

to our original independence, let us not seek to palliate the contumacious spirit displayed by the British clergy in their conference with Augustine. As Christians they ought cheerfully to have assisted in evangelizing the pagan Saxons. The terms which he proposed were mild and reasonable, and the faith which he proposed was as pure and orthodox as their own. »

Now I infer from the very words of St Augustine that, it is quite clear that the faith of the British Church was essentially the same as that of St Augustine, otherwise he would certainly have taken exception to such differences in doctrine, and not solely to accidental points of discipline, and moreover it is inconceivable that he should have invited them to preach to the Saxons a faith different from his own. That the faith taught to the English by St Augustine was the same as that of the Catholic Church of the present day, does not require proof to any one who has made the most superficial study of the annals of the Anglo-Saxon Church. The Supremacy of Rome, the doctrines of the Real Presence, the Sacrifice of the Mass, Purgatory, devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, are written on every page of her history, and came to be incorporated in the very language and customs of the people. (See the historical works of Rev. T. E. Bridgett, C. SS. R.)

As for the grounds of the opposition of the British bishops to St Augustine, this can be fully accounted for. The decay of faith and morals amongst clergy and people, isolated from the rest of Christendom, natural pride and hatred of the Saxons, all which Gildas tells us existed in the British Church in his day, are quite enough to account for their opposition to St Augustine, and this opposition cannot in the teeth of history be attributed to any primitive independence of Rome in the British Church.

Too long to relate her whole early history, I mark some data :

1. — Pope St Eleutherius, at the request of Lucius, a British king, sent missionaries into Britain, in 180.

2. — The next notice we have of the British Church is, that British bishops were sitting with the other Catholic bishops at the Council of Arles, in Gaul, in 314 ; and of Sardica, in 347.