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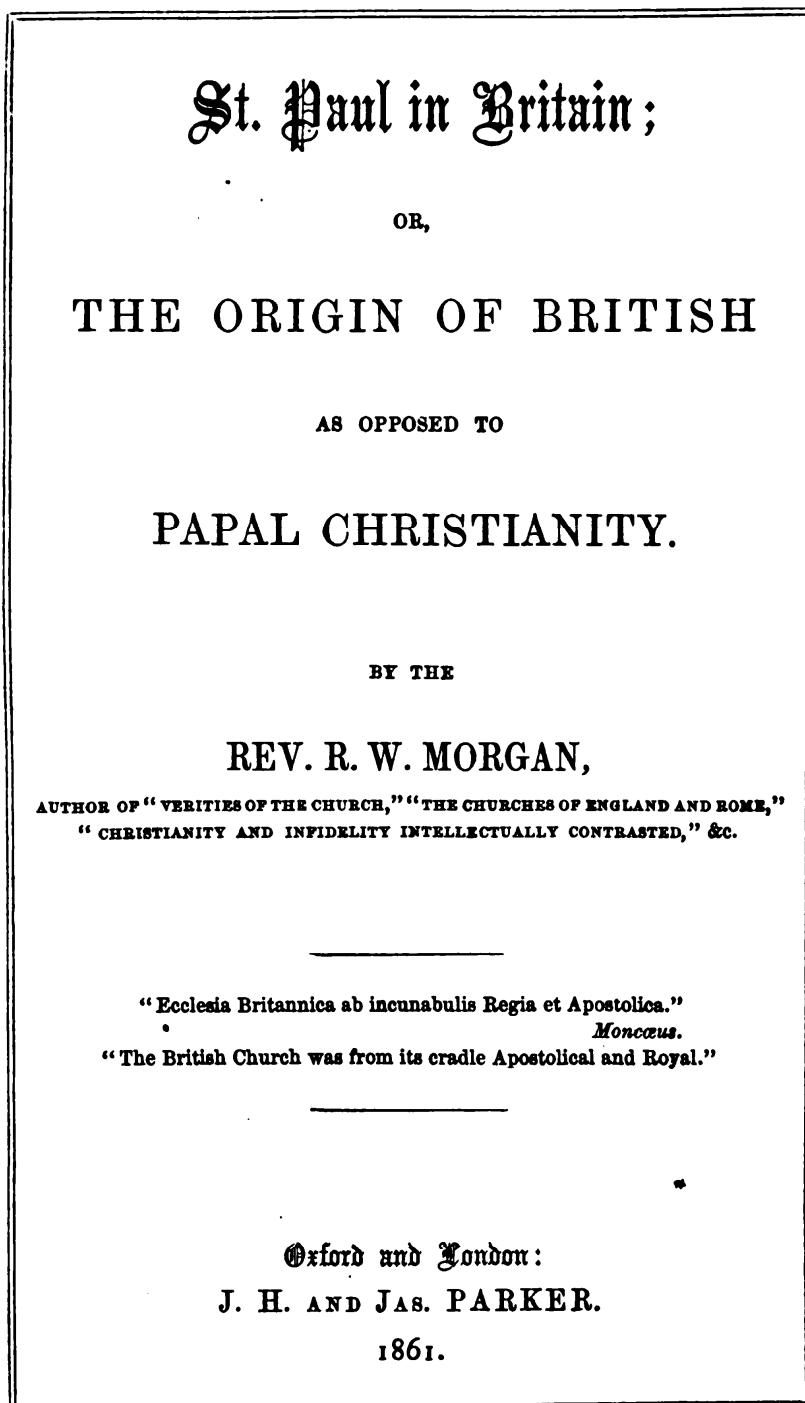
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20 November 2011

Origin of British Christianity – R W Morgan (1861)

Note: For R W Morgan's conclusions, see pp35-38 of this article, his pages 213-216



PREFACE.

A FAITHFUL account of the origin of native British Christianity as opposed to the Papal system first introduced four hundred and fifty-six years subsequently by Augustine the monk, is here, in readable compass, presented to the public. The history of such origin is inseparably blended with the long-sustained resistance of our early forefathers to the invasions of their liberties by the greatest empire of antiquity, wielding against them the military forces of nearly three-quarters of the globe. The events thus recorded have left their moulding power to this day on our constitution in Church and State. The most cursory glance at them is sufficient to demonstrate the untenableness of the supposition that Britain is indebted to Germany—a country which has never itself been free—for its free institutions, or to Italy for its Gospel faith. The leading principles of her laws and liberties

are of pure indigenous growth; and her evangelical faith was received by her directly from Jerusalem and the East, from the lips of the first disciples themselves of Christ. The struggles in after ages down to our own period for the restoration and preservation of these indigenous birthright liberties, this primitive apostolical faith, constitute the most stirring and ennobling portions of our annals; and we may rest assured that as long as in their modern developments of British Protestantism, British Patriotism, and British Loyalty, they continue to inspire the national heart, our island will continue to retain her position in the van-ward of the march of Order, Liberty, and Progress.

Dec. 24, 1860.

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Church on earth, built on its own apostolic foundations, and recognising the apostolic Scriptures alone for its rule of faith ^b.

The general conclusion arrived at by the writers who have previously investigated this final part of our question may be given in the words of Capellus: "I scarcely know of one author, from the times of the Fathers downwards, who does not maintain that St. Paul, after his liberation, preached in every country in Western Europe, Britain included ^c." "Of Paul's journey to Britain," writes Bishop Burgess, "we have as satisfactory proof as any historical question can demand ^d." The same view is substantially maintained by Baronius, the Centuriators of Magdeburg, Alford or Griffith, next to Baronius the most erudite of the Roman Catholic historians;

^b Bede's testimony as to the pure scriptural character of the teaching of the British Church is full and explicit, and he contrasts, with feelings of shame and reluctance, the apostolic lives of the British missionaries with those of his own Papal Church. Of Columba he writes, "He taught only what was contained in the prophetic, evangelic, and apostolic writings, all works of piety and charity being at the same time diligently observed."—Lib. iii. c. 41. Of Aidan: "All who resorted to him applied themselves either to reading the Scriptures or to learning Psalms."—Lib. iii. c. 5. Of Adamnan: "He was most admirably versed in the knowledge of the Scriptures."—Lib. iii. c. 15. How entirely the British Church rejected human authority in matters of faith may be collected from the saying of Columba, "Except what has been declared by the Law, the prophets, the evangelists, and apostles, a profound silence ought to be observed by all others on the subject of the Trinity."—Lib. iii. c. 4.

^c Hist. of the Apostles. ^d Independence of the British Church.

Archbishops Parker and Usher, Stillingfleet, Camden, Gibson, Cave, Nelson, Allix, &c.

Let us preface the *catena autoritatum* on this point with a few general testimonies from widely different quarters.

“The cradle of the ancient British Church was a royal one, herein being distinguished from all other Churches : for it proceeded from the daughter of the British king, Caractacus, Claudia Rufina, a royal virgin, the same who was afterwards the wife of Aulus Rufus Pudens, the Roman senator, and the mother of a family of saints and martyrs ^e.”

“We have abundant evidence that this Britain of ours received the Faith, and that from the disciples of Christ Himself, soon after the crucifixion of Christ ^f.”

“Britain in the reign of Constantine had become the seat of a flourishing and extensive Church ^g.”

“Our forefathers, you will bear in mind, were not generally converted, as many would fain represent, by Roman missionaries. The heralds of salvation who planted Christianity in most parts of England were trained in British schools of theology, and were firmly attached to those national usages which had descended to them from the most venerable antiquity ^h.”

^e Moncæus Atrebas, the learned Gallican divine, *In Syntagma*, p. 38.

^f Sir Henry Spelman's *Concilia*, fol., p. 1.

^g Soames' *Anglo-Saxon Church*, *Introd.*, p. 29.

^h Soames' *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 112—257. This statement is so true, that sixty-three years after the landing of Augustine, that is, A.D. 660, when all the Heptarchy, except Sussex, had been converted,

“The Christian religion began in Britain within fifty years of Christ’s ascension¹.”

“Britain, partly through Joseph of Arimathæa, partly through Fugatus and Damianus, was of all kingdoms the first that received the Gospel^k.”

“We can have no doubt that Christianity had taken root and flourished in Britain in the middle of the second century^l.

“It is perfectly certain, that before St. Paul had come to Rome Aristobulus was absent in Britain, and it is confessed by all that Claudia was a British lady^m.”

“The faith which was adopted by the nation of the Britons in the year of our Lord 165, was preserved inviolate, and in the enjoyment of peace, to the time of the Emperor Diocletianⁿ.”

Let us now trace our way back from the time of

Wini, Bishop of Winchester, was the only bishop of the Romish communion in Britain, and he had purchased his first bishopric of London from Wulfhere, King of Mercia: all the rest were British. And the cause is patent: Maelwyn or Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, Ninian, the apostle of the southern Picts, Aidan of the Northumbrians, Paul Hên his successor, Columba of the Scotch, Finan of the East Angles, Cad or Chad of the Mercians, were all native Britons, educated in the native colleges. The Romish succession had died down to one prelate, and Saxon Christianity was kept alive or re-founded by British Christians. The succession of Augustine in Canterbury and Rochester expired in Damianus, A.D. 666.

¹ Robert Parsons the Jesuit’s *Three Conversions of England*, vol. i. p. 26.

^k Polydore Vergil, lib. ii.

^l Cardwell’s (Camden Prof.) *Ancient History*, p. 18. 1837.

^m Alford’s *Regia Fides*, vol. i. p. 19.

ⁿ Bede, lib. i. c. 4.

Venerable Bede, A.D. 740, step by step, to the apostolic era and the apostles themselves.

In the seventh century we have a galaxy of Christian bishops in England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland, whose names alone would make a considerable catalogue.

In the year A.D. 596 we have the Augustine mission landing in Kent, followed by three conferences with the bishops of the British Church. In A.D. 600, Venantius Fortunatus, in his Christian Hymns, speaks of Britain as having been evangelized by St. Paul °.

In A.D. 542, Gildas writes:—"We certainly know that Christ, the True Sun, afforded His light, the knowledge of His precepts, to our island in the last year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar p."

In A.D. 500—540, we have various productions of Christian bards, such as Talièsin and Aneurin, emanating from the courts of the Christian sovereigns of Britain—one of the latter, "The Crowned Babe," (i.e. Christ,) interesting as the earliest European specimen, of any length, of rhyme in poetry: it is composed in the ancient British tongue.

In A.D. 400—450, we have the Pelagian heresy originated by Morgan, Abbot of Bangor, being in truth nothing else than a revival of Druidism, and of the old Druidic ideas with regard to the nature

° "Transit et oceanum vel qua facit insula portum.

Quasque Britannus habet terras atque ultima Thule."

p *De Excidio Britannia*, p. 25.

and free-will of man. The beauty of Morgan's or Pelagius' Latin compositions, his extensive learning and reproachless life, spread the heresy everywhere, and Europe was in danger of relapsing into its old faith. The heresy was suppressed in Britain by the two visitations and zealous preaching of St. Germanus or Garmon, Gallic Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus, brother of Vincentius Lirinensis. We are indebted to Pelagianism for the most valuable part of the productions of St. Augustine of Hippo, its opposer—the Coryphæus of theological authors^a.

^a Pelagius was born the same day as his opponent, Augustine of Hippo, Nov. 13, A.D. 354. Vortigern or Gwrtheyrn, the British king, on being excommunicated by Vodin, Archbishop of London, for his incestuous connection with his own daughter, became a Pelagian, and invited the Pagan Saxons rather against his own Christian subjects than against the Picts. He soon abandoned Pelagianism for the open Paganism of his young wife Ronixa, (Rowena,) the daughter of Hengist. It is memorable that Pelagius, when Abbot of Bangor, on receiving an admonition from the bishops of Gaul and Italy,—the Bishop of Rome included,—on the latitudinarian nature of his principles, returned it with the observation :—"Sola in Britannia Ecclesia Britannica judex." He was deposed next year by a synod at Winchester, resigned Bangor, and went abroad to Rome, Africa, Jerusalem, and died finally in his native land. Of all heretics he was the largest-minded, the most learned, and the most elegant. The caution of one of his opponents,—“Speak not to Pelagius, or he will convert you,” is a very high compliment to the fascination of the man and his address. But the rapid progress of his tenets is attributable also to his commanding eloquence in the British language, of which he was a perfect master—it is, indeed, to this fact that Prosper attributes his success in Britain :—

“Dogma quod antiqui satiatum felle Draconis
Pestifer vomuit coluber sermone Britanno.”

Carmina, lib. ii.

In the year A.D. 408 this Augustine asks, "How many churches are there not erected in the British isles which lie in the ocean?" And about the same time Arnobius writes:—"So swiftly runs the word of God that though in several thousand years God was not known, except among the Jews, now, within the space of a few years, His word is concealed neither from the Indians in the East nor from the Britons in the West*."

Theodoretus in A.D. 435 testifies:—"Paul, liberated from his first captivity at Rome, preached the Gospel to the Britons and others in the West. Our fishermen and publicans not only persuaded the Romans and their tributaries to acknowledge the Crucified and His laws, but the Britons also and the Cimbri (Cymry †.)"

To the same purport in his commentary on 2 Timothy iv. 16:—"When Paul was sent by Festus on his appeal to Rome, he travelled, after being acquitted, into Spain, and thence extended his excursions into other countries, and to the islands surrounded by the sea."

More express testimony to Paul's preaching in Britain could not be delivered, nor from a more unexceptionable quarter. Theodoret was Bishop of Cyropolis, attended both the General Councils of Ephe-

* Opera, fol., Paris Edit., p. 676. † Arnobius, *Ad Psalm cxlvii.*

† Theodoret, *De Civ. Græc. Off.*, lib. ix. Nicephorus seems to have followed Theodoretus, (Niceph., lib. ii. c. 40;) and Eusebius Pamphilus, lib. iv.—"ἐπὶ τὰς καλουμένας Βρεταννικὰς νήσους."

sus (A.D. 431) against the Nestorians, and of Chalcedon, A.D. 451, consisting of 600 bishops. As an excellent interpreter of Scripture, and a writer of ecclesiastical history, he deservedly ranks high.

Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople, supplies (A.D. 402) accumulative evidence of the existence of pure British Christianity. "The British Isles," he writes, "which are beyond the sea, and which lie in the ocean, have received the virtue of the Word. Churches are there founded and altars erected. Though thou shouldst go to the ocean, to the British Isles, there thou shouldst hear all men everywhere discoursing matters out of the Scriptures, with another voice, indeed, but not another faith, with a different tongue but the same judgment^u."

"From India to Britain," writes St. Jerome, (A.D. 378,) "all nations resound with the death and resurrection of Christ^z."

In A.D. 320, Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, speaks of apostolic missions to Britain as matter of notoriety:—"The apostles passed beyond the ocean to the isles called the Britannic Isles^y."

The first part of the fourth century is the era of Constantine the Great and his mother Helena. Gibbon, with that perversity which beset him as a mania in dealing with the leading facts of Christianity, strives

^u Chrysostomi, *Orat.* 'Ο Θεος Χριστός.

^z Jerome, *In Isaiam*, c. liv. ; also, *Epistol.*, xiii. *ad Paulinum*.

^y Eusebius, *De Demonstratione Evangelii*, lib. iii.

to persuade himself that Constantine and Helen were not Britons, but natives of some obscure village in the East²; his sole support for such a supposition being the fragment of an anonymous author, appended to Ammianus Marcellinus. "The man must be mad," states Baronius, "who, in the face of universal antiquity, refuses to believe that Constantine and his mother were Britons, born in Britain³." Archbishop Usher delivers a catalogue of twenty continental authorities in the affirmative—not one to the contrary. The Panegyrics of the Emperors, the genealogy of his own family, as recited by one of his descendants, Constantine Palæologus, native records and traditions, all the circumstances of his career, demonstrate Constantine a Briton, bred in the strongest British ideas. "It is well known," states

² Naissus. Colchester, the birth-place of Helen of the Cross, has, from time immemorial, borne the cross with three crowns for its arms.

³ Baronius, *ad ann.* 306: "Non nisi extremæ dementiæ hominis." Until the reign of Constantine the Roman Christians had no other church than the Titulus to worship in: "Ante Constantini imperium templa Romæ non habuerint Christiani," observes Bale, (*Scriptores Britan.*, p. 17.) The Pope, it is well known, claims the sovereignty of the States of the Church by right of the decree of the British Emperor Constantine making them over in free gift to the Bishop of Rome. That this decree was a forgery no one doubts; it was, however, confirmed by Pepin. By the papal Church's own shewing, it is infinitely more indebted to the ancient British Church and sovereigns than they ever were to it. Without the benefactions of the Claudian family and Constantine, it would never have risen above the character given it by Pius the First, the brother of Hermas Pastor,—“Pauper Senatus Christi.” For its earthly aggrandisement it is mainly indebted to ancient British liberality.

Sozomen, "the great Constantine received his Christian education in Britain^b." "Helen was unquestionably a British princess," writes Melancthon^c. "Christ," declares Pope Urban in his Brief, *Britannia*, "shewed to Constantine the Briton the victory of the cross for his sceptre." "Constantine," writes Polydore Vergil, "born in Britain, of a British mother, proclaimed Emperor in Britain beyond doubt, made his natal soil a participator in his glory^d." Constantine was all this and more,—by his mother's side he was the heir and representative of the royal Christian dynasty of Britain, as a glance at the table on the next page will serve to shew.

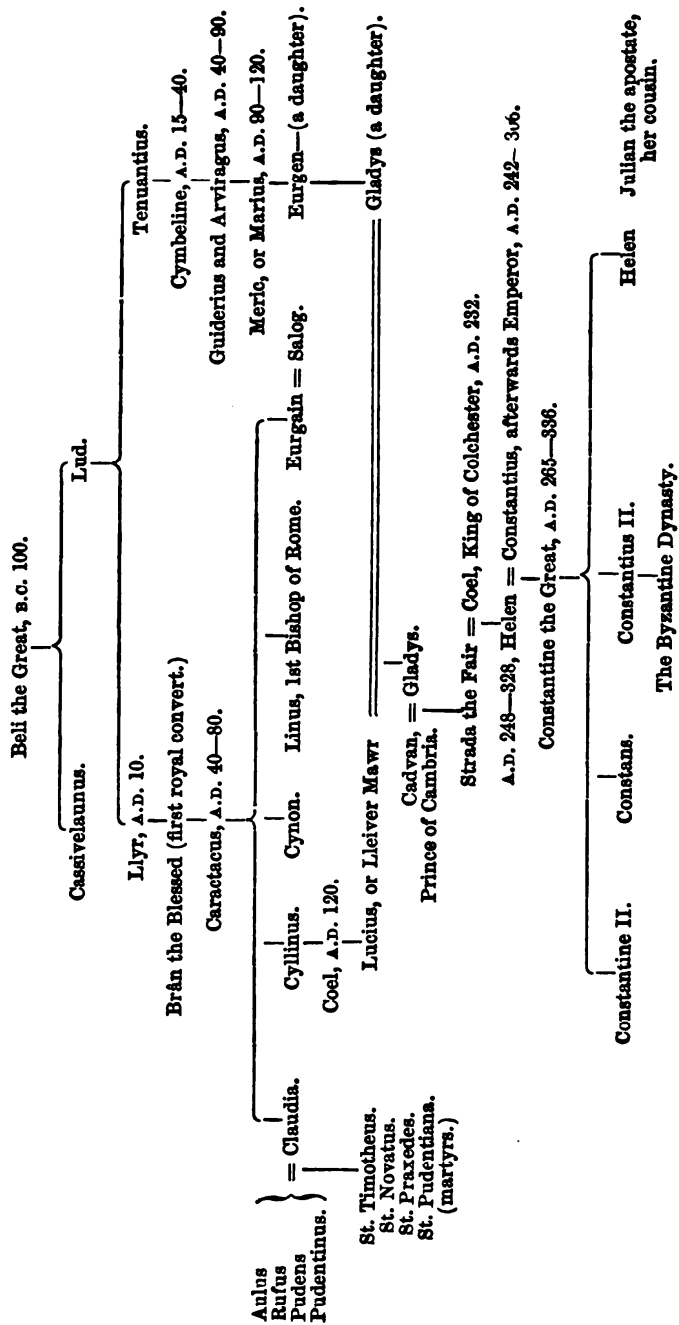
The policy of Constantine, in carrying out which for twenty years with admirable wisdom and inflexible purpose he was supported by armies levied for the most part in his native British dominions, consisted in extending to the whole Roman world the system of constitutional Christianity which had long been established in Britain. But his religious sympathies, as well as those of his mother, were wholly Eastern, not Roman. They were those of the British Church. They revolved round Jerusalem, and the Holy Land, and not Rome. Constantine made but two brief visits, during his long reign, to the

^b Sozomen, *Eccles. Hist.*, lib. i. c. v. So Eumenius, in his Panegyric on Constantius to Constantine: "He begot thee in the very flower of his age."—*Pan.* 9.

^c *Epistola*, p. 189.

^d *Historia Brit.*, p. 381.

ROYAL CHRISTIAN DYNASTY OF ANCIENT BRITAIN.



Italian capital. Helen spent all her declining years in restoring the churches and sacred sites of Palestine. The objects of Constantine's life are well explained by him in one of his edicts:—"We call God to witness, the Saviour of all men, that in assuming the government we are influenced solely by these two considerations,—the uniting of the empire in one faith, and the restoration of peace to a world rent to pieces by the insanity of religious persecution." Regarded in his threefold character of general, statesman, and legislator, the British founder of secular Christendom may justly be considered the greatest of the Roman emperors. The British Church was represented during his reign by native bishops at the Councils of Arles, A.D. 308, and Nice, A.D. 325^o.

In A.D. 300 the Diocletian persecution raged in Britain, but was stopped in one year by Constantius Chlorus, continuing to ravage the rest of the empire for eighteen years. We have elsewhere given a list of the British martyrs who perished in it. We cannot doubt that we stand, during these centuries, in the midst of a Church as broad and thoroughly national as the present Protestant establishment; indeed, in one chief respect more so, for the present national Church of England is not that of the people

^o The archbishopric of York was founded, at the request of Helen, by Constantius the Emperor, A.D. 290. Its second archbishop, Socrates, was martyred in the Diocletian persecution.

of Scotland, Wales, or Ireland, whereas the ancient British Church embraced all these populations in its fold. Their very names indicate the broader national character of the ancient and primitive Church, one being the British Church, or Church of Britain, the other the Church of England.

Continuing to trace the British Church back, we find Origen, A.D. 230, alluding thus to its existence : “The divine goodness of our Lord and Saviour is equally diffused among the Britons, the Africans, and other nations of the world †.”

In A.D. 230, however, Britain had been re-incorporated in the Roman empire. What was the case in A.D. 192—198, in the reign of Commodus, when it proclaimed its independence, and the British legions elected Albinus Cæsar? Was the Church confined to the Roman province then insurgent, or were the stubborn British tribes—the Cymri, the Caledonii, the Picts, whom no efforts of peace or war could succeed in bringing to acknowledge the right of a foreigner to plant hostile foot in Britain—within its pale? Tertullian, who flourished during the war of Commodus in Britain, which Dion Cassius terms “the most dangerous in which the empire during his time had been engaged,” says expressly “that the regions in Britain which the Roman arms had failed to penetrate professed Christianity for

† Origen, *In Psalm* cxlix.

their religion.” “The extremities of Spain, the various parts of Gaul, the regions of Britain which have never been penetrated by the Roman arms, have received the religion of Christ^g.” We have seen that the British Church had, long before Tertullian’s age, founded the Churches of Gaul, Lorraine, and Switzerland, and that its missionaries had made their way into Pannonia. Coming nearer Rome itself, we find that in Tertullian’s own age a missionary of the British Church founded, A.D. 170, the Church of Tarentum. This was St. Cadval, after whom the cathedral at Tarento is still named^h. Not only, therefore, did the British Church, A.D. 170, embrace Roman and Independent Britain, but it had struck its roots in France, Switzerland, Germany, and the extremities of Italy.

We now come to A.D. 120—150, within the era of the disciples of the apostles. It is certain from St. Paul’s own letters to the Romans and to Timothy, that he was on the most intimate and affectionate terms with the mother of Rufus Pudens, with Pudens himself, with Claudia his wife, and Linus. The children of Claudia and Pudens were instructed in the faith by St. Paul himself. The eldest was baptized Timotheus, after Timothy, Bishop of Ephesus, the Apostle’s “beloved son in Christ.” The four,

^g Tertullian, *Def. Fidei*, p. 179.

^h MS. Vellum of the Church of Tarentum; *Catalogue of Saints in the Vatican*, published A.D. 1641; Moronus, *De Ecclesia Tarentina*.

Timotheus, Novatus, Praxedes, Pudentiana, with their father Pudens, sealed at different times their faith with their blood in Rome, and were, with Linus, the first Britons who were added to the glorious army of martyrs. And, Pudens excepted, they were not only martyrs, but royal martyrs; not only royal martyrs, but martyrs of the most patriotic and heroic blood in Britain. Let us confirm these statements by the evidences of primitive antiquity.

The reader will recollect the “natal day” of a martyr is the day of his martyrdom.

Pudens suffered A.D. 96, Linus A.D. 90; Pudentiana suffered on the anniversary of her father’s martyrdom, in the third persecution, A.D. 107; Novatus in the fifth persecution, A.D. 139, when his brother Timotheus was absent in Britain, baptizing his nephew, King Lucius¹. Shortly after his return from Britain, and in extreme old age, about his ninetyeth year, Timotheus suffered with his fellow-soldier Marcus in the same city of Rome, “drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” Praxedes, the surviving sister, received her crown within the same year. Claudia alone died a natural death, in Samnium, before any of her children, A.D. 97, surviving Pudens one year. They were all interred by the side of St. Paul in the Via Ostiensis.

¹ All authors concur in this fact, though all do not see how naturally it followed the relationship between the royal house of Britain and its branch settled in Rome.

May 17. Natal day of the blessed Pudens, father of Praxedes and Pudentiana. He was clothed with baptism by the apostles, and watched and kept his robe pure and without wrinkle to the crown of a blameless life ^k.

November 26. Natal day of St. Linus, Bishop of Rome ^l.

May 17. Natal day of St. Pudentiana, the virgin, of the most illustrious descent, daughter of Pudens, and disciple of the holy apostle St. Paul ^m.

June 20. Natal day of St. Novatus, son of the blessed Pudens, brother of St. Timotheus the elder, and the virgins of Christ Pudentiana and Praxedes. All these were instructed in the faith by the apostles.

August 22. Natal day of St. Timotheus, son of St. Pudens, in the Via Ostiensis ⁿ.

September 21. Natal day of St. Praxedes, virgin of Christ, in Rome ^o.

Have we, again, any direct contemporary evidence that Linus, the first bishop of Rome, was the son of Caractacus, and brother of Claudia Britannica? Putting aside, for a moment, British genealogies

^k Martyr. Romana, ad diem Maii 17. To the same effect the Martyrologies of Ado, Usuard, and Esquilinus.

^l Martyr. Rom., ad diem; Martyrologies of Ado; Greek Menologies; Usuard, &c.

^m Martyr. Rom., ad diem; Ado, &c.

ⁿ Martyr. Rom., Ado, Usuard, Greek Menol.

^o Martyr. Rom., Ado, &c.

and tradition, does any cotemporary of St. Paul and Linus, in Rome itself, assert the fact? Undoubtedly. Clemens Romanus, who is mentioned by St. Paul, states in his epistle, the genuineness of which has never been questioned, that Linus was the brother of Claudia,—“Sanctissimus Linus, frater Claudiæ p.” Clemens succeeded Cletus within twelve years of the death of Linus, as third bishop of Rome. He had also been associated with the British missionary Mansuetus, in evangelizing Illyria. His sources of information are, therefore, unquestionable. St. Paul lived, according to all evidence, whenever he was at Rome, whether in custody at large (*libera custodiâ*) or free, in the bosom of the Claudian family. There is no dispute that Claudia herself was purely British, and whether Linus was her son or

p In the Oxford edition of Junius, published A.D. 1633, “The son of Claudia.” *Apostolici Patres*, lib. vii. c. 47; *Apostolici Constitutiones*, c. 46. The Apostolic Constitutions may or may not be what their present title infers; but no scholar who peruses the opinions *pro et contra*, collected by Ittigius, (*De Patribus Apostolicis*,) Buddæus, (*Isagoge in Theologiam*,) and Baratier, (*De Successione Primorum Episcoporum*,) will assign them a later date than A.D. 150. The mention of Linus in them runs thus: “Concerning those bishops who have been ordained in our lifetime, we make known to you that they are these:—Of Antioch, Euodius, ordained by me, Peter; of the Church of Rome, Linus, the (son) of Claudia, was first ordained by Paul, and after Linus’ death, Clemens the second, ordained by me, Peter.” Lib. i. c. 46. In the original, Λινος μὲν ὁ Κλαυδίας πρῶτος ὑπὸ Παύλου. Analogy requires υἱός to be supplied, but the relationship might have been so well known as to render ἀδελφός superfluous.

brother, the British character of the family, and the close, the domestic ties of affection between such family and St. Paul, are equally manifest. The relationship is, in many important regards, more intimate between St. Paul and the British mind,—that mind being the leading, because the royal, influence in Britain,—in the domestic circle and family worship of the Claudian palace at Rome, than when he addressed the British people themselves in Britain.

But Clemens Romanus not only proves to us that the family which the Apostle thus honoured with his constant residence and instruction was British, that the first bishop appointed by him over the Church at Rome was of this British family, but that St. Paul himself preached in Britain, for no other interpretation can be assigned his words, *ἐπι το τερμα της Δυσσεως*—“the extremity of the West.” “Paul, after he had been to the extremity of the West, underwent his martyrdom before the rulers of mankind; and thus delivered from this world, went to his holy place ⁹.”

⁹ Clement. Rom., Epistola ad Corinthios, c. 5. The passage *in extenso* runs thus: “To leave the examples of antiquity, and to come to the most recent, let us take the noble examples of our own times. Let us place before our eyes the good apostles. Peter, through unjust odium, underwent not one or two, but many sufferings; and having undergone his martyrdom, he went to the place of glory to which he was entitled. Paul, also, having seven times worn chains, and been hunted and stoned, received the prize of such endurance. For he was the herald of the Gospel in the West as well as in the East, and enjoyed the illustrious reputation of the faith in teaching

It may be suggested that Linus, the first bishop of Rome, was, however, some other than the brother of Claudia, mentioned by St. Paul. Not so; for if the above authorities permitted a doubt to remain, the evidence of Irenæus as to their identity is conclusive. "The apostles," writes Irenæus, A.D. 180, "having founded and built up the Church at Rome, committed the ministry of its supervision to Linus. This is the Linus mentioned by Paul in his Epistles to Timothy ¹."

We are not aware we should be stating anything improbable if we regarded St. Paul's domiciliation at the house of Pudens, or his being ministered to immediately before his martyrdom by Pudens, Claudia, and Linus, as additional presumptive evidence of his sojourn in Britain. At any rate, we observe that all the sympathies with which he was surrounded, after his arrival at Rome, in the Claudian family, all the influences of that family in their native country, would lead him to Britain in preference to any other land of the West. This was the great isle of the Gentiles, the centre and source of their religion, and,

the whole world to be righteous. And after he had been to the extremity of the West, he suffered martyrdom before the sovereigns of mankind; and thus delivered from this world, he went to his holy place, the most brilliant example of stedfastness that we possess."

¹ Irenæi Opera, lib. iii. c. 1. Irenæus was born in Asia, became a disciple of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, afterwards a presbyter of Lyons, whence he was sent as a delegate to the Asiatic Churches. He succeeded Photinus in the bishopric, and suffered under Severus.

through his royal converts, a "mighty door and an effectual" for its conversion was opened to him.

Caractacus meanwhile continued to reside at Aber Gweryd, now St. Donat's Major, (Llan Ddunwyd,) in Glamorganshire, where he had built a palace, *more Romano*. Everything invited Paul to Britain, to follow the bishop he had already commissioned for the work of the Gospel therein, and to be the guest of the royal parent of Claudia. Considering the combination of circumstances which now favoured the execution of his long-cherished design of visiting the West of Europe, we should regard it much more extraordinary if the Apostle had not come to Britain than we do his coming here. When to this circumstantial evidence we add the written testimonies we have adduced of Eusebius, Theodoret, Clemens, and others, that he positively did preach in Britain, we see fair reason for concurring in Bishop Burgess's conclusion, though the bishop had but a part of the evidence we have collected before him, "That we possess as substantial evidence, as any historical fact can require, of St. Paul's journey to Britain *."

* The ancient MS. in Merton College, Oxford, which purports to contain a series of letters between St. Paul and Seneca, has more than one allusion to St. Paul's residence in Siluria.

Had the large collection of British archives and MSS. deposited at Verulam as late as A.D. 860, descended to our times, invaluable light would have been thrown on this as on many other subjects of native

There are six years of St. Paul's life to be accounted for, between his liberation from his first imprisonment and his martyrdom at Aquæ Salvæ in the Ostian Road, near Rome. Part certainly, the greater part perhaps, of this period, was spent in Britain—in Siluria or Cambria, beyond the bounds of the Roman empire; and hence the silence of the Greek and Latin writers upon it.

Has any portion of his doctrine or teaching in Britain come down to us? Any such would be sure to be transmitted in a British form, and most probably in that triadic form in which the Druids, the religious teachers of Britain, delivered their teaching. Now we find in the ancient British language certain triads which have never been known otherwise than as "the Triads of Paul the Apostle." They are not found *totidem verbis*, either whole or fragmentally, in his epistles, but the morality inculcated is, of course, quite in unison with the rest of his Gospel preaching.

Triads of Paul the Apostle.

“There are three sorts of men: The man of God, who renders good for evil; the man of men, who renders good for good and evil for evil; and the man of the devil, who renders evil for good.

interest. Amongst these works were the Poems and Hymns of Claudia. Vide Matthew of Westminster, William of Malmesbury, "Life of Eadmer."

“Three kinds of men are the delights of God: The meek; the lovers of peace; the lovers of mercy.

“There are three marks of the children of God: Gentle deportment; a pure conscience; patient suffering of injuries.

“There are three chief duties demanded by God: Justice to every man; love; humility.

“In three places will be found the most of God: Where He is mostly sought; where He is mostly loved; where there is least of self.

“There are three things following faith in God: A conscience at peace; union with heaven; what is necessary for life.

“Three ways a Christian punishes an enemy: By forgiving him; by not divulging his wickedness; by doing him all the good in his power.

“The three chief considerations of a Christian: Lest he should displease God; lest he should be a stumbling-block to man; lest his love to all that is good should wax cold.

“The three luxuries of a Christian feast: What God has prepared; what can be obtained with justice to all; what love to all may venture to use.

“Three persons have the claims and privileges of brothers and sisters: The widow; the orphan; the stranger’.”

The evangelical simplicity of these precepts, contrasting so forcibly with monkish and mediæval

’ Ancient British Triads; Triads of Paul the Apostle.

inventions and superstitions, favours the traditional acceptance of their Pauline origin. Their preservation is due to the Cor of Ild.

The foundation of the great abbey of Bangor Iscoed is assigned by tradition to St. Paul. Its discipline and doctrine were certainly known as "the Rule of Paul," (*Pauli Regula*), and over each of the four gates was engraved his precept, "If a man will not work, neither let him eat." Its abbots regarded themselves as his successors; they were always men of the highest grade in society, and generally of the blood royal. Bede and other authors state the number of monks in it at 2,100. The scholars amounted to many thousands. Pelagius was its twentieth abbot. St. Hilary and St. Benedict term it "*Mater omnium monasteriorum*," the mother of all monasteries. The first Egyptian monastery was founded by Pachomius, A.D. 360^u.

In what language did St. Paul preach in Britain? This question, if pursued, would open an interesting but difficult investigation. Every apostle, by the Pentecostal inspiration, possessed the command of every known tongue then in the world. This supernatural faculty was part of the "power from on high" with which they were endowed, and the

^u "Pelagius heresiarchus ex Britannia oriundus famati illius collegii Bangorensis prepositus erat in quo Christianorum philosophorum 2,100 militabant suarum manuum laboribus juxta Pauli doctrinam victitantes."—*Vita Pelagii*, p. 3.

lingual credential of their divine mission. Of the fact that Paul preached in the British tongue we have no evidence ; neither have we any that he ever preached in Latin ; yet with both languages he must, as an apostle, have been familiar. We infer he often preached in both. The Druids in their sacred writings used the Bardic alphabet, of forty-two characters ; but in their civil transactions, as Cæsar informs us, the Greek alphabet. St. Paul wrote all his Epistles in Greek, and Greek continued some time after the apostolic age the language of the Church at Rome. The royal family of Britain were, as we have seen, ardently attached to both Greek and Latin literature. Cymbeline and Llyr, the old generation, had received their education, which must necessarily have been the highest Rome could impart, from Augustus Cæsar himself. Caractacus must, unless we have recourse to the rather violent supposition that Claudius, who heard, and Tacitus, who has recorded, his oration, were proficient in British, have delivered himself in Latin *. Paul, it is certain, used the tongue of the people in preaching to the people. The canon he laid down for the Corinthian Church was that which he practised himself : “ If I know not the meaning of the voice, I

* Claudia herself was the authoress of a volume of epigrams, a volume of elegies, and a volume of sacred poems or hymns. Copies of these were preserved in the library at Verulam as late as the thirteenth century.

shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be to me a barbarian. . . . I would rather in the church speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.” He must, therefore, according to this rule, have preached to the Britons in their vernacular tongue.

By the conversion of the British dynasty in its various members, a very important class of prophecies were fulfilled. Isaiah especially abounds in predictions that the infant Church should have the kings and queens of the Gentiles for its nursing-fathers and nursing-mothers. In the infant or cradle days of the Christian Church there were no Gentile kings or queens, except the British, converted to Christianity. Isaiah again pointedly refers to the “isles afar off” as supplying these kings, and it is to the “brightness of the rising of the Church” they are represented as coming. “The isles of the Gentiles afar off,” and their glory, their kings and queens, ministering to the Church in its infancy, forms indeed a most striking portion of the evan-

∫ 1 Cor. xiv. 11, 19. It was the uniform practice of Christians, from the earliest times, to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, and it was not till the period of Charlemagne that Latin became the language of the Church services. Vide Usher's *Historia Dogmatica*. No two causes contributed so much to the declension of Christianity and the progress of Mahometanism, as the suppression by the Church of Rome of the vernacular Scriptures, and her adoption of image-worship.

gical predictions. In none other than the British royal family could they be fulfilled, for no other royalties in such days, nor long after, were to be found within the pale of the Church. The expressions, also, "the ends of the earth," "the uttermost parts of the earth," "the isles afar off," used by Isaiah, are precisely those which the Roman authors also used to designate Britain. These prophecies must have experienced realization—"for the Scriptures must needs be fulfilled"—in the precise times to which they definitively refer. And the historical evidence we have adduced, proves that in these early kings and queens of our island—"the far-off island of the Gentiles"—they were literally and to a tittle substantiated. Brân, or Brennus, Caractacus, Linus, Cyllinus, Claudia, Eurgain, were members of even then perhaps the oldest Gentile sovereignty in the world. This sovereignty was that of the great Gentile isle: to these various members of it were sent those disciples that escaped from the first persecution of the infant Church at Jerusalem; some of these members were converted within five years of the Crucifixion; they came literally to the brightness of the rising of the Church, when the glory of Christ and of the Pentecostal descent was yet resting upon it; they became its nursing-fathers and nursing-mothers, both at Rome, through the Claudian family, and in Britain, through the elder reigning branch. In the next century the same Si-

lurian family established Christianity, under Lucius, as the national religion, and in the commencement of the fourth century its direct heir in blood and succession, Constantine the Great, made such Christianity the religion of the whole Roman world, his mother Helen being at the same time the benefactress of all the Eastern Churches, especially that "which is the mother of us all"—Jerusalem. From the captivity of Caractacus and the life of St. Paul in the family of his daughter Claudia at Rome, to the turning of the Roman empire into Christendom, the history of the royal dynasty of Britain in connection with the Church of Christ is indeed one long, continuous, and exact verification of Scriptural prophecy ².

Against the British Church itself no charge of

² A few of these prophecies we subjoin:—

"It is a light thing that thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the outcasts of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation unto the ends of the earth. Kings shall see and arise; princes also shall worship. Behold they shall come from the north and from the west. Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers and queens thy nursing-mothers. Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and kings shall minister unto thee. Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings. I will set My sign among them, and send them that escape of them unto the nations, unto the isles afar off, and they shall declare My glory unto the Gentiles. They shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of My planting."—Isaiah xlix., lx., lxvi.

heretical doctrine has at any time been advanced, though the heresiarch, the very prince of heretics—Pelagius, was nursed in her bosom. Bede's reluctant testimony is, on this point, decisive. Whilst the Christian Churches in Asia, Africa, and on the Continent of Europe were overrun with false doctrines, the British Church grew up and covered with its shade the whole nation, untroubled for the space of four centuries by any root of bitterness. It is reasonable to infer that the foundations of such a Church were very deeply and faithfully laid by the hands of wise master-builders. According to the foundation rose the superstructure, resting on these four pillars—St. Paul, Simon Zelotes, Joseph, Aristobulus. Its great evangelist in the second century, St. Timotheus, the baptizer of his nephew King Lucius and of his nobility at Winchester, had also received the faith from the mouth of Paul himself. This unanimity of faith in the founders impressed itself on the Church they founded, which "continued in the things it had learned and been assured of, knowing from whom it had learned them."

Having thus first surveyed the religions of the ancient world at the birth of Christianity, and next traced the introduction of the latter, and its progress in Britain, a bird's-eye view will shew us the following Churches, making up the Catholic Church sixty-six years after the Incarnation:—In Palestine—Jerusalem, Samaria, Cæsarea, Lydda; in Assyria—Baby-

P

lon; in Syria—Antioch, Damascus; in Asia-Minor—Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Ephesus, Smyrna, Sardis, Thyatira, Pergamos, Philadelphia, Cæsarea in Cappadocia, Laodicea, Colosse, Galatia; in Greece—Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Beræa, Philippi, Crete; in Egypt, Alexandria; in Italy, Rome; in Gaul, Lyons; in Britain—Cor Avàlon (Glastonbury), Cor Salog (Old Sarum), Cor Iiid, (Llan Iiid) in Siluria.

The force of the testimony for St. Paul's residence in Britain may be more clearly estimated by comparing it with that for St. Peter's at Rome. The earliest testimony in favour of the latter is that of Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, A.D. 180^a, prior to which we find no indication in the Scriptures or ecclesiastical authors that St. Peter ever visited or ever intended to visit Rome, which, as a Gentile Church over which St. Paul in the most pointed manner claimed jurisdiction^b, was certainly not within the province of the apostle of the circumcision. Britain, on the contrary, was within Paul's province, placed already, as Ephesus and Crete had been, by Paul himself under one of his bishops, Aristobulus. If we

^a Irenæi Opera, lib. iii. c. 1:—"Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews in his own language while Peter and Paul were engaged in evangelizing and founding the Christian Church at Rome."

^b "My apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations, among whom are ye also . . . that I might have some fruit among you also, as among other Gentiles."—Rom. i. 5, 13.

are to concede that St. Peter founded the Roman Church in person, much more are we compelled by infinitely stronger evidence to acknowledge that St. Paul in person founded the British Church^c.

Of St. Paul's life after quitting Britain no particulars have descended to us. After visiting Asia we find him in the last scene of his life returned to the bosom of the British royal family at Rome. In his farewell charge to Timothy he sends him the greetings of Pudens, Linus, and Claudia. These, with that of Eubulus, the cousin of Claudia, are the only names

^c If we desired to strengthen from Roman Catholic evidence the apostolical foundations of the British Church, or to insist that it can with equal justice, at least, as the Roman Church, claim St. Peter amongst its founders, it would not be difficult to adduce the affirmative evidence of Roman Catholic authorities upon the point. Cornelius à Lapide, in answering the question "How came St. Paul not to salute St. Peter in his Epistle to the Romans," states, "Peter, banished with the rest of the Jews from Rome by the edict of Claudius, was absent in Britain." (*Cornelius à Lapide, in Argumentum Epistolæ St. Pauli ad Romanos*, c. xvi.) Eusebius Pamphilus, if we can credit the quotation of him by a very untrustworthy author, Simeon Metaphrastes, states St. Peter to have been in Britain as well as Rome.—(*Metaphrastes ad 29 Junii*.) The vision to which St. Peter refers, 2 Pet. i. 14, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me," is said to have appeared to him in Britain on the spot where once stood the British Church of Lambedr (St. Peter), and now stands the Abbey of St. Peter's, Westminster. Lambeth may be a corruption of Lambedr. But this question lies between Roman Catholic authors and their own Church, which will scarcely put the seal of its infallibility on a position that places the British Church on its own special appropriated Rock.

of the brethren mentioned by him ; these ministered to him on the eve of his martyrdom, these attended him when he was on the block of the state lictor at Aquæ Salvæ, a little out of Rome, and these consigned his remains with their own hands to the Pudentinian family tomb on the Ostian Road. Like his Divine Master, "he made his grave with the rich in his death." Linus, Claudia and Pudens and their four children, when God in His appointed time called them to receive the same crown of the Cross, were buried by his side: the other royal converts, Brân, Caractacus, Cyllinus, and Eurgain died peaceably in Britain, and were interred in the cor of Ilid in Siluria. All—kings, heroes, apostles, martyrs, saints—were united in the kingdom of light, in the joy of their Lord ^d.

^d Bede was a very earnest adherent of the novel papal Church, introduced, A.D. 596, by Augustine into Britain, but the honesty and simplicity of his character has rendered his history in many respects a very inconvenient and obnoxious record to the said Church. What became of the remains of St. Peter and St. Paul? At Rome they still pretend to exhibit them, but Bede—and it must be remembered he is a canonized saint in the Roman calendar—expressly states that the remains of the bodies of the apostles Peter and Paul, the martyrs St. Lawrence, St. John, St. Gregory, and St. Pancras, were, at the solicitation of King Oswy to Pope Vitalian, removed from Rome to England, and deposited at Canterbury A.D. 656, Pope Vitalian's letter to Oswy being extant.—(*Bede's Hist.*, lib. iii. c. 29.) Their remains, then, if any, repose in British soil.

CONCLUSION.

FROM the preceding investigation ensue the following conclusions:—

1. Before Christianity originated in Judæa, there had existed from the remotest period in Britain a religion known as the Druidic, of which the two leading doctrines were identical with those of Christianity, viz., the immortality of the soul and vicarious atonement.

2. That this identity pointed out Britain as of all Gentile countries the one best prepared for the reception of Christianity.

3. That the only religions persecuted by the Roman government were the Druidic and the Christian.

4. That this common persecution by the great military empire with which Britain was engaged in incessant hostilities from A.D. 43 to A.D. 118, materially aided in pre-disposing the British mind in favour of Christianity.

5. That Britain, being the only free state of Europe, was the only country which afforded a secure asylum to the Christians persecuted by the Roman government.

6. That a current of Christianity flowed into Britain from the East contemporaneously with the first dispersion of the Church at Jerusalem, A.D. 35—38.

7. That the first planters of the Gospel in Britain never were in Rome at all, but came hither from the mother Church at Jerusalem.

8. That these first planters were Joseph of Arimathea and his associates, who settled under the protection of the British king Arviragus, in the Isle of Avàlon, Glastonbury,—one of the Druidic cors of Somerset.

9. That among the earliest converts of Joseph and his fraternity were Gladys (Pomponia Græcina) the sister, Gladys or Claudia, and Eurgain, the daughters, and Linus the son of Caractacus, prince of Siluria, and military dictator of the national forces against the Romans.

10. That the second planter of the word was Simon Zelotes the apostle, who was martyred and buried in the Roman province, probably near Caistor, in Lincolnshire.

11. That the third planter was Aristobulus, one of the seventy, brother of St. Barnabas and father-in-law of St. Peter; commissioned first bishop of Britain by St. Paul, and consecrated by St. Barnabas, the two apostles to the Gentiles. That Aristobulus was engaged in his mission in Britain when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, some years before his first visit, or the visit of any other apostle, to Rome.

12. That Pudens, the husband of Claudia, Claudia herself, her sister Eurgain, her brother Linus, and aunt Pomponia, being converted prior to St. Paul's visit to Rome, the rest of the British royal family, Brân, Caractacus, Cyllinus and Cynon, were converted and baptized by St. Paul himself during his detention in that city preceding his first trial. That

the palace of Pudens and Claudia was the home of St. Paul and the other apostles; that their four children, Timotheus, Novatus, Pudentiana and Praxedes, were instructed in the faith by St. Paul; and that Linus, the brother of Claudia and second son of Caractacus, was appointed by the same apostle first bishop of the Church of Rome, such Church meeting at that time, and till the reign of Constantine, in the aforesaid palace, called indifferently "Domus Pudentis, Palatium Britannicum, Domus Apostolorum, Titulus, Pastor, St. Pudentiana."

13. That after the return of Caractacus to Siluria, St. Paul himself, following the footsteps of his bishop and forerunner, Aristobulus, visited Britain, and confirmed the British Churches in the faith.

14. That the last days of St. Paul, preceding his martyrdom at Rome, were attended by Pudens, Claudia, Linus, Eubulus, whose salutations he sends in his dying charge to Timothy, and that his remains were interred by them in their family sepulchre.

15. That the foundations of the British Church were Apostolical, being coeval, within a few years, with those of the Pentecostal Church at Jerusalem, —preceding those of the primitive Church of Rome, so far as they were laid by either an apostle or apostolic bishop, by seven years,—preceding the arrival of St. Peter at Rome, as fixed by the great majority of Roman Catholic historians (thirteenth year of Nero), by thirty years,—preceding the first arrival of the

papal Church of Rome in Britain, under Augustine, by 456 years.

16. That the British Church has from its origin been a royal one; the royal family of ancient Britain,—of whom her present Majesty, Queen Victoria, is, through the Tudors, the lineal blood representative—being 1. the first British converts to Christianity; 2. the founders of the first Christian institutions in Britain; 3. the chief instruments, in the second century, in the establishment of Christianity as the state religion; and in the fourth century, in the persons of Helen and Constantine the Great, the chief instruments in the abolition of Paganism, and the substitution, in its place, of Christianity over the whole Roman Empire.

17. That the spiritual or ecclesiastical head of the British Church was always a Briton, resident in Britain, amenable to British laws, and British laws only, and having no superior in the Church but Christ.

18. That whatever may be the religious advantages or disadvantages of the union of the ecclesiastical and civil governments in the person of the Sovereign, such union has been, from the first colonization of our Island, first in Druidic and then in Christian times, the native British, as opposed to the foreign papal—and, in later times, dissenting—principle of their separation.

[ENDS]