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### ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

NO. II.

#### PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY IN BRITAIN.

It appears from the account referred to in the preceding paper on this subject, that Christianity was introduced into Britain at a very early period, though by whose means has not been satisfactorily ascertained. It has been related also that, when it had been well nigh extinguished by the Saxon domination, a number of the zealous professors and ministers of the Gospel retired into Wales, Northumberland and Scotland; that in the sixth Century Gregory sent Augustine and several monks from Rome to preach Christianity to the Britons; that the Welch Christians refused to unite or co-operate with the Romish missionaries, preferring to retain their independence; and that several of them were soon afterwards barbarously massacred, probably in consequence of this refusal. We proceed now to sketch the progress of Christianity in the island.

**SEVENTH CENTURY.** What share Augustine had in exciting the hateful spirit which led to the destruction of

nearly twelve hundred of the monks of Bangor and their followers, we have no certain means of deciding; but the principles upon which he acted in his mode of church government, and the authority he assumed, would naturally tend to produce and enlarge it, and thus to sow tares among the wheat, and infuse bitterness into the cup of salvation. Believing, probably, that his plans were best calculated to promote the Gospel among the people he had visited, he might be conscientious in attempting to bring every thing to agree with the model of the Roman church. He had ordained other bishops, as well as inferior clergy; and after his death one of them, Laurentius, succeeded to the see of Canterbury. He trod in the steps of his predecessor. Aiming to establish a nominal unity, he laboured, as Augustine had done, to bring the British churches to a conformity with the church of Rome. He was actuated by the same spirit of selfish ambition, from which too