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Santiago: The Evolution of a Patron Saint.

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SANTIAGO.

THE EVOLUTION OF A PATRON SAINT.

IN a recent work Professor Fleure has suggested that there may have been some connection between Santiago da Compostella and the great stone monuments that abound in the north-west of Spain.¹ The connection may at first sight appear remote, but a careful inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the growth of the cult of St. James in that region leads me to think that his suggestion is not devoid of foundation. The materials for the investigation are scanty, and there are inevitable blanks which must needs be filled by conjecture, but in the following pages I have endeavoured to set in array such scattered items of evidence as I have been able to collect.

In many parts of the world there are to be found monuments consisting of large unhewn stones, usually set on end, either standing alone or composing circles or alignments, or else forming parts of such structures as tombs or temples; these, known to archaeologists as megalithic monuments, are especially plentiful in Western Europe from Scotland to Spain. For some centuries they have excited the interest of antiquaries and archaeologists, and recently fresh theories have been promulgated, seeking to show that they were first erected some four thousand years ago by a trading people, who wandered over the world in search of precious metals and other valuable

¹ Fleure (H. J.), *Human Geography in Western Europe*, p. 91.

commodities, though the custom of setting up such monuments survived in many regions into later periods, sometimes even to quite recent times.¹ Whatever be their origin, they have nearly always been looked upon with religious or superstitious awe by the dwellers in those regions where they abound, and have been, nay, are still, objects of worship to the religiously or superstitiously minded. To quote recent examples would be superfluous, and one must be content to refer to the *pardons* in Brittany, which are in many cases held in honour of such monuments, while in the past we need only cite the prohibitions against their worship pronounced by the Councils of Arles (452), Tours (567), Nantes (658), Toledo (681 and 692) and Rouen.²

Among regions in Western Europe where such monuments abound, none is richer than the Iberian peninsula, and here they are specially numerous near the western coast, and particularly in the northern part of that strip in the Province of Galicia. This is not to be wondered at, if the recent theories are correct, for in these parts tin has been found more plentifully than in almost any other part of the world, and is known to have been mined there in prehistoric times. Here then we may expect to find that the megalithic cult was at its best, and considering how remote from civilisation this corner of Europe has been, and still is, it is here that we might expect to find superstitions connected with these monuments surviving into recent times.

The Galician megaliths are of various kinds, and have been well described by Borlase;³ it will be sufficient

¹ Elliot Smith (G.), *The Migrations of Early Culture*; Perry (W. G.), "The Relationship between the Geographical Distribution of Megalithic Monuments and Ancient Mines," in *Memoirs and Proceedings of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society*, lx. 1-36.

² Fergusson (J.), *Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 24.

³ Borlase (W. C.), *The Dolmens of Ireland*, 635-657.

for our purpose to mention a few distinct types. Menhirs or standing stones are not uncommon. "At Padron," says Borlase,¹ "is a monument consisting of a rude flight of steps leading up to a pillar-stone on the top of great rocks dedicated to the saint (St. James)." We shall have to refer again to this particular pillar-stone or menhir. Dolmens, too, are common, and are also looked upon as sacred; Fergusson states that at Cangas de Onis, in the Asturias, a dolmen forms the crypt of a small church, while at a place called Arrichinaga, about twenty-five miles from Bilbao, there is a large dolmen inside the Church of St. Michael.² An interesting detail from our point of view is a name frequently given to this type of monument, for Borlase tells us "in Galicia, and the north-eastern provinces bordering on the Pyrenees, the word *arca* is applied to dolmens, and to tumuli containing the cist exposed."³

Other monuments of the same series are, to quote the same writer, "those known by the name of 'Petrae Nofae,' used to denote graves hewn out of a single solid-stone. Such sepulchres were in use amongst the ancient inhabitants of the Serra da Estrella in Portugal. Signor Sarmiento gives two examples from that country, and one from Galicia is figured by Signor José Villa-Amil, who calls it a Piedra Noffa. Naffus or Naufus, according to Ducange, was a term usually applied to a wooden sarcophagus. In any case it took its name from its resemblance to a ship."⁴ A still further type, perhaps natural rather than artificial, was the rocking-stone, which here as elsewhere became an object of worship. Of this type Borlase says, "He (Signor Costa) cites also the Rocking-stone in Galicia called La Barca de Nuestra Señora, 'The ship of Our Lady,' to which a Christian legend is attached." "There

¹ Borlase (W. C.), *The Dolmens of Ireland*, 652.

² Fergusson (J.), *op. cit.* 387.

³ Borlase (W. C.), *op. cit.* 636.

⁴ *Ibid.* 657.

are, at least, seven celebrated 'rocking-stones' in Galicia." ¹

Such is the evidence that we can gather from the megalithic monuments still existing in north-western Spain. Whether or no the early prospectors for tin set them up as objects for worship is uncertain, but that they were venerated by subsequent inhabitants is clear both from the prohibitions against their worship issued by the Councils of Toledo, and by the sanctity in which they are held at the present day.

Little if anything is known of the religion of the Iberians, or of the Celts who settled later in Galicia, before their land became part of the Roman Empire, and it seems unlikely that the beliefs of the conquerors were adopted to any great extent beyond the limits of the towns. We may assume too, I think, that the same was equally true of Christianity, which must have reached the peninsula before the close of the first century, though we have little evidence of its spread here during these early days. Doubtless after the time of Constantine the country became nominally Christian, but the new religion, as elsewhere in the Roman Empire, was largely confined to the inhabitants of the *civitates* or cities, while the *pagani* or heath-men, the dwellers in the villages, adhered to their old beliefs.

The coming of the Vandals in 410 could have made little difference to the religion of the country, as they soon passed on to North Africa, though the Suevi, who had accompanied them, remained in Galicia. Later in the same century arrived the Visigoths, who established their rule throughout the peninsula, but permitted the Suevi to hold Galicia as a feudal kingdom. Whatever may have been the religious views of their conquerors, it is probable that it made little impression on the peasants; the Suevi and Visigoths became a noble caste, mixing little with their subject people, who, if they were nominally con-

¹ Borlase (W. C.), *op. cit.* 651, 653.

sidered Christians, certainly continued attached to their earlier beliefs and customs. Among these the worship of megalithic monuments was conspicuous, for as we have seen it was still in vogue in the seventh century. At the first Council of Toledo in 681 the ecclesiastics admonished "*cultores idolorum, veneratores lapidum, accensores facularum, excolentes sacra fontium vel arborum*," and another Council, held there in 692, repeats the admonition in almost identical terms.¹

Towards the close of the seventh century, then, the peasants of Spain were to all intents and purposes pagans, worshipping idols and megalithic monuments, and this is likely to have been specially true for Galicia. Suddenly a great change occurred. The Saracens, starting out from Arabia to spread Islam throughout the world at the point of the sword, had passed rapidly along the North African coast, and threatened the peninsula from the south. In 710 Tarif, one of their leaders, made a raid across the narrow straits and landed with 500 men on the rock which still bears the corrupted name of Gebel-Tarifa, and the following year the Saracens from Morocco came to stay and to set up the rule of the Moors in Spain. Neither Roman governor nor Visigothic nobles could stem the tide of their advance, and before twenty years were out they had virtually conquered the whole peninsula, and would have brought France also beneath Moorish sway had they not been repulsed at Tours in 733 by Charles Martel. The Visigothic nobles fought hard and were all but exterminated, the peasants exchanged a nominal Christianity for a nominal Mohammedanism, and doubtless continued as before to worship their megalithic monuments, free from admonishment from their new masters, who held the Kaaba sacred. The few Visigoths who survived retreated to the mountains, and eventually settled in the north-west, where they kept alive the tra

¹ Fergusson (J.), *op. cit.* 24, fn. 5.

dition of Christianity, and no doubt endeavoured, with but partial success, to convert their retainers to their faith. They collected around Pelagius or Pelayo, a Visigothic noble who was proclaimed King of the Asturias, and they succeeded in inflicting a defeat upon the Moors in 718, and so retained their small corner of the peninsula for the Christian faith. Pelayo's little band had at one time been reduced to thirty men and ten women, but they adhered to their cause, and in time wrested more land from the invaders; later Pelayo's son-in-law, Alfonso of Cantabria, united the few Christian elements in these north-western provinces, and in 751 began a series of brilliant campaigns against the Moors, thus recovering from them the provinces of Old Castile, Leon, Asturias and Galicia. Intermittent warfare between Christians and Moslems, known as the Holy War, continued for about two centuries, during which period neither side gained any appreciable advantage.

It seems to have been about this time that the cult of St. James was first introduced into the peninsula, for the first mention of it that can be found is in a book on the festivals of the Apostles by Ado, who lived from 800 to 875. Of St. James he relates "the sacred bones of this blessed Apostle, having been carried to Spain and to the uttermost confines thereof, namely those which are situated opposite to the British Sea, were honoured by the most distinguished worship of the people there."¹ Pardiac, who published in 1863 a pamphlet on the Pilgrimages to Compostella, says that the remains of the Apostle were found there in 816, but he does not give his authority for that date,² but Vasaeus, in his Chronicle of Spain, mentions the event under the date 798.³ It is said that pilgrimages to the shrine were undertaken as early as 849.⁴ It seems clear

¹ *Acta Sanctorum*, vi. Julii. *De S. Jacobo Majori*, 6.

² Pardiac, *Pelerinage de Compostella*, Bordeaux, 1863.

³ *Acta Sanctorum*, vi. Julii. *De S. Jacobo Majori*, 15.

⁴ *Ibid.* 32.

that the adoption of St. James as the patron saint of the Christians in Spain must be attributed to the eighth century and to the Holy War, and must have been the work of Alfonso or perhaps of Pelayo himself.

Unfortunately we have no contemporary chronicles of this period from which to gather information as to the doings of this small Christian community, and we have to fall back on conjecture. The struggle was essentially a religious war between the adherents of Christianity and Islam. The Mohammedan forces were fighting for the advancement of their religion, and used as a rallying cry their famous article of belief, "There is no deity but God, and Mohammed is only his prophet." The Christians needed a similar war-cry, and it is reasonable to suppose that they desired to use Christ and one of His Apostles as names to conjure with, but had to determine which of the latter they would select.

The following reason is usually given for the choice of James. Christ had been asked by their mother that James and John should sit "one on His right hand and the other on his left," and though no promise had been given in response to this request, it seems to have been assumed that these positions had been granted. Christ, in the person of His Vicar, was ruling at Rome, and St. John was worshipped at Ephesus; it was natural then that if St. John were seated in the east of the Mediterranean world, St. James should dominate the west. This was the explanation given in later times, but it seems to assume more subtle reasoning and a greater appreciation of geography than was likely to have existed among the poor Christian outcasts in north-west Spain. In this, I think, we must recognise, not so much the reason that led to the selection of James as the Patron Saint of Spain, as a much later attempt to explain a phenomenon which had by that time become a mystery.

As we have seen, contemporary chronicles there are

none, and the only documents that throw any light upon the origin of the cult are :

An anonymous work, written, it is believed, by a monk of Compostella about 1050, and known variously as *Le Livre de St. Jaques*, or the *Codex Calixtinus*.¹

Historia Compostelana, by D. Didacus Gelmirez, first Archbishop of Compostella, written towards the close of the eleventh century.²

The Itinerary of William Wey, written in 1456.³

All three give a purely mythical account of the origin of the cult, but William Wey, who was an intelligent traveller, managed to pick up on the spot certain traditions, which have a very primitive appearance, and which will help us, better than the earlier and more official accounts, to understand how the cult arose.

William Wey was a Fellow of Eton, who, when past middle life, was seized with a desire for foreign travel, and in 1456 sailed from Plymouth to Coruña, and visited the shrine of Santiago at Compostella, and other sacred sites in its neighbourhood. In his diary, which was published in 1857 by the Roxburghe Club, he gives a faithful account of his voyage, and describes the shrine and its associations as they then were, giving very fully the traditions there current concerning its foundation.

He relates how the saint came to Spain and preached the gospel at Padron, and subsequently returned to Jerusalem, where he was afterwards put to death. After his martyrdom his disciples took his body and carried it to Joppa, where they found a large ship ready to start ; on this they placed the body, and setting sail, arrived in seven days at Padron. Having reached the port they carried the body ashore, singing the while *In mare viae*

¹ Cf. Bédier (J.), *Les légendes épiques*, Paris (1912), iii. 39-182.

² Florez, *España sagrada*, xx.

³ *The Itineraries of William Wey* (Roxburghe Club), 1857.

tuæ et semitæ tuæ in aquis nullis, "Thy way is in the sea and thy path in the great waters."

As soon as they had landed they placed the body of the saint upon a large stone, which in Wey's time was known as *Barcha*, and let it fall back against another stone, which was known as *Patronon*, and immediately the stones miraculously took the body into themselves. *Barcha*, it appears, was hollowed out like a tomb, and the other, *Patronon*, was set up against it like the back of a chair.

Before proceeding with Wey's story, let us see whether we can interpret this incident. It would seem that near the port of Padron, the Iria Flavia of the ancients, at the mouth of the River Ulla, stood a megalithic monument consisting of two stones. One of these was clearly a *Petra nofa*, a stone with a grave hollowed out of it, and may also have been a rocking-stone, as its name *Barcha* or *Barca* implies. Behind this and touching it stood a menhir, venerated by the natives under the name of *Patronon*; the names *Barca* and *Patronon* clearly signify "the ship and the skipper."

Now it is evident that these two stones, which from their position resembled a ship with its captain, and which were also clearly visible from the sea as the navigator approached the port, were objects of deep veneration to the natives, and that when these were asked to adopt Santiago as their "patron saint," their minds naturally wandered to the *Patronon* whom they had long worshipped with his ship at *Iria Flavia*. It would be useless to tell them that their new patron was a Christian Apostle, who had been martyred some centuries previously at Jerusalem; they needed a concrete object for their worship, and if they must have a patron, the *Patronon* who had served them so well for countless generations would surely do.

So in the minds of the natives the patron saint was indissolubly connected with the menhir of *Iria Flavia*,

the pillar-stone mentioned by Borlase,¹ and as the stone was more important than the saint in the eyes of the people, there was nothing to be done but to identify them by a pious fiction. Thus, I believe, grew up that story, related in all simplicity by William Wey, of what I think I may describe as the Inlapidation of St. James.

This worship of the concrete stone rather than of the abstract saint infected also the pilgrims who frequented the sacred spot, and they were, so Wey tells us, in the habit of breaking off small portions of these stones to take home with them as sacred relics or as *souvenirs* of their visit. This seems to have annoyed the custodians of the shrine, who doubtless were true worshippers of Santiago, and so, Wey tells us, they took the stone which was called "*puppis vel Barcha*" and threw it into the river, and placed the other beneath the high altar of the church of St. James Patronensis, from whom, according to Wey, the town took the name of Patronon or Padron. There these remained for some years, for Pope Gregory III (731-741) promised a large number of indulgences to those who visited the Church of St. Mary of Yria, the Church of St. James Patronon, where the stone *Patronon* was fixed beneath the high altar, the place where *Barcha* was, and the spring of St. James, where the Apostle had stood and preached when he visited Spain in the flesh. The two stones and the spring were still to be seen and worshipped when William Wey visited the spot in 1456, in spite of the admonitions of the Councils of Toledo.

Such was the state of the cult during the latter part of the eighth century, but soon after a change took place. It was some time during the reign of Alfonso the Chaste, King of Asturias, that is to say between 791 and 842, that it seems to have occurred to Theodomir XV, Bishop of Iria, that a change was needed. No subsequent writer gives us a clue to his motives, but we cannot be far wrong

¹ *I' id. sup.*

in believing that the bishop realised the inherent paganism of the cult, and sought some means to detach it from its megalithic associations. Exactly what happened we can only surmise, for the first account of the transaction occurs in the *Historia Compostellana, sive de rebus gestis*, written by D. Didacus Gelmirez, first Archbishop of Compostella, in the beginning of the twelfth century, when the story had already gathered around itself an accumulation of myth.

The account he gives is as follows : " But it is related that Theodomir succeeded to the aforesaid bishops, raised by divine providence to the said see, and in his time the might of divine majesty deigned to visit and enlighten the western church by revealing the tomb of this great apostle. But how it was revealed to him the following page makes clear. Certain personages and men of great authority told the said bishop that they had seen lights in a copse, which had grown for a considerable time over the tomb of the Blessed James, frequently burning at night time ; and that there an angel had frequently appeared to them. Having heard this, he himself went to the place where they said that they had seen these things, and saw the lights burning in the said place unmistakeably with his own eyes. Inspired thereby with divine grace he speedily approached the said little copse, and looking carefully around him discovered among the trees and shrubs a little house, containing within it a marble tomb. Having found this he gave thanks to God and sought the presence of King Alfonso the Chaste, who was then reigning in Spain, and to him truthfully narrated what he had heard and seen with his own eyes. He (the king), gladdened by such great news, when the way had been shown to him, entered these parts, and restoring the church in honour of so great an apostle, with the authority of many bishops and servants of God, and of noble men, and by his royal prerogative, moved the bishopric

of the Illensian¹ see to this place, which is called Compostella."²

In this account we must recognise a description of one of those pious frauds so commonly practised in the early Middle Ages, and the most charitable construction to be placed upon the deed is that the Bishop of Iria arranged it to dissociate the cult of the patron saint from the worship of the megalithic Patronon. It must be admitted, however, that there is just the possibility that some of the inhabitants of Compostella were desirous of benefitting from the pilgrimages, which had already become popular.

What led to the selection of the new site is also uncertain. We are told that a Roman town, known as *Liberum donum*, had stood on the spot, and tradition later asserted that the body of the apostle had been brought hither from Iria for burial. *Liberum donum* is not mentioned by any classical writer of repute, and Strabo is silent about it, so we cannot tell what claims it had to be the centre of this cult; but the fact that it stood almost equidistant from a number of ports in the north-west corner of Spain suggests that it might, even in prehistoric days, have been a great junction of roads leading to them, and so, like Canterbury and St. David's, which are similarly situated, have become at an early date a sacred site both for pagan and Christian worship.³

The date of the Invention of St. James—if I may use a term hallowed by sacred usage yet singularly applicable to the event that has been described—is variously given by different writers. Archbishop Gelmirez tells us it was during the reign of Alfonso the Chaste, Vasaeus, in his chronicle of Spain, says 798, while Nicolai gives the date as 812; we have no means of dating it more closely.

¹ This must be a mistake for Iriensian; Illensian could only refer to Sardinia, which the context forbids.

² Florez, *op. cit.* xx. 8.

³ Fleure (II. J.), *op. cit.* 38, 91.

In the *Breviarum Eborensis*, printed in Lisbon in 1548, the following remarks are quoted from a letter of Leo III, who was Pope from 795 to 816: "But his body was carried away by night for fear of the Jews by his disciples, who, accompanied by an angel of the Lord, went to Joppa by the sea shore. While they were waiting here, doubting what to do, by God's will there appeared a ship ready to sail. They entered it rejoicing with the foster-son of the Saviour, and setting sail, voyaged with a favourable wind in great calm, and dropped anchor in the port of Iria in Galicia. Having landed from the ship they set the body in a small farm called *Liberum donum*, distant nearly eighteen miles from that town, and there it is now worshipped. But they found in that place an idol set up by the pagans and a crypt, in which were iron tools for cutting stone. And rejoicing thereat they destroyed the idol entirely and having opened the ground they interred the body of the apostle in a stone tomb which they had excavated, raising above it a little house with an altar."¹

Thus, if we can accept the authenticity of this letter, the legend that St. James had been buried at Compostella was recognised with papal sanction before 816.

Alfonso the Chaste died in 843 and was succeeded by his cousin Ramiro I, who was King of Asturias and Leon, and the crown of these provinces continued with his descendants until, at the death without issue of Bermudo III in 1037, it passed to his sister Sancha, who had married Ferdinand I, King of Castile, and the kingdoms became for a time united. At the death of Ferdinand in 1065, the kingdoms were again divided between his sons, Castile going to Sancho II, Leon to Alfonso VI and Galicia to Garcia, but Sancho and Garcia seem to have left no issue, and at his death in 1109, as his son Sancho had died the previous year, Alfonso left all three kingdoms to his

¹ *Acta Sanctorum*, vi. Julii. *De S. Jacobo Majori*, 14.

daughter Uracca, widow of Raymond, Count of Burgogne, who had in 1104 married as her second husband Alfonso I, King of Aragon. Her heir was Alfonso Raymond, known afterwards as Alfonso VII or VIII, who succeeded to the kingdoms of Leon and Castile in 1126.

This somewhat dull summary of a royal pedigree has been necessary to enable me to introduce a notable person who had a considerable influence on the development of the cult. Though Raymond, Count of Burgogne, had died before his wife succeeded to her kingdom, he was aware that his son would succeed his mother, and he was anxious to have him well educated and to leave him under adequate guardianship. For the double post of tutor and guardian he appointed his brother, Gui de Bourgogne, an astute and afterwards famous cleric. Raymond, as we have seen, died before 1104, when his widow married again, and Gui, who became Archbishop of Vienne in 1088, had undertaken his duties of tutor and guardian some years before Uracca succeeded to her kingdom. It is probable that the boy was brought up and educated at Vienne, though doubtless he and his guardian often visited his Spanish home; it is known that they did so in 1108, while the boy's grandfather was still alive, for that year Gui made a pilgrimage to Compostella. His visit to the sacred shrine seems to have impressed him, and he saw what possibilities there were for its development, and it was probably under his auspices that the Abbey of Cluny obtained such influence there and did so much to encourage pilgrims both from Burgundy and from other parts of Christendom. It was about this time, and no doubt under the influence of Gui or his brother Raymond, that the monks of Cluny made many settlements in north-east Spain and did much to educate the natives. One of their number became Bishop of Compostella, and was succeeded in 1093 by Diego Gelmirez, whose work we have already quoted.

Now it has been thought that it was under the influence of the Abbey of Cluny, and perhaps especially of Gui de Bourgogne, that towards the beginning of the twelfth century some unknown French monk wrote a work, parts of which at any rate became very famous. This was a work which Bédier calls *Le Livre de St. Jaques*, and which consisted of five parts: An anthology; the book of miracles; the book of the translation (of St. James); the Chronicle of Turpin; and a guide to pilgrims visiting Compostella.¹

The object of this work seems to have been to advertise the sacred shrine, and to serve as a useful guide book to visitors, and it is believed that it was written to please, if not at the instigation of Gui, who had in 1119 assumed the tiara under the title of Calixtus II, and the work has long been known to scholars as the *Codex Calixtinus*. The only portion that need concern us here is the Chronicle of Turpin, or as it is sometimes called, the "Ystorya de Carolo Magno."

This story, of which various versions exist, begins by relating how St. James was the first to preach the gospel in Galicia, and how he returned to Jerusalem, was martyred by Herod, when his disciples returned to preach to the Galicians. The story then tells of Charlemagne and how one night he saw across the heavens a pathway of stars stretching from Frisia to Galicia, where the body of St. James was lying unrecognised, and seeing this repeatedly and wondering what its significance might be, he saw beside him a warrior who said that he was St. James the Apostle; the saint demanded that he should set his country free from the Saracens. Then follows an account of a mythical campaign between Charlemagne and the Moors in Spain.

The Chronicle of the pseudo-Turpin was translated into many languages and was widely read; a Welsh version

¹ Bédier (J.), *op. cit.*

has recently been translated and published.¹ Its great circulation, probably by the Cluniac monks, who had many branch houses throughout western Europe, ended in making the pilgrimages to Compostella exceedingly popular. It has been noticed, too, that its popularity was greatest among the inhabitants of Brittany, Wales and Ireland the very areas in which megalithic monuments are found most abundantly.²

Various other references to the cult are to be found in writings of the twelfth and subsequent centuries, which give accounts of St. James and the finding of his body; all are substantially the same as those already cited, each, however, having added small details of their own. In an old codex of the monks of Marchia we find that the body of St. James "was seized by Hermogenes and Philetus and other disciples, and was placed in a ship to be taken to another place and there by the goodness of the Lord to be honourably buried. Having entered the ship they fell asleep, and waking next morning found themselves in Spain, where long ago he had preached. So carrying ashore the body they laid it upon a stone, and soon saw it sink like a liquid into the stone."³ Another MS. History of Compostella, composed early in the twelfth century, gives a similar account, but states that the body was buried beneath a marble slab.

Juan de Marina, the Spanish historian, writing about 1592, says that in a breviary of Toledo St. James is stated to have been buried "*in arca marmorica*."⁴ There has been much discussion on the adjective *marmorica*, and many emendations have been made, such as *marmorea*

¹ Williams (R.), *The History of Charlemagne*, a translation of *Ystoria de Carolo Magno* (Cymmrodorion Society), 1907.

² Hartwell Jones (G.), *Celtic Britain and the Pilgrim Movement* (*Y Cymmrodor*), xxiii. 244 *et seq.*

³ *Acta Sanctorum*, vi. *Julii. De S. Jacobo Majori*, 12.

⁴ *Acta Sanctorum*, vi. *Julii. De S. Jacobo Majori*, 14.

and *Tamarica*, from the river Tamarus that flows near Compostella ; a Parisian codex has also the form *Carmarica*. The point does not seem to be important, but it is interesting to remember that, as we have seen, *arca* is a term used locally for a dolmen.

Thus the legend grew by constant slight accretions, until recent guides to Santiago give seriously the folk-lore tales of how the body of the apostle sailed by itself from Joppa to Spain in a stone boat or a marble sarcophagus.

One word as to the name Compostella. It seems doubtful whether this name was used before the discovery there of the apostle's body, but on the whole it seems probable that it was. Its meaning was clearly unknown at that time, for many etymological theories were advanced. Gelmirez himself admits that the place was known by various names, such as *locum sanctum*, *Liberum donum*, or *Compositum telus*, from which he thought Compostella to have been derived. The author of the Chronicle of Turpin interpreted the word as *Campus stellarum*, and to account for this added the dream of Charlemagne and the Milky Way.

One cannot close a paper on Compostella without some reference to the scallop shell, the peculiar badge of pilgrims to this shrine. It is often said that the use of these shells by pilgrims was of purely practical origin, as they were light and easily carried, and served for both platter and cup. Such a prosaic origin is probably incorrect, and in any case would not suit the myth-making instinct of the hagiographer. The story usually given by the Spanish writers is the following: "When the body of the saint was being miraculously conveyed in a ship without sails, or oars, from Joppa to Galicia, it passed the village of Bonzas, on the coast of Portugal, on the day that a marriage had been celebrated there. The bridegroom with his friends were amusing themselves on horseback on the sands when his horse became unmanageable, and plunged

into the sea ; whereupon the miraculous ship stopped in its voyage, and presently the bridegroom emerged, horse and man, close beside it. A conversation ensued between the knight and the saint's disciples on board, in which they apprised him that it was the saint who saved him from a watery grave, and explained the Christian religion to him. He believed, and was baptized there and then, and immediately the ship resumed its voyage, and the knight came galloping back over the sea to rejoin his astonished friends. He told them all that had happened, and they, too, were converted, and the knight baptized his bride with his own hands. Now, when the knight emerged from the sea, both his dress and the trappings of his horse were covered with scallop shells ; and therefore the Galicians took the scallop shell as the sign of St. James."¹

This mythical story will be even less acceptable to modern thinkers as an explanation of the custom than the more prosaic one which preceded it. The scallop was used on the armorial bearings of many noble houses, but this was because of some connection with a pilgrimage to this or some other shrine ; it was also the badge of Cluny, but it seems more likely that Cluny borrowed it from Compostella, than that the reverse process took place.

It is an interesting fact that scallop shells have been found occasionally in leaden coffins of Roman date, especially in this country,² but no reason has been advanced, as far as I can ascertain, to account for this custom.

Such shells, or those of the cockle, which closely resemble them, appear on the coins of many Greek cities ; none, however, occur in the Greek colonies in Spain, and the great majority come from Italy and Sicily. Now of

¹ Cutts (E. L.), "Pilgrims of the Middle Ages," in *Art Journal*, 1861, 309 ; Hartwell Jones (G.), *op. cit.* 256 fn.

² Lovell (M. S.), *The Edible Mollusks of Great Britain and Ireland*, 106 ; Roach Smith (C.), "Leaden Coffins," *Journ. Arch. Ass.* ii.

those east of Italy nearly all belong to Corinth or to some of her colonies, and from there the symbol may have been carried to Syracuse. But the majority of the coins thus marked coming from Italy seem to have been derived from those of Tarentum, where tradition places a settlement, probably of Cretans, long before the arrival of the Dorian colonists. Motya and Panormus, which also bear the symbol on their coins, were originally Phoenician settlements.

Everything points to the fact that the symbol was used by the Phoenicians, and by the traders connected directly or indirectly with Corinth and Tarentum, both cities in whose name occurs the stem *inth* or *ent*, which has been thought to belong to some pre-Hellenic trading people. It is worthy of note, too, that tombs, thought to bear some connection with megalithic culture, are found in Sicily, especially near Syracuse, while near Tarentum are the only dolmens to be found in the Italian peninsula.

Our evidence is far from conclusive, yet it seems to point to some connection between the scallop shell and those early prospectors who were first responsible for erecting the megalithic monuments, and whose trade fell later into the hands of the Cretans and Phoenicians. For what purpose they used the scallop we can only surmise. It is said that the deep valves of the scallop "are used by fishermen as lamps for their huts,"¹ and one might imagine that they could be so employed in mines; but mining in early days was probably merely surface digging, for which lamps would not be required. It is possible that they were used for digging or scraping together the ore, or perhaps for some other purpose connected with their occupation as prospectors, but we must be content to leave the problem unsolved, an opportunity for some future inquiry.

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¹ Lovell (M. S.), *op. cit.* 104.