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Gwir yn erbyn y Byd.

DRUIDISM.

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CHAPTER IV.

FROM PRYDAIN TO DYVNWAL-MOELMUD.

Not long afterward, as it would appear, there came other tribes and settled in the island. The "Genealogy of Iestynson-of-Gwrgant" refers to two such that came over in the interval between Prydain and Dyrnwal-Moelmud. The Triads speak of three more, which, from the fact that those who composed them were permitted to settle here under

certain restrictions seem to claim precedence, of the Coranians especially. They are thus recorded:—

There are three refuge-seeking tribes that came into the Island of Britain under the peace, and by permission of the nation of the Kymmry without weapon, without assault. The first was the tribe of Kelydhn in the North; the second was the horde of the Gwydhyl, and they are in Alban; the third were the men of Galedin, who came in the naked ships ("Lhongau moelion"—probably canoes,) into the Isle of Wight, when their country was drowned, and had lands assigned them by the race of the Kymmry. And they had neither privilege nor claim in the Island of Britain, but the land and protection that were granted under specified limits. And it was decreed that they should not enjoy the immunities of the native Kymmry before the ninth generation. (23)

The Kelydhn were the old Caledonians of Scotland. The name signifies "the people of the coverts," and was no doubt given them in reference to Coed-Kelydhn, (24) or the forest of Caledonia, in and about which they dwelt.

(23) There are three sets of Historical Triads printed in the second volume of the *Myvyrian Archaeology*. The first was compiled by Mr. R. Vaughan, the antiquary, out of several old MSS. The second is a copy of the Triads in the Red Book of Hergest, a MS. of the fourteenth century, which is preserved in the archives of Jesus College, Oxford. The third purports to have been taken from the Book of Carádoc-of-Nantcarvan, who lived about the middle of the twelfth century, and from the Book of Ieuan-Brechva, who wrote a compendium of Welsh Annals, down to 1150. The learned Sharon Turner's remarks are just: "The Historical Triads have been obviously put together at very different periods. Some appear very ancient. Some allude to circumstances about the first population and early history of the Island, of which every other memorial has perished. The Triads were noticed by Camden with respect. Mr. Vaughan, the antiquary, of Hengwrt, refers them to the seventh century. Some may be the records of more ancient traditions, and some are of more recent date. I think them the most curious, on the whole, of all the Welsh remains." *Vindication of the Ancient British Poems*, p. 131. The Triad quoted above is the 6th of the Third Series.

(24) This was probably distinguished at first as Coed-Kelydh, in the singular number, which signifies the "woody shelter," the plural termination *on* seems to refer more particularly to the inhabitants, *g. d.* the "wood of the Kelydhn," or of the sylvan frequenters.

They are supposed to have been the same race of people as the Brigantes, and were divided into two nations: the Deucaledones, or Deheu-Kelydhon, who inhabited the Southern part of the country, and the Victuriones, or Chwith-Wyr, whose provinces lay Northward. That they spoke the Keltic language appears probable, from the circumstances of their being distinguished by these names, as also from the designation of one of their towns, which was situated at the extremity of the wall of Antoninus. Nennius observes that this wall was called in the British language (Brittanico Sermone) *Guanl*, and a commentator of the thirteenth century adds that it extended "à Pengaul, quæ villa, Scotticè Kenail, Anglicè verò Peneltun dicitur," (see Stevenson's Nennius, p. 19). *Kenail* is in the Irish dialect, which is apt to employ the letter c, where the Kymmraeg has the p. Bede writes the word, *Peanvahel*, (25) which he calls Pictish, (Bede. lib. i. c. xii. § 29). In that case there must have been a greater affinity between the Kymmry and the Picts, than between these and the Scots, with whom, however, they are so constantly associated.

The Gwydhyl were likewise settled in Alban, or Scotland. The name is almost synonymous with Kelydhon, signifying *woodmen*, or men who lead a venatic life in the woods; and it is not improbable that they were a branch of the same people. Gwydhyl was contracted into Gael, and we see traces of the word in Argyle, *i. e.*, Ardgael, or, according to some old writings, Argathel, and Argail; also in Galloway, anciently written Galwedra, Galwegia, or Gallewathia, from which we may infer what particular localities they occupied.

The men of Galédin appear to have been a portion of the inhabitants of the north-western coast of the continent; for we have the testimony of Florus as to an emigration from that part, owing to the influx of the ocean, such as the Triads speak of. His words are:—

"The Kimbri, Theutoni, and Tigurini, exiled from the extremity of Gaul by an inundation of the sea over their territories, went in search of places to settle in wherever they might find them."—L. iii, c. 1.

It must have been, we suppose, one of the three, and judging from the name, we should say that they were those here called the Kimbri, that sought an asylum in the Isle of Wight, which would be granted them by the aborigines, not only from considerations of humanity, but also by reason of mutual relationship.

Now the question, with respect to the matter we have in hand, is this,—were the people, just described, different as to their religion from the "peaceful tribes;" and if they were, to what extent did they exercise any influence upon the primitive or indigenous system?

With respect to the first named, that is, the Kelydhon,

(25) According to the other versions, *Peanvahel* and *Peanwel*. All these forms are but different modifications of the Kymmric *Pen-y-wal* (Pennal), the head or end of the wall.

though we know not whence they came, and consequently, to what external impressions they had been previously exposed, still, inasmuch as the character of their language differed but little from that of the Kymmric tongue, we may reasonably presume that they had maintained their religion proportionably pure, and that their influence for evil would be inconsiderable.

We may gather from the old names of the localities in which the Gwydhyl dwelt, that they had degenerated further than the Kelydhon, in respect of language. This had already begun to assume the form which it exhibits at present, and which characterizes it as the Erse or Gaelic dialect. If, then, the language was beginning to become corrupt, it is fair to suppose, as we have already observed, that their religious tenets partook, in a corresponding degree, of the same deterioration.

As to the men of Galédin, if they were the same people with the Kimbri, as we have reason to think, though thus of the primitive stock of the Kymmry, they must have been exposed to the influence of several nations,—some of them, as the Teutons, being derived from a different source to their own, and having, undoubtedly, about the time in question, lost much of the primitive traditions. The position in which these, on their arrival in Britain were placed, prevented them from having much intercourse with the old inhabitants; it is not, therefore, probable that they had communicated to them any considerable portion of their own peculiar doctrines.

The Kelydhon and Gwydhyl, whatever may have been the degree in which their religious dogmas varied from the Bardism or Druidism of the Kymmry, could have exercised very little influence upon the latter people, because they themselves were situated too far to the north. The people most likely to be affected by them would be the Brython.

In a civil or political point of view there was, indeed, but little danger to be apprehended from one or other of these three tribes, because of the conditions under which they were permitted to establish themselves in the island. "They had neither privilege nor claim in the Island of Britain, but the land and protection that were granted under specified limits. And it was decreed that they should not enjoy the immunities of the native Kymmry before the ninth generation."

The mode of reckoning the nine degrees may be learned from the following extract, which has been taken out of Anthony Powell's MS., of Tir-Iarlh, and is published in the *Iolo MSS.*, p. 74.

"The ninth seizer will stand in the privilege of the ninth descent; but upon a principle different from that of lineal pedigree; its regulating law being as follows:—

"The first of the nine seizors is the son of an alien, that is, the son of a foreigner, who is a sworn man to the country and lord. He is called an alien by descent.

"The second seizer is by the marriage of an alien's son with an innate Kymmraess.

"The third seizor is a son born from that marriage.

"The fourth is by the marriage of that son, that is, a son of an alien by primitive descent, with an innate Kymmrâess.

"The fifth seizor is a son born from that marriage, that is, a grandson of the alien by descent.

"The sixth seizor is by the marriage of that son with an innate Kymmrâess.

"The seventh seizor is a son born from that marriage, being a great-grandson of the alien by descent.

"The eighth seizor is the marriage of that son with an innate Kymmrâess.

"The ninth seizor is a son born from that marriage, being a great-great-grandson of the alien by descent. The reason why he is called a seizor is, because he seizes the privilege of an innate Kymmro from the ninth degree, by virtue of intermarriages with innate Kymmrâesses. If, after his birth, he should utter three cries, his privilege is confirmed, though he should die immediately after the three cries. And every elder of that family, whether lineally or collaterally connected, will be entitled to the rights of an innate Kymmro, even to the alien by descent, who will enjoy the privileges of a nobly born Kymmro in the right of his seizor. And every one of his descendants, whether lineally or collaterally connected, is ennobled from the time that he shall have sworn allegiance to the country and lord, and is entitled to his five free acres of land, according to the primitive usages of the nation of the Kymmry, before they arrived in the island of Britain."

The foregoing refers to the time of Arthur; still it is to be remembered that it professes to be founded on "the primitive usages of the nation of the Kymmry, before they arrived in the Island of Britain." Besides, the genealogical arrangement spoken of is clearly recognized in the code of Dyvnwal-Moelmud, and there is every reason to believe that it originated at a still earlier date. From the Moelmutian Laws we may see, moreover, what was the relative position of the alien during the process of naturalization.

"Every alien and churl is required to be a sworn man, and appraised to the lord of the territory, and to his proprietary lord; his proprietor is one who shall take him under his protection, and who shall grant him land in a villein-town; and an alien is to be at the will and pleasure of such, until he shall attain the descent and privilege of an innate Kymmro; and that is to be obtained by the fourth descendant of his issue by legitimate marriages with innate Kymmrâesses. And this is the mode of regulating those marriages, namely—the son of an alien, being a sworn man to the lord of the territory, who shall marry an innate Kymmrâess by the consent of her kindred, is, by that marriage, in the privilege of the second degree of kin and descent; to their children attaches the privilege of the third degree; and one of those children, by intermarrying with a Kymmrâess of legitimate blood, assumes the fourth degree; a son by that marriage stands in the privilege of the fifth degree, and he is the grandchild of the original alien; and that son, by intermarrying with an innate Kymmrâess, rises to the privilege of the sixth degree of kin; and a son by that marriage, or a great-grandson of the original alien, is of the seventh degree; and, by intermarrying with an innate Kymmrâess, attains the eighth degree, under the privilege of his wife; for it is the privilege of every innate Kymmrâess to advance a degree for her alien husband with whom she shall intermarry; and the son of this great-grandson, by such marriage, attains to the privilege of the ninth descent, and, therefore, he is called a seizor, for he seizes his land, or his fruition of five free acres, with his immunity and privilege of chief of a kindred, and every other social right due to an innate Kymmro; and he becomes the stock of a kindred, or he stands in the privilege of chief of kindred to his progeny, and likewise to his seniors; for such of them as may be living, as father, or grandfather, or great-grandfather, and not further, obtain in their seizor the privilege of innate Kymmry; and he is not, in law, called the son of his father, in suits for land, but his seizor; and he is a seizor to his grandfather, and also a seizor to his great-grandfather, and a seizor to his uncles, and his cousins, and his second cousins, where they, one or other, shall descend from legitimate marriages. And the seizor becomes chief of kindred to them all, after arriving at the full age of manhood, and every one of them is a man and a relative to

him; and his word is paramount over them, one and all, and he is not to be subjected to oath and appraisement; for although they approach the kindred of the seizor, and possess their privileges, free under the protection and privilege of their chief of kindred, they obtain not their lands except those who individually attain the degree or privilege of the ninth descent, that is, of seizor." (*Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales*, ii. pp. 504, &c).

This makes the subject very plain. If, therefore, the law in question was in force when the refuge-seeking tribes came over, or was made to meet their case, it follows that not residence merely, but also intermarriages with native women, formed the conditions under which they obtained territorial possessions. And as it was necessary that there should be four successive contracts of such marriages, and that there should be male issue in each case, it will easily appear how very gradually the incorporation of the Kelydhon, Gwydhyl, and men of Galéidin, with the aboriginal colonies would take place. By a very slow process, then, did they attain that position in which they could exercise any influence upon the peaceful tribes. And several generations must needs pass by before they acquired a status in the National Gorsedh or senate, which would enable them to outweigh the judgment of the natives, and gain privilege and efficient warranty to their own peculiar tenets.

It is stated in the "Genealogy of Iestyn," that "the strangers came from the city of Troy to the Isle of Britain" (Iolo MSS., p. 4), in the reign of Tewged-the-Dark, son-of-Lheveinydh, who flourished about 120 years before Dyvnwal-Moelmud, or 550 years before the Christian era. Reference is made to "Guttyn-Owen and others" (26) on the subject of their exploits here. But it is scarcely credible that the Chronicle of Basingwerk Abbey, attributed to Guttyn-Owen by that eminent antiquary, Robert Vaughan, Esq., of Hengwrt, should be one of the authorities meant; for, though it contains an account of the Trojan expedition, as usually related, it deviates widely from the "Genealogy" in its list of princes, and does not even mention Tewged's name. We may, therefore, very well suppose that the allusion is made to a document no longer extant, and to another and a later colony of Trojans. And in the absence of any positive information on the subject, we infer from the locality whence the "strangers" are said to have originated, as well as from the time when they arrived in this country, that they were a portion of the Massilian Greeks.

The jealousy with which the Phœnicians contrived to conceal from their Mediterranean neighbors this remote source of their wealth, had prevented, in the time of Homer, more than a doubtful or glimmering notion of a sea of isles beyond the Pillars, from reaching the Greeks. The

(26) Guttyn-Owen was one of the most distinguished poets of the fifteenth century. He was historian and Herald-Bard to the abbeys of Basingwerk and Strata-Florida, and he resided alternately in those two monasteries. He was the second person named by Henry VII. in the commission to inquire into the pedigree of his grandfather, Owen Tudor. He died about 1480.

poet, however, seems to have culled just enough information from those voyagers to enable him to place in these isles the abodes of the pious, and the Elysian fields of the Blest. (27) And this, we may remark by the way, adds a wonderful confirmation to the statement of our own Triads relative to the social and religious character of the early inhabitants. In the "Argonautics," a poem written, it is supposed, more than 500 years before the Christian Era, (28) there is a somewhat more clear idea of these parts. Ireland is glanced at under the name of Iernis, whilst another island, supposed to be Britain, is described as *Νησον πευκησσαν*, which Camden thinks was a mistake, for *Νησον λευκησσαν*, the White Island, or "Ynys Wen." (29)

Herodotus, B. C. 445, was "not acquainted with the islands Cassiterides." All that he knew was that tin was imported from thence to Greece. (*Herodoti Historiarum lib. iii. § 115*, Ed. Schweighæuser, Argentorati, 1796.)

The first express mention that occurs of the two chief British Isles is in a work written, if not by Aristotle, by an author contemporary with that philosopher; the treatise in question (*De Mundo*) being dedicated to Alexander the Great. They are there mentioned under the names of Albion and Iernè, and are moreover called "Britannic."

It would appear, therefore, that though the Greeks had begun to trade with Britain before Herodotus' time, their knowledge of the country was very limited for nearly a century later. And to the same effect is the evidence furnished by the discovery of Greek coins in this country, which are generally of a date varying between B. C. 460 and B. C. 323. These, however, would imply a rather extensive and regular intercourse between the two nations; therefore, we are permitted to fix an earlier date to the discovery of the island by the Greeks,—and perhaps we shall not be far wrong in identifying it with that of the "Argonautics"—with which the era of the arrival of the strangers from Troy will very well tally.

The earliest navigators among the Greeks were the Phocœans, who established a very flourishing colony at Marseilles, about 600 years before the Christian era. It was these that directly communicated with Britain. One of them, indeed, the philosopher Pytheas, who was a contemporary of Aristotle, is mentioned by name as having visited our shores (Strabo, lib. iii. iv). And we are informed, moreover, in respect of the mode of transit, that the

(27) Ὁ τοῦν ποιητὴς τὰς τοσαύτας στρατίας ἐπὶ τὰ ἐσχατὰ τῆς Ἰβηρίας ἱστορηκώς, πυνθανόμενος δὲ καὶ πλουτοῦν καὶ τὰς ἀλλὰς ἀρστας (οἱ γὰρ Φοινικεὶς ἐδήλουν τοῦτο) ἐνταῦθα τὸν τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐπλάσε χωρὸν καὶ τὸ Ἠλυσιον πεδιον.—*Strabon, lib. iii.*

(28) Written, it is supposed, by Onomacritus, a contemporary of Pisistratus.

(29) "Quæ necessario sit hæc nostra, Λευκαίον χερσον id est, albicantem terram dixisse quam ante pauculos versus Νησον πευκησσαν, pro λευκησσαν, vocasse videatur."—Camden's *Britannia*.

tin, lead, and skins of Britain were taken to the Isle of Wight, (30) thence transported to Vennes (31) and other ports in Brittany, afterward conveyed to Marseilles, and finally exported to all parts of the world which traded with the Greeks.

The religion of the Greeks was extremely debased, especially among the common people, as we may infer from Homer, and other books of early date. They cultivated polytheism to a great extent, and ascribed deeds to their gods that were a disgrace even to human nature. How they had fallen into this state, it is not incumbent upon us to inquire; suffice it that they were in it at the time when their merchants traded with Britain. Is it probable, then, that they obtruded their religious tenets upon the natives, and were instrumental in corrupting, to some extent, the ancient Druidism of the country? They were under no vow to hide their theology from strangers and aliens, and inasmuch as the Bards of the Isle of Britain were of an inquisitive turn of mind, there is no room to doubt that they became acquainted, in some degree, with the religion of the navigators, especially in Cornwall, where the tin works were. However, since the Greeks had no permanent standing in the country, there was not much danger to be apprehended of their seeking to bring their system and doctrines under the notice of the Gorsedh. Those things, if brought at all, must have been brought by some of the native bards. And according to the rule and usage of the Gorsedh,—they would not be rashly approved and ratified,—it would be necessary that they should be most minutely searched and investigated in all their bearings, by the principal *liverati* of the nation, and receive the sanction of three consecutive Gorsedhau, before they were fully and efficiently authorized.

That the Bardic discipline received the attention of the Kymmry at this time is evident, from what is recorded of Enir, son of Ithel, called Enir-the-Bard, that "he was an exceedingly wise king, and a good Bard; that he reduced to fair order the maxims of wisdom, and conferred high distinctions on Bards and Druids; so that he and they became supreme through the world for wisdom and knowledge." (32) He was the thirteenth prince of Siluria.

According to the "Genealogy of Iestyn-son-of-Gwrgant," the Coranians arrived in this country a generation before Dyrnwal-Moelmud (Iolo MSS. p. 5). They are regarded as the first of "the three usurping tribes that came

(30) Diodorus Siculus says that at low water the space between the continent of Britain and the Isle of Wight (Ictis) became dry land, and that great quantities of tin were carried over to that island in carts and wagons. Lib. v. and lib. xxii. p. 347. This geographical fact accounts for the name of "The Wolf's Leap," at a place between Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, mentioned in the Saxon Cartulary of Wilton Abbey.

(31) *Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions*, tom. xvi. p. 168.

(32) *Genealogy of Iestyn-son-of-Gwrgant*, *apud* Iolo MSS. p. 5.

into the Isle of Britain, and never went out of it." (33) They came, it is said, from "the land of Pwyl" (34), an expression which has been variously conjectured to denote Poland, Holland, and Belgium. But whatever is meant by the word, it would seem from the singular phrase, "Saxon aliens," which is applied to them, that the Kymmry considered them, and the tribes which, in after ages, established the Heptarchy, as the descendants of a nation which originally inhabited a common mother-country, a hypothesis that is corroborated by their recorded promptitude to unite with those tribes to dispossess the aboriginal inhabitants of the paramount sovereignty.

We are told in the Triads that they settled "about the river Humber, and on the coast of the Hazy Sea," or the German Ocean; and if they were the same people as the Coritani, of which there is very little doubt, it would appear that, in course of time, they extended their territories in a south-western direction; for geographers represent them as occupying the present counties of Northampton, Leicester, Rutland, Lincoln, Nottingham, and Derby. And this shifting and enlargement of territory is just what we might expect from their hostile and usurping character, and is thus far confirmatory of the statement, if not of the antiquity, of the Triads which refer to the Coranians.

Extensive information is imputed to this people:—

"So great was their knowledge, that there was no discourse upon the face of the island, however low it might be spoken, but what, if the wind met it, it was known to them. (35) And through this they could not be injured." *Mabinogion; Lhudh and Lhevellys.*

They were also acquainted with the monetary system; for the Greal (1806, p. 241) adds, "a'u bath wynt oedh arian cor," and their coin was cor money, that is, probably, the money of the Coranians. Some coins have been discovered bearing the inscription CORI, and it is very likely that they proceeded from the mint of this people. (36)

The Coranians continued their hostility to the aboriginal inhabitants, and to encroach upon their possessions, until they finally coalesced with the Romans and Saxons, and became one people with them.

(33) Triad 7, *Third Series.* Dr. Pughe refers to an old MS. in which this colony is mentioned as the first in order in seven:—"Coraniaid, Draig Prydain, Draig estrawn, gwy lledrithiawg, Gwyddyl-Ffichti, Kesariaid, ac y Saeson." *Dict. sub voce* "Coraniaid."

(34) In *Myv. Arch.* ii. p. 78, it is added,—"Ac or Asia pan hanoedhymt," and they came originally from Asia. Jones the compiler declared, upwards of 200 years ago, that he copied the various readings from which this passage is taken, just as he found them, in a copy that was more than 600 years old in *his* time.—p. 80.

(35) This resembles the wonderful perception of the American Indians.

(36) According to popular interpretation, "arian cor" was fairy money, which, when received, appeared to be good coin, but which, if kept, turned into pieces of fungus, etc. There is no doubt that this legendary explanation arose from a misconception of the term COR. As it also means a dwarf or a fairy, this signification naturally laid hold of the imagination, and in course of time, probably when the existence of the Coranians was a good deal forgotten, wholly dislodged the other.

If the Coranians were of the same original stock as the Saxons, their religion must needs have borne a similarity to that which the latter professed on their arrival in this island in the fifth century, though it was, perhaps, somewhat more pure. These were idolaters, as the Saxon names of the days of the week still bear witness. They worshipped the sun and moon; Thor, the thunderer; Woden or Odin; Tiow, the god of war, and several others, which shows that they had deviated considerably from the truth. Nevertheless, they had some indistinct belief in One Being, that was regarded as superior to all the others, that is, GOD, which is the name that the English still give to the Divine Being; we hence infer that the patriarchal light was not totally put out among them.

The Coranians, on one occasion, perpetrated a deed that was directly opposed to the spirit of the Druidic religion, that is, they slew Saeran the Bard, "when he was visiting them on a message of peace and tranquility."

But whatever may be said of the character of the religion professed by the Coranians, it is not probable that it had much influence on the natives whilst they continued their enemies, and were not subdued under their power, though, undoubtedly, the Bards and Druids who resided on the confines of their territories, availed themselves of every opportunity within their reach to extend their knowledge. There was something in a religion which instigated its professors to deeds of usurpation and encroachment, that struck, as it were, against the very soul of Druidism. It was impossible that portions of the one should readily and naturally be dovetailed into the other.

CHAPTER V.

DYVNWAL-MOELMUD.

We have now arrived at a remarkable period in the history of our nation—a period in which the remains of its literature are presented to us more particularly in the form of laws. These interesting documents, or, at any rate, as many of them as are known to be extant, were printed A. D. 1807, in the third volume of the *Myvyrian Archæology*. Afterward, in 1841, they were published, with an English translation, under the patronage of Government, in a book entitled "The Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales." (37)

(37) At the end of the "Trioedh-y-Cargludau," p. 483, is added this note:—"And they are called the Triads of the Car-motès; and Dyvnwal-Moelmud, King of the Kymmry, authorized them, for the purpose of showing what was right and law in a country and kindred. And Dyvnwal-Moelmud was the best legislator that ever appeared, and the best in securing privilege and protection both to native and ailht, lest any should act wrongly and unlawfully. Afterward, Howel-the-Good, King of all Kymmru, confirmed them, to be in force, in opposition to any that should introduce contrary judicature and contrary privileges."

And at the end of the rest of his Laws are the following:—

"And thus terminate the Triads of Dyvnwal-Moelmud, which are called the triads of community and federate community. And every annalist and genealogist that would become acquainted with the privileges and customs

Though they do not appear to have been committed to writing for centuries after the Christian era, but on the contrary, to have come down orally, after the manner of the Common Law of England; yet, as no doubt they were well-known to the judicial authorities, and were duly administered by them when occasions required, we have no right to suppose that the specimens which we now possess differed materially from the form in which they were at first enacted, inasmuch as they were impressed on the public mind in the shape of triads—a form which laid unusually firm hold of the memory—and were not revised in a national convention before the time of Howel-the-Good, we may fairly presume that they were not even verbally changed, but that the necessary adaptation to fresh circumstances, as they arose, were made in the administration of them, rather than in the substance of the laws themselves. In looking over the code, we do not see any direct and positive allusion to Christian usages, except in one passage only; and even that, since it is a kind of triple triad, shows clearly that the last clause at least had crept subsequently into the original text, or is an interpolation. But whilst it thus crept in, it did not thrust out the former portions, which still very distinctly bear about them the stamp of druidic antiquity. They are here subjoined, as they appear in their accumulated or triple character:

“There are three *crairs* (38) to swear by: the staff of a priest, the name of God, and hand-in-hand with the one sworn to; and these are called hand-*crairs*. There are three other modes of swearing, to wit: averment upon conscience, averment in the face of the sun, and confirming under the protection of God and His truth. After that, were introduced the ten words of the law, the Gospel of John, and the blessed cross.”

The construction of this extract is remarkable: “There are three *crairs* to swear by;”—“there are three other modes of swearing;”—“after that, were introduced.” The druidic modes of swearing are spoken of as being in use

of the country and kindred of the Kymmry collectively; and the privilege of descent, and its nature by equity; and the privilege of arms, in respect of descent and territorial divisions; and the privilege and lack of privilege of allhts; such ought to know these Triads, before he can of right have an authorized degree of vocal song, in session, according to the privilege and custom of the Bards of the old Kymmry.

“And I, Thomas-son-of-Evan, of Trev-Bryn, in Morganwg, transcribed this from the old booke of Sir Edward Mansell of Margam, when the year of Christ our Lord was 1685.”

In the Triads, Dvynwal-Moelmud is called one of “the three national pillars of the Isle of Britain,” because “he first reduced into system the laws, institutes, usages and privileges of country and kindred.” (*Triad 4, Third Series*). He is also called one of “the three beneficent kings of the Isle of Britain,” because “he improved and amplified the institutes, laws, privileges, and usages of the nation of the Kymmry, as would be right and just for all within the Isle of Britain that were under the protection of God and His peace, and under the protection of country and nation.”—*Triad 59, Third Series*.

(38) *Crair* is defined by T. Richards, as “what is touched with the hand by them that swear.” In the middle ages the name was almost exclusively confined to the relics of the saints. Probably the root of the word is “*gair*,” “air;”—Query, *cre-air*?

when the Triads were framed; and here we find that they receive the force of law. That law, therefore, must have been older than the era of Christianity.

But were the usages spoken of in the two first Triads really of a druidic character? Undoubtedly they were, if any credence is to be given to the traditions of the bards. The *staff* is thus mentioned in the “Voice Conventional of the Bards of the Isle of Britain:”

“Every conventional bard, of whatever order he may be, shall hold in his hand at Gorsedh a *staff*, or *crair*-stick, of the same color as his robe, and a fathom in length. The progressionists shall severally bear a *staff* of the three bardic colors intermixed, to indicate and denote progression. . . . If the aspirant be under protection, his *staff* shall be only half a fathom; but if he be under privilege, that is, a protected licentiate, the length of his *staff* shall be a fathom.” *Iolo MSS*, p. 62.

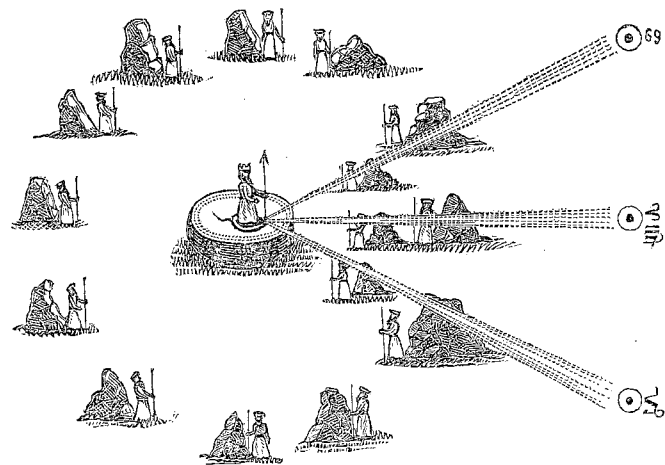
And in another document which refers to the insignia of the Bards:

“There are three general *crairs*: a robe, a *staff*, and a bandlet. . . . The *staff* denotes privilege.” *Ibid*, p. 217.

It is worthy of remark that the word “*crair*” is joined to “*staff*” in both these passages, as is it likewise in the Law Triad. Besides, this mode of swearing is emphatically described in the Traditions of the Bards:

“The usage of conventional asseveration is this: to stand in Gorsedh, with a poet's *staff* in hand, look in the face of the sun and the eye of light, and to declare upon one's word and conscience.” (*Voice Conventional, apud Iolo MSS*, p. 61.)

By swearing in the Name of God, we are to understand the asseveration of a Bard, as he stood within the form or figure of the Divine Name, which was, as it were, imperceptibly drawn on the Gorsedh. For, in the formation of the Gorsedh, it was necessary that the stones called station-stones should be placed inside the circle, toward the east, in such a way that the rays of the sun, as it arose on the equinoctial and solstitial days, should traverse them in the direction of the stone of covenant, in the centre of the circle, thus forming the mystical symbol. (See *Voice Conventional, ibid.*)



That portion of the circle which was taken in by the rays was regarded by the old Bards as more sacred than the other parts, because it represented, as it were, the

Name of God. The presiding Bard stood on the stone of covenant, or central stone, looking eastward; and this appears to have been the druidic mode of speaking in the Name of the Lord. All things of importance, and among them the usage of taking an oath, were carried on in this holy of holies.

The custom of swearing hand-in-hand is also laid down in the "Voice Conventional of the Bards of the Isle of Britain."

"He must put his hand in that of the presiding bard, that is, the chief of song, or chair-bard, and declare upon his word and conscience, looking the while in the face of the sun, and the eye of light." (*Ibid.*)

This mode of swearing seems to have been of a patriarchal, or at least of an oriental character, as may be inferred from the reference to it in Prov. xi. 21: "Though *hand join in hand*, the wicked shall not go unpunished." And, perhaps, there is an allusion to the same usage in 2 Kings x. 15: "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?" said Jehu to Jehonadab; "if it be, *give me thine hand*. And he gave him his hand," in token of affirmation, "and he took him up to him into his chariot." The custom is still observed among some of the tribes of the East, as the following extract from Bruce's Travels shows:

"I cannot here help accusing myself of what, doubtless, may be well reputed a very great sin. I was so enraged at the traitorous part which Hassan had acted, that, at parting, I could not help saying to Ibrahim, 'Now, Sheikh, I have done everything you have desired, without even expecting fee or reward; the only thing I now ask you, and it is probably the last, is, that you avenge me upon this Hassan, who is every day in your power.' Upon this *he gave me his hand*, saying, 'he shall not die in his bed, or I shall never see old age.'" Bruce's Travels, Vol. i. p. 199.

Inasmuch as the rite in question was thus peculiarly Eastern, we may easily suppose that our remote ancestors brought it with them here, when they first took possession of the island.

The second Triad refers to the same dispensation, but that it mentions other modes, which were more frequently practised in later times.

Averment "upon conscience," and "in the face of the sun," have already been brought under our notice as druidic customs. Since, also, "the protection of God and His peace" is applied in the Laws of Dyvnwal, though not exclusively, to the consecrated circles in which the Divine Being was worshipped, (39) there can be little doubt that the "confirming under the protection of God and His truth," which is described as the third crair to swear by in the second Triad, was some ceremony, and therefore a druidic one, that was practised in those places.

But we have still stronger proof of the antiquity of the Moelmutian Code, even in its present form. In the 71st

(39) For instance,—“Three common rites of federate country and border country: a principal river; a high road; and a *resort of worship*; and those are under *the protection of God and His peace*; since a weapon is not to be unsheathed by such as frequent them, against those they may meet.”—*Welsh Laws, etc.*, Vol. ii. p. 517.

Triad we have a clear recognition of "The Druid Bard," as an established and authorized priest, who, in virtue of his office, was to diffuse instruction, and to demonstrate the sciences of wisdom and *religion*, (40) which could not have been the case subsequently to the second century of the Christian era, when Lheurg transferred the civil rights of the Druids, as such, into the hands of the Christian hierarchy.

Several internal evidences, derived from the languages and phraseologies used by the compiler, may likewise be adduced in support of what has been said as to the antiquity of Dyvnwal's Laws; let one suffice. There is the word "clud," in the "Triads of the Cludau;" has any recent writer been able to discover its exact and real meaning? It must, undoubtedly, be admitted, that neither the "progression" of Probert, nor the "mote" of Areurin Owen, conveys the general sense that runs through the several "cludau" mentioned in these Triads; and we find it difficult to believe that they ever possessed one and the same meaning, until we come to the word "caethglud" in the 33rd Triad. This is a familiar word, and at once removes our doubt that to "clud" was attached formerly a full and clear meaning, which we cannot grasp in these days. This circumstance shows, evidently, that the social state, under which the word was coined, and properly comprehended, must have existed several generations back, probably indeed before the time of Dyvnwal himself; for at the end of the Triads it is added:

"And they are called the Triads of the *Carcludau*; and Dyvnwal-Moelmud, King of the Kymmry, *authorized* them, for the purpose of showing what was right and law in a country and kindred. And Dyvnwal-Moelmud was the best legislator that ever appeared; and the best in securing privilege and protection both to native and alien, lest any one should act wrongly and unlawfully."

Inasmuch as we infer from these and the like testimonies that the original form in which the Moelmutian code was compiled underwent subsequently no alteration, or but next to none, we may now fairly appeal to it for a description of Druidism, in the time of the royal legislator, as far as its references will apply. Very few, indeed, are the allusions of any kind which we have here to the doctrines of religion; nevertheless, the doctrine of One God is plain enough. Mention is made more than once of "God and His peace;" whilst there is not the least reference to

(40) "Three branches of the art of Bardism.—Third, the Druid-Bard (*Derwydhwrdh*), who is to be a presiding Bard graduated and warranted as to wisdom and sciences; and of elocution, to demonstrate judgment and reason in respect to sciences; and his function is to be under the privilege of a grant, by the discretion and induction of a customary session authenticated by the vote of session by ballot. And his function is to diffuse instruction, and to demonstrate the sciences of wisdom and religion, in the session of the Bards, and in court and in lhan, and in the household wherein his office is performed." pp. 511-13. Lhan, though now used to denote a church, seems to be of druidic origin, meaning simply an enclosure; hence the compounds *ydlan*, *gwinlhan*, *perlhan*, *corlan*, etc.

more than one God, nor any indication that the word has ever been used in the plural number. If there had been a belief among the Kymmry at this time in "gods many," no doubt these would have been distinguished by name, and among them the Supreme God Himself; and in abolishing such names, it could hardly be expected that the distinctive name of the true God would have been totally removed from every place, and under every circumstance. But here there is no sign that any particular name was ever attached to the great God (41) which would indicate that He was but one of a series of divinities.

We find that they worshipped this God publicly at appointed times. One of "the three cludau of consociation" was "the congress of a kindred, at a meeting for worship on the principal high festivals." (Welsh Laws, etc., ii. p. 477.) They were summoned to worship "by sound of horn" (Ibid, p. 479); and permission was given to resort thither from every part of the country, without fear of opposition, "under the protection of God and His peace," (Ibid).

But we think that we see in these Laws a recognition of the doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of the soul. In Triads 19, 20, we thus read:

"There are three strong punishments: *eneidvadheu*; cutting off a limb; and banishment from the country, by the cry and pursuit of men and dogs; and it is for the king to direct which he willeth to be inflicted.

"There are three *eneidvadheu* punishments: beheading; hanging; and burning; and it is for the king or lord of the territory to order which he willeth to be inflicted." (Ibid, p. 487).

Now *eneidvadheu* is of bardic derivation, and bears a relation to the religion of the Druids. According to the "Triads of Bardism and Usages," (Lhanover MSS.) a man became "*eneidvadheu*" in three ways: 1stly, by being punished according to law for some offence of an injurious or hurtful tendency; 2ndly, by surrendering himself voluntarily to the demand of justice, for any injury he may have committed; 3rdly, by giving himself up "in behalf of truth and justice, for the sake of peace and mercy." "That is, the first will attach himself in transmigration to the condition and nature of man, his fall not being lower; and the other two will ascend in the circle of felicity." Or, more clearly: men in these three ways obtain a release for their souls, which is, moreover, a sort of propitiation for their misdeeds, and consequently they may be considered as receiving forgiveness of the same. If a person, exhibiting the first-named character in respect of wickedness, dies a natural death, he will descend very low in the scale of transmigration; but the punishment inflicted upon him by the law is considered as equivalent to his offence, and as preventing him from falling below the point of liberty. The voluntary surrender of a man of the second description

(41) DUW, the Kymmric name of God, is compounded of *dy*, intens., and *gw* is. HE IS—THE EXISTING.

adds to the meritorious virtue of the punishment, and raises him above the state of transmigration to the circle of felicity. He who answers to the last description of character, that is, who is "slain for the good he has done," will ascend very high in the circle of felicity.

The meaning of "*madheu*" (42) is, to loose, or release, in reference to the liberation of the soul from the body through execution; but inasmuch as liberation of that kind is considered as necessarily implying a sort of propitiation and forgiveness for sin, it came in time to be used in its secondary sense only, as it is invariably used in the present day. It is quite a mistake to suppose that it is from the idea of loosening or remitting the sin, that the word *madheuant* acquired its meaning. *Eneidvadheu*, or the setting the soul at liberty by killing the body, was the circumstance that first gave it its religious import.

The Triads, which we have cited, show that this expiatory punishment was prevalent in the time of Dvynwal-Moelmud, and therefore, that the doctrine of metempsychosis formed an essential part of the druidic creed at that period. But if any one should intimate that, probably, no more was meant by *eneidvadheu* in the Laws under consideration, than execution simply, such an explanation would necessarily assign a still higher antiquity to the said doctrine. If the term *eneidvadheu* had already lost its original signification, it follows that the signification itself and the doctrine which it involved, were extremely ancient. And as we meet with the doctrine in later times, it is impossible to conceive that it had been interrupted in the reign of Dvynwal-Moelmud, that is, as is supposed, about 430 years before Christ.

We are not aware of anything else in the Moelmutian code that indicates the character of religion at that time, further than the influence which it had upon society in respect of marriage and its relations. They all bear testimony to the comparative purity of Druidism.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM DYVNWAL-MOELMUD TO THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

In the interval between Dvynwal-Moelmud and the era of Christianity, several circumstances arose which were calculated to influence, more or less, the national religion of Britain.

About 128 years after the death of the great legislator, that is, in the time of Gwrgan-of-the-Thick-Beard,—

An awfully tempestuous inundation occurred in the British seas, that engulfed a large portion of the Lowland Cantred; and in consequence of this deluge, the Gwydhyl first came to the Isle of Britain, and received of Gwrgan lands in Ireland, where they became a numerous and powerful people. In the time of the said Gwrgan, also, the men of Lhychlyn came first to the

(42) The classical scholar will, no doubt, recognize a certain similarity between the word and the Greek *μεθιμη*.