duodecim kalendarum Maiarum, indictione secunda; qui vixit annos plus minus triginta, imperante domno Tustiniano piiesimo Augusto, anno eius consulatus quarto, pontificante apostolico viro domno Sergio papa anno secundo." [2]

[1] Bede, *op. cit.,* V, ch. 7.
[2] *Ibid.*

KING INA

When Caedwalla went to Rome, he was succeeded by Ina, a man of considerable force, who was destined to rule Wessex for thirty-eight years (688-726). He was the son of Cenred, an underking of the West-Saxons; and he probably sprang from the tribe inhabiting Somerset, of the line of Ceawlin. He was chosen king in the life-time of his father. In a west-country legend of about the Tenth Century, Ina is represented as a ceorl, who, in accordance with a divine command, was taken from driving his father's oxen at Somerton in Somerset, and chosen by the bishops and nobles at London to be King of England south of the Humber. The greater part of his reign was devoted to extending his territories. In the east, he set up his kinsman Nunna as underking of Sussex; in the west, he encroached year by year on West Wales. Details are lacking; but we may ascribe the conquest of West Somerset to the middle of his reign.[1] Ina invaded Kent in order to avenge the death of Mul, Caedwalla's brother. Withred, the Kentish King, met him in 694, and agreed to purchase peace by paying him thirty-thousand pieces of money as a wergild for Mul. This war gained Ina supremacy over all the country held by the English south of the Thames. He was supreme over East Anglia, including London, before 694.[2]

Withred, King of Kent (690-725), is claimed as the first English king to grant general charters of immunity to the churches of his kingdom; thereby the church-lands were freed from secular and royal dues. "Whether Withraed's so-called 'Privilege' is really a genuine document will probably never be ascertained; but he also issued a code of laws mainly directed to make the status

[1] Cambridge Mediæval History, II, 560 (article by W. J. Cobbett, M.A.).

[2] Dictionary of National Biography, XXVIII, 429 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

of the clergy clear and definite, which are markedly in favour of the Church."[1]

The example set by Kent was not lost on Ina. It was early in his reign, perhaps between 690 and 693, that Ina published his laws—the earliest extant specimen of West-Saxon legislation. As we have them now, they form an appendix to the dooms issued two centuries later by King Alfred; and it is not quite clear how far they have been abbreviated and revised. Still they give valuable evidence for the Seventh Century; "they seem to present a contrast to the Kentish dooms on many points, and also deal with a larger number of topics. The most interesting sections are perhaps those dealing with the conquered Welsh in Somerset and Dorset."[2] Truly a remarkable collection, there is much that suggests the principles and ethics which Christian missionaries had enjoined. The laws themselves are rather of the nature of amendments of customs; and they deal chiefly with penalties and compensations for injuries. Some, however, relate to Church matters, such as the baptism of children, the payment of church-scot, and the jurisdiction of bishops. The mention of Erconwald, the famous Bishop of London, who died before or in the year 694, shows that the laws belong to the earlier part of Ina's reign.[3]

In what might be called the prologue to his code, Ina, "by the grace of God King of Wessex," states that with the counsel and teaching of his father, Cenred, Heddi his Bishop, Erconwald his Bishop, all the ealdormen and chief "witan" of his people, and a great assembly of "the servants of God," he has "been considering concerning the salvation of our souls and the stability of our realm, that right law and just dooms may be made fast

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[1] Cambridge Mediæval History, II, 561 (article by W. J. Cobbett, M.A.).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Chambers, R. W., *England before the Norman Conquest*: London, New York, Toronto, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras: Longmans, Green & Co., 1926, p. 178.

and firm among our people, so that none of the ealdor-
men, nor of our subjects, after this should pervert these
our dooms." Christian influences are obvious in a large
part of the legislation. A child must be baptised within
thirty nights, under penalty; if the child die unbaptised,
the father must forfeit all that he possesses. A slave
working on Sunday, without his lord's knowledge, shall
be flogged or fined; a free man working on that day with-
out his lord's command shall lose his freedom or pay
sixty shillings. Church-dues shall be rendered at Martin-
mas, under penalty. One guilty of death may save his
life by fleeing to the church, but must pay just compensa-
tion. Anyone fighting in a monastery shall pay 120
shillings. Church-dues shall be paid from the estate and
the house where a man is residing at midwinter. For
breaking the peace of a fortified house of the King or
of a bishop within his bishopric, 120 shillings compensa-
tion shall be paid. There are laws concerning theft,
robbery, gangs, the maintenance of foundlings, the care
of illegitimate children, the marriage contract, concealing
theft, the fencing of land, stray beasts, common pasturage,
destruction of trees, cattle-stealing, military service,
eviction, and other matters; many of the items are sugges-
tive of Christian teaching.[1]

Ina's code of law is for its date "a lengthy document
covering a wide range of human relationships, entering
much more fully than any other early code into the details
of the agrarian system on which society rested, and marked
by a definite purpose of advancing Christianity. It is
not a tariff of offences, but the result of a serious attempt
to bring together a body of rules governing the more
complicated of the questions with which the King and
his officers might have to deal. It is the work of a
responsible statesman, capable of bringing his clergy and
nobles into deliberation on the blending of ancient customs
and new enactments in an elaborate body of laws. It

[1] Attenborough, F. L., ed. and trans., *The Laws of the Earliest
English Kings;* Cambridge: University Press, 1922, pp. 37-59.

stands for new conception of kingship, destined in time to replace the simple motives which had satisfied the men of an earlier age."[1]

Furthermore, as the same critic observes, Ina "was the effective supporter of the process which in his days was creating an organised Church in Wessex out of a number of isolated monasteries and mission stations. He founded the sea of Sherborne for the better government of the churches west of Selwood. The first West-Saxon synods of which there is definite evidence belong to his reign, and the oldest record of such a body which has survived shows that it met by his advice and under his presidency."[2]

In 704, Brihtwald (650?-731?), the eighth Archbishop of Canterbury, had taken measures for the division of the vast diocese of Wessex. Of the bishoprics which Theodore found on his arrival in England, that of the West-Saxons was the only one which he did not subdivide. The reason why he left it as it was may probably be due to the civil history of Wessex, which was in an unsettled state for some years after the death of Cenwalh. Under Ina, the kingdom was in a more settled condition; and the importance of an increase in the West-Saxon episcopate was obvious. Bishop Heddi had resisted an order for the division of the episcopal jurisdiction, it is believed; but on his death the bishopric of Wessex was divided into the two dioceses. One was given to Daniel; the other to Aldhelm.[3] The old diocese was evidently too large and unwieldy for one bishop to govern.

The boundaries of the two West-Saxon dioceses have been the subjects of controversy. In an article which appeared in 1939, the matter has been reviewed at length; and the author, Francis Peabody Magoun, Jr., has availed himself of the mediæval source-material and the recent discussion of historians. William of Malmesbury (*De*

[1] Stenton, F. M., *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 71.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Bede, *op. cit.*, V, ch. 18.

Cestis Pontificum Anglorum) states that "in the partition
of the West-Saxon episcopate this is clearly observable,
(namely) that whoever had the see of Winchester, had
the two counties Hampshire and Surrey; and the other,
who (had the see) of Sherborne, had (the counties of)
Wiltshire, Dorset, Berkshire, Somerset, Devon, (and)
Cornwall."

> "In divisione Westsaxonici episcopatus hoc obser-
> vatum palam est, ut qui Wintoniae sederet, haberet
> duos pagos Amptunensem et Sudeiensem; alter qui
> Scirenurniae, haberet Wiltunensem, Dorsatensem,
> Berruchensem, Sumersetensem, Domnoniensem,
> Cornubiensem."

Thus William assigns Hampshire and Surrey to Daniel;
and Berkshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset, Devon, and
Cornwall to Aldhelm. Cornwall and Devon did not con-
stitute an effective part of Aldhelm's diocese, though there
is no objection to their allotment on paper. As the most
easterly county of the Sherborne diocese, William men-
tions Berkshire. Magoun believes that the report of
William of Malmesbury is essentially right.[1]

Leaving the problem of the diocesan boundary, we may
observe that the reign of King Ina was far from peaceful.
Some difficulties arose between him and the rulers of the
East-Saxons in 705, about certain West-Saxon exiles who
had been received in Essex. He was willing to come to
a peaceful settlement, and agreed to meet the East-
Saxon rulers at a conference at Brentford in October, to
submit the matter to the two bishops of the East and
West-Saxons, and to abide by their decision. In 710,
he made war with the King of the British, Dyvnaint, and
put him to flight. This war seems to have advanced the
West-Saxon boundary from the Quantock hills, to which
it had been extended by Kentwyn, over the western
districts of Somerset. Probably then Ina built a fortress
on the Tone, from which the town of Taunton has sprung.

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[1] Magoun, Francis Peabody, Jr., "Aldhelm's Diocese of
Sherborne," *Harvard Theological Review*, XXXII (April
1939), 103-114.

An invasion of the Mercians under Coelred took place in 715; it was repelled at the battle of Wanborough with a consequent retreat. The same year, Ina suppressed the rebellion of two aetheings of the race of Cerdic. He slew one of them—Cynewulf. The other, Eadbriht, in 722, seized on Ina's new fortress, Taunton, but was driven out by his Queen Aethelburh. Eadbriht fled to Surrey and Sussex. Ina made war on the South-Saxons, and in 725 slew the aetheling.

Under Ina, the English and Welsh lived peaceably side by side. His laws recognised the right of Welshmen to own property, and declared the weight to be given to the Welshman's oath and the legal value of his life. "Ina was renowned for his piety as well as his vigour in war. He was a benefactor to Glastonbury, and is said to have built the first of the churches raised to the east of the ancient wooden church of British times. His preservation of the sanctuary of the conquered people may be connected with his other relations with them. While he certainly did not, as tradition asserts, place a Bishop's see at Wells, it is extremely likely that he was a benefactor, if not a founder, there. At Abingdon he annulled a number of grants previously made to the monastery, but afterwards endowed it richly. A fellow-worker with his kinsman Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury, he obeyed all Aldhelm's wishes and carried out his plans. Aldhelm's efforts to persuade the Welsh to conform to the Roman Easter must have been agreeable to Ina, and his success may to some extent have been due to the King's influence."[1]

But the insurrection of the aethelings and the South-Saxon war seem to have disgusted Ina with the world. In 725-726, he abdicated after thirty-seven years' reign. In company with his wife Aethelburh, he made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he died soon after his arrival. He was succeeded in Wessex by his brother-in-law Aethelheard.

[1] Dictionary of National Biography, XXVIII, 429 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

William of Malmesbury paid him a high tribute, extolling him as "a rare example of fortitude; a mirror of prudence; unequalled in piety. Thus regulating his life, he gained favour at home and respect abroad . . . How sedulous he was in religious matters, the laws he enacted to reform the manners of the people are proof sufficient; in which the image of his purity is reflected even upon the present times." The same mediæval author recounted Ina's services to the Church, in the building of monasteries and houses of worship. He listened to the precepts of Aldhelm with humility, and "nobly adopted, and joyfully carried (the same) into effect." He confirmed the privilege which Aldhelm had obtained from Pope Sergius, for the immunity of the monasteries; and gave much to the servants of God by his advice, and finally honoured him with a bishopric. After his triumphal spoils in war, after many successive degrees in virtue, Ina aspired to the highest perfection, and betook himself to Rome. "There, not to make the glory of his conversion public, but that he might be accephtable in the sight of God alone, he was shorn in secret; and, clad in homely garb, grew old in privacy. Nor did his Queen, the author of this noble deed, desert him; but as she had before excited him to undertake it, so, afterwards, she made it her constant care to soothe his sorrows by her conversation, to stimulate him when wavering, by her example; in short, to omit nothing that could be conducive to his salvation."[1]

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum,* I, ch. 2.

WEST-SAXON SAINTS
ALDHELM

Aldhelm, first Bishop of Sherborne, was one of the shining lights of West-Saxon history. He and Daniel were consecrated to the episcopate on the division of the diocese in 705. Aldhelm was of noble birth; it has been suggested that he was the son of King Kentwyn. In childhood, he was placed under the care of Maelduib, a learned Scot, who, early in the seventh century, had settled at Malmesbury. From him Aldhelm, who was born about 640, learned those studies for which he became famous.

Maelduib was an Irish monk, who had established a small community at Ingelborne. About 637, nearly fifty years after the battle of Wanborough and long before any Saxon in the neighbourhood was a Christian, this Irish Christian teacher, "wearied with the dissensions of his countrymen and desiring a perfectly peaceable place for the hermit life, found at Malmesbury a suitable asylum. There was a sufficient population for his teaching purposes. They were Britons, and Christians. The pagan Saxons were not there. He was free from the quarrels of the Christian Scots. From ravages of marauders, which had driven him out of one abode and another, the nature of the place was a safeguard. Here, then, he settled; gathered companions of like mind; and built a small basilica which still existed in the time of William of Malmesbury, 1140, and was called St. Michael's."[1] John Leland, whom King Henry VIII appointed in 1533 his library keeper and antiquary, with a commission to visit and peruse the libraries of all cathedrals, abbeys, colleges, and other places where records and the secrets of antiquity were deposited, went to Malmesbury. He saw a manuscript collection of the antiquities of Malmesbury,

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[1] G. F. Browne, *St. Aldhelm: His Life and Times* (London, 1906), 43-44.

part of which he transcribed. It gives Gladow, or Bladon, as the British name of the castle; Ingelborne as the Saxon name. Its builder was a British king named Dunwallo Malmutius. Leland read in an old chronicle at Malmesbury, *De prima origine Maeldulphesbyriensis monasterii,* that "Maildulph was so beset in his parts of Scotia (Ireland) by thieves and robers that he fled into England and came to the castle of Bladon."[1]

Maelduib's dwelling-place is understood to have been in Burnvale, nestling under the precipitous side of the narrow neck by which the fortress was approached. "His basilica was built, no doubt, *more Scottorum,* as Bede expresses it, that is, in the Irish fashion of timber. The Britons of Somerset built of wattle and clay; a large amount of very careful and abiding work of this interesting character was uncovered a few years ago near Glastonbury, where, as we know, a chapel constructed of these materials remained till the Norman Conquest. British basket-work was much valued in imperial Rome."[2]

Bishop Browne suggests that Maelduib was one of the learned monks associated with St. Carthach, and that he was so much upset by the jealousy of the Irish of one territory against the Irish of another territory, that he determined to make an end of such expriences and seek a place of quiet. The younger St. Carthach, who was a Munster man, while visiting a saint near Tullamore, in the ancient Meath, was advised to found a monastery nearby. This was probably not earlier than 588, says Bishop Browne; and Carthach was quite young. The great schools of learning at Durrow, Clonmaenois, Clonfert, and Clonard, were all in the neighbourhood, and Durrow especially was near. Carthach created, and for nearly forty years he ruled, the monastic school of Rahan Under his management it grew to remarkable success. About the years 632-634, the jealousy of the native clerics came to a head; they stirred up the secular ruler of the

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[1] *Ibid,* p. 44 (note).
[2] *Ibid,* p. 45.

territory, Blathmac, to drive the strangers away. Carthac, an old man, refused to leave, unless force was used. Blathmac himself took him by the hand and led him out of his beloved home. Carthach and his monks moved southward, till at length they reached the dominion of the Desii of Waterford; their price gave Carthach a territory in which to found another school. They began to build, and called their new home Lios-beg, "a small habitation"; but a prophetic virgin bade them call it Lios-mor, "a great habitation." Lismore has become one of the most famous of the many schools of learning and of saints which gave Ireland the name of *Insula sanctorum et doctorum.*[1]

When Aldhelm's connection with Malmesbury began, the dwellings other than the castle had been completely destroyed; and the people lived at a royal abode near, called Kairdurberg, and by the Saxons, Brohamberg; in later times it was known as Brokenberg. In the British days, while the British town on and about the hill was still flourishing, certain nuns, under the obedience of the Abbat Dinooth (Dunawd), had a settlement near Ingel-borne, in a little town called Ilanberg, by the Saxons called Burchton. At the time we are now considering, the Welsh occupied the whole of the south-west of England, as well as the central West (now called Wales), and also occupied the north-west. The West-Saxons had not pene-trated the barrier which the great forest, Selwood, presented to their further progress westward. Malmes-bury was near the northern point of that forest. The Britons were still in possession of the land from some miles east of Malmesbury, right through to St. David's, and from Crichdale to the Land's End. "It was the impenetrable wedge of forest territory which forced the Saxons in their progress up the Thames to make a detour, leaving the Britons at Malmesbury undisturbed. They turned south-west again when they got round the point of

[1] *Ibid,* pp. 45-47.

the forest, and won the battle of Deorham (Dyrham) in 577. That battle gave them Cirencester and Bath and Gloucester, and thus made more marked than ever the wedge of forest territory in which Malmesbury stood, still a British hold."[1]

Maelduib, having obtained leave to build his hut beneath the walls of the old castle, lived by the monastic rule, and took pupils for his subsistence. He certainly brought with him the celebrated Irish culture; and a little society grew up around him. His teaching progressed without disturbance. William of Malmesbury, whose account of Aldhelm may be accepted in its main outlines, says that Meldun or Maildulf, of Scottish race, a philosopher by erudition and a monk by profession, first came to the spot now called Malmesbury as a hermit; but the densely wooded region he had chosen for his dwelling, though it offered complete retirement, gave him no means of procuring a livelihood. To avoid the risk of starvation, he opened a school, and began to teach philosophy and dialectics. This school must have obtained a certain proficiency to have secured such a pupil as Aldhelm. It is impossible to say what its rules and organisation were. It possibly approached the form of society described by Adamnan in his life of Columba; or it may have been still looser, approximating the form of Irish school existing at Glastonbury in the childhood of Dunstan. William of Malmesbury reports that Maelduib was buried in the great church at Malmesbury, and that his bones were turned out by Warin, the first Norman abbot. The year 675 may be accepted as the date of Maelduib's death or resignation; and the statement that he lived for fourteen years after Aldhelm received the tonsure, and died at Winchester during the episcopate of Leutherius (670-676), who conferred the abbacy on Aldhelm after Maelduib's death, may possibly be true.[2]

[1] *Ibid*, p. 42.

[2] *Dictionary of National Biography*, XXXV, 341-342 (article by Miss Bateson, with references and citations).

Bishop Stubbs says that Maelduib's existence "shows that he formed a link in the long chain of traditionary Irish teachers who helped the conversion of southern England in the seventh century, and connected the half Irish Church of central England with the Welsh border, Glastonbury and Cornwall. Aldhelm, the pupil of the Scotic Mailduf, carries the Roman Easter to Devonshire and Cornwall, just as Wilfrid, the pupil of the Scotic monks of Ripon, carries it into the Northumbrian kingdom."[1]

The origin of the name of Malmesbury has aroused much discussion. Some have derived it from the name of Dunwallo Malmutius, who is said to have built the castle of Gladow or Bladon; it has been argued that the British pronounciation of Malmut would approximate to Malmett, and Malmettsbury would soon soften into Malmesbury. Bishop Browne says that in its earliest forms the name is clearly derived from that of the Irish teacher Mailduib, either in that form or in the form Meldun or Meldum. "We have Maildubiensis ecclesia, Maldubiensis, Maldubesburg, Maldulfesburg, Maldumesbury, Maldufesbury, Maldubesburg, Meldubesburg, Meldumesburg." Other forms of the name are connected with Aldhelm—Ealdelmesbyrig, Mealdelmesbyrig, and Maldelmesburuh. Bede's reference to the *Maildufi urbs— quod Maildufi urbem nuncupant*—does not preclude the subsequent evolution of the name. Bishop Browne quotes Plummer, who writes in his edition of Bede's historical works, that "the greater fame of Aldhelm eclipsed that of the original founder, and we find the place called Ealdelmesburg, Aldhelm's borough . . . By a contamination of this with the older forms we get Mealdelmesburg, which became the prevailing form, and through gradations . . . became the modern Malmesbury." In fact, Bishop Browne goes further. He says that we may take it as quite certain that when Maelduib addressed Aldhelm,

[1] *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, III, 786 (article by the Rev. William Stubbs).

he did not call him "Aldhelm" or pronounce the "dh" in his name; but rather called him "Mallem" ("My dear Aldhelm"). This was Gaelic practice; and examples of the elision may be given. The Saxon Malmesbury would thus be simply the borough of Mallem, and was no doubt exactly the local pronounciation before it was softened into the modern "Marmsbury." To this theory Bishop Browne inclines.[1]

When Theodore of Tarsus arrived in England, at the end of May, 669, he found that "the Italian mission of seventy years before had left but small results and almost no machinery." Between 597 and 669, twenty-eight bishops and archbishops had been consecrated to sees in the territories occupied by the several sctions of the English race. Of those twenty-eight, only twelve had been consecrated by bishops connected with the Roman mission, namely, three to Canterbury, of whom one (Laurentius) was consecrated by a bishop without a pall; four to Rochester; one to London, which was East-Saxon, not Mercian, at the time; three to Dunwich; and one to York. Not one of those was consecrated to any part of the territory included in the diocese of Bristol; no Mercian bishop and no West-Saxon bishop derived consecration from Augustine. Nine of the remaining sixteen consecrations of the twenty-eight before Theodore's arrival were these: two to Canterbury, namely Augustine, by a Gallican prelate (Vergilius of Arles), and Theodore by Pope Vitalian; two to York, by French and British bishops; four to Lindisfarne, three by Finan and one by Irish bishops; one to London by Finan. Of the seven consecrations to Wessex and Mercia, there were two to Dorchester (the Dorchester near Oxford, the original seat or the Wessex bishopric), one by Asterius of Milan and the other by French bishops; and four to Mercia, three by Finan and one by Irish bishops. Not one of them had any connection with the Italian mission.

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[1] Browne, G. F., *St. Aldhelm;* 73-76.

Furthermore, Theodore found in all the English territories only three bishops with sees, East-Saxon, East-Anglian, and Northumbrian. Of these, the only one who had the Canterbury consecration was dying—Boniface of East-Anglia. The East-Saxon bishop was of French consecration, the Northumbrian of French and British. There was no bishop of Mercia, no bishop of Wessex. " 'Almost dead' is the verdict which the facts write across the page on which the history and results of the Italian mission are recorded. Aldhelm was an important factor in the new and larger life of this Church."[1]

With Theodore came Hadrian, an African, of a convent near Monte Cassino; and the coming of Theodore and Hadrian caused a sudden intellectual change in England. As soon as the new teachers were installed at Canterbury, a vast number of scholars flocked to them. They taught secular as well as religious learning. Among those pupils was Aldhelm, once taught by Maelduib. Ill health compelled him to leave Canterbury, however; and he returned to Malmesbury about the year 672, when he was about thirty-two years of age. There he succeeded his Irish teacher as master of the school of students and religious. The school grew to such importance that the Bishop of Wessex, Leutherius, erected it into an abbey, and made Aldhelm its first abbot.

During his thirty years as abbot, Aldhelm was known widely as one of the most learned men of his time. Scholars from France and Scotland sought his counsel. "When learning was at its lowest ebb in the rest of western Europe, it flourished in England . . . Bede knew pupils of Theodore and Hadrian, to whom Latin and Greek were as their mother-tongues; and this new spirit of learning extended to nunneries. Aldhelm addressed his treatise, *De Laude Virginitatis,* to the Abbess of Barking and her nuns. Aldhelm was foremost in this intellectual movement. His Latin treatises are written in an intricate style, and are full of Latinised Greek words. His letters

[1] *Ibid,* 18-20.

and his Latin verses are more simply expressed. He was skillful in all kinds of music, in singing, and in improvisation. Finding the people unwilling to listen to preaching, he stood on a bridge where many came and went, and sang songs, and when a crowd had gathered round him, thinking him a professional minstrel, he would gradually bring sacred subjects into his song."[1]

It is stated, probably with exaggeration, that he could read the Scriptures in Hebrew. He studied theology, Roman jurisprudence, the art of poetry, and astronomy. Arithmetic, used then chiefly for ecclesiastical calculations, he found very difficult. His observations on natural phenomena show how readily faith was placed in the fables of antiquity.

Aldhelm was a great builder as well as a scholar. Maelduib's monastery had been so poor that the monks had scarce enough food to keep them alive; Aldhelm changed all that. There was a small basilica there, built, according to tradition, by Maelduib; Aldhelm is said to have built a more august church in honour of the Saviour and Saints Peter and Paul. It was designed to be the head church of the monastery. "The documents showed that in this church was the head and chief seat of the place, and the congregation of the monks The custom at that time was that at the dedication of new churches some honorific epigram should be made to the honour of the celestial Spouse and of Mother Church; in accordance with this custom the holy man sang the epithalamium in honour of the apostles."[2]

He founded also a monastery near the river called From. The church which he built there in honour of Saint John the Baptist was still standing in the time of William of Malmesbury. He was credited with having founded a monastery at Bradford; the inclusion of that town in the list of places in the privilege of Pope Sergius

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[1] *Dictionary of National Biography*, I, 245 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

[2] Browne, G. F., *St. Aldhelm,* 111-112.

confirmed the general opinion that he was the founder. The little church standing there, dedicated to St. Laurence, was said to have been built by him. Towards the end of his life he built a wonderful church at Sherborne, which William of Malmesbury had seen. "In William's time, so far as the existence of monasteries was concerned, Frome and Bradford (on Avon) were mere empty names. Whether the disappearance of such important buildings was due to the insane violence of the Danes or to the rapacious guzzlings of the English, he could not ascertain. Malmesbury alone remained, still flourishing, full of inmates, with beautiful buildings."[1]

Leutherius had granted the land called Maldumsburg to Aldhelm and his successors, and had specifically declared that no succeeding bishop or king should venture to tamper with this grant. The grant was made in public near the river Bladon, August 26, 675. (Bishop Browne bases these statements on the account of William of Malmesbury.)[2]

Aldhelm visited Rome in the pontificate of Sergius (687-701). There he received the grant of privileges for his monasteries. On his return, he was met by King Ina and Ethelred of Mercia with a large assembly of people in triumphal procession.

He took a prominent part in urging the Britons to adopt the Roman Easter. The Britons had clung to their own usages, which were very precious to them as signs of their national life; and their priests beyond the Severn still regarded English churchmen as excommunicate. The schism was of serious importance in Wessex, where the British element had grown as the kingdom extended westward. In 705, the matter was considered in a synod of the West-Saxon clergy; and Aldhelm, then a priest, was requested to urge the Britons of the west to conform to Roman practices. Accordingly he wrote a letter to Geraint, the King of Dyvnaint (Domnonia—Devon and

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 112-113.

[2] *Ibid*, pp. 113-114.

Cornwall), and to his bishops, on the tonsure and on the Easter question. It was widely read; and it proved successful in persuading the Britons who were subject to the West-Saxon to adopt the Roman usage.

This letter, which was in reality a remonstrance, urged God's priests dwelling in Domnonia to live in harmony with each other. It declared that the tonsure in vogue among them was traceable to Simon the Magician, and was not in accord with the type appointed by St. Peter. The observance of Easter, contrary to the Roman usage, was "another and a more cruel mischief to souls," and coincided with Jewish and heretical practices. Lastly the Celtic priests of South Wales, who dwell beyond the Severn, refuse to eat with those of the Roman communion. They throw the remains of the meals of which the Saxons have partaken to dogs and swine, and cleanse the dishes and bowls with sand or ashes. "They refuse us the kiss of grace; they even refuse us an ordinary greeting. If any of our people . . . go to dwell among them, they put them under penance for forty days." They are like the Pharisees, who incurred the "woe" of cleansing the outside of cup and platter, and for indulging in a spirit of self-righteous intolerance. Aldhelm entreated the British clergy: "Do not superciliously and doggedly refuse to obey the decrees of St. Peter, nor in tyrannous pertinacity spurn the tradition of the Roman Church, for the sake of the statutes of your own forefathers." [1]

"This letter is remarkable; for it treats the Welsh as men who are to be convinced by reason, and shows a very strong desire for union with them."[2] That it abounds in mis-statements of fact, cannot be denied: the Britons are described as Quartodecimans, with no indication that the term is used in a lax sense; the faith of St. Peter is identified with conformity to all the decrees

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[1] Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, LXXXIX, 87. For a translation of the letter, see William Bright, *op. cit.*, 462-466.

[2] *Dictionary of National Biography*, I, 246 (article by the Rev. William Hunt).

or observances of Rome; there is a conspicuous lack of a sense of proportion in matters ecclesiastical or religious. "If so good a man and so well-read a student could sink into such petty narrowness, what must have been the effect of Latin rigorism on the rank and file of Latinised clergy?"[1]

The intense antipathy of the British to the English Church was, of course, connected with the bitter recollection of the English conquest and the humiliating experiences of English ascendency, as Bright observes; nevertheless, with all such allowances, it was excessive and unchristianlike. The Britons who preserved their independence seem to have disregarded Aldhelm's remonstrances; those beyond the Severn did not yield until 809, and another century passed before their example was followed by the Britons of the extreme West.[2]

It was soon after writing this letter that Aldhelm was made a bishop. He devoted himself to the active duties of his office, constantly moving from place to place, and preaching the Gospel. While on one of these journeys, he fell suddenly sick at Doulting in Somerset, and was carried into the little wooden church, where he died on the 25th day of May, 709. He was buried at Malmesbury. "The Church in Wessex profited much by his preaching, his zeal for education, his activity in building churches, and his influence with Ina. We may fairly believe that it was due to him that the last effects of the isolation which had marked its early years were finally obliterated. While he laboured in Wessex, he had friends and scholars all over England, among them Aldfrith, the scholar-king of Northumbria. And so doubtless through Eadhelm, though without any special action on his part, the Church in Wessex was brought into full union of sentiment with the rest of the English Church."[3]

[1] Bright, William, *Chapters on Early English Church History* (Oxford, 1897), pp. 466-467.
[2] Hunt, William, *A History of the English Church from its Foundation to the Norman Conquest* (London, 1907), 169-170.
[3] *Ibid,* p. 171.

In the regions of art and literature, Aldhelm's adult life covered a period of remarkable creation and development. The earliest piece of English literature in existence, in its original form, dates from five years before his appointment as abbot; the inscription in Anglian runes on the shaft of the great cross at Bewcastle in Cumberland, which sets forth the purpose of the erection of the "slender token of victory . . . in memory of Alcfrith, son of Oswy," erected "in the first year of Ecfrith, King of this realm" (670). The first example of Anglian art, perhaps, with classical foliage, and with Anglian interlacements in perfection; this great cross, originally seventeen feet high, is two hundred and fifty years earlier than the first dated "high cross" in Ireland. The great cross at Ruthwell in Dumfrieshire, seventeen feet and sixteen inches high, dates from Aldhelm's time. In metal, we have St. Cuthbert's pectoral cross and portable altar. Of actual writing and drawing and painting, we have the matchless Lindisfarne Gospel. We possess an immense manuscript codex, now in the Laurenziana at Florence, which is an example of the codices in the Library at Wearmouth in Aldhelm's time —the *Codex Amatianus,* which Aldhelm's contemporary Coelfrid carried as a present to the Pope when he resigned the abbacy of Wearmouth and set off for a visit to Rome. In ecclesiastical architecture, great strides were made in Aldhelm's time. Masons were introduced from Gaul; the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow were built, with their four churches; the great basilicas of Ripon and Hexham were raised, excelling in size and splendour all churches north of the Alps. These basilicas were finished two or three years after Aldhelm was made abbot.[1]

Aldhelm, certainly one of the foremost scholars of his day, was an industrious and versatile writer; but he wrote in a studied and painstaking manner. He indulged in quite fantastic experiments in versification, using acrostics and alliteration freely and resorting to various artificial

[1] Browne, G. F., *St. Aldhelm,* 62-66.

devices. "The principal of his works, which are still preserved, show that he owed his fame rather to the ignorance than to the taste of his admirers. With an exception in favour of some passages of his poems, they are marked by a pompous obscurity of language, an affectation of Grecian phraseology, and an unmeaning length of period, which perplexes and disgusts. As a writer his merit is not great; but if we consider the barbarism of the preceding generation, and the difficulties with which he was surrounded, we cannot refuse him the praise of genius, resolution, and industry."[1]

Some comments may be made on Aldhelm's extant works. His *De Laude Virginitatis*, which is in prose, contains a number of instances of triumphant chastity. It is dedicated to Hildelitha, Abbess of Barking. The *De Laudibus Virginum* is a poem on the same subject, addressed *ad maximam abbatissam*. The preface to this poem is an acrostic address in hexameter verse. It consists of thirty-eight verses, so written that each line begins and ends with the successive letters of the first line: "*Metrica Tirones nunc promant carmina castos*"; thus the first and last lines, and the initial and final letters of each line, consist of the same words. In the last line, the words occur backwards. The final letters are to be read upwards.

His *De Octo Principibus Vitiis* is a poem of 458 Latin hexameters. The eight vices are listed as gluttony, luxury, avarice, anger, despair, slothfulness, vain-glory, and pride. As Doctor Lingard notes, Aldhelm was "able to boast, that he had been the first of his countrymen who had enrolled himself among the votaries of the Roman muse."[2]

Mihi conscius sum illud me Virgilianum posse jactare:
Primus ego in patriam mecum modo vita supersit,
Aldhelmus rediens deducam vertice musas."

[1] Lingard, John, *The Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church* (Philadelphia, 1841), 204.

[2] *Ibid.*

The *Epistola ad Acircium,* or *Liber de Septinario,* is a treatise on verse-making, for Acircius, or Aldfrith, King of Northumbria. In it are included the *Aenigmata,* which have been called "a curious instance of that fantastic and difficult versification which some men in former times pursued." Both the beginning and final letters of the thirty-six hexameters present to us, in succession, one of this sentence: *"Aldhelmus cecinit millenis versibus odis."* These *Aenigmata* consist of twenty tetrastica, or stanzas of four lines, on various subjects—earth, clouds, nature, the rainbow, the moon, the fortune, salt, the nettle, and so on; of fourteen pentasticha of five lines each; or thirteen hexasticha of six lines each; of nineteen stanzas of seven lines each; of ten stanzas of nine lines each. Aldhelm used rhyme, thus affording one of the earliest examples that we have.

> Christus passus patibulo
> Atque laeti latibulo;
> Virginem virgo virgini
> Commendabat tutamini.

Aldhelm's "Dedicatory Ode" on the consecration of a basilica built by Bugge, a daughter of King Kentwyn, in the time of King Ina, consists of eighty-five hexameters. It recounts Kentwyn's rule of the Saxons, his passing on to the sanctified life, and his leaving his own kingdom for the name of Christ; and it extols Caedwalla, who "left the empire of the world and the sceptre, to plough with curved ships the turgid waves and pass through the aequorial plains of the sea . . . Kindly Rome rejoiced at his coming, and the clergy of the Church were glad, when still clad in his white robes, he was seized with disease and breathed out his mortal life, seeking the lofty realms of the poles above, mounting to the clear height of starry Olympus."

Aldhelm wrote a poem on the altars dedicated to the Blessed Mary and the Twelve Apostles. The verses describe their trials and works. The Virgin is urged to hear mercifully the prayers of the people; and the

Apostles are begged "to lighten the burden of (Aldhelm's) sins and loose his offences by pardon, that relying on divine grace he may ultimately reach heaven."

There is a poem written on entering the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome. This poem is incorporated by William of Malmesbury in his biography of Aldhelm.

Among the letters of Aldhelm, there is one addressed to a Saxon name Eahfrid, who had lately returned from a six-years' course of study in Ireland. This letter reveals the frequency of visits of Englishmen to Irish seats of learning, and it embodies an insight into the behaviour of the Irish students in England. The writer pleads that the fertile turf of Britain supplies teachers Greek and Roman, well able to solve the severe problems of the celestial library and to unlock them to enquiring smatterers. While the fields of Ireland are rich in learners and green with the pastoral numerosity of students, yet Britain possesses "the flame-bearing sun and the lucid moon; that is to say, Theodore the Archbishop, grown old from the earliest childhood of rudiments in the flower of philosophic art, and Adrian, his companion in the brotherhood of learning, ineffably endowed with pure urbanity."

The great esteem in which Aldhelm was held is exemplified in a letter written by an anonymous Irishman. That "Scot of name unknown" implores Aldhelm to take him and teach him, as the brightness of Aldhelm's wisdom shines beyond many lecturers. The reference to St. Aldhelm's own teacher—"a certain man of our holy race"—confirms the evidence that Maelduib was from Ireland.[1]

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[1] Browne, G. F., *St. Aldhelm,* 259-261.

DANIEL AND BONIFACE

Daniel, Aldhelm's contemporary in the see of Winchester, was a learned, wise, and holy man; and he must also have contributed to the spread of education in Wessex. It is easy to conjecture that under the influence of such earnest and industrious bishops the West-Saxon monasteries became the abodes of learning and activity in all good works. Wessex surely had its share in the missionary enterprise; thence went forth Winfrith, or St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, and many of his fellow-helpers. While our knowledge of the early life of Boniface is meagre, it is possible to state a few items with reasonable certainty. He was born probably on the border of the kingdom of Wessex near Exeter, about the year 675; and his family seems to have been prosperous. He entered the monastery very young, and remained there through childhood, passing then to the Abbey of Nursling in the diocese of Winchester, and coming thus early under the influence of Bishop Daniel. After some years he was put in charge of the abbey school and, about 705, he was ordained priest. Drawn irresistibly into the missionary adventure, he sailed to Frisia, where he launched on the great crusade which made his name illustrious. His contributions to the evangelisation of the Continent, however, should not eclipse the fact that he gained his early instruction and inspiration from the Church of the West-Saxons; furthermore, his most intimate correspondents were the men and women, high and low, with whom he spent the first forty years of his life. His love and loyalty for his own kinsfolk remained one of the most evident motives of his reforming zeal.[1]

The correspondence between Boniface and Bishop Daniel shows the tremendous influence which the elder cleric extended over a strong and impulsive man; and incidentally we catch glimpses into the genius and spirit of

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[1] Emerton, Ephraim, trans., *The Letters of Saint Boniface* (New York, 1940), 4-6.

the West-Saxon Church. A letter, written by Daniel about the year 718, served as an introduction to the missionary. "All pious and merciful kings and princes, reverend and beloved bishops, holy abbots, priests and spiritual children, sealed with the name of Christ," were urged to extend to Boniface, the bearer, an affectionate welcome.[1]

Another letter, written about five years later, suggests that Daniel was quite a stabilising force in the conduct and ministry of the younger ecclesiastic. The elderly bishop gives frank and practical advice as to Boniface's dealings with the uncivilised people whom he is seeking to convert to Christianity. "Do not begin by arguing with them about the origin of their gods, false as those are," he advised; but rather lead them on by reasoning, so that they will realise the fallacy of their position. A number of suggestions are given. "I have been glad to call these matters to your attention," says Daniel, "out of my affection for you, though I suffer from bodily infirmities."[2]

Boniface respected the judgment of his aged friend, and asked his help in meeting the problems of his difficult field. Sometime between 742 and 746, or threabouts, he wrote to his beloved master, Bishop Daniel, "servant of the servants of God." "Trusting to your well-proven fatherly wisdom and friendship," he said, "(I) am laying before you the troubles of my weary mind and am asking your advice and comfort." False prophets had entered the fold, while the faithful, "needing the patronage of the Frankish court," were unable to separate themselves from contact with such persons. "But when someone from our ranks, priest, deacon, clerk, or monk, leave the bosom of Mother Church and departs from the true faith, then he breaks out with the pagans into abuse of the sons of the Church . . . Without the support of the Frankish prince, I can neither govern the members of the Church nor defend the priests, clerks, monks, and maids of God; nor can I,

[1] *Ibid,* 32.
[2] *Ibid,* 48-50.

without orders from him and the fear inspired by him prevent the pagan rites and the sacrilegious worship of idols in Germany. But when I go to him to secure his aid in these matters, I cannot possibly avoid personal contact with men of that sort, as the canon law requires; I can only refuse agreement with them."

After stating his problem, Boniface requested the loan of a book—a book which could not be obtained on the Continent. The letter contains some touching personal allusions; and the reader learns that the aged Daniel was suffering from blindness.[1]

The venerable Bishop of Winchester replied in a letter full of comfort and assurance. Boniface himself was already a man of about seventy, who had spent a quarter of a century in the most diligent and strenuous toil; yet he humbly and sincerely wore the garment of humility when he applied to his old teacher for moral support and guidance. And the aged Daniel spoke from his heart as the friend and mentor of one whom he loved. He urged Boniface to follow the example of the holy men of the past, and to endure with patience what could not be set right by correction. Even St. Paul was involved in dangers from false brethren. Daniel advised Boniface to recall that the wheat and tares are allowed to grow together, and that both clean and unclean animals entered into the ark through the same door.[2]

A few years after Daniel's consecration, his jurisdiction was reduced by the establishment of Sussex as a separate diocese, with its see at Selsey, and Eadbert as its first bishop.[3] As some compensation for this loss of territory, Daniel added the Isle of Wight to his diocese; that island had been unattached to any diocese since its evangelisation by Wilfrid on its conquest by Caedwalla in 686.

Here it is fitting to bring our narrative to a close. We have surveyed the planting of Christianity in Wessex; we

[1] *Ibid,* 114-117.
[2] *Ibid,* 117-121.
[3] *Dictionary of National Biography,* XIV, 19-20 (article by the Rev. Canon E. Venable).

have traced the movements which influenced its unique character; and we have watched its growth to that maturity where it produced apostles and saints.

The letters of the illustrious Boniface and his saintly father in God prove the regenerative power of Christianity—that Christianity which made its appearance among a ruthless, cruel, barbarous people, and in a few decades inspired heroic missionaries to seek distant lands, while at the same time it expressed itself in calm judgment and rare dignity and understanding.

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