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JOURNAL OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS  
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EDITED BY THE HONORARY SECRETARY,  
CAPTAIN F. W. H. PETRIE, F.R.S.L. &c.

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## ORDINARY MEETING, JANUARY 5, 1880.

THE REV. ROBINSON THORNTON, D.D., VICE-PRESIDENT,  
IN THE CHAIR.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed, and the following elections were announced :—

MEMBERS :—The Right Rev. Bishop Callaway, D.D., M.D., Kaffraria ; Rev. C. S. Rivington, M.A., India ; J. A. Rossiter, Esq., Ceylon ; M. H. Sutton, Esq., Reading ; Rev. H. Taylor, M.A., Humshaugh ; Rev. H. G. Watkins, Barnet.

ASSOCIATES :—M. Bulteel, Esq., M.R.C.S.E., London ; Captain J. B. Carey, Malta ; Rev. R. Daniel, B.D., York ; G. Heap, Esq., London ; Rev. J. R. Lewin, India ; J. R. Mosse, Esq., M.I.C.E., Ceylon ; Rev. W. H. Painter, Bristol ; Rev. J. Priestley (Life), India ; Mrs. Huish, Isle of Wight.

Also the presentation of the following books for the library :—

“Proceedings of the Royal Society.”	<i>From the same.</i>
“Climatic Changes.” G. Heap, Esq.	<i>Ditto.</i>
“Ecce Christianus.” By Anon.	<i>Ditto.</i>
“The Christian in the World.” By M. H. Sutton, Esq.	<i>Ditto.</i>
“Convict Life.”	<i>Messrs. Wyman.</i>

The following paper was then read by the Author :—

*THE DRUIDS AND THEIR RELIGION.*

By JOHN ELIOT HOWARD, F.R.S.

*Introduction.*

MY introduction must be in the way of apology. I have undertaken to write upon a subject historically obscure, and regarding which we must be content to accept the best amount of evidence we can procure. The time will not admit of full treatment of the subject : I, nevertheless, hope to be able to communicate some portion of the interest which the inquiry into the history and antiquities of our own land presents. I have been met at the outset by formidable difficulties, not a little increased by passion and prejudice arrayed on both sides in the multitudinous controversies that have arisen, but shall

endeavour to steer between Scylla and Charybdis, and to conciliate some who at present are averse to the study. Circumstances have through the last twenty years led me to pay frequent visits to "wild Wales;" and I must acknowledge an interest in the people as well as in the scenery which may scarcely seem belonging to one whose life has been passed in the vicinity of the Imperial city; whose daily journalists teach us to look down upon the rest of England as "provinces:" "provincial towns,"—"conquered," I suppose, by the Roman legionaries stationed in London when Boadicea and her valiant "British" rose against the central authority. I must also confess that I am attracted by the peculiarities of a rich, fluent and ancient tongue, and one which seems, to my surprise, to have some deeply philosophical principles involved in its original structure.\* Why should we desire its extinction, or shut our eyes to the very obvious truth that *we* are not a homogeneous nation?—not Romans, not Anglo-Saxons, not Britons, except in part; least of all can we trace our descent from the lost tribes of Israel, being, without knowing it, of the Circumcision. In consequence of this latter descent it is said *we* are to inherit all nations.† If any do not exactly see this, it is so much the worse for them, for "when God has desired to place a portion of the heathen heritage in our hands, He has made us seize it by violence(!), thus breaking the heathen kings and potentates into pieces like a potter's vessel." It is not my object to controvert these wise people, who find in the national inclination to drunkenness one of the strongest arguments for their being "the Israel of God;" but it is quite to the point on which I am writing to show the amount of ignorance that prevails, even among "Anglo-Saxons." It appears on the same authority that the Irish, or at least the southern portion of the nation, are "cursed Canaanites," and therefore their lives and liberties, to say nothing of their lands, are at the disposal of the Protestants of the North, who are God's Israel, and if they find the land too narrow for them have only to march southward and possess their inheritance!

In an interesting account of a Board school for deaf mutes which I recently read, it is recorded that the astonishment of the pupils had no bounds when they found that the world extended far beyond London. The ignorance of these afflicted ones simply calls forth our sympathy; but the ignorance of

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\* See *Gomer*. By Archdeacon Williams, 1854.

† *Anglo-Israelism Examined*. By F. H. White; 1879.

would-be instructors of the people who can assert that the smoke hanging over our land and the reflection from the lights by night, are to bring to mind the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day—deserves a measure of reprobation which it is foreign to my purpose to bestow.

One of the arguments brought forward to prove our identification with the ten tribes I will dwell upon a little, since it furnishes a suitable introduction to my remarks on the antiquities of Britain. It is this, that “*We possess Jacob’s stone. This stone the author of forty-seven identifications calls the Signet-ring of the Almighty, and says it was the chief corner-stone of the Temple, and was secured by Jeremiah and taken by him to Ireland, and finally placed in Westminster Abbey and deposited under the seat of the Coronation Chair.*”

This stone is indeed a very remarkable one. We are assured by Jewish tradition that it consists of several stones, which, being emulous of the honour, rolled themselves into one; in proof of which the account in Genesis is referred to, that Jacob “*took of the stones (plural) of that place and put them for his pillows;*” and again, Jacob took “*the stone (singular) that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon it.*”

Being thus a miraculous stone from the beginning, no wonder that it was an oracle. It was brought into Ireland by Simon Brech, the first king of the Scots, 70 years B.C.\* 370 years afterwards it was transferred into Scotland by King Fergus, and in the year 850 was removed by King Kenneth (who subdued the Picts) to the Abbey of Scone, and destined for the coronation of kings. At length Edward I. of England, the conqueror of the Scots, having led into captivity John Baliol, their king, possessed himself of this stone, and placed it as an offering to the Almighty in the year 1297. Much more may be found about this stone in Keysler and also in Fergusson.†

But the unfortunate thing for our theorists is, that this stone does not promise rule to the Anglo-Saxons, but to the Scoti, or *native Irish*,‡ the “*Canaanites*” of the same writers: according to the oracular declaration:

“*Ni fallit fatum, Scoti quocunque locatum  
Invenient lapidem, regnare tenentur ibidem.*”§

The stone no longer either groans or rejoices according to the character of the occupant of the throne, but it may be

\* Keysler, p. 25.

† *Rude Stone Monuments*, pp. 382, 439.

‡ See Smith’s *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*.

§ Keysler, p. 26.

supposed to proclaim this lesson, that the monarchy reposes more safely on the *affections of an united people*, than upon the serried array of the bayonets of Imperial power. The idea of the extraordinary destiny of "the Anglo-Saxon race" finds its way into unexpected quarters, as in the following extract :

"There is at the bottom" (of the May Meetings) "a real desire to do good to others, with the added notion that the Anglo-Saxon race is the proper vehicle of good to everybody."—*The Times*, May 20th, 1879.

I hope, therefore, it will not be thought that I am treating of "things remote, impossible, and false," but rather of "that which before us lies in daily life," when I endeavour to show that to review our "dim original and prime" is essentially necessary. It is surely disgraceful not to know what pertains to our own country.

Camden, in his *Britannia*, has well shown how many of the names of our towns, our rivers, and our local sites are Welsh, so that we cannot comprehend the names of these without its help, nor understand the meaning of our rivers, so graphically named as they were by the original dwellers on their banks. The Wharf, for instance, of which Camden says, "If any one would derive the name of it from the British word *guer*, swift, the nature of the river will favour him." The Dee, of course, is the *black* river, whilst on the other hand Pont-*aber-glas-llyn*, in few words, describes a bridge and the river flowing under it, proceeding from a lake coloured blue-green by copper ore. This lake is in the hollow of Snowdon.\* We cannot name a basket without being reminded that the word (*basged*) is purely British, as well as that of the *withy* (*gwydd*), from which it may be constructed. We cannot spread the festal board aright unless the *board* is the Welsh *burdd*, that is, a table. The door (*dor*) of our house is British, and when we go *forth* through it, it is to be understood that we go on our way (*ffordd*). The implements of the husbandman's toil, such as the coulter (*cwlltyr*) of his plough, may often speak Welsh. A *cord*, at any rate, is explained as something twisted (*cord*, from *cordeddu*, to twist); and even in the prince's motto, *Ich*

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\* The word *glas* is originally derived from woad (Herbert, p. lvi.).

"Illinent certè aliis (herbis) aliæ faciem in populis barbarorum feminae, maresque etiam apud Dacos et Sarmatas corpora sua inscribunt. Simile plantigini *glastrum* in Galliâ vocatur, quo Britannorum conjuges nurusque toto corpore oblitæ, quibusdam in sacris et nudæ incedunt, Æthiopum colorem imitantes."—Pliny, lib. xxii. 11. i.

*dien* (senseless in German to my mind), we surely find the very words, *Eich dyn*, "Your man," pronounced when the newborn British-Welsh prince was held forth to the admiring crowd from the window of Caernarvon Castle. We may even go higher in the social scale for illustration, for what is the very name of the queen we have referred to? Boadicea is the *British Victoria*, goddess of victory!\*

For good or for evil, the interests of the Welsh and English (and let me say Irish) are inseparably entwined together; and it surely ought to be the mission of the ministers of peace and goodwill amongst men to remove what remains of the feelings excited in the hearts of peoples once oppressed, but now enjoying equal privileges with their conquerors. I view with no favour the attempts to eradicate the Welsh, the Irish, or the Gaelic languages, and to supersede them by the instruction of our Board schools in *English*. One language without a competitor is apt to degenerate, as we find in London. In conclusion I may be permitted to express regret for the loss of the assistance of Welsh friends (amongst others our *confrère*, Canon Lysons) whose memory I cherish, and who would have helped my imperfect Welsh.

### *Antiquities of Britain.*

I am confronted at the very outset of my inquiry by this difficulty: Can it be proved that the megalithic monuments, the cairns and dolmens, which still arrest the mind with an undefined impression of immeasurable antiquity, have any relation to the present population? or may they not rather be the survivals of an extinct faith belonging to an aboriginal people long since passed away? Can they be proved to have any relation to the Druids and their religion? So much light has been thrown on this subject by the researches of a living author,† that it is only requisite that I should advert to some points on which I venture to dissent from his views.

Mr. Fergusson says, "the impression on his mind is every day growing stronger that the dolmen builders in France are the lineal descendants of the cave men, whose remains have recently been detected in such quantities on the banks of the Dordogne and other rivers in the south of France. These people seem neither to have been Celts nor Gauls, but the people of Aquitaine, and allied to the Cimbrians, and there-

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\* See Williams's *Welsh Dictionary*, *sub voce*, "Buddigion."

† Fergusson's *Ancient Stone Monuments*, p. 32.

fore, probably, to the Welsh. The trade in tin from Cornwall across France to Marseilles seems to have followed a track coinciding with the line of these dolmen-building, *ac*-speaking tribes (331-333). We have, therefore, at once a suspicion of great antiquity. On the other hand, Mr. Fergusson proves that megalithic monuments continued to be erected till a comparatively recent date. Indeed, the custom of erecting these is still extant amongst a hill tribe in India.\*

We cannot, then, certainly determine the age of such a monument as Stonehenge from its megalithic character. We must find, if possible, some other sources of information. Now tradition, if it can be at all relied upon, assigns a greater antiquity to the inner circle of "blue stones" than to the more striking surrounding circle of trilithons composed of sarsen stones found in the neighbourhood. The eleven "blue" stones are of a different nature, "being all cut from igneous rocks, such as are not to be found nearer than Cornwall or even Ireland." It is, then, not at all improbable that these may be of an older date, and brought, on account of their supposed sanctity, from Ireland, as tradition records. None of these are large—one of the finest only 7 feet 6 inches high; but it is quite consistent with what we learn elsewhere, that the peculiar sacredness of the place may have attached to these, and that the more majestic *trilithons* may have been erected afterwards as a memory of the British chiefs slain there by Hengist.

Nennius records that, "at a feast held at the palace or monastery at Amesbury, to which it was agreed that all should come unarmed, three hundred British nobles were treacherously slain by the followers of Hengist, who had concealed their weapons under their cloaks." But why was the feast appointed at this out-of-the-way place, except that on account of its sacredness it was the national gathering-place of the Britons?

This, indeed, is what we gather from the British bards. It is called the great circle or sanctuary of the dominion, by Cuhelyn in a verse to the praise of Eidiol, who was *presiding in the circle*, a man eminently distinguished for wisdom.

"A proclamation was issued inviting equal numbers to a conference at a banquet of mead. The mead and wine are distributed by the knights of the enclosure at the appointed spot, and the spot appointed was the precinct of Iôr, in the fair quadrangular area of the Great Sanctuary of the Dominion."†

\* See *The Early Dawn of Civilization*, p. 23.

† Edwards's *Mythology and Sites of the Druids*, p. 313.

Cuhelyn was a bard of the sixth century, according to Davies (of the eighth or ninth by other authorities), and of course the language is difficult to translate; but in connection with what is said elsewhere, I think we may safely conclude that the *Mawr Côr Kyvoeth* was the circle of Stonehenge.

From Aneurin we learn that the feast was celebrated in a suite of temporary buildings upon the Ystre or Cursus, into which one of the avenues leads from the Great Temple. This is half a mile north from Stonehenge, about two miles long, inclosed by two ditches 350 feet asunder. This, then, might be the "*palace*" of Nennius. The *temple* was apparently none other than the adjacent Stonehenge, sacred to the Supreme Being (according to Davies)\*; but the character and worship of the priests who inhabited the "*monastery*" show pretty distinctly that the whole was a survival of heathenism, whatever slight varnish of Christianity might be spread over the narrative by later authorities. The writer of the "*Pictorial History of England*" seems inclined to agree with the learned Herbert, that Hengist and his associates were the parties plotted against. I must confess that this is the only solution which can be found (in my opinion) for the mysterious language of the bards. Vortigern is blamed as being "*Gwrtheyrn Gwrthenau,*" or "*Vortigern of the untoward mouth.*"† The 53rd triad tells us that "*He revealed the hidden dragons which Lludd ap Beli had concealed in the stronghold of the higher powers,—out of love for Rhon-wen, the daughter of Hengist the Saxon.*" This was one of three disclosures which were sufficiently important to cause the downfall of the cause of the Britons. "*Some secret of vast moment was divulged by him out of friendship to his allies and love for his wife,*" the beautiful Rowena.

A poem of Taliesin (p. 63) is said to be extant concerning this "*plot of long knives,*" *Twyll y cylyl hirion*, as it was called by the Britons, which, if published, might still further elucidate the subject; but in the meantime we may partly guess that there was, in all probability, some ulterior design in inviting a comparative handful of Saxons to a feast at which the British nobility from all parts of the kingdom, and even from Ireland, assembled. They were to come unarmed, as being the guests of Vortigern. The flowing mead was abundantly supplied, in cups of glass, to the illustrious assemblage of gold-adorned guests—the torquated Britons

\* But to Hên Velen, Belinus the Ancient or the Sun, according to Welsh authorities.—Herbert's *Brit.*, p. 49.

† *Britain and the Romans*, p. 64.

and the Saxons with their ornaments of amber,—and it is easy to understand that, according to preconcerted arrangements the Britons might have withdrawn; and the Saxons, overcome with wine, might have easily been consumed in the palace by fire, or otherwise disposed of by the hidden “dragons of Beli.” Eidiol, who was “president of the circle, and knight of the course,” showed himself quite competent to the task. He is celebrated as “the strenuous one,” and is said to have slain, or perhaps butchered, 300 Saxons with a staff of service wood.\* The Saxon chief, however, anticipated this plot (if plot there were) by giving the appointed signal, *Nimd eure seaxes*, and the flower of the British nobility, 360 in number, were cut off, three only escaping. Vortigern, it is to be observed, was not involved in the strife, which soon extended over the whole kingdom. As regards the connection of all this with our subject, it is to be noted that the feast was that celebrated on the *Cynteivin* or 1st of May. A shriek was heard on the night of every May-day, over every hearth in Britain, which was thus interpreted by a great proficient in occult knowledge: “the shrieks arise from a contest between the dragon of Britain and the dragon of a foreign nation, which on the night of May-day endeavours to conquer her, and the shriek you hear is given by your dragon in her rage and distress” (p. 66). This was continued during the supremacy of the bards of Beli, the British Apollo; and, however apocryphal, the story alludes to this fearful tragedy befalling them at the Bel-teinne, or feast of (we cannot doubt) *this same deity*.† If the Saxons were entirely pagan, so we may well believe were their opponents also, in the depths of their hearts, if not in outward profession. Now Vortigern is allowed to have been a splendid entertainer, and is not accused by his bitterest enemies of being an enemy to his country. Gildas calls him, indeed, *superbus tyrannus*, but exonerates him from blame in the affair of inviting the Saxons, which he says was done with the unanimous voice of all his counsellors. The tragic end of Hengist, when at last he fell into the power of the British, is a strong confirmation of the pagan character of the times. He was made prisoner at *Caer Cynan* near Doncaster (now Conisborough), was kept for some days, at the end of which Emmrys (Ambrosius) held a council to determine on his fate (p. 75). At this council a bishop (brother to that Eidiol who was superintendent of the *Côr Gawr*) declared that, whoever might befriend him, he would

\* Herbert's *Brit.*, p. 47.

† Smith's *Dict.* “Belinus.”

hew him in pieces as the prophet Samuel slew Agag, king of Amalek. Hereupon Eidiol received a sword from his brother, led Hengist outside of the place, to the summit of a hill, and smote off his head. A mound, still remaining, was erected over his remains. This was probably looked upon as a solemn sacrifice, but whether to the Christian's God or to Belinus (Bel) we are not informed, and may infer as we please.

I think it cannot be denied that Britain in the fifth century was essentially heathen—that the old temples had not lost their sacredness; and that the bards, genuine descendants of the Druids, though much their inferiors, were engaged for a long period in secret endeavours to cast off even the semblance of Christianity.

It appears to have been at the same era that St. Patrick was engaged in preaching in the sister island. His banishing the snakes probably refers to the success of his mission in putting an end to the power of these "serpents" of Beli.

It were much to be desired that the history of the succeeding age could be written by some one possessed of sufficient *cynwrinach*, or sympathetic knowledge, to comprehend the mysticism of the bards; and of sufficient theological capacity to be able to unfold the connection which I cannot doubt to have existed between this mysticism and the errors of Pelagius. This remarkable man was a Briton (*Brito*), probably his real name was Morgan, of which word Pelagius might be a translation. His doctrines created a profound sensation. He "asserted the absolute freedom of the will and the perfectibility of human nature by the unaided efforts of man himself." The foundation on which he rested was not the revelation of some new truth, but the general sentiment of his countrymen, imbued for ages with these very principles. He was crushed\* by a decree of Pope Innocentius, issued A.D. 417; but perhaps it may be said that his doctrines have never entirely ceased their partial hold on the population of these Isles.

The account given by Jeffery of Monmouth of the erection of Stonehenge bears, in part, the impress of probability, and, if at all correct, would lead to the supposition that Merlin had inherited some of the real science of the old Druids. Merlin, who had been the *prophet* of Vortigern, advised Aurelius to send for the Giant's Dance in Killaraus,† a mountain in

\* Smith's *Dict.*, *sub voce*.

† Giraldus Cambrensis says, "In the plains of Kildare," which is more likely. See *Choir Gaur*.

Ireland. "For there is a structure of stones there *which none of this age could raise without a profound knowledge of the mechanical arts.*"

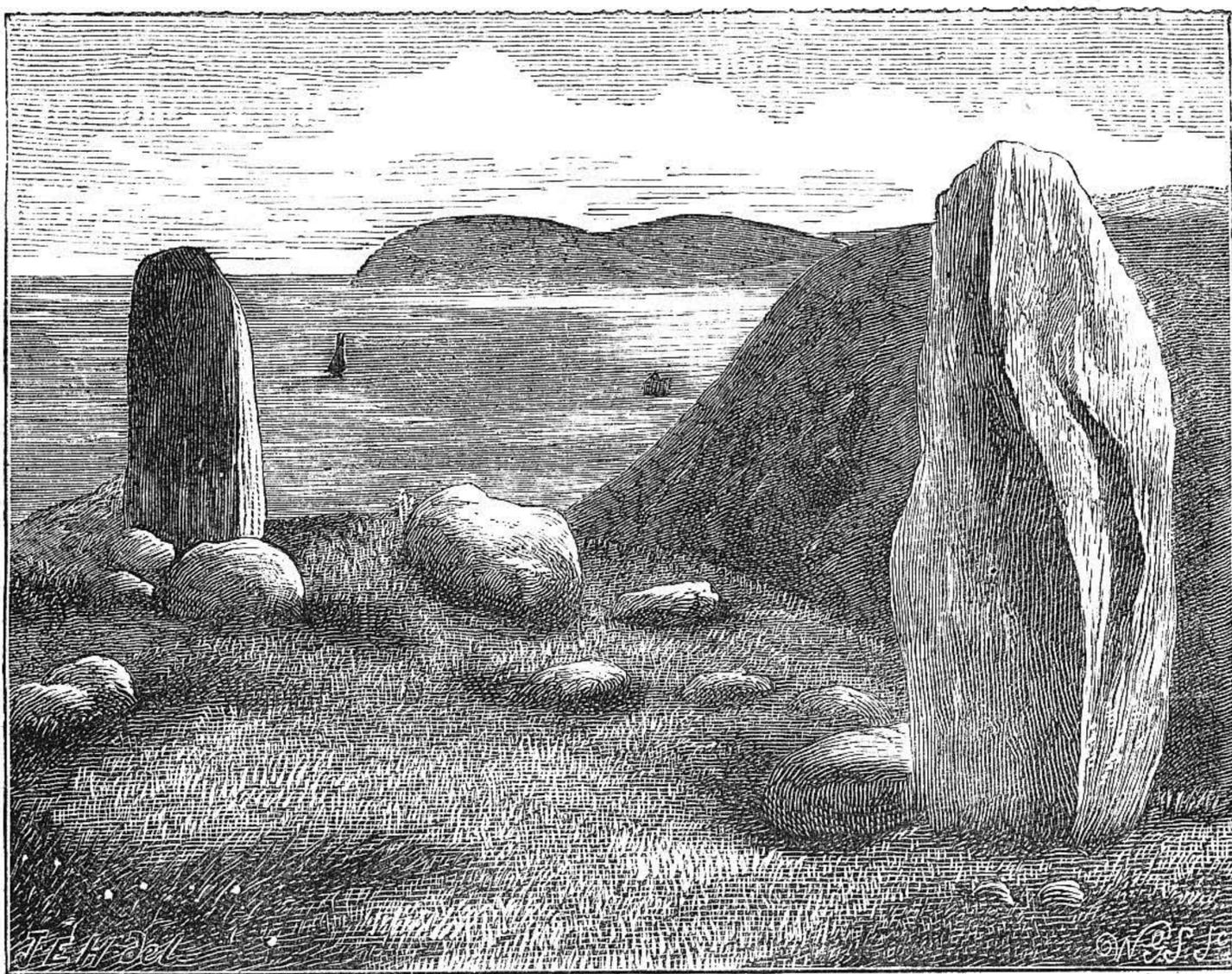
"These stones," continued Merlin, "are *mystical*, and of a *medicinal virtue*. The giants of old brought them from the *furthest coasts of Africa*, and placed them in Ireland whilst they inhabited the country." Merlin then, having received commission, placed in the proper order the engines which he thought necessary for the work, took down the stones with incredible facility, and afterwards reared them up as a monument to the slaughtered Britons; and, as the British historian concludes, "thereby gave a manifest proof of the pre-*valence of art above strength.*" It cannot be that the Sarsen stones were removed from Ireland, but the design of the erection might be taken from a like structure at Kildare, which place was celebrated for its connection with Druidic worship, as its name "Kill dara (*the cell of the oak*)" implies. It was there that St. Bridget kept her perennial fire, and a noble round tower, 130 feet high, still exists as a survival of these fire-worshipping times.

In order to examine into the connection between these so-called Druidic remains and the British worship, I consulted Davies in his "Mythology and Rites of the British Druids." Without being able to assent to many of his views, I found that in one case the Neo-Bardism of the twelfth century seemed to connect the worship of Ceres and Proserpine with a peculiar caer or sanctuary of this mystical goddess in the Gyvylchi, in the desert of Arvon, in Eryri, or the region of Snowdon.\* The annotator upon Camden describes a strong fortress (on the summit of Pen-men-maur) from which an old road, still in part traceable, conducts to the temple. "About a mile from this fortification stands the most remarkable monument in all Snowdon, called *Y Meineu Hirion*, upon the plain mountain within the parish of Dwygyvylchi. It is a circular entrenchment about twenty-six yards in diameter; on the outside whereof are certain rude stone pillars of which about twelve are now standing, some 2 yards and others 5 feet high; and these are again encompassed with a stone wall. It stands upon the plain mountain, as seen when we come to the height, having much even ground about it, and not far from it there are three other large stones, pitched on end in a triangular form."

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\* E. Davies, p. 299, &c.

This I saw under the guidance of a young Welshman, who enlivened the way in not very successful instruction in his language, especially in the Welsh Shibboleth. As usual in these localities, refreshed by the breezy air and beautiful views—for the builders of these circles had a fine appreciation of the best points in the country for extensive views—I examined the Meini Hirion and the stones which lie to the east, which perhaps formed a *kist vaen* for the mystical purification of the worshippers of Ceridwen.



MEINI HIRION, WITH GREAT ORME'S HEAD IN THE DISTANCE.

Whatever glory the sanctuary once had is departed, and it always must have been a very poor affair compared with Stonehenge or Avebury. On my second visit I made a sketch of two of the stones, but could not find any evidence of the number of which it once consisted—*probably* nineteen, or the metonic cycle. Twelve, our author says, are *now* standing. Since then the number has apparently diminished. I noticed one which bore the marks of blasting lying near, which a farmer had turned to his own purposes.

All I could discover in that and in a subsequent visit was that it presented a beautiful site for an observatory of the heavenly bodies. I cannot venture into the question between

Davies and Nash (in "Taliesin")\* about the meaning of the poem *y Howel ab Owain* to which I have referred. He celebrates, to quote Nash's translation, some "tall and white-necked fair of slowly languid gait," whose company he wishes to enjoy. If Mr. Nash, who is very decided that this was an earthly female, and not a goddess, would but have attempted the task of taking a languid young lady—"Even in bending a rush she would totter, so small, so delicate, so feebly descending"†—from *Dwygyfylchi* up to the *Meini Hirion*, he would have been well-convinced by the task that *Howel ab Owain* had no such intention; but that he either was or professed to be sufficiently "moonstruck" to think of spending the night in observing the "luminary of splendid qualities and fair" which he describes in such romantic terms.

All this Neo-Bardism in the *twelfth* century I conclude to have had no real foundation in the belief of the people. It was otherwise, however, in the earlier ages of mankind, when, as in the days of the prophet Isaiah, the idolaters remained among the graves (or tumuli) and lodged in the monuments (or hidden places), evidently with the object of obtaining some intercourse with the invisible world,‡ a superstition in part described by Sir Walter Scott:—

"Brian an augury hath tried  
Of that dread kind which must not be  
Unless in dread extremity.  
The *Taghairm* called; by which afar  
Our sires foresaw the events of war," &c., &c. §

The tale of Arthur is mystically connected with the revival of Druidism; and still this association may be traced in the language of the country. Thus, in *Llan Bendy* parish, in *Cardiganshire*, we find a monument which joins the name of Arthur with another name which can only refer to *Ceridwen*.||

We are told¶ that the three mighty labours of the Isle of Britain were—

Lifting the Stone of Ketti,  
Building the work of Emrys,  
Piling up the Mount of Assemblies.

\* *Taliesin, or the Bards and Druids of Britain*, 1858.

† Davies, p. 284. ‡ See *Ges. Lex.* § *Lady of the Lake*, canto iv. 4.

|| It is called *Bwrdd Arthur and Gwâl y vilast*. A monument of the same kind distinguished by the latter name exists, according to the author quoted above, in *Glamorganshire*, and a third *Llech yr Ast* in *Cardiganshire*. Probably many more, as a similar instance was to be found (of the latter name) near *Llandudno*. To explain this would be as tedious as unpleasant, as it refers to the transmigrations of *Ceridwen*.

¶ Davies, p. 402 ("W. Arch." ii, p. 70).

The first of these "labours" refers to what is now called Arthurstone, or Arthur's Quoit, on Cefn Bryn, near Swansea.

This is described in *Camden's Britannia*.\* It is also called *Maen Ketti*, the stone of Ceridwen. "When complete it must have weighed between 35 and 40 tons." Motley, in his *Tales of the Cymri*, tells us that, "A species of divination is still practised at Arthurstone, by the neighbouring rustic maidens, who have little idea that they are perpetuating (perverted indeed in its object) the rites of Druidism and the mysteries of Eleusis in their propitiatory offering. At midnight of the full moon, if a maiden deposit in *the sacred well beneath* a cake of milk, honey, and barley-meal, and then on hands and knees crawl three times round the cromlech, she will see, if 'fancy free,' the vision of her future lord; if her affections are engaged, the form of the favoured youth will stand before her, fearfully bound to answer truly her questions as to his sincerity."

We may suppose all this vain curiosity to be now banished, but in A.D. 1848 it was existing. More extraordinary still are the superstitions extant in Brittany about the remedial virtue of the stones.

Further information on this subject may be found in Smith's *Dictionary of Geography, &c.*, under the head "Bætylus."

Certain incantations brought *more of divinity* into stones, so that they really were worshipped. The Logan† stones were appealed to in judicial cases, to manifest the right by a divine decision. Other stones were supposed to speak and to utter oracular sayings (which notion the Druids no doubt had means of confirming and turning to their own benefit). Keysler, in his celebrated work,‡ instructs us on these subjects, proving from the Acts of different councils the worship paid by our ancestors; thus the "Concilium Nannetensis" decreed:—

"Lapides quoque, quod in ruinosis locis et silvestribus dæmonium ludificationibus decepti venerantur, ubi et vota vovent et deferunt, funditus effodiantur atque in tali loco projiciantur ubi nunquam a cultoribus suis inveniri possint."

I have been informed that certain perforated stones in Brittany are still used for the purpose of two parties covenanting together by joining hands through the stone,§ which is thus called to be a (divine) witness of the transaction,

\* Gibson's *Camden's Brit.*, col. 741. † *Llogi*, to covenant.

‡ *Antiquitates selectæ Septentrionales et Celticæ*. Hanover, A.D. 1720.

§ See Fergusson, p. 255.

“*velut ibi quoddam numen sit,*” as the next Council quoted, Concilium Rotomagense, aptly says.

This council was also occupied with the iniquity of *candles* and other gifts brought to the sacred trees and fountains, or to certain *stones*, as if to altars. The Concilium Tolitanum (ann. 681) tells the adorers of idols, the worshippers of stones, those who *light torches* and honour (*excolentes*) sacred fountains and trees, are admonished that they who thus sacrifice to the devil are the authors of their own death.

In the year A.D. 789 I find the injunction that the *cauculatores* (in German, *gauckler*), enchanter, weather-makers, &c., should mend their ways, and those (*stulti*) who brought candles (*luminaria*) to the stones (*petris*) or fountains should cease this custom (*pessimus usus et Deo execrabilis*). These *cauculatores* might well be remnants and survivals of the old priests.

To come nearer home, we learn in the pages of this erudite author, that in the reign of King Edgar (circ. ann. 967, as is found in a MS. in Christ's College, Cambridge) the strongest admonitions were issued against similar practices, some of which are even unintelligible at the present time. The laws of Canute prohibit the same things, the adoration of the sun, moon, fire-fountains, rocks, &c. All this tends to show us that this natural idolatry had so strong a hold upon the people that the only way found to wean them from it was to introduce them more or less into the bosom of the Church, as the Concilium Nannetensis, for instance, decrees.\*

The struggle of the Church with Druidism was, then, long-continued and a very real thing! As in many contests, the victory, though final, was not altogether without compromise.

In the year A.D. 384 the Emperor Theodosius “prohibited sacrifices, and forbade the curious inquisition into futurity by the examination of the viscera” of human beings, practised by the King of Babylon, circ. B.C. 593 (see Ezek. xxi. 21), and by Julian the Apostate (circ. A.D. 363).† To the disgrace of humanity, this absurd and cruel practice lingered thus long. Indeed, we are informed by a French author that human sacrifices were still offered in Brittany in the seventh century.‡

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\* “Omnibus interdicatur, ut nullus votum faciat aut candelam vel aliquod munus pro salute sua rogaturus alibi deferat, nisi ad Ecclesiam Domino Deo suo,” with which agrees “Capitulum,” &c. “Ut sacerdotes admoneant viros et mulieres, ut ad basilicas *luminaria* et *incensum*, et bucellas, et primitias afferant,” p. 14.

† Smith's *Dict.*, sub voce, “Theodosius.” See Cwolson's *Ssaber and Trans. Vict. Ins.*

‡ *Le Morbihan*, par Délandre, p. 21.

In the reign of Theodosius, and by his order, occurred the great destruction of the temples of the gods throughout the empire. A striking illustration of the heathen notion of the actual indwelling of the *numen* in the image occurred during the destruction of the magnificent temple of Serapis at Alexandria. The fall of this great idol shook the popular belief of Egypt to its foundations. The emperor had given orders to destroy the temple of Serapis, but the heathens believed that the deity would resent the slightest affront to his majesty. A soldier, bolder than the rest, encouraged by the archbishop Theophilus, dealt a blow against the cheek of Serapis with a ponderous axe, and the face of the idol fell to the ground. The deity silently submitted to his fate. The idol was broken in pieces, and dragged through the streets of Alexandria.

Cæsar, moved by other considerations, took the axe into his own hands, and struck the first blow on the consecrated trees of the Gaul, saying to his soldiers, "*Credite me fecisse nefas.*" Thus fell the wood of which Lucan gives a graphic description,\* every tree sanctified by human blood.

Keysler tells us how long this horrid custom lingered in Germany, and the survival of tree worship even to his own day.

*Once admit Pantheism, and you cannot exclude idolatry.*

### *Antiquity of Druidism.*

To proceed on tolerably sure ground in the investigation of this subject, we will first glance at the testimony of history. Cæsar† gives the following account of the Continental Druids, derived no doubt in great part from his friend Divitiacus, Prince of the Ædui, who was a Druid, and had a principality in Britain as well as in Gaul. He was an intimate client of Cicero.‡

"They preside over sacred things, have the charge of public and private sacrifices, and explain their religion. To them a great number of youths have recourse, for the sake of acquiring instruction, and they are in great honour among them; for they generally settle all their disputes, both public and private, and if there is any transgression perpetrated, any

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\* *Pharsalia*, iii., p. 399, &c

† *De Bello Gallico*, lib. vi., cc. 13-18.

‡ *Borlase, Ant.*, p. 81.

murder committed, or any dispute about inheritance, they decide in respect of them. They appoint rewards and penalties, and if any private or public person abides not by their decree, they restrain him from the sacrifices. This is with them the most severe punishment. . . . One presides over all these Druids, who possesses the supreme authority among them. . . .

“The Druids usually abstain from war, nor do they pay taxes together with the others. . . . In particular they wish to inculcate this idea, that souls do not die, but pass after death from one body to another; and they think that by this means men are very much instigated to the practice of bravery, the fear of death being despised.

“They also dispute largely concerning the stars and their motion, the magnitude of the world and of the earth, the nature of things, the force and power of the immortal gods, and instruct the youth in their principles.”

This we may safely rely upon as on the whole a veracious account (B.C. 99-44) of this remarkable system, which, as far as Cæsar could learn, originated in Britain. This accords with the traditions of the Bards, who say that Bardism originated in the Isle of Britain. “No other country ever obtained a proper comprehension of Bardism. Three nations corrupted what they had learned of the Bardism of the Isle of Britain, blending it with heterogeneous principles, by which means they lost it—the Irish, the Cymry of Armorica, and the Germans.”\*

It was, then, *ab origine*, a purely Welsh institution, but not, as I think, originating in Wales. The resemblance is far too strong to the other great priestly dynasties of Egypt, of Chaldea, and of Persia to allow the tradition of an independent origin to have much weight. We might as well suppose the orgies of Ceridwen independent of those of Demeter in Samothrace.

Strabo, Book iv., tells us that amongst all the Gauls “there are three sorts of persons who enjoy *particular* consideration. They are the *Bards*, the *Vates* (diviners), and the *Druids*. The *Bards* composed and sang hymns; the *Vates* occupied themselves with sacrifices and the study of nature; and the *Druids* joined to this study that of ethic philosophy. They have such a great opinion of the justice of the Druids that both public and private causes are referred to their decision. Formerly they were even the arbiters of wars, which they succeeded

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\* Barddas, Preface, xxvii.

frequently in averting when they were on the point of breaking out. . . . These last, as well as the others, believed *that souls and the world are imperishable*, but that there are epochs in which fire and water will predominate. . . .

“The Gauls have, moreover, as well as the most part of the people of the north, strange customs which announce their barbarity and ferocity. Such, for instance, is that of hanging to the necks of their horses, in returning from war, the heads of the enemies which they have killed, and afterwards to fasten them as ornaments before their doors. Posidonius says that he has been a witness in several places of this custom, which at first was revolting, but became familiar by degrees. When amongst these heads there were those of men of distinction, they embalmed them with resin of cedar, and showed them to strangers. They would not part with them for their weight in gold.

“Nevertheless, the Romans have obliged them to renounce this ferocity, as also the customs which belong to sacrifices and divinations wholly contrary to our manners. Such was, for instance, their habit of opening, with one blow of a sabre, the back\* of the victim, and drawing predictions from the manner in which he fell. They only made these sacrifices by the ministry of the Druids.”

The fourth book of Strabo is known from internal evidence† to have been written in the year A.D. 19. So that we have clear evidence of the state of things at the commencement of our era amongst our neighbours as well as (we must conclude) amongst all the Celtic tribes.

We have thus a tolerably complete account of the Druids from contemporary writers when their order was approaching towards its final extinction under King Lucius in England, A.D. 177, according to Borlase's *Ant.*, p. 149; but not till many centuries later in Mona and in Ireland. The earlier notices are more obscure. Diodorus Siculus quotes from Hecateus the Milesian, who was a great traveller, and accurate in his description of that which fell under his own observation.‡ He wrote about B.C. 500. He describes the Hyperboreans as living in an island in the ocean over against Celtica, not smaller than Sicily.

“Amongst the Hyperboreans were men, priests as it were of Apollo, constantly hymning lyric songs in his praise.§ Also in that island was a

\* “The part above the diaphragm.”—Diodorus of Sicily.

† Smith's *Dict.*, *sub voce*, “Strabo.”

‡ Smith's *Dict.*, *sub voce*, “Hecateus.”

§ *Talesin*, by D. W. Nash, London, 1858, p. 10.

consecrated precinct of great magnificence, a temple of corresponding beauty, in shape spherical, adorned with numerous dedicated gifts; also a city sacred to the god, the majority of its inhabitants harpers, who, continually harping in the temple, sang lyrical hymns to the god, greatly magnifying his deeds. The Hyperboreans had a peculiar dialect, and were very friendly-disposed to the *Hellenes*, especially the Athenians and Delians. The moon was not far distant from this island, and clearly showed certain earthly eminences.\*

"Every nineteenth year the god descends into this island. *This was the great year of the Hellenes.* When the god makes his periodical visit, he both plays the harp and dances during the night, from the vernal equinox to the rising of the Pleiades, taking great delight in his own successful efforts. A family called Boreadae, descendants of Boreas, were the kings of this city, and superintendents of the temple, succeeding each other by birthright."

It is scarcely necessary to remark that our author does *not* speak here from personal observation, but in all probability from the reports of Phœnician merchants who had long been accustomed to frequent Cornwall for tin. The mention of a cycle of nineteen years is remarkable, and shows that these Druids were observant of the heavenly bodies. What ground they had for supposing the weather was governed by changes of the moon I do not know. Certainly the summer of 1879 has been a reproduction of the summer of 1860.† The worship of Apollo or the sun is identical with that of the Druids. I think we may fairly deduce the probable inference that in the year B.C. 500 Druidism was in full power in England, and that Avebury, or some similar Druidical temple, had become known to the Phœnician, and subsequently the Grecian traders. Many Greek writers beside Hecateus mention the Hyperboreans.

Beyond this period history will give us no information. All is lost in the mists of antiquity, and our only resource is comparison with other nations.

The records of the Druids have all perished. The most sacred of their traditions, being committed to the memory of their disciples, who were required, it is said, to learn some 20,000 verses, could not survive the cruel persecutions of the Romans; who, in their hatred of the liberty of which these were supposed to be the upholders, crushed both the masters and the disciples.

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\* Higgins's *Celtic Druids*, p. 118.

† The period of 19 years is the Metonic cycle or 235 months, in which time the lunations return (nearly) and begin as they were before. It takes its name from Meton, the Athenian.

In the Neo-druidism, of which I treat elsewhere, it is probable that we have some faint reflections of the knowledge ascribed to these wise men; but it is in turning to the philosophy of the East that we derive the strongest assurance of the character as well as the origin of their knowledge. In our Gaelic and Welsh translations of the Bible the Druids are understood to be the representative of the *Magi* (or as we call it), "the wise men of the East," and we must look for that origin of their caste in *the land of caste*, or India in its widest extent.

The Indian philosophy, which leaves nothing undefined, explains this matter also.\* There was a time, after the end of preceding worlds, and before the beginning of this, that beings who had acquired merit in the previous state of existence were brought to inhabit this sphere. They could live without food. They could soar through the air at will, and the glory proceeding from their persons was so great that there was no necessity for a sun or moon. No change of seasons was known, nor any difference. There was no diversity of sex, and they all lived in happiness and mutual peace. There was, however, after some ages, a substance produced which attracted the attention of one of the Brahmas, who was induced to taste, and the taste was so delightful that it excited the wish for more, and a principle of evil was now first manifested amongst the beings of the earth, who had hitherto kept themselves pure. The other Brahmas began to follow this example, by which the glory proceeding from their persons was extinguished, and it became necessary that a sun and moon and other shining bodies should be brought into existence.

The history proceeds to explain the origin of the diversity of sex and the difference of colour amongst mankind, and the origin of caste.

The Brahmins, proceeding from the mouth of Brahma, had alone inclination for the divine sciences (*Bráhma véda*).

This then, *traditionally*, was the commencement of *the priestly class*, found among the Egyptians, Colchians, Iberians, Medes, Persians, and Etruscans, also in the new world among the Peruvians and Mexicans, and having in common much knowledge which they concealed from the vulgar.

There can be little doubt that the Druids were a branch of this widely-spread freemasonry; originating with the early

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\* *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 64.

dawn of civilized society, having close relationship with the *Magi* of the East, and like them great proficient in astronomy, in astrology, and other kindred studies. Pliny says\* that in his time the Britons were so excessively devoted to all the mysteries of magic that they might seem to have taught even the Persians themselves that art.

We have probably an indication of this in the survival of the name *Cader Idris*, or the [cadair] seat or chair of Idris. About this Idris we learn but thus much from the Welsh traditions, that he was a great astronomer; but it is otherwise in the East, where he is renowned as the same person as Hermes or the Biblical Enoch, and the Sabians, the old star-worshippers of Harran, looked to his son Sabi as their founder.† In the Coran also the Biblical Enoch is identified with Idris and with Hermes. This Sabian worship came down in full force at Harran till the time of Julian the Apostate, who fell in the Parthian war, A.D. 363.

All that we know of the religion of the Druids seems to present strong affinity with these worshippers of the heavenly bodies, with whom the fathers of the Patriarchs symbolized. See Joshua xxiv. 2, and Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, sub voce "Haran."

### *The Tenets of the Druids.*

Borlase, in his "Antiquities of Cornwall," examines very closely into the resemblances between the Druids and the Persian Magi. From these I would select some of the most striking, indicative of a common, or at least kindred origin, and throwing a strong, reflected light on Druidism.

*First.*—The Druids had none but open temples, and these devoid of images; so Cicero tells us that all the Grecian temples met with in the expedition of Xerxes into Greece were burnt at the instigation of the Magi, "because the Grecians were so impious as to enclose those gods within walls who ought to have all things round them open and free—their temple being the universal world."

The Persians, according to Herodotus, "called the whole circle of heaven Jupiter." In this the Druids would have

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\* *Natural History*, lib. 1, cap. 1.

† *Chwolson Die Ssabur*, vol. 1, pp. 246, 787.

seemed to the same writer to have entirely concurred. There can be little doubt that the circular temples of the Druids were erected with reference to the heavenly bodies. I suspect, however, that the reason lay deeper in the system of each nation than Herodotus supposed. The central fire and the circulation of the planets around this may be referred to hereafter. Suffice at present to say, that there is little doubt the Unity of the Godhead\* was a fundamental doctrine in both religions—a doctrine reserved as strictly esoteric, and only to be taught to the fully initiated.

Cæsar (Lib. vi. c. xiii.) informs us that the reason why the Druids did not commit their doctrines to writing was as I have stated:—"They appear to me," he says, "to have enacted this law for two reasons, because they *neither wished their doctrines to be made known to the vulgar, nor their pupils, trusting to the aid of letters, to pay less attention to the cultivation of their memory.*"

In all this they entirely symbolized with the Pythagoreans, whom I regard as almost one fraternity. The following account of the doctrine of Pythagoras I find in Higgins's *Celtic Druids*, p. 126, quoted from the Rev. Dr. Collyer:—†

"God is neither the object of sense nor subject to passion; but invisible, only intelligible and supremely intelligent. In His body He is like the light, and in His soul He resembles Truth. He is the universal spirit that pervades and diffuseth itself over all nature. All beings receive their life from Him. There is but one only God, who is not, as some are apt to imagine, seated above the world, beyond the orb of the universe; but being Himself all in all, He sees all the beings that fill His immensity—the only principle, the light of heaven, the father of all. He produces everything, He orders and disposes everything. He is the reason, the life, and the motion of all beings."

If such were the opinions held about God, it is very obvious why it was thought necessary to conceal them from the vulgar. Socrates probably lost his life from divulging similar sentiments among the Greeks. Origen informs us that *the Druids were exceedingly addicted to the Pythagorean philosophy.*‡ Pythagoras was born, it is said, at Samos, and was perhaps a Tyrrhenian Pelasgian. It is a curious coincidence that his name might signify, in Welsh,§ one of the main objects of his life, the unfolding of a system of the universe. He is not to

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\* I use the word "God" and "Godhead," though not strictly accurate, for want of intelligible pantheistic terms.

† Lecture XII., p. 499.

‡ Higgins's *Celtic Druids*, p. 305.

§ *Pyth* (world), *agorad* (opening).

be regarded, however, as a myth, but a real person, though many fables were narrated respecting him. He was born, probably, about the year B.C. 570, and travelled over the greater part of the known world in search of philosophy.\*

Ritter believes that through his descent from the Tyrrhenian Pelasgians Pythagoras derived, by tradition, a peculiar and secret *cultus*. Certainly the religious element was the predominant one in his character. His disciples were submitted, like those of the Druids, to severe processes of initiation, in which their powers of maintaining silence were especially tested. Their whole discipline is represented as tending to produce a lofty serenity and self-possession. They had some secret conventional symbols, by which members of the fraternity could recognise each other, even if they had never met before. Pythagoras is said to have been the first to apply to himself the term *φιλόσοφος*, and it is believed that he wished that his disciples should exhibit a reflection of the order and harmony of the universe.† Their pride and exclusiveness, however, and their opposition to the democracy of the day, led to their destruction by fire, together, perhaps, with their master. So, to the discredit of human nature, this grand experiment for its amelioration came to an end. I will proceed to enumerate some further particulars in which the Pythagorean and the Druidical systems agree.

“Number was the dominant and self-produced bond of the eternal continuance of things.”‡ One is the absolute number and the origin of all numbers, and consequently of all things. This original unity is also called God. Harmony of relation is the regulating principle of the universe. The harmony of the spheres was a pretty and poetical conceit of the Pythagorean mind.

If Pythagoras assigned living reality and power to num-

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\* “The Egyptians are said to have taught him geometry, the Phœnicians arithmetic, the Chaldeans astronomy, the Magians the formulæ of religion and practical maxims for the conduct of life. The doctrine of the transmigration of souls was derived by him, in all probability, from the East, and Zenophanes mentions the story of his interceding on behalf of a dog that was being beaten, professing to recognise in its cries the voice of a departed friend.”<sup>1</sup> This is quite in accordance with the Bardic doctrine that a wicked man, when he dies, and his soul enters the meanest worm in existence, becomes better, and ascends in the migration of Abred.<sup>2</sup> From this has arisen the saying “*Trample not on thy better,*” addressed to one who tramples on a worm voluntarily and without a cause.

† Cic. *Tusc.* v. 3.

‡ “Philolaus” in Smith’s *Dict.*

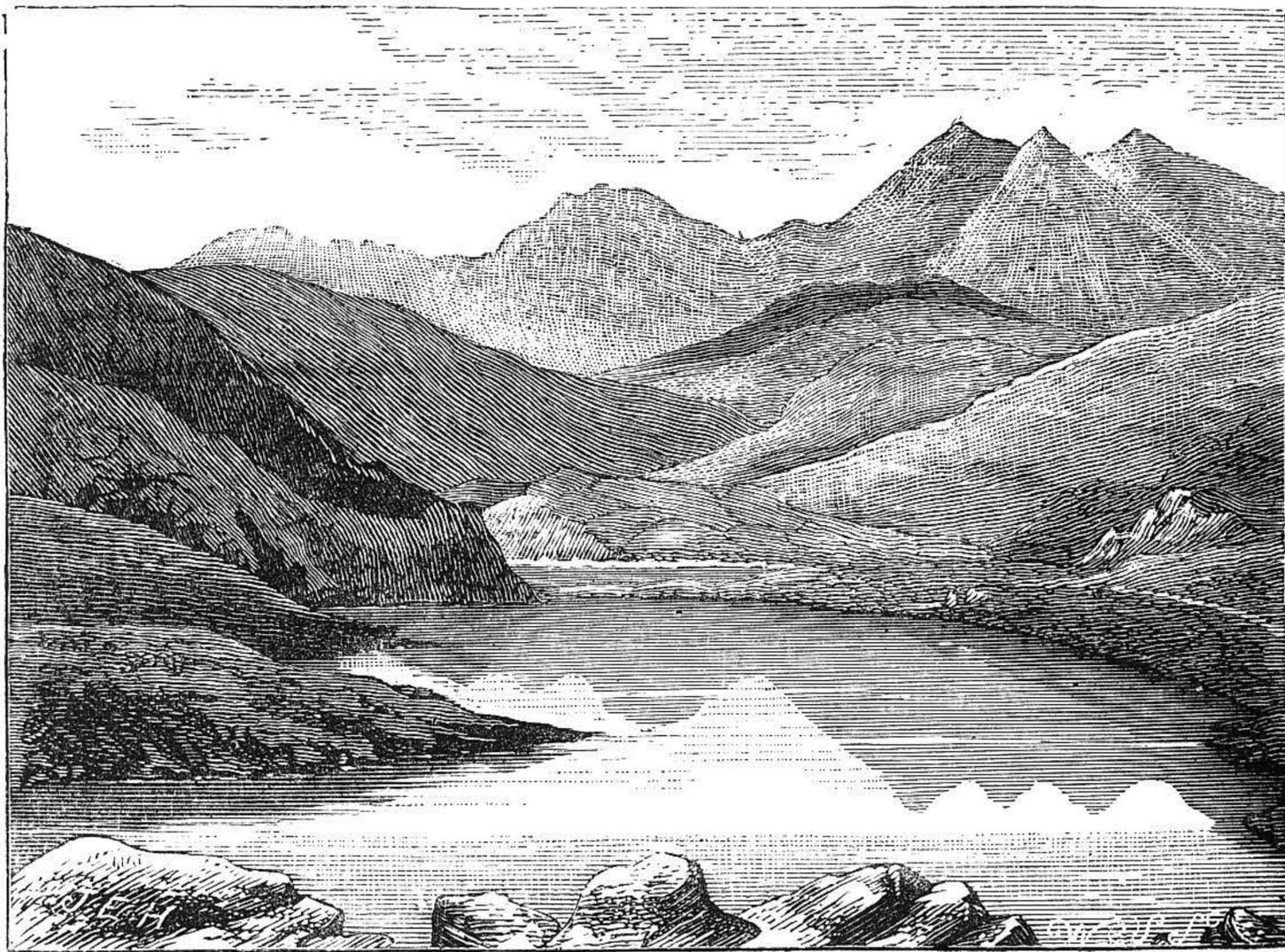
<sup>1</sup> Smith’s *Dict.*

<sup>2</sup> *Barddas*, p. 244.

bers as efficient in the work of creation, he was not more absurd than we are when we speak of nature and of the laws of nature as if they had any real existence. "The number *three* was spoken of as defining or limiting the universe and all things, having end, middle, and beginning, and so being the number of the whole."\*

Snowdon, as is well known, presents from the eastern side the aspect of three peaks to one mountain, and the highest point is called *Yr Wyddfa*, which seems to imply "*the Presence*."

"This untranslatable word signifies '*the place of presence*,' or that wherein the Deity makes himself personally manifest, being compounded of *ma* a place and *gwydd* presence. *Gwydd* is also knowledge, and means trees, which is probably the radical sense, and borrowed from the Druids."†



SNOWDON, FROM CAPEL CURRIG.

\* This, as is well known, is thoroughly Welsh. We have the same notion in the oracles of Zoroaster.

Πάντι γάρ ἐν κόσμῳ λάμπει τριάς, ἧς μόνας ἄρχει  
'Αρχή πάσης τμησεως ἢ δε ἡ τάξις  
'Εἰς τρία γάρ νοῦς εἶπε πατρός τέμνεσθαι ἅπαντα,

where the one supreme Father "differentiates" all things, and speaks all into three. St. Augustine tells us<sup>1</sup> that in the Punic *שלש*, *three*, signified salvation, *salus*; perhaps *Gad* (Jupiter), good fortune.—*Trans. Bib. Arch.*, iii. 171.

† *Britannia after the Romans* p. 32.

<sup>1</sup> Kenrick's *Phœnicia*, p. 166.

In the Pythagorean system the element fire was the most dignified and important, in this again agreeing with the Druids. The central fire Philolaus terms the hearth of the universe, the house or watch-tower of Zeus (as the Bards thought the sun the abode of Hu, Huan),\* the mother of the gods, the altar and bond and measure of nature. It was the enlivening principle of the universe. By this fire they probably understood something purer and more ethereal than the common element. Round this central fire the heavenly bodies performed their circling *dance*.† Farthest off the sphere of the fixed stars; then in order the five planets, the sun, the moon, the earth, and the counter-earth.‡ The revolution of the earth round its axis was taught by the Pythagorean Ecphantus and Heracleides; a combined motion round the central fire and round its own axis, by Aristarchus of Samos. The circling dance§ of the Druids was intended to commemorate the above astronomical discoveries; and that these were by no means contemptible we may infer from the certainty that these old "astronomers" could calculate eclipses.||

I refer to Laplace for the history of the early origin of astronomy, and for the connection of Pythagoras with that of the Egyptians, which he supposes to have been founded two Sothic periods before B.C. 139, when this period was renewed, or  $1461 + 1461 + 139 = \text{B.C. } 2783$ . From other considerations, he places the probable beginning of the Zodiac at B.C. 2500, and I suppose little doubt can be felt as to the astronomical references of the Great Pyramid. It would follow from these, conjoined with those recently observed as to the Chaldean astronomy, that this science had already been cultivated by

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\* See *Welsh Dict.*, *sub voce* "Huan," also.

† *χορηγεῖν* is the expression of Philolaus.

‡ *ἀντιχθων*, the *antipodes*.

§ "Drud awyrdwth, amnwyth, amniver

Druidion a Beirddion

A wawl nêb dragon." (The bard Cynddelw.)

Translated thus by Davies<sup>1</sup>:—"Rapidly moving, in the course of the sky, in circles, in uneven numbers, Druids and bards unite in celebrating their leader," *i.e.* the Sun.

|| Caius Sulpicius, a Gaul by nation, foretold an eclipse of the moon to the Roman army, upon which Livy adds that thenceforth "Gallos Romanis militibus sapientiâ prope divinâ visos."—Livy, lib. xlv. ch. 37; Borlase, 90.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*, pp. 16, 173.

the joint labours of the wise men of the east for some two thousand years before the age we are considering. It is not, then, too bold a conjecture to suppose that the circles of stones interlacing each other, the central hearth, the triple unity, the eastern position, and so forth, should be embodied in what we call Druidical remains. I have in a former paper alluded to Stonehenge; I have since examined Avebury, which appears to be "the largest and in most respects the most important of the class in this country."\* The three immense unhewn stones (one of which is now fallen), which probably commemorated the Druidical trinity, conjoin with a multitude of other particulars in denoting it a temple devoted to the worship we are considering, in the compass of which "half a million of people could stand," or some 250,000 be seated. It is not adapted to the purposes of defence, and it would be as reasonable to suppose Westminster Abbey to have been erected for the purpose of interring the illustrious dead as the circuit of Avebury to have been formed simply as a British cemetery.†

By the Pythagoreans the intervals between the heavenly bodies were supposed to be determined according to the laws of musical harmony, so that their grand organ was the music of the spheres.

Shakespeare seems to have had some notion of this sort of worship, for which he may be excused as having been, as Fergusson says, "brought up, as most Englishmen have been, in the Druidical faith"! He could dispense with pews and cushions.

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music  
Creep in our ears; soft stillness, and the night,  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.

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\* Fergusson, p. 61.

† Mr. Fergusson says that, "There is certainly no passage in any author, classical or mediæval, which would lead us to suppose that our forefathers were addicted to the worship of a deity so unlikely to be a favourite in such a climate as ours!" I should have been ready to suppose that the very reverse conclusion would be drawn from the visit of the sun being only once in nineteen years. A deity who made himself so scarce would be more likely to be venerated than in climes where his rays were those of the far-darting Apollo. "The moon walking in brightness," was evidently a more attractive object in Arabia in the times of Job. Our author's argument, derived from the absence of "the groves and oaks these sectaries(!) delighted in," must be questionable to anyone who has trod with pleasure among the beautiful trees which adorn the now-picturesque village occupying the site of this temple—for such I venture to call it, although it is certainly too large to be covered in from the weather, which our modern worshipper thinks essential.

Sit, Jessica: look, how the floor of heaven  
 Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;  
 There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest  
 But in his motion like an angel sings,  
 Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims.  
 Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
 But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
 Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.\*

If for "Druidical faith" we substitute the term "natural religion," we shall find many of our noblest minds devoted to it. Byron, who, it is to be feared, profited little by the Scotch sermons of his education, thus speaks of the matter in hand:—

"All heaven and earth are still—tho' not in sleep,  
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling most  
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep—  
 All heaven and earth are still; from the high host  
 Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain coast.  
 All is concentrated in a life intense,  
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor life is lost,  
 But hath a part of being, and a sense  
 Of *that* which is of all Creator and Defence.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt  
 In solitude, when we are *least* alone;  
 A truth, which thro' our being then doth melt  
 And purifies from self; it is a tone  
 The *soul and source of music*, which makes known  
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm  
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,  
 Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm  
 The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

Nor vainly did the early Persian make  
 His altar the high places and the peak  
 Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take  
 A *fit and unvalled temple*, there to seek  
 The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak  
 Upreared of human hands. Come and compare  
 Columns and idol dwellings, Goth or Greek,  
 With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,  
 Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer.†

The inability to understand how worship could be possible on a cold mountain summit, with no protection from draughts, or provision to keep out the rain, is very characteristic of the age.

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\* *Merchant of Venice*, Act v.

† *Childe Harold*, canto iii.

All the elements of nature partook of a certain divinity, according to the Magian and the Druidical religion, since all were united to Deity. The universe is "imperishable and unwearied; it subsists for ever: from eternity did it exist, and to eternity does it last, controlled by One akin to it, the mightiest and the highest."

Hence the care to preserve the elements pure became a part of their religion. I must confess that for myself I so far share their prejudices that I should prefer the breezy air of the Wiltshire downs to the atmosphere of Westminster Abbey.

The very corrupting body of the sinner, according to the true doctrines of fire worship, pollutes all creation! The death of the sinner Haman could not take place in the light of the king's presence. Among the true fire worshippers the body was delivered to be torn by dogs and by the fowls of heaven, lest it should corrupt the pure air of heaven.

The soul, as a principle of life, was supposed to partake of the nature of the central fire. Nothing is more certainly recorded in reference to the teaching of the Druids than the practical effect which this had in producing a contempt of death in their scholars.

On these points, however, I may not dwell, for the time would fail me to tell of all the justice and magnanimity ascribed to these kingly priests, who, like Divitiacus, the friend of Cæsar, could combine both offices in one, and need not deliver over to the secular arm the offenders, for it was their pleasure to take this into their own hands, and to practise vivisection on a most extensive scale. It was considered good for the prospects of the coming harvest when an unusual number of human sacrifices took place. No doubt they assured the vulgar that the well-propitiated sun-god would then drive away the mists and unveil his smiling face.

It is certain that, like the old Accadians, they considered that nothing but the life of man could atone for man,\* and in putting a man to death they only (as the Buddhists say)

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\* The sacrifice of the firstborn in honour of the sun-god was one of the most notorious rites of ancient Semitic worship. The first month of the year and the first sign of the Zodiac referred to this sacrifice, called *The Sacrifice of Bel*. It is to Accad, and not to Phœnicia, that we must look for the origin of human sacrifice in Western Asia. This inference is verified by two Cuneiform texts in which mention is made of human sacrifice. We have clear indications in these of the sacrifice of children, such as took place in Carthage, in Phœnicia, and in Palestine,—also in the British Isles.—See *Trans. Bib. Arch.*, iv., p. 25.

facilitated his transmigration. It was their mode, their custom, and doubtless these spectacles were as gratifying to the ancient Britons as, to the modern English, the sight of male and female acrobats risking their lives and limbs in their service.

We should bear in mind that the "sermons" connected with the national religion of the ancient Britons were as interesting as modern bull-fights. All could hear the shrieks of the victims, if indeed these were not drowned by the clangour of musical instruments and the howlings of the animals sacrificed.

"An idol named Crom-cruach, consisting of a stone, capped with gold, about which stood twelve other rough stones, was universally worshipped in Ireland before the introduction of Christianity. St. Patrick has the credit of overthrowing this horrible idol, to which the Irish sacrificed the firstborn of every species."\*

A plain in Leitrim still retains the appellation of "The Place of Slaughter." The stone which stands most to the east among the *Maeni hirion*, which I have depicted above, is reputed traditionally to have been the place of sacrifice of the babes, and there was connected with it a sort of altar pavement, the remains of which may be seen in the sketch I made.

The Druids had far too keen an appreciation of the popular mind of the day to suppose the masses would be content with scientific lectures. "Things lovely and of good report" would perhaps have been as little able to fill the temple at Avesbury with worshippers as to meet the taste of the millions at the present day. The Druids kept to themselves their science and the best part of their creed. They left to the public their religion, or rather took it into their own hands, for no sacrifice could be offered without their help. By the way in which the blood flowed they read the mind of God, for was not the blood itself in part divine? The channels for the blood to flow in are mentioned by Borlase and other writers, and still shown, if I remember right, in Brittany. This kind of religion seems to have prevailed wherever these so-called Druidical temples were reared, from the land of the Amorites, the Tyrrhene, and perhaps Iberian races, to the far-distant Mexico and Peru—distant in point of space, but perhaps of kindred origin. Mr. Fergusson may, I think, find evidence enough, if he looks for it, that the religion of the Druids was the true national religion, and that no sectarianism disturbed its peaceful course.

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\* *The Island of Saints*, by the Author (1855), p. 180.

I see no reason to doubt that the Druidical religion and its sanguinary cultus were in full force in England when the ten tribes of Israel were carried captive into Assyria. The co-existence of human sacrifice with a rather high degree of civilization need not be incredible to those who study the great advance of the Mexicans, even in astronomical science. These Aztecs had so far perfected their researches in this direction that they even surpassed their Spanish conquerors in accuracy of computation of the length of the year, and had the method of observing the transit of stars from deep wells, constructed for the purpose, as Mr. Proctor and others suppose to have been the use of passages in the Great Pyramid.

Certain points of coincidence between the doctrines of the Druids and Buddhism are mentioned by Hardy,\* and these must have arisen at a date much earlier than any we have been considering. As to Pythagoras, it is clearly a matter of history that he was intimate with Abaris, a celebrated Druid, who came to him from the land of the Hyperboreans. The great resemblance with the Magian religion, which I can only refer to, also seems to indicate a point of connection before the Cymry left their aboriginal quarters.

Unless we are willing to concede a considerable amount of philosophic cultivation to the framers of the language of the primitive Welsh, we shall find ourselves wholly at a loss to account for its structure. In like manner, unless we concede that the structures at Avebury and Stonehenge were *really* temples, we shall be wholly at a loss to conceive what could induce any body of people to rear structures of such vast extent, "the effect of which," as Mr. Fergusson observes (p. 96), "is immensely enhanced by the monolithic simplicity of the whole." No style of architecture can possibly be conceived more suited to the gloomy and austere rites of Pantheism than the circular temples and groves of these nations.

The Welsh derive their migrations apparently from Thrace, and it is there, amongst the old Pelasgi, themselves wanderers from the realms of the East, that we find corresponding rites of worship.

We have positive testimony in Pausanias,† that the mysterious rites of Demeter were performed at Hermione, within circles of stones called *Logades*.‡

Demeter is the same with Ceridwen. Hermione was an ancient city of the *Dryopes*,§ one of the aboriginal tribes of

\* *Manual of Buddhism*, pp. 27, 34.

‡ Gomer, p. 173.

† *Lib. ii.*, cap. 54.

§ Query from *δρυ-οψ*.

Greece, and was the chief seat of the worship of Demeter Chthonia, who appears to have been their principal deity.

The god at Dodona,\* was reputed to dwell in an oak-tree, reputed the oldest in Greece, and is said to have revealed his will from the branches. This oak was at first his only temple. All this sounds very Welsh.

At Telmissus (in Lycia ?) there was also a renowned temple, *circular and hypæthral*, where a native god was worshipped with magnificent religious rites.†

“In ancient times,” says Herodotus,‡ “the Pelasgi, as I know by information which I got at *Dodona*, offered sacrifices of all kinds, and prayed to the gods, but had no distinct names or appellations for them, since they had never heard of any. They called them gods (*θεοι*), *disposers*, because they had disposed and arranged all things in such a beautiful order.”

Our research thus tends to *connect, if not to identify*, the *Welsh*, by various analogies, with the vanished nation of the *Pelasgi*, the scattered remains of which were extant in the Classical æra in many parts of Greece and Italy. They were called by the Athenians *Pelasgoi*, or Storcks, from their habit of migration.§ They were told by an oracle in Italy that they suffered adversity because they had discontinued offering their firstborn, together with the firstfruits of the field. The *Pelasgi* certainly came from the East.

### *The Mistletoe on the Oak.*

It is necessary to my argument that I should show the relation of the mistletoe to the religion of the Druids. In order to do this I must use the *golden key*, of which I have spoken elsewhere, for this was the *aureus ramus* (the “golden branch” of Virgil),|| than which Pliny (xvi. 95)¶ assures us *the Druids held nothing more sacred*.

In order to understand the mystical secret involved, we must follow with some attention the proceedings of the Druids in gathering this sacred plant.

\* Smith's *Dict.*, *sub voce* “Dodona.” † Gomer, p. 170.

‡ Herodotus, book ii., sec. 52. § Smith's *Dict.*, *sub voce* “Pelasgi.”

|| Virgil, who was born near Mantua, in Cisalpine Gaul, had probably some acquaintance with the tenets of the Druids; at all events, he makes the golden branch, sacred to infernal Juno, the means of gaining access to the infernal regions. (*Æneid*, lib. vi.)

¶ Nihil habent Druides (ita suos appellant magos) visco et arbore, in quâ signatur, si modo sit robur, sacratus. Jam per se roborum eligunt lucos, nec ulla sacra sine eâ fronde faciunt, ut *inde appellati* quoque interpretatione Græcâ possint Druides videri, &c. Lib. xvi., 95.

A recent French writer describes thus the aspect of Gaul, which to a considerable extent must also have been that of Britain in those days \* :—

Instead of a cultivated country, it presented to view only an immense forest with thickets almost impenetrable, from the bosom of which arose, like rounded domes, oaks of secular antiquity.

Nevertheless, in this immense forest there existed vast openings. The dry lands of Champagne, where the chalky soil would not support abundant vegetation, or the sterile districts of Brittany, where cromlechs and stones unheven by the tool of man † presided over human sacrifices. Here and there were fortified camps whither the population retired with their cattle.

In Britain vast fortifications encircled the summits of the Downs, as we see abundantly from remains still existing.

The area of Stonehenge (or of Avebury ?) was looked upon as a quasi-island in the midst of the expanse of Salisbury Plain. In the north of Gaul the people availed themselves of real islands, and probably of lake dwellings.

In the depth of these sombre forests the Druids had their retreats and their principal sanctuaries. They consecrated them to their divinity, and gave the name of God to that *internal something* (*secretum illud*) of which they were naturally cognizant (qu'ils sentaient par la piété). ‡

They were forbidden to cut or to lop these sacred forests. They believed them inaccessible to wild animals, impenetrable to the storm, and safe from the lightning. The earth was believed to tremble, and serpents issuing forth from its recesses to coil themselves round the trees. These forests were arsenals. The spoils of their enemies were here deposited under the care of the ministers of religion. These sacred woods were called virgin forests (*castum nemus*), and they formed sanctuaries, the privileges of which were afterwards attached to the churches.

We see, then, that all was consecrated. They had only to retreat within themselves to be conscious of God, or if their souls "mingled with the universe" of outward things it was to be conscious everywhere of Divinity.

But this gave them no peace. It was a religion of fear, and consistent with the grossest immorality. Nevertheless, there was felt a need of reconciliation with this awful mystery above them. It needs be that heaven and earth should in some way be brought together. There was a pure and serene heaven above them if they could share its blessings.

This meeting-point was found whenever the oak, itself a symbol of Taronowy, the god of thunder, found a celestial visitant in the *ethereal tree* (*Pren awr*), the *tree of the high summit* (*Uchelvar*).

This tree of pure gold (*Pren pur awr*) could not fix its roots in earth, § it must be altogether of heavenly original; and so to find a congenial home on earth it rooted itself into that which was already of congenial nature, the dread Taronowy, the mystic oak.

So it was not common mistletoe that would answer the purpose, but it was the *mistletoe upon the oak*, a conjunction even then rare and now almost extinct. It was the great object of the Druids to ascertain when this

\* *Le Gui de Chêne et les Druids*. E. Magdaleine, 1877.

† The writer refers to Deut. xxvii., v. 5 and 6. "Thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them." ‡ P. Reynaud.

§ Ου γαρ αληθειη ουρον ενι χθονι. Oracles, Zoroaster.

heavenly gift had been given, and to prepare themselves for its reception by fasting and special ceremonies.

As soon as the discovery was made it was the sign of a communication from heaven (*e caelo missum putant*), and the announcement was made to the pontiff of one of the three great colleges (of Gaul).

The next business was to arrange for the collection of the precious plant, and bards were sent forth in all directions to summon the people to the great religious ceremony. The words of the proclamation are believed to survive in the custom which prevails, especially at Chartres, the old metropolis of the Druids, in soliciting presents on the new year with the words, "*Au qui l'an neuf.*"

The tribes being assembled, with tumultuous joy, at the appointed spot, waited for the clergy, who arrived by torchlight leading the sacrifices. Three Druids of the first class, crowned with ivy, advanced with slow steps, one carrying the bread intended for offering, the next a vase filled with holy water, and the third a sceptre of ivory, the characteristic mark of the chief Druid.

The pontiff who was to gather the sacred plant then advanced to immolate the victims, and offer the sacrifice. He was dressed in a white robe and a rochet, carrying an ornament somewhat similar to a cross, which was also the custom of the priests of Egypt. He was shod with wooden sandals, crowned with oak leaves, and wearing a long beard which gave to his countenance a character of mysterious austerity. From his girdle was suspended, by a chain of precious metal, a pruning-knife of gold, having the form of a crescent. Behind the chief priest came the nobility, and then the people.

When all had arrived at the foot of the oak, three ceremonies had to take place: (1) the offering of the victims and the consecration of the oak; (2) the gathering of the mistletoe; (3) the distribution of the sacred plant, the sacrifice, and the festivities.

A triangular altar of wood was constructed round the trunk of the tree (*unity in the circle, and trinity in the altar*), from which the oak seemed to arise.

A circular tablet was appended to the tree, on which were written mystic letters signifying (according to Trémolière), *Dieu père, Lumière souveraine, principe de la vie qu'il donne au monde.*

The victims, two bulls, were then offered, and a Druid cast upon a fire lighted at each of the angles of the altar a slice of bread on which some drops of wine had been poured; hymns to Teutates accompanying this portion of the ceremony.

These offerings being completed, the Arch-Druid ascended the tree by means of a ladder, and cut, without touching it, the branch of mistletoe with his golden falchion, allowing it to fall upon a white linen cloth which had never been used, the four corners of which were each held by young Druidesses or by Druid dignitaries. Great care was taken that it should not touch the ground.

Afterwards took place the distribution of the precious plant. Water in which the sacred mistletoe had been immersed was given to or sprinkled upon the people (*l'eau lustrale*). Then the branches were cut to pieces and divided amongst the assembled tribes in the midst of feasts and addresses. Then followed scenes not very dissimilar from some enacted under the pretence of religion to the present day.\*

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\* The "Pardon of St. Ann" (to which I have seen the Bretons flocking in their picturesque costumes), may well be a "survival" of the above festival of heathenism, though now turned to the profit of the priest, and of the "Church."

I think the account of the altar much to be noted in connection with the Pythagorean notion of the Number Three, which either as a number or *in a triangle* denoted the *universe in connection with God*, the Absolute in itself, the Unconditioned.\*

The whole subject of the golden branch reminds of the language of Isaiah (xlv. 8), "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, *and let them bring forth salvation*, and let righteousness spring up together," especially as the previous verse has by way of contrast to the dualism of the Persians. In Zechariah (xiv. 8) the typical branch is shown to be a person: "Behold I bring forth my servant, the BRANCH." "The primary idea of the Hebrew word is that of shining forth;"† so by a kind of play upon words, very common in the Hebrew, we have the word rendered *Ἀνατολή* in the LXX. of Zechariah; and in the gospel, "*The dayspring from on high* hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness . . . to guide our feet into the way of peace."‡

Do we not then begin to see that the word DRUID may have been one full of meaning and of the loftiest possible pretension? Does it not imply that as sacrificing priests they were mediators between heaven and earth? Mystically they were alike, the oak (*Taronowy*) and the branch of pure gold which it bore. Each one of the mysterious confraternity partook of the divine majesty of the god of lightning, who was indwelling in the oak, and also of the heavenly qualities of the branch which it bore. Supreme dominion and the credit of possessing the properties of the "all-healing" plant§ of heavenly birth, were in themselves a large endowment, especially with the added attribute of the highest wisdom.

This derivation of the word suggested in the work above quoted appears to me probable. *Dru* or *Dar* (another form) "must have once signified equally an oak and the thunder;" and "the Thunderer is identified with the tree" in a passage of Taliesin quoted by Williams || to whom I refer for full elucidation of the subject, also for the proof that the Greek "Ἰδῆ¶" is identical with the Welsh *gwydd*, so that we have in Druid the exact rendering of the oak and the mistletoe, "the branch"

\* Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, sub voce "Tabernacle."

† Ges. *Lex. in loco*.

‡ Song of Zacharias in Luke i.

§ *Omnia sanans*, Pliny; "*guithil*," German, *uchel-fel*, heavenly honey Le Gui, pp. 76-77.

|| Gomer, p. 107.

¶ With the digamma.

including *mystically* all I have said.\* The *Chief Druid* of his age was the priest and representative of the great luminary, A VISIBLE GOD upon earth.†

### *Pantheism.*

The Bardic system teaches that God made all things out of Himself,‡ or in other words:

“From the particles which He collected out of the infinite expanse of the circle of Ceugant, and collocated in order and just arrangement in the circle of Gwynvyd as worlds, and lives and natures, without number, weight, or measure, which any mind or intellect but Himself could possibly foresee or devise, even if it possessed the endless ages of the circle of Ceugant.

“Of what materials did God make the worlds?

“Of *Himself*, for existence having a beginning does not otherwise take place.

“How were animation and life obtained?

“From God and in God were they found; that is, from the fundamental and absolute *life*, that is from God *uniting Himself to the dead or earthliness*; hence motion and mind, that is soul.”

From this we must understand that God did not create the ultimate particles of matter, but found them in the Ceugant. So that we start with the absolute reversion of the grand truth so clearly propounded in the first verse of Genesis, that, in the beginning Elohim created or formed the ultimate particles of matter, both of the heavens and the earth.

We also learn that, instead of God being, as taught by Our Lord, IINEYMA, Spirit, He is *HU* the mighty, not to be known or understood apart from His creation.

“The smallest of the small  
Is Hu the Mighty, as the world judges,  
And the greatest, and a lord to us,  
Let us well believe, and our *mysterious god*.  
Light his course and active;  
An atom of glowing heat is his car.  
Great on land and on the seas,  
The greatest that I manifestly can have,  
Greater than the worlds. Let us beware  
Of mean indignity to him who deals in bounty.”

The “mysterious God,” as it is translated, is in the original “*Duw Celi*,” that is to say, “God, the secret one;” reminding us much of Jupiter Ammon, which has the same signification, also of the altar to the Unknown God at Athens.

\* Voila incontestablement, dit J. Regnaud, le type primitif de deux radicaux, *derw*, chêne, et *wydd*, *gwydd*, qui in Kimrique signifie *gui*, la plante par excellence. Le *Derwydd*, se retrouve dans le Breton *Drouz*, qui signifie, non pas seulement “l’homme du chêne,” mais “l’homme du *gui* de chêne.” Regnaud. † Davies, p. 296. ‡ Barddas, p. 257.

“The least thing is none other than God,” for in every particle (of light especially) there is a place wholly commensurate with God (p. 17). It is not quite so clear what happens when light is absent, as we may see presently, but all corporeal things endued with *life* are constructed out of the particles of *light*.

I suppose we must consider that light may be latent as electricity, but as there is an awkward question about “*Cythraul*” in the darkness, all Bardic devotions must be performed in the light of the sun.

“Why is the face turned towards the sun in every asseveration and prayer?” (p. 263).

“Because *God is in every light*, and the chief of every light is the sun. The sun was designated *Huan*, or the abode of God (p. 264), therefore, in the act of worshipping as well as in the performance of every other solemn rite, they did all in the face of the sun and the eye of light, that is, in the face or before the face of him whom they regarded as living and existing in the sun and the light.”

This is the explanation of a *Christian* president of the chair of Glamorgan, and perhaps not entirely correct, for we have seen (p. 257) that God is *united (ymgyfymgyd)* to “the dead” (or *marw*), hence we have the idea expressed in the following passage:—

“What material did God use in the formation of the world, namely, the heaven and the earth, and other things known and conceived (p. 261)?”

“The *Manred*, that is the smallest of the small, so that a smaller could not be, which flowed\* in one sea through the Ceugant—God being its life and *pervading each atom*, and God moving in it, and changing the condition of the ‘manred’ without undergoing a change in himself. For life is unchangeable in all its motions, but the condition of that which is moved is not one and the same. Therefore, because God is in every motion (*yymod*), one of God’s names is *MODUR*, and the condition that is moved is called *Modur-ansawdd*.”

Every particle of *Manred* may therefore be thus expressed. Let *M* stand for *Manred*, and *x* for the unknown quantity, or God, then

$$M + x$$

the smallest particle conceivable, but let *M* be multiplied by the number expressing all the particles in the universe, still this infinite number will be simply  $+ x$ , because God is one.

\* This explains the component *rhed* which occurs in the word “manred,” i.e. “flowing particles.”

Something like this conception is expressed by Pope\* in the following lines:—

“All are but parts of one stupendous whole  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul  
That changed through all, and yet in all the same.  
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame;  
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glowes in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,  
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent,  
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part  
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;  
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns  
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns.  
To Him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
He fills, He bounds, connects and equals all.”

#### *Contrast and Conclusion.*

Pantheism in its refined form seems to me to be the highest effort of the natural mind in religion. We are told by the Apostle Paul that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. It is, nevertheless, needful to man that he should have some sort of a religion, without which he is like a dog without a master. In pursuance of what may be called the religious instinct, he worships that which seems most superior to himself. In the first place, the sun, “of this great world both eye and chief,” seems to claim his admiration. His beneficent power, as quickening all creation, is that which strikes us most who behold so little of his rays; but in the zones more evidently under his dominion he becomes the mighty Baal, the far-darting Apollo, striking his enemies with irresistible force, slaying the powers of evil, typified under the serpent form, and honoured everywhere with human sacrifices. The moon, the apparently more gentle goddess (or god) received on the other hand the supreme homage of nations, presiding over fecundity—the planets also, as we are now learning afresh, having much influence on the destinies of this lower world. But out of all this Sabeism arises the more refined conception of *light* or *fire* as common to all these, and as either embodying or typifying that more refined principle which was supposed to animate all.

It is this form of idolatry which came to its culminating point in Persia, and seems to have pervaded Druidism and

\* *Essay on Man*, p. 77.

the religion of the kindred races who peopled Ireland. The sacred fire of St. Bridget, and the Round Towers so evidently imitated from the fire-temples, attest this sufficiently. In that which remains to us traditionally embodied in the religion of the Bards, we trace the worship of the sun very distinctly, although this may be covered with the varnish of Christianity.

It was probably from an idolatry of this kind that Abram was separated when he was called forth from Ur of the Chaldees at the command of "the God of glory" to serve Him alone. The name of the city is now understood to be "Light," and this we must presume was then considered the highest manifestation of deity, though not excluding the grossest idolatry of any of the striking forms of nature—of idols representing these, or even of man himself as embodying a larger share of divinity than others.

The intense personality of the living God thus making himself known to the father of the faithful is in most striking contrast both to Pantheism and to its accompanying polytheism. God Almighty (*El Shadai*) made Himself known by (apparently) a personal call to Abram ("Jehovah had said to Abram"). We do not suppose (and indeed are told the contrary) that Abram beheld any shape or form, nor do we know the name by which Abram knew how to call the hitherto unknown God who spoke to him, unless it were as above.\*

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\* We find the name "God," *El*, compounded with the name of at least one of the antediluvians, just as in the Chaldean records the name *Tutu* or Father occurs in the antediluvian name *Ubara-tutu* (servant of the father), applied to the father of Hasiadra or Noah, and we have much reason to believe that at that early age *El*, *Bel* (not *Baal*) and *Tutu* were equivalent. *Melchizedek* in worshipping *El-elioun* (the Most High God) worshipped the true and living God. It was not till the time of Moses that the Almighty revealed His name, the *tetragrammaton* which we call *Jehovah*. I cannot help thinking that the previous name was a *trilateral*, such as is found in "*Beriah*," for instance, before the time of Moses. It was either *JAH*, as we find it in the Psalms, or *IAΩ*,<sup>1</sup> as in the Greek verse said to be an oracular response of *Apollo* :

φράζω τὸν πάντων ὑπατον θεὸν ἔμμεν Ἰαῶ.<sup>2</sup>

Both of these are sufficiently near the *IAU* of the Bards to make me think that even the last may be the remembrance of a world-old tradition.

"*Porphry* says that *Sanchoniathon*<sup>3</sup> received information from *Hieromabalus*, a priest of *Iaw*."<sup>4</sup> See also *Cory's Ancient Fragments*. Ed. 1876, p. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Certain ancient writers have stated that the God of the Hebrews was called "*IAΩ*."—*Ges. Lex.*, *sub voce* "יהוה."

*Smith's Dict. of the Bible*.

Since the recovery of the arrow-headed writing I presume the authority of this author will no longer be questioned.

<sup>4</sup> *Higgins's Celtic Researches*, pp. 198 and 208.

In whatever way the revelation of God to Abram was effected, it must be regarded as one of the most stupendous events in the history of mankind. Three thousand six hundred years have passed away, and in every one of these years Abram and his seed have been marked under the eye of God as (whether faithful or unfaithful) the seed of Abraham his friend. The mind of man, ever searching into the unknown and the incomprehensible, should at least endeavour to *grasp* such a fact as this. To deny it or to explain it away seems alike hopeless; to admit it involves the admission of the Personality of the Almighty in opposition to all Druidism, Pantheism, Polytheism, and Natural Religion.

The God of Abram *loves*, seeks the friendship of a man, suffers him to plead with him as a friend, acknowledges that friendship, directs, refines and purifies the object of His choice, and takes him to dwell with Himself, where, according to the testimony of Christ, he is still *living*.

All this is, in my opinion, quite *above* reason, though in no way contrary to reason, for reason has no plummet to cast into this unfathomable depth. THE TRUTH can only be received by faith and spiritually; but, being received through divine teaching and in the appointed way of reconciliation, becomes the joy of the heart for ever!\*

Pantheism may seem attractive in the hour of prosperity, but it has no remedial feature for the hour of adversity, no consolation against the darkness of the grave. Ask electricity to comfort you on the bed of languishing, or demand of elemental fire if it can purge away your sins, or fit you for the happy life of the blessed! Neither is water more effectual.

“Omne nefas, omnemque mali purgamina causam  
Credebant nostri tollere posse senes . . . .  
Ah nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis  
Flumineâ tolli posse putatis aqua.”†

It is not the *Pantheist*, but the Christian, of whom it may be said with truth—

“His are the mountains, and the valleys his,  
And the resplendent rivers. His to enjoy  
With a propriety that none can feel  
But who, with filial confidence inspired,  
Can lift to Heaven an unpresumptuous eye  
And smiling say, My Father made them all.”

\* κτήματα ἐς ἀεί. See John, 2nd epistle, v. 2.

† Ovid, *Fast.*, lib.

## APPENDIX.

*The Bardo-Druidic System.*

THE promoters of the Welsh Eisteddfod, which was held at Llangollen in the autumn of 1858, offered a prize of £30, and a Bardic tiara in gold, for the fullest information, from original sources, of the theology, discipline, and usages of the Bardo-Druidic system of the Isle of Britain. This led to the production of a work compiled chiefly from the MSS. of the late Iolo Morganwg, one of the two that constituted the only members of the Bardic institution, when it was revived at the close of the last century. Of this the adjudicators speak in the highest terms, remarking :—

“When we consider that the *Gorsedd* of the Bards was but a continuation, in the White Island, of the circular temples of patriarchal times, we may feel assured that it is among the remains of Bardism, or the religious system connected with those primitive temples, we may hope to discover, if at all, that *Golden Key*, concealed and secured, which can open the mysteries, or esoteric doctrine, of ancient nations.”

I have reserved for this Appendix a more elaborate examination of the work entitled *Barddas*, as I can scarcely expect of my audience to follow with the *Cyvrinach*, or sympathetic intelligence which is required, the details of this curious mysticism. It perhaps requires that one should have some of the old British blood in one's veins to understand it even with labour and study; but having acquired it, the possessor may feel that he has indeed possession of the golden key, by which to open out stores of hidden wisdom, though that be indeed the wisdom of this world that comes to nought.\*

This system as developed in “*Barddas*”† must be taken for what it is intrinsically worth, there being no sufficient proof of the genuineness of all its traditions. It is, nevertheless, exceedingly well worth study. It is a refined system of Druidism, made to conform as far as is possible with the teaching of Christianity.

It professes to derive from tradition (confirmed by Nennius‡) the origin of the Cymry from Javan, and asserts that Einiged the great, son of Huon, son of Alser, son of Javan, son of Japheth, son of Noah the aged, was the first who invented the *coelbren*—that is, “the wood of credibility,” or record-stick, called by Taliesin, “*y gorwydd a gorail*.” This being the early depository of knowledge, led, as I conclude, to the same word being employed for both, *gwydd* signifying equally “a frame of wood” and “knowledge”; for the *coelbren* was simply a frame of wood enclosing sticks on which letters could be cut with a sharp knife. The perishable nature of the material was a great disadvantage, leading of course to the destruction of all the early records of the Cymry, whilst the Accad people, who in early times were probably their neighbours, found in the plains of Babylonia the right substance, *clay*, which could be baked thoroughly, and thereby rendered indestructible, and so transmitted to us their learning and science, as Pliny says, “*on baked tiles*.”

“Several words in the language which relate to knowledge and literature have a primary reference to *wood*. Thus: *arwydd*, a sign; *cyfarwydd*, skilful; *cyfarwyddyd*, information; *cywydd*, a species of versification, also revelation; *dedwydd*, having recovered knowledge, happy; *derwydd*, a Druid; *egwydder*, a rudiment, an alphabet; *gwyddanor*, a rudiment; *gwyddon*, a man of science; *gugnwiddigion*, men of sacred knowledge.”§

\* 1st Cor. ii. 6.

† *Barddas*, or, *A Collection of Original Documents, &c., illustrative of the Bardo-Druidic System*. By the Rev. J. W. Abithel, M.A., 1862.

‡ “*Extraditione veterum, qui incolæ in primo fuerunt Britannicæ.*”

§ From *Barddas*, p. 13, note.

"*Derwydd*, a Druid, compounded of *gwdd*, a wise man, and *derw*, the oak. *Der-lwyn* and *llwynyrdern*, an oak grove, are among the commonest names of places in Wales. *Derw* is evidently cognate with the Greek root  $\delta\rho\nu$ , as seen in  $\delta\rho\nu\omicron\varsigma$ , an oak. Hence the Greek word compounded from  $\delta\rho\nu$  and *gwdd* took the form of  $\delta\rho\nu\text{-}\iota\delta\text{-}\eta\varsigma$ ; in Latin, *Druida*."\*

"Bran the blessed," the father of Caractacus, is said to have learned a different mode at Rome, where he was detained as a hostage, and brought it with him to Britain, where he taught it to the Cymry, as well as the dressing of the skins of kids and goats, so as to be suitable for written letters. This latter became customary, so that the old method was only preserved by the bards for secret communication, and for the preservation of their knowledge when it became prohibited.

According to this system, the commencement of writing was the making known the ineffable name of God.

"When God pronounced His name, with the word sprang the light and the life, for previously there was no life except God Himself. And *Mennw* the aged, son of *Menwyd*,† beheld the springing of the light, and its form and appearance not otherwise than thus—



in three columns, and in the rays of light the vocalization—for one were the seeing and the hearing, one unitedly the form and sound."

"*Mennw*, on hearing the sound of the voice, obtained the three letters, and knew the sign that was suitable to one and other of them. Thus he made in form and sign the name of God, after the semblance of rays of light."

"It was from the three primary letters that were constructed every other letter, which is the principal secret of the bards of the Isle of Britain."

The sense of O was given to the first column, the sense of I to the second column, and the sense of V to the third.

"That is to say, it was by means of this word that God declared His existence, life, knowledge, power, eternity, and universality. And in this declaration was His love; that is, co-instantaneously with it sprang like lightning all the universe into life and existence, co-vocally and co-jubilantly with the uttered name of God, in one united song of exultation and joy."

"It was thus then that God made the world, namely, He declared His name and existence."

"No man ever heard the vocalization of His name, and no one knows how to pronounce it."

"Formerly signs were employed, namely the three elements of vocal letters" (vowels). However, to prevent disrespect and dishonour to God, a Bard is forbidden to name Him except inwardly and in thought.

These signs being cut on wood, were called *llythyrau* (letters). Sixteen letters were constructed out of the principal columns, and two were afterwards added, and other two completing the sacred number‡ of twenty.

"They were first made on trees: that is, wood was hewn into four-sided staves, on each of which were cut small notches, and it was by means of as

\* Gomer. By Archdeacon Williams, p. 105.

† "The words *mennw* and *menwyd*, which are here used as proper names, signify the source of intellect and happiness, the mind or the soul, being derived from *men*, an active principle:" compare *mens*,  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ . *Man* also comes in here as originally a being possessing *mind*.—*Manuscha*, Sanscrit.

‡ "In *Awen*."—Taliesin.

many notches as were necessary that letters were formed. After that, on a slate stone; that is, letters were engraved on it with a steel pencil or a flint." The lettered stone was called *coelvain*.

The first ten letters were the following\* :—

a, p, c, e, t, i, l, r, o, s,      called *Abceditros*.

In the second age, sixteen letters were arranged, whence literature became more clear.†

In the third age, there were eighteen letters for the improvement of literature; in the fourth age, twenty-four.

According to Cæsar, the Druids in their public and private accounts used Greek letters; but there were some things, such, probably, as the name of God, which they did not deem it lawful to commit to writing.

"The three primary letters," and "the principal secret of the Bards," reminds of the history of Sanchuniathon, who records the fact that Isiris, the *inventor of the three letters*, the brother of Chna (Canaan), who is called the first Phœnician, was instructed in certain mysteries by the prophets *who superintended the mysteries and taught the initiated*.

I will add the passage in the Appendix for the information of those who can compare the account with the worship of Demeter as Eleusis, of the Cabeiri, and of Bacchus. Was the same secret worship common to these initiated ones, and to the Druids? and have we to look for a Phœnician origin for the religion?

Whatever may be the answer to these questions, I think it can scarcely be denied that all this speculation about the rise of letters looks back to an early period of the world's history.

Cadmus is said to have introduced into Greece, from Phœnicia, an alphabet of sixteen letters, so that the "letters" may after all have been imported into both countries from the same quarter.

In order to explain the religious system of Bardism, it is necessary to recur to their three different circles. *Ceugant*, then, is to them the infinite expanse which symbolizes with the *το απειρον* of Pythagoras, "an undefined and infinite *something*" in which were found the points or monads, the *αρχαι*, the beginning of all things.‡

It seems to produce in the disciples of Bardism a sense not only of awe, but of something akin to the revulsion of feeling that one experiences in suddenly being placed on the brink of a precipice. "God only can endure to traverse the circle of *Ceugant*" (p. 233), and in attempting to do this and to become gods the first created mortals fell into *Annon* as the just punishment of their pride.

They were created in the circle of *Gwynnyd* (p. 259), that is, of white or happy life, "thoroughly good" (p. 253), for "where God exists in every atom

\* Irenæus says ("Ad. Haer." 2, 41), "The old and first letters of the Hebrews which are also called sacerdotal are in number ten, but everything is expressed in writing by means of fifteen."—Kenrick's *Phœnicia*, p. 162.

† "The primitive Greek alphabet is attested by many authorities to have consisted of only 16 letters, which have been thus enumerated :—

α β γ δ ε ι κ λ μ ν ο π ρ σ τ υ

and these are called Phœnician letters."—Kenrick's *Phœnicia*, p. 161.

"Quippe fama est, Cadmum, classe Phœnicium rectum, rudibus adhuc Græcorum populis artis ejus auctorem fuisse temporibus Trojanis memoravit xvi. litterarum formas."—*Corn. Tacit. Ann.*, lib. xi. 16.

‡ Smith's *Dict.*

of *manred* evil is impossible, because there neither is nor can be room for it, since God and all goodness fill the infinitude."

This grand event took place (p. 259) "by the voice of his mighty energy, that is, by its melodious sweetness, which was scarcely heard when, lo! the dead gleamed into life, and the non-entity which had neither place nor existence flashed like lightning into elementation, and rejoiced into life; and the congealed, motionless shiver warmed into living existence, the destitute nothing rejoiced into being a thousand times more quickly than the lightning reaches its home."

All this is very pretty and poetical, but how evil first entered I am not bard enough to determine. *Abred* is the *cylch* or circle of evil, of which *Anwn* is the depth, and the "dogs of *Anwn*" were still occasionally seen by the Tam-o'-Shanters of Wales in this century.\*

Evil having entered, it has become necessary (p. 233) that "every living and animate being should traverse the circle of *Abred* from the depth of *Anwn*, that is, the extreme limit of what is low in every existence endued with life, and they shall ascend higher and higher in the order of gradation of life, until they become man, and then there can be an end to the life of *Abred* by union with goodness.

"But no man shall at death go to *Gwynfyd* except he who shall attach himself in life, whilst a man, to goodness and godliness. The man who does not thus attach himself to godliness shall fall in *Abred* to a corresponding form and species of existence of the same nature as himself, whence he shall return to the state of man as before. And then according as his attachment may be to either godliness or ungodliness shall he ascend to *Gwynfyd*, or fall in *Abred* when he dies. And thus shall he fall for ever, until he seeks godliness, and attaches himself to it, when there will be an end to the *Abred* of necessity and to every necessary suffering of evil and death."

"Independently of Bardism,† it would be difficult to explain why *advyd*, a term signifying *reworld*, or a beginning of the world over again, should in common use stand for adversity. It was originally applied to the state of retraversing *Abred*, which being a punishment for sin was, of course, a state of hardship and adversity."

### The Welsh Trinawd.

I do not think this had originally any connection with Christianity.

The Chinese philosopher Lao-tsen, who flourished according to Chinese chronology about the sixth or seventh century B.C., and held the opinions commonly attributed to Pythagoras, writes thus:—†

"Celui que vous regardez et que vous ne voyez pas se nomme J. Celui que vous écoutez et que vous n'entendez pas, se nomme Hi. Celui que votre main cherche, et qu'elle ne peut pas saisir, se nomme Wei. Ce sont trois êtres qu'on ne peut comprendre, et qui confondus n'en font qu'un." J.H.V.

The Chinese interpreter of the passage maintains that these mystical letters signify "the void." In this we seem to trace the *το κενον* of Pythagoras, and also the doctrine of the Druids, as above stated; also the *Nirvana* of the Buddhists.

\* For the goblin huntsman, Arthur, and dogs of *Anwn*, see *Brit.*, p. 116.

† *Barddas* Preface, p. xxv.

‡ As translated by M. Rémusat, *Smith's Dict. of the Bible, sub voce* "Jehovah."

*The Creation.*

“DISCIPLE: With what material did God make all corporeal things endued with life ?

“MASTER: With the particles of light, which are the smallest of all small things, and yet one particle of light is the greatest of all great things, being no less than material for all materiality that can be understood and perceived as within the grasp of the power of God. And in every particle there is a place wholly commensurate with God ; for there is not and cannot be less than God in every particle of light, and God in every particle ; nevertheless, God is only one in number. On that account every light is one, and nothing is one imperfect co-existence but what cannot be two, either in or out of itself.”

“QUESTION: How were animation and life obtained ?

“ANSWER: From God and in God they were found ; that is from the fundamental and absolute life ; that is from God uniting himself to the dead, or earthliness ; hence motion and mind, that is, soul. And every animation and soul are from God, and their existence is in God, both their pre-existence and derived existence ; for there is no pre-existence except in God, no co-existence except in God, and no derived existence except in God and from God.”\*

*Names of God.*

Amongst other terms which seem to have come down from the times of heathenism, † is one which demands particular notice, since (as observed by the Editor of 1876 edition of Cory's *Ancient Fragments*) “we learn from an Assyrian inscription of Surgon's that the correct pronunciation of the most sacred name of God amongst the Semitic people was Ya-u, or Yāhū;” *it is the same in Welsh!*

## IAU.

“DISCIPLE: Why is Iau (yoke) given as a name of God ?

“MASTER: Because the yoke is the measuring rod of country and nation in virtue of the authority of law, and is in the possession of every head of family under the *mark of the lord of the territory*, and whoever violates it is liable to a penalty. Now God is the measuring rod of all truth, all justice, and all goodness, therefore he is a yoke on all, and all are under it, and *woe to him who shall violate it.*”

Is not this the origin of the broad arrow ↑ stamped on all to which attaches the inviolability of that which belongs to the sovereign ?

*The Pelasgi.*

The *Pelasgi* worshipped Ceres in groves similar to those of the Britons, as we learn from Callimachus in his hymn to Ceres. ‡

Τὴν δ' αὖτα καλὸν ἄλσος ἐποιήσαντο Πελαγοί  
 Δένδροισιν ἀμφιλαφές διὰ κεν μόλις ἦλθεν ὕσος  
 Ἐν πίτυς ἐν μεγάλαι περὶ εἶαι ἔσαν, ἐν δὲ καὶ ὄχραι  
 Ἐν δὲ καλὰ γλυκύμαλα—τό δ' ὄς ἀλεκτρινον ὕδωρ  
 Ἐξ ἀμάραν ἀνεθύε.

\* *Barddas*, p. 257.

† *Duw, Dofydd mawr* (the great tamer); *Ionawr, Iau, Ener, Muner, Ner* (the powerful); *Naf* (the creator) *γδυw*.

‡ *The Testimony of Profane Antiquity*. Bridges, p. 75.



The CHAIRMAN.—I have now on behalf of this meeting to return thanks to Mr. Howard for the very learned and interesting paper he has just read. "Learned and interesting" are two attributes that are not always joined together. Sometimes we have papers that are learned and not interesting, and I have also heard papers that have been interesting without being very learned, but here we have both together. (Hear, hear.) We shall now be happy to hear any remarks that may be made upon the subject.

Rev. J. FISHER, D.D.—The paper is one that is interesting to several classes of people. It is interesting to the linguist, to the ethnologist, and, in a certain way, to the historian and to the Christian. The writer has, I think, shown us that man did not come hither in an uncivilized or savage state. Mr. Howard has said, the language of the Welsh people is a philosophic language which evidently was not gathered in the first instance from men grunting or barking, and from that gradually developed into so noble a language as that of the old Gaul. I think it would prove a very interesting and useful study if someone who has the time at his disposal would take the hint and give us something like a dictionary of all those words, whether names of places or names of men, or whatever else, that are really Gaelic in origin. (Hear.) There is no fear, however, of their being lost, for I have no doubt that the manuscripts and books we have will suffice to preserve the language. It certainly would be a great pity that it should be lost or displaced. Of course it is abundantly apparent that the English language is displacing other languages in many countries. It appears very clearly from Mr. Howard's paper that our ancestors far away in the olden days had a knowledge of, and believed in, the unity of God. For my part I believe that that word Belus—Baal—is the same in the Babylonian, Phœnician, Celtic, and so on. Our old "May-day" in this country was "Beltina," the "Fire of Baal;" and to this day May-fires are kindled in Ireland.

The CHAIRMAN.—May I here introduce what I have thought might be a very interesting passage from this book, to which Mr. Howard has not alluded. It is a passage from *Ammianus Marcellinus*, who was a soldier in the army of Julian, and who lived in the time of Theodosius. Writing at the date A.D. 370, he makes remarks on the subject of the religion of the Gauls, and says pretty much what Strabo says. He writes something like this:—"In this country men are generally trained up in the pursuits of laudable doctrine or laudable learning furnished largely from the Bards, Euhages and Druids." "Euhages" is the spelling given here, but that is wrong; it should be "Euhates," but *Ammianus* spells the word "Euhages," meaning to express what is expressed by Strabo's book by *Ouates*, or, as the Latins wrote it, "Vates" (one of the words which shows a connection between the Latin and the Celtic), therefore the three orders of the Bards were the Bards proper, the Vates, and the Druids. "The Bards," he says, "wrote the deeds of illustrious men in heroic verse, and sang them with the sweet accompaniment of the lyre; the Euhages examine into the order and mysteries of nature, and endeavour to explain them; the Druids

are far higher in their flights, being, as the authority of Pythagoras declared,"—he distinctly makes them out to have been Pythagoreans,—“bound together in a brotherhood and applying themselves to questions as to matters secret and of great subtlety; and, looking down on human things, they declared that souls were immortal.” This is a short but interesting passage in relation to this subject, and it shows what knowledge an officer in the army of that time, half Greek and half Roman, possessed. He probably got it from Strabo. At any rate, he had the knowledge; and as the extract, which is probably taken from his commonplace book, seemed to me to be of some value, I have given it to you. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. D. HOWARD.—Of course, the question of the precise antiquity of Stonehenge is almost insoluble; but there is one thing that has always seemed to me not to have been fully taken into account in considering the history of Stonehenge. I think it is plainly shown that the Roman dominion must have overlapped the actual use of Amesbury and Stonehenge and the state of civilization which they disclose. When we examine not merely Stonehenge, but the whole of the district of Salisbury Plain and the range of chalk hills running down into Dorsetshire, we find a complete set of fortresses on the high ground as far as the vast camp of Amesbury. I may say that every convenient bluff of chalk is usually fortified by works that were evidently intended to be effective against horses and chariots rather than against foot-soldiers, for there are deep trenches cut just across the neck of land where it would otherwise be possible to bring up cavalry, and these are not found on the sides where active foot-soldiers might very well fight their way up, but where it would be impossible to bring up horses or wheeled vehicles. These fortifications were carefully engineered by the Romans, some of them being occupied as Roman camps, as was evidently the case at Bradbury Rings and Old Sarum, and also at Hod Hill, where one can see the site of the old Roman camp in the midst of the vast camp surrounding it. These places, it is apparent, were used as fortresses at the time of the Roman dominion. Therefore, assuming that the Amesbury rings may be older than the Roman rings of the same appearance, and that there are no signs of their being newer, or of having been actually used as fortresses by the British at the time of the Romans, who put their camp in the middle, and had roads cut from one fortress to another,—assuming that the Stonehenge and Amesbury rings, temples, and so forth, really belonged to an antecedent period in the 500 historical years during which the Druids existed before that time, that will allow a considerable antiquity to the period in which they were in use; and as they certainly were used at the time of the Roman dominion, they are therefore brought down to a comparatively modern time. You will find in the chalk countries Roman camps exhibiting a perfectly startling clearness of cut, so that the vallum and all the works are surprisingly easy to trace, although many of them have been completely lost sight of by being so entirely covered by coppice that it is only when the coppice is cut you can find them.

REV. S. WAINWRIGHT, D.D.—Among those referred to by Mr. Howard in his valuable paper are the Pelasgi, and after a reference to Herodotus he says, research tends to “connect” the Welsh with this vanished nation—you will observe he does not use the word “identify,” as some rather enthusiastic writers have ;—but this connection of later nations with the earlier is one of the not least interesting of the obvious results of studies of this kind, which also show a common origin in respect to religious usages that have sprung from religious beliefs, while in the next place they lead us to a consideration of what have been the results of the migrations of different members of the human family ; results which have led a man like Professor Rawlinson to say that the tenth chapter of Genesis is our “sheet-anchor” after all, in investigating questions as to the human family, where we note that one branch being pastoral settled here, another with different tendencies went to another region, &c. ; and not only do we note that tendencies of this kind were in operation, but that they were favoured by the necessities, urgencies, and exigencies of the time about which nations were divided into peoples and among the lands after their tongues. I hope, therefore, that what might be otherwise regarded as Mr. Howard’s dry linguistic notes will be seized on by readers as furnishing a *terminus a quo* from which we may push our researches. With regard to the Welsh language, there are those who would pull down a church, though they could not, to save their souls, build up a hovel, and I must say that attempts to eradicate the Welsh language are not to the advantage of civilization. To those engaged in philological research the Welsh language is of inestimable value as affording a landmark in the history of the world. It has the distinctive features of an original language ; the names of things not indigenous have quasi-European names ; whilst those which are indigenous are indigenous to the language itself. It is not so even with Hebrew, which consists of elements derived from other languages and at remote dates. Going back to the question of the Pelasgi, we find they came from the East, and if we read what Lightfoot says about an immigration from Chaldea to the shores of the Black Sea, we shall see that in the Galat or Kelti we have the Celts or Cymri of the present day. You have traces of this idea in the “Old Testament” where the pillar dividing the possessions of Jacob from those of Laban was called Galeed by the one and Jegar-sahadutha by the other. For Abraham and Laban spoke the language of Mesopotamia ; but Abraham having gone to the Canaanitish region, and adopted the language he found there, Jacob was born and bred to use the language which his father and mother had used, namely, that which we call Hebrew. Mr. Howard alludes to the Pythagorean system, and also to that of the Gnostics ; may I say in regard to the Gnostics of our day that there is no dictum of modern gnosticism more misleading than that which asserts, “Law does this,” “Law does that.” Law never caught a thief and never hanged a murderer : it is the power at the back of law which incites law to this or that end. Let us have done with all this ; and we shall have done with it as we fall back on the simplicity of that first faith which is at the root of all Religion. (Applause.)

Mr. J. E. HOWARD.—I have to thank all the speakers for the very kind and favourable way in which they have referred to my paper, and I would now, very briefly indeed, endeavour to gather up one or two points to which alone it seems to me to be necessary to allude. With regard to the Pelasgi, to the mention of whom Dr. Wainwright referred, I may say that the study I have given to the subject has brought before me, very unexpectedly, the connection between the Greek,—particularly the Thracian element,—and the Welsh; and I find this confirmed in “Barrdas,” in which work the origin of the *Cymry* is derived from *Javan*. *Javan*, we know from the Scriptures, represented the Greek element—not the Hellenic, but that of northern Greece. I would also refer you to “Gomer,” by Archdeacon Williams, for some very remarkable connections between the abstract philosophical elements of the Welsh and the Greek languages. I would mention with reference to the Baal fires, that I have seen the ashes of these fires in Brittany. A circumstance occurred to me which shows how important it is to understand Welsh in order to get at the etymology of places even in this country. A clergyman,—a friend of mine—living in the neighbourhood, took me to the top of St. Ann’s Hill, in Wiltshire, for the sake of showing me the prospect. He told me the common people said: “It is not ‘St. Ann’s Hill,’ it is ‘Tan Hill.’” I said: “‘Tān Hill’ is ‘The Fire Hill’—the hill on which the beacon blazed.” This connection of “Tān” with “St. Ann” is also found in Brittany, and the Feast or Pardon of St. Ann is held on the same day as that on which there is a cattle-fair on St. Ann’s Hill in Wiltshire. This is just one instance of how a little knowledge of Welsh sometimes helps us in getting at the origin of an English word. (Tān in Welsh is “fire.” Trydan, “*pervading fire*,” is the electric fluid.)

The meeting was then adjourned.