

within the Church body was overwhelming against a compulsory celibacy, and not even the defenders of it upheld it as a law; moreover, the synod of 1876 has decreed the lawfulness of the marriage of a non-officiating priest, and thereby the question of competency was settled. But, the memorial urged the opposition to the abolition was so determined and influential, and Bavaria was in so peculiar a position that, for the sake of peace, it was advisable to postpone a decision, and the council therefore advised the synod to decree that all motions now before it should be postponed until 1884. It transpired that the council had been equally divided on a motion that Baden be exempted from the general law, and that priests should be allowed to marry in the Grand Duchy only.

Another document was read, and that was a threatening letter from the Archbishop of Utrecht, who wrote in the name of the Dutch Old Catholic Church, warning the synod that the abolition of clerical celibacy might lead to unpleasant consequences, and very probably to the cessation of intercommunion between the two bodies. The Archbishop had a right to be heard, since the Dutch Church is the source of the German Episcopate, but Bishop Herzog had a greater right to be heard, as the head of a flourishing sister community, and we simply note that the Swiss Bishop and council observed a dignified silence. Intercommunion southwards is a far more living bond than intercommunion northwards.

The chief motion was that of Mannheim, which had been long prepared and discussed throughout Germany, and which merely proposed a repeal of the law. Dr. Petri moved that the matter be postponed for five years, that Baden be especially exempted, but that the Bishop's jurisdiction over the Grand Duchy should in that case cease. Professor Michelis formulated a motion, which, he said, went to the very extreme point of concession on his part, that compulsory celibacy should be abolished, and that priests might marry on three conditions—1, the Bishop's consent; 2, the sanction of two-thirds of the members of the congregation; and 3, ability to support a wife and family. This was verily a great concession on his part, and it is rejoicing to find that the learned professor is saved for the movement. Professor Reusch handed in a protest against any synodal decision on two grounds:—(1) that the synod was not competent, and its conclusion not lawful; and (2) that tendencies would be thereby educed, which were foreign to the original and true character of the Old Catholic movement. Bishop Reinkens made a conciliatory speech, saying that he did not share the objections of the Utrecht remonstrance, and stating that, for the sake of peace and to avoid division, he would vote against an immediate abolition. Then Dr. Thürlings—a Bavarian priest, and a man that is leaving his mark on the movement—formulated a compromising motion, which was put to the vote, and carried, as follows:—

“Inasmuch as: 1. Priestly celibacy has not the character of a dogma, but rather is of a disciplinary nature. 2. The so-called law of celibacy is, as a law, in accordance neither

with the spirit of the Gospel, nor with the spirit of the Catholic Church. 3. Through this compulsory celibacy circumstances are produced, that are in the highest degree scandalous, and inflict serious injury on popular morality: Therefore the synod resolves, declaring expressly that thereby the true ecclesiastical importance of a voluntary celibacy, undertaken in a spirit of self-sacrifice, is in no wise prejudiced—1. That the prohibition of the canon law, which forbids the contraction of a marriage on the part of an ecclesiastic from sub-deacon upwards, constitutes for the Old Catholic community no obstacle towards the marriage of an ecclesiastic, nor a hindrance towards the administration of the cure of souls by a married ecclesiastic. 2. The resolutions of the second and third synods, contrary to this decision are repealed.”

The vote on this motion was 75 for, and 22 against, or 19 ecclesiastics and 56 laymen for, and the Bishop and 5 priests with 16 laymen against. Three members, one cleric and two lay, did not vote. The vote is decisive. The Bishop's voice was only given for the sake of concord, and the other opponents were Reusch, Friedrich, and the parish priests Braun, Kopp, and Hochstein. For the motion voted Dr. Knoodt, Vicar-General, Professors Michelis, von Schulte, Lutterbeck, and Weber, Dr. Thürlings, Dr. Mosler, Ricks, &c. The synodal council divided equally, four for and against. Langen, Menzel, and Tangermann were not present, and the *Deutscher Merkur* says that at least ten absentees would have voted in the minority, but certainly a larger number would have joined the majority. On the announcement of the numbers Friedrich and Reusch left the synod.

One hundred delegates were present, twenty-seven clerics and seventy-three lay. The annual report noted, for the first time, a decrease in the total number, which stands now at 51,864 souls, against 53,640 of last year. Congregations in Germany 122, one more than last year. The number of priests is variously given: one account gives it as fifty-nine, but this must be overstated, for last year's table only gave fifty-five, and of this number at least six have departed or been removed, and the accessions are only three during the year, so that the figures should be fifty-two. But three married priests are waiting for admission at once; and the old members are sustained by this means.

ST. AUGUSTINE AND THE EARLY BRITISH CHURCH.

WE regret to find, in the address of welcome, delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the colonial and American bishops of the Anglican communion, assembled at a special service in the Cathedral in Canterbury—which is given on another page—that he not only makes no mention of the existence of the British St. Church prior to the coming of Augustine, but attributes the origin of the Church to that prelate. This appears to us but half-hearted loyalty, which ascribes the origin of the English Church exclusively to St. Augustine, who,

though he obtained his orders from the Gallican Church, was set to Britain by the Pope of Rome.

The same testimony on which we accept the landing of St. Augustine in Britain bears witness to the fact that he found the Church existing there; under its own bishops and metropolitans, who refused to acknowledge his supremacy; and the Anglo-Saxon liturgy, adopted by St. Augustine, is the result of concessions to the British Christians who refused to adopt the Roman liturgy.

Nor is this, by any means, the only testimony we have to the antiquity of the British Church. To mention but a few of the many historical allusions to it: Gildas, the most ancient of our historians, who flourished during the sixth century, asserts its existence before the time of the revolt and defeat of Boadicea, A.D. 61, during the life-time of St. Paul and nearly half a century before the death of St. John. Tertullian, also, in his book, “*Contra Judæos*,” written about A.D. 209, declares that “those parts of Britain into which the Roman arms had never penetrated were become subject to Christ,” thereby indicating that in the end of the second century, Scotland even, had not been unvisited by missionaries. During the persecution of Diocletian, we meet with the first British Christian martyr, ‘St. Alban,’ of Verulamium, the date of whose martyrdom is placed by Bede and others at A.D. 286.

In the Council of Arles, A.D. 314, we find the names of the bishops of three British sees Eborius of York, Restitutius of London, and Adelfius, whose see is generally identified with Lincoln. British bishops were also present at Sardica and Rimini, which councils were held during the fourth century, and probably at Nicæa. Athanasius (ad Jovianum) and Hilary (de Synodis) bear witness to the orthodoxy of the British bishops throughout the Arian Controversy. The British Church, then, must have existed in their day, that is, during the fourth century, or more than two centuries before Augustine's time.

These are some of the indisputable proofs that the Church existed in Britain centuries before the coming of Augustine, he not having reached the island until the close of the sixth century, A.D. 597. The Archbishop, it is true, is the actual and legal successor of the great missionary, but we do not think that the circumstance of sitting in St. Augustine's chair justified him in overlooking the important facts we have adduced as to the independent, apostolic origin of the English Church. We are quite willing to accord to St. Augustine all the honor which is his due, nor can it be denied that it is very great; and yet we must never forget that the fearless stand of the ancient British bishops won for us special privileges, and was the first step in that manly and ceaseless protest of the English Church against the unlawful aggressions of Rome, which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries culminated in the Great English Reformation, and the consequent absolute freedom of the Anglican Church, without which the important conference, over which His Grace is now presiding, could never have taken place.