

THE SAINTS OF CORNWALL

WILLIAM JOHN FERRAR

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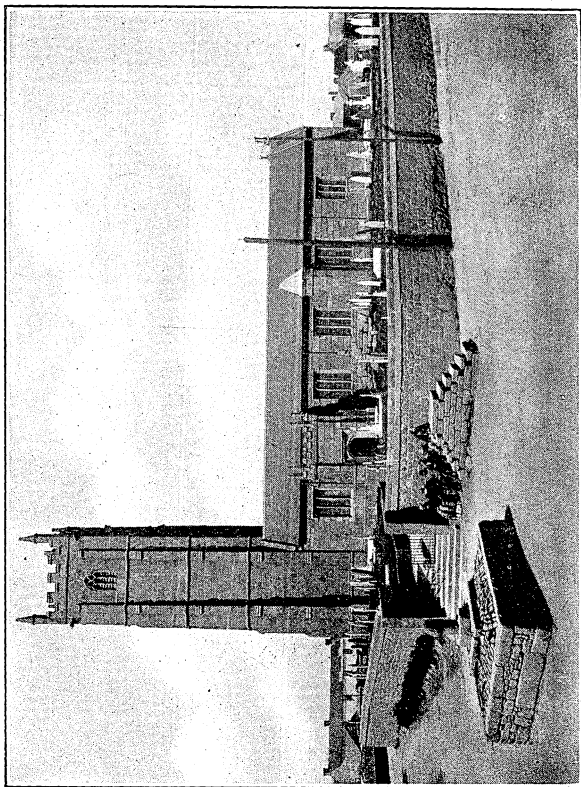


Photo by Valentine

ST. BURYAN'S CHURCH, CORNWALL

THE SAINTS OF CORNWALL

BY
WILLIAM JOHN FERRAR



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	7
I. IRISH SAINTS	13
II. WELSH SAINTS	24
III. NATIVE SAINTS	50
IV. A SAXON SAINT	53
V. SAINTS OF ARMORICA	56
VI. FOREIGN SAINTS	62

INTRODUCTION

PLACE-NAMES

THE names of towns and villages in Cornwall introduce us to a romantic world. They are usually the names of saints, and their liquid syllables are echoed in the same or slightly different forms in Wales, Ireland, or Brittany. They are not the names of saints of the Bible, nor indeed, except in rare instances, those of the saints of the Western Church, whose centre was Rome. They are either the heroes of the Celtic Church or of the Church of early Gaul. Their commemoration on the shores and hills, and in the valleys of Cornwall, bears witness to the historical events, from the Roman days onwards, which kept the Celtic world apart, uninfluenced by the Roman Empire and the Saxon invasion, and left it for a long period outside the borders of Roman Christianity.

TRADITIONAL ORIGIN

These saints of Cornwall are in very few cases natives of Cornwall. They are the earliest missionaries who founded churches on the spots where they stand to-day. They are voyagers from other parts of the Celtic world expressing in their random appearances the vagrant element in the Celtic spirit; they sowed the seed and passed on. They testify

to a unity of race and soul that bound together in a loose way the tribes who remained outside the sweep alike of Roman domination and Saxon or Norman invasion.

Thus among these saints we distinguish three classes—those who came from *Ireland*, those who came from *Wales*, and those who came from *Armorica*, or Brittany. A recent writer¹ has warned us against attempting, as Mr. W. C. Borlase did in his *Age of the Saints*, to mark out with too great exactness the actual sphere of their local influence. But we may roughly conclude that the Irish missionaries affected the Land's End district most, and the Welsh the part round Padstow and Bodmin up to the Devon border, while the Armorican influence was felt later, especially along the southern coast. It must be remembered that Brittany was, so to say, a colony from Britain. Either naturally from the expansion of tribes, which like bees threw off new swarms, or under the impulse of Saxon pressure, the Britons landed in detachments on the shores of the mainland, then sparsely populated and covered with forest, and established a new Britain. Their priests accompanied them. The land became Christian and grew rich and powerful, and distinguished for the earnestness and purity of its religion. Its great saints either visited Cornwall to revitalize the faith of the parent stock, and founded the Churches which bear their names, or else Bretons who returned to Cornwall brought the *cultus* of new saints with them.

The Irish saints seem to have come in the fifth century, the Welsh in the sixth, and the Armorican influence would naturally be later.

¹ T. Taylor, *Celtic Christianity of Cornwall*, p. 38.

THE CELTIC TRIBE

In reconstructing the picture of the evangelization of Cornwall we have to put in the forefront the characteristics of Celtic Christianity. We must discard all ideas of the State and the Church which are discordant from the tribal system of Ireland and Wales. Church and State were alike tribal, because they were Celtic. It followed that the religious organization, such as it was, centred in the members of the tribe, and that its sphere was not local. It also followed that the heads of the Church were high-born men akin to the chief of the tribes, who exercised a spiritual sway side by side with the temporal rule of their kinsmen. Nay, they had a sphere of temporal rule as well under certain conditions, such as the obligation of providing men to help fight the battles of the tribe.

THE "LAN"

The *lan*, which was always a monastic foundation, was set up side by side with the secular tribal centre. It was the seat of a second tribe—a sacred tribe. It possessed its own lands, and had its own rights. Its head was "the saint," or sacred person, and the saintship was handed on, like the chieftainship of the secular tribe, as far as possible in the hereditary line. Thus "the saint" was, from one point of view, the ancestor and founder of the monastic Church, or *lan*, and from another he was the living representative of the saint, holding his power and property for the sacred tribe.

In thinking of the Celtic Church it is essential to remember that all its spiritual influences were centred in and radiated from the *lan*, or sacred settlement; this was the Church, as distinct from the State. In itself it included an army of

priests, missionaries, students, and teachers, as well as agricultural labourers to till its lands, and manual workers and servants to minister to its physical life. It was university and school, as well as church and monastery. Students flocked, it is said, in thousands to a foundation like S. Iltyd's at Llantwit Major. Its importance ministered to the creation of the story of the original founder; his sacred well and humble cave became holy places; his spirit lived on, one may say, in the actual head of the community.

The *lan* itself was no structure of stone, but a simple collection of bee-hive huts round the church: the Celtic monks had their own round of religious ordinances and secular work. The "saint," or abbot, was not necessarily a Bishop. The position of the Celtic Bishop is quite alien from any ideas of episcopacy based on the organization of the rest of the Catholic Church of the East and West. The Bishop, or Bishops, had apparently no sphere of government: that resided in the head of the sacred tribe; the Bishop was a brother of the *lan*, who existed solely to pass on the sacred orders of the Church. He was a kind of steward of the "saint" in sacred matters.

AUTHORITIES

The authorities for the lives of those saints are unfortunately late, usually from the eleventh century onwards. They are monastic writings written on conventional lines to suit the requirements of their time. They adapt for their own purposes the miracles of the Old Testament, and of our Lord and the Apostles; they weave in a large element of Celtic folk-myth, and draw from the romantic fount that lies behind the Arthurian legend. Yet

in one or two instances we find ourselves on more solid historical ground. A writing is perhaps certified by experts to be written within a century of the date of the saint, or evidently embodies some early writing. Some local tradition or inscription may render us slight assistance, or some expression in an early document attest a statement in these imaginative biographies in a way that shows that behind their fanciful constructions was a background of historical reality. Many influences in recent years have been at work, which tend to make historians chary of rejecting absolutely the record of documents which possibly embody, amid many distortions and exaggerations, earlier testimony of a contemporary date. It is the aim of the historian to find what that testimony was, and what residuum of actual fact remains after it has been discovered and analysed. There is reason to think that a considerable element of truth remains, after all has been said, in the traditional lives of the saints commemorated in Cornwall.

THE SAINTS OF CORNWALL

I

IRISH SAINTS

S. BREACA AND HER COMPANIONS

THE district of the Land's End is said to have been evangelized by parties of Irish missionaries, who arrived towards the end of the fifth century. They landed in the estuary of the Hayle on the north coast. Their names were Breaca, Ia, Uni, Sininus the abbot, Elwinus, Marnanus the monk, Germochus the King, Crewenna, Helena, Etha (or Thecla), Gwithianus, and Wynnerus. The parishes of Breage, St. Ives (pronounced St. Eve's), Crowan, Germoe, Gwithian, Gwinnear, which preserve the names of their founders, are close together, and the patron saint of Lelant is S. Uni.

The Cornish proverb, "Germoe mather, Breaga lavethes" (Germoe the King, Breaga the nurse), probably preserved a very ancient tradition. Like the Homeric heroes, the Celtic chieftains were attached to their nurses.

Breaca was born in East Meath, where a district, in which S. Brigid's oratory was situated between

the Liffey and the Boyne, bears the name of Magh Breagh, *i.e.* Breaca's field. Breaca was probably educated in S. Brigid's convent. The pagan chief of the country, Tewdwr, who also appears in the surviving Cornish Mystery-play *Meriasek* as a cruel tyrant, attacked the party by Ryvier Castle to the east of the Hayle, and some of them seem to have been killed. It is suggested that St. Levan thus became a martyr, though his name is not given. Breaca escaped to Pencair, and Trenewth, near Crowan, where she founded a Church; she founded another at Talmanith.

S. Ia, whose name appears under the various forms of Hia, Hya, Ye, Ia, Iia, Iies, Ita, Itha, and Iva, and has been transformed in quite modern times to Ives, through confusion with the other S. Ives, was "a nobleman's daughter, and a disciple of S. Barricus," according to her legend, now lost, but seen by Leland before the Reformation. Dinau, a Cornish chief, built a church for her on Pendinas, the headland on which the present town of St. Ives stands. This church would not have been on the site of the present church, which was a chapel to the church of Lelant, built first in 1410, but at the end of the promontory. She is said to have removed to an unidentified place, named Conetconia, and to have been put to death by Tewdwr.

S. Uni, of whom nothing is known, was supposed to have been the brother either of St. Breaca or S. Ia. He is the patron of Lelant and Redruth, and is said to be buried at his church of St. Uny, near the former.

S. Sininus, traditionally an abbot and S. Patrick's companion at Rome, is the patron of Sennen and perhaps of Zennor. S. Elwinus is possibly the saint to whom St. Allen is dedicated.

S. Marnanus is conjectured to be the patron of St. Mawnan.

S. Germoch the King left his traditional seat and tomb at Germoe. It is to be seen at the north-east of the churchyard. Dr. Cox says: "Its internal measurement is 6 ft. 3 in. by 3 ft. 6 in.; it is entered by two pointed archways 6 ft. high, supported by a circular pier and responds; at the back is a seat divided into three compartments by two shafts with a sculptured crowned head in apex of the centre one. . . . The most reasonable tradition is that it was from this site that the saint preached his first sermon in Cornwall." ¹

S. Breaca's three other companions, S. Crewenna, S. Helena, and S. Etha or S. Thekla, are regarded by Mr. Baring-Gould as the patrons of Crewan, Helland, and St. Teath near Padstow. Nothing is known of them.

With regard to the traditions of Penwith, here summarized, Mr. Taylor says: "We have little historical evidence prior to the Norman conquest. The story of S. Ia's arrival with her companions must be received with caution, but there is no reason to doubt that a substratum of truth lies beneath a legend which is by no means modern." ²

S. Gwythian, or Gothian, has his name preserved in the church to the east of the Hayle.

S. Wynnerus, or Gwinear, was, according to one story, with his sister Piala, the precursor of the rest. He came to Cornwall with 777 followers, of whom seven were bishops, after mission-work in Armorica. The whole company were destroyed by Tewdwr. In the Breton legends of S. Guiner, the legend appears in a Breton setting, Tewdwr becoming a prince of Cornouailles. It seems probable

¹ *Churches of Cornwall*, p. 116.

² *Celtic Christianity of Cornwall*, p. 85.

that S. Wynnerus stands for an early, and for the time fruitless, expedition to Cornwall from Ireland.

S. PIRAN (KIERAN)

If one takes one's way along the cliffs from Perranporth, where the long waves roll up the sand in such glorious lines of snowy foam, it is a little difficult to find the ruined church of S. Piran. You wander among the tumbling dunes, and the search seems hopeless; but, if you strike inland at the right point, you drop upon it at last with its guardian case of stone, looking very unromantically like a water-works. This is all that remains of the little oratory that was discovered and cleared of sand in 1835; Mr. Cox estimates that about two-thirds of it were carried away before protection was organized. It was only 25 ft. long by 12 ft. broad in the nave, and 13 ft. in the tiny chancel, and its height 13 ft. and 19 ft. to the gables; a little stone seat ran round the building. There was an altar of rubble with a stone slab; beneath it was a headless skeleton, and there seemed to have been a canopy above, where the head of the saint was kept.

There is little doubt that one sees here all that remains of one of the oldest Christian buildings in England—probably of the sixth century. Its preservation is due to the fact that a sand-storm overwhelmed it in the ninth century, and another church was built on the other side of the stream. This was rebuilt in 1462, and removed piecemeal farther inland in 1803, and its old foundations have been opened up recently.

In the time of Domesday the mother-church of S. Piran had a dean and canons, but these disappeared, and Henry I gave the church to the

Chapter of Exeter. In 1269 the vicar paid 6 marks to Exeter, and made what he could from offerings. In an inventory of 1281 we are told of "a reliquary in which is kept the head of S. Pyeran, with the rest of the relics secured with iron and lock, a hearse in which the body of Pyeran is placed for processions, a tooth of S. Brendan, and a tooth of S. Martin within a silver box, also a pastoral staff of S. Pyeran adorned with silver and gold and precious stones." It seems to have been the custom to take the relics in procession to St. Agnes on Rogation Tuesday, and to receive offerings.

There is thus no doubt that in those days the church was regarded as the foundation and the burial-place of a S. Piran. "It is certain," says Mr. Taylor, "that in the thirteenth century, and *a fortiori* in the eleventh, the foundation of S. Piran was regarded as Celtic, and that the church claimed to have in its custody the crozier of its episcopal founder."¹ That is to say, there is ground to believe that this saint was really the great S. Piran, or Kieran, the Irish Bishop, who was closely associated with S. Patrick. According to the hypothesis he came from Ireland, and ended his days in Cornwall. This may of course be doubted, but we are at one with a long line of tradition in so thinking of S. Piran.

The Irish Lives of Kieran differ as to his date. Some make him, as "first-born of the saints of Ireland," a pilgrim to Rome, where he studied and was ordained Bishop; he met S. Patrick in Italy before 402: others make him meet S. Patrick after his labours had begun. But Mr. Baring-Gould has decided that any meeting with the Apostle of Ireland is chronologically impossible. He flourished in the middle of the sixth century, and is usually regarded

¹ Taylor, *Celtic Christianity*, p. 111.

as first Bishop of Ossory. He lived as a hermit at a lonely spot called Saigir (now Seir-Kieran, in King's County), where he founded a monastery, and also a nunnery for his mother Liadania, now represented by the church of Killiadhun¹; he was a great missionary in the district of Ossory, and his enthusiasm for preaching the Gospel led him with the other Irish saints to cross over to Cornwall. He probably died after the year 560, and there is therefore no reason why the small building, so like the early Irish oratories, should not be the actual sanctuary wherein the bones of S. Piran were first laid. March 5, his day of commemoration in the Irish calendars, was also S. Piran's Day at Padstow; he was looked upon as the patron-saint of the Tinnerns, "who keep his feast on the 5th day of March, and tell twenty idle stories about him, much derogating from his sanctity."²

Some of the stories in the Irish Lives are an outlet for the liveliness of the Celtic imagination. There is the cuckoo-story. A chief had stolen a nun from the neighbouring convent; Kieran demanded her restoration. "Not unless the cuckoo rouses me to-morrow morning," said the offender. It was midwinter, but next morning the notes of the cuckoo were heard under his window, and in deadly fear he restored the maiden to her cell. There is the tale of the boy Crichidh who was always up to mischief, and once put out the Paschal fire, which ought to burn all the year. "Now we shall be without fire until Easter, unless the Lord sends us some. As for that boy, he will come to a bad end shortly!" said Kieran to the brethren. The boy was killed by a wolf, but when Kieran's name-

¹ Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints*, March 5, 1866.

² W. C. Borlase, *Age of the Saints* (quoting from Tonkin), p. 24.

sake, Kieran of Clonmacnois, to whom the boy belonged, came to Saigir, there was no fire, and no boy, and it was very cold weather. Then Kieran of Saigir prayed and a globe of fire fell into his hands, and he held it for his guests to warm their hands at in the lap of his chasuble. His namesake refused to dine unless the boy was restored. "Brother," said Kieran, "I knew wherefore thou didst come; the boy is now on his way hither." And indeed he was, for he walked in alive and well. And there is the story how Kieran restored to life the seven harpers of the King of Munster, who had been murdered and immersed in a bog for a month, while their harps hung on a tree by its side. It was only the greatest and most venerable saints of whom such marvels were told.

Three Cornish parishes are dedicated to the saint. Perranzabuloe, the Lampiran of Domesday, Perranuthno, near St. Michael's Mount, where he is joined with S. Nicholas, and Perranarworthal, near Falmouth, with its fine three-staged tower and Norman tympanum. He is probably the S. Kerian of Exeter.

Some, with Leland, identify S. Keverne with S. Kieran, but Professor Loth, a great authority in France on the Celtic saints, considers Peran, Kerrien, Keverne, and Kieran as all distinct saints.¹ If Keverne is only a form of Kieran, the saint has another church by the caverned serpentine rocks opposite the Manacles, whose shapely spire on its two-staged tower has been for ages a landmark for sailors.

S. BURYAN

The noble tower of S. Buryan is a striking object in the rather desolate landscape of the

¹ Taylor, *Celtic Christianity*, p. 85.

Land's End. It was an old collegiate church, the Eglosberrie of Domesday, which was probably rededicated by King Athelstan in 930 on his way to annex Scilly, and the present building is mostly late fifteenth-century work.

The story of S. Buryan, or S. Berriona, is pieced together by conjecture, which connects her somewhat adventurously with S. Piran. We are told in one of his Lives that in the monastery which he provided for his mother in Ireland there was a fair maiden, Bruinsech the slender, who was her foster-child. This was the abducted maid who figures as the heroine of the cuckoo-story. Bruinsech in the legend died of fright, but was resuscitated by S. Piran. It is assumed that Piran brought his mother and Bruinsech with him to Cornwall.

Mr. J. Adams identifies the place of her dwelling "about a mile south-east of the parish church which bears her name, beside a rivulet on the farm of Bosliven, and the spot is called the Sentry, or Sanctuary. The crumbling ruins of an ancient structure still remain here, and traces of extensive foundations have been found adjoining them." It was probably here that the Saxon King knelt and made his vow that if he conquered the Scilly Isles he would found a church and college as a thank-offering to God.

In support of this conjecture is the fact that May 12 is the feast-day both of S. Burian and of S. Bruinsech in the Donegal Calendar.

S. LEVAN

S. Levan, whose name may be a corruption of Silvanus, was probably associated with S. Buryan. His cell is shown at Bodellen in St. Levan parish. His memory was very popular in local tales in the

time of Dr. Borlase (1740), and Mr. Hunt's *Popular Romances of the West of England* gives some interesting traditions. Mr. Baring-Gould quotes the story of Joanna. The triangular garden which belonged to her lies between the church and the site of the saint's cell. "She was there one Sunday picking pot-herbs, and, seeing S. Levan go on his way to the sea to fish, she abused him for desecrating the holy day. He retorted that there was no more harm in fishing than in picking vegetables. Angry because she answered him again, he declared that, if any girl were baptized in the water from his well and called Joanna, she would prove a bigger fool than his interlocutor. From that day to this no parents will have a daughter so named, unless baptized at St. Sennen."¹

There is still the green path by which the saint used to go to fish, and his seat in the churchyard, a rock split in two. It is said that the end of the world will come when a pack-horse can pass through the split in the rock.

There is the story, too, of his catching two bream on his line, and throwing them back because one was enough for his supper, recatching them thrice, and then, supposing something lay behind their strange persistence, taking them home, where he found his sister Breada and her two children, who ate so greedily that they were choked with the fish-bones. "This," says Mr. Baring-Gould, "produced a lasting coolness between Breada, and her brother."

S. FEOCK

In Feock, with its two-staged thirteenth-century tower forty yards from the church, and its fine

¹ Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints*, Appendix vol. p. 231.

outlook on the Carrick Roads, we have a memory of some unknown Irish missionary. Mr. Borlase refuses to identify him with Fiech of Sletty, the disciple of S. Patrick, and the bard who sang his praises. The same name seems also to underlie Shevioch, where the dedication is to S. Peter and S. Paul.

S. RUAN

S. Ruan of Cornwall is probably the S. Ronan of Brittany, and the Roman of Romansleigh in Devon. Borlase regards him, on the authority of Leland, as an Irishman. Leland had seen his legend at Tavistock, which described how he made himself an oratory in a wood in Cornwall, called the "Nemean," full of wild beasts, and settled thus at Falmouth. Mr. W. C. Borlase's account of how the name of this wood was transferred in the Breton legend to Brittany is very illuminating. It is even possible that this Ruan is the apostle sent by S. Patrick to Scotland. Anyway, we may start at Romansleigh as his first resting-place, and track him thence to his sacred well at Kerrier, and his parishes of St. Ruan Major, near Porthleven, St. Ruan Minor, and Ruan Lanihorne (a corruption of Llan-ruan). This latter, dedicated in 1321, possesses a semi-effigy in Purbeck stone of an ecclesiastic within a cusped arch of a slightly earlier date, which was found in 1866, and has been thought to be meant for the saint. There is a holy well in the village.

He crossed to Armorica, landed in the west of Léon, and settled as a hermit in the wild forest of Nemet, near Quimper, a great haunt of wolves. His efforts to convert the pagan people roused great opposition, and he was charged by a woman

named Keban, whose husband he had converted, with being a were-wolf. She said he had carried off her child by night in the form of a wolf and eaten it. There were British colonists there, and Ronan was tried before their King, Gradlo. Gradlo proposed that his wolf-dogs should decide the question: if they smelt wolf they would tear Ronan to pieces. Gradlo, who wished to save him, fed his hounds well, and perhaps introduced them to the saint beforehand. On the day of the trial Ronan held up his hand, and they came and fawned on him. Then the mob turned on Keban, Ronan's reputation being re-established, and it was with difficulty that she was saved from destruction. He assured the mob that if they searched her house they would find the child. And the little girl was discovered safe and sound.

II

WELSH SAINTS

THE FAMILY OF BRYCHAN

A NUMBER of the Cornish saints are represented as the children or descendants of Brychan, King of Brecknock. This Brychan was half Irish, for his father, Aulach MacCormac, an Irish Pictish chief, had settled with his followers in Brecon, probably after Britain had been drained of her fighting men in the rebellion of Constantine the Tyrant against the Emperor Honorius, A.D. 407.

Brychan, then, ruled in Brecon about the time when the Roman legions were withdrawn for ever from Britain, and the appearance of his family in Cornwall and Brittany seems to be connected with the movements consequent upon the Pictish and Irish invasions. Though it is no doubt that many of the saints were of noble birth, to belong to the "family of Brychan," one of the three "holy families" of Britain in the early hagiology, need not imply more than the fact that a saint was Welsh, and came from Brecon.

There is a stone at Endellion inscribed with a cross of an Irish type and the words, "Broechan hic jacet . . . otti filius."¹ This is probably of

the seventh century, and shows that the name of Brychan was not uncommon.

The Welsh legends ascribe to him a household of forty-nine children, three wives and concubines. To account for his extraordinary family it is suggested either that his grandchildren are included, or that three Brychans have been fused into one.¹ The "young women's window" at St. Neots represents him with his legendary family in his lap. The Cornish documents reduce his family to twenty-four, "all of whom were holy martyrs or confessors in Cornwall and Devon, and all of whom led the lives of hermits there."² These lists, as Mr. Borlase has shown, are interesting as showing which Cornish parishes were traditionally associated with the names of Welsh saints.

Mr. Baring-Gould gives, as the saintly children of Brychan connected with Cornish parishes, S. Gwladys, S. Cledwyn (mother of S. Clydog and S. Cleer), S. Morwenna, S. Keyne, S. Tydie (Tudy), S. Gwynys (Genes), S. Nectan, S. Corth, who married S. Brynach, their children being S. Gwennan (Wenn), S. Mwynen, or Minefreda, of St. Minver, and S. Berwyn (perhaps Merryrn), and last Rhiengar, wife of Cynon and mother of S. Cynidr (Enoder).

S. Gwladys married S. Gwynllyw (Olave), uncle of S. Petroc; her children were the great S. Cadoc and S. Glywys of Gluvias, father of S. Gwodloyw (Willow) of Lanteglos-by-Powey.

S. Cynon, Rhiengar's husband, son of S. Caranog, was brother of Sandde, who married S. Non, their son being S. David, and another brother was S. Carantoc (Crantock), companion of S. Patrick.

Pedigrees are not very interesting, but the list

¹ Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints*, Oct. p. 178.

² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

¹ Borlase, *Age of the Saints*, p. 147.

shows how much Cornwall owed to Welsh Christianity in the fifth and sixth centuries. For Brychan is reckoned to have died about A.D. 450. Rhiengar's union with Cynon linked the Brychan family with the second holy family of Britain, that of Cunedda, from whence sprang S. David, S. Teilo, and S. Mabon.

Let us endeavour to trace the saints named through the ancient parishes of Cornwall.

St. Cleather is a small village on the road from Launceston to Camelford, about half-way from Launceston to Davidstow. There is little of interest in the church beyond some old Norman work, made use of when the church was rebuilt. S. Clether is supposed to be the S. Cledog who was martyred by the pagan Saxons in 492 and buried in Herefordshire.

S. Morwenna, the saint of Morwenstowe, and probably of Marham Church, was regarded as a daughter of Brychan. Mr. Baring-Gould mentions a local tradition that, when she was dying, Nectan, the saint of Hartland, "ministered to her, and raised her head that she might with her dying eyes look on Wales, whence she had come." A later authority, Mr. T. Taylor, regards her as a Saxon saint, who displaced an earlier British saint when the invaders poured over the eastern boundaries of Cornwall.

S. Keyne, or Ceneu, was perhaps a granddaughter of Brychan. Her legends tell how, before her birth, rays of light shone from her mother's breasts, and how she dreamed that she nursed a dove. The child Ceneu was dovelike, sometimes shining like the sun, sometimes white as snow. She refused to be married, left her home, and settled across the Severn, where she turned the serpents into stone. This is a rude explanation of the ammonites

in the lias at Keynsham. She travelled on to Cornwall, and was brought back to Llangeneu in Abergavenny by S. Cadog, where she caused a spring to well forth. When she died the angels came and dressed her in crimson and gold, and said: "Come with us, and we will introduce you to the Kingdom of thy Father."

S. Keyne is said to have given the well in the parish near Liskeard, which bears her name, to the people in return for the dedication of the church. "It is covered," says Mr. Baring-Gould, "with old masonry, upon the top of which grow five large trees, a Cornish elm, an oak, and three antique ash trees in so narrow a space that it is difficult to imagine how the roots can be accommodated."¹ The virtues of the well are famous from Southey's poem.

Mr. Borlase would identify S. Keyne with S. Ceinwen, who is the same as Kenwyn, whose church is a mile from Truro. The feast-day of each is October 8.

"S. Keyne's church," says Dr. Cox, "is not of much interest."

S. Tydie is probably S. Tudy, who was a disciple of the Breton saint, S. Maudeg, known in Cornwall as S. Mawes. Little is known of him, and it is supposed that he founded his church near Camelford, when in Cornwall with his master. He was the apostle of South-west Cornailles, and founded the monastery of Loc-Tudy.

S. Gwynws may be the saint commemorated at S. Gennys, the village on the southern horn of Widemouth Bay. But the dedication is usually attributed to the popular Breton, S. Genesius.

S. Nectan, or S. Nighton, was a hermit buried on the headland of Hartland. Leland calls him a

¹ *Age of the Saints*, p. 155.

martyr. It is probable that his light warned ships of the dangers of the coast. There is a church dedicated to him in the parish of St. Winnow, near Lostwithiel, and Niton in the Isle of Wight is S. Nighton's.¹

S. Gwennan, of the Brychan family, is *not* the better-known Gwen, or Wenn, descendant of Vortigern, sister of S. Non, wife of S. Selyf, and mother of S. Cubi, in the Geraint family.

S. Mwynen, Minver, or Minefreda, and her brother Berwyn, or Gerwyn, were of the house of Brychan, and are the founders of St. Minver and St. Merrin, near Padstow. In St. Minver parish is the chapelry of S. Enoder, who was a cousin.

S. Dwynwen, of the same family, may perhaps be the founder of Ludgvan (Llan-Dwynwen), and of Advent (Adwen or Llan-Dwen).² In Wales she was the patron of lovers. Maelon Dafodril (delightful name) and Dwynwen were in love with one another. She behaved like a flirt; he retaliated. Then an angel gave her some heavenly drops which extinguished her love, and she turned Maelon into ice with the same potion. She prayed that he might be thawed, that all maids who prayed to her might receive the husbands they wished, or else become indifferent to them, and that she might never again desire to marry. "Nothing wins hearts like cheerfulness" is said to have been a saying of this eminently human saint.

S. CADOC

S. Cadoc, the great Welsh saint, has left a trace of himself in a spring at St. Michael's Mount and a chapel at Padstow: possibly too both Quethiock

¹ See T. Taylor, *Celtic Christianity*, p. 126.

² Baring-Gould, *Ap. p.* 175; also Borlase, p. 154.

and Ladock are corrupt forms of his name. As the founder of the Abbey of Llancarvan in Wales, he ranks high among the saints of the West.

There is much of romance in his legendary life. His father, a Welsh King, stole his mother in a raid, and barely escaped with his life. His robber-followers stole a poor monk's cow on the night Cadoc was born, and it was this monk that baptized him when he came to reclaim his cow. To the same monk Cadoc was sent when seven years old, to learn Latin grammar. He studied in Ireland, and in Wales with a teacher from Rome, who was very poor. His life includes the story of the mouse who brought poor hungry Cadoc a grain of corn, which led to the discovery of a subterranean Celtic granary that was well supplied. Then he went to the woods and met the great white boar, that made three bounds from his den, which Cadoc marked as the site of his future monastery. Then the ground was cleared and drained, and Llancarvan built, and thither came the monk Gildas, with his beautiful square bell of hammered silver and copper. It was offered first to the altar of S. Peter at Rome; but the Pope was unable to sound it, so Gildas brought it back to S. Cadoc, in whose hand it sounded so sweetly.

At Llancarvan Cadoc held great state. A hundred clergy, a hundred soldiers, a hundred workmen, a hundred poor men, and a hundred widows fed daily at his table, besides many guests. His monks cultivated the land, and carried on a great religious and secular school. There is a collection of Cadoc's maxims which include proverbs as wise as these: "Truth is the elder daughter of God," "Conscience is the eye of God in the soul of man," "The best of patriots is he who tills the soil."

Cadoc converted his father and mother, who

both entered on a life of poverty, living in two huts by a stream and working for their living.

When the Saxons came S. Cadoc fled to an island in the Bristol Channel, and then to one off the Morbihan coast, in the bay of Etel, still called after him, where he founded a monastery and constructed a causeway along which the Breton children could come to school. It was here, after his fears that his favourite Virgil might be in hell, and his vow not to eat or drink till "he knew what fate God had allotted to one who sang upon earth as the angels sing in heaven," that he dreamed of a soft voice saying: "Pray for me, pray for me; never be weary of praying. I shall yet sing eternally the mercy of the Lord."

Cadoc returned to Britain, and to the very heart of heathendom. He went to Weedon in Northants, where he was martyred. As he was celebrating the Holy Eucharist, a band of Saxon horsemen burst into the church, driving the Christians before them. A Saxon chief struck him with his lance. "Lord invisible, Saviour Jesus," were Cadoc's last words, "grant me one grace—protect the Christians of my country!"

Cadoc is said to have travelled to Rome and to Jerusalem, and to have brought back, like many travellers, some water from the Jordan, which he poured into the Cornish spring that he had caused to well forth with the stroke of his staff.

There is a tale of his carrying red-hot coals to his master in his gown, and then hiding them in the earth. Mr. Baring-Gould¹ thinks he must have discovered a vein of coal in Glamorganshire, which was afterwards covered by a fall of earth. A measure of truth often lies behind these marvellous stories, which were put together centuries

¹ *Lives of the Saints*, Ap. p. 175.

after, when the actual facts were overlaid with legend.

S. GLUVIAS

S. Gluvias, brother of S. Cadoc, was called Glywys the Cornishman, probably because he migrated to Cornwall early in life. The church that bears his name looks towards the hill-slope running down to the Penryn River, the southern arm of the estuary of the Fal. On his return to Wales he founded a church at Coed Cernw, or "The Cornishman's Wood."¹ His son, S. Willow, is patron of Llanteglos-by-Fowey. Mr. Baring-Gould would like to identify S. Willow (Gwodloew) with a certain Gwyddlew, who was probably the "S. Olave" of Cornwall and Devon, and notes that an inscribed stone of the sixth century near Launceston has the name GUNGLEI upon it.

Leland makes S. Willow a hermit, and asserts that he was murdered by a kinsman named Mellyn.

S. NON

Rhiengar, daughter of Brychan, by her marriage with Conon, became sister-in-law of S. Non and S. Carantoc, and aunt of the great S. David, all of whom have left their mark on Cornwall.

According to the oldest *Life of S. David*, his mother was not a nun, but a beautiful maiden, with whom Caereticus, a Welsh prince, fell in love.² She was, according to Baring-Gould, daughter of a petty chief-king of Caer Gaweh, whose castle was on one of those impregnable headlands by St. David's. She brought forth her child in a little

¹ *Lives of the Saints*, Ap. p. 212.

² Borlase, *Age of the Saints*, p. 139.

dwelling near Porth Cleis, on the downs sloping to the cliff. His birth was marked by a thunderstorm, and, the great menhir under which she lay being split asunder by the lightning, one part was whirled aloft and thrown at her feet wet. She leaned her hands on it, and the marks remained, and when a chapel was erected there they used it for the foundation of the altar. S. David was baptized in a well close by.

S. Non seems to have accompanied her son in his travels. Her church of Altarnun, now S. Mary's, by the Bodmin moors, is close to Davidstow, just as the two names occur close together in Wales and Brittany. At Altarnun is S. Nun's Well, into which mad people used to be thrown backwards. She is also commemorated at Bradstone on the Devon bank of the Tamar, and the slab of stone is to be seen on which, the story says, she was martyred by the Druids.

William of Worcester professes to have copied from the Kalendar of the Church of S. Michael the statement: "S. Nonnita, mother of S. David, rests in the church at Alternon . . . where S. David was born."¹

In Brittany she and S. Divy are connected with the district of Lanterneau, and the miracle-play of S. *Nonna* used to be performed annually at her church of Dirinon. The impress of her knees is shown upon the rock there.

S. DAVID

We have seen how the national saint of Wales was born by the granite headland that bears his name. He was educated under S. Iltyd at Caerworgon, and Paulinus in Caermarthenshire. He

¹ Borlase, *Age of the Saints*, p. 140.

then went to the Black Mountains, and lived in a cell where Llanthony Abbey stands. Then, bidden by an angel, he came back to the Vale of Rhos and built a monastery at Mynyw, where St. David's Cathedral was afterwards built. Here he lived a rigorously ascetic life, never tasting meat, and was made an Abbot-bishop. He was with great reluctance brought to the Synod of Brefi in 519, to suppress the Pelagian heresy. "Such was the grace and eloquence with which he spoke that he silenced the opponents, and they were utterly vanquished." The legends told how a white dove descended and rested on his shoulders, and the earth rose beneath him and became a hill, from which his voice resounded as a trumpet. He was then elected Archbishop, but only accepted the dignity on condition that his chair might be moved from Caerleon to the securer retreat where his monastery stood. To this King Arthur agreed, and so Mynyw, that remote fastness, became the chief seat of the Cambrian Church. He died and was buried there soon after the death of Arthur, *circ.* 542. His empty sepulchre stands in the choir of the noble church of St. David's. It is said that his relics were removed to Glastonbury; but recent discoveries make it probable that they were enshrined behind the high altar, where some bones were discovered at the restoration of the lady-chapel, which were buried in the graveyard.

Between S. David's studying with Paulinus and his return to Mynyw comes the story of his journey to Glastonbury to rededicate the church, and how the Lord told him that He had already dedicated it, and so S. David built the chapel at the east end which ever after bore his name.

The monks at Mynyw were bee-keepers, and gave the honey to the sick and poor. A pretty

story tells how the bees were so fond of a monk named Modemnoc, that they followed him to the ship on which he was going to Ireland. He tried to circumvent them, but it was useless. Then S. David gave them his blessing and let them go—and so bees were introduced into Ireland.

"Raise me after Thee!" were S. David's last words. Davidstow and the places connected with S. Non seem the only traces of S. David in Cornwall. There is little difficulty in supposing that he came there and founded a monastery at some period in his long life.

S. CARANTOC

S. Carantoc was son of Corun ab Ceredig, Prince of Cardigan. He is associated in his legend with S. Patrick and King Arthur (fifth century). He joined the former in Ireland "to assist him in the compilation of his Brehon laws." He settled with his disciples in Wales, attended by a white dove which one day seemed to want to guide him. "I will go and see whither the white bird leads," said Carantoc. It led him to a grassy spot in the forest, where he founded the church of Llangrannog in Cardigan.

There was a terrible serpent in the district of Carr, which caused King Arthur trouble. The legend says that a beautiful altar came down to Carantoc from heaven; he was carrying it in a boat over the Severn when it fell overboard. Carantoc knew that God would bear it to its final resting-place. He went to King Arthur and asked if he knew where it was. "Bind me the serpent in Carr, and I will tell you," said the King. Carantoc went to Carr, cast his stole on the serpent, and brought it into the hall of King Arthur, where

his knights were feasting, and, after feeding it, let it go, bidding it do no more harm. Arthur gave him the altar, which had been washed ashore, and which he had intended for a table for feasting with his knights. So the altar was set up at Carrow, or Carran. We may suppose that the perfect little church of Crantock, with its series of modern windows illustrating the life of the saint, is the site where the altar was set up. S. Carantoc is said to have died in Ireland.

S. PETROC

The tide is on the turn, and there is scarcely a ripple on the blue surface of the land-locked harbour formed by the estuary of the Camel. The ferry-boat toils slowly across with its freight of gaily-clad visitors, and one or two parties are being rowed about. In the basin shielded by the quays a little fisher-boy is punting his father's boat round and round, with a model ship, all sails set, following in his wake. Fishermen lean on the rails with that happy knack of looking as if they would never do anything again more serious than posing for artists. Out of the station the train steals dreamily away, the smoke from the engine hangs in the still air against the hillside like a long Elizabethan ruff, and slowly vanishes away. Up from the quay rise jumbled buildings, stone, brick, discoloured stucco in admirable confusion. And around the broad inlet of the harbour rises the amphitheatre of the sloping fields, reaching to the horizon, rich yellow corn, green roots, with here and there a glorious flash of mustard, while the sheep, reddish specks on the hillside, nibble peacefully.

This is a picture of Padstow Harbour some summer's evening to-day, and it was into these

same waters that S. Petroc sailed in his hide-covered wicker-boat somewhere about A.D. 550. He had come from Ireland with three companions, Croidan, Medan, and Dagan, imbued like himself with the insatiable love of missionary roaming that characterized the Celtic saints. But he was never regarded as an Irishman. Leland, quoting from his legend, extant in his time, says: "He was by birth a Camber; studied twenty years in Ireland; returned to his monastery in Cornwall, and died there." The Welsh *Bonedd y Saint* make him the son of a Cornish prince, and he is also ranked among the Welsh saints as the uncle of the great saint-king Cadoc. We shall probably be safest in regarding him as a Welshman, who had studied in Ireland, then the centre of Western learning.

There seems to have been a settlement where Padstow now stands. It was called Loderic, or Laffenac. Petroc seems to have landed a little above it by the mouth of the Little Petherick River, and according to Ussher fixed his first monastic settlement there. Padstow seems to be a corruption of Petrockstowe. In 1291 it is known as "the Old Stow," and in 1349 Padstow or Petrockstowe. But long before then Petroc had become associated with Bodmin, where it is supposed he made his final settlement. It seems probable that either he, or his monks after him, moved farther inland to be more secure from the attacks of pirates. All this is very misty, but the places round Padstow fit in very well with the legends of Petroc.

The story says that, on landing, he asked some harvesters for water, that they rudely told him to get it for himself, and that he struck his staff upon the ground and a spring welled forth. Then there

is the tale that he inhabited a cell near Bodmin, which was vacated for him by a certain Goron, who is said to have come over with S. Piran. He reappears in the dedication of the parish of St. Goran. But this would have to be after some time spent nearer Padstow.

A Samson also had a cell near by, somewhere near the site of Prideaux Place, which used to have a chapel dedicated to him. This hermit is supposed by some to have been the great S. Samson of Dol, and there is no chronological reason why he should not have been there just then, waiting till the time was ripe for him to go to Brittany. On S. Petroc's arrival he departed, according to the story, leaving the neighbourhood free for the labours of his friend.

We may think, then, of Petroc somewhere by the Little Petherick River, gathering his monks around him, and, according to the ascetic practice of the time, reciting his Psalter sitting up to his neck in the water, and living on "bread and water, with porridge on Sundays." There is no reason to be sceptical about the story of Constantine, which at any rate is a pretty one. This monarch, prince, or landowner—it is doubtful if it is the same Constantine, who was son of Cador, Duke of Cornwall, and the proto-martyr of Scotland—was hunting, when the stag he was pursuing took refuge at Petroc's feet. At first, in fury, he was about to murder the saint, but his body became rigid, and he was unable to harm him. He repented of his many sins, and decided to sever himself from the world, and to retire to a cell on the sands not far off, which is now represented by the ruined walls of the Church of S. Constantine. This is one of those stories which contain, at any rate, the truth that good and holy men very often have a won-

derful power of winning the confidence of dumb animals.

The fourteenth-century Life of the saint, by John of Tynemouth, is full of marvels, but is based on the old Life as given in the *Acta Sanctorum*. According to this, after thirty years in Cornwall, he went to Rome and Jerusalem, and thence to India. There, on the seashore, he embarked in a shining bowl, which bore him to an island, where he lived for seven years on a fish which never diminished in size. The bowl then carried him back to India, where he found a wolf guarding the staff and sheepskin that he had left behind. The wolf became his trusty companion. It is evident, as Mr. Baring-Gould points out, that the writer of this fable was weaving a web of ancient folk-lore, the sources of which can only be imagined. S. Petroc, he thinks, has usurped the honoured place of the man in the moon. There are also stories of his slaying a dragon on his return to Britain, and curing a woman who had eaten an egg which had developed into a great reptile within her.

Such mediæval extravagances do not make Petroc himself unhistorical, or his connection with Padstow and Bodmin mythical: they only show the great veneration inspired by his memory, and the importance of the ecclesiastical foundation that traced its early beginnings to his borrowed cell.

Petroc died at Padstow, and his body was transferred to Bodmin, where it was preserved in an ivory casket. These relics have their story. A Breton became Canon of Bodmin about the middle of the twelfth century, and in the year 1177 successfully carried them off to the monastery of S. Mewan in his own country. This caused such a scandal that King Henry II had to insist on

their being restored. This was done by a certain Ronald de Dinan shortly after. The relics no longer exist, but the ivory casket which contained them was accidentally discovered, and is preserved in the municipal buildings at Bodmin.

The following churches in Cornwall and Devon are dedicated to S. Petroc: Bodmin, Padstow, Little Petherick (St. Petroc Minor), and Trevalga: in Devon there are West Anstey, South Brent, Clannaborough, St. Petrock in Exeter, Hollacombe, Lidford, and Newton St. Petrock.

S. KEA

The tower of Old Kea Church remains on the western bank of the Truro River before it passes into King Harry's Reach. Insane people used to be chained to a stone inside the church in days gone by.¹ The modern church is near Truro.

S. Kea, or S. Kay, the S. Quay of Brittany, was one of the Welsh saints of the early sixth century, and closely associated with the Arthurian legends.

The full Celtic charm hangs over the story of his journeying to Cornwall and Armorica. When a monk in Wales, he dreamed that he must take a bell and go to Rosynys, and that the bell would ring of itself when he arrived at his mysterious destination. He procured a bell from Gildas and set out for the unknown, like so many of his fellows. Landkey in Devon seems to have been one of his resting-places, but this was not Rosynys, so he had to go on and crossed the Tamar. He came at last to the estuary called Hirdraeth, and in sheer weariness lay down on the grass by the mouth of the Fal. While he lay there a man

¹ Borlase, *Age of the Saints*, p. 100.

came up, and shouted across the stream to another on the opposite bank asking if he had seen anything of his cows. "Yes," was the answer, "I saw them yesterday at Rosynys." Kea leapt up at the words, and went down to the bank, struck a rock that brought forth a spring of water, sated his thirst, and crossed the river. There was a wood on the other side, where he built himself an oratory. Then the bell began to ring of itself, and he was sure he had reached Rosynys, where he was to settle.

Tewdric, or Tewdwr, the tyrant and oppressor of the early saints, had his court at Gudrun hard by. He carried off the saint's cattle, and, as in the case of S. Neot, seven stags came and voluntarily took their place at the plough. Tewdric struck S. Kea, and knocked out his teeth, and the saint bathed his face in a spring, that ever after was used by sufferers from toothache.

At last S. Kea determined to escape to Armorica. But he had to arrange with the merchant from whom he was to procure corn for the journey, and agree to take with him a heavy barge lying at Landegu. The saint threw a rope from his boat to the barge and towed it down the Fal and across the sea to Brittany.

He made his home at Cleder in Léon, and founded a monastery. He is also a patron of St. Quay near Lannion, and originally of St. Quay near St. Malo.

He is said to have returned to Britain at the time of King Arthur's battles with the pagans and the traitor Mordred. He visited Gwenever after the death of Arthur, and persuaded her to repent and dedicate her life to God in a nunnery. Then he returned to Brittany, was present at the death-bed of his friend S. Kerian, and died at Cleder.

Rosynys is, of course, the Roseland of to-day.

S. SAMSON

Mgr. Duchesne ascribes the earliest Life of S. Samson to the seventh century.¹ It claims to have been written by one who had been a pupil at Llantwit Major, where Samson was himself educated, and to contain the evidence of the deacon Henoeh, a cousin of the saint, which had come down from Samson's mother.

He was the son of Amwyn Dhu, an Armorican chief, who went to Wales in the days of S. Dubricius and S. Iltyd. His mother's name was Anna, and she had a dream that her child would be seven times more precious than the three bars of silver her husband had presented to the church because of her previous barrenness. A pupil in the great school of Iltyd, Samson had to be dissuaded from asceticism by the saint. "My little son," said he, "it is not proper that you should injure the health of your small body in its early bloom by severe abstinence." He cured a monk who had been bitten by an adder, when the boys were winnowing corn, by applying oil to the sting. He was ordained deacon by S. Dubricius, and, as Samson knelt before him, the Bishop saw a white pigeon fly in through the window of the church, flutter about his head, and then settle on Samson's shoulder; it remained there during the ordination and the Mass that followed. There seems to have been no miracle here: it was probably, as Mr. Baring-Gould thinks, a pigeon that Samson had made friends with.

There was a plot in the monastery to make away with Samson. The Abbot's nephews, one of whom

¹ *Fastes*, vol. ii. p. 381, n. 2. But see R. Fawtier, *La Vie de Saint Samson*, p. 75.

hoped to succeed him, were alarmed by the young deacon's growing eminence, and thought he was likely to oust them. One of them was the butler of the brethren, and, when he made the usual cooling drink of herbs, he put some poison into Samson's cup. He drank the deadly potion unharmed, although the monastery cat, which had lapped some of it up, died at once. When he became a priest Samson retired to an island every day to an anchorite named Piro. There he occupied himself with hard work, and in the evening lit his lantern and retired to his cell for study and meditation.

When Anwryn, his father, fell ill, he sent for his son. At first he refused to go, but, being rebuked by Piro, he set out, with a deacon for companion, for his father's palace. They had to pass through a forest, where their superstitious fears were moved by the strange noises and the gloom. A wild woman with a huge boar-spear suddenly appeared in their path. Samson's companion galloped away on his horse, was thrown, and became unconscious. Samson, knowing the woman to be an incarnation of evil, bade her restore his friend to life. As she was unable to do so, he killed her. Then he restored his friend to consciousness, and they went on their way.

On his son's arrival Anwryn confessed his sins and determined to dedicate himself and all the rest of his family to God in monastic life. There was a little daughter. "She is given up to the world's pomps and pleasures," said Samson, foreseeing her future; "nevertheless, let her be suckled, for she is a human being."

On his return Samson became cellarer. This did not please the monks. They accused him of giving away the honey from the jars. But, when

Iltyd examined them, they were proved to be full.

Next we hear of Piro's sad end. He was returning to his cell on the island one night, and, being very drunk, fell into a well. He was hauled out, but died from his injuries. S. Iltyd made the monks, who lived on the island, elect Samson to be their Abbot. He found it such a difficult task to reform their drunken habits that, within two years, he gave it up in despair, went over to Ireland, and then returned for a time and lived in a cave on the Severn.

One night he dreamed in his cave that S. Peter, S. James, and S. John appeared to him and consecrated him Bishop in due form. When this was told to Dubricius it was believed, and, together with two assistant-bishops, Samson ruled a see in Wales.

His next vision occurred when he was saying Mass one Easter night. A tall man appeared to him and bade him go to Armorica. It must be assumed that, if he visited Cornwall he must have done so now on his way to Brittany; but many of the legends confuse events that happened in the two Briton lands. He would have landed at Padstow with his books and vestments, which eventually accompanied him to Armorica.

M. Fawtier and Mr. Taylor place the scene of the story of the idol in Cornwall, Mr. Baring-Gould in Brittany. The earliest Life would seem to support the former view. The saint was sojourning at Docco (St. Kew), and was in the hundred of Trigg one day, when he came upon some men performing idolatrous worship "at a certain shrine, after the custom of the Bacchantes, by means of a play in honour of an image." This seems to have been a foul and indecent emblem. Samson,

with two of the brethren, approached the chief, whose name was Gwedian, and gently rebuked him. He pleaded in excuse that it was a time-honoured ancestral festival. While the others began an uproar, a lad who was riding at full speed in the same field was thrown from his horse, and lay motionless with his head twisted under him.

S. Samson seized the opportunity. "You see," he said, "that your image is not able to give aid to the dead man. But, if you will promise that you will utterly destroy this idol, and no longer adore it, I, with God's assistance, will bring the dead man to life." They agreed. He prayed over him for two hours, and in the end delivered him to them safe and sound. Then they bowed down to him, and utterly destroyed the idol. The narrator of the story professes to have seen the cross that the saint engraved upon a part of it, or upon some stone that was near. Many interesting deductions about the pagan stone-worship of the time are drawn from the story, which seems to have the ring of substantial truth.

At Dol, where he settled, Samson was involved in the political life of the period. A usurper named Commor had killed Jonas, prince of that part of Brittany, and sent his son Judael to King Childebert at Paris. The saint went to Paris to beg the King to restore him to his possessions, which he succeeded in doing, in spite of the opposition of Ultrogotha, Childebert's queen.

According to the Welsh accounts, Samson returned to Llantwit Major and died there. There are two stone crosses at Llantwit, the inscriptions stating that one is the cross of Iltyd and Samson, and that Samson erected it for his soul, and that the other was prepared by Samson for his soul, and for those of Judael and Arthmael. These in-

scriptions are probably of later date; but, knowing the restlessness of the Welsh saints, it is quite likely that Samson retired to his old haunts to die. This probably took place about A.D. 565, S. Samson having taken part in a Council at Paris in 557.

S. MADERN

Madern, the patron of Madron, is an unknown saint as the name stands; but Mr. Borlase and Mr. Taylor would identify him with S. Padarn or S. Paternus. Thus Madron would be the Cornish equivalent of the Welsh Llanbadan.

As is explained by Mr. Baring-Gould, following M. de la Borderie, there were three saints named Paternus: one a Bishop of Vannes, another a Bishop of Avranches, both in the fifth century, and a third the Welsh S. Padarn, of the sixth century, a cousin of S. Samson, who probably never left Britain.

The eleventh-century chronicler combines what he knows of all three in the Life which makes S. Paternus successively founder of Llanbadan and Bishop of Vannes. If the sixth-century Padarn migrated from Wales to Cornwall, we can, with Mr. Baring-Gould, imagine him settling at North and South Petherwyn, on the borders of the country, where, as he points out, it would be possible for the amusing incident to have happened during Samson's stay in Cornwall of his impulsively rushing out to greet him with only one shoe and stocking on. The Holy Well and Chapel at Madron would be an enduring memorial of his presence in the extreme West, where, as is supposed, its importance as a place of pilgrimage ousted the original patron of the church, for Madron was probably originally Landithy; this ancient chapel and well is, with the chapels of Gwythian

and Perran-zabuloe, in all probability the only remnant of the Celtic Church. It was used up to the Reformation, and even as late as 1640 there is a record of an extraordinary cure in its hallowed waters of a lad who could not walk.

S. MAWES

The ancient borough of S. Mawes is a fishing-town north of Falmouth in the parish of St. Just-in-Roseland. There was a chapel here that was desecrated after the Reformation, and a new chapel-of-ease was built for the place in the last century. Leland (*temp.* Henry VIII) says: 'There is a chapelle of him and his chaire of stone a little without and his well; they call this saint there S. Mal; he was a Bishop in Brittany, and was painted as a scholmaster.'

S. Mawes was the tenth son of an Irish King, and as such was dedicated to God. As Cornish tradition regarded him as Welsh, it is probable that he and S. Tudy reached Cornwall by way of Wales. He is supposed to have come thither to escape the Saxons, and to have established himself on a rock at the mouth of the Fal, where he caused a miraculous fountain to spring forth, and carved a stone chair. The well is still used, and one side of the legendary chair of S. Mawes may be seen in the wall of a house.

The story of the seal tells how his followers, who used to gather round the chair of their master to meditate on his teaching, were interrupted by the rude behaviour of a big seal, who constantly came and distracted their attention by his gambols and noises. The saint hurled a stone at it, tradition says, which still remains lodged on the top of the

Black Rocks more than half-way across Falmouth Harbour.

When S. Mawes left Cornwall he stayed in the Isle of St. Maudez (l'Île Modez), which bears his name, and founded a monastery. Once, when the fire went out, he sent a brother named Bodmael over to the mainland at low tide to fetch some. A cottager gave him some red-hot coals on condition that he carried them in his lap. This was nothing to a sixth-century saint. But, as he was on his way back, the tide rose, and his life was in danger. Then S. Mawes prayed, and a rock rose under his feet, which rose with him as the tide rose, and the coals remained dry.

S. Materiana, patron of Tintagel and Minster, may have been Madrun, daughter of Inyr, King of a part of Monmouthshire, round Caer-Went. Inyr and his wife Vortimer had welcomed S. Tathan here, and allowed him to build a monastery.

Madrun's sister Anna was the mother of S. Non, the mother of S. David. She and her handmaid Anhun are said to have retired from the world in a retreat in Merionethshire, where she founded the church of Trawsfynydd.

S. COLLEN

S. Collen, the patron of Colan, near Padstow, and also of Llangollen in North Wales, and Llangollen near Quimper, was a Welsh saint of the seventh century. His Life in Welsh is full of imaginative absurdities. He was called upon to be the Christian champion in the wars of Julian the Apostate against a Pagan Goliath named Bras, the condition being that those on the side of the vanquished should embrace the religion of the conqueror in the duel. He bruised his arm in the

first encounter, but Bras chivalrously gave him a box of ointment, which he used and threw into a river. He then felled Bras to the ground, who was converted and baptized, together with "the whole Greek nation."

After this he was Abbot of Glastonbury for a time, and then went about preaching. Then he lived probably on Glastonbury Tor, and was conducted one day to the fairy court of Gwyn ab Nudd, King of Annwyn, or the Under-world, by a messenger. He took his holy water with him and found a glorious royal castle with musicians, soldiers, courtiers, fair maidens, and every kind of luxury. The King on his gold throne invited him to partake of a grand feast. "I will not eat of the leaves of the trees," said Collen, and sprinkled holy water on the knights in their red and gold attire, and they all vanished, leaving only the green hillocks. In all this we see how the Celtic folk-lore was worked into the lives of the saints.

S. BRIOCH

This saint is the patron of S. Brieuc in Brittany. He was probably a Welshman, but nothing of any importance is known about his life.

S. GULVAL

S. Gudwall, or Gulval, was especially venerated at Ghent, where his relics repose in the monastery at Blandinbergh. He was born in Wales in the seventh century, and, after ordination and consecration as Bishop, retired to a seaside cave with a disciple. This cave was open to all the fury of the waves, and the legend tells how he prayed that God would form a barrier for him, and that

the fish came with grains of sand in their mouths and piled them up, until a breakwater was formed.

When companions came and joined him he built seven boats, and transported them all to the place near Penzance which bears his name, where he founded a church and monastery.

III

NATIVE SAINTS

GERAINT AND HIS FAMILY

THE especially Cornish saints are practically grouped in one family, that of Geraint, Gerennius, or Gerrans. The Geraint with whom we are concerned was the son of Erbin, who is perhaps identical with S. Ervan, and the grandson of a Constantine (*circ.* 460), King of Devon and Cornwall. It must be noted that there were several Geraints and Constantines. This was the Geraint of the *Mabinogion*, who married Enid, having reinstated her father, whose kingdom had been usurped. And of course he is the hero, and Enid the heroine, of one of the most touching of the *Idylls of the King*. He is the typical warrior-saint, and he uses his powers in stemming the tide of the Saxon pressure on the West. He fell "in battle, fighting for the blameless king," in 522, at Llongborth, probably Langport in Somersetshire. A great poem was composed to his memory by the bard Llywarch Hîn, of which Mr. Baring-Gould gives these stanzas:

In Llongborth I saw the rage of slaughter,
And biers beyond all number,
And red-stained men from the assault of Geraint.

In Llongborth I saw the edges of blades in contact,
Men in terror, and blood upon the pate,
Before Geraint, the great son of his father.

In Llongborth Geraint was slain,
A brave man from the region of Dyvnaint,
And before they were overpowered, they committed
slaughter.

The church of Gerrans is said to have been founded by him, and the mound on Veryan or Carn Beacon is traditionally his tomb. He was supposed to be buried there in a golden boat with silver oars. Excavations in 1855 resulted in the discovery of the remains of a still earlier prehistoric chief in a stone chest.

Geraint had five sons, of whom Cyngar, Jestyn, and Selyf, or Solomon, bore the name of "saint." Cyngar's name appears in Congresbury in Somerset, and in a chapel and well at Llantwit. Borlase suggests¹ that St. Just-in-Roseland, so near to Gerrans, may really have this Jestyn for its patron. Selyf's son by Gwen, aunt of S. David, was Keby or Cuby, locally known as Kubby, who seems for a part of his life to have been an abbot-bishop at Caerbygi, or Holyhead in Anglesey. Cuby in Cornwall bears his name, and he is patron of Duloe, where he has a holy well. He is supposed in his legend to have journeyed to Jerusalem, and to have returned home with ten disciples, having been consecrated Bishop on the way by S. Hilary. Baring-Gould thinks it more probable that he went to Wales. Yet we have early evidence of the presence of Britons in the Holy Land. He settled near a place called Edelygion, perhaps Tregony, then a flourishing seaport, and by his miracles converted Etelic, the prince of the district. His brother, S. Melyan, and his nephew, S. Melor, both commemorated as founders of Cornish churches, were murdered by Rivold, his sister's husband, and this led to his departure for Ireland. He spent four

¹ Borlase, *Age of the Saints*, p. 161.

years in the Isle of Aran, which was a gathering-place of the saints—S. Kieran of Clonmacnois, S. Brendan, the two S. Finniains, and S. Kevin are said to have been there.

Many quaint legends are told of his sojourn at Aran. He had great contests with Crubthir Fintan, who eventually succeeded in compelling him to depart in a boat without a skin-covering. He is celebrated as the devoted friend of S. Elian, who had been his master, and S. Seiriol. The places where they met are traditionally sacred. "Midway between Caer-gybi and Seiriol's chapel at Priestholm, near Beaumaris, there are two wells, the meeting-place of Seiriol the Fair and Cybi the Brown. These names were given because, in their weekly journeys to and from the well, Cuby always faced the sun travelling eastward in the morning and westward in the evening, whereas Seiriol always journeyed with his back to the sun."

IV

A SAXON SAINT

S. NEOT

THERE is no pleasanter excursion in Cornwall than that to St. Neots. From the little station of Doublebois a walk of three miles through woods, with a little stream singing by your side, brings you to the retired village and the ancient church. You find there a most interesting series of fifteenth-century windows, which suggest many thoughts about the church life of the day, and show how men and women lived and dressed. There is the window put up by the men of the parish, the one put up by the wives, the one put up by the young women, and the one put up by the artist himself, besides many others of earlier and later date. The St. Neot's window gives the chief incidents in the twelfth-century Life of the saint, which of course must have been founded on the early Life mentioned in Asser's *Life of Alfred*. We see S. Neot, according to the later legend, resigning his crown to his younger brother Alfred, and taking the monk's habit at Glastonbury. We see him reciting his office with his feet immersed in his sacred well in the field hard by the church. Here he rescues a doe from the hunter, who gives up his horn to the saint, and becomes a monk himself. Five vignettes tell the fish story, how

an angel told S. Neot that the three fish in the well would never diminish so long as he only took one for his dinner every day, how he fell ill, and sent his lad Barius for the fish, and how Barius took two fish from the well, boiled one and grilled the other, and how S. Neot bade him throw them back into the well, and they both returned to life. Three more give the robber story. The thieves steal S. Neot's oxen, and four stags with branching antlers come and take their place at the plough, driven by a man and a boy; then one of the thieves, astonished at the marvel, brings back the oxen, and enters the monastery with his converted companions. In the last S. Neot at Rome kneels for Pope Martin's blessing.

S. Neot was no doubt closely related to King Alfred, though he was not, as the legend tells, his brother. He was trained as a monk in Glastonbury Abbey, and came to a part of Cornwall called Hamstoke, where there was a Saxon settlement, in order to live a life of retirement and devotion with one companion named Barri. He made his retreat where the church now stands, half a mile from the sacred well. After seven years he went on a journey to Rome, and on his return formed a monastery at St. Neots, being advised by the Pope to forsake the solitary life and evangelize Cornwall. This college of priests is mentioned in *Domesday Book*. King Alfred used to visit his kinsman when hunting in the neighbourhood, and was healed at S. Guerir's shrine of a malady from which he had suffered all his life. S. Guerir seems to have been the original Cornish saint of the district, replaced, as often happened, by the Saxon Neot. But S. Neot seems almost the only instance of a Saxon saint winning the love and veneration of the Cornish. S. Neot is said to have advised

Alfred on important matters, such as the re-establishment of the English school at Rome. He remained Abbot of his monastery until his death on July 31, 877, and was buried in the church he had built on the site of S. Guerir's shrine.¹ His body was translated to the Huntingdon St. Neots, then called Eynesbury, by the direction of Alfred.

¹ Taylor, *Celtic Christianity of Cornwall*, p. 128.

V

SAINTS OF ARMORICA

THE life of S. Germanus of Auxerre was written by Constantius within fifty years of the saint's death. We may therefore rely on its account of the main facts of his life. No mention is made of his presence in Cornwall, but it is not unlikely that he passed through Cornwall from Wales to the Continent.

His two visits to Britain were in 429, and in 448 B.C. On the first occasion he came with S. Lupus of Troyes, as the representative of the Bishops of Gaul, to oppose the heresy of Pelagianism which was spreading in the island. The two visitors went with the British army to repulse an invasion of Picts and Scots, and, having baptized those who were not Christians, Germanus, who had been a soldier of noble family before he was ordained against his will, took the headship of the British, and by means of an artful ambush surprised the army amid cries of "Hallelujah," and thus won a famous victory without losing a man. This battle, of which Bede says nothing beyond what is told by Constantius, is supposed to have taken place at Mold in Cheshire; there is a church dedicated to S. Germanus in the adjoining parish. On his second visit the incident of the swineherd Ketelus is supposed to have occurred. He was

the swineherd of the King of Powys, and received the Bishop and his companion in his poor home, when the King turned them away in contempt. S. Germanus deposed the King, and put Ketelus in his place. He is also said to have rebuked King Vortigern for his licentious life, and to have received from his son Vortimer the land where Vortigern reviled him. This was at Builth, and there is a church of S. Germanus there. On his way back he threw himself in the way of a savage German King, who had been sent by the Roman general in Gaul to repress a Breton revolt. He moved him to mercy by his entreaties, and proceeded to Ravenna to lay the case of the Bretons before the Emperor Valentinian III. It was at Ravenna, where he was received with great honour, that he died in 448. His body was carried back to France, and was met on the other side of the Alps by the sorrowing clergy of Auxerre, over whom he had ruled for thirty years. His shrine was demolished by the Huguenots in 1567.

It is claimed by a Cornish MS., probably of the ninth century, that he preached in Cornwall.¹

S. PAUL OF LÉON

S. Paul of Léon was a pupil of S. Iltud at Llantwit Major along with S. Samson. He retired with other young men to a wild part of Brittany when only sixteen. He was invited by a prince named Mark to evangelize his people. So he settled for a time at Vannes with twelve priests. Later on he wished to go back to solitude, and before he went asked the prince to give him a bell. "For at that time it was customary for kings to have

¹ Baring-Gould, *Life of the Saints*, July, p. 690.

seven bells rung before they sat down to meat." His request was refused, and it was many years before Paul became the possessor of a bell. When a fisherman found one on the seashore and brought it to him, he smiled and said that, though Mark had refused him one, God had now sent it after years of waiting.

His sister lived in a small community on an island in Morbihan. It was rough and inconvenient for landing. She begged him to pray that it might be extended with a sloping shore. So they prayed together, and the sands rose where the sea had been, and the sister laid pebbles along the path to the recovered land, and they grew up into the rude pillars which mark the road of S. Paul to-day.

He stayed for some time in Ouessant, that rugged island by Finistère, and afterwards moved to the territories of Count Withur, and settled in the Isle of Batz. He taught the people to hive bees, and to keep pigs. Withur sent him with a letter to his overlord, King Childebert, at Paris. It contained a request to appoint Paul Bishop of Léon. So he was consecrated, very much against his will, by a kind of artifice, and lived to a great age, laying aside the work of the see before his death.

His church beyond Newlyn, by a little inland stream, was raided and burned by Spaniards on July 23, 1595, with "toure, bells, and all things pertaining to the same," and the two first entries in the register record the burial of two parishioners killed by Spaniards. This raid was repaid next year by the siege and capture of Cadiz. The church was rededicated to S. Paulinus of York in 1336, and the fabric no doubt, with the exception of the tower, which is later, belongs to that date.

S. CURY

The close association of Cornwall and Brittany is shown in the dedication of S. Cury, with its tall granite cross with wheel-head. S. Cury is Corentin, the first Bishop of Quimper, in Brittany, famous for its wonderful Pardon in August, and holiday-fair. He lived in the fifth century, and the ancient legends for his festival are extremely naïve. The legend of the fish is similar to that in the life of the Saxon Neot, and illustrates the common stock of ideas drawn upon by the later story-tellers. This miraculous fish lived in a pool close to the hermitage at the foot of Mont Saint-Côme. It was a case of "cut and come again," for, however many meals Corentin sliced from it, it always recovered before he needed food again. It enabled him to be hospitable as well, for when King Grallo lost his way hunting, and arrived hungry at the hermitage, the slice that Corentin cut from the back of the fish, though the King's cook ridiculed its small size, proved enough for all who sat down. The King was introduced to the fish after dinner, and it was quite intact. But when one of the royal retinue cut a slice from it, the wound refused to heal, till the saint exercised his craft, and bade it retire into solitude to escape the dangers of popularity. The King presented the forest and district of Plou-Vodiern to the saint, in return for the hospitality he had so miraculously partaken of, and made Quimper into a bishopric, appointing Corentin Bishop. The saint was present at the Council of Angers in 453.

S. MERIADOC

S. Meriadoc, or Meriasek, is the patron saint of Camborne. He is the hero of the miracle-play of

Beunans Meriasek, the Cornish version of which was written in 1504. He was an important saint in Brittany, and was numbered among the early bishops of Vannes. This M. Loth, however, denies.¹ He was familiarly known in Cornwall as Merry Dokey.

Meriadoc was of the royal family of Conan, and was born early in the seventh century. He lived as a hermit near Pontivy, "where he made it a point of conscience to bend his knee a thousand times a day at the name of God, and as often during the night." Much against his will, according to the legend, he was carried from his cell to be Bishop.

S. WINWALOE

S. Winwaloe falls among the Armorican saints commemorated in Cornwall. His name is preserved in Gunwalloe, and he is also the patron of Landawednack close by. His father was Fragan, cousin of Cado, King of Britain, son of Geraint, who migrated to Armorica about 460, and settled where St. Brieuc now stands. Fragan's wife was Gwen of the three breasts, not the Gwen known in Cornwall as Wenn, who was the wife of Selyf. This Gwen is represented in ecclesiastical sculpture as suckling her three sons, Gwethenoe, Jacut, and Winwaloe at the same time. Winwaloe means "The white, or the beautiful," and he and his brothers were devoted to God in their boyhood, and handed over to the care either of S. Corentin or S. Budock, and they began a religious life in the Isle-Vert.

There is a cross at Lanvengat called "The Cross of the Thousand Sails," which is said to com-

¹ *Les Saints Bretons*, pp. 92, 93.

memorate a great battle in which Fragan and his men defeated an immense army of pirates who attempted to land. "I see a thousand sails," was the cry of Winwaloe, and the victory of Fragan was attributed to the prayers he poured forth. His father used the spoils of the slain to build a monastery called Loc-Christ.

Winwaloe eventually settled at Llandévennec, on the other side of the harbour of Brest, and established a monastery, where he died early in the sixth century. It is not unreasonable to suppose that he established a sister Llandévennec in Cornwall, and had a permanent connection with the district of the Lizard.

His body is preserved at Montreuil-sur-Mer, and his chasuble, alb, and bell are at Antwerp in the Jesuit Church of S. Charles. Blandinbergh, near Ghent, claims also to have the body of a S. Winwaloe. There seem to have been two saints of the name, and their legends are not easy to disentangle.

VI

FOREIGN SAINTS

BESIDES dedications to Scripture saints, saints from Wales, Ireland, and Brittany, and the one or two Saxon saints, there are some churches in Cornwall with dedications to outlandish saints, such as Blasius, Cornelius, or Julitta.

These are in some cases mediæval rededications after the Celtic Church had become thoroughly absorbed in the religious life of England. In such cases the name of a well-known and much-venerated saint was substituted for an obscure local saint, whose name alone remained. Thus Hermes perhaps took the place of S. Erme, and S. Ervan. But in other cases there may have been a direct intention of getting rid of the Celtic saints as much as possible.

Mr. Borlase lays stress, however, on the Breton and Gallic character of many of these saints. They were the popular saints of Gaul, and, owing to the close ecclesiastical association of Cornwall and Brittany, they made their own way naturally across the Channel—that is to say, we need not regard them as forced upon the Celt, except in a few cases, by a Romanized Anglo-Norman Church. "They are not," he says, "the ordinary saints of the Roman Calendars,¹ though some of them may appear there, but they *are* the ordinary saints of

¹ *Age of the Saints*, p. 177.

Gallic Martyrologies and the Breton litanies of the tenth century."

It will suffice here merely to give the usual explanations about the bearers of names that are often curiously distorted, remembering that some of them may be ignorant corruptions of obscure Celtic names. To give the details of their legends is hardly necessary.

SYMPHORIAN (A.D. 180), patron of Veryan and Forrabury, was a youthful martyr in the persecution of Marcus Aurelius at Autun in Gaul.

HERMES (second century), a martyr in Rome under Hadrian.

COLUMBA, patron of the two S. Columbs, was a Virgin Martyr at Senus in Gaul under Aurelian.

BLASIUS, patron of St. Blazey, and of Woolcombers, is, according to Borlase, not S. Blaise, but an Armenian martyr (A.D. 316).

Ivo, patron of St. Ives, a fictitious Persian saint.

GENESIUS, patron of St. Gennis. Of Auvergne in the seventh century.

HELENA, patron of Helland. Perhaps the mother of Constantine.

JUSTUS, patron of St. Just. Perhaps the companion of S. Augustine.

MARCELLIANA. May be Marcellina, sister of S. Ambrose. She is associated with S. Materiana at Tintagel.

CORNELIUS, patron of Cornelly. Probably Pope Cornelius, who died A.D. 252.

PROTASIUS, patron of Blisland. Perhaps a Bishop of Milan (fourth century).

PROBUS and GRACE are regarded by Borlase as foreign, but by Baring-Gould (*Lives of Saints*, vol. xvi. p. 201) as Cornish saints.

JULITTA, patron of St. Juliot and Lanteglos,

and with CYRIACUS, of Luxulyan. They were martyrs under Diocletian.

DIONYSIUS, patron of St. Denys. Martyred under Aurelian.

EUSTACHIUS, patron of St. Ewe. Martyred under Hadrian.

FELICITAS (perhaps patron of St. Phillack). A martyr under Antoninus Pius.

GEORGE, patron of Treneglos. Martyr under Diocletian.

CLARUS, patron of St. Clare, Apostle of Aquitaine in the first century.

"Other names, such as Augustine (chapel in Dewstow, etc.), Gregory, Clement, etc., might come from any source, and are probably as late as the more important calendar saints, as also are dedications of chapels to SS. Nicholas, Francis, Leonard etc." ¹

¹ W. C. Borlase, *The Age of the Saints*, note, p. 178.