

Britain. The first church in Britain is said to have been built at Glastonbury, by Joseph of Arimathea, who with forty companions, (so the story runs) emigrated in the troublous times of Palestine, to what was then the new colony of the Empire. The erection was of "wattle-and-daub," i. e., of interlaced osiers plastered with clay. In Tennyson's "Holy Grail" one of the characters says,—

"From our old books I know,
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to build.
And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore."

The oldest remaining church of the British period is that of St. Pirens-in-the-Sand. Piren was a famous missionary after whom a number of places in Cornwall are named, Piren Arworthal, Perranzabuloe, &c. The little church in which he is supposed to have ministered was discovered some years ago, and freed from the sands of the sea-shore, which had buried it for ages.

Christianity in Britain seems to have made considerable progress. Representatives of the British Church attended the great councils of Arles, Nicea, and Sardica. But it suffered grievously from the irruptions of the Northmen, savage worshippers of Thor and Woden; and at length Theon, Bishop of London, and Thaddeus, Bishop of York, gathered their flocks together, and fled into the mountain fastnesses of Wales and Cornwall. Years elapsed ere the Saxons, under a combination of influences were Christianized. Then churches arose again in the South-eastern parts of Britain.

If you were sailing along the banks of the Humber, you might see, on the southern shore, the tower of a Saxon church which has weathered the storms of eight centuries. It is that of Barton-upon-Humber, at the termination of the Roman Street, which extended from Lindum Colonia to the river. Its rude and feeble imitations of Roman art at once arrest the attention. In some Saxon structures the semi-circular heads of the small and narrow windows were cut out of a single stone. Sometimes two such heads were cut out in one stone; and between them a support, in form of a pillar, was inserted, dividing the window into two lights. Such, if I remember rightly, are the windows in the tower of Barton Church.

A few fine churches were built in England even in Saxon days;