

God, you carefully select and with special instruction impart to the *Church of the English*, which as yet is new to the faith, what things you have been able to collect from many churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. From each individual church, therefore, choose the things which are pious, which are religious, which are right, and deposit these things, when you have collected them, as it were, into a bundle, in the minds of the English for their use."

This is very excellent advice, and entirely accordant with the teaching of the Anglican Church to-day, but we can hardly imagine that a modern Roman Pope would give such sensible advice to any missionary bishop nowadays.

With regard to the use of images, the purity of the ancient British Church is well attested by the fact that when, in 787 (or 190 years after Augustine), the second Council of Nice foolishly sanctioned the veneration of images, a Council of the Bishops of the Anglo-Saxon Church was held, at which the decree was unanimously condemned, but of this I shall have something more to say further on.

Turning now to some of the peculiar practices adopted by the Church of Rome, e.g., the enforcement of celibacy on the clergy, the denial of the Eucharistic cup to the laity, we find that the latter grievous error had no place in the Anglo-Saxon Church, nor even in the Roman Church, until the beginning of the thirteenth century; and whatever theories may have been prevalent as to the advisability of priestly celibacy, as a matter of practice, it was by no means universally adopted in the Anglo-Saxon Church. While in so many respects the ancient Church of England differed in its faith and practice from that of modern Romanism, still it cannot be denied that some of those opinions and practices which ultimately ripened into the dogmatic decrees by which the Roman Church has attempted from time to time to add to the Catholic faith as set forth in the Nicene Creed, by degrees gained a foothold in her bosom, and were widely adopted, until the great upheaval of the Reformation, when the Church of England set herself carefully to scrutinize every doctrine and every practice, and while scrupulously reforming those which were really primitive she fearlessly cast from her those which were false or unwarranted, or which tended to superstition, and by this means she recovered not only her pristine purity of faith, but even more than her pristine purity in practice.

Augustine, as we have seen, failed to secure the union and co-operation of the British bishops, but what he failed to accomplish was ultimately effected under one of his successors in the See of Canterbury.

Through the influence of Oswy, King of Northumbria, those Roman usages which, we have seen, differed from those of the ancient British bishops, were ultimately adopted by the successors of the latter, and under Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, the British and Roman parties became united, and thus the Anglo-Saxon Church became consolidated (circ. 669); it is also well to remember that it was not until the reign of Egbert, about 160 years afterwards, that the State of England became united under one king, because it is sometimes foolishly said that the Church in England owes its origin to the State.

While we cannot yield to Rome the merit of founding the Christian Church in the British Isles, we may nevertheless gratefully acknowledge that in an age of darkness and barbarism it afforded, through Augustine's mission, material aid to the native church and helped in an important measure to hasten the conversion of many of our forefathers to the Christian faith.

The Anglo-Saxon Church, after its consolidation under Theodore, was adorned by many noble sons, of whom we, their fellow-churchmen, may well be proud. Theodore himself, a fellow-countryman of S. Paul, though not coming to England until 66 years old, lived 22 years in the country as Archbishop of Canterbury, and he may be justly ranked as one of the ablest prelates that ever filled that important See. Though he did much to establish the authority of the Roman See over the English Church—for which we may not think him particularly praiseworthy—he also gave stability to the religious establishment of England, both in regard to its organization, doctrine and discipline, and he also wisely provided for the intellectual growth of the nation by his liberal and enlightened patronage of learning.

In 673 was born that Christian scholar and priest I have already mentioned, whose name will always be memorable in the annals of the Church—the Venerable Bede. From the early age of seven years he was an inmate of a monastery, his earliest patron and instructor being Benedict Biscop, the abbot and founder of the monasteries of Jarrow and Wearmouth. After passing his childhood and youth under circumstances most favorable to his advancement in learning, he was at 19 ordained deacon and at 30 priest. He was of a studious turn of mind, and his industry was indefatigable. Scripture was his favorite study, but he seems to have eagerly explored every branch of learning within his reach, and he became the great school master of the Anglo-Saxon race. In addition to his "Ecclesiastical History," which has come down to us, and which is an invaluable record of interesting events compiled from ancient monuments, traditions and personal knowledge, he translated into Anglo-Saxon the most necessary formularies of the