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ON THE BOUNDARIES THAT SEPARATED THE WELSH AND ENGLISH RACES DURING THE 75 YEARS WHICH FOLLOWED THE CAPTURE OF BATH, A.D. 577; WITH SPECULATIONS AS TO THE WELSH PRINCES, WHO DURING THAT PERIOD WERE REIGNING OVER SOMERSETSHIRE.

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SOME years back I laid before the Institute¹ certain opinions I had been led to form, with reference to the districts respectively occupied by the Welsh and English races subsequently to the Treaty of the Mons Badonicus. I would now call attention to the boundaries that separated the two races at another important epoch of our history, I mean after the settlement which necessarily followed the battle fought at Deorham, A. D. 577. This battle was one of those events which change the fortunes of a people. It led, as we learn from the Chronicle, to the surrender of the three great cities of Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath; and must have left our ancestors in quiet possession of the whole basin of the Severn—at least, on this side of the river—from the walls of Bath to the woodlands of Arden. The Welshmen living south of Bath seem to have come early into an arrangement with the conquerors, but we know that these restless soldiers were carrying on their desolating inroads in other directions for several years afterwards. The following entry refers to one of these inroads.

“A. 584. Now Ceawlin and Cutha fought with the Brits at the place that is called Fethanleah, and there Cutha was

¹ Vid. “The early English Settlements in South Britain.” Salisbury Volume, Arch. Institute, p. 28.

slain, and Ceawlin took many towns and countless booty, and angry (yrre) he returned to his own country."

The Chronicle does not disclose to us any ground for Ceawlin's anger, and I can only account for the existence of such a feeling on the supposition that he considered the check he received at Fethanleah to be owing to some misconduct on the part of his own officers. This hypothesis may help us to an explanation of the following entries :

"A. 590. Now Ceol reigned 5 years."

"A. 591. Now was there great slaughter at Wodnes beorh and Ceawlin was driven out."

From Malmesbury we learn that on this occasion both Englishmen and Britons conspired against him, De Gestis, 1, 2; and from the Appendix to Florence we further learn, that among the rebels was his own nephew Ceol, whom two years previously he had made his viceroy—probably over the newly-conquered districts of the Severn-valley. The disaffection which Ceawlin's harshness had left behind him in that neighbourhood may have furnished the inducement which tempted the nephew to rebel against his benefactor: we are expressly told "*immerito rebellavit.*" Flor. App.

As Ceawlin's defeat is an incident of some importance in this inquiry, it will not be amiss to dwell awhile on the circumstances that attended it.

Wodnes beorh was not merely celebrated as the scene of Ceawlin's defeat. In the long struggle for supremacy between Wessex and Mercia, after the latter had advanced its frontiers to Cirencester, it was always at Wodensburgh that the kings of Wessex stood on their defence. Yet the situation of this important post has not yet been determined. According to Sir R. C. Hoare, it was at Woodborough, south of the Wansdyke, though he also tells us that there is a place called Wanborough;² according to a suggestion of the editors of the Mon. Hist. Brit.,³ it may have been at "Wemborow?"—a place I am unacquainted with; according to Mr. Thorpe, the place is undetermined;⁴ while Lappenberg⁵ thinks there may have been a temple of Woden at Wodensburgh, and that it was with special

² North Wilts, p. 16 n.

³ Mon. Hist. Brit. p. 305.

⁴ Flor. Wig. Chron. 9. Hist. Society's

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⁵ Lapp. Hist. of Engl., Thorpe's Transl.

i. 263.

reference to such temple that the kings of Wessex took post there. As there is so much in our early history which must ever remain uncertain, we ought not to leave unsettled any question that really admits of settlement. The place is beyond all question Wanborough, near Swindon.

I have observed elsewhere that names of places which, in the Anglo-Saxon times, took what may be termed the genitival form, not unfrequently appear as simple compounds a few centuries later. Thus in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, I should expect to find, instead of Wodens burgh the simple compound *Woden-burgh*;⁶ and Wanborough would be the modern corruption of *Woden-burgh*, just as Wansdyke is the modern corruption of Wodens dyke,⁷ and Wensday (the ordinary pronunciation of Wednesday) is the modern corruption of Woden's day. Here, then, we have identity of *name*, and that it indicates identity of *place*, will hardly be doubted by any one who casts his eye over the map, and sees all the great highways of Wessex converging to a point in the neighbourhood of this village. When posted at Wanborough, the king of Wessex had Roman roads whereby to communicate with Winchester and Old Sarum, the capitals of his two principal shires, while another Roman road came to him from Silchester through the heart of Berkshire, and the Icknield Street brought him the men of the Chiltern, and adjacent parts of Oxfordshire. It was neither to protect nor to be protected by any Temple of Woden, that he took post at Woden's burgh. A military necessity fixed him there; it was the key of Wessex.

At Wanborough, then—as it were in the threshold of his house—Ceawlin prepared for the final struggle. After a reign of more than thirty years, and conquests such as no

⁶ Aubrey, in his *Mon. Brit.*, actually calls Wanborough by this name.

⁷ I have ever considered this word as exhibiting the true etymology of Wansdyke. Vide *Salisbury Vol. Arch. Institute*, p. 28 n. From some expressions that occur in Mr. Scarth's paper on "The Course of the Wansdyke," *Som. Arch. J.* vol. vii. part 2, p. 16, a hasty reader might be led to infer, that I adopted Stukeley's etymology, which every Saxon scholar must repudiate.

It is a speculation of Grimm, in which he is followed by Kemble, *Sax. in Engl. i.*

52 and 343, that Woden, like *Mercurius*, was the God of boundaries. The Latin *Mercurius*, the Greek *Hermes*, and his prototype the *Saramaya* of the Sanscrit hymns were all of them supposed to have the superintendence of boundaries, and as they all three presided over the planet Mercury, with which our own Woden was connected, it is a reasonable conjecture, that Woden is the English representative of these divinities, and as such partook of their attributes. This hypothesis will account for the names both of Wanborough and of Wansdyke.

other English king could boast of, he had to meet revolted subjects in alliance with the people he had so often vanquished. The English settlers of the Severn-valley, with their Welsh confederates, must have advanced, like the Mercians at a later period, along the Roman road leading from Cirencester ; and after one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles recorded in our annals, Ceawlin was defeated. Two years afterwards he died in exile.

After such a defeat, Wessex must have been long in a state of weakness and prostration, but it had recovered its former power, when A.D. 643, Cenwall became its king. His repudiation of his wife, the sister of Penda King of Mercia, the invasion of Wessex by that monarch, the expulsion of Cenwall, his conversion to Christianity during his exile, and his return to his kingdom by the aid of his kinsman Cuthred are matters of history, and need not here detain us. It was four years after his return from exile, and in the ninth year of his reign, that he began the career of conquest, which brings him into connection with our present subject.

From Malmesbury we gather, that after the expulsion of Cenwall, the Britons, emboldened it would seem by the opportunity, and ill brooking the condition to which they had been reduced, made attempts to throw off the supremacy of Wessex.⁸ The steps by which Cenwall re-asserted English dominion, and effected the final subjugation of the Britons in the north of Somersetshire, are recorded in the following entries of the Chronicle.

"A. 652. Now Cenwall fought at Bradan ford (Bradford) by Avon.

"A. 658. Now Cenwall fought against the Weals at the Pens (æt Peonnum), and drove them to the Pedride (Parret)."

It will be seen that the Chronicle does not mention the enemy with whom Cenwall fought at Bradford. But we know of no enemy he was engaged with after his return from exile but the Welsh, and it would be difficult to say what other adversary he could encounter in that locality.⁹

⁸ De Gestis, i. 2.

⁹ There would not be room for doubt on the subject, but for the expression of Ethelwerd, "*bellum gessit civile*." Little

weight, however, is due to the statements of this writer at any time ; and his ignorance is more than usually conspicuous in this part of his narrative.

The battle "at the Pens" must have made the whole of Somersetshire north of Selwood English ground, and the Welsh, who up to the period when Cenwalh began his conquests, had been living in the neighbourhood of Bath, must either have retired southwards, or been absorbed in the English population which followed the tide of conquest. We have to inquire what were the boundaries which separated the Welshmen of this district from their English neighbours during the interval that elapsed between the conquests of Ceawlin and these later conquests of his successor Cenwalh.

It was for a long time, and I believe it still is¹ the prevalent opinion among our antiquaries, that the Wansdyke was the southern boundary of Ceawlin's conquests. The doubts I had long entertained as to the correctness of this opinion were strengthened on reading the account of the survey of the Wansdyke which Sir R. C. Hoare has given us in his work on North Wiltshire. After tracing the dyke over certain meadows to Englishcombe Church, he tells us, "In the two uppermost of these fields, called farther and hither home grounds (Cattle) the ridge is very grand and perfect. At the head of the latter of these grounds I observed another bank and ditch steering towards Wansdyke from the southwest."—North Wilts, p. 25. I took the earliest opportunity that offered itself after reading this passage of examining the bank and ditch referred to, and found them extending the whole length of the hither home ground, alongside of, and merely separated by a hedge from, the lane leading thence to English-batch. The vallum was some 4 feet high, and the ditch was *to the westward*. On leaving the hither home ground the dyke²

He actually mistook the name of the place where the second battle was fought for that of an English king—"Cenualh et Peonna reges bella restaurant Britannos adversus."

¹ The latest notice of the subject I have met with, is contained in a paper written by the Rev. F. Warre, a gentleman who has made the earthworks of the West of England his particular study. He thinks Ceawlin "probably extended his conquest to the coast of the Bristol Channel, somewhere between Portishead and Weston-super-mare." Som. Arch. Jour. 1856 and 1857, part 2, p. 50. At

some point of the coast between these two places, the Wansdyke, according to the generally received opinion, terminated its course.

² The Anglo-Saxon term *dic* was used both as a masculine and as a feminine substantive; and it was a suggestion of Kemble's, that in the former case it might signify the vallum, and in the latter, the foss or ditch. *Dyke* is its modern representative in the north, and *ditch* in the south of England, and our ordinary English employs the first of these words to signify the vallum, and the other the fossa. But in the north *dyke* is used in

crossed the lane and entering a ploughed field was lost. I followed its direction in the hope of finding some other portion of it ; but the season was an unfavourable one, the trees being in full leaf,³ and it was not till I reached Wallsmead some 6 miles south of Bath, that I recovered any traces of the object I was in search of. Eastward of the homestead of this name a stretch of meadow sweeps over a small combe, and then rises to the ridge overlooking the great valley in which lie Medyat and Camerton. Here, just where I had expected to find it, on the very line of watershed separating the drainage of the Frome from that of the Avon, I discovered a fragment of the dyke. It was but a fragment, for the grass land narrowed to a point on reaching the ridge, but though the dyke was on the very verge of the descent into the valley, its ditch was to the westward, and I felt convinced that it formed part of the line of earthwork I had been examining at Englishcombe. A belt of trees that had been planted on it,⁴ was continued some 300 yards into the ploughed field immediately adjoining it to the northward, and I had little doubt that when the belt was planted, the dyke was for the whole of this distance a conspicuous feature in the landscape, and as such gave name to the adjacent pastures.

My search south of Wallsmead was not very successful, as might perhaps have been expected with so little to guide it ; but I examined Wallscombe near Wells with care, and discovered in its neighbourhood, what I believe to be another portion of the dyke. About half a mile west of the picturesque hollow which bears this name of Wallscombe, there is an occupation road leading from Pens-hill farm down to the turnpike road from Wells to Bristol. The lower part of this occupation road passes between high banks covered with gorse. The westward bank is formed by the natural slope of the ground, but that to the eastward is

both these senses, as is *ditch* in our southern counties. A portion of the Fleam-dyke, near Cambridge, is still called "High Ditch" by the peasantry.

³ The proper season for these investigations is the winter, or early spring. A wood which, at such a time, might be satisfactorily explored in half-an-hour, would at another season require a day's searching before it yielded up its secrets.

⁴ The habit of planting rows of trees

along the course of these boundary dykes seems to have been very prevalent during the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth century. It would have been well if the same respect for antiquity had been exhibited by some of our modern landowners. The wanton destruction of these monuments which has been so general during the last ten or fifteen years is certainly not creditable to those who might have prevented it.

evidently artificial, and might be thought at first sight to consist of mere heaps of mud and filth thrown out of the hollow way beneath it for the convenience of passage. But a careful examination convinced me such was not the case; and when I found a little farther on mounds of earth, in a direction where the dyke might pass, and the road did not, I felt satisfied that I had been examining a portion of "the wall," though in a state of much degradation. On Salisbury Plain, Malborough Downs, the Chiltern, and other districts where the surface of the ground has been little disturbed, we frequently find ancient trackways entering into these boundary ditches and running along them, sometimes for considerable distances. Before the inclosure of Pens-hill, now some seventy or eighty years ago, I believe one of the ancient trackways leading up to it ran along the ditch which accompanied the vallum, and that the present occupation road, in some part at least of its course, coincides with such trackway.

In the neighbourhood of Walls-combe is the mineral district of the Mendip. The high value set on the lead mines of that district in times immediately preceding those we are treating of, is manifest from the pains, which must have been taken, in carrying through an intricate country the Roman road which led to them from Old Sarum. Nothing was more natural than for Ceawlin to insist on the possession of these lead-mines; and if it were conceded to him, no line of demarcation could be drawn, which would more neatly or more effectually secure his object than the one we have been describing. Lead-mines are now working immediately to the west of this line, but I know of none to the eastward; while the vallum proceeds from Englishcombe towards the coveted mines in a course as direct as the water system of the country would allow, with any regard to the mutual convenience of the parties.

That such boundary line did at one time separate the two races, is strongly indicated by the topography of the district. Close to the supposed boundary, and on what has been considered to be the English side of it, are Englishcombe and Englishbatch—and I would ask, whence could these names originate? Certainly not from any proprietor bearing the name of English, for Englishcombe is mentioned in Domesday, which was compiled before surnames were known in

England; and the only way in which I can account for their origin, is by supposing that the places they indicate were inhabited by Englishmen at a time when an alien race were living in the immediate neighbourhood. There is, I think, a fair and reasonable presumption, that by the terms of the settlement between Ceawlin and the Welsh princes, the latter retained possession of the Frome valley, and raised the dyke we have been endeavouring to trace, as the line of demarcation between them and the formidable strangers who had invaded their country.

The name of another locality in this neighbourhood may deserve a passing notice. West of Englishcombe, and at the foot of the strong earthwork now known as Stantonbury, is a village called Merkbury, *i. e.*, the burgh or fortress of the March. Here, or perhaps in the adjacent earthwork, the kings of Wessex may have kept a guard, to watch over the marches and to punish any Welshmen who might cross the dyke to "lift" the cattle, or other property of their English neighbours.

If we admit the premises, the boundary line south of Bath is a very obvious one. At Wookey Hole, near Wells, rises the Axe, which is the drain of the marshes lying south of the Mendip, and along this river, from its mouth to its source, the boundary must have run, then along the vallum by Walls-combe and Walls-mead to English-combe, and then along the Wansdyke⁵ to the river.

Our knowledge of the boundary north of Bath must be gleaned mainly from a passage to be found in the *Eulogium Historiarum*. This well-known MS. was written, as the scribe informs us, in the year 1372, and by command of a certain prior. Leland, whose notice of its contents has been the chief means of drawing public attention to it, considered it to be a Malmesbury MS., written by some monk of Malmesbury, at the command of some prior of Malmesbury; and though the opinion has been controverted, I

⁵ The Wansdyke seems like other portions of the boundary line to have been known at one time as "the wall." I learn from my friend Mr. Dickinson of King Weston, that the neighbourhood of the house known as "The Cross Keys," immediately south of Bath, and situated on the very line of the Wansdyke, is called in certain maps "the wall-tyning."

The Old-English verb *to tyne* signifies to be lost; and "wall-tyning" must mean the loss or disappearance of the wall. It is probable that in the neighbourhood of this, the main line of approach to the city from the south, the "wall" was levelled at a very early period, and that the name of "wall-tyning" originated in this circumstance.

believe it to be in the main a correct one.⁶ The following is the account the Eulogium gives us of the foundation of the great monastery, which has conferred celebrity on the name of Malmesbury :—

“There was in Ireland (Scotia)⁷ a certain monk named Meildulf, who was so harassed by thieves and robbers in his own country that he could hardly live. He, seeing that he could not long remain there, took to flight, and came as far as England. As he was surveying the country and thinking how God would dispose of him, he at last took up his quarters under the Castellum of Bladon, which in the Saxon tongue was called Ingelbourne Castle. This Castellum was built by a certain British king, the eighteenth from Brutus, by name Dunwallo, and by surname Molmuncius, 642 years before the Incarnation. There had formerly been a city there, which was totally destroyed by the foreigners (alienigenis) but the castellum, being a fortified building, maintained itself, and stood there a long time after the Incarnation without having any dwelling near it. The king's residence and the manor belonging to it were, both in the Pagan and in Christian times, at Kairdurburgh, which is now called Brukeburgh, or otherwise Brokenbern (Brokenberh). The hermit aforesaid by name Meldulf selected for himself a hermitage beneath the Castellum, having obtained permission from the men in charge of it for there was not much resort of people there, and when the necessities of life began to fail him, he collected round him scholars to teach, that by their liberality he might mend his scanty commons. In a short time, these scholars so learning the rudiments swelled into a small convent,” &c. (c. 92).

From another passage in the Eulogium we learn that besides his work at Malmesbury, Dunwallo built castella at Laycok and Tetraonburgh. Laycok is, of course, Laycock on the Avon, but the locality of Tetraonburgh has not yet been ascertained.

The writer of the Eulogium took his very absurd

⁶ Since this question was argued at Bath last summer, it has been elaborately discussed in the edition of the Eulogium lately published by the Treasury Commissioners. The editor has been led to the same conclusions as myself.

⁷ Whether we should translate Scot-

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land or Ireland depends on the question, whether the writer of the MS. was using the language of his own century, or merely transcribing from an ancient MS., one that might probably date from Anglo-Saxon times.

chronology from Jeffrey, but I think no critical reader will doubt, that the main facts of his story must have been derived mediately or immediately from authorities that were contemporaneous, or nearly so with the foundation of the monastery. We may, I think, safely infer, that when Maildulf visited the place, he found an English guard posted in a certain castellum, said to have been built by a Welsh prince named Dyvnwal Moelmyd;⁸ that the castellum was surrounded by the ruins of Caer Bladon—or, as we now term it, Malmesbury⁹—which still lay waste as the “alienigeni,” or in other words our ancestors, had left it a century before; and that the king’s steward, who, by the bye, was an officer of rank and dignity, resided at Caer Dur or Brokenborough,¹ and held the surrounding district as part of the royal demesne. The brook flowing by Brokenborough seems to have been known to the Welsh as the Bladon,² and to the English as the “Ingelbourne,”³ and hence the castellum built at its junction with the Avon was called by the English “Ingelbourne Castle.” I think we may further gather, that when our ancestors sacked Caer Bladon, A.D. 577, the Welsh still maintained themselves in the castellum, and that as the Brokenborough brook took the name of Ingelbourne, that is the brook of the Engle, the *other* brook, that is the Avon, was considered as belonging to the Welsh. Some time must have elapsed before the name of Ingelbourne was generally accepted in the neighbourhood; and as it is stated that Brokenborough was the seat of the Royal Manor during both the Heathen

⁸ This name is well known to Welsh legend. The Latinised form Dunwallo Molmutius, was probably first used by Jeffrey. Had the name been Latinised at an earlier period, the first element now represented by *Dyvn*, would no doubt have taken the shape of *Domno*. In adopting the chronology of Jeffrey, the writer of the Eulogium seems also to have adopted his nomenclature.

⁹ The old English name for the place was Maildulfisbury, of which Malmesbury is the corruption.

¹ The name of Brokenborough is what may be called “suggestive.” We readily picture to ourselves the king’s steward settled in the Welsh town, brewing his ales, salting his meats, and busily storing up wheat in his granaries, to be provided

against the next occasion when his master shall pass down the Foss from Cirencester to Bath; and at the same time we see the breach by which our ancestors first entered Caer Dur still unrepaired, though a Welsh garrison is lying only two miles off in the castellum at Caer Bladon. It is the old story—that contempt of enemies which has ever been characteristic of our countrymen, and which, if it has often led them to victory, has sometimes entailed upon them very humiliating reverses.

² The Welsh name of the river was sometimes used by the Monks of Malmesbury. Vid. C. D. No. XI.

³ Vid. the boundaries of Brokenborough. C. D. No. 460, vol. iii. p. 447.

and the Christian periods, there is a fair presumption that the Welsh and English were neighbours to each other at Malmesbury during the whole of the interval that elapsed between the date of Ceawlin's conquest and that of Cenwalh's.

Here, then, we have two fixed points ; the one near Bath, where the Wansdyke reached the Avon, and the other at Malmesbury. The question is, how were they connected ? Now, at the point where the Wansdyke reached the Avon, there is on the opposite bank a succession of high steep bluffs, Farley Down, King's Down, &c. which, as they trend northwards form the eastern side of the Box-valley. The valley gradually narrows into a ravine, one of those singular rents which characterise the outcrop of the oolite—as it were a natural ditch some two hundred feet deep, and even at the present day one-third filled with forest. Along this valley the boundary must have run to Castlecombe, where there is reason to believe was once a Roman Station, and thence over the open to Malmesbury.

I have not examined the country between Castlecombe and Malmesbury in search of the dyke which no doubt at one time crossed it, for an open country that has been under the plough for a thousand years holds out little encouragement to the explorer. But estates lying in this district are the subject of several charters, and in the description of the boundaries, we find references to a "*vetus fossatum*," to a "*fossatum quod appellatur dych*," &c. If these boundaries were thoroughly investigated, there would, I think, be a fair probability of our lighting upon some fragments of the ancient ditch, which, at the period in question, must have separated the two races.

To the north-east of Malmesbury are to be found the scanty remains of Bradon Forest. When disafforested in the time of Charles I., it reached eastward as far as Cricklade ; and in the eighth century it seems to have touched in the opposite direction upon Malmesbury, for the historian of that name informs us, that it was the beauty of these woodlands that induced Maildulf to select the place for his residence—"*Nemoris amœnitate quod tunc temporis immensum eo loco succreverat captus eremiticam exercuit.*"⁴ From Bradon

⁴ *De Pontificibus*, Lib. v.

a line of forest seems to have stretched almost uninterruptedly to Selwood. It must have run nearly parallel to, and in some places immediately beneath, the chalk hills which bound to the westward the bleak upland known as Salisbury Plain. Large masses of natural wood are still to be met with along this line of country and tracts now denuded of timber still bear names, such as Melksham Forest, Blackmore Forest, Pewsham Forest, &c., which plainly indicate their former character.

On the line of this natural boundary, on the very brow of the hill looking down upon the basin of the Avon, stands the town of Devizes. The etymology of this name has given rise to much absurd speculation, but is not, as it seems to me, very far to seek. The continuator of Florence,⁵ and William of Newburgh,⁶ both call the place *Divisæ*, a word which is found used in our charters as the technical term for boundaries, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. The probability is, that the district where the Roman road leading from London to Bath, stooped down into Welsh territory was known as "the borders;" and that when Devizes was founded in the twelfth century it took its name from the district, and was called *Divisæ* according to the phraseology of the period. A Cistercian monastery in Northamptonshire, which was also founded in the twelfth century, was called *De Divisis*, either because it lay on the borders of Rockingham Forest, or because the forest itself was looked upon as constituting the *Divisæ* or borders of the county—certainly not for either of the foolish reasons which are given us in the *Monasticon*. Devizes is of course nothing more than a barbarous anglicism for *Divisæ*.

Further south, at the extreme angle of Salisbury Plain, and immediately adjoining to localities which still exhibit very remarkable traces of British occupation, we meet with the village called Mere. This name is no less significant and appropriate than that of Devizes; and may indeed be considered as the English equivalent of the Latin word.

It may be thought strange, that the Welsh should retain a tongue of land some 50 miles long by 14 broad, in the midst of a country which had become English territory. But everything tends to show us, that these anomalies were

⁵ Flor. Wig. Chron. 2, 126. Hist. Soc. Publ.

⁶ Hist. Anglic: b. 1, c. vi.

of frequent occurrence in the territorial arrangements of the period. After one of these dreadful inroads of which we have spoken, the open country—more especially in the neighbourhood of the great roads—must have presented a scene of desolation over which our ancestors moved as masters; but scattered here and there must have been towns, castella, and forests in which the wretched inhabitants had taken refuge, and were they still maintained themselves. In resettling the boundaries the great problem would no doubt be, how to unite these scattered localities with other Welsh territory, so as least to encroach upon the districts which the sword of the foreigner had won. The difficulty was not badly met in the case before us. The main lines of communication, to wit the Roman roads leading from Cirencester to Bath and Winchester respectively, were yielded up to our ancestors, but the wooded valleys of the Frome and the Avon were left in the possession of their old inhabitants. The new frontier may have been a weak one along the “Wall,” from Wallscombe to Englishcombe, and again from Castlecombe to Malmesbury; but in every other part of its course, it was a line drawn by the hand of nature herself, and as strong as hill forest or marsh could make it.

In following out these speculations, the questions naturally arise, who were the British princes that negotiated the treaty which resulted in all this parcelling out of territory? who the British king that led his Welshmen to the fierce fight upon the plains of Wanborough? who the leaders that withstood Cenwalh at Bradford, and at “the Pens?” These are fair and reasonable questions, but they are not easily answered. In the whole course of our national history there is no period, in which the fortunes of the British race are involved in more bewildering uncertainty than the one we are now concerned with. Still, however, there are some glimmerings of light which if rightly used may help to guide us, and contemptible as is the authority of Jeffrey’s work considered as a history, yet it may possibly contain legendary matter that will be of service to us in the inquiry.

This fabler traces the line of Brutus through a long series of British kings till it terminates in the death of the two brothers Ferrex and Porrex. Then, we are told, after some

interval a certain young man named Dunwallo Molmutius, son of Cloten, Duke of Cornwall, rebelled against the king of Loegria (England) and made himself King of Britain. This Dunwallo constructed roads, compiled the celebrated code of laws which bears his name, and died leaving two sons Belinus and Brennus. Civil war arose between the brothers, the latter of whom was aided by the King of Denmark. They were, however, at last reconciled, and Brennus passed over to the continent, and after various adventures took Rome—was in short the Brennus whom Livy has made famous. Belinus left his kingdom to his son Gurguntius Barbtruch, a mild prince but a man of spirit; and when the King of Denmark refused to pay the customary tribute, Gurguntius attacked him, and after many fierce battles compelled him to submit, &c.

We have already observed that a prince named Dyvnwal Moelmyd—of which name Dunwallo Molmutius is merely the Latinised form—figures largely in Welsh legendary history. He is commemorated in no less than four of the triads; and not only are his laws represented as the groundwork of the celebrated Code of Hywel Dda, but copies of them are said to be still extant in certain MSS., and have been more than once published. There is no character of early Welsh story that comes before us in a more consistent shape, or with circumstances that more nearly approach to historical probability. If we look merely to Welsh tradition, it seems difficult to suppose that Dyvnwal Moelmyd was a mere myth; and when we find the early accounts of Malmesbury ascribing to him the erection of the castellum at that place, and of two other castella in the neighbourhood, we can hardly help drawing the inference, that he was a real personage, who before, and perhaps not long before, Ceawlin's inroad exercised a certain supremacy in that part of Britain. If we further suppose that certain loose traditions of his reign reached Jeffrey, we can easily understand how such a writer would feel little scruple in fixing him some 400 years before Christ, merely in order to identify his son Brennus with the conqueror of Rome.

The hypothesis we have sketched out is indirectly supported by another and perfectly independent line of inquiry. "The Book of Llandaff" in its present shape is a

compilation of the twelfth century, and some of the legends it contains may perhaps be of a date not long anterior to its compilation. But the charters it contains were certainly taken wholly or in part, literally or with slight verbal alterations, from the Registry of the Cathedral, and from these charters we learn that the principal benefactors of Llandaff were certain princes, who reigned over the present counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan, in the following order; Teithfalt, Tewdric, Meuric, Athruis, Morgan, &c.; and from the latter Glamorgan took its name—Gwlad Morgan, the country of Morgan. The charters which mention these princes never meddle with chronology, and the dates which have been quite recently assigned to the reigns of some of them, differ by centuries. Yet it seems easy enough to settle within narrow limits the periods when these princes must have lived. It appears from the charters that King Meuric was a contemporary of the two bishops Dubricius and Odoceus. Now according to the *Annales Cambriæ*, Bishop Dibric (who must certainly be Dubricius) died A.D. 612; and according to the same authority King Iudris (who must certainly be the same person as Athruis), was slain in battle on the banks of the Severn in the year 632.⁷ We may then conclude that his grandfather Tewdric was reigning over Glamorgan towards the close of the sixth century. The story which represents⁸ this prince as leaving his hermitage on the banks of the Wye to join the army of his son King Meuric, of his defeating our ancestors and earning a martyr's fate and fame in the moment of victory, is no doubt familiar to the reader. In St. Teilo's legend,⁹ Mailcun, Tewdric son of Teithpall, and *Gwrgant Mawr*, that is, Gwrgant the Great, appear among the earliest benefactors of Llandaff, and they are all three represented, according to the loose statements common to this class of compositions as contemporaries of the saint. Mailcun is of course the celebrated Maelgwn Gwynedd, King of North Wales, whose death is recorded in the *Annales Cambriæ*, A.D. 547, and Gurgantus Magnus, we learn from the charters, was father-in-law to King Meuric. If we suppose Teudricus and Gurgantus Magnus to have flourished during the half

⁷ The death of "Iudruis, King of the Britons," is recorded in the *Annals of Tighearnach*, under the date 633.

⁸ Lib. Land. 133.

⁹ Lib. Land. 111.

century which followed Maelgwn's death, we shall sufficiently meet the requirements of the story, such as it may be gathered from the disjointed notices, contained in the charters and other trustworthy portions of the *Liber Landavensis*.

From the manner in which the name of Gurgantus Magnus is mentioned, it is evident he was a prince of high rank and dignity among his contemporaries. When Bishop Oudoceus returned to Wales from Canterbury after his consecration, we are told¹ that "King Meuric, with his two sons and his wife Onbraus, *daughter of Gurgantus Magnus*, and the three Abbots of the three monasteries, and all the princes of the kingdom," went out to meet him, and though the whole story be a fable, it may suffice to show us the place which Gurgantus Magnus occupied in Welsh tradition. Again, in a certain charter,² "Meuric King of Glamorgan, son of Teudric, and his wife Onbraust, daughter of Gurgantus Magnus," &c., gave certain estates to Llandaff and Bishop Oudoceus; and in another charter, estates in Gower are given to the same religious foundation by "Athruis, grandson of Gurgantus Magnus."³ These princes of Glamorgan, though certainly among the most eminent in South Wales, seem to have been proud of their connection with this great but mysterious personage. Yet we know not who or what he was or where he lived, though we can give the genealogy of some half dozen petty princes, who must have been his contemporaries. Every little district west of the Severn is provided with its regulus, and we are fairly driven across the Bristol Channel before we can find room for one who filled such a space in the eyes of his contemporaries. May he not have been king of Domnonia, the same Gurguntius Barbtruch, whom Jeffrey represents as the grandson of Dunwallo Molmutius, and who, under the name of Gwrgan Varvtrwch, figures so largely in Welsh legend?

Welsh scholars, who have annotated the *Liber Landavensis*, seem inclined to think that all the estates conveyed by the charters in which the name of Gurgantus Magnus occurs, were situated in Gower.⁴ It seems probable that the supremacy of this king of Domnonia was acknowledged

¹ Lib. Land., p. 125.

² Lib. Land. 132.

³ Lib. Land. 136.

⁴ The port of Swansea, which adjoins to Gower, must have been the chief means of communication between South

by the Welsh princes west of the Severn, and that the lands conveyed to Llandaff by his daughter and grandson were part of the royal demesne, which, as suzerain, he had a right to dispose of, and which he had given to his daughter on her marriage with Meuric. That the suzerain had power to make these territorial grants may be inferred from the statement we find in Nennius, to the effect that Pascentius, son of Vortigern, received the territory called Guortigiaun, in Herefordshire, as a gift from Ambrosius, who was "king over all the districts of Britain"—*largiente Ambrosio qui fuerat rex in omnes regiones Britanniae*. Again, the *Liber Landavensis* contains a charter,⁵ in which Pepiau king of Ercyng bestows on Llandaff and Bishop Dubricius an estate lying near the Wye, and described as "the gift (*jaculum*)"⁶ of his father-in-law King Constantinus," who signs as one of the attesting witnesses. This charter precedes the two which make mention of Gurgantus Magnus, and must therefore, I presume, be of earlier date. I infer, that before the time of Gurgantus Magnus, the sovereignty of Constantinus was acknowledged west of the Severn, and that by virtue of his sovereign power, he conveyed the estate in question to his son-in-law King Pepiau.

"The conversion of Constantinus to the Lord," is a celebrated entry in the *Annales Cambriae*, from which Tighernach appears to have borrowed it. The date attached to it, according to the calculation of the editors of the *Mon. Hist. Brit.*, corresponds with the year of our Lord 589; but in the annals of Tighernach the entry appears under the date 588. The "conversion," if we may trust our later historians, meant simply a retirement into some monastery; and, according to Fordun,⁷ into a Scotch monastery, though I suspect he drew this inference simply from having met with the entry in the Scotch, *i.e.*, the Gaelic Annals of Tighernach.

Wales and Domnonia; and therefore we can understand how the kings of Domnonia came to possess territorial rights in that neighbourhood. The intercourse between Swansea and the opposite coast seems to be still active. When I explored the district of Gower some fourteen or fifteen years ago, I was much surprised at the great number of persons I met with who were natives of Somerset or Devon.

⁵ Lib. Land. p. 69.

⁶ I do not remember to have seen any other example of this word. Judging from the meaning given to the related word *jacto*, I infer that *jaculum*, in mediæval Latin, signified a gift or conveyance of property.

⁷ Scot. Hist. iii. 25. In the pages of Fordun "the sainted Constantinus, King of Cornubia," appears as a missionary and a martyr!

Having viewed these dark and intricate questions by the light of Welsh tradition, and by the aid of such casual hints as are furnished us by the *Annales Cambriæ*, and by the charters contained in the *Liber Landavensis*, let us now turn our attention to the scanty but precious notices which have been handed down to us in the two works of Gildas—his *Epistle* and his *History*.

The *Epistle* of Gildas refers to Mailcunus as still living, and therefore could not have been written later than the middle of the sixth century. It could not have been written much earlier, for Gildas was born in the year of the siege of the Mons Badonicus, which was probably the year 520, and we cannot suppose the epistle to have been written by a man much under thirty. In this work Gildas inveighs against five British princes by name; Constantinus, "the tyrannical whelp of the lioness of Domnonia;" Aurelius Conan, spotted like a leopard; Cuneglassus, who is reminded that his name signifies a tawny butcher; Vortiperius, the aged tyrant of the Dimetæ;"⁸ and, finally, "the island-dragon" Mailcunus, at once himself a tyrant and the uprooter of tyrants. We are told that Constantinus had that very year violated sanctuary and murdered two royal youths in their mother's arms, and beneath the very "amphibalum" of the abbot; and that this was not his first crime, for that many years before, lost in adulteries and sins, he had repudiated his lawful wife, &c. Aurelius Conan is bid take warning by the untimely end of his ancestors and his brothers (*patrum fratrumque*), and told that he is now but a barren stock. Cuneglassus and Vortiperius are not mentioned elsewhere, except in the veracious pages of Jeffrey. Mailcunus is the well-known Maelgwn Gwynnedd, whose chief seat Anglesea no doubt suggested to Gildas the abusive epithet he applies to him.

The "*History*" of Gildas was written forty years after the siege of the Mons Badonicus, or about the year 560. It is in this work that we find Aurelius Ambrosius described as "courteous, mild, and true," as being of Roman descent, and as having lost in the disturbances of the time relatives (*parentes*) who had *worn the purple*. The writer's meaning may not be expressed with all the precision we might wish

⁸ That is, the people of Pembroke and the adjacent districts.

for, but I think there is only one conclusion⁹ that any critical mind can come to, viz., that Aurelius Ambrosius was a descendant of the two usurpers Constantinus and Constans, who passed over into Gaul, A.D. 407, and perished there four years afterwards.

Aurelius Ambrosius, there can be little doubt, was the same person as the Natanleod of the Chronicle,¹ and therefore must have perished A.D. 508. From Gildas' History we gather that at the time it was written, *i. e.*, some half century after the death of Aurelius, his descendants were occupying a large space in the public eye, though Gildas describes them as having greatly degenerated from the worth of their ancestors. Now, when we remember that the two princes whom Gildas in his Epistle makes the first objects of his invective, bore the names respectively of Constantinus and Aurelius, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that they were the descendants, however unworthy, of Aurelius Ambrosius; and when, moreover, we find Aurelius Conan reminded, in the same epistle, of the untimely end of his ancestors and of his *brothers*, we are almost necessarily led to infer, that he was the brother of the royal youths whom Constantine had murdered. Jeffrey makes Aurelius Conan the nephew of Constantine, but it will agree better with the tenor of our present speculations, if we suppose him to have borne to him the relationship of great-nephew. It is clear from Gildas' narrative that the murdered princes were mere youths when slain by Constantine, and consequently that neither they, nor their brother Aurelius Conan, could have had Owen Vinddu (of whom we shall speak shortly) for a father, if this elder brother of Constantine died at the time we have elsewhere² supposed to be the case.

The scanty notice that is taken in Welsh legend of a man so eminent as Aurelius Ambrosius is very remarkable. It seems to have resulted mainly from the popularity acquired by Jeffrey's romance, that unhappy work which is everywhere found darkening the pure light of our early history. Nennius tells us, that Arthur was called *map uter*, the terrible boy, because he was cruel from his childhood; and

⁹ Vid. Salisbury Vol. Arch. Institute, p. 49.

¹ lb. p. 58.

² Salisb. Vol. Arch. Institute, p. 60.

Jeffrey having somewhere met with the phrase, and mistaking the adjective for a proper name, supposed it to mean "the son of Uther," and so called into existence that fabulous personage Uther Pendragon, the brother of Aurelius Ambrosius, and the father of Arthur. Accordingly, and in open defiance of Gildas' History, he treats Ambrosius as a childless man, and passes on the sovereignty to this supposed brother, the mere creature of his own imagination. The triads and other Welsh legends that mentioned Ambrosius appear to have been altered with the view of accommodating them to these fables, and when a difficulty occurred, the name of the usurper Maximus (Maxen Wledig) seems very commonly to have been substituted for that of Ambrosius. Owen Vinddu, Peblig, Ednyved and Cystennyn Goronawg, are represented as the sons of this Maxen Wledig—a statement which it is impossible to reconcile either with Roman or with British history. But there are certain MSS., for instance the one translated by Roberts, which make Owen Vinddu to be the son of Ambrosius. This hypothesis has nothing in it inconsistent with the known facts of history, and gives probability to the statement contained in the remarkable triad which represents Owen Vinddu as one of the three *Cynweissiaid*³ or overseers, and whom, according to some MSS., all followed "from the prince to the peasant at the need of the country, on account of the invasion and tyranny of the foe." Cawrdav, son of Caradawg Vreichvras, was another of those who are said to have attained the perilous honour of being the nation's "overseer" under like circumstances.

We have then some authority, that is such authority as Welsh tradition can furnish us with, for considering Owen Vinddu not only as the son, but also as the successor of Ambrosius; and indeed there is a triad which actually represents him as one of the three British kings who were raised to the throne by the general convention of the country. On the authority of the same triad we may venture to consider Cawrdav son of Caradawg Vreichvras, as one of those who attained the like dignity; and if we adopt this conclusion, it may be a support to the inference which other considerations lead us to; namely, that his father Caradawg Vreichvras, was the son or other near

³ Myv. Arch. 2, 4.

relative of Owen Vinddu. The best informed Welsh scholars consider *Caer Caradawg*, so often mentioned in Welsh story, to be—not Salisbury as Jeffrey represents it to be, but—the strong earthwork immediately adjoining to Amesbury (*Caer Emrys*) ; and its neighbourhood to, if not its identity with, the city of *Emrys* or *Ambrosius*, seems to warrant the inference, that by virtue of his descent from this prince, *Caradawg* became lord of the important fortress that bore his name. *Caradawg Vreichvras* is celebrated as one of the three *Cadvarcogion* or Battle-knights, and his prowess has been repeatedly the theme of Welsh eulogy. He must for some twenty or thirty years have fought the Welshman's battle, and borne the brunt of every hostile inroad.

The circumstance that *Caradawg Vreichvras* acted as one of Arthur's officers, need not lead us to distrust the conclusion, that *Caradawg* was a descendant of *Ambrosius*. Alternations of power and dependence on the part of the great families seem to have been characteristic of the period ; and there is reason to believe⁴ that *Vortimer*, son of *Vortigern*, at one time acted as the lieutenant of *Ambrosius*, his father's rival. As to the origin and early career of *Arthur*, I have nothing to add to what has been stated elsewhere.⁵ I know of no trustworthy authority that connects him with the family of *Ambrosius*, and I still believe him to have been elected the *dux belli* in a moment of danger, probably on the death of *Owen* without children, or with children too young to meet the exigencies of the times. On the death of *Arthur*, *Caradawg* probably continued for some time to stem the tide of invasion in South Britain, and his son *Cawrdav* may have succeeded to the same perilous duty on the death of his father.⁶

The pedigree of *Dynwal* has been variously given by different writers. The tradition that makes him the son of *Prydain*,⁷ son of *Aedd Mawr*, &c., is mythical on the face of it, for *Prydain* is evidently the eponyme of Britain ; and that which makes him the son of *Clydno*, son of *Prydain*, &c., is

⁴ Salisbury Vol. Arch. Inst. p. 53.

⁵ Ib. p. 67.

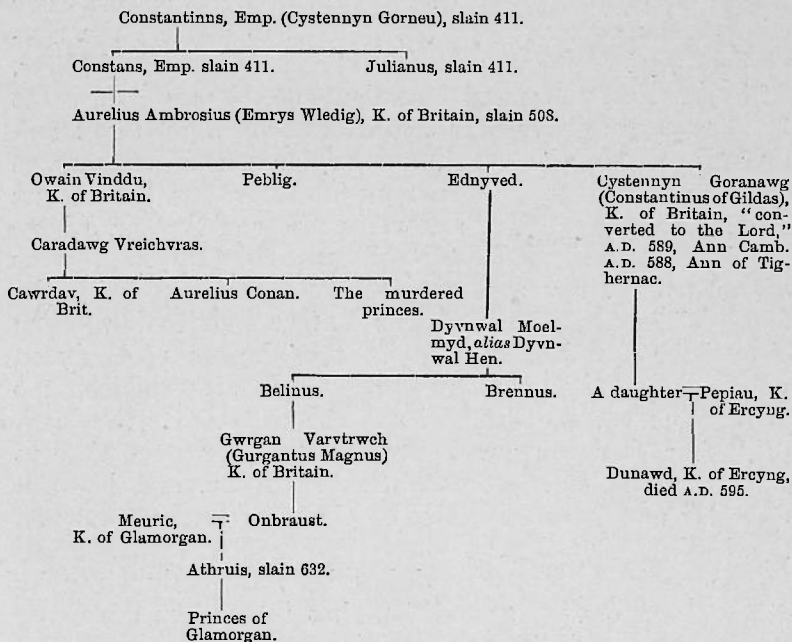
⁶ In the Salisbury Vol. Arch. Inst. p. 68, I stated that *Caradawg* probably lost his life at the battle of *Cattraeth*. It is the commonly received opinion, but con-

siderations which I cannot here enter upon, have convinced me that it is an untenable one. *Caradawg Vreichvras* could not possibly have been the *Caradawg* mentioned in the *Gododin*.

⁷ Myv. Arch. 2, 67. Triad 58.

merely another edition of the former one accommodated to Jeffrey's narrative.⁸ But we are told that one Dyvnwal Hen, that is Dyfnwal the Old, was the son of Ednyved, brother of Cystennyn Goronawg, and, if we suppose—and the supposition has every probability in its favour—that Dyvnwal Hen was the familiar name assigned by tradition to Dyvnwal Moelmyd, then Dyvnwal Moelmyd must have been nephew of Constantinus and grandson of Ambrosius.

The reader will now understand the grounds on which the following scheme is constructed. It is an attempt to show the pedigree and descendants of Aurelius Ambrosius, and is indeed little more than an enlarged edition of the scheme which was published in the Arch. Jour., Salisb. Vol., p. 70.



⁸ The oldest MS. of the *Dull Gwynnedd*, or N. Welsh version of the Laws of Hywell Dda, which was probably written in the twelfth century, contains the following notice of Dyvnwal Moelmyd. "Before the crown of London and the sovereignty were seized by the Saxons, *Dywnwal moel mud* was king of this island, and he was son of the Earl of Cernyw (Cornwall) by the daughter of the king

of Loygyr (England), and after the male line of succession to the kingdom became extinct, he obtained it by the distaff, as being grandson to the king." *Dull Gwynnedd*, cxvii. Later MSS. make him the son of Clydno, Earl of Cernyw. These various notices of Dyvnwal are evidently fables originating in Jeffrey's History.

I have, whenever it was possible, tested these speculations by the aid of chronology. It is a searching test, and in the present case requires to be applied with caution and with a certain allowance for the imperfection of the instrument. The dates assigned to the events recorded in the *Annales Cambriæ*, are calculated from an unknown epoch. It is probable that the several entries were taken from the Registry of some monastery, and that the "year one" indicated the year when the monastery was founded and the Registry commenced. Before we can know the real date of any event, we must ascertain from other sources the date of some preceding or subsequent event, and then add or subtract the number of intervening years. Unfortunately there is hardly a single event recorded in the earlier part of these annals whose date is known with perfect certainty. Even the relative dates are not always trustworthy. The Roman numerals, which indicate these dates, are particularly liable to error in transcription, and it would be easy to show that in some cases the copyists have blundered. The dates I have given according to the vulgar era, are those calculated by the editors of the *Mon. Hist. Brit.*; and though as I have stated elsewhere, I consider them to be not altogether trustworthy, yet I believe them to be in most cases near approximations to the truth. The dates which are given in Dr. O'Connor's edition of Tighernach's *Annals*, are of course open to the same criticism.

The principal, if not the only difficulty in the scheme which has been submitted to the reader, relates to the age of Constantinus, on his retirement into the monastery. Though we suppose him to have been left an infant at the death of Ambrosius, and though we take the most favourable dates the *Annals* furnish us with, he must have been at least eighty years of age, when he was "converted to the Lord." I do not shut my eyes to the grave objections, which at first sight surround such a hypothesis, but formidable as is the difficulty, I may venture to ask, is it an insuperable one?

Gildas wrote his *Epistle* before, but not very long before the year 550, and in it he tells us, that the murder of the princes was not the first crime Constantinus had committed, for that *many years* before, lost in adulteries and

sins, he had repudiated his lawful wife.⁹ We can hardly suppose that the prince so addressed had not reached the period of middle life, and the age which on our hypothesis must be assigned to him, namely, some forty years, agrees well with Gildas' statement. Again, Dunawd, son of Pabo post Prydain, is celebrated in the Triads as one of the "three pillars of battle of the Isle of Britain." Pabo must certainly be the same prince as Pepiau, son-in-law to King Constantinus; and the death of "King Dunaut" is recorded in the Ann: Cambriæ, A.D. 595. If we suppose that Dunawd was only thirty years of age at the time of his death, his grandfather, some six years previously, may very well have reached the age of eighty. These considerations may not lead to any very definite conclusion, but both point in the same direction, both would lead us to infer, that the wretched king was sinking under the weight of his years, no less than of his crimes and his misfortunes, when he sought refuge in the cloister.

With this explanation, I believe the scheme that has been submitted to the reader's notice will answer all the fair requirements of the test it has been subjected to; and I do not hesitate to express my belief, that no such coherence of dates would be found in a story which had not, to say the least, a certain substratum of truth to rest upon.

Before we close the paper, it may be well briefly to review the conclusions to which these speculations lead us.

It would seem that in the middle of the sixth century, when Gildas wrote his Epistle, Constantinus, youngest son of Aurelius Ambrosius, was lord of Domnonia, and gradually working his way by a course of intrigue and violence to the supremacy of Britain. We have grounds for the belief that he succeeded in this object of his ambition, though his success was soon followed by the revolt of his nephew Dyvnwal Moelmyd, and, as a consequence of such revolt, by the loss, not only of Domnonia, but also of certain districts which belonged to the *Civitas* of the Belgæ. Dyvnwal appears to have secured his conquests by the erection of castella, and to have established a wise and vigorous government. When the battle of Deorham was fought, the terri-

⁹ Et hoc ne post laudanda quidem merita egit. Nam multis ante annis crebris alternatisque fœtoribus adul-

teriorum victus, legitima uxore contra Christi Magistrique gentium interdictum repulsa, &c.

tory subject to this king—or it may be to his son and successor Belinus—must have reached to within a few miles of Cirencester; and to the lukewarmness or the disaffection of these princes, Ceawlin may have been in some measure indebted for his success. To the same causes may perhaps be attributed the comparative facility with which, as it would seem, the Britons in the neighbourhood of Bath came into an arrangement with our ancestors.

The British kingdom which Dyvnwal Moelmyd succeeded in establishing took the name of the *Civitas*, which formed its larger portion, and was called Domnonia. Under Gwrgan Varvtrwch, it appears to have reached its greatest height of prosperity. The lord of the rich and beautiful district, which stretched from Malmesbury to the Landsend, must have been little inferior to the king of Wessex himself, either in the extent or in the resources of his dominions. We have reasons for believing, that the supremacy of Gwrgan Varvtrwch was acknowledged, probably on the retirement of his aged relative Constantinus, by such of the British chiefs as survived the ruin of their country; and it was probably under the leadership of this prince that the Britons fought in the great battle, the loss of which drove Ceawlin into exile—at least, I know of no other event which tradition could have tortured into those successes against the king of Denmark, ascribed by Jeffrey to Gurguntius Barbtruch.

In Gwrgan Varvtrwch I would also recognise the king of Domnonia, who is represented by Malmesbury⁹ as the founder of Glastonbury Abbey. “In the year of our Lord’s Incarnation 601, a king of Domnonia granted the land in five hides, which is called Yniswitrin, to the Old Church there situate, at the request of the Abbot Worgret. ‘I, Bishop Mauron, have written this charter; I, Worgret, of the same place abbot, have subscribed my name.’ Who the king was, the great age of the instrument prevents us from ascertaining, but that he was a Briton might be inferred from this, that he called Glastonbury in his own language Yniswitrin, for it is well known that it is so called by them in the British tongue. To Abbot Worgret whose very name smacks of British barbarism, succeeded Lodemund, and to

¹ De Ant. Glast.

him Bregored. The dates of their promotion are uncertain, but their names and rank are exhibited in the greater church, on the tablet by the altar. To Bregored succeeded Berthwald."

Here we have a king of Domnonia dealing *as such* with a portion of the Belgic province. It was not the sovereign of Britain, but the king of Domnonia, who made the grant, and I would ask whether this does not strengthen the conclusion to which we have been led by other trains of reasoning; to wit, that sometime in the sixth century the kings of Domnonia conquered certain tracts of Britain lying beyond the boundaries of their proper territories, and thus gave rise to the traditions on which Jeffrey based his story of the revolt and successes of Dunwallo Molmutius?

The direct male descendants of Gwrgan Varvtrwch, if indeed he left any, are unknown, for it would be idle to follow the statements of Jeffrey when not supported by independent testimony; but we have ample proof that the descendants of his daughter Onbraust were reigning over the modern counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan for many generations. The first of his successors on the throne of Domnonia whom history recognises, is Gereint the opponent of Ina king of Wessex. In the days of Gereint, Domnonia though stripped of half its provinces must still have been, both in power and in dignity, the first of the British kingdoms. I cannot think that Aldhelm would have addressed any of the petty princes of Wales in terms like those he uses in the preface to the celebrated letter he wrote to Gereint on the subject of Church Discipline.

"To the most glorious Lord of the Western Kingdom, whom—he that searches hearts and weighs our actions is my witness—I love with brotherly affection; to King Gerontius, and at the same time to all the priests of God scattered throughout Domnonia, Aldhelm, abbot, &c., sends health in the Lord."

The writer of this epistle was among the first, if not actually the first of the learned men of Europe, and also a very near relative of Ina. Making all allowance for epistolary compliment, I think we may fairly draw the conclusion, that a prince addressed in such language by a man so

eminent could have held no mean place among the crowned heads of that period.

It is not my object to trace the several stages of decay through which the power of Domnonia passed, as it melted away before the ascendancy of England. The more intimate relations of this British kingdom were no doubt with the kindred races of Wales and Brittany, but the influences it exercised over the national progress, and even over the literature of its English neighbours, were by no means of slight account, though they have hitherto been most strangely overlooked. They afford, I think, the only solution of some of the most intricate problems connected with our early history ; and the little attention which has hitherto been directed to the subject can only be excused by a consideration of the great difficulties which surround the inquiry. Materials for such inquiry may be scanty, but they are not altogether wanting, and if subjected to a searching criticism might possibly yield results no less important than unexpected. May I venture to express a hope that some rays of light have been thrown on these dark passages of our history in the present essay ?