

without old-age, and peace without discord, and glory without vanity, and songs without weariness and rewards without end: where Abel is with the martyrs, and Enoch with the living, and Noe with the sailors, and Abraham with the patriarchs, and Melchisedech with the priests, and Job with the long-suffering, and Moses with the princes, and Aaron with the bishops, and David with the kings, Esaias with the prophets, and Mary with the virgins, and Peter with the apostles, and Paul with the men of Greece, and Thomas with the men of India, and John with the men of Asia, and Matthew with the men of Judea, and Luke with the men of Achaia, and Mark with the men of Alexandria, and Andrew with the men of Scythia; and where the angels are and the archangels, and the cherubim and seraphim, and the King of Kings, for ever and ever. Amen.'

T. CHARLES EDWARDS

PENAL TIMES AND AFTER

SPEAKING last year at the centenary celebrations of St David's church, Swansea (which was also about the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Swansea mission), the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster remarked on the fact that 'so little has been written of the history of Catholicism in Wales'. Having undertaken some years ago to write a popular account of the Church in Wales, the present writer knows from very practical experience how little that little is; and he hopes that the few pages that follow—to say nothing of all the other pages in this issue of BLACKFRIARS—may perhaps encourage others, better qualified than himself, to put their hands to the work of filling this deficiency in the religious and ecclesiastical history of these islands, a deficiency which may be partly due to the fact that for a century and more the overwhelming majority of Catholics in Wales have not themselves been Welsh.¹

It is well known that the Protestant Reformation was not well received in Wales, and that up to the end of the Civil War no other part of Great Britain, not even Lancashire, was more openly Catholic. 'The Welsh counties tell [the Earl of] Pembroke', wrote the Duke of Feria to Philip of Spain, 'to send no preachers across the border or they will not get back alive'; recusant-rolls and other records are full of the names of Welsh gentry; and the views of the common people were voiced in the writings of poets, of whom the Wrexham schoolmaster, Bd Richard Gwyn, martyred there in 1584,

¹ These notes are mostly taken from my *Catholic Church in Modern Wales* (London, 1935), by kind permission of the publishers, Messrs Burns, Oates and Washbourne.

is the best remembered. The names are known of over fifty Welshmen, clerical and lay, who died for the faith between 1539 and 1680: the first was the Venerable John Griffith, formerly rector of Towyn, who was hanged in Camberwell, and the last a missionary priest named Robert Pugh, who died in Newgate jail; and in between were such men as Bd John Roberts, of Trawsfynydd, Bd John Kemble (Welsh on his mother's side), and Bd David Lewis, of Abergavenny.

It gradually came about, without any general commotion, that 'Welshmen were content to fall in with the humour of the government of the day and to take their religion from the superior powers'—to take it, or leave it altogether. That Wales did not in religion become another Ireland is in a last analysis probably attributable to the failure of the supply of Welsh-speaking clergy. And decisive in this failure were the 'stirs' at the English College in Rome, which led in 1579 to the removal of Dr Morys Clynog, of Clynog Fawr, from the rectorship, and the dispersal of the Welsh students.

Many Welshmen distinguished themselves ecclesiastically on the continent around this time. Dr Owen Lewis (in whose arms St Charles Borromeo died) and Dr Morgan Phillips were collaborators of Cardinal Allen in founding the English College at Douay, and Lewis died in 1588 as Bishop of Cassano, in Calabria, just as he was about to be made Cardinal. Bd John Roberts was a principal founder of the monastery of St Gregory at Douay, now Downside Abbey, whose prior in 1612-14, Dom Leander Jones, Llanfrynach, could write of his community as 'I and my Welshmen'. Another link of St Charles Borromeo with Wales was Dr Griffith Roberts, of the diocese of Bangor, who was his confessor and canon theologian. Dr Roberts wrote a now famous manual of Welsh grammar, which was published in Milan in 1567; the first edition in Wales began printing at Carmarthen in 1857, but was not completed till sixty years later. He also published, at Rouen in 1585, an appeal to his fellow countrymen to keep the faith, *Y Drych Cristionogawl*.²

With a safe-conduct from King Charles I and the privity of Pope Urban VIII, Dom Leander Jones (mentioned above), came to England in 1634 with the object of investigating various difficulties for the Holy See and discussing with Archbishop Laud, an old friend, the possibility of finding a basis for reconciling the Anglicans with Rome. He died in London with his mission unfinished. No other Catholic Welshman was prominent in public affairs in Great Britain till the days of Herbert Vaughan, two hundred and fifty years later.

² Cf. on Dr Roberts an excellent article by D. Rhys Phillips in *Pax* (Caldey, 1917; Nos. 51-52).

In the Civil War, Wales was almost solid for the King,³ and the triumph of the Parliamentarians was fatal to any chance of a Catholic revival. The Titus Oates 'plot' was the final catastrophe, in particular through the complete dispersal of the Jesuit centre in the south, at The Cwm, Llanrothal, near Monmouth, and their reduction to one or two priests at Holywell in the north. As an example of what happened, of the 13,311 people in Breconshire in 1673, Catholics numbered 156; in 1767 there were 60.⁴ Six years later the vicar apostolic of the Western district, Bishop Walmesley, reported to Rome that there were nine clergy and 750 lay people in the whole of Wales. They were nearly all Welsh, but very few Catholic publications in their language are recorded during the eighteenth century.

Of the Welsh or marcher families of *boneddigion* who kept the faith into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or later, their mansions serving as rallying-points for the scattered and unorganised Catholics, only three are still represented on the spot by congregations today. The *Llanarth* line of the illustrious clan of Herbert became lords of that place, which is close to Raglan, in 1465, and adopted the name of Jones in 1587. Their domestic chapel at Llanarth Court (Hendreobith) was in continuous use by the faithful from Elizabeth's time until about 1750, when the existing church was built. The house eventually became the headquarters of the secular clergy in South Wales, and from the eighteenth century members of the Jones family continually appear as Catholic benefactors, especially by giving land for churches. In 1848 Mr John Arthur Edward Jones of Llanarth reverted to the name of Herbert, and by his marriage with the Hon. Augusta Charlotte Hall the Llanarth family was brought into association with the well-known Welsh cultural activity of Miss Hall's mother, 'old Lady Llanover'.

A score of miles north-east of Llanarth is *Courtfield*, the manor house of Welsh Bicknor, where also there has been a continuous succession of Catholics, with priests from the early seventeenth century. Courtfield is the seat of that branch of the descendants of Roger Vaughan, knighted at Agincourt, which suffered so much for its constancy in penal times; and it gave a remarkable number of ecclesiastics to the Church during the nineteenth century, notably Cardinal Herbert Vaughan, third archbishop of Westminster, whose

³ A local record of 1649 at Carmarthen refers to 'that bloody O. Cromwell'—himself of Welsh descent.

⁴ But at this time Catholics were still widely scattered: e.g., in one area, around the Monmouthshire Black Mountains, 3 at Clodock, 3 at Oldcastle, 3 at Llanigon, 2 at The Hay, 15 at Cwmyoy. There were still a few in the last-named remote village in 1839.

nephew Francis became the second bishop of Menevia.⁵ Though Courtfield is now technically in Herefordshire and long since Anglicised, it is not so long ago that people there still spoke of the Catholic chapel as 'the Welsh church' in distinction from the parish church, which was 'the English church'.

In North Wales, *Talacre* in Flintshire never had the importance of Llanarth in the south, because of the proximity of the Holywell missions. Its owners were descended from the younger son of Richard, lord of Mostyn in Tegeingl *temp.* Henry VII, and were of the blood of several martyrs, including Bd Philip Howard and Bd Margaret Pole. Since 1670 the family has given a number of clergy and religious to the Church, of whom the most distinguished was the late Francis Mostyn, second archbishop of Cardiff.

Courtfield is still in the occupation of the Vaughans, but at both the other old family centres the Catholic tradition is now carried on by religious orders. Since 1920 *Talacre* has been the home of the Benedictine nuns formerly at Milford Haven, who were received into the Church in 1913 at the same time as the monks of Caldey; and, as readers of this review will know, Llanarth Court is now the first Dominican establishment in Wales since the dissolution of the monasteries.

Apart from the manor houses just mentioned, the faith has never died out at Monmouth, Abergavenny, Brecon, Holywell, Chepstow, Usk and probably Welshpool; and it will be noticed that all these places, except the fourth and last, are close together on or near the south-eastern border. Among other factors, this can be attributed to the influence of such families as the Herberts and Joneses, Vaughans, Progers of Wern Ddu, Prichards of The Graig, Morgans of Skenfrith, and Havards, and to the Jesuit residence at The Cwm. When this last was broken up in 1678 the centre shifted to near-by Perthir, an estate held first by Powells and then by Lorymers. The last Welsh bishop in Wales till 1895, Matthew Prichard, O.S.F., lived here while vicar apostolic of the Western district from 1715 till 1750, and it became a Franciscan Recollect residence. There were seventy Catholics at Perthir in 1813, but when the friars left in 1818 the mission was merged in that of Monmouth. Other Mass centres round about were at Hilston, The Grove, and The Graig, but the congregations gradually dwindled, and in 1846 the remnants were gathered into one at Coed Anghred, a little wood on a hill above Skenfrith. Here a church, a priest's house, school and cemetery were provided; but they were not needed long: in 1911 the church

⁵ Menevia is the Latin form of Mynyw, the Welsh name of the District called in English Saint Davids.

was pulled down, and what remained of this mission too was merged in Monmouth.⁶

In *Monmouth* itself, the Catholics met in various places during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, till in 1793 a tiny chapel was opened, allowed by the magistrates on condition (*inter alia*) that worshippers should not enter more than one at a time! The present church is on the same site. Among its treasures are the altar and other relics of Bd John Kemble, who ministered near by, around Pembrige Castle, and is buried at Welsh Newton.

The Franciscans maintained missionaries in Monmouth from 1687 till 1812, though none of them were Welsh after 1732. There were only forty Catholics in the town in 1813. Among its priests was Thomas Burgess Abbot, a most zealous and devoted pastor, full of enthusiasm for a sacred past of which for forty-three years he felt himself to be the personal custodian. He retired in 1894, a living link with the pre-Emancipation Welsh Catholicism of Monmouth.

By birth, education or ministry Bd Philip Powell, O.S.B., Bd Philip Evans, S.J., Bd David Lewis, S.J., martyrs, and the Venerable Father Augustine Baker, O.S.B., were all closely connected with *Abergavenny*, where buildings still remain in which Mass was celebrated from at least 1674. Franciscans ministered there from 1687 to 1857, among them David Gregory Powell ('Dewi Nantbrân'; d. 1781), who wrote a Welsh catechism, and the great missionary Edward Ignatius Richards (d. 1828). Up to about 1820 a missionary was useless in Abergavenny unless he spoke Welsh, especially as he was liable to be sent out to remote places in Breconshire, Glamorgan and even Carmarthenshire.

Brecon was served from 1642 till the Oates plot by William Lloyd (brother of Bd John Lloyd), who died under sentence of death in the town jail in 1679. For generations the mainstays of this mission were members of the Havard family, especially those of 'Roman Dingle' at Senni, Battle, Aberyscir and Cefn Coed Cymmer. They gave three priests to Brecon, of whom the two Lewises, uncle and nephew, were particularly devoted and respected; the name of Lewis Havard senior (d. 1845) appears on a list of supporters of the Reform Bill of 1832, preserved in Brecon Museum. Among the other pastors were two converts, Joseph Jones (1850-51) and J. P. Gildas Davies (1857-64); Mr Jones ('Caradog') had been a Wesleyan minister; and Mgr Peter Lewis, the last native Welsh priest of the 'old school' (d. 1902), known all over South Wales, was there from 1851 to 1856. Brecon continued to be an almost entirely Welsh-speaking mission till after the middle of the last century, when the present

⁶ It is nearly a quarter of a century since I was at Coed Anghred. It is to be hoped that the cemetery is no longer in the shocking state of neglect that it was then.

church was built. The history of previous meeting-places is confused; but there are some conveyances and other documents expert examination of which might help to clarify it.

Holywell in North Wales takes its name from the healing spring of St Winefride (Gwenfrewi), pilgrimage to which seems never to have ceased for a thousand years. For long during penal times there were two missions, with headquarters at The Cross Keys and The Old Star inns in Well Street, in charge of secular clergy and Jesuits respectively. The first-named came to an end in 1802, the penultimate priest being Philip Jones of Clytha; but the Jesuits ministered at Holywell without a break from the end of the sixteenth century till 1930, when the parish was handed over to the diocesan clergy. The great figure in the early days was Father John Bennet, 'father of the Jesuit missions throughout Wales', born at Bryn Canellan, an heroic confessor of the faith who reconciled Bd Richard Gwyn with the Church. There must also be remembered the Graingers and Parrys of Twysog in Denbighshire. A tablet in the present church commemorates the reputed last descendant of the Parrys, who died in 1881, but in fact a representative of both Graingers and Parrys was living in Bavaria ten years ago.

The Holywell Jesuits were chaplains to the Herberts at Castell Coch, *Welshpool*, till 1748, and it is likely that that town should be added to those with a continuous succession of Catholics.⁷

In 1800 the number of Catholics in Wales perhaps did not much exceed a thousand; today they are (including Herefordshire) over 100,000; and this huge growth by industrial immigration has inevitably entailed the organisation of the Church in Wales as 'a non-Welsh mission to strangers within the gates'. It is a fascinating and moving story; but I can do no more here than mention a few names, over and above those already referred to. Some are English: Thomas Joseph Brown, O.S.B., vicar apostolic and diocesan bishop for forty years, the beloved Bishop John Cuthbert Hedley, O.S.B., and Father Edward Metcalfe. Some are continental: Father Elzear, O.S.F.C., Father Louis Nedelec at Cardiff, Father Trébaol, O.M.I., in the north. Many are Irish: Father Charles Cavanagh, the heroic Fathers Patrick Portal and Carrol around Merthyr Tydfil, Father Oliver Murphy at Pembroke Dock for forty-four years, Father T. P. Kane, S.J. A few Welsh: Fathers Ioan Huw Jones at Caernarfon and

7. Various registers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have survived and have been printed, with valuable notes, by the Catholic Record society, viz., Perthir 1758-1818 (Vol. D), Holywell 1730-1829 and Llanarth 1781-1838 (Vol. III), Monmouth 1601-1826 (Vol. IX), Abergavenny 1740-1838 (Vol. XXVII). The paucity of material about penal-times in Wales is partly due to the fact that in 1780, during the Gordon Riots, the mob burned the house of Bishop Walmesley at Bath and all the archives of the Western district perished.

the Williams brothers of Anglesey, Mgr Paul Hook. And among the laity, William Owen y Pab (i.e., 'the Pope'),⁸ Gwilym Lewis, Nant y Glo, and H. W. Lloyd of Rhagatt.

But there is one man of whom a special word must be said, though little enough of his priestly life was spent in Wales—Father Henry Hughes, tertiary of the Order of Preachers, of an old Carmarthen-shire family. He had a brilliant career as professor, preacher and missionary in Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Italy, Africa and the United States, and at the age of fifty-three was invited by Bishop Knight of Shrewsbury to work in North Wales. After a year's promising missionary work at Abersoch, on the south coast of the Lleyn peninsula, he took up his residence on the neighbouring St Tudwal's Island. With an Irish priest named Gilfillan and half-a-dozen laymen, he intended to establish there a community of Dominican tertiaries who should be a Welsh-speaking mission to Wales. The bold and visionary enterprise lasted only seven months. Father Hughes's health was delicate, living conditions and weather were appalling; he caught a chill and on 16th December, 1887, he died. Henry Hughes was buried in Llanengan churchyard, near Abersoch; and his enterprise was buried with him.⁹

Many names have been recited in the foregoing pages, and this is deliberate—for they must not be forgotten. But there are other things that must not be forgotten. To the vast majority of Welsh people these Catholic names in the history of their country are unknown. Conversely, there are great names in more recent Welsh history unknown to the vast majority of Catholics in Wales. For example, the early Puritans; John Penry, who left the high slopes of Mynydd Epynt and the faith of his fathers, became a prophetic reformer, and was hanged by order of Elizabeth; and William Wroth, Llanfaches, also the son of a Catholic recusant, and Vavasor Powell. The fathers of Welsh Protestantism and of Welsh education: Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, Hywel Harris of Trefecca, Daniel Rowlands, Tomos Charles o'r Bala, who started the Sunday-schools, Bishop Morgan, who put the Bible into Welsh, Vicar Prichard, Sir John Phillips of Picton, Sir Hugh Owen, Sir Owen Edwards. The industrialists, with hardly a Welshman among them except David Davies the Ocean: Hanburys, Homfrays, Crawshays, Coffin of the Rhondda, Baileys. The political radicals: Hiraethog, Roberts of Llanbryn-mair, Mabon, and the Scottish Keir Hardie. The hymn-writers Williams Pantycelyn and Ann Griffiths, a peasant girl

⁸ For Owen, see J. E. Lloyd's *Owen Glendower*, pp. 157-58. A strange figure with a curious career was Chevalier J. Y. W. Lloyd, Clochfaen (d. 1887).

⁹ See an article by Father Illtud Evans, O.P., in *Blackfriars* (Supplement—March, 1945).

of Powys of whom it has been said that the 'intensity of her conversion to spiritual things would have earned her canonization in the Roman Catholic Church'; and the prose-writers, Ellis Wynne and Daniel Owen, tailor and novelist. Above all the poets: Goronwy Owen, son of a drunken tinker, Twm o'r Nant, Ceiriog (a country stationmaster), Islwyn, Wateyn Wyn (a miner), Eben Fardd (a weaver), and many more before and since, from Aneirin to T. Gwynn Jones. What, indeed, do we Catholics know of them?

These gaps of mutual ignorance must be closed before there can be lessened a greater and more significant gap—between the Welsh people and *Eglwys Lân Rhufain*, the Holy Roman Church.

DONALD ATTWATER

A NOTE ON WELSH EDUCATION

THESE is a general impression that the Welsh Nonconformist tradition is hostile to the introduction of religious instruction into education, hostile to denominational schools, and is the ally of secularist principles in education. This article can be no more than a note on the matter, but it may help to give Catholics working in Wales some clue to the understanding of the Nonconformist position.

Most people are aware that the Welsh Nonconformist attitude was developed during the struggle between church and chapel in the 19th century. The 'church' was the established Church of England, the Anglican and anglicising church of the land-owning Tory Welsh-despising gentry. The 'chapel' was the loose confederation of three or four dissenting bodies to which the mass of the Welsh-speaking peasantry belonged. The Catholic Church hardly came into the picture.

Indirectly, it was in it from the beginning of the struggle. It was in 1843 that the Calvinistic Methodist body confirmed its hitherto reluctant 'dissent' by a resolution to join the other Nonconformist bodies in the support of British schools, in which no dogmatic religion was taught, as opposed to the National schools of the Church of England. From that date the battle is engaged. The Calvinistic Methodist resolution was directly due to the progress of the Oxford Movement within the Church of England. The 'Puseyites' roused alarm in Wales. They seemed to herald the capture of the Church of England by Rome. Protestantism was in danger. The Catechism in the schools could be used to Romanise. The last link between the Church and the Methodists was broken, and the British school campaign was the answer of Welsh Nonconformity to the Oxford Movement. From that moment onward to the 1870 Education Act, and on to the twentieth