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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE CELTIC CHURCH.

BY THE REV. F. R. MONTGOMERY HITCHCOCK, D.D.

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND: ITS CONNECTION WITH THE EAST; ITS DIFFERENCES FROM THE CHURCH OF ROME; ITS INDEPENDENCE.

THE Church of Ireland until the twelfth century, generally speaking, for six centuries, was a free and a national Church. It had many points of contact with the Eastern Church which suggest an Eastern origin, and as many points of difference from the Roman Church which make a Roman origin impossible.

In the first place, we shall briefly summarize the points of contact with the East. With regard to the monastic habitations, they resemble in plan, i.e. a group of small huts surrounded by a *cashel*, the communities of the East, like that of Mount Tabor, after which they were modelled.¹ The ascetic practices of the Irish hermit, such as suspending oneself by the armpits from hooks,² were imitations of the devices in self-torture discovered by the anchorites of the Syrian desert, probably in imitation of the Indian fakir's methods of self-torture. The smallness of the churches reminded travellers of those of Mount Athos and Asia Minor; and the group of seven churches, e.g. at Glendalough and Clonmacnois suggests the "Seven Churches of Asia." The shape of the doors of the hermitages of SS. Flannan and Molua at Killaloe, broader at the threshold than at the head, resembles Egyptian style of architecture. The circle of the Irish cross is probably the loop of the *crux ansata* of the Egyptians, their circle of life being an emblem of immortality. The swathed form of Christ in Irish sculpture may have been modelled after the mummified figures of the Egyptians. While Mr. F. E. Warren³ points out (1) that the Celtic designs in the *Book of Kells* resemble nothing in Italian MS. or ornamentation of that time, but have a considerable likeness to Egyptian fresco painting; (2) that the peculiarity of the Greek style of writing, in which the written letters depend from the line above, instead of resting on the line beneath, is found in the Stowe Missal (ff. 18, 20-4); and (3) that the serpent, a common design in Celtic calligraphy, which reaches its perfection in the serpentine decoration of the shrine of St. Patrick's Bell,⁴ is of Egyptian origin, recalling the feats of Moses before Pharaoh and the serpent in the wilderness. The serpentine formation of the pastoral staff of Eastern bishops has been noted.⁵ The Eastern monks were as careful as the Irish in preserving their manuscripts in stamped leather satchels or

¹ Reeves' *Columba*, p. 360.

² *Life of Finnchu*, Dict. Nat. Biog.

³ *Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church*, p. 51.

⁴ Reeves, *Description of St. Patrick's Bell*, Belfast, 1850.

⁵ Goar, *Euchology*, p. 115.

"polaires" and hanging them on pegs or slinging them on their shoulders by their straps.

That there should be something in common between Ireland and the East, when we consider the early connection between the two, which is proved by the visits of Irish monks to Egypt such as that mentioned in *The Survey of the World* by Dicuil, in which Fidelis explained the Pyramids as the barns built by Joseph, and the visits of Egyptian monks to Ireland, seven of whom, according to the Litany of Ængus the Culdee, are buried in Desert Ulidh, is not surprising. But this intercourse would hardly be sufficient in itself to explain other points of resemblance. For instance, the Irish and Eastern bishops wore crowns,¹ not mitres, doubtless out of respect for the Apostle John, who was placed by them far above SS. Peter and Paul, and who is described by Eusebius² as wearing a *petalum* or plate. They also, like the Eastern Church, suspended crowns over shrines. The Irish Church also, like the Greek, used unleavened bread for the Holy Communion, fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, a custom declared by Ussher³ to be "agreeable to the custom of the Grecian rather than of the Roman Church." An Irish Penitential ordered the women to be veiled when receiving the Sacrament,⁴ like the Eastern and Gallican Churches. From Adamnan's *Columba* (i, 44) Döllinger inferred that they gave the episcopal benediction, like the ancient Gallican and Mozarabic liturgies, between the Consecration and the Communion of the People. It was given in the Oriental manner, that is, with the right hand, first, second and fourth fingers extended and the third closed over the palm, the Roman mode being to raise the thumb, fore and middle fingers and bend the other two. Again, the sacred monogram I.H.S., which was much used in the East, is found in Irish illuminative work, and is properly explained as the first three letters of the Greek name of Jesus in the glossary of Cormac, who was also a Greek scholar of some importance, the celebrated Bishop-King of Cashel, not as the initial letters of the title "Jesus hominum salvator." One might also refer to the resemblance between the Creed of Patrick given in his Confession and the symbols in the *Treatise of Irenæus*⁵ who came from the East to Gaul. Extensive passages in the Stowe Missal have been borrowed from the Gallican Liturgy. Now Gallican Christianity seems to have come originally from Syria and the East via the Greek colony of Massilia (Marseilles), through Pothinus and Irenæus. Gaul also derived its monastic

¹ Warren, *Celtic Church*, p. 120.

² *H.E.* v, 24.

³ *Opera* iv, 305. The fast on Wednesday and Friday is ordered in the Eastern rule of St. Antony.

⁴ *The Apostolic Constitutions*, II, 57. St. Basil, and the Council of Auxerre made a similar rule (42nd canon).

⁵ See Creeds of SS. Irenæus and Patrick, *Hermathena*, vol. xiii, p. 41 *et seq.*, by present writer. Chiefly note the Assumption instead of Ascension, the Spirit as "the pledge of immortality," Christ's "power above every name," "one God in the Trinity of the Sacred Name." Cf. Irenæus III. 18, 3, "In Christi nomine subauditur qui unxit et ipse qui unctus est, et ipsa unctio in quâ unctus est."

system from the East. And it was from the Gallican Church, so greatly subject to Eastern influences, that the Irish Church derived its special character, both before Patrick's day and in his time and after.

There was a constant intercourse between the Churches of Armorica and Brittany and the Christians of Britain, Cornwall and Wales between A.D. 450 and 600. British bishops were present at the Councils of Tours A.D. 461, Vannes 465, Orleans 511, Paris 555. Mansuetus, the first Bishop of Toul, was an Irishman, and Beatus, Bishop of Lausanne and Apostle of Switzerland, was also Irish. Eliphius and Eucherius, martyrs in France of the fourth century, were Irish. According to Diodorus Siculus, tin was exported from Britain to Gaul and transported through Gaul to the mouth of the Rhone. Strabo also mentions the commerce between Britain and Gaul. Columbanus was ordered to be shipped off from Nantes in an Irish merchant vessel. Irish wolfhounds were exported to Gaul in the days of Patrick. And the *Life of Kieran* describes a visit of Gallic traders to Clonmacnois A.D. 548.

The following Gallican bishops had considerable connection with Britain, if not with Ireland, between A.D. 390 and 590: Martin of Tours, said to be the great-uncle of Patrick, Hilary of Poitiers, one of whose hymns is in the ancient Irish "Book of Hymns," Victricius of Rouen, Germanus of Auxerre, Lupus of Troyes, Severus of Treves, and Gregory of Tours. Celtic churches were dedicated to saints of Gaul: for instance, ancient churches at Canterbury and Whithern are dedicated to St. Martin; many in Cornwall and Wales to St. Germanus, and two in Glamorganshire to St. Lupus under the name of St. Bleiddian (little wolf). That there was a marked difference between the Roman and the Gallican liturgy may be inferred from Augustine's question to Pope Gregory: "Why is one form of Mass observed in the holy Roman Church and another in the Gallican Church?"¹

We shall now consider some points of difference between the Celtic and the Roman Churches in these early days. That there were many is to be inferred from the words of Augustine to the British bishops at Bangor: "Because in many things you are acting contrary to our custom, nay, contrary to the whole Church."² The difference in the calculation of Easter was really the main point of the controversy.³ It was not a theological question, but an astro-

¹ Bede, *H.E.*, i, 27. Gregory's reply was moderate and wise. "It pleases me," he said, "that if you have found any thing either in the Roman or the Gallican or *any other Church* which may be more acceptable to God, you carefully make choice of the same and carefully teach the Church of the English, which as yet is new in the faith, what you can gather from the several Churches."² Bede, *History*, ii, 2.

³ The Celtic Churches of Britain and Ireland still adhered to the earliest Easter table, which had in the meanwhile been altered several times for astronomical reasons by the Church on the Continent. Augustine's stipulations at the conference with the British bishops were reduced to three points, the keeping of the Roman Easter, and Baptism, and the preaching of the Gospel to the English. But the British bishops refused all three especially the last. Therefore missionaries were sent from Ireland to convert the Angles and Saxons.

nomical point that had been debated at the Synod of Whitby. One party kept Easter on the fourteenth day after the Vernal equinox, Sunday or no. The other party on the Sunday which fell on or between the fourteenth and twentieth day of the moon next after the Vernal equinox. But it had become a party badge, and that it was displayed with all the bitterness of a political contest may be seen from the letter (A.D. 634) of Cummian, who advocated the Roman Easter, to Segene, Abbot of Hy, in which he denounced an Abbot Finan who opposed Rome as "the whited wall," and expressed the pious hope that God would smite him (Finan). That there was some foundation for Cummian's sarcastic remark, "Rome is wrong, Jerusalem is wrong, Alexandria is wrong, Antioch is wrong, the whole world is wrong; only the Irish, Scotch and the Britons are right" is clear, but we cannot but express the wish—a little more pious than Cummian's—that Rome had left us to find out our mistake and correct it ourselves. It was the attempt to force them to correct the mistake without giving them the time to see it, that made the Celts resent what they justly considered unwarranted and arrogant interference. For they clearly saw that the acceptance of the Roman Easter meant the acceptance of Roman doctrine and influence.

The tonsure was another point of difference, the British tonsure being the old Druid style of shaving the front of the head "from ear to ear," and letting all the rest grow, the Roman being the so-called "corona" or crown, in imitation of our Lord's "crown of thorns," and the Greek being a complete tonsure of the whole head. The Synod of Whitby also accepted the Roman tonsure. But many of the Irish clergy regarded their own tonsure as a sign of their independence, and persisted in retaining it. This gave rise to the proverb, *Cosmail Mael do Caplait*,¹ which means that the native tonsure is as good as the Roman. This is in the *Tripartite Life* (Rolls ed. 104). A similar *mot*—"similis est calvus contra caplit" is in Tirechán's Memoir. Another point was in connection with the Ordinal. For it was the custom of the British and Irish bishops² to receive consecration at the hands of *one* bishop; but the general, though not the universal, rule in the Roman Church was to have three bishops to consecrate. It was one of the Canons of the Council of Arles (A.D. 314) that three bishops at least and seven, if possible, should assist at consecrations. This question had not been raised in the case of St. Patrick, who used to consecrate bishops without any other bishop to assist him; but seems to have been pressed just at the time when the Italian mission of the seventh century was endeavouring to drive the Irish clergy out of England. Consecration by a single bishop had been recognized

¹ *Mael* being the man with native and *Caplait* (Capillatus) the man with Roman tonsure. See Bury, *Life of St. Patrick*, p. 241.

² "The King and clergy of the Cambrian region having summoned *one* bishop from Ireland, according to the custom of the Britons and Irish, made him (Kentigern) be consecrated bishop."—*Life of St. Kentigern*, c. xii (by Jocelin).

as valid by Pope Gregory (A.D. 601) in his answer to Augustine, in which he ignores the existence of the British bishops, of whose existence, however, he suddenly became aware in his answer to Augustine's seventh question, in which he commits the British bishops to his control.¹ "Truly," he said, "in the Church of the English, in which as yet you are found the only bishop, you cannot consecrate a bishop otherwise than single-handed."² What was wrong in the case of an Irishman was thus made right in the case of an Italian.

An instance of the arrogance of the foreign mission is the treatment of Chad, Bishop of York, who had been consecrated by Wini, Bishop of Winchester, and two British bishops (A.D. 665). But Wilfrid, the champion of the Roman cause, had in the meantime gone abroad to be consecrated Bishop of York, refusing to be consecrated by Irish bishops, "whose communion the Catholic see spurned,"³ and on his return found that Chad had been put in his place. He then set the mischievous example of appealing to Rome, and is said to have procured by influence or other means a Papal decree in his favour, as Geraldus Cambrensis tried in vain to do at a later date. The consecration of Chad was then alleged to be invalid. But Theodore, the first Archbishop by consent of the English Church, afterwards (A.D. 669) completed his ordination after "the Catholic manner."⁴ And the rule was made that "such as have received ordination from the bishops of the Scots (Irish) or Britons, who are not Catholics in the matters of Easter and tonsure, are not in union with the Church, and must again be confirmed by laying-on-of-hands by a Catholic bishop."⁵ This was done in order to compel the Irish and British clergy to accept the new calculation of Easter and the "coronal" or crown-like tonsure. We might mention here the dying injunction of St. Cuthbert, a convert to the Roman view (A.D. 687), to his followers: "With those that err from the unity of Catholic peace, either by not celebrating Easter at the proper time or by living perversely, have no communion"; and the resolution of the Council of Celcyth (A.D. 816) which called in question the Orders of the Irish clergy and the efficacy of the Sacraments administered by them, and banned their services both in Baptism and Eucharist. This proves the independence of the Celtic Church. And in Ireland some time afterwards

¹ Bede, *H.E.*, i, 27. "We entrust to your fraternity all the bishops of the Britains" (*Britanniarum*).

² *Ibid.*, i, 27.

³ So William of Malmesbury *de Gestis Pontif.* lib. iii quoted by Ussher, iv, 348, "Quorum communionem sedes aspernaretur Catholica." Eddius the biographer of Wilfrid quotes a speech of Wilfrid in which he states that "there are many Quartodecimans like the Britons and Scots (Irish) in Britain, and begs to be allowed to be consecrated in France where were many Catholic bishops."

⁴ Bede, *H.E.*, iv, 2. "Ordinationem ejus denuo catholica ratione consummavit." Compare the canons of Nicæa (325) regarding those ordained by the schismatic Meletius Bishop of Lycopolis.

⁵ The *Penitential* of Theodore, ii, 9.

two canons¹ were drawn up by the Roman party, and falsely ascribed to Patrick and his companions Auxilius and Iserninus, condemning the native custom of consecration by a single bishop and the native tonsure. Nevertheless, the Irish Church pursued the even tenor of her way, and we find both Lanfranc (1070-89) and Anselm (1093-1114) of Canterbury, complaining of episcopal consecration by a single bishop² in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Another point of difference was the marriage of the Irish clergy. Patrick himself was the son of a deacon and the grandson of a priest.³ In the Book of Canons ascribed to him but belonging to the eighth century there is a canon to the effect that "if a clergyman is not tonsured after the Roman fashion, and if *his wife* does not veil her head when she walks out, they shall be despised by the laity and separated from the Church." This implies the existence of a married clergy. The words of Gildas⁴ (A.D. 547), on the text "the husband of one wife," addressed to the clergy imply the existence of a married clergy in Britain. The Brehon laws (*Senchus Mor*, i, 55) also distinguished between a married and unmarried clergy, prescribing different penalties for sin in either case, much less for the married than the celibate bishop. The fact that Pope Innocent III (A.D. 1198-1216), who excommunicated King John of England, wrote to his legate in Ireland to abolish the custom there by which the sons and grandsons used to succeed their fathers and grandfathers in their ecclesiastical benefices,⁵ proves that the Irish clung to their custom with all the more tenacity to show their independence of Rome. And in the *Book of Leinster* (p. 369) there are two lists, one of the sons (189)⁶ of the Irish saints, and the other of their daughters (102), which would scarcely have been given if there had been anything improper in the fact of a married clergy. Geraldus Cambrensis tells us how unwilling the Welsh

¹ To be found in the collection of Irish Canons called the *Hibernensis*, edited by Wassersleben, and "put together, it is generally agreed, at the end of the seventh or in the first years of the eighth century" (*Bury, Life of St. Patrick*, p. 235). Adamnan who died A.D. 704 is quoted. The canon ascribed to Patricius runs: "PATRICK: If any cleric is not tonsured in the Roman way he ought to be excommunicated." The preceding canon (lii. 6) ascribes the Irish tonsure to Simon Magus.

² Ussher, *Opera* iv. Letters 27, 35, 36, to Kings Turlough (A.D. 1074) and Murtough (A.D. 1100).

³ *Confession* (an authentic work): Patrem habui Calpurnium filium quemdam Potiti presbyteri.

⁴ Ussher, iv, 294. Ussher collected many of the important letters which throw a light on the history of the early Irish Church.

⁵ Ussher, Works, iv, 296.

⁶ Tirechán in his memoir tries to father the rule of celibacy on St. Patrick. But in those days celibacy was not the rule. The proposal that clergy should separate from their wives was opposed at the Council of Nicæa (A.D. 325). The Council of Anjou (A.D. 433) permitted the clergy to marry, and the Council of Trullo (A.D. 692) did likewise. On the other hand, Pope Siricius (A.D. 385) wrote a decretal to a Spanish bishop maintaining the necessity of celibacy. There are, however, allusions to married clergy in the inscriptions in the Catacombs under the years 404, 405. See De Rossi.

clergy of the twelfth century were to give up marriage and their hereditary claim upon Church livings. "Their sons," he says, "after the death of their fathers succeed to the Church benefices, not by election but by the right of inheritance."¹

Clerical celibacy did not become the law of the Church of England until 1102, when the Council of Westminster,² under Anselm's presidency, declared that "no archdeacon, presbyter, deacon or canon should marry or retain his wife, and that no one was to be ordained to the sub-diaconate without profession of chastity." But in 1549, clerical marriage was legalized by Act of Parliament. In the meantime, the Irish clergy continued to marry. We find the Bishop of Connor informing Pope Gregory IX that he had been elected to the see, being "the son of a priest and begotten in priesthood,"³ by the Irish canons, who were most eager to have him as Bishop, but he was compelled to resign by the Pope. In *Primate Cotton's Visitation* (A.D. 1400) there is an interesting account of the Primate's visit to *Dubhregles* or Black Abbey, founded by Columcille at Derry, where a married man, Odo O'Dogherty, was instituted as Abbot in the Primate's presence. He had been elected by the canons, in whose eyes his marriage did not make any difference, but the Primate sternly expelled poor Katherine from her home. From the Annals of the *Four Masters* we learn that Conn, Bishop of Clonmacnois, was a married man, and that his father, grandfather and great-grandfather had been in holy orders (A.D. 1022, 1031, 1056, 1079, 1103, 1128).

The question of clerical celibacy is not a question of what is right, but of what is expedient. In the New Testament there is nothing against the marriage of the clergy. St. Peter the Apostle was a married man. St. Paul claimed the right to "lead about a wife as well as other apostles and as the brethren of the Lord and Kephas,"⁴ and in his letter to Timothy⁵ laid down the rule that "a bishop should be the husband of one wife." In the Catacombs⁶ of Rome we find inscriptions which prove that there were married clergy in the fourth and fifth centuries in Rome. In the Würzburg Glosses (Irish) on the Pauline Epistles the Irish Scribe, writing on 1 Cor. vii. 28, says, "He manifests here the difference

¹ Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils and Documents*, gives a record under year 961 which describes the opposition of the Welsh clergy to the rule of celibacy, "so that it was considered best to permit the clergy to marry."

² Dunstan (A.D. 978) and the British clergy discussed the matter, and the latter refused to yield, with consequences fatal to themselves as the story goes. The Council of Westminster (A.D. 1076) passed laws on the subject in the days of Hildebrand (Gregory VII), who thought that a celibate priesthood would be more likely to be devoted to the Papacy—a spiritual empire under the Pope—than a married clergy.

³ Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta Hiberniæ*, Letter 70, p. 28.

⁴ 1 Cor. ix. 5. ⁵ 1 Tim. iii. 1.

⁶ De Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianæ*. Sub. ann. 404, 405. Among them are records of Stephen, son of a priest, Melon, and of Philip, son of a priest, Alypius. J. S. Northcote (*Epitaphs of the Catacombs*, p. 117) mentions inscriptions of Roman priests and deacons whose wives were buried with them, up to the end of the fourth century.

between marriage and celibacy, for when of the married it is said (v. 36) 'he sinneth not,' of the celibate he says, 'he doeth well.' And when he says of the married, 'he doeth well,' he says of the celibate, 'he doeth better.'" The matter is one of expediency. No hard and fast rule, therefore, can be laid down; no other, in fact, than that which hath been laid down by the Master: "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

But the Irish clergy not only married, they and their people married within the prohibited degrees of relationship. See the complaint of Lanfranc (A.D. 1074) in his letter to Turlough, King of Ireland. But it is to be observed that the Celtic clergy did not consider themselves bound by the Canon Law but by the Mosaic Law in this matter; and, therefore, they married within degrees generally prohibited, but sometimes permitted by the Roman Church, when it served their purpose, as in the case of Henry VIII's marriage with Catherine of Aragon. The Synod of Cashel (A.D. 1172) passed a resolution against these marriages. When we read the charges of incest made by the Roman against the Irish clergy, we must remember that they denounced marriage between people in spiritual affinity, such as sponsors, as incest.

Lanfranc also alludes to the omission of chrism at Baptism in the Celtic Church. Chrism was never, indeed, an essential part of Baptism. And it was often difficult to obtain oil in Ireland. St. Patrick speaks of his neophytes with the oil fresh on their brows¹ and robed in their white garment (the *chrisom*); and the earliest extant Irish Baptismal Service in the Stowe Missal prescribes three separate acts of unction, on breast, and shoulders before Baptism, and brow after. The Irish practised immersion (single), to judge from the large fonts at St. Breacan's Bed (sixth century) and King Cormac's Chapel at Cashel (twelfth century). Trine immersion, with the alternative of aspersion (sprinkling), is ordered in the Stowe Missal (ciii. 14), which strangely omits the formula of Baptism in that office. Compare the Würzburg Gloss on Colossians ii. 14, "Three waves pass over us in Baptism because He was three days in the sepulchre." Benedict (Abbas) of Peterborough, in describing the proceedings of the Synod of Cashel (A.D. 1172), remarks that it was ordered that the baptism of infants should be performed in church and by the priests "in the Name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit,"² and mentions that there was a custom in different parts of Ireland, in the case of a rich man's child, for the father or someone else to plunge it three times in milk, otherwise, three times in water. Lanigan denied this, but

¹ Letter to Coroticus (2). "Crismati neophyti in veste candida, dum fides flagrabat in fronte ipsorum." See also *Book of Armagh* (f. 12), the daughters of Leary were clothed in white after Baptism.

² Fergil (Vergil), abbot of Aghabo, who left Ireland in A.D. 745 and became Abbot of Salzburg, was ordered by Archbishop Boniface to rebaptize a person because the priest used ungrammatical Latin. He refused, and the Pope upheld him because the priest had intended to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

the Life of St. Brigit in the *Book of Lismore* states that she was after birth bathed in milk which was in accordance with Brigit's merit.

The Pedilavium, or washing of feet after Baptism, was a rite practised in the Celtic and Gallican Churches, after John xiii. 4-7, but is not found in any Roman Office. Theodore of Canterbury in his *Penitential* did not recognize British or Celtic ordinations or consecration of churches, and even expressed doubts as to the validity of its Baptism. The same hostility was shown to the Celtic clergy by the Roman party on the Continent as well as by Bede and Eddius. Gregory III (A.D. 731-741) wrote letters to the Bishops of Bavaria against the "teaching and ritual of the Gentiles," and of "the Britons who went there" and of "other false priests or heretics"—a clause which doubtless referred to Irish missionaries. The bitterness was shown in other ways. Boniface, the "Apostle of Germany," denounced Vergilius, who had been Ferghal of Aghabo in Ireland, and was then the "Apostle of Carinthia," and Sidonius, to Pope Zachary (A.D. 746), for the manner in which they administered Baptism, and not being able to effect his purpose, had them condemned for teaching the sphericity of the earth. Other Irishmen on the Continent were subjected to ill-treatment and persecution by the Roman party.¹

With regard to the practice of Confession in the Celtic Church, auricular Confession is not mentioned in the *Book of Armagh*. Mr. F. E. Warren² points out that it was public rather than private, and optional rather than compulsory, and therefore dropped into disuse. Instead of a father confessor the Irish consulted, as in the well-known case of Columba, an Anmchara or soul-friend, who advised them what steps they should take to atone, but gave no absolution. With regard to incense, Mr. Warren writes³: "We have been unable to discover any passage referring to the use of incense in the Celtic Church." And as regards the style and character of the music of the Celtic Church, we know very little beyond the fact that the services were sung,⁴ and that they were not sung in the Gregorian or any other Roman chant, but most probably in the Alexandrian course introduced into the monasteries of Lérins and Marseilles.⁵

In the Eucharist unleavened bread was used by the Irish Church as by the African Church of Cyprian, and the Saxon Church of Theodore; the chalice was mixed, and there was probably a daily celebration,⁶ but there was *Communion in both kinds*, as we shall show from the following instances. In the Rule of Columbanus

¹ Warren, *Liturgy of Celtic Church*, p. 45, quotes authorities.

² *Ibid.*, p. 149. Malachi of Armagh, circ. 1123, sought to introduce and make compulsory auricular confession.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁴ Columba's voice could be heard chanting (*decantans*) a mile off (Adamnan).

⁵ Mabillon, *De Gallican Cursu*, p. 381.

⁶ The Würzburg Gloss (Irish) on Eph. i. 7, speaks of "the Spiritual Blood which is offered every day upon the altar."

there was a penalty of six lashes attached to injuring the chalice with the teeth. In Sechnall's *Hymn* (before A.D. 447) St. Patrick is described as "giving drink to the people of God in a *spiritual cup*" (*propinansque Dei plebem spirituali poculo*). In the later *Lives of the Saints* we read such passages as—"When the girl had received the Body of Christ and His Blood, she died without grief." Cogitosus in his *Life of St. Brigit* tells us that Brigit "the Abbess passed through another door with her maidens and widows to enjoy the banquet of the *Body and Blood* of Jesus Christ." The Antiphony of Bangor (seventh century) contains the Communion Hymn of the Church of Ireland in which there are many allusions to the Chalice. It is known in Neale's version in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (313): "Draw nigh and take the Body of the Lord, And drink the holy Blood for you outpoured."

Cuthbert, who had adopted the Roman usage, was, as Bede tells us, requested by an officer of Egfrid to visit his wife before her death and give her "the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ."¹ The Irish rule of the Culdees spoke of "giving the chalice," and of "going to the chalice" i.e. Holy Communion.² The chalice was held by the deacon; while the priest administered the Bread. The size of the Ardagh chalice (now in the Royal Irish Academy) shows that in its time the cup had not been taken from the laity. In the passages quoted we notice not only a distinct difference from the Roman use of withholding the cup from the laity, but also a spiritual interpretation of the Holy Communion which is contrary to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. On this point we may compare with advantage the Post Communion Collect: "the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son" with the Irish (Würzburg) Gloss on Eph. i. 7: "the *spiritual* Blood which is offered every day upon the altar," and the Post-Communion Collect in the Rosslyn Missal (thirteenth century, Irish), "that we who offer the spiritual sacrifice, etc."³

A strange Irish custom was for two priests to consecrate together; it being the privilege of a bishop to consecrate singly. Adamnan⁴ tells us of a bishop who concealed his rank when staying with Columba at Iona, and that Columba, in order to honour him, invited him to join in the consecration; but on discovering his rank, said: "Christ bless thee, brother, break this bread alone as a bishop." In the Stowe Missal, which was saved when the Danes burnt the Abbey of Lorrha (A.D. 834), and is the earliest form of Liturgy in the Irish Church, we also notice that there is no sign of the *cross* at the words of Institution, and that the three Orders—Bishops, Priests and Deacons alone, and none of the minor orders—deacon, subdeacon, reader, exorcist and ostiarius are mentioned. See Warren's account of this Missal (*op. cit.*, pp. 198–267). It also has the pedilavium after Baptism.

The charge made by Lanfranc to King Turlough that money

¹ Bede, *Life of Cuthbert*, c. 15.

² Warren's *Celtic Ritual*, p. 269.

³ Reeves' edition, p. 86.

⁴ *Vita S. Columbæ*, i, 44.

was received by Irish bishops for ordination would not apply at least to St. Patrick, who declared in his *Confession* that he never received the half of a scruple for Baptism nor the price of his shoe for ordination. Neither orders, nor dispensations, nor decrees have ever been publicly or privately sold in the Church of Ireland, as the latter have been and are, without question, sold by the Church of Rome.

There were a number of other points of difference in ritual and liturgy between the Celtic¹ and the Roman Church, specially in the ordination of clergy and the consecration of churches,² but the main points of difference, which may be classed as (1) the Method of Calculating Easter; (2) the Style of Tonsure; (3) Consecration by one Bishop; (4) the Marriage of the Clergy; (5) Absence of Incense; (6) Communion in Both Kinds; (7) Spiritual Interpretation of the Holy Communion, are sufficient to attest the independence of the Irish Church.

In conclusion, we may add that the Irish clergy were not slow in asserting that independence on occasions. For instance, we find Columbanus, who defended the Celtic mode of calculating Easter by appealing to the authority of Anatolius of Laodicea (A.D. 270), writing letters to Pope Boniface IV in which he says: "I grieve over the *infamy* of the chair of St. Peter. . . . Watch, and again I say watch, Pope, because they say Vigilius³ did not keep good watch, and he is condemned as the source of the *scandal* by those who blame you. . . . Watch first of all for the faith . . . that you may purge the chair of Peter from all error. . . . A very grievous thing it would be if the Catholic faith was not held in an Apostolic see. . . . I entreat you, because many doubt the *purity of your faith*." He freely criticizes the Church of Rome, and warns it of the risk it runs of losing the keys, an authority which can only last as long as it is rightly and reasonably used; and of the danger of arrogance and pride, which the Lord will surely humble; and he is grieved to say the name of God is blasphemed among the heathen on account of the quarrels of the Italian bishops. He also makes the uncomplimentary remark that "a living dog is better than a dead lion" (Leo), when urging the Pope to remove the errors his predecessors had left uncorrected. This is proof that Columbanus did not believe in the infallibility of Rome or its Bishop. And on the other hand, we find him asserting in his fourth Letter to Boniface (A.D. 612) that the Celtic Church was neither schismatical nor heretic, that it received "nothing but the evangelical and apostolic doctrine," that "not one of us has been heretic, Jew or schismatic," and that "the *Catholic faith* is maintained unshaken by us as by you, the successors, forsooth,⁴ of the

¹ Comprising the British, Scottish, Armorican as well as the Irish Church.

² Warren's *Celtic Church*, pp. 69-82.

³ Pope A.D. 537-55. His vacillations over the Three Chapters which he accepted and then anathematized, and then again changed his opinion about them, causing much dissension in the West by his action in the matter.

⁴ The *scilicet* in this passage is clearly ironical.

holy Apostles." The Roman faith was not necessarily the Catholic faith in his eyes.

This was no vain boast of Columbanus. Seventy years later (A.D. 680) Wilfrid of York, whom we have already met as a determined enemy of the Celtic Church in Britain, speaking at Rome, "for all the northern part of Britain and Ireland, and the Islands which were occupied by the Angles, Britons, Scots (Irish) and Picts," stated that the true and Catholic faith was held by them, and subscribed to that statement.¹ The hostile attitude of Wilfrid and his chronicler Eddius to the Celtic Church gives all the more weight to his words.

And if we find converts to Romanism like Cuthbert of Melrose, and Romanizers like Aldhelm of Malmesbury, denouncing the Celts who would not adopt the new Easter cycle and other customs, we also read a complaint² from Archbishop Lawrence (A.D. 604), successor of Augustine, that Dagan, an Irish bishop, would neither eat nor lodge with him; and another from Aldhelm to Geruntius, King of Damnonia, saying that "the priests of Cambria, proud of the purity of their morals, have such a horror of communication with us that they will neither pray in the churches with us . . . salute us or give us the kiss of peace."³

The facts given in this chapter are sufficient to prove the existence of a free and independent Celtic Church in Ireland, Britain, Wales and Scotland which claimed to be Catholic in doctrine and practice, but was bitterly attacked by, and as bitterly opposed to, the claims and usurpations of the Roman Church. This Celtic Church had her own list of Saints, in which Columbanus, the corrector of Roman abuses and the adviser of the Pope, and Colman, who opposed his efforts to Romanize Northumbria, have high places. A native liturgy, monastic rules, translation of the Scriptures, mode of consecration, Baptism, calculation of Easter and chanting serve to complete the picture of a wholly independent Church. From A.D. 700 to 1200 that autonomy or freedom to govern herself and make her own laws was gradually undermined and finally taken away, to be fully and completely recovered at the Disestablishment of 1870.

With regard to the word "Catholic," we have seen how Columbanus claimed that his Church possessed "the Catholic faith," and on the other hand, the members of the Roman party, like St. Cuthbert, denying this, and asserting that the Irish Church "erred from the unity of Catholic peace." The speech of Wilfrid⁴ made when requesting that he might be consecrated bishop by some of the Gallican bishops, and not by the bishops in Britain, "whom the Apostolic Seat does not receive into its communion," testifies to this hostility of Rome and the Roman party to the Celtic Church,

¹ Eddius, *Life of Wilfrid*, c. 51.

² Bede, *H.E.*, ii, 4

³ Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, iii, 268-73.

⁴ Given by Eddius, his biographer.

an hostility which was shown to the Church of Ireland from its earliest years up to the present time.

The question is : Are we to surrender the title Catholic (Universal) to the Church of Rome, a title which our ancestors of the Church of Ireland claimed, and to which the Church of Rome of to-day has absolutely no right, since she departed from the Catholic faith and practice by her doctrines of Transubstantiation, Intention, Invocation of Saints, Mariolatry, Immaculate Conception, Works of Supererogation, Sale of Indulgences, Doctrine of Purgatory, and Papal Infallibility, which have never been held or practised by the whole or Universal Church.

Again, the spirit of the Church of Rome is the reverse of Catholic. This is noticeable from the commencement of the Romeward movement. The men who joined the Roman party in Ireland in the seventh century seem to be actuated by a new spirit. "First of all," writes Professor Zimmer,¹ "we are struck by the spirit of intolerance towards different views, and consequently by the spirit of *uncharitableness* as was shown by Augustine towards the British bishops, by Wilfrid towards Colman, and by Aldhelm in his letter to Geruntius." The same writer speaks of the spirit of *deliberate* falsification of documents in the interest of the Church which "only appears in the Irish Church after her union with that of Rome" (p. 117), and which renders worthless most of the Irish ecclesiastical records of that and the following centuries.

Such a spirit is the direct opposite of the grand old Catholic principles of faith, hope and love. Such a system is the reverse of Catholic, the very antipodes of the deep piety and sweet reasonableness of the ancient Church and early Bishops of Rome, when that see and city was "president in love," and renowned for hospitality and orthodoxy. The protest of Latimer rises to our lips. "I confess," he said, with the light of heaven upon his brow and a voice as if from another world, "I confess there is a Catholic Church to the determination of which I will stand; but not the Church which you call Catholic, which sooner might be termed diabolic. And whereas you join together the Romish Church and the Catholic Church, stay there, I pray you. For it is one thing to say Romish Church and another thing to say Catholic Church."

¹ *Early Celtic Church*, p. 116 et seq. (Eng. trans.).

St. George's Service Book for Schools has been drawn up by some of the staff of St. George's School in Jerusalem for use in the services of the School (2s. 6d. net). It is arranged on the lines that are now popular, and those who are seeking new forms of service may find them helpful, even if unable to adopt them as a whole.