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ANCIENT IRISH SAINTS.



Biographical Sketches of
ANCIENT IRISH SAINTS,

ETC.

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TO THE

RIGHT REV. JAMES ATLAY, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD.

CONTENTS.



	PAGE.
ST. PATRICK	1
ST. COLUMBA	14
ST. COLUMBANUS	39
ST. GALL	67
ST. DIE, OR DEICHOLUS	85
AIDAN	91
LAST IRISH BISHOPS OF LINDISFARNE	104
THE IRISH CHURCH AND ITS MISSIONARIES	129
WAS THE MISSION OF AUGUSTINE A SUCCESS OR A FAILURE	141
CLAUDE, BISHOP OF TURIN	157
VIRGILIUS, BISHOP OF SALTZBURGH	172
ST. KILIAN, THE APOSTLE OF FRANCONIA	182
TIGERNACH AND MARIANUS SCOTUS	193
JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA	208
MALACHY O'MORGAIR	221

Biographical Sketches of Ancient Irish Saints.

I.

ST. PATRICK.

PALLADIUS.

THAT converts to Christianity were in Ireland before the arrival there of St. Patrick, is admitted by all good historians. Palladius, who was sent by Pope Celestine to Ireland, A.D. 431, but who remained in that country only a very short time, was sent to the "Scots that believe in Christ." This sentence proves two things: first, that the ancient Irish were called "Scots," and secondly, that there were Christians already in the land. It is said that they had Bishops amongst them, and therefore some species of authorized Church constitution. Lanigan, the great Roman Catholic historian of the Irish Church, and who is, for the most part, a very pains-taking author, gives us the

names of some of them, though at the same time he attempts to disprove their mission : Ailbe of Emly, Declan of Ardmore, Ibar of Begery, and Kieran of Saigir. It was scarcely possible for two countries to lie so near to one another as England and Ireland, and that there should not be a continuous intercourse between them. We know the great zeal that existed amongst the ancient missionaries, and that there were Christian Churches in Britain towards the middle or close of the second century, if not before ; and hence we may reasonably conclude that their efforts must have been directed to the sister isle, and the Gospel of Christ must have been preached to its people.

Christianity, however, made no great progress in Ireland before the arrival of St. Patrick, and to this great and good man may certainly be ascribed the honour of being the Apostle of the Irish nation.* He is said to have been born

* Ledwich, and some other persons of small antiquarian lore, and less research, have attempted to throw a doubt upon the existence of St. Patrick. Such authorities as Usher, Camden, "The Annals of the Four Masters," "The Saxon Chronicle," etc., in whose writings his mission is spoken of, will establish the fact of his existence to all minds, except those of the prejudiced or unlearned.

near Boulogne, in France. His father was Calpornius, a deacon, and his grandfather Potitus, a priest. From these circumstances, as well as from an article in one of his own constitutions respecting the wives of clergy, we may infer that in his time marriage was not prohibited. When quite a youth, Patricius, or Patrick, was taken captive by some pirates, carried over to Ireland, and there sold as a slave to a man named Milcho, whose sheep he tended for about six years. At the end of that period he escaped from captivity, and returned to his own country, near Boulogne. He then devoted himself to the study of sacred literature for several years. A part of his time was spent with St. Martin, at Tours, where, probably, he obtained holy orders ; a part with St. German, at Auxerre, and a part in the Monastery of Lerins, which was built on one of the two islands now called " Isles de St. Marguerite," near Cannes, in the South of France. His mind was deeply imbued with divine truth, and with an earnest desire to save immortal souls. During his residence in Ireland, " his spirit had been stirred within him, when he saw the people wholly given to idolatry," in that quarter where he lived ; and as his heart now yearned for mis-

sionary work, he determined to return to the land of his captivity, and to devote his life to the deliverance of that people from spiritual bondage, by whom he had formerly been enslaved. He is said to have been consecrated to the episcopal office by a Bishop, near Evreux, in France, about the year 431, and probably with a view to the Irish mission. His consecration did not come from the Bishop of Rome. Palladius was the *Romish* missionary, but he failed. Perhaps he wanted perseverance, or was terrified by the threatening aspect of the people; or, to take the most charitable view of the case, his health might have caused him to retire from the work, for he died in Britain shortly afterwards. St. Patrick may have heard of the failure of Palladius, and thus his steps may have been quickened on their course. He arrived in Ireland in the early part of the year 432, and never was any missionary more successful. He went forth with his life in his hand, "to turn a people from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God," and before his death the greater part of the inhabitants of the Island were converted to the Christian faith. Nor did he fail to establish the Irish Church upon a

firm basis. It was “built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone.” Archbishop Usher very clearly shows, in his work, “The religion professed by the Ancient Irish,” what true doctrine was held amongst them; and at the same time Church discipline and order were duly attended to. The chief episcopal seat was fixed at Armagh, and a great number of Bishops were consecrated for their especial work. In those ancient times, and in the rude and uncivilized state of society which then existed, it was necessary that missionaries should live together, as well for mutual support and consolation, as for mutual defence. From this and other causes arose Monastic establishments, and the brethren of the Monastery were frequently not only the teachers of religion, but the cultivators and civilizers of the district. All honour be to those high-minded men who thus devoted themselves to the spiritual and temporal welfare of their fellow-creatures; but now that the state of society in these lands is so completely changed,—now that danger springs from other sources than bodily assaults upon the teachers of Christianity, the attempt to revive this “ex-

tinct enthusiasm " would only create ridicule, or excite contempt.

" Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis
Tempus eget."

In primitive times a great work was wrought in Ireland, as well as in other countries, by means of Monastic houses ; and in many of them it was not uncommon to have a Bishop, who was under the jurisdiction of the Abbot. We are so much accustomed in modern days to ally the temporal condition of a Bishop with his spiritual functions, that we can sever them with difficulty. And yet they are perfectly distinct, and to the minds of men in those remote days, there was nothing to prevent the subordination of a Bishop to the Superior of his Convent. The Bishop had his own functions to discharge, and these interfered in no way with that temporal obedience which he owed to the head of his house. The idea that Bishops must necessarily have jurisdiction within a city, and be named therefrom, is not borne out by the facts of history. It has been asserted that more than 300 Bishops existed at one time in Ireland, and such a vast number may well be accounted for from the

custom above stated. Nor did dependence upon the Monastery entirely cease, even when territorial jurisdiction was added to episcopal duties. There is evidence to prove that the missionaries who went forth from Iona to evangelize the north of England, and to revive the drooping or dying condition of the British Churches, continued in their obedience to Columbkille and his successors; and even after they became Bishops of Lindisfarne and other places, they looked back to their old Convent, not only with filial respect and love, but they seemed to have obeyed implicitly the commands of him whom they still regarded as their chief. The great controversy respecting Easter proves this beyond a doubt; and though the Irish missionaries may have been in error as to the true mode of calculating the return of this festival, let us not be too severe upon them for their pertinacious regard to the custom of their Church. There is abundant proof that we owe them a great debt of gratitude. More was done by them for the revival of the British Church in the north of England, and in the kingdoms of Mercia and Wales, and even for the conversion of the Saxons, than by Augustine and his immediate successors.

But to return to St. Patrick. He landed in Ireland, somewhere in the county of Wicklow, probably in the place where the town of Wicklow now stands, about the month of April, A.D. 432. The people did not receive him, and he found it necessary to retire to his boat. He then sailed towards the north, and again disembarked on the shores of the county of Down. He there converted the Lord of the district, who was named Dicho, and thus obtained a footing and a friend in the country. He then directed his course inland, towards the residence of his former master, Milcho; but as the latter would not receive him, he returned to his friend Dicho. After this period he seems to have met with almost miraculous success in the holy cause which he had espoused, and after about two years sojourn in various places, he became more bold, and determined to preach his Divine Master's Gospel at Tarah, the residence of the Monarch Leogaire, where the Princes and chief men of the kingdom were assembled at that time.

The ancient government of Ireland was a Pentarchy. There were five principal Kings, one of whom, the King of Meath, was usually chosen

as Monarch. In later times, the King of Ulster, was occasionally selected for the Monarchy, being of the same sept or family as the royal house of Meath. This form of government existed until the early part of the eleventh century, when it was broken in upon by Brian Boru, the King of Munster, who usurped the Monarchy, under the pretext that he could thus have more power and influence in expelling the Danes.

In the fifth century, the residence of the Monarch was at Tarah, in Meath, and St. Patrick and his companions arrived in the neighbourhood on Easter-eve. It happened at that very period, that the Monarch and a great assembly of people were met to celebrate one of their religious festivals. They seem to have been fire-worshippers (a circumstance which may indicate the eastern origin of the race), and a law existed that on this particular evening, no fire should be lighted in that locality, until the signal was given by a fire blazing forth from the royal hill of Tarah. The Christian company unwittingly broke this law, and their fire being observed by the King and his Princes, caused great astonishment. Inquiry was made re-

specting the daring violators of the law, and when the Magi informed the King that the strange fire must be extinguished immediately, or that it would overcome their fires, and bring about the downfall of the kingdom, Leogaire set off in violent haste with a number of followers, to exterminate the intruders. When he arrived within a short distance of the Christians, he sent for St. Patrick to appear before him, and to give an account of his conduct. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." We may presume that such was the course pursued by the Christian Bishop upon this occasion. Certain it is, that not only was the King's anger pacified, but permission was given to St. Patrick to preach before the Royal assembly at Tarah on the next day, which was Easter-Sunday.

We cannot conclude that Leogaire himself was ever converted to the Christian faith. Two of his daughters, and his brother Connall, became converts at a later period, and in all probability their influence furthered much the progress of the Gospel. When St. Patrick left Meath, he proceeded to Connaught, and we soon hear of the conversion of thousands of people. At a particular place in Sligo, 12,000 persons, and

amongst them seven Princes, were gained over to the cause of Christ. From Connaught, our missionary Bishop directed his steps to Ulster, and after a short sojourn there, he visited the other provinces of Ireland, and success everywhere attended his holy efforts. Doubtless he met with obstacles in his triumphant career. When the cause of God is prospering, Satan's activity is sure to be redoubled; and the Magi and heathen priests did not fail to struggle for the maintenance of their own superstitions. In the province of Leinster, in that part anciently called Leix, but now denominated the King's and Queen's County, St. Patrick nearly met with his death. A great man of that district was stirred up against him and his religion, and determined to murder him. Tidings of this foul intent reached the ears of Odran, the faithful charioteer of St. Patrick; and when he came, while driving his master, to the dangerous neighbourhood, this generous and devoted servant feigned fatigue or illness, and requested his master to change places with him for a space. Thus when the murderer approached to execute his wicked purpose, his vengeance was wreaked upon the

wrong man, and the assassin making a sudden attack upon him who was sitting in St. Patrick's seat, transfixing him with a lance ; and then, believing his work performed, coolly passed on. The good missionary was saved, but at an expense which must have caused the deepest affliction to his mind. It is related that punishment soon overtook the murderer, and that he was struck dead by God a short time afterwards.

From the King's County, St. Patrick proceeded to Munster with unabated zeal, and unabated success. Wherever a Christian community was formed, he there ordained clergy to continue the work which he had commenced, to build up the Church in its most holy faith, and to keep alive the flame of pure religion upon the Christian altars. After preaching the Gospel throughout every district in Ireland, he returned to Ulster, and it is probable that it was upon his return he founded the Church and Bishopric of Armagh. From the time of his arrival as a missionary in Ireland, he never left the country of his adoption. True, it was not so easy to travel in those days, as in our own ; but still Boulogne was not very distant, nor could home or kindred have been foreign to his heart. This

period of his life occupied about thirty-five years; and then, after one of the most eventful lives upon record, he fell asleep in Jesus, on the 17th of March, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. The exact year of his death cannot be stated with accuracy, but most probably it was A.D. 465. Before his decease, he intimated his wish that Benignus, who had been converted by him on his first visit to Tarah, should succeed him in the Bishopric of Armagh. This wish could not fail to be attended to, and Benignus was advanced to the Primacy.

II.

ST. COLUMBA.

HIS BIRTH.

THE learned reader needs not to be informed that Columba is a Latin name, and signifies a dove. Several persons were called Columba, or Columbanus, but the two most distinguished were the subject of the present memoir and that Columbanus who evangelized the country of France around Luxeuil, and who afterwards established a Monastery at Bobbio in Italy. St. Columba of Iona, was born about the year 521. He was descended by his father's side from "Niall of the nine hostages," the Monarch of all Ireland, and his mother belonged to a noble family in Leinster. This royal and illustrious lineage may have given him a certain amount of worldly influence, which, doubtless, he employed usefully in his holy endeavours to preach Christ's Gospel, and to spread the truths of Christianity both in his own country

and in the country of his adoption ; but upon one occasion it seems to have been a great snare to him,—caused him to trust too much in an arm of flesh, and resulted in disastrous consequences to himself and others. The circumstance shall be related in the course of this narrative.

His real name was Crimthan, and he himself either assumed the name of Columba from a due appreciation of the qualities thereby implied, and which he wished to sustain, or it was given him by others, in consideration of that dove-like innocence which was certainly the general character of his life. He is commonly styled in Irish history, St Columbkil. Kill signifies cell or church ; and the term Columbkil is said to mean “Columb of the churches,” from the vast number of churches and religious establishments which he founded.

He seems like Timothy to have known the Holy Scriptures from his childhood, having been entrusted for care and education to the charge of a clergyman, near the church of Kilmacrenan, in the county of Donegal. While yet a small boy, he was invited, together with his preceptor, by Brugacius, Bishop at Rathenaigh, to spend the festival of Christmas with him ; and we are

told that he and this good Bishop used to recite the psalms together, probably in alternate verses. Our Bishops and other ecclesiastics, should never forget the influence which their words and actions may have even upon the lowliest minds; and the effect may be felt, acknowledged, and bring forth its fruit, when they themselves are mouldering in their graves.

Columba exhibited from his earliest years a pious and holy mind, as well as a proper attention to the subjects of useful knowledge, which would fit him for his station in life, and enable him to act that part in the world, to which his high birth evidently called him.

When he left the house of the friend and tutor of his boyhood, he was sent to the school of St. Finnian, of Maghabile, in the county of Down. He remained there until he became a deacon in the Church, and he applied himself very diligently, not only to the acquisition of human learning, but also endeavoured to imitate the virtues of his excellent preceptor. After leaving Finnian's school, he went to Leinster, and there studied for some time with Germanus, a teacher of great celebrity. From thence he is said to have gone to Finnian of Clonard, the

school or college of which place was had in great reputation, if not at that period, certainly in subsequent ages. From thence he returned to his native country of Tirconnell, and immediately applied himself to the great business of his life, the work of the ministry, and the inculcation of those great principles by which the religion of our Lord is known and made effectual. In the chapter upon St. Patrick, the utility of Monastic establishments, under their early forms and rule, was spoken of. Columbkil pursued the same course in this respect, as St. Patrick. The necessity of banding men together for mutual support, and consolation, and defence, had not ceased, though doubtless Christianity had much increased. We need not be surprised, therefore, to find that Columbkil's first efforts were made in this direction. When he was twenty-five years old, he obtained from his relatives, the Princes of the country, a piece of land near Lough Foyle, not far from the place where the city of Derry now stands. Upon this he erected a church, and formed a religious establishment ; and when he had placed his institution on a firm basis, he proceeded to visit other parts in Ireland, "that he might

work the works of *Him* that sent him, while it was day, and before the night came, when no man could work."

At that period there was no parochial system, at least not in Ireland. It is doubtful whether there was any territorial district assigned even to Bishops. The parochial system is most admirably suited to a country that has been already Christianized. That a clergyman should be in every parish, that the souls of all the inhabitants within its limits should be entrusted to his care, that he should have them in his charge, and be responsible for God's work amongst them, while they should have the privilege, and right, and benefit, of resorting to him for consolation and direction in all their troubles, whether spiritual or temporal,—this is a system of such wisdom, loveliness, and of good report, that it will commend itself to every Christian mind, and be adopted in every Christian land. And yet there is a higher system with which we have to do: that which may be called by some, the Christian, by others, the Church system. This existed long before England, or Ireland, or any other country was divided into parishes, and in all new Colonies must necessarily exist, and be the

only one in action, while their civilization and conversion to Christianity are taking place. We are right in being warmly attached to the parochial system, for it has effected, and still continues to effect great good amongst us; but when it fails (as sometimes it will do in overcrowded and too populous places, or where the people are thinly scattered over a wide and straggling district, or where the ministering servants of God may be sadly neglectful of the great trust committed to them), let us endeavour to correct the evil, not by disestablishment or disendowment, because there has been an apparent failure, but rather let the Church system come to the rescue, infuse new blood into the feeble parts, wake up the dying embers to a brighter and better life, and either by division of parishes, or an increase of clergy and spiritual agency, throw an increased vitality and energy into "the things that are ready to die."

It was in accordance with the Church system that St. Columbkille proceeded in his holy mission. His earnest desire was to convert souls to God, and build them up in the faith of Christ, wherever they could be found, and wherever he was able to reach them. From Derry he went

to a place anciently called Dairmach, now Durrow, in the Queen's County. Dair, or Dare, signifies an oak, and the whole word means the "oak plain," or oak field. Here he again pursued the same course as at Derry, and erected a Monastery upon land which was given him for the purpose, by a chieftain named Bredan. This establishment became more celebrated, at least it was more known to foreigners, than the kindred institution at Derry. Bede thus speaks of it:—"Before he passed over into Britain, he had built a noble Monastery in Ireland, which, from the great number of oaks, was called in the Scottish (*i.e.*, Irish) tongue, Dearthmach, the field of oaks; from both which Monasteries" (Bede had classed it with his other great establishment at Iona) "many others had their beginning through his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland."

St. Columba is said to have founded other institutions in Ireland, which were doubtless of vast benefit in their localities, and from whence the Word of the Gospel sounded forth continually to the surrounding neighbourhoods. But the time came when he was destined, in the providence of God, to leave his native

country. He may have heard of the spiritual destitution which existed amongst the inhabitants of North Britain, and his heart may have yearned over their miserable condition, and longed to communicate to them that holy religion which conveyed such blessings to his own soul, and to the souls of his people. From his usual zeal and piety we may have expected this; still, if the following story be true (and it is considered doubtful by very eminent writers, because it is not related by his great biographer Adamnan, nor mentioned by Bede), he was forced to abandon home and friends, under very distressing circumstances. This is the event alluded to in a former part of this chapter, wherein it is stated that his powerful relatives became a snare to him. Columba was on a visit with Finnian of Moville. The latter had a copy of either the whole, or part of the Holy Scriptures. In those days such a book must have been most valuable, and appears to have been guarded by Finnian with very jealous care, Columba obtained the loan of it, and immediately set about to transcribe it, without the knowledge of his host. When the copy was nearly finished, Finnian discovered what had been done, and

was greatly displeased. He considered that an unfair advantage had been taken of him, and that a copy should not have been made of his book, even though it was Holy Scripture, without his permission. He demanded, therefore, as a matter of justice, that the copy should be rendered up to him.

The quarrel between Finnian and the subject of our memoir was not easily appeased. The former continued strenuously to claim the copy of his book, and the latter as strenuously refused to give it. Doubtless each thought the other most obstinate and tormenting. At last the matter was referred to Diermit, the Monarch of all Ireland, who decided in favour of Finnian. His judgment has passed into an Irish Proverb, which may be thus translated: "Its calf belongs to every cow, and its copy to every book."

Columba was enraged at what he considered the injustice of the sentence, and certainly the reason for the decision made the judgment ridiculous, if not worse. But now follows the worst part of the transaction. It is said that Columba excited his great and powerful relatives in the North to take up his cause, and interfere even by arms, in his behalf. There were no doubt

many motives at work besides the strife arising from the book, and they all resulted in a war against the Monarch Diermit, who was defeated in a great battle at Cuildremne, near Sligo, in the year 551. Three thousand men of Diermit's army are said to have perished in the engagement. Columba was probably not the sole or immediate origin of this fatal war, but still he may have remotely and indirectly caused it. As is so often the case in many a strife, both public and domestic, he may have dwelt upon his wrongs, brooded over them, cherished them, and nursed his anger to such an extent as to work himself into the belief that he was the worst used man in existence, and that even the cause of religion itself was injured in his person. Angry men do not stop to weigh arguments. However when the engagement was over, and the fearful consequences made apparent, his better mind returned, and through his mediation peace was effected between the contending parties; and we may hope that if his spirit was distressed by the untoward circumstances, it may have been somewhat relieved and gratified by the restoration of the Book.

His brethren in Ireland greatly disapproved

of his conduct : nay, he himself seems to have been repentant and much humbled. They thought that some public humiliation should be undergone by him before their censures for the great scandal which he had brought upon religion were removed, and they referred him to the judgment of St. Lasrean of Devenish. His sentence was a very severe one. It was expressed in the following terms : "That he should spend the rest of his life an exile on a foreign soil, where he should attach more persons to Christ than had fallen in the war." Columba bowed his head and obeyed. His only reply was, "It shall be done ;" and not long after he departed to other lands to preach Christ's Gospel there. His submission and humility were admirable, though the former part of his conduct might not have been unstained.

We are all apt to think too deeply of our petty wrongs, and to speak reproachfully of our neighbour. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." This man, great and excellent as he was in the usefulness and general tenor of his life, considered that he was unkindly, perhaps unchristianly treated by Finnian in the matter of the Book. To this was added manifest in-

justice on the part of the Monarch. Anger was stirred up in his bosom, and hard and bitter words used against his Sovereign and his brother minister. Hence the long train of evils which followed. We do not obey sufficiently these Apostolic precepts: "Speak not evil one of another, brethren;" "Have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." Especially should this obtain amongst clerical brethren. The character of every minister in the Church should be dear to every true-hearted Churchman; and even where there may be folly or inconsistency in the conduct of any one, we do not mend the matter by giving it publicity,—we make ourselves offenders and transgressors of the law which commands us to "cover the multitude of sins," while the cause of our Divine Master Himself and His holy religion may be injured by the disparagement or abuse which we inflict upon His ministering servant.

God is constantly employed in bringing good out of evil; and seldom has such a signal instance been manifested as upon this occasion. When St. Columba left his native land he repaired to North Britain, to labour for his

Lord and preach His Gospel amongst the Picts and other inhabitants of that country. He obtained a grant of the little island of Iona, from Connall, one of his relatives, who at that time was King of the Dalriodans, or Albanian Scots, an Irish Colony that had settled in North Britain about the year 503. There Columba erected a Monastery and gathered around him many brethren and assistants; and there he remained until his death,—those intervals alone excepted which he spent in Missionary work amongst the inhabitants of Scotland, and in visiting, in later times, the establishments which he had formed in Ireland previous to his exile. Iona became world-famous. The Missions which were sent forth from its shores were eminently successful, not only in Scotland (which owes its conversion to Christianity mainly to their instrumentality), but throughout the north of England, and amongst the Saxons of the ancient kingdom of Mercia. These Missions were also singularly blessed in reviving the drooping condition of the British Churches. The kindred Celts of Britain regarded with greater affection their brethren from Iona and Ireland, than Augustine and his followers; and

subsequent events, particularly as respects the great Paschal controversy, proved the extent of their obedience and the intensity of their veneration.

There was a remarkable circumstance connected with Columba's rule in Iona, and over all its tributary establishments, which ought not to be concealed by the historian. Columba never advanced beyond the order of Priesthood. He never succeeded to the Episcopal office. This was said by some to have been caused by a mistake, and the following anecdote is told respecting it. To use Lanigan's words, "It was probably not long after the foundation of Dairmagh (Durrow), and while Columba was still in South Meath, that he was raised to the Priesthood. It is related, that being judged worthy of the Episcopacy, he was sent, with the approbation of several Prelates, to St. Etchen, for the purpose of being consecrated by him. Being arrived near Etchen's church, the saint inquired for the Bishop, and was told, 'There he is below, ploughing in a field.' He then went up to him, and was welcomed with the greatest kindness by the holy Prelate, who, on being apprized of the reason of his visit, did

not hesitate to ordain him soon after. Yet, if we are to believe some authors, a singular circumstance occurred in this business. They tell us that through a sort of mistake Etchen ordained him, not Bishop, as was the general wish of the clergy and people, but Priest; and that, after having spent the following night together in prayer, Etchen, on discovering his mistake, offered to consecrate him Bishop; which proposal Columba declined, attributing what had happened to a dispensation of Providence, and declaring that he would remain the rest of his life in the order to which he had been admitted." This learned historian thus comments upon this remarkable event in a subsequent note: "Neither Etchen nor Columba could have been mistaken as to the nature of the act during its celebration. Therefore, whatever was the oversight, or mistake, alluded to in that narrative, it must have been of some other kind. Etchen might have acted designedly in conferring at first only the order of priesthood, through a wish not to violate the rule of not ordaining *per saltum*" (for at that time Columba was only a deacon), "but with the intention of afterwards giving him Episcopal ordination. To this Columba

submitted, and meanwhile formed the determination not to rise higher. In process of time, persons, who thought he should have been made Bishop, ascribed the whole to a mistake." Of the fact itself there can be no doubt. In Bede's notice of St. Columba we have the following passage: "Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign of Bridius, who was the son of Meilochon, and the powerful King of the Pictish nation; and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ by his preaching and example, whereupon he also received of them the aforesaid island (Iona) for a Monastery. His successors hold that island to this day; he was also buried therein, having died at the age of seventy-seven, about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. That island has for its ruler an Abbot, who is a priest, to whose direction all the province, and even the Bishops (contrary to the usual method) are subject, according to the example of their first teacher, *who was not a Bishop*, but a priest and monk, of whose life and discourses, some writings are said to be preserved by his disciples. From the aforesaid Island and College of Monks," continues Bede, "was Aidan sent to instruct the English

nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a Bishop at the time when Segenius, abbot and priest, presided over that Monastery ; whence, among other instructions for life, he left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence, or continence." The effect produced upon England by Aidan, together with Finan, his successor in the See of Lindisfarne, who was also a missionary from Iona, is thus related by Archbishop Usher. "By the ministry of Aidan was the kingdom of Northumberland recovered from Paganism : whereunto belonged then, beside the shire of Northumberland and the lands beyond it, unto Edenborrow, Frith, Cumberland also, and Westmoreland, Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the Bishoprick of Durham. And by the means of Finan, not only the kingdom of the East Saxons, which contained Essex, Middlesex, and half of Hertfordshire, was regained, but also the large kingdom of Mercia, converted, first unto Christianity ; which comprehended under it Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Rutlandshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire,

Nottinghamshire, Cheshire, and the other half of Hertfordshire. The Scottish that professed no subjection to the See of Rome were they that sent preachers for the conversion of these countries, and ordained Bishops to govern them : namely, Aidan, Finan, and Colman successively, for the kingdom of Northumberland ; for the East Saxons, Cedd, brother to Ceadda, the Bishop of York, before mentioned ; for the Middle Angles, which inhabited Leicestershire, and the Mercians, Diuma, and after him Cellach and Trumhere." *

Such was the great effect produced upon England by Columba and his successors.

The subsequent portion of this great man's life was passed for the most part in Iona. Occasional visits were paid to Scotland, and also to Ireland. The Missionary establishments which he had formed in both countries would need his countenance and advice ; and so great and beloved were his fame and name, that wherever he went, crowds waited upon him, and the people were only too delighted to be permitted to minister to his necessities, and to provide

* Usher, "Rel. of Ancient Irish," cap. x., p. 357.

all things required for his journeys or his entertainment. So great was his renown that he was chosen to inaugurate Aidan as King of the British Scots, in A.D. 547. King Aidan came to Iona for the purpose, and there Columba performed the ceremony.

But the time approached when his life and labours were drawing to their close. It may interest our readers to give the final scene in the words themselves of his famous biographer, Adamnan, as quoted by King, in his admirable and concise work on the History of the Church in Ireland. Adamnan was Abbot of Iona, and lived about a hundred years subsequent to Columba. An edition of his life has been published by Dr. Reeves, the learned Irish antiquary, and "is one of the most curious records that remain of our ancient saints."

On the last day of his life "the venerable man himself and his pious attendant Dermot proceeded to the adjoining granary to bless it; and when this act of piety had been performed, after uttering a thanksgiving for the two heaps of corn which he found there, the saint congratulated his brethren of having in them a sufficient store of food for the coming year, in

case of his removal from them. And then, dwelling much in his thoughts on his nearly approaching end, and unwilling to conceal from his faithful Dermot what he saw in prospect before him, he promised to disclose to him more particular information about it, on condition of keeping it a profound secret ; and when, in compliance with the Saint's wish, his attendant had on bended knees given utterance to a promise to this effect, the venerable man thus proceeds : ' This day is in the sacred volume called the Sabbath, which is interpreted rest ; and to-day is verily a Sabbath for me, because it is the last with me of this present toilsome life, upon which, after all my toils and sorrows, I come to enjoy my Sabbath : and at the approaching hour of midnight, as the hallowed day of the Lord begins, I shall, as the Scripture saith, be going the way of my fathers. For now my Lord Jesus Christ vouchsafes to invite me to Himself, and when this midnight, as I say, comes, I shall go out at His own bidding to be with Him.' Upon hearing these sad words his attendant began to weep bitterly, while the Saint endeavoured to the best of his power to comfort him." Presently, after ascend-

ing the hill which overhung the Monastery, he stood at the top of it a little while; and as he stood there, with uplifted hands pronounced a blessing on his community, in terms expressive of the future greatness to which he foresaw it would attain. After which, “descending from that eminence and returning to the Monastery, he remained sitting in his chamber writing the Psalter. And coming to that verse in the thirty-third Psalm (thirty-fourth according to the Hebrew version) where it is written, ‘But they that seek the Lord shall not want any manner of thing that is good,’ ‘Here,’ said he at the close of the page, ‘I must come to a stop. What comes after, let Baithan write.’” We must here note that this Baithan was the cousin, favourite disciple, and immediate successor of Columba as Abbot of Iona; and that he also was much renowned for his wisdom, learning, and sanctity. Adamnan next goes on to remark, that “the last verse he had written was well suited to this departing Saint, who shall never want for good things throughout eternity. And the verse that follows, ‘Come ye children and hearken unto Me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord,’ was equally

well suited to his successor,—father as he was, and instructor of spiritual children,—who, according to the charge of his dying friend, succeeded him, not only in the teaching, but in the writing too. After having written to the end of the above-mentioned verse, which terminated that page, the Saint goes to church to be present at Vesper Service of the Lord's Day Eve; at the close of which, returning to his humble abode, he rests for part of the night on his couch, where he had the bare flag for straw, and for his pillow a stone, which to the present day stands near his grave, as a sort of monumental inscription for it." Afterwards, when his happy end approached, the Saint enjoyed repose for a short time previously; then, "as the midnight bell was heard to ring, rising up hastily, he goes to the church, and running before the rest, and coming in alone, he sinks on bended knees in prayer." Dermot presently comes in, before the brethren had assembled with their lights, and feeling in the dark for his master, discovers him sunk in a dying state: he raises him, and sitting beside him, places his head with reverent affection to rest on his bosom. The others had now arrived; the dying man, unable

any longer to speak, raised, with Dermot's aid, his feeble right hand to bless his monks, "so that he might appear, even with a motion of the hand, to convey to his brethren that benediction which he was unable to express orally, from his breath failing him. And after having thus imparted to them his solemn blessing, he immediately breathed forth his spirit." The cold hand of death, however, could not destroy the constant serenity of his countenance; but the cheerful placid expression that remained after life had fled, seemed rather like the repose of sleep than the torpor of death. Peace was now his portion, sorrow that of the survivors; and "the whole church echoed with their sad wailing." "Meanwhile, after the departure of his sacred spirit, morning hymns having ended, the revered remains are removed from the church, accompanied by the brethren's sweet psalmody, to the abode from which a little before he had come out alive. And for three days, and as many nights, the becoming ceremonies suitable to the occasion are duly performed with all propriety: which having ended in the praise of the God of Wisdom, the venerated remains of our holy and happy patron,

wrapped in fair linen, and placed in a convenient receptacle, are interred with due solemnity, to rise in bright and everlasting glory." "This, then," continues Adamnan, "was the close of our illustrious patron's life; this his entrance on his recompense; who now, according to the sentences of the Scriptures, admitted as a companion to former saints in their eternal triumphs, joined with Apostles and Prophets, numbered with the company of the thousands arrayed in white, of the saints who have washed their robes in the Lamb's blood, follows the Lamb for his leader, a spotless virgin free from every stain, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who with the Father hath all honour, power, praise, and glory, and dominion, for ever, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen."

"Such was Columba's end; such the recital of it given by his distinguished successor." The words with which King concludes the tenth chapter of his first book are full of interest.

"My Roman Catholic readers will look in vain for various particulars, which they may naturally think very important to be omitted in the dying scene of a priest of the Church

departing in the Catholic faith ; but on which, nevertheless Adamnanus is utterly silent. No anointing occupies the thoughts of the dying saint ; no purgatory is conceived to open for him its dismal doors ; no torments after death are thought necessary to remove the stain or guilt of his forgiven sins ; no prayers are lost in the idle effort to raise him to that holy heaven, where he would have been before them ; but when, absent from the body, he had gone to be present with the Lord, the temporary sorrow which nature exacted from those who remained on earth, soon gave way to the chastened joy of 'sweet psalmody' and thanksgiving, on behalf of the bright jewel rescued from all the defilements of earth, and set for ever in the Redeemer's diadem."

St. Columba died on the 9th of June, A.D. 596, or 597. There is some doubt as to the exact year, none with regard to the day. It has been also said that his remains were subsequently removed to Down, in Ulster, and were buried in the same grave with St. Patrick and St. Brigid.

III.

ST. COLUMBANUS.

IT was remarked in a former chapter, that there were several persons called by the name of Columba, or Columbanus. Two of the most celebrated were Columba the founder of the Monastery and missionary establishment at Iona, and the subject of our present notice. The former is generally termed St. Columba, or St. Columbkil; the latter is best known under the name of Columbanus; and if we are to judge from the Latin poem written by him, and addressed to Hunaldus, and which commences with an acrostic, it was the name which he himself assumed. The similarity of appellation has caused some confusion in the histories of these two very distinguished men, and careless writers have sometimes confounded one with the other. A monk called Jonas (which also signifies, in Hebrew, a dove), who lived at

Bobbio, in the seventh century, wrote his life, and many circumstances connected with his history have been derived from this source. Columbanus had not a royal descent, like his great name-sake : still he was well born, and is called by Jonas, "*pubertas nobilis*." He was a native of the province of Leinster, and his birth took place about the year 559. He is described as having received a good classical education, and was certainly a person of no mean genius. He wrote an exposition of the Psalms, while only a youth, and the Latin poems of his which Usher gives in his "*Sylloge*," evince considerable skill in the art of versification. He became very early impressed with religious sentiments, and there being probably some especial allurements in his native district (for a certain religious female is said to have warned him very strongly upon the subject), he left Leinster, and placed himself under the care and instruction of a venerable teacher, named Senile, or Sinell, Abbot of Cluain-inis, in Lough Erne, and who was a man very distinguished both for his personal piety and his knowledge of Holy Scripture. From thence he went to Bangor (anciently called Benchor, which signifies white

choir), in the county of Down, where he remained for some years under St. Comgall, the chief of that school and Monastery ; and it was there that he first formed the resolution to visit the Continent, and to endeavour with God's assistance to spread the knowledge of true religion in other lands. At that time the Churches of France were in a very declining state. Jonas tells us, that "either from the constant incursions of foreign enemies, or from the neglect and carelessness of the Bishops, the power of religion became almost extinct, and nothing but the profession of Christianity remained." Mr. Hallam in his "History of the Middle Ages" states, that the facts connected with the political history of France at this period "impress on the mind a thorough notion of the extreme wickedness of almost every person concerned in them, and consequently of the state to which society was reduced." Christianity had been preached, and Churches established in that country long before, but time and other unhappy circumstances had dimmed their lustre, and created a necessity for new missionary exertions, and a new kindling of the holy flame of divine truth upon the

decayed, and almost forsaken altars of Christianity.

Tidings of this state of things may have reached Columbanus in his retreat at Bangor, and may have excited his missionary zeal, and determined his future proceedings. His proposition, however, to leave Ireland was not at first pleasing to St. Comgall. The latter was unwilling to lose so promising a pupil, and such an agreeable and improving companion; but at last he gave way, and consented to part with him, considering, doubtless, the cause of God and his holy religion more than his own tastes or inclinations. Nor was it a mere cold consent he gave. He selected twelve companions to attend him (some of whom, as St. Gall and Deicholus, became very famous in the history of the Church), and sent them all forth with solemn prayer, and a dedication of their efforts to the Lord's service.

St. Columbanus, and his zealous and godly company, after a short delay in passing through England, arrived in France about the year 590. His course lay towards Burgundy, and the district of the Vosges; a wild uncultivated tract of country, in which he ultimately formed a

settlement. As they journeyed, "the venerable man," saith Jonas, "took care to preach the word of the Gospel in whatever places they came to : and such abounding grace was there in this blessed man, that whatever persons' houses he was staying in for a time, he was sure to turn the attention of all the inmates to their improvement in religion." Milner, in his "Church History," thus speaks of him. "Columban, an Irish Monk, extirpated the remains of expiring paganism in France. He also passed the Rhine, and evangelized the Sueve, the Boii, and other German nations." "He must also," adds Milner, in a subsequent chapter, "be mentioned as an author, though we have already celebrated him in the character in which he shone far more : namely, of a missionary." His writings do not quite please Milner ; but, saith he, "one sentence retrieves his character, and with it I shall dismiss him : 'We must have recourse to Christ the fountain of life.'"

In this desolate district of the Vosges mountains Columbanus and his companions nearly perished from hunger. For nine days their food only consisted of the bark of trees, and such

roots of the forest as could supply them with sustenance. But at last God was merciful to them, and relieved their necessities. They had taken up their abode in a ruined fort, called Anegrates, now Anegray, and bore their trials with much patience and Christian fortitude. "This follower of God," says Jonas, "remembered that man doth not live by bread alone, but that they who satiate themselves with the word of life, enjoy an abundant and continual feast, of which if any man partaketh, he shall never know hunger." Carantocus, Abbot of the Monastery of Salix, heard of the distress to which these strangers were reduced, and sent them a supply of provisions by his storekeeper, Marculfus, who spoke to every one on his return, in such terms of Columbanus, that the people resorted to him from all quarters. The number of those who came to place themselves under his direction was so considerable, that at last Columbanus erected a Monastery at Luxovium, or Luxeuil, about eight miles distant from Anegray. A community still remained at this latter place; but, says Lanigan, "so great was the concourse of persons of every description, and particularly of young nobles, anxious

to avail themselves of his instructions, and to lead a religious life, that he was soon obliged to erect another Monastery at a place in the neighbourhood, to which he gave the name of 'Ad Fontanas,' now 'Fontaines,' from its being well furnished with springs. Over this new Monastery, as well as over that of Anegrates, he placed superiors, subordinate however to himself. For these establishments he drew up a Monastic rule, most probably derived, at least in a great part, from that of his master, Comgall of Bangor." *

At this period the great controversy which agitated the Church was respecting the time when Easter should be observed. The Eastern Churches kept the same day as the Jews: namely, the fourteenth day after the moon of March, no matter on what day of the week it happened to fall, while the Western Churches kept the Sunday after. This difference existed even during the life of Polycarp, for he went to Rome to confer with Anicetus on the subject, and when they could not convince one another, they agreed in this, that the peace of the Church

* Lanigan, vol. ii., chap. 13, sec. 2.

was not to be disturbed by a question which merely affected custom or usage. "The dispute, however," says Calmet, "grew warm under the pontificate of Victor, about A.D. 188, and the Asiatics continuing their practice, and Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, with the other bishops of Asia, having written to the Pope a long letter in support of their opinion, Victor sent letters through all the Churches by which he declared them excommunicate! The other Churches did not approve of this rigour, and notwithstanding his sentence, they continued in communion with those who still kept Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon of March." It is very clear from this circumstance, that though there was an attempt at this period on the part of the Bishop of Rome to obtain power in the Church, yet that this was not submitted to, nor was his jurisdiction or infallibility recognized.

The subject was thought worthy to be brought before the General Council at Nice, in 325, and it was there ruled that the Sunday immediately following the fourteenth day of the moon of March, should be observed as Easter-day. This was the day which was always kept by the

British and Irish Churches, by St. Columba and St. Columbanus, and their several followers. The difference which arose between them and the Roman Church upon this subject, had its origin in another cause. At the time of the Nicene Council, and for many years after, the Western Churches used the old cycle of 84 years, in their calculation for Easter. The Astronomers of Alexandria discovered a better cycle, that of nineteen years, which we use at present. When the latter (which was certainly the more correct) began to be adopted, the difference between the two cycles caused occasionally very considerable difference with respect to time in the celebration of Easter-day. And where the two parties came into contact, the discrepancy might create some confusion and annoyance. The Irish and British Christians were very much attached to the cycle of 84 years. It was handed down to them by their forefathers. The great men of their Church had thought it sufficient for their use. They considered that it had the sanction of the General Council of Nice. It was their custom; and, above all, the new mode of computation was attempted to be enforced upon them by a foreign power, whose

supremacy they did not acknowledge, and whose presumption they disliked. These arguments had doubtless much weight with Columbanus ; but we also learn from his letter to St. Gregory the Great, that he esteemed the Irish mode of computation the truest and the best. Therefore he believed that he had not only ancient custom and authority, but right upon his side.

This difference respecting Easter tide, was the origin of his troubles in France. It was not the ostensible, nor the more immediate cause of his expulsion from the kingdom, but it may have led to it. The Gallican Bishops were certainly much disturbed and annoyed at the mode in which Columbanus celebrated his Easter, and they held a Council to take the question into consideration, and settle the course which they should pursue towards him. It was upon this occasion he wrote his celebrated letters to Gregory the Great ; and he wrote also to the French Bishops, remonstrating with them “upon the impropriety of troubling him about such a point, and of expelling him from his abode on account of it.” These letters are extant, and may be found in Fleming’s “*Collectanēa Sacra.*” King, in his admirable little

work, gives extracts from these epistles, which may interest our readers.

To Pope Gregory he says, "How is it then that you, with all your wisdom,—you, the brilliant light of whose sanctified talents is shining abroad throughout the world,—are induced to support this dark Paschal system? I wonder, I confess, that the erroneous practice of Gaul has not long since been abolished by you.

* * * * *

"For observe, that Victorius (the cycle of Victorius) was never adopted by our teachers, and the Old Irish, *who were most able philosophers, and calculators of mathematical tables*; but was rather looked upon by them as a subject for ridicule or indulgence, than as an authority. Therefore, in favour of me, a poor hesitating stranger, rather than one affecting to be learned, direct hither the support of your opinion, and disdain not promptly to transmit the influence of your clemency, in order to the restraining of this storm that rages around us. Because, after the reading of such weighty authors as I have consulted, it does not satisfy me to be met with that one sentence of these Bishops, who have nothing to say, but, 'we must not cele-

brate our Passover with the Jews.' Bishop Victor said this long ago, but none of the Eastern Christians adopted his comment." Columbanus then proceeds to argue against the usage of the Roman Church with respect to the time at which Easter ought to be observed, asserts that his own mode was founded upon the authority of the Sacred Scriptures, and that therefore no human authority should prevail against it. He declares also that besides this highest sanction of all, he had the sanction of St. Jerome, who commended the tables which were then in use among the Irish. "Let your vigilance then be careful," continues Columbanus, "that there be no disagreement between yourself and Jerome, in the expression of your sentiments: for I confess to you plainly, that the man who contradicts the authority of St. Jerome will be looked upon as a heretic, and rejected with scorn by the Churches of the West. For, as far as the Divine Scriptures are concerned, they entertain sentiments decidedly and wholly accordant with his." In this epistle Columbanus certainly shows great deference and respect to the Bishop of Rome. Nor was this to be wondered at. Rome had been the capital of the

world, and was then the capital of the Empire of the West. The position of her Bishop was therefore very exalted; and Gregory's own character for learning, talents, and piety, must have added immensely to his dignity and influence. But there is nothing in the letter which at all recognises an infallible authority either in the Pope, or in the Roman Church. The very contrary may be fairly concluded from the passages which speak of the authority of the Holy Scriptures and of St. Jerome. In fact, Roman infallibility was not then thought of. It was the growth of after ages and of more corrupt times. Upon this subject, Archbishop Usher well remarks, "It is most likely that St. Patrick had a special regard unto the Church of Rome, from whence he was sent for the conversion of this island; so, if I myself had lived in his days, for the resolution of a doubtful question I should as willingly have listened to the judgment of the Church of Rome as to the determination of any Church in the whole world, so reverend an estimation have I of the integrity of that Church as it stood in those good days. But, that St. Patrick was of opinion that the Church of Rome was sure ever after to

continue in that good estate, and that there was a perpetual privilege annexed unto that See, that it should never err in judgment, or that the Pope's sentences were always to be held as infallible oracles, that will I never believe; sure I am that my countrymen after him were of a far other belief, who were so far from submitting themselves in this sort, to whatever should proceed from the See of Rome, that they often stood out against it, when they had little cause so to do." *

Besides this letter to Gregory, Columbanus also addressed an Epistle to the Bishops of Gaul. He plainly wished to remain in France, and not to be removed from the work of God to which he had devoted himself; and he was unwilling to be disturbed by the decree of the Council, which had been summoned upon the subject of the controversy respecting Easter.

He commences as follows: "To our holy lords, and fathers, or brethren in Christ, the Bishops, *Presbyters*, and other orders of holy Church, I, Columba, sinner, send greeting in Christ." Then he makes some remarks re-

* Rel. of Ancient Irish. Chap. 8.

specting their Council, prays a blessing upon their deliberations, and proceeds in these words: "One thing, therefore, I beg of your holy assemblage,—that you will patiently and kindly bear with my folly, and the arrogant presumption, as some call it, of my writing to you; a step extorted by the necessity of the case, and not suggested by vanity, as the very humbleness of my style makes evident. And considering that I am not the originator of this diversity, and that it is for Christ the Saviour, our common Lord and God, that I have come a stranger to sojourn in this land, I pray you by our common Lord, and adjure you by Him who is to judge the quick and dead (if ye be worthy to be confessed by Him, who will say to many, 'Verily, I say unto you, I never knew you'), that you will allow me, in the spirit of peace and charity, to live in silence among these woods, beside the bones of our brethren, seventeen in number, who have departed this life, in the same manner as we have been allowed to live among you these twelve years past; that we may, in accordance with our bounden duty, offer up our prayers in your behalf, as we have been doing heretofore. Let us, I implore you, be con-

tent to live together here in Gaul, destined, as we are, to live together in the kingdom of heaven, if we be counted worthy of that blessing. For we have one kingdom promised to us, and one hope of our calling in Christ, with whom we are to reign together; that is, if we first suffer with Him here, that we may also together with Him be glorified. I am aware that to many this talkativeness of mine will appear superfluous, but I have judged it better that you, too, should know what are the subjects that we here handle and study with one another. For these are our Canons, the Commandments of the Lord, and of the Apostles. In these is our faith. These are our arms, our shield and sword; these our defence. These are they that have influenced us to leave our native land. These here also we struggle, though in our luke-warm way, to observe. In these we desire and pray, that we may preserve until death, as we have seen our elders do before us. Be it your part, then, holy fathers, to consider well what course you adopt towards these aged poor and pilgrim veterans; for I am of opinion that you will find it better to comfort than to disturb them." He then endeavours to prove that

the Irish mode of computation was much better than the Roman, and thus continues his most admirable and Christian letter; "Do you, then, make your choice which of the two you are disposed to follow, and which you can best confide in, according to that saying of the Apostle, 'Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.' Far be it from me to strive to maintain a contest with you, to furnish our adversaries (Jews, or heretics, or Gentile heathen) with occasion of joy, in witnessing the contention going on among us Christians. Far, far indeed from us be such a course! For independently of it, we may mutually agree, either for each one of us to abide with the Lord in that mode of life wherein he hath been called, if both traditions be good; or else that the books should be read on both sides with peace and humility, and without anything of a contentious spirit, and whatever system accords most with the Old and New Testaments, that that should be observed without any ill feeling on the part of any one. For if it be of God that you should expel me from this solitude, which for the sake of my Lord Jesus Christ, I have come across the sea to dwell in, it shall be

mine to use that language of the prophet,—‘If this tempest be upon you for my sake, take me up and cast me into the sea, that this commotion may cease from you.’ Yet be it your part first to make the effort, after the example of those sailors, to rescue, in the bowels of your compassion, the endangered passenger, as they did, although being heathens, according to the Scripture narrative, which says, ‘And the men struggled to return to the land, but they could not, for the sea wrought, and the swelling of the waters increased.’* Finally, to bring this communication to a close, I would suggest, although it may be presumptuous, that when there are so many walking and running in the wide and broad way of this world, if there be found some few who bend their steps towards the straight road, through the narrow and straight gate that leadeth unto life, according to our Lord’s precept, such persons should rather be brought on their way to life, than hindered by you; lest, perchance, you, too, as well as the Pharisees, should come in for your share of that censure of our Lord,—‘Woe unto you scribes and

* Jonas, cap. 1—13.

Pharisees, because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men, and enter not in yourselves, nor allow those that are entering to go in.'” After some more remarks upon the subject of mutual forbearance, he concludes the epistle with the following eloquent and pathetic passage: “In order then that we may love one another in unfeigned charity, let us diligently consider the precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ, and hasten, so far as we understand, to put them in practice; that by His doctrine the entire Church may be hastened on with one impulse of exceeding great fervour, in pursuit of heavenly things. May He of His own free grace vouchsafe to us this blessing, that we may all hate the world and love Him only, and Him desire with the Father and the Holy Ghost, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Finally, fathers, pray for us, as we also do, unworthy though we be, for you; and do not regard us in the light of aliens, for we are fellow-members of one body, whether we be French, or Britons, or Irish, or whatever be our nation. Let us, then, all nations, rejoice in the acknowledging the faith, and confession of the Son of God, and hasten forward, all of us, to

advance to the 'perfect man,—to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Jesus Christ,' in whom we may love one another, speak well of one another, correct one another, visit one another, pray for one another; that with one another we may reign, and have joy in His presence. Give your indulgence, I beg of you all, most forbearing and holy fathers and brethren, to my talkativeness and boldness in attempting a task beyond my powers."

The letters to Gregory the Great never reached him; and this epistle to the French Bishops and Presbyters may have conciliated them in some measure, but still it was not efficacious in preventing the banishment of Columbanus from France. This latter circumstance arose from another cause. At that period, a wicked woman named Brunechild, called by Fleury, Brunechaut, widow of Sigebert, King of Austrasia, ruled over Austrasia and Burgundy, in the name of her two grandchildren, Theodebert and Theoderic. When these grew up to man's estate, she wished to continue her influence and authority, and descended even to pander to their vices, that she might retain her power. Such unhappy

instances have not been without their parallel even in modern history, and are not peculiar to the French people only. Other nations and other times have had dark stains in this respect upon their reputations, and their morality and Christian character have suffered grievously in consequence.

Theodoric, incited thereto by his grandmother, led a vicious life in company with his concubines. Columbanus reproved him (as was his duty to do) for this mode of conduct, and though the King bore his godly admonitions well at first, and made many promises of amendment, yet he would not separate himself from his wicked associates, nor forsake his immoral practices. At last, Brunechild's counsels, aided by his own evil heart of unbelief, prevailed. Columbanus was expelled from the kingdom, and ordered to return to his native land. Through various fortunes and chances, attended by a few faithful companions, he pursued his way to Nantes, that he might embark there for Ireland. On his journey thither, he is said to have performed several 'miracles; and when arrived at the sea, the elements themselves seem to have united to prevent his farther progress. His

companions, together with their effects, were put on board a ship ready to depart for Ireland, and dropped down the river to the sea, while Columbanus himself followed in a small boat, intending to embark in the larger vessel when the ocean was reached. But the winds and waves were boisterous. The ship was driven back, and lay stranded for three days at the mouth of the river. The master of the vessel believing that his voyage was interrupted on account of the companions of Columbanus, put them and their effects out upon the shore; and no sooner had he done so than the storm ceased, and he was allowed to proceed on his voyage. This was also said to be another miracle; nor should we hesitate to confess that it was certainly a singular interposition of Providence.

Respecting the numerous miracles recorded of those saints of old (and their histories abound with them), we should not be too hasty in denying, nor too credulous in accepting them. A miracle is a suspension or interruption of the laws of nature. The God of nature can, of course, interrupt or interfere with His own laws. That He has done so in very many instances, will be admitted by every Christian; and that

miracles were performed by Christ and His Apostles, is universally allowed. In the establishment of our holy religion, these miracles were necessary ; and if it had not been for the “pious frauds” which became too common in the Church in succeeding ages, and which threw a certain amount of disrepute upon the true miracle, we, in modern times, might not have been so incredulous with regard to its reality. But beside these “pious frauds,” a proper distinction does not seem to be sufficiently drawn in Church history between a miracle (a suspension of the laws of nature) and an answer to prayer. Thus, in the case before us, Columbanus had doubtless laid out his whole cause before the Lord of Hosts ; and when the winds threw back his ship upon the land, his prayers were plainly answered, and there was a manifest interposition of Divine Providence evincing God’s will, although no miracle was wrought in his behalf. It was a common occurrence. Many a ship has been stranded, both before and since ; and as “a sparrow doth not fall to the ground without our Father,” every Christian should believe that all his steps are ordered by a Counsel, and directed by a Wisdom, omnipotent and omniscient.

The storm and its effects were very remarkable in the case of Columbanus ; for Theoderic, incited thereto doubtless by Brunechild, had sent an escort or guard to conduct him as far as the sea, over which he was to sail to Ireland. When the port was reached, and he and his companions were fairly launched, the duty of the escort ceased, and the soldiers, with their commander, probably left Nantes before Columbanus was restored to land. However this be, there was no farther obstruction to his movements ; and when he left Nantes, he took refuge with Clotaire II., King of Soissons, who received him with much kindness and consideration, for he was very desirous that Columbanus and his company should settle in his dominions, thinking no doubt that he and his people would derive much advantage from their ministrations. This conduct of the King shows the great estimation in which Columbanus and his mission were held. It is probable that his expulsion by Theoderic, and the cause of it, were fully known to Clotaire, who may not only have compassionated Columbanus for the harsh treatment he met with, and the persecutions which he had to endure through the instigations of a wicked woman,

but the King may have esteemed him the more for his faithful reproofs of the vicious practices of his former Sovereign. "Them that honour Me," saith God, "I will honour."

From some unknown cause, Columbanus did not remain at Soissons. He abode there for a little while, and then set out on his way to Italy, which was destined to be his final resting-place. He requested the King to procure him a safe passage through the realms of Theodebert, brother of Theoderic, being afraid lest the wrath of the latter should have also found a place in the bosom of his brother, especially as both were the grand-children of Brunechild, who was his undoubted enemy. Clotaire granted him an escort, but it seemed unnecessary, for Theodebert received him with open arms, and like Clotaire, endeavoured also to induce him to remain in his dominions, promising, as we are told by his biographer Jonas, "to find him out lovely places in every way suited to the purposes of servants of God, and neighbouring nations to preach to, within reach on every side." The conduct of both these Princes, Clotaire and Theodebert (especially that of the latter, by whose brother and grandmother he

had been expelled from his former settlement), proves beyond all controversy the great renown which attached itself to the character of Columbanus, and the estimation in which his services were held by the Kings and Princes of France. Columbanus acceded to the request of Theodebert ; and being allowed to choose a residence for himself and his companions, he wandered along the Rhine, and into Switzerland, and took up his abode for a time at Bregentz, on the lake of Constance, where he preached the Gospel, and made many converts from among the Pagan people who abounded in that district, and also restored others who had fallen away from Christianity to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It was here he left Gallus, who became afterwards the well-known Apostle of the Swiss nation, and from whom the town and canton of St. Gall derive their name.

At this period a war arose between the brothers Theodebert and Theoderic, concerning the boundaries of their respective States. The former was defeated, taken prisoner, and sent to his grandmother Brunechild, who ordered him to be executed. His kindness to Columbanus merited a better fate, though it might

have been one of its causes. This war having increased the power of Theoderic and Brunchild, Columbanus wisely determined to remove himself from their reach, and crossed the Alps to Italy, where he founded the Monastery of Bobbio, not far from Milan. This Missionary establishment (for it must be ever borne in mind that these Monastic institutions were originally intended to Christianize and civilize their surrounding neighbourhoods) was as eminently successful as its French sister. But Columbanus did not live sufficiently long to see the result of his labours in Italy. He only survived his arrival there about three years, and died at Bobbio on the 21st of November, A.D. 615, at the age of seventy-two. The beautifully situated town of San Columbano, in the territory of Lodi, still preserves his memory and his name.

Columbanus wrote several works, some of which are lost; others have been handed down to us, and may be found in Fleming's "*Collectanea Sacra*." Usher, in his "*Sylloge*," gives three of his Latin poems; one in rhyme, and another in hexameter verse, which contains the acrostic, Columbanus Hunaldo. In King's "Appendix" there is a translation of his letter

to Pope Boniface, and two specimens of his Instructions, or short sermons. All of these are well worth reading. King mentions an instance of mis-quotation from the letter to Boniface, by Lanigan and Carew, the two principal Romish writers of Irish Church history. In the letter there occurs the following passage : “ You are in a manner connected with heaven, and Rome is the head of the Churches of the world, *excepting the singular prerogative of the place of the Lord’s resurrection.*” The sentence is made to end at the word world, the last portion (which we give in italics) being omitted. I am unwilling to charge wilful perversion of the truth upon such respectable authors as these before-named, and hence incline to the conclusion that they had not the original document before them, but quoted from a text-book. Lanigan gives the passage twice : once in English, and the second time (in a note) in the original Latin, but in both cases he ends at the same word. The omitted passage proves, beyond a doubt, that Columbanus did not admit the supremacy, much less infallibility, of the Roman See.

IV.

ST. GALL.

THE honours of this world should form no part of the Christian's expectation. His record is on high ; and if this maxim were more attended to, disappointment would less frequently ensue. To work in the Lord's vineyard from the love of it, with a single eye to His glory, for the benefit of His holy Church and the welfare of our fellow-men and of their never-dying souls, is the Christian's great reward ; and, if not recognised in this world, will receive its true honour and glory in the world to come. Still it sometimes happens that virtue, and patience, and self-denial for the good of others, meet, even here, with their due acknowledgment, and history should record with pleasure such instances when they occur. To have a whole country receive its name from a Christian missionary has not often taken place,

and such honour is therefore worthy of especial notice.

When Columbanus left Ireland to preach Christianity in the eastern parts of France, and to revive the flame of our holy religion, which had sunk very low, and was almost dying out upon its altars, he was accompanied by twelve of his countrymen. Gallus, afterwards called St. Gall, was one of them; and the grateful Swiss called by his name, not only the town and monastery which he had founded, but the whole of the surrounding country was entitled the Canton of St. Gall, and thus the memory, and the name, and the fame, of him by whom they were converted to the faith, were perpetuated to the remotest ages. We know but little of the parentage, or the early life of St. Gall. He was an Irishman, a monk of Bangor in the north of Ireland, and his name is mentioned by Fleming in his "*Collectanea Sacra*," as the first of the twelve companions from that Monastery, who were chosen, or volunteered, to attend and assist Columbanus on his holy mission. The religious condition of France at that period was very lamentable. It is said by a Roman Catholic historian, that,—

“The Gauls, or, as we now call those provinces, France, were then in great need of some holy and resolute missionaries, who would be able and willing to stem the torrent of crimes and vices caused by the irruptions of the Northern barbarians, and to rouse the clergy from the torpor and indolence in which they indulged themselves. Columbanus was highly qualified by his learning, zeal, and courage for this undertaking.”

Nor does St. Gall appear inferior to his great leader and master. His labours are mixed up with those of the rest of his companions in their journeyings through France, and in their residence at Luxueil, and amongst the Vosges mountains. And when Columbanus was persecuted for his faith and holiness, and driven from the Monastery which he had founded and the work to which he had devoted himself, St. Gall went out with him in his wanderings, and attended him as far as Switzerland, on his way to Italy. At Brégentz, on the Lake of Constance, St. Gall seems to stand out prominently amongst his fellow-missionaries. “There was a temple there, in which three images of gilt brass were affixed to the wall, and used to be adored by the people, who, having discarded the service of the holy altar, were wont to say, These are our ancient gods and protectors.” Upon some

great heathen festival, when a vast multitude of people were assembled for their idolatrous worship, St. Gall addressed them in their own language, and exhorted them to return to the true God. This language he is said to have known very well, and probably during his residence amongst the Vosges mountains he applied himself to the study, not only of the Frankish tongue, but of the various dialects of the surrounding nations. His acquisition of these proves that he was a man of no ordinary calibre and attainments. After his discourse to the Brégentians was ended, he boldly took the images, the objects not merely of their idolatrous worship, but possibly also of their affections (to such mean and contemptible things does idolatry reduce the heart of man), "and broke them in pieces with stones, and cast them into the lake." This courageous sermon and action produced their usual effects. Some were very angry and enraged at the destruction of the images. They might have thought that the objects of their superstitious reverence and worship, or the ministering servants of the idols, would do them some bodily harm, and that unless punishment was

inflicted upon the aggressors, vengeance would redound upon themselves. Hence the missionaries were for a time in considerable danger. It requires no ordinary courage to face an infuriated and threatening mob ; but these men of God boldly held their ground, and at last prevailed. We are told "that some were converted, and confessing their sins, praised the Lord." Having thus obtained the nucleus of a Christian Church, Columbanus with St. Gall and the rest of their companions, proceeded to consecrate a building in which the sacred services might be celebrated. There was a heathen temple in that neighbourhood, which is said by Walafridus to have been once (in better and holier times, before Paganism had made its fierce irruption upon the Christianity of the country), a Christian church. The missionaries obtained possession of this edifice, and dedicated it again to the true God, for His holy worship. The sanctuary was cleansed and purified by the Word of God and by prayer, and certain religious, perhaps superstitious ceremonies, in accordance with the usages of that day, were observed, and at the conclusion "the people departed (it is said) full of joy." A

Monastery was then erected, which seems to have been the usual course of proceeding in those rude and uncivilized times, where mutual support in spiritual as well as temporal things was an absolute necessity. Suitable employment was provided for the brethren, and to each was assigned a special work of manual labour. Some worked in the garden, others attended to the fruit trees, while others were occupied with those farming operations which made an impression upon the uncultivated wild, and brought the desert and the brake into fertility and verdure. The especial duty assigned to St. Gall, was the making of nets, and to provide fish from the waters of the lake for the use of the Convent. The monks of those days were no laggards. They might have delighted in heavenly contemplation, and we may presume did so, but still (like the Apostles of old) they worked with their own hands to provide sustenance for themselves and others, and often experienced satisfaction from the feeling, that "it was more blessed to give than to receive."

St. Gall remained at Brégentz with his chief, Columbanus, for about a year; but as the latter

thought it expedient to place the Alps between him and his bitter persecutors, and made haste to go to Italy, a separation took place between the friends and fellow-missionaries, which more redounded to the welfare of the Church than if they had continued in the same company. At that time St. Gall was ill and unable to travel. This was one obstacle to his setting out upon a long, painful, and perhaps dangerous journey. Besides, a great work lay before them in that part of Switzerland, and as St. Gall could speak its language with fluency, it seemed every way the wisest course to leave him behind to labour, when he recovered from his illness, in that portion of the Lord's vineyard. St. Gall had a friend, named Willimar, a priest, who lived at Arbona on the Lake of Constance, and who had received with great kindness and hospitality Columbanus and all his companions, when they first came into that part of the country, and at whose instance and direction they had taken up their abode at Brégentz. To him St. Gall repaired, while still the sickness was upon him, and Willimar entrusted him to the care of two of his clerks, who paid him all proper attention, and supplied him with everything necessary for

his recovery. In due time his health was restored, and then he entered again upon his missionary labours.

At the distance of a few leagues from the Lake of Constance, there lay a narrow and then secluded valley : through it ran the small river Steinace, or Steinach, and there it was that St. Gall, acting under the advice of Heltibold, one of Willimar's deacons, who knew the country well, determined to take up his abode. He consecrated his residence with fasting and prayer, and for a time led a solitary life.

When the period of his retreat and contemplation was drawing to a close, he commenced operations by building a small church, or oratory, and erecting twelve small habitations for the companions who wished to join him in his work. The ancient propagators of the Gospel in foreign parts seem to have delighted in the Apostolic number, for we find frequently a chief, attended by twelve companions, going forth to their sacred work ; nor are there wanting instances at home, as at Winchester and other places, where a grateful remembrance of the twelve Apostles, as well as the seventy disciples, animated the spirit of ancient founders.

The twelve cells which St. Gall erected were soon filled, and his followers were carefully instructed by him in sacred and other lore. This was the origin and foundation of the celebrated Abbey of St. Gall, from whence the light of Christianity was diffused in early ages over all Switzerland, whose Abbots in after times were Princes, and warriors and companions of the great ones of the earth, and whose library was renowned for its rare and valuable books and manuscripts, and was the conservator of many classical works. In the 8th century the Abbot Othmar greatly extended these small buildings, or perhaps founded anew a much larger Monastery, and established a school, or college, for the propagation of that knowledge which his learned predecessors had brought into the country. In the year 1780 there were manuscripts there entitled "*Scotica Scripta*," "*Irish Writings*;" and it was from this institution that the Greek and Latin languages were diffused over France and Germany upon the revival of classical literature in Europe. It is said that in this Abbey were preserved, during the dark ages, all that now remain of the works of Quintilian, Petronius, Silius Italicus,

Valerius Flaccus, Ammianus Marcellinus, some parts of Cicero, and other classical and valuable books. Quintilian's "Institutions" were discovered in a tower of the Monastery in the year 1415, by Poggio Bracciolini, a native of Florence.

Up to the 10th century piety and learning seem to have flourished amongst the monks, and many works of erudition were issued by them, but about the beginning of the 13th century, if not before, a fatal change took place. Superstition had gradually usurped the place of true religion. The spirit of holiness had departed from the sanctuary, and though it lingered for a while over the ancient precincts, as if loth to forsake utterly a place once so loved and honoured, yet the spirit of the world, and of ambition, and of vanity, and pride, which had taken possession, at last prevailed, and the cell of the anchorite was converted into the tent of the soldier. The desire for military celebrity, which then pervaded Europe, soon found its way to the retired Monastery of St. Gall, and the character of the pious and literary Churchman was exchanged for that of the warrior and the General. The Abbots became celebrated for their warlike

skill, and were as notorious for their oppressions, as they were formerly famed for their piety and learning. They took part in most of the Swiss wars, and in process of time greatly extended their territories. The establishment continued as a Monastery to the year 1805, when it was suppressed.

A remarkable story is related of St. Gall, which is said to have happened soon after he had formed his establishment upon the little river Steinace. Fridiburga, the daughter of Gunzo, Duke of that country, was said to be possessed of an evil spirit. An exorcism was performed by St. Gall, and the evil spirit was expelled. She had been betrothed to Sigebert, King of Austrasia, and upon her recovery she was conducted by her father to Metz, where Sigebert then resided. The latter was informed of the disease and its cure, and by whom it was effected. All the parties were extremely grateful to St. Gall, and Sigebert made him a grant of the place where he had established himself, and sent him some presents. Fridiburga was, of course, the most grateful of them all, but the fervor of the new religious feeling with which she was inspired, led her into

extremes and into error. Forgetful of her engagement to Sigebert, and acting, as is said, under the advice of St. Gall, she retired from the world, and entered into a convent of women at Metz, upon the very eve of her intended marriage. The history says, that the King, so far from being offended at this proceeding, highly approved of it; and we can well imagine this, especially if there were any species of madness attendant upon the possession of the evil spirit. It is right to say that Lanigan doubts the truth of this whole story; and yet may there not be some foundation for it? We can readily suppose that Fridiburga was ill; that her disease had assumed some of the forms of hysteria, which often, united to fits, present the appearance of madness. This might easily be ascribed to Satanic influence, and St. Gall's form of prayer by the bedside of the sufferer may be righteously presumed the exorcism which, through the power of God, healed the malady. The advice of St. Gall to his penitent to retire from the world was only in accordance with the religious sentiment or superstition of that day, and the forbearance and ready approval of Sigebert may have had their origin

as much in the selfish principle as in higher considerations.

Amongst the presents conveyed to Gallus upon this occasion was an elegant silver cup, which Magnoald, one of his disciples wished to be reserved for Divine Service ; but St. Gall would not suffer it. He had distributed for the benefit of the poor all the other presents that had been sent him, and he ordered this to be sold, and the proceeds distributed with the rest. He said that the words of St. Peter should ever be kept in especial remembrance : “Silver and gold have I none ;” and that his master, Columbanus, was accustomed to celebrate the Holy Communion in *brazen* vessels, “because our Saviour is said to have been affixed to the cross with nails of brass.”

Some time after this the See of Constance became vacant. An assembly of prelates and clergy met together to elect a Bishop, and St. Gall was invited by Duke Gunzo to attend the Convention. He accordingly went to Constance, accompanied by his two deacons, John and Magnoald. The Duke addressed the Bishops and clergy, and exhorted them to choose a fit and proper person to fill the vacant See. All

eyes were at once fixed on Gallus, and he was unanimously elected as their Bishop, on account of his "superior knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, his wisdom, humility, charity towards the poor, and singular sanctity." But St. Gall declined the honour : he thought his deacon John fitter for the post, that John possessed all the qualities mentioned, in a greater degree than himself, and besides, that John was a native of that district, while he was a comparative stranger. He therefore recommended John to be chosen in his stead. When John heard his name mentioned, he withdrew hastily from the meeting, and hid himself in the Church of St. Stephen outside the city. Thither he was followed by the clergy and people, who drew him from his retreat, and unanimously elected him to be their Bishop. The unwillingness to accept the episcopal office in primitive times was very often, doubtless, very real. The office of a Bishop at that period only plunged a man into a sea of troubles ; persecutions frequently followed ; the taller the head, the higher the aim, while honour and renown (so far as this world was concerned) rarely waited on the possessor of a See. In

modern times, refusals to become Bishops have not been wanting, and these are deserving of much more credit, for the mitre always conveys dignity, as we may hope it does grace.

So far as regarded St. Gall's refusal of the Bishopric, we may fairly conclude, from the well-known character of the man, that he shrunk neither from the trouble nor the danger of the office, but that he honestly believed that John would make the better Bishop, and that he himself was better employed in the work of evangelization to which he had devoted himself; while John's refusal in the first instance, and his acceptance afterwards, may doubtless be ascribed to those pure and holy motives which ever animate the true servants of the Most High.

Elected thus by acclamation to be their Bishop by his future clergy and people, John seems to have been consecrated to the episcopate on the instant, and that without proceeding to the office of the priesthood. Many more irregular things were committed in ancient times than churchmen of a certain type are willing to allow : and this irregularity may have happened in the hurry of the proceedings.

After the reading of the Gospel, St. Gall was asked to preach, and the sermon which he made is still extant, having been subsequently written out for the benefit of the people. It gives a history of religion from the creation of the world down to the preaching of the Apostles; and is described as being extremely well written, and interspersed with many moral and pious observations. It was published by Canisius, and corresponds exactly with the summary of it given by Walafridus.*

Some time after this, another great honour was paid to St. Gall. It was a most significant recognition of his services to the Church in France, and redounded much to the credit of all parties. We have seen in the life of Columbanus, that he, and St. Gall, and others of their holy companions, were driven by unjust persecution from Luxueil. Some envy, small perhaps at first, but nourished (as is too often the case) into enmity at last, upon the part of the French Christians, may have been one of the causes which led to the departure of the Irish missionaries. However, time, the great healer, and

* Lanigan. Vol. ii., p. 436.

the good influence of their holy religion, induced a better mind, and Eustatius, Abbot of Luxueil, having died in 625, St. Gall was unanimously elected as his successor, and he was thus recalled to the scene of his former labours.

A deputation of six monks, all Irishmen, were sent to Switzerland to endeavour to prevail with him, and obtain his acceptance of the office, but he steadily declined the promotion, and replied, that "having abandoned his relatives and acquaintance, chosen a solitude for his residence, and refused a bishopric, he could not think of being raised to any rank which might involve him in the cares of this world." The members of the deputation were kindly received and hospitably entertained, but nothing could persuade St. Gall to forsake his loved retreat. There he lived, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour by his example and his labours, and there he died the death of the righteous about the year 645. He was of a great age, ninety-five years old, when he departed to his rest, and his memory has always been held in especial reverence in the Church, particularly in that country to which he had

devoted his life-long services. He was honoured with the title of Apostle of the Alemanni, or Swiss people, and no missionary was ever more deserving of the name. Notker in his "Martyrology" has the following notice of him :—

"God's mercy raised up the blessed Gallus to be the Apostle of the Alemanni, and he himself, a well-skilled traveller in the ways of godliness, having imbued them with the true faith by his teaching, brought back the nation which he found sunk in Paganism, from the darkness of ignorance to the light of the Sun of righteousness which is Christ."

A short letter, or part of an oration by Gallus, is given by Usher in his "Sylloge," but its authorship is doubted, especially by Basnage, who says that it was written by another Gallus, a Bishop of Clermont, about the year 650.

V.

ST. DIÉ, OR DEICHOLUS.

ST. DIÉ was half-brother to St. Gall, and was one of the twelve companions who attended Columbanus on his mission to evangelize the east of France. In the Irish language he was called Dichuil, which was Latinized into Deicholus; and thence changed, by the people amongst whom he laboured, into Dié.

Under the latter name he is gratefully remembered to the present time among the Vosges mountains, and in the country about Besançon, for the good deeds he wrought in their vicinity more than twelve hundred years ago. In Franche Comté his name is frequently given in baptism to persons of both sexes, a small alteration being made with respect to females.

“He quitted Ireland, his native country,” saith Alban Butler, “with St. Columban, and lived with him first in the kingdom of the East Angles, and afterwards at Luxeu.”

When the troubles of Columbanus arose, and when he was obliged to leave France, ostensibly on account of his attachment to the old, and once well-approved method of keeping Easter, but in reality on account of private enmity and envy, Deicholus set out with his master and leader. After having walked a little way from Luxueil, he found himself unable to proceed. He had a weakness in his feet, was advanced in years, and was doubtless daunted at the nature of the wanderings which lay before them. He may also have considered that he would be only a burden to his companions, if he were unable to travel as fast and as energetically as their age and strength gave them power to do ; and, rightly judging that the Lord's work was to be done everywhere, he requested Columbanus to leave him behind. His brother Gallus, and we may presume all his companions, were no doubt very sorry to part with him. Friendships in a foreign land, companionship in suffering, endurance together in straits and difficulties "for the testimony of Jesus and for the Word of God," are ties not easily broken ; but there seemed no help for it, and the leave he supplicated was granted. The evil (as is so frequently

the case) was converted by our gracious God into a blessing.

Deicholus, having parted from his people, turned aside from the direct track, and being afraid to return to Luxueil, from whence he and his master and countrymen had been on that day so ignominiously expelled, he went through lonesome places as well as he was able, until he arrived at a spot called Luthra, in the midst of a forest, in the district of Besançon. There he made his abode, and as there were Christians in the neighbourhood, he frequented their church. The character of an anchorite was then held in great respect by the generality of the people, and for the most part he well deserved it. The ascetics taught self-abnegation, and confirmed their teaching by their practice, in an age of licence and self-indulgence. It was thought that the holiness of mind and purpose which animated these excellent men, must have been the necessary result of their fastings and austerities, and the people bowed down before them as they would before a present Deity. In particular cases, indeed, where enmity was stirred up against them from party zeal, or from private causes (as in the case of Columbanus),

the popular tide was turned against them ; but these were the exceptions, not the rule. The people of the forest were greatly attracted by the self-denying, holy life of Deicholus, and he was noticed especially by a pious lady named Bertildis, the widow of Weifhar, a nobleman of large property. She made him a grant of land at Luthra, and religious men flocked to him from all quarters. There, according to the usual, and indeed necessary custom of the day, where missionary enterprise was to be promoted, he formed a community of monks, and erected two oratories, one of which was dedicated to St. Peter, and the other to St. Paul. At this time Clotharius II., who had received considerable accession of territory on the eastern borders of France, visited that part of his dominions. He heard of the fame of Deicholus, and went to see him. Finding that he was one of the companions of Columbanus, whom the King held in the highest estimation, he took Deicholus at once into his favour, requested him to remain at Luthra, and to improve and civilize the people in that particular quarter. In order to enable him and his companions to live, while they devoted their

energies to the evangelization of the inhabitants, the King assigned some additional lands for the use of the Monastery ; and these were greatly increased in after times, so that it was possessed of large estates, and considerable temporal power. Alban Butler says, "that the Abbot of Lure was formerly a Prince of the Empire. The Abbey was subsequently united to that of Morbac, in Alsace."

But with the temporal grandeur of these ancient Monasteries we have nothing to do. They flung themselves into the tide of worldliness which rolled beside their once sacred walls ; and while the form of self-abnegation still remained, the spirit of it was carried away by the flood that the first monks and founders had so successfully stemmed.

A life of Deicholus was published by Bollandus, and another by Colgan. In the tenth century, a monk of Lure wrote an account of his life and miracles ; but where a great interval of time has elapsed between the actual life and its record, little dependence can be placed on such histories. The writers are very apt to draw upon their imaginations for their facts. That St. Dié was a man of extraordinary

piety and zeal, we can readily believe; and that he effected much good amongst the people for whom he laboured, is manifest from the retention of his name with such great reverence even to the present day. He seems to have mingled much cheerfulness with his religion, not deeming it necessary to unite moroseness, or want of geniality, with strict rule, or even ascetic practices. "St. Columban once said to him, 'Deicholus, why are you always smiling?' He answered in simplicity, 'Because no one can take my God from me.'"

He continued at the head of the establishment which he had founded for several years; and then, having fulfilled his course, and finished the work which was given him to do, he died in a good old age, about the year 625.

VI.

AIDAN.

THE APOSTLE OF NORTHUMBRIA AND FIRST BISHOP OF LINDISFARNE.

OSWALD, King of Northumbria, when a youth, had been driven into exile, or had taken refuge among the Scots of Ireland : * he received much instruction there, and with his followers embraced Christianity. When he succeeded to the kingdom, he wished to introduce his own religion into his dominions : the Gospel had been preached in the North of England

* "It has been inquired," says Dr. Lanigan, "who were the Scots, among whom Oswald had been an exile. Some say they were the British Scots, and hence Mr. Lingard states that Oswald had concealed himself in the mountains of Scotland. Maihew, quoted by Colgan, maintains that Oswald had taken refuge in Ireland, and that it was there he became a Christian. Fleury also observes that by the Scots, among whom Oswald was baptized, are to be understood the Irish." "If it be admitted that Oswald took shelter in Ireland, it follows, of course, that the elders of the Scots, as Bede calls them, to whom that Prince applied,

before his time ; but unhappily Paganism prevailed over the truth for a space, and when Paulinus, who was the Roman missionary, retired from his Bishopric at York, the Christian cause seemed altogether lost, and idolatry gained the ascendancy. It was a singular blessing that drove Oswald from his country, and that he found a retreat in Ireland ; for when he returned and obtained the throne, he applied for missionaries to minister to himself and to instruct his people. Bede gives a very interesting account of this good King Oswald : “Two princes, named Osric and Eanfrid, who had lapsed into Paganism, occupied the dominion before him. Cadwalla, King of the Britons, slew them both, ‘though the act was base in him,’ for one of them was slain by

were some of the Irish prelates and superior clergy : not indeed of the South [of Ireland], but of the North. This is plainly intimated by Bede, who, after telling us that they sent Aidan, accounts for his following the Irish computation of Easter by observing that the Northern province of the Scots still adhered to it. By *Northern province* he evidently meant the North of Ireland ; for immediately after he opposes to their practice that of the Scots of the Southern parts of Ireland. And hence we have additional argument that the Scots with whom Oswald was concerned, were those of Ireland.”—Lanigan, vol. ii., p. 418.

treachery. Oswald, a man beloved of God, after the death of his brother Eanfrid, advanced with an army, small indeed in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ; and the impious commander of the Britons was slain, though he had most numerous forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand." "The place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where, Oswald being about to engage, erected the sign of the holy cross, and on his knees prayed to God that He would assist His worshippers in their great distress. It is further reported that the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be fixed, the King himself, full of faith, laid hold of it and held it with both his hands, till it was set fast by throwing in the earth; and this done, raising his voice, he cried to his army, 'Let us all kneel, and jointly beseech the true and living God Almighty in His mercy to defend us from the haughty and fierce enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a great war for the safety of our nation.' All did as he had commanded, and accordingly, advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory as their faith de-

served." * It is said that this place is now called Hallington, anciently Havenfelth, or Heavenfield. It is about a mile from Bingfield, and a few miles north of Hexam.

The request of King Oswald to have missionaries sent to him, was probably made in the first instance to his former friends in Ireland, and by them forwarded to their brethren and countrymen in Iona.† Iona was nearer to the place of action : skilful missionaries might have been found there, who were better acquainted with the habits and customs of the Northumbrian people. Certain it is that the Establishment at Iona answered the request. The first effort was a failure : the Christian brother who was sent to preach Christ's Gospel was daunted by the greatness of the undertaking, and despaired of success ; he remained only a short time in Northumbria, and then returned

* Bede, book iii., cap. 1 and 2.

† "Fleury's account is as follows : "Si tôt que le roi Osouald fut établi dans son royaume, il songea à rendre Chrétien tout son peuple, et pour cet effet, il envoya aux anciens des Ecossois ; *c'est-à-dire des Irlandois*, chez lesquels il avoit reçu le baptême, demandant un évêque pour instruire les Anglois ses sujets."—Fleury, L. xxxvii., ch. 18.

to Iona. The brethren assembled to hear the cause of his return, and of his failure.

Then (to use the words of Bede) "they seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous that the nation should receive the salvation it demanded, and grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aidan to the priest then spoken of, 'I am of opinion, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the Apostolic rule, give them the milk of more easy doctrine, till being by degrees nourished with the Word of God, they should be capable of greater perfection, and be able to practice God's sublimer precepts.' Having heard these words, all present began diligently to weigh what he had said, and presently concluded that he deserved to be made a Bishop, and ought to be sent to instruct the incredulous and unlearned, since he was found to be endued with singular discretion, which is the mother of other virtues; and accordingly being ordained, they sent him to their friend, King Oswald, to preach: and he, as time proved, afterwards appeared to possess all other virtues, as well

as the discretion for which he was before remarkable." *

Aidan is described as a man of singular piety, virtue, and activity. Although Bede differed from him in the mode of calculating the celebration of Easter, and in other matters connected with obedience to the Roman See (to whose decrees the Irish, in the seventh century, utterly refused to submit), still he praises his "great meekness, piety, and moderation, and his zeal in the cause of God ;" though he adds, "it was not according to knowledge, for he was wont to keep Easter Sunday according to the custom of his country (which we have before so often mentioned), from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon." "It was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men, that he taught no otherwise than he and his followers had lived ; for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world." Bede then describes the active life which Aidan led : how he was wont to

* Bede, book iii., cap. 5.

traverse "both town and country on foot, never on horseback unless compelled by some urgent necessity, and wherever he saw any, either rich or poor, he invited them, if infidels, to embrace the mystery of the faith ; or if they were believers, to strengthen them in the faith, and to stir them up by words and actions to alms and good works."

Upon Aidan's arrival in Northumbria, he asked King Oswald to give him the little island of Lindisfarne, on the north-east coast of Northumberland ; and there he formed a Missionary establishment and erected a Bishop's See.

"The early part of this great prelate's life," saith Lanigan, "is involved in obscurity. It cannot be doubted that he was a native of Ireland." And the learned doctor adds, in a note ; "This is clear from the Annals of Roscrea, and the Calendars of Cashel, Donegal, and Tallagh."

Camden also speaks of him as an Irishman, and the same may be concluded from the authority of Usher, Ware, and Fleury.

King Oswald received him with open arms, and aided him in his missionary exertions, not

only by his countenance and protection, but also by active interference during his preaching. Aidan was not at this time much acquainted with the English language, but the King, from his long residence in Ireland, could speak Irish well; and hence he was accustomed to interpret Aidan's sermons to the people. "It was most delightful," saith Bede, "to see the King himself interpreting the Word of God to his commanders and ministers; for he had perfectly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment." Many assistants to Aidan soon came from Ireland to aid him in his holy work. They were all joyfully received by the King, who made provision for their maintenance, and gave them all the support his authority and counsel could effect.

The Gospel was preached most zealously throughout the whole country, churches were erected in suitable situations, "the people flocked with joy to hear the Word of God, and thus through the instrumentality of Aidan and his attendant missionaries, the whole kingdom of Northumbria was restored or converted to the Christian faith. Hence he may be legitimately entitled the Apostle of Northumbria.

His diocese extended into Scotland, and also comprised that of York, which Paulinus had forsaken; and for thirty years Aidan and his successors, Bishops of Lindisfarne, had under their jurisdiction not only their own immediate territory, but also the Archdiocese of York and all that immense district appertaining to it. Great zeal and discretion and administrative capacity were necessary for such an extensive charge; but Aidan was equal to the occasion, and was indefatigable in fulfilling all his obligations. "He made it a rule," saith Bede, "that all those who accompanied him, whether they were of the clerical order or not, should be engaged in reading the Scriptures or getting the Psalms by heart. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to eat with the King, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a small repast, made haste to be gone with them either to read or write."

It has been before remarked, that notwithstanding the great differences which existed in the opinions of Aidan and of Bede respecting

the paschal controversy, and the superiority of the Roman See, yet still such was the merit of the former that the venerable historian was obliged to recognise his virtues and to record his works. Nor does he write of them in any churlish or unwilling manner; but seems to dwell upon them with love and admiration, while testifying against his apparent errors. The tenets of Aidan might be deemed schismatical or heretical by Bede and the Romish party; but we of the Church of England may well confess them to be a proper assertion of the independence of the British and Irish Churches, and a plain proof that at this period the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome was totally unrecognised by the Apostle of the North. The passage in Bede is well worth transcription: "I have written thus much concerning the person and works of the aforesaid Aidan, in no way commending or approving what he imperfectly understood in relation to the observance of Easter,—nay, very much detesting the same; but like an impartial historian, relating what was done by or with him, and commending such things as are praiseworthy in his actions, and preserving the memory

thereof for the benefit of the readers : viz., his love of peace and charity, his continence and humility, his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory, his industry in keeping and teaching the heavenly commandments, his diligence in reading and watching, his authority becoming a priest in reproving the haughty and powerful, and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted and relieving or defending the poor. To say all in a few words, as near as I could be informed by those that knew him, he took care to omit none of those things which he found in the Apostolical or Prophetical writings ; but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to perform them all. These things I much love and admire in the aforesaid Bishop, because I do not doubt that they were pleasing to God ; but I do not praise his not observing Easter at the proper time : yet this I approve in him, that in the celebration of his Easter the object which he had in view in all he said, did, or preached, was the same as ours,—that is, the redemption of mankind through the passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven of the Man Jesus Christ, who is the Mediator

betwixt God and man. And therefore he always celebrated the same, not, as some falsely imagine, on the fourteenth moon, like the Jews, whatsoever the day was, but on the Lord's day, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon" (the Romans kept it on the Lord's day, from the fifteenth to the twenty-first moon); "and this he did from his belief of the resurrection of our Lord happening on the day after the Sabbath, and for the hope of our resurrection, which also he, with the holy Church, believed would happen on the same day after the Sabbath, now called 'the Lord's day.'" *

Such was the great Apostle of Northumbria; such the character given by one who may be described as the political and religious opposer of his opinions; such were the virtues which so eminently fitted him for the great missionary work to which he was called, and in which he so successfully laboured. A question must here force itself upon the historian, and which may deserve examination upon some future occasion, Was Augustine's mission a failure? or would it have been a failure if Aidan and his associates

* Bede, book iii., cap. 17.

and successors had not "gone up into the breaches and made up the hedge" when Saxon idolatry had almost overwhelmed the remnant of British Christianity, and the feeble flame which the zeal of Augustine and his companions had momentarily kindled? That Aidan and his followers laboured, and prayed, and watched, and fasted, and devoted themselves with untiring zeal, and glowing faith, and loving patience, to the work of converting men "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that wonderful success was granted to their efforts. Whole nations of the Saxon Heptarchy were brought into the Church of Christ through their instrumentality; and if in after ages the Roman party obtained the pre-eminence and became the dominant power in the English Church, the only thing that can be fairly asserted upon that part of the subject is this: "*those* men laboured, and *these* entered into their labours." Aidan came into England about the year 635; "and died in the seventeenth year of his episcopacy, the last day of the month of August."

VII.

THE LAST IRISH BISHOPS OF LINDISFARNE.

FINAN.

THE successors of Aidan were Finan and Colman, and great interest attaches itself to their names, not only for the missionary work they performed, but for the noble stand they made against the encroachments of the Roman See, which, in their time, began to make considerable progress in the Western Church.

Finan was a monk of Iona, and having been consecrated a Bishop there, he was sent to occupy the See of Lindisfarne, which had been rendered vacant by Aidan's death. According to Fleury, "he built at Lindisfarne a Cathedral Church, not of stone, but of wood, after the manner of the Irish." Very little is recorded of Finan; but that little is of immense import-

ance. He and his attendant ministers were active and zealous missionaries of Christ's Gospel. The diocese of Lindisfarne extended over the kingdom of Northumbria, and reached from the southern parts of Scotland to the south of Yorkshire. The inhabitants of this extensive district were converted to Christianity chiefly through their instrumentality, and still more success and honour were reserved for them; for there was given to their zeal and piety the large kingdom of Mercia, the Prince of which, Peada, the son of King Penda, was converted and baptized by Finan. Peada was then Prince of the Middle Angles, and ultimately succeeded his father in his extensive kingdom. Desiring to obtain for his wife, Elfreda, the daughter of Oswy, King of Northumbria, Peada came to the court of that King to solicit her hand in marriage. His proposal was rejected, for the following cogent reason. Oswy and his daughter were Christians: Penda and his son were pagans. The word of God expressly commanded, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:" and if this law were obeyed more fully, not merely in the letter, but in the spirit of it; if

young persons would more frequently consider the fatal influence which an irreligious connection must necessarily exercise over the minds of those within its sphere, there would be fewer unhappy marriages, and a greater strengthening of those religious forces by which people are much helped on in their Christian course. Where principle is not regarded, no blessing can rest on any union, whether it be in holy matrimony, or partnership, or any other tie by which members of the human family are linked together.

Worldly motives may at first have induced Peada to listen to the truth. It happens occasionally that even they who come to scoff remain to pray, and though the desire to make Elfreda his wife would have prevented him from scoffing at her religion, still we may fairly conclude that this desire was the motive which first induced him to attend to the exhortations of his Christian teachers. The word of God did not return void; for at last the Prince became so convinced of the truth of Christianity, that he declared his intention to become a Christian, even if King Oswy's daughter were refused to him. When his conversion became

thus manifest, Finan baptized Peada, and all his companions and attendants. Bede's account of this transaction is full of interest, and may be found in his history, at the date A.D. 653.

Peada proved the reality of his conversion by his subsequent conduct, and he requested that missionaries might be sent to him to preach the Gospel to his people, and to teach them the way of life. "Four priests having been given him, who, for their erudition and good life, were deemed proper to instruct and baptize his nation, he returned home with much joy." Their names were Cedd, Adda, Betti, and Diuma. The three first were Englishmen, the last was an Irishman. The impression produced upon the people through the instrumentality of those holy men was exceedingly powerful; and so great was the number of converts made by them, that within the space of two years it was thought expedient to give them a Bishop. Diuma was chosen for this office, and was consecrated by Finan, who placed him not only over the Middle Angles, but also "over the great kingdom of Mercia, which had lately fallen under the dominion of King Oswy." Diuma lived only a short

period after this ; but during his brief life he “acquired a great flock for the Lord.” Kellach, also an Irishman, succeeded him in his work and in his office ; and thus through the exertions of all these Irish missionaries, Christianity spread from Scotland to Hereford and the borders of Wales.

Another pearl of great price was about this time added to the Church’s crown through the instrumentality of Finan. The East Saxons had expelled their Bishop Mellitus, and had returned to idolatry.

“Sigebert was King of that nation, and a friend to King Oswy, who, when he came to him into the Province of the Northumbrians, used to endeavour to persuade him that those could not be gods that had been made by men,—that God is rather to be understood as of incomprehensible majesty, and invisible to human eyes,—whose everlasting seat is in heaven, and not in vile and fading matter.” *

The exhortations and influence of good King Oswy at last prevailed, and Sigebert and his friends were baptized by Finan, at the same place in which the holy rite was performed on Peada and his company. Thus did these two neighbouring princes and their people receive

* Bede. b. iii., cap. 22.

the faith of Christ ; and thus did the leaven which came forth from Iona continue its active and glorious working over the English nation. Sigebert adopted the same plan as Peada, and requested from King Oswy teachers, who might convert his nation to Christianity. "Oswy, accordingly, sending into the province of the Midland Angles, invited to him Cedd, and giving him another priest for his companion, sent him to preach to the East Saxons. These two, travelling to all parts of that country, gathered a numerous Church to our Lord." † Some time after this Cedd received episcopal consecration from Finan, at Lindisfarne, and then returned to his province, "where he pursued the work he had begun with more ample authority, built churches in several places, ordained priests and deacons to assist him in the work of faith and the ministry of baptism, especially in the city of Ithancester, ‡ as also in that which is named Tilsburgh." § Finan died about the year 660, and was succeeded by Colman.

† Bede, b. iii., cap. 22. ‡ Tilbury, opposite Gravesend.

§ Somewhere near Maldon, Essex.

A few years previous to the times of Finan, a very eminent servant of God made a great impression upon the kingdom of the East Angles. A brief notice of him may not be out of place before we come to our sketch of the work and labour of Colman; for thus we shall be enabled to see in one view how great a portion of England was converted to the faith of Christ through the instrumentality of these Irish missionaries. Bede thus speaks of him;—

“While Sigebert governed the kingdom, there came out of Ireland a holy man called Furzey, renowned both for his words and actions, and remarkable for singular virtues. On coming into the province of the East Saxons, he was honourably received by the aforesaid King, and performing his usual employment of preaching the Gospel, by the example of his virtue and the efficacy of his discourse, converted many unbelievers to Christ, and confirmed in His faith and love those that already believed.”

St. Furza, or Furzeus, “was of noble Scottish (Irish) blood, but much more noble in mind than in birth. From his boyish years he had particularly applied himself to reading sacred books, and following monastic discipline; and, as is most becoming in holy men, he carefully practised all that he learned was to be done.” For many years previous to his arrival in

England, he laboured diligently in his native country, and doubtless met with that success which earnestness and energy, when excited by faith and guided by discretion, rarely fail to effect. The "Acta Sanctorum" relate some very singular visions, with which St. Furza was said to be favoured. Bede speaks of him as having fallen into some infirmity of body, and it is not improbable that his bad health may have caused occasional feverish excitement, and consequent mental delusions. Lanigan, the Roman Catholic historian, seems to reject these accounts for the most part. He thus speaks of him: "One of the most distinguished Irish saints, who in those times filled England and France with the fame of their virtues, was St. Furzey (in Irish Furza), concerning whom a great deal has been written, and indeed so much that it has served rather to darken than illustrate his history." And again, in a note, the same learned writer remarks, "I suspect that taking them (the visions) as they appear in the Acts, they *have been much amplified*. However, there is one vision which is well worthy of notice, on account of the great truths there enunciated. The spirits of two Bishops,

Bevan and Meldan, were said to have been made manifest to him :—

“From them Furzey received much instruction : for instance, concerning the dreadful effects of pride and disobedience to superiors of every description, the duties of ecclesiastics and monks, but particularly as to the nature and heinousness of spiritual and inward sins. They told him, that some glory in what they have received from God, as if they had acquired it by their own labour. Others afflict their bodies by abstinence and fasting, and are shocked at the slightest external transgression ; while they think nothing of pride, which drove angels from heaven ; nor of avarice, through which our first parents lost the bliss of the terrestrial paradise ; nor of envy, which induced Cain to kill his brother Abel ; nor of false testimony, by which our Saviour was condemned. And thus they look upon the sins that are most grievous in the sight of God, as the lightest, and *vice versa* ; adding, it is not enough to chastise the body, unless the soul be cured of malice and iniquity, and charity is the root and head of all good works.”

These are noble words. They must have been singularly useful and appropriate at the period in which they were uttered, if not by spiritual messengers, at least by Furzey himself ; and they are well worthy of consideration by religionists of all ages, and of all schools and sections in the Church.

Such crowds attended upon the ministrations of St. Furzey, that he seemed unable to bear them. Religious solitude had become the order,

or the fashion, of the day; and accordingly he withdrew to a small island in the sea, from whence he soon after proceeded to England, accompanied by his two brothers, Foillan and Netan. He arrived in England in the year 637, according to Usher, and continued his holy and faithful exertions to convert souls to his Divine Master's kingdom, for the space of thirteen years. He then migrated to France, where he founded the Monastery of Lagney, not far from Paris, and died in that country about the year 650. His work among the East Angles was carried on for a time by his brothers, but after his death they were invited over to Brabant, together with some other learned Irishmen, by St. Gertrude, Abbess of Nivelles, to instruct her community in "Sacred Psalmody, and Religious matters." When they arrived in Brabant they erected a Monastery at Fosse, not far from Nivelles, for the benefit of their countrymen, which used to be called, the "Monastery of the Irish."

The third Bishop of Lindisfarne was Colman, who succeeded Finan in the year 661, "having been sent from Ireland for that purpose." He was a monk of the Columbian Order, and had

passed some time at Iona previously to his mission to England. During his episcopacy, the wretched controversy about Easter, which never had entirely ceased, assumed an importance that was fatal to the peace and prosperity of the Church; and which by its results, and by the efforts made to obtain an apparent unity among the Christians of Rome and England, was most effective, if not in obtaining unity of doctrine and discipline, in reducing the Church of England into subjection to the See of Rome. Hence the great praise given by Bede and the other historians of Romeward tendency, to all those who took the Romish view of the computation of Easter; and hence the ridicule and opprobrium heaped (as is too common among controversialists) upon those who differed from them: yet so much beauty and holiness of life existed amongst the Irish missionaries, who continued steadfast to their own computation, and in their opposition to the asserted supremacy of the Roman See, that even their enemies were obliged to confess their worth and acknowledge their excellencies.

“This difference,” saith Bede, “about the observance of Easter, whilst Aidan lived, was patiently tolerated by all men, as being sensible, that though he could not keep Easter

contrary to the custom of those who sent him, yet he industriously laboured to practice all works of faith, piety and love, according to the custom of all holy men; for which reason he was deservedly beloved by all, even by those who differed from him in opinion concerning Easter, and was held in veneration not only by indifferent persons, but even by the Bishops, Honorius of Canterbury and Felix of the East Angles. But after the death of Finan, who succeeded him, when Colman, who was also sent out of Scotland (*i.e.*, Ireland), came to be Bishop, a great controversy arose about the observance of Easter and the rules of ecclesiastical life. Whereupon this dispute began naturally to influence the thoughts and hearts of many, who feared, lest having received the name of Christians, they might happen to run, or to have run in vain."

Doubtless inconveniences and difficulties arose from the diversity of practice between the Roman and British Christians; and if it were not for the affected superiority of the Romish party, and that usurped supremacy which even then was growing up in the Church, and which the British and Irish Christians steadily resisted, a reconciliation might have been effected, and the breach made up in all loving-kindness. We learn that in Finan's times "Easter was twice kept in one year: King Oswy having kept it at one period, and his Queen, Ernflada, at another. Prince Alfrid also was attached to the Romish computation, "having been instructed in Christ-

ianity by Wilfrid, a most learned man, who had first gone to Rome to learn the ecclesiastical doctrine." This Wilfrid afterwards became Archbishop of York, and went through varied conditions of fortune, both before and after his consecration.

To put an end to this controversy it was determined (A.D. 664) to hold a Synod in the Monastery of Streanshalck, which signifies the bay of the lighthouse, and which was afterwards called Whitby. The Abbess Hilda, "a woman devoted to God," then presided there. This Synod was attended by King Oswy and his son Alfrid, and their respective followers. Bishop Colman and his Irish clergy also came thither; the Abbess Hilda and her followers were ranged upon his side, and joined with them was Cedd, the Bishop of London, or of the East Saxons. On the other side were Agilbert, Bishop of the West Saxons, a Frenchman, "who had lived a long time in Ireland for the purpose of reading the Scriptures; the priests Agatho, Wilfrid, and Romanus, and James, the deacon of Paulinus, whom he left at York when he forsook the Northern mission in despair. King Oswy was the presiding genius of the Synod; and from his

antecedents we may presume that all his sympathies would have been with the Irish party, were it not for that fatal yearning after unity which has caused perhaps more real disunion, and strife, and contention, and ill-feeling among Christians, than almost any other principle whatsoever. He opened the conference by remarking, that "it behoved those who served one God, to observe the same rule of life;" and then, after an address to the assembly upon that topic, he commanded his Bishop Colman first to declare what his custom was respecting the celebration of Easter, and from whence he derived its origin. Then Colman said: "The Easter which I keep I received from my elders, who sent me hither as Bishop; and all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated in the same manner. It is that which we read was kept by the Evangelist John, and all the churches over which he presided." Here this good Bishop seems to have made an over-statement or mis-statement, of which his opponent did not fail to take advantage. The cause of truth is never advanced by such means; yet how common amongst all controversialists is such a mode of proceeding! Their zeal outruns not only their

discretion, but their learning; and a cunning adversary will generally find out the weak point of the defence, and destroy it, and thus will often contrive to overthrow an argument and a cause which, but for this fatal defect in reasoning, might have been impregnable.

It was no excuse, though it may be some palliation, that Colman entirely believed his own assertion. But how could he prove his position from the example of St. John? There is no evidence to be deduced from Scripture upon the subject; and if he declared that he followed the custom of the Churches of Asia, which were founded by St. John, he laid himself open to the imputation of being a quarto-deciman, which he certainly was not.

“Colman,” continues Bede, “having said thus much and more to the same effect, the King commanded Agilbert to show whence his custom of keeping Easter was derived, and on what authority it was grounded. Agilbert answered: ‘I desire that my disciple, the priest Wilfrid, may speak in my stead, because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better explain our opinion in the English language than I can by an interpreter.’ Then Wilfrid, being ordered by the King to speak, delivered himself thus: ‘The Easter which we observe we saw celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul lived, taught, suffered, and were buried; we saw the same done in Italy and France,

when we travelled through those countries for pilgrimage and prayer ; we found the same practice in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and all the world wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad through several nations and tongues, at one and the same time ; except only these, and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, who foolishly in these two remote islands of the world, and only in part even of them, oppose all the rest of the universe."

Colman defended himself against this not very courteous charge of folly, by having recourse again to the example of St. John. To which Wilfrid replied, that even if John did keep Easter after the mode and reckoning of the Jewish law, many things were done at that period to conciliate the Jews ; "but when Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that our Lord arose from the dead on the first day after the Sabbath," that was the day he kept. He waited until the evening of the fourteenth day of the moon of March. "And thus it came to pass that Easter Sunday was only kept from the fifteenth moon to the twenty-first."

"Thus it appears that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you imagine, nor that of Peter, whose traditions you knowingly contradict, and that you agree neither with the law nor the Gospel in the keeping of your

Easter." Here Wilfrid is also guilty of a misstatement. What authority had he for asserting that Peter kept Easter in the manner intimated? Eusebius, in his account of the controversy, has no notice of it. And could such a statement have been made with truth, ancient historians would not have failed to mention it. Colman rejoined: "Did Anatolius, a holy man, and much commended in Church history, act contrary to the law and the Gospel when he wrote that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth? Is it to be believed that our most reverend Father Columba, and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, thought or acted contrary to the Divine writings?" To which Wilfrid replied: "It is evident that Anatolius* was a most holy, learned, and commendable man; but what have you to do with him, since you do not observe his decrees? For he, following the rule of truth in his Easter, appointed a revolution of nineteen years, which either you are ignorant of, or if you know it, though it is

* Anatolius was Bishop of Laodicea, and invented the cycle of nineteen years about A.D. 276, which cycle however was not generally adopted for a long time afterwards.

kept by the whole Church of Christ, yet you despise it." After some more observations in the same ungentle mood, Wilfrid continues ; " As for you and your companions, you certainly sin, if, having heard the decrees of the Apostolic See and of the universal Church, and that the same is confirmed by Holy Writ, you refuse to follow them." Here we have two most outrageous mis-statements on the part of Wilfrid. The See of Rome may have sent forth an ordinance on the subject, but the universal Church and Holy Writ made no declaration in the matter whatsoever. The Council of Nice decreed nothing respecting the cycles. It only determined that Easter was to be kept on a Sunday, being the day of our Lord's resurrection. Indeed the cycle of eighty-four years was then used, and for a long time after, in the Roman Church.

"For though your fathers were holy, do you think that their small number, in a corner of the remotest island, is to be preferred to the universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours (and I may say ours also, if he were Christ's) was a holy man, and powerful in miracles, yet could he be preferred before the most blessed prince of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter ; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ; and to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven'?"

The quiet assumption of authority for the See of Rome, as well as his begging the question on other important points in the controversy, are here especially remarkable.

“When Wilfrid had spoken thus the King said, ‘Is it true, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?’ He answered, ‘It is true, O King.’ Then says he, ‘Can you show any such power given to your Columba?’ Colman answered, ‘None.’ Then added the King, ‘Do you both agree that these words were principally directed to Peter, and that the keys of heaven were given to him by our Lord?’ They both answered, ‘We do.’ Then the King concluded: ‘And I also say unto you, that he is the door-keeper whom I will not contradict, but will, as far as I know and am able, in all things obey his decrees, lest when I come to the gates of the kingdom of heaven there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys.’ The King having said this, all present, both great and small, gave their assent, and renouncing the more imperfect institution, resolved to conform to that which they found to be better.” (Bede, book iii., cap. 25.)

Among the ancient Synods of the English Church, none were more important in their bearing and results than that of Whitby. The questions about Easter and the tonsure were mere questions of discipline. They touched upon no article of faith; they affected no custom which a little more charitable feeling and forbearance could not easily have reconciled; and

yet they were debated both in England and elsewhere with such bitterness that Gregory Nazianzen exclaims, with sorrowful indignation, respecting this and some other questions agitated in his time, "The kingdom of heaven is converted by discord into the image of a chaos, of a nocturnal tempest, and of hell itself." But though the questions were unimportant in themselves, they were most important in their results. The decision paved the way for the advance of the Romanizing power in the English Church, and crushed those who alone could make head against it. The very ground upon which the King gave his sentence, and upon which the Synod acted, though showing a manifest fallacy, gave an impulse to the doctrine of the Roman supremacy, which went on increasing until the period of the Reformation. The heart of good King Oswy yearned for uniformity. It must have been especially disagreeable to him to keep a different Easter from his wife and son, and hence, considering the question as very unimportant if only some uniform mode of keeping the festival could be devised, he probably came to the Synod with a foregone conclusion in his mind. Indeed, if the words of Eddius are to

be credited, the King saw the fallacy of the argument respecting the keys as well as we do ; for this biographer of Wilfrid states that the King repeated the passage about the keys "*smiling*." Doubtless, seeing the absurd nature of the alleged proof, he was less serious than he ought to have been ; but still the smile shows that, though willing to accept the conclusion, he did not much regard the grounds on which it rested.

The decision at Whitby was disastrous in various ways. Not only was the tendency towards Roman supremacy immensely increased thereby, but these good men (through whose instrumentality the British Church was moulded into new life, was given increased vigour, and the Saxon people throughout the greater part of England were converted to the faith), were driven from the country of their adoption and their labours. "Colman," saith Bede, "perceiving that his doctrine was rejected and his sect despised, took with him such as would not comply with the Catholic Easter and the tonsure (for there was controversy about that also), and went back to Scotland to consult with his people what was to be done in this case." Thus

the very salt of the land was withdrawn from it, and a great blow must have been thereby struck upon vital Christianity. The piety and self-denial and holy life of Colman and his followers are thus described by the venerable historian :—

“The place which Colman governed shows how frugal he and his predecessors were, for there were very few houses besides the church found at their departure ; indeed no more than were barely sufficient for their daily residence. They had also no money, but cattle ; for if they received any money from rich persons, they immediately gave it to the poor, there being no need to gather money or provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world, for such never resorted to the church, except to pray and hear the Word of God. The King himself, when opportunity offered, came only with five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, departed. But if they happened to take a repast there, they were satisfied with only the plain and daily food of the brethren, and required no more ; for the whole care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world,—to feed the soul, and not the belly. For this reason the religious habit was at that time in great veneration ; so that wheresoever any clergyman or monk happened to come, he was joyfully received by all persons as God’s servant ; and if they chanced to meet him upon the way, they ran to him, and bowing, were glad to be signed by his hand, or blessed with his mouth. Great attention was also paid to their exhortations, and on Sundays the people flocked eagerly to the church or to the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the Word of God ; and if any priest came into a village, the inhab-

itants flocked together to hear from him the Word of Life, for the priests and clergymen went into the village on no other account than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in few words, to take care of souls; and they were so free from worldly avarice that none of them received lands and possessions for building Monasteries unless they were compelled to do so by the temporal authorities, which custom was for some time after observed in all the churches of the Northumbrians." (Bede iii., cap. 26.)

Such is the description given by this great historian of the saintly Colman and his faithful energetic followers; and this testimony is all the more valuable because it comes from a religious and political opponent. The leaning of Bede towards Roman influence and supremacy is manifest not only by his account of this controversy, but in other portions of his history; and great indeed must have been the virtues of those men which elicited such warm approval, when we know that he considered them schismatical at least in their opinions, if not tainted with worse errors. Nor was this meed of praise confined to Bede. Henry of Huntingdon says, "The three Scottish Bishops, Aidan, Finan, and Colman, were extraordinary patterns of sanctity and frugality."

Great, then, must have been the loss to the kingdom of Northumbria when Colman departed

from its coasts. At such a period the withdrawal of so much spiritual life from its Church must have exercised a fatal influence on the nation at large. Bede tells us that "Colman, the Scottish Bishop, took with him from Britain all the Scots he had assembled in the isle of Lindisfarne, and also about thirty of the English nation, who had been all instructed in the monastic life." He and his company seem to have repaired to Iona in the first instance, where doubtless he gave an account of the conference at Whitby, and the arguments and resolution by which the King and Council had decided the controversy against them. After remaining there a short space, they retired to a small island on the west coast of Ireland, called Innisbofinde, "the island of the white heifer." Colman built a Monastery there, and placed in it the monks he had brought, both English and Irish; and some disagreement having arisen between them, he removed the English to another Monastery which he built at Mageo, now called Mayo, not far from the town of Castlebar. "This Monastery," saith Bede, "is to this day possessed by English inhabitants. It contains an exemplary society of monks, who

live by the labour of their hands, after the example of the venerable Fathers." Colman did not long survive his return to Ireland. He died about the year 666. The period during which these Irish Bishops held the See of Lindisfarne was thirty years. Aidan governed the diocese for seventeen, Finan ten, and Colman three years.

VIII.

THE IRISH CHURCH AND ITS MISSIONARIES.

FROM the times of St. Patrick to the beginning of the ninth century, religion and learning flourished in Ireland. Hence she was called “*Insula Sacra*,” and “*Insula Sanctorum*.” There was doubtless a great mixture of barbarism amongst the people, for much barbarism existed throughout the whole of Europe during the same period ; but still all ancient writers testify to these two facts,—that missionaries of great note, energy, and erudition, went forth from Ireland to other quarters, and that the schools in Ireland were continually resorted to by foreigners for instruction, and especially for instruction in the Holy Scriptures. The learned Camden remarks, “Our Anglo-Saxons used to flock together to Ireland, as a market of learning ; whence it is that we continually find it said in

our writers, concerning holy men of old, ‘He was sent away to be educated in Ireland.’ And it would appear that it was from that country, the ancient English, our ancestors, received the first instruction in forming letters, as it is plain they used the same character which is still used in Ireland.”

Bede also thus testifies : “There were in that country, at the time we speak of, many of the nobility, and of the middle classes too, of the English people, who in the time of Bishops Finan and Colman, had left their native isle and retired to Ireland, either for the purpose of studying the Word of God, or else to observe a stricter life. And some indeed presently devoted themselves to the Monastic profession, while others chose rather to pay visits to the chambers of the different masters, and so to carry on their studies ; all of whom the Scots (*i.e.*, the Irish) received most cordially, and provided with daily food free of charge, as likewise with books to read, and gratuitous instruction. Amongst these students were two of the English nobility, named Edilhun and Egbert, youths of excellent parts, the first of whom was the brother of Edilwin, a man

equally beloved of God, who himself also went to Ireland in the following age for the purpose of studying there, and returned to his country well educated ; after which, having been appointed Bishop in the province of Lindis, he ruled that Church most nobly for many years." The venerable historian also tells us of a certain bishop named Agilbert, who came into the province of the West Saxons from Ireland, A.D. 650. He was a native of France, "but he had spent no small time in Ireland for the sake of reading the Scriptures, and he associated himself with the King of the West Saxons, taking on himself voluntarily the ministry of preaching ; whose learning and industry, when the King observed, he asked him to accept the Episcopal See of that place, and remain as Bishop with his people." In the year 685, a son of Oswy, the King of Northumbria, named Alfrid, succeeded his brother Egfrid on the throne. At the time his brother died, he was living, says Bede, "as a sojourner in the country of the Scots, there imbibing heavenly wisdom with all his heart's attention ; for he had left his native land and its pleasant fields, to learn in studious exile the mysteries of the Lord."

William of Malmesbury relates that he was the elder brother, but, unhappily, illegitimate. Being on this account thought unworthy of the throne, "he retired into Ireland, either by compulsion, or from indignation. There, safe from the hatred of his brother, and deeply versed in literature, for which he had such abundant leisure, he had gotten his mind stored with philosophy in all its branches."

There was also another foreign Prince who in those times obtained shelter and instruction in Ireland, though it is probable that sinister motives may have been at work respecting him. Dagobert, son of Sigebert II., King of Austrasia, had been sent, while yet very young, to a Monastery in Ireland, about the year 655, by Grimoald, Mayor of the Palace. He remained there about fifteen years, when he was recalled to his own country, and received a portion of his father's dominions from Childeric II. When Childeric died, Dagobert became Sovereign of all Austrasia. During his reign many distinguished Irishmen received especial favours from him.

Usher, in his "Sylloge," gives a very remarkable letter from Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury,

to Æfridus, who had just returned home from Ireland, after spending six years there in study. Aldhelm speaks reproachfully of this, and asks the reason why "*Hibernia, whither students flock by sea in troops*, should be exalted with such ineffable advantage; as if here, on the fruitful soil of Britain, Greek or Latin teachers could not be found, who should be able to open out the dark problems of the heavenly library to inquiring youths. For although the aforesaid country of Hibernia be a fertile and verdant pasture (if I may so call it) for the studious multitude of readers to feed in, just as the heavens are ornamented with bright and gleaming stars, yet that Britain," as he proceeds to express it in metaphorical language, enjoyed similar advantages.

There are many others named who went expressly to Ireland to have the advantage of its celebrated schools, during the period above referred to. Only one more shall be mentioned, and that not only on his own account, but also on account of his biographer, the famous Alcuin. Willibrord, Archbishop of Utrecht, was born in Northumberland, about the year 658. Through his missionary exertions the religion of our

Lord was spread among the heathen people of Batavia, Friezland, and Westphalia. Before he proceeded to these countries he received lessons for twelve years in Ireland, "from the first masters of devoted piety and sacred learning, until he came to the state of a perfect man, and to the age of the fulness of Christ." Alcuin wrote his life in both Latin prose and verse. The above extract is taken from the prose life, and he further describes him as one "to whom fertile Britain gave birth, and whom *learned* Ireland instructed in sacred studies."

From these proofs (and others might be added were it necessary) we may conclude that there were many learned establishments in Ireland during the period here spoken of, in which instruction in sacred and secular literature was communicated. In all probability the principal Monasteries, if not all, contained schools or teachers who were able to educate these foreigners as well as their own people, but the following schools are named as being the most celebrated: Armagh, Lismore, Clonard, Clonmacnoise, and Bangor. "The Irish," says Lanigan, "collected information from whatever quarter it could be found in. They studied

the works of both Greeks and Latins in every department of knowledge, and it is certain that they were at that period very well versed in Greek learning, and undoubtedly much more so than other people of Western Europe."

During the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, very many Irishmen went forth from their native land to preach Christ's religion to other countries. In fact, Ireland might then have well been called the missionary seed-bed of Europe. St. Columba and his establishment at Iona, evangelized the North of England and Scotland. An Irishman named Diuma was the first Bishop in the ancient kingdom of Mercia. Malmesbury derives its name from Maidulph, an Irishman, who founded the first Monastery there; and in Cornwall the names of many Irish saints are remembered even to the present day, as among the first preachers of the Gospel, or at least as persons from whom some spiritual benefit was derived to the people.

Nor was the Irish name less celebrated on the Continent. Columbanus and his companions formed an establishment at Luxueil, in Franche Compté, through the instrumentality of which religion and civilization were spread over that

part of France ; and when, from his fidelity in his Divine Master's service he was driven from thence, he retired to Bobbio in the Milanese, and founded another Monastery there, which was eminently successful in the propagation of the Gospel in that locality. The town San Columbano still records his name, and is a living testimony to his holy exertions. In the same manner St. Gall, one of the cantons of Switzerland, gratefully bears witness to the holy labours and zeal and influence of Gallus, an Irishman. He was one of the companions of Columbanus. The latter, after he was driven from Luxueil, passed about a year in Switzerland. After that period he determined to go to Italy, and as Gallus was then sick of a fever, and consequently unable to travel, he was left behind, in all probability at his own request. Gallus knew well the language of the country, and could therefore become an able minister of Christ's Gospel amongst its people. He knew that if his life were spared he could be much more useful in his Divine Master's service in the place where he then sojourned, than if he accompanied Columbanus to Italy, and the event proved the correctness of his judgment.

His labour for the good of souls was blessed with singular success, and he is esteemed the great Apostle of the Alemanni, or Suevian nation. I need scarcely add, that the town and canton of St. Gall are called after his name.

A vast number of other names might readily be added to these celebrated Irish missionaries, but time and space are only available for a few more.

Deicholus was the maternal brother of St. Gall, and, like him also, had been a follower and disciple of Columbanus. When his master was driven by unjust tyranny from Luxueil, Deicholus also abandoned it, and having wandered towards Besançon, he founded a Monastery and missionary establishment at Luthra, now called Lure. He was very successful in his holy endeavours to convert the people of that neighbourhood to Christianity, and is still gratefully remembered in France under the title of "St. Dié."

The great Apostle of Franconia and Carinthia was St. Kilian, an Irishman. He suffered martyrdom for the faith, and for his bold and open testimony against ungodliness. The circumstances were very similar to those on account of which John the Baptist was beheaded.

But amongst all these men of eminence and

piety (and a very long list is given by Lanigan in his useful work), there are few more worthy of note than Virgilius, Bishop of Saltzburgh. He was born in Ireland, and was said to have been a scion of a noble family. He arrived in France previous to the year 746, and was well received by Pepin, son of Charles Martel, who was then Mayor of the Palace. He remained with him about two years, and then proceeded to Bavaria, having been warmly recommended to its Duke by Pepin. The controversy which Virgilius maintained with Boniface, the English Apostle of Germany, need not here be entered upon. One of the accusations brought against Virgilius may throw some light on the state of astronomical knowledge then existing in some of the schools in Ireland. He was charged with heresy, because he held that there was "another world, and other men under the earth:" that is, because he was of opinion that there were antipodes. It was only at home (most probably) that he could have obtained this knowledge of the rotundity of the earth; for such learning, when expounded on the Continent, was strongly condemned, and by none more vehemently than by Pope Zachary and Bishop Boniface. The

same influence which would have repressed, or extinguished Gallileo, was here at work, and it was with great difficulty that Virgilius escaped from his persecutors. After a life full of faith and of good works, he died in peace, in the year 785.

A writer of the ninth century, a monk of St. Gall, wrote two books, "De gestis Caroli Magni." In one of them we find the following narrative : — "When the illustrious Charles began to reign alone in the western parts of the world, and literature was everywhere almost forgotten, it happened that two Scots of Ireland came over, with some British merchants, to the shores of France, men incomparably skilled in *human learning* and in the *Holy Scriptures*. As they produced no merchandise for sale, they used to cry out to the crowds flocking to purchase, 'If any one is desirous of wisdom, let him come to us and receive it, for we have it to sell.' They repeated this declaration so often that an account of them was conveyed to the King Charles, who, being a lover, and very desirous, of wisdom, had them conducted with all expedition before him, and asked them if they truly possessed wisdom, as had been reported to him. They answered that they did, and were ready in the name of

the Lord to communicate it to such as would seek for it worthily. On his inquiring of them what compensation they would expect for it, they replied that they required nothing more than convenient situations, ingenious minds, and, as being in a foreign country, to be supplied with food and raiment. Charles, having heard their proposals, and replete with joy, kept them both with himself for a short time. After some interval, when obliged to proceed on a military expedition, he ordered one of them, whose name was Clemens, to remain in France, entrusting to his care a great number of boys, not only of the highest noblesse, but likewise of the middle and lower ranks of society, all of whom were, by his orders, provided with victuals and suitable habitations. The other, by name Albinus, he directed to Italy, and assigned to him the Monastery of St. Augustin, near Pavia, that such persons as chose to do so, might there resort to him for instruction." *

If the authority of this anonymous writer, who is called by Muratori simply "Monaco di San Gallo," may be depended upon, the Universities of Paris and of Pavia were founded by Irishmen.

* Lanigan, vol. 3, p. 208.

IX.

WAS THE MISSION OF AUGUSTINE A SUCCESS OR A FAILURE?

ACCORDING to the account given to us by Bede, Augustine came into England in the year 597. He died in the year 604. Mabillon asserts that his death took place in the year 607: in either case, he had but few years for missionary exertion. Upon his arrival, he obtained a very favourable reception from Ethelbert, King of the East Saxons, and who was also the Bretwalda, or Chief Monarch of the Heptarchy. Bertha, the Queen, was a Christian. She was the daughter of Charibert, King of Paris; and when she was married to Ethelbert, she was attended to her new home by Luidhard, Bishop of Senlis. The privilege of exercising the rites of her religion was granted her, and Luidhard became her chaplain. The kind reception of Augustine by Ethelbert was doubtless owing to these providential circum-

stances. Queen Bertha and her Bishop must have influenced, in no ordinary degree, the King's mind; and then, when Augustine came to their aid, God blessed all their efforts and their prayers, and the King was converted by their instrumentality. We may, therefore, reasonably conclude that the conversion of the King was chiefly owing to Augustine. It was a great success. Soon after this event, Augustine, who when sent forth to the work by Gregory had not been created a Bishop, returned to Arles, in France, to be consecrated to the Episcopal office. Bede says that this consecration was effected by Ætherius, Bishop of Arles: but this is a mistake. Virgilius was Bishop of Arles in 597, and hence it must have been performed by him. However, the matter is not very important, as no doubt has ever been thrown upon the Episcopal consecration of Augustine, and Gregory would have taken effectual care that all was done in decency and order. When Augustine returned to England (and the journey in those rude times must have taken a considerable number of months from his seven years' mission), "he sent Laurentius the priest, and Peter the monk, to Rome, to ac-

quaint Pope Gregory that the nation of the English had received the faith of Christ, and that he was himself made their Bishop.* Was he not somewhat premature in this announcement? Doubtless Augustine was overjoyed that he had converted the King,—nay, the Bretwalda,—the Monarch of all England. It was a work for which he had great cause to be thankful, and he might well call upon Gregory to rejoice with him in his success; but he had not converted the nation. They did not even receive the faith externally and nationally: Ethelbert, with a wisdom and good feeling which does him infinite credit, would force no man's conscience. The words of Bede are, "He compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers as to his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom." What shall we say, then, respecting this statement of Augustine, "that the nation of the English had received the faith of Christ"? Alas, the result was not favourable to its truth! and certainly such exaggeration has not been equalled by modern missionaries; for we find

* Bede, book i., cap. 27.

that after a few years, almost the whole of the English nation had lapsed into idolatry, if indeed they had ever emerged from it. King Ethelbert's own kingdom was a very small portion of England. "He was King of Kent, and had extended his dominions as far as the great river Humber." As Bretwalda, he may have exercised much influence; but the office gave him no real power in the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy; nor, if it did, would he be willing (as we have seen) to employ it in order to force his religion upon men. In this small corner of England there were undoubtedly "several who believed and were baptized:" and, after the conversion of the King, "greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the Word; and forsaking their heathen rites, to associate themselves, by believing, to the unity of the Church of Christ." * Augustine had been accompanied to England by "nearly forty companions." The King permitted them to reside in the city of Canterbury, and very beautiful is the description given by Bede of their daily life: "Applying themselves to fre-

* Bede, book i., cap. 26.

quent prayer, watching and fasting, preaching the Word of Life to as many as they could, despising all worldly things as not belonging to them, receiving only their necessary food from those they taught, living themselves in all respects conformably to what they prescribed to others, and being always disposed to suffer any adversity, and even to die for that truth which they preached." * Such conduct produced its due effect upon the people. Ten thousand are said to have been baptized at an early period of the mission ; and if as many more were added to the visible Church during the life-time of Augustine, the work would have been very great for such a short space of time ; but still there would have been but small grounds for the assertion that "the English nation had received the faith of Christ." Much uncertainty exists as to the exact number of persons converted by Augustine and his companions. One impediment to their progress must have been very formidable : they were ignorant of the English language, and were obliged to bring interpreters with them from

* Bede, book i., cap. 26.

Gaul. In time, they doubtless made themselves acquainted with it, but at first their want of knowledge must have been a serious obstacle.

In the year 604, or according to Mabillon, in 607, Augustine died, having consecrated three Bishops,—Mellitus to preach to the East Saxons, Justus to be Bishop of Rochester, and Laurentius to succeed him in the See of Canterbury. “At this period,” saith Dr. Innett, in his continuation of Stillingfleet’s “*Origines*,” “a great part of the kingdom of Kent had received the Christian faith. The Cathedrals of Canterbury and Rochester were begun, and some other churches, *founded by the Britons*, were repaired; and some provisions made for the education and subsistence of the clergy; all which was chiefly owing to the piety and magnificence of Ethelbert, King of Kent, and the zeal and labours of Austin and his followers; but as to all the rest of the English nation, there does not appear the least step made towards their conversion before the death of Austin.”

After his decease, and during the life of Ethelbert, the affairs of Augustine’s Mission may not have retrograded; but when Ethelbert died, in the year 613, “everything ran into

confusion, Paganism revived again, and made so bold an effort as at once overwhelmed the Christian Church, and the zeal and courage of those who should have supported it; for Eadbald, son and successor to Ethelbert, either had not been converted to the Christian faith, or if he had, he renounced it upon coming to the Crown." "The conduct of this King," saith Bede, "proved very prejudicial to the new Church; for he not only refused to embrace the faith of Christ," but was also defiled by that sin which is mentioned in 1 Cor. v. 1: he had married his father's wife. "By both which crimes," continues Bede, "he gave occasion to those to return to their former uncleanness; who, under his father, had, either for *favour*, or *through fear of the King*, submitted to the laws of faith and chastity. This confusion was increased by the death of Sabert, King of the East Saxons; who, departing to the heavenly kingdom, left three sons, still Pagans, to inherit his temporal Crown. They immediately began to profess idolatry, which, during their father's reign, they had seemed a little to abandon; and they granted free liberty to the people under their government, to serve idols." Afterwards,

being offended with Mellitus, "they obliged him and his followers to depart from their kingdom. Being forced from thence, he came into Kent, to advise with his fellow Bishops, Laurentius and Justus, what was to be done in that case; and it was unanimously agreed that it was better for them all to return to their own country, where they might serve God in freedom, than to continue without any advantage among those barbarians who had revolted from the faith. Mellitus and Justus accordingly went away first, and withdrew into France, designing there to await the event of things." * The Kings were punished for their wickedness, and slain in battle; but still the people would not leave their idolatry, "nor be corrected, nor return to the unity of faith and charity which is in Christ."

Such was the lamentable state of things in England only a very few years after Augustine's death. Could it be said that he had made much permanent impression upon the nation, much less that he had converted them to the faith of Christ? And though one of his Bishops,

* Bede, book ii., cap. 5.

Laurentius, either by a real dream of sore flagellation, or by a pious fraud, obtained a hearing from the King, and an ultimate renunciation of his idolatry; and though Mellitus and Justus were re-called a year after their departure, still the Gospel made little progress at that time in England. "Justus indeed returned to the city of Rochester; but the Londoners would not receive Bishop Mellitus, choosing rather to be under their idolatrous high priests." *

Nor did Augustine succeed in conciliating the British Bishops, and in forming a union with the British Church. It was a very unhappy circumstance for him, and for the Christian cause, that Gregory the Great, having usurped an authority over the British Bishops which the Church had not conferred, and to which his position and his office did not entitle him, transferred this usurpation to Augustine. It made him proud. It caused him to have an overweening opinion of his station, if not of his merits. Gregory had to warn him in an especial manner against being too much elated on account of the miracles which it was asserted

* Bede, book ii., cap. 6.

that he wrought, and for the success that attended his first efforts. He may have been humble in his own person, but that he presumed too much upon his power and his office, is sadly manifest in his interviews with the British Bishops. How often does this pride of place, under the semblance of obtaining proper respect for authority, precedence, rights, etc., tempt men to commit great evils !

“ Man, clothed in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep.”

Augustine met the British Christians in two solemn conferences. At the first, although the miraculous restoration of sight to a blind man was said to have been effected by him, yet he did not prevail to obtain a recognition of the primacy he asserted ; and at the second conference his failure was still more signal. Seven British Bishops are named as having attended this conference ; Worcester, Hereford, Chester, Bangor, St. Asaph, Landaff, and St. David's. These names, however, are very doubtful : but it is an affair of no consequence. “ Many most learned men ” accompanied the Bishops. Before

they went to the conference, they consulted a "certain holy and discreet man, whether they ought, at the preaching of Augustine, to forsake their traditions." He answered (to continue in the words of Bede), "If he is a man of God, follow him." "How shall we know that?" said they. He replied, "Our Lord saith, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; if, therefore, Augustine is meek and lowly of heart, it is to be believed that he has taken upon him the yoke of Christ, and offers the same to you to take upon you. But if he is stern and haughty, it appears that he is not of God, nor are we to regard his words." They insisted again, "And how shall we discern even this?" "Do you contrive," said the anchorite, "that he may first arrive with his company, at the place where the Synod is to be held; and if at your approach he shall rise up to you, hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ. But if he shall despise you, and not rise up to you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised by you." The result is well known. Augustine did not rise at their approach, but in a sitting posture received them. The primacy

which he had obtained from Rome forbad the usual courtesy. His attempt at superiority was manifest. His pride of place, and assumption of an usurped power, which Gregory had no right to confer, and which he had the folly to receive, interfered to destroy the work of God, brought a long course of evils in its train, and prevented the union of the British Christians with the zealous, and perhaps more enlightened Roman missionaries. The three points of union placed before them by Augustine were not very difficult of adoption. "You act," saith he, "in many particulars contrary to our custom, or rather the custom of the universal Church; and yet, if you will comply with me in these three points,—viz., to keep Easter at the due time; to administer baptism, by which we are again born to God, according to the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church; and jointly with us to preach the Word of God to the English nation, we will readily tolerate all the other things you do, though contrary to our customs. They answered they would do none of these things, nor receive him as their Archbishop; for they alleged among themselves, that if he would not now rise up to us, how much more

will he not condemn us as of no worth, if we shall begin to be under his subjection." *

If to this we add the answer made by Dinot, Abbot of Bangoriscoed, in Flintshire, the whole case will be very manifest: "That the British Churches owe the deference of brotherly kindness and charity to the Pope of Rome, and all Christians. But other obedience than this they did not know to be due to him whom they called Pope; and for their parts, they were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Caerleon upon Usk, who, under God, was their spiritual overseer and director."† From all this it is very plain that the real ground of difference was this affected primacy. The British Church would not recognize an authority unknown to their fathers, and indeed unknown at that time to the Church Catholic; and their representatives at this conference not only disliked the manner of Augustine, but utterly rejected the power he assumed. And whether the declaration which was made by him when he was thus rejected, was a threat or a prophecy ("that in case they would not join in unity with their brethren, they should be warred upon by their

* See Bede, book ii., cap. 2.

† See Collier, vol. i. p. 178.

enemies ; and if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should at their hands undergo the vengeance of death." * "When, through the dispensation of the Divine judgment, all this fell out exactly as predicted") the British Bishops and their people might not unreasonably believe that the prophecy was father to the event, and that the cruel sufferings and devastations and wars which they had to endure, might have arisen in some respect from the instigation of Augustine, even though the evils did not take place until after his death. At all events, the threat was anything but conciliatory, and the breach between these brethren who ought to have been one in Christ, and who ought to have "earnestly contended together for the faith once delivered to the saints," was lamentably widened by the assertion of a supremacy which had no foundation in Holy Scripture, and which at that period was totally unrecognized in the Church. Was the mission of Augustine, then, a success or a failure? He certainly failed to convert the Saxons, and he as certainly failed to throw new life into the expiring flame of British Christianity.

* Bede, book ii., cap. 2.

PAULINUS.

NOTE.—A short notice of Paulinus may be added, by way of appendix, to this paper. He did good service in the North of England for a time; but alas! the impression which he made was not permanent, and after he fled from his bishopric, the people lapsed into their former Paganism. He had been sent by Gregory the Great, about the year 601, to aid Augustine in his missionary labours, and subsequently he was placed at York, as Bishop over the province of Northumbria. Bede's account is full of interest: "At this time, A.D. 625, the nation of the Northumbrians, that is the nation of the Angles, that live on the north side of the river Humber, with their King Edwin, received the faith through the preaching of Paulinus." The occasion of this nation's embracing the faith, was, their aforesaid King being allied to the Kings of Kent, having taken to wife Ethelberga, daughter to King Ethelbert. He having, by his ambassadors, asked her in marriage of her brother Eadbald, who then reigned in Kent, was answered, "that it was not lawful to marry a Christian virgin to a Pagan husband." This answer being brought to Edwin by his messengers, he promised in no manner to act in opposition to the Christian faith which the virgin professed, but would give leave to her, and all that went with her, men or women, priests or ministers, to follow their faith, and worship after the custom of Christians. Nor did he deny but that he would embrace the same religion, if, being examined by wise persons, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God."

The marriage took place. Edwin and his people received the faith in all outward form, and doubtless, during the six

remaining years of his life, energetic efforts were made to make real converts of the people. But at Edwin's death, who was killed in battle in the year 633, the nation again lapsed into idolatry. We have this melancholy record in Bede, in the twentieth chapter of his second book. "The affairs of the Northumbrians being in confusion by reason of this disaster (Edwin's death), without any prospect of safety, except in flight, Paulinus, taking with him Queen Ethelberga, whom he had before brought thither, returned into Kent by sea, and was honourably received by Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald." He was afterwards made Bishop of Rochester, where he continued until his death. Hence we may fairly conclude that the people of Northumbria were very far indeed from being converted by Paulinus, though some seeds of divine truth may have been sown there by him.

CLAUDE, BISHOP OF TURIN.

ERROR creeps on stealthily. The serpent glides with noiseless pace, and only raises his head when preparing for the fatal spring. Image worship, the invocation of saints, and their subsequent adoration grew in this manner to their mediæval height. Good men wished to instruct the people: books were difficult of access,—few persons could read or write; plain truths of religion might be communicated to many at the same time by means of pictures. Fourteen of these could give a very vivid description of our Lord's passion; and the history of the Virgin Mother and her Child could well be gathered from the great masters, whose art or taste or religion led them to depict it. There was only one step from this to the Apostles and primitive saints and martyrs. Who will say that a remembrance of them should not always

be preserved in the Church? They lived and suffered and died "for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God." Their holy and self-denying and devoted lives set a noble example to all Christians, and doubtless animated the zeal of some, and kindled anew the dying flame of religion in the hearts of others. But as God is continually bringing good out of evil, so Satan is continually bringing evil out of good; and the wise Christian who studies history with effect will not be "ignorant of his devices." We learn from Eusebius that the woman who was healed of her issue of blood by our blessed Lord was a native of Cæsarea-Philippi; and that "at the gates of her house there stood a brazen image of a woman on her bended knee, with her hands stretched out before her, like one entreating. Opposite to this was another image of a man, erect, of the same materials, decently clad in a mantle, and stretching out his hand to the woman." "This statue, they say," continues the historian, "is a statue of Jesus Christ, and it has remained even until our times; so that we ourselves saw it whilst tarrying in that city. Nor is it to be wondered at that those of the Gentiles who

were anciently benefited by our Saviour should have done these things, since we have also seen representations of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and of Christ Himself, still preserved in paintings; as it is probable that, according to a practice among the Gentiles, the ancients were accustomed to pay this kind of honour indiscriminately to those who were saviours to them." Here was the germ of the evil: the people began to pay these images and pictures a certain amount of honour. If it was the woman who was so miraculously healed that had erected these statues, she could never have intended that any, even the very least, religious veneration should have been offered to the image of herself; and hence we may conclude that no religious worship of any sort was to be paid to the other member of the group. But that which at first was only erected to commemorate, or to instruct, soon passed the boundary line, and men fell from respect and reverence into adoration and worship. The subsequent history of this statue is not without its interest and its instruction. Bingham (book viii., sec. 6) says that "in the middle of the fourth age the Christians of Cæsarea-Philippi showed a little respect to

the statue of Christ, which the Syrophænecean woman who had been cured of an issue of blood was supposed to have erected in honour of our Saviour ; for when Julian had removed it, to set his own in the room, and the heathen out of hatred for Christ had used it contemptuously, and broken it in pieces by dragging it about the streets, Sozomen tells us ‘the Christians gathered the fragments together, and laid them up in the church, where they were kept to his own time.’ Philostorgius, in relating the same story, adds one circumstance, which well explains Sozomen’s meaning ; for he says, ‘They were laid up in the diaconicum, or vestry of the church, and there carefully kept indeed ; but by no means worshipped or adored.’” “This,” continues Bingham, “was so far a commendable act ; but no proof of images being set up publicly in churches.”

There is a wide step between respect or reverence, and worship or idolatry. Sacred things ought always to be held in respect ; but when the reverential beholders of them degenerate into worshippers, and thus become guilty of idolatry, what is to be done with the pictures or images, or relics, which have become the causes

of so much debasement and sin? When the Israelites laid up the brazen serpent among their sacred treasures, it was doubtless a feeling of respect and reverence which prompted the act; but when it became an object of idolatry, will any blame good King Hezekiah for breaking it in pieces, and calling it Nehushtan? It was no doubt from a similar motive that Epiphanius performed that act, towards the close of the fourth century, which is thus recorded in his letter to John, Bishop of Jerusalem. In passing through Anablatha, a village of Palestine, "he found a veil hanging before the doors of the church, wherein was painted the image of Christ, or some saint, for he did not well remember which it was; but seeing, however, the image of a man hanging in the church, against the authority of Scripture, he tore it in pieces, and advised the guardians of the church rather to make a winding-sheet of it, to bury some poor man in." It must have been some fear of idolatry which caused the Council of Eliberis, in Spain, to ordain the following Canon, in 305: "We decree that pictures ought not to be in churches, lest that which is worshipped and adored be painted upon the walls." Notwith-

standing this decree, the evil grew and prospered ; and that which was originally intended, and put into execution by good and holy men for good and holy purposes, became a debased and sensual and idolatrous worship. Voices were raised occasionally against the increasing error, and doubtless produced some effect for the time, and may have purified the mind, if not the customs of Churchmen. Amongst these voices, none went forth with greater power than that of Claude, Bishop of Turin. Fleury says that he was engaged, together with Alcuin and an Irishman named Clement, in the instruction of Charlemagne, and his daughters, "Gisele" and "Rictrude ;" and that the especial department in this course of study (which comprised rhetoric, astronomy, and languages) that was assigned to Claude, was the explanation of the Holy Scriptures. Charles the Great had not only a profound respect for learning and learned men ; but was himself most learned. He was skilled in astronomy and other sciences, could speak Latin equally as well as his native tongue, and possessed a good knowledge of Greek. To be patronized and favoured by a Prince of so much talent, learning, and discri-

mination as Charlemagne, was in itself an evidence of merit.

Claude was a Spaniard by birth, and was well acquainted with the sacred writings. About the year 814 he wrote three books of commentaries upon Genesis, four upon Exodus in 821, and some more upon Leviticus in 823. He also composed annotations upon St. Matthew, and upon all the Epistles of St. Paul. It was in consequence of his knowledge of the Bible that he was appointed to the Bishopric of Turin, in which diocese great ignorance of Holy Scripture prevailed. Claude entered upon the new work and labour to which God had called him with a faithful determination to perform his duty, and to instruct the people committed to his charge in the pure truths of the religion of Christ. "Amongst other abuses," says Fleury, "which he found in that country was the excessive worship of images, which by an ancient custom had increased to downright superstition. To extinguish this he went into the opposite extreme;" and by that which Fleury calls an indiscreet zeal, "he effaced, broke down, and took away all the images, and all the crosses from the churches in his diocese. A friend of

his, the Abbé Theodemir, being of opinion that he was proceeding with too great haste in his reformation, wrote him a letter of advice, in which he intimated that the images ought to be preserved, though he did not dare to say that they ought to be adored. This letter was not pleasing to Claude, who thus replied: "Having been constrained to accept the Bishopric, when I came to Turin I found all the churches full of abominations and images; and because I began, by myself alone, to destroy that which every one adored, every one began to open his mouth against me. And then they all said, 'We do not believe that there is anything Divine in the image which we adore: we only do reverence in honour of him whom it represents.' To which I answered," continues Claude, "if those who have forsaken the worship of demons, honour the images of saints, they have not abandoned their idols: they have only changed their names. For whether you paint on a wall the representations of St. Peter and St. Paul, or those of Jupiter, Saturn, or Mercury, they are neither gods nor apostles nor men. So that all that is done is to change the name; while the error remains always the same. That if we are to

worship men, we ought to worship them living, since they are the image of God : not after their death, when they resemble only stones." Claude doubtless only referred here to the dead nature of the corruptible body : not to that body as capable of a resurrection, or to the immortal spirit. "And if," he adds, "it is not permitted to worship the works of God, much less the works of men."

He attacked in an especial manner, says Fleury, the worship of the cross, and asserted, "If we are to worship it because Jesus Christ was fastened to it, we ought also to worship many other things ; for He was only six hours upon the cross, and nine months in the womb of the Virgin, His mother. We ought therefore to worship virgins ; mangers, because He was laid in one ; linen cloths, because He was enwrapped in one ; boats, because He often entered them ; asses, because He rode on one ; lambs, lions, stones, by which names He was designated ; thorns, roses, spears, which were used in His passion. He has not commanded us to worship the cross ; but to bear it : that is, to renounce self." These are strong words, and stirring words ; and if the premises be true, that the

cross is to be worshipped because Jesus Christ hung upon it, who can deny the other conclusions? That the cross, the blessed symbol of our redemption, became an object of idolatry in the middle ages, is well known to every historian; and Claude's voice was only one, out of many, raised against it: raised unhappily without effect, until the Reformation (which now some amongst us so ungratefully decry) came in to purify the Church's customs and doctrines, and to save the Roman Church herself from falling beneath the weight of her own corruptions.

This treatise of the Bishop of Turin was replied to by Dungal, a celebrated Irishman who lived in a French Monastery during the reigns of Charlemagne and Lewis the Meek, and taught philosophy and astronomy. Fleury gives a recapitulation of his arguments, and very fairly, though perhaps unwittingly remarks (and the remark may tend to show the nature of the whole answer): "Dungal reasons little in this work. He employs nothing but authority; as in fact the chief proof in this matter has been always tradition and the constant practice of the Church." That the ancient practice of the Church was not in favour of image worship, or

the worship of the cross, is manifest to every one who has ever examined the subject. Indeed Dungal himself exhibits this. In his reply to Claude he changes the word "worship or adoration," into "reverence." The Bishop's argument was that images or the cross ought not to be worshipped or adored; and because they had become the subjects of idolatry, that they ought to be removed from the churches. Dungal replies that sacred pictures and the cross and the relics of the saints ought to be *reverenced* with the honour which is suitable to them; but that sacrifice ought not to be offered to them, nor should the worship that is due only to God be given them: and he maintains (evidently mistaking the point of the Bishop's argument) that "Claude, in rejecting the cross, declares himself also an enemy of the passion and the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. We might wonder at this perverse mode of reasoning, but that it has found an unhappy parallel in our own times. Those who, with the Reformers and the ancient Church, have denied the real corporal presence of our Lord in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper have been accused also of denying the incarnation.

We learn the sentiments of Claude principally

from his enemies and opposers ; but even in their recitals the truth crops out, and some of the things which they condemned may well find favour in our eyes. "In the Litanies and other Offices of the Church," says Dungal, "he did not wish to mention any saint, nor to celebrate their festivals. He forbids candles to be lighted in the day-time in the churches, or to cast the eyes upon the ground in prayer ; and commits many other impieties of such a kind that I do not dare to relate them, although I have learned them from persons worthy of credit. Likewise he refused to attend a Council of Bishops, saying that they were only an assembly of asses. But they ought not to have been so patient, nor to have spared such a man."

It was certainly not right to have called an assembly of Bishops asses ; but we know that Bishops have not been always the wisest and most learned of personages, nor do we know what provocation Claude may have received from his episcopal brethren, nor whether he did not speak it in jest, as the phrase is sometimes used, though it might have been true in this, as in other instances, that "many a true word is said in a joke."

The zeal of Claude against image worship and the growing errors in the Church, met with that fate which has so often befallen earnest men. He was misrepresented and reviled. Even his early friend Theodemir joined in the reproaches. Indiscretion, want of judgment, irreverence, were feeble expressions to those which were afterwards uttered against him ; and were it not for the friendship which his former intimacy with the Royal Family had gained him, the results to himself, personally, might have been most disastrous. The accusations at last amounted to heresy and Arianism. In his youth Claude had been a pupil of Felix d'Urgel, who was convicted of holding heretical opinions respecting the nature of our Lord, and who was condemned by an assembly of fifty-seven Bishops, convened at Rome by Charles, in the year 799. Felix himself confessed and renounced his error at Aix-la-Chapelle the same year, in presence of Charles, and after a disputation, in which Felix was allowed to produce his authorities and his arguments. "The Prelates," says Fleury, "combated and overcame them by fair reasoning, without any violence ; upon which he submitted himself and renounced his error." However,

when his enemies began to find fault with Claude, the error of one who was formerly his master might furnish ground of accusation against him; and hence in all probability the charge of heresy and Arianism. "This noble stand in defence of true religion," saith Mosheim, "drew upon Claudius a multitude of adversaries: the sons of superstition rushed upon him from all quarters; Theodemir, Dungallus, Jonas of Orleans, and Walafridus Strabo united to overwhelm him with their voluminous answers. But the learned and venerable Prelate maintained his ground, and supported his cause with such dexterity and force that it remained triumphant and gained new credit. And hence it happened that the city of Turin and the adjacent country were, for a long time after the death of Claudius, much less infected with superstition than the other parts of Europe."

Indeed we may not unreasonably conclude that the Vaudois Church, that ancient descendant of primitive faith and usages, received much benefit from Claude's preaching and writings and conduct; and that by these their doctrine was kept pure and antagonistic to Roman error, even to our own times.

Of all the works of Claude, only one seems to have been published: his "Commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians." The preface to this Commentary, together with a letter of his to the Abbot Justus, are published by Archbishop Usher, in his "Sylloge." Some controversy has arisen as to the country of his birth, the Archbishop asserts that he was an Irishman; but Lanigan disclaims the notion, and will have none of him. The latter thinks that the learned Archbishop made a mistake between Claude and Clement, a contemporary and fellow-teacher with Claude in the family of Charlemagne. This great and celebrated Bishop of Turin died about the year 840.

XI.

VIRGILIUS, BISHOP OF SALTZBURGH.

THE spherical form of our globe was probably known to some of the ancient astronomers.

The round figure which the earth's shadow presented on the moon's disc during an eclipse, might have caused them to notice the fact ; yet the idea that the earth was a plain, level surface, was almost universal during the middle ages, and those who advanced a contrary opinion were accounted little better than heretics, and sometimes hardly escaped the punishment appointed for such. It has been said that one of the difficulties Columbus had to contend against, and which prevented sailors from enrolling themselves amongst his crew, was, lest when he came to the extremest edge of the world's surface, he and his ship should drop off into vacuity, and fall, none knew whither. It is no easy matter to fight against a deep-seated

popular prejudice, and hence those who stand up for the truth ought ever to be held in especial honour and remembrance.

Virgilius, Bishop of Saltzburgh, who has been well entitled the Apostle of Carinthia, was a man far advanced in knowledge beyond the age in which he lived, and his astronomical attainments led him to the conclusion that the earth was not a flat surface, but round; and that people similar to ourselves lived, in all probability, on the other side of the world. He was an Irishman, whose unlatinized name was Feargal. The word Fear, in Irish, signifies man; and hence the change into Vir was very easy and obvious. His life was written in the twelfth century, and has been published by Canisius, and also by Messingham and Mabillon. It consists of two parts: one containing his real biography, the other an account of the miracles said to have been wrought at his tomb. The life begins in the following manner: "The most blessed Virgilius, descended from a noble family in the island of Hibernia, applied his mind so zealously to the study of literature, that he might have been regarded as the most learned man amongst the learned of his age and

climate," which, Lanigan thinks, may signify the whole Western world. By Bruschius he is styled "*Vir pietate et doctrina clarus*," and he is spoken of in like manner by Hundius and other German writers.* Not long after his entrance into holy orders Virgilius left his native country and went to the Continent as a missionary. He was most graciously received in France by Pepin, son of Charles Martel, then Mayor of the Palace, with whom he remained two years. Pepin was greatly attached to him, and retained him at a princely residence which he had near Compeigne, called Carisiacum. From thence Virgilius proceeded to Bavaria, about the year 745, favoured with very strong recommendations from Pepin to Otilo, Duke of Bavaria. It was here that those lamentable disputes commenced between him and Boniface, the great Apostle of Germany, which might have ended most disastrously for Virgilius and for truth, were it not that the protection of both Pepin and Duke Otilo shielded him.

There was an ignorant priest who used to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism in the

* "Lanigan," vol. iii., p. 181.

following manner : “ *Baptizo te in nomine Patria, et Filia, et Spiritua, sancta,*” instead of “ *Patris, Filii, et Spiritus sancti.*” Boniface thought that this change of form, though done in ignorance, invalidated the Sacrament, and ordered Virgilius, and a friend who laboured with him, named Sidonius, to re-baptize all persons on whom this form had been used. Virgilius was of a different opinion. He considered that there was no malevolence or heretical intent in the mind of the officiating priest ; that the error arose merely from his ignorance of the Latin language, and which he might have thought had better not be used in the sacred ritual ; and believing, with the Universal Church, that to baptize a second time was an unlawful and sacrilegious act, Virgilius refused to obey the command of Boniface. The matter was referred to Pope Zachary, at Rome, who decided against Boniface, and in favour of the Irish missionary. Zachary’s letter upon the subject is given by Archbishop Usher in his “ *Sylloge,*” the sixteenth letter of the collection. Boniface was very indignant with Virgilius for this resistance to his authority and for his appeal to the Roman Bishop, and in a letter which he wrote to

Zachary he seems to have made several charges against his opponent, one of which was at that time supposed to involve the most serious heresy. Zachary's reply to this letter of Boniface is also given by Usher in the seventeenth letter of his "Sylloge," and from this we gather that the heresy of Virgilius consisted in the opinion which he had formed of the earth's sphericity, and that there were people on the other side of the globe from us : in other words, that there were antipodes. It is very probable that Zachary did not quite understand the meaning of the accusation against Virgilius. The Pope may have thought that it was the opinion of the latter that there was another world, and there were other men dwelling beneath the earth. The words he uses in his condemnation of the asserted heresy, are, "*Quod alius mundus, et alii homines sub terras sint;*" but no doubt he would have judged it a still more monstrous heresy, and worthy of a far severer punishment, had the real notion flashed upon his mind,—that men lived with their feet opposite to our's, and thus moved apparently with their heads downwards. We need not however go to the antipodes in search of persons who do not know

at times whether they are on their heads or their heels; and it is not uncommon for men in our own hemisphere, and very great men, too, to lose their heads altogether. The men in the moon, who, according to Swift, were able to take their heads off their shoulders and put them under their arms, may have had their types even amongst ourselves. Other charges of a less grave character were also brought by Boniface against Virgilius: that the latter used to sow the seeds of dissension between him and Duke Otilo, and that he aspired to one of the bishoprics founded by Boniface.

“Mabillon supposed that Boniface was displeased with Virgilius because he had come to Bavaria with recommendations from Pepin, and not by order of Boniface himself; and that he was taken great notice of by the Duke Otilo. To which he adds that perhaps Virgilius was not very submissive to him.”* All this may be true; and joined with the opposition of Virgilius on the baptismal question, is fully sufficient to explain why Boniface was so angry with him.

* “Lanigan,” vol. iii., p. 185.

Duke Otilo, not very long before his death, which took place in 748, created Virgilius Abbot of the Monastery of St. Peter's, at Saltzburgh ; and, by some means or other, peace was made for him with the Roman See, for we find that he was appointed Bishop of Saltzburgh in 756, by Pope Stephen II. and King Pepin. Two years elapsed before he could be prevailed upon to assume the office and the responsibilities of a Bishop, but after his consecration he devoted himself with great zeal and energy and success to the sacred duties of his calling. He built a new Cathedral at Saltzburgh, which he dedicated to God in memory of St. Rupert, the first Bishop of that See ; and also erected other churches in various quarters, for the benefit of the people. Nor did he confine himself to the mere building of material temples : he was a most zealous pastor of Christ's flock. He preached the Word continually throughout his diocese ; reproved, rebuked, exhorted, with all long-suffering and doctrine, and thus endeavoured to build up the spiritual temple of the Church in its best and highest and noblest form.

About this period a very interesting event took place. Two Carinthian Princes—Karastus,

a son of Boruth the Duke of Carinthia, and Chetimar, a nephew of Boruth—had been detained as hostages in Bavaria, and were baptized and educated there as Christians. When Boruth died, Karastus became the reigning Duke. He lived only three years after his succession, and then Chetimar ascended the vacant throne. He is described as a very virtuous and religious Prince, and was extremely desirous that his people should become Christians like himself. He had with him, as a chaplain and instructor, a person named Majoranus, who had been ordained by Virgilius. Chetimar had studied in the Monastery of St. Peter's in his youthful days, and doubtless drew in much knowledge and piety from its holy and learned Abbot; and he was accustomed to send presents to it every year, as a token of his respect and remembrance. After he was raised to the Dukedom of Carinthia, he requested Virgilius (who by this time had been made Bishop) to visit his kingdom, and instruct and confirm his subjects in the Christian faith. Virgilius was then unable to comply with the Duke's desires, but he sent Modestus, a Bishop, together with some priests and other missionaries, to preach

the Gospel and convert the people to Christianity. Modestus spent the rest of his life in Carinthia, and when he died Chetimar again requested Virgilius to come to him. But various causes again occurred to prevent him, and he sent in his stead a priest named Latinus, who, owing to the disturbed condition of Carinthia and the various intestine troubles which agitated it, could not long remain within its borders. Virgilius, however, considered that he had a special call to the superintendence of the country, and during the reigns of Chetimar and his successor Watune, kept it well supplied with ministering servants of his Divine Lord and Master. He may thus be said to have established the Carinthian Church, and was rightly entitled the Apostle of Carinthia.

Towards the close of his life he made a visitation of his now extensive diocese. He wished to eradicate idolatry wherever it was to be found, and to strengthen and establish those who were already true disciples. His efforts and progress seem to have been wonderfully successful. He was received with joy and acclamations everywhere. He ordained clergymen, consecrated churches, gathered in converts,

and made all the provision for the future ministrations of the Word and Sacraments that the circumstances of the times permitted. His journeys extended through Carinthia to the frontiers of Hungary; and then, perceiving that his health began to fail, he returned to Saltzburgh, where he died on the 27th of November, 785. He is said by Ware to have written a treatise on the Antipodes, which no doubt would be full of interest if it could be found. It may possibly have consisted of the letter which he wrote to Pope Zachary in explanation of his sentiments on the subject, and which may have caused his acquittal of the heretical notions ascribed to him. Ware also mentions that Virgilius was the reputed author of a Glossary quoted by Melchior Goldast. Alcuin, in his poems, gives a most beautiful and touching description of this learned and good Bishop, and thus sums up his character:—

“ Vir pius et prudens, nulli pietate secundus.”

XII.

ST. KILIAN, THE APOSTLE OF FRANCONIA.

Two lives of St. Kilian are extant. One was written (as is said) by Egilward, a monk of St. Burchard's Monastery, near Wurtzburg, in the eleventh century ; and the other, a smaller work, by an unknown author, which is supposed to be more exact. Both have been published by Canisius. In the larger life the following passage occurs, and we learn from it, as well as from other sources, the country of his birth : "Scotia, which is also called Hibernia, is an island of the ocean sea, very celebrated for the fertility of its soil, but far more celebrated for its holy men ; of whom Italy boasts of Columbanus, Alemannia is enriched by Gallus, and Teutonic France is ennobled by Kilian." Rabanus and Notker also mention that he came from "Hibernia Scotorum Insula." Marianus Scotus,

Mabillon, and Fleury, also bear testimony to the same effect.

Of his parentage, and the part of Ireland he came from, nothing is known. According to the custom, and perhaps the necessities of those days, he entered into a Monastery, as well for instruction as to pursue a more holy life, which the state of society at that time gave him no opportunity to follow. Iona has been pointed out as the place where he made his profession; but as he is said also to have become Abbot of the same Monastery into which he entered as a monk, and as he never was Abbot of Iona, this seems to me impossible. After some time of residence in his Monastery (wherever it was), he took upon him the office of the priesthood, and subsequently became a Bishop. It was not uncommon at that time in Ireland for the larger Monasteries to have Bishops attached to their establishments. Various functions had to be performed, which, according to Apostolic order, could only be performed by men clothed with the episcopal office, and these functions seemed to those ancient Christians of more importance than the assignment of any territorial jurisdiction to a Bishop. Hence the great multiplication

of the number of their Bishops, which amounted at one time (as is asserted) to 365.

Like many other good men, "his spirit was stirred within him" when he saw so much of the world "given to idolatry," and he determined to go forth to other lands, and preach that Gospel which brought such blessing to his own soul. A few companions attended him, and amongst them are mentioned Coloman, a priest, and Totman, a deacon. They passed over into France, and journeyed eastward, until they reached Wurtzburg, in Franconia. The situation was so pleasant, and probably an opening for their labours seeming manifest, they determined to fix their abode there. Here one or two difficulties occur in the history of St. Kilian. The larger life asserts that at this time Ireland was under an interdict on account of the Pelagian heresy. Lanigan is very indignant at even the supposition of such a blot upon his country's annals. He admits that some censure may have rested upon the Irish for their tenacity in holding their ancient customs respecting Easter and the tonsure, but he strenuously denies the interdict and the Pelagianism. Indeed, the charge seems ill founded,

and may have arisen from the fact of Celestine, the great friend and associate of Pelagius, having been an Irishman. Pelagius himself was a Briton (according to Usher), and if they both were monks of Bangor (of which there is some doubt), their friendship may have arisen from this, as well as from the contiguity of their respective countries. The charge of Pelagianism upon the Irish Church may also have had its origin in the letter written after the death of Pope Severinus, by the heads of the Roman Church, in answer to one written from Ireland on the subject of the Paschal controversy. A casual expression in this letter, which has been preserved by Archbishop Usher, seems to intimate that the Pelagian heresy, after lying dead everywhere for nearly 200 years, had lately revived in Ireland; and, indeed, some of its theologians may have become tainted with that heretical doctrine. Still there is not a sentence in the letter upon the subject of an interdict, and it may be concluded that interdicts did not exist in those early ages.

Roman doctrine was making hideous advances in the Church, but Roman power and presumption were still kept in the background, probably

were unthought of, even by the Romans themselves, and certainly were not submitted to by the nations of Europe. Rome, as the capital of the Western Empire, would naturally possess great influence and authority in any question, either temporal or spiritual, and its Bishop would be looked up to with that reverence which his place and station, and generally his learning and religious-mindedness, demanded; but at the period of which we are treating, no supremacy was sought for nor admitted.

Lanigan states that after being established at Wurtzburg, Kilian applied to the See of Rome for permission to preach the Gospel to the surrounding peoples, and that he went to Rome to obtain it. We can well imagine how that Kilian, a stranger in a strange land, would seek the countenance and protection of the great Bishop of the West; and especially as he, a Bishop himself, was about to exercise episcopal jurisdiction in *partibus infidelium*, and in a territory over which the Bishop of Rome might claim some authority. To make all matters smooth, therefore, with all his neighbours, both far and near, this journey might have been undertaken, and his wisdom and discretion

obtained the success they merited. He was most kindly received by the Pope, whose name was Conon, and who doubtless welcomed with gladness so able an assistant to the Continental mission, and gave him whatever authority and power his influence and office could supply. Kilian and his two companions, Coloman and Totman, returned to Wurtzburg, and there commenced missionary operations, which were most successful.

Gozbert, the Duke of that country, was converted by his instrumentality, and with him a great number of his subjects were added to the faith. And here we have to record the old Herodian tale again, and to see how similar circumstances generally produce similar results. At first, seeing that such might have been allowed by the Pagan customs of the idolatrous religion from which the Duke had been so recently converted, Kilian hesitated to say, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." He waited until his convert became stronger in the faith, and saw more of the excellence and beauty of the religion he had adopted. But the time came at last, when the disclosure must be made; and Kilian informed

the Duke that "there was one thing still requisite for his being quite acceptable in the sight of God: viz., that he should part with Geilana (his wife), as their marriage was unlawful." * This was esteemed a hard thing by Duke Gozbert, the most difficult (as he himself described it) which had been hitherto set before him by Kilian. However, he was willing to comply, only he claimed a little time for its performance; and this procrastination was fatal to the missionaries, to Geilana, and to himself. The time he asked for, was, until his return from a military expedition upon which he was about to proceed, and he faithfully promised that when he came back he would put away Geilana from him, although she was very dear to him.

This question of marriages contracted in Paganism, before persons are converted to Christianity, is a very difficult one. Beside the consideration of the men, the unfortunate women, who have married in accordance with the religion in which they were brought up, demand the greatest sympathy. All the bonds

* Lanigan, vol. iii., p. 116.

which perhaps they have considered holy, all the ties which affection has drawn around them, all the interests which home and children and husband have made to grow up on all sides of them for many a year, are dissolved by one fell stroke, and the roots which were deeply imbedded in their hearts, are by one dreadful hurricane torn from their resting-place.

There can be no doubt that the Christian law respecting marriage is imperative upon all those who have been brought up within the pale of Christianity, but the case is far different in the matter of persons who have entered into such intimate relations under other conditions and circumstances. We may be thankful when no such case is brought before us for the exercise of our judgment, and for our decision.

We may safely conclude that Kilian acted with the most disinterested and strictly conscientious motives; that it was almost as hard for him as for the Duke; and that the certain enmity of Geilana would be prejudicial, not merely to himself and his companions, but also to that which he had so entirely at heart, the cause of the holy religion he advocated. Nor was he deceived, so far as he himself and his

companions were concerned ; for after the departure of Gozbert upon his expedition, Geilana determined upon revenge, and employed assassins to murder the missionaries. Like Herodias of old, she may have thought that the death of her enemy was necessary to the maintenance of her position and her power, and therefore that her interest, as well as her feelings of displeasure, called for his destruction. - When the assassins arrived, the night had fallen. It was fitting that darkness should cover so great a crime, and it was desirable for the author and perpetrator of the deed that they should be hidden from the sight of men. But the darkness and the light are both alike to God, and it rarely happens that murder, though it may lie long concealed, is not discovered at the last. The assassins found Kilian and his holy companions, Coloman and Totman, engaged in sacred exercises, and singing the "praises of the Lord." They were conscious of their approaching end, but made no resistance, and thus became holy martyrs in a holy cause. Their death is said to have taken place on the 8th of July, A.D. 689. St. Kilian has been designated the patron saint of Wurtzburg ; but he has another title, which he more

eminently merits, namely, that of the "Apostle of Franconia."

When Gozbert returned to Wurtzburg, he naturally asked for his Christian friends and fathers. Geilana denied all knowledge of them ; and as she had ordered their bodies to be hastily hidden away in the earth on the night of their murder, she hoped that the deed might be concealed. But one of the assassins soon made the discovery. He was found running about like a madman, and crying out that Kilian was consuming him internally with dreadful fire. The Duke must have then suspected that the absence of the missionaries arose from some dreadful cause ; and calling together those of his subjects in Wurtzburg who had embraced the Christian faith, he asked them how this unhappy man should be treated. There was a person present at the meeting, who is said to have been suborned by Geilana ; and he advised that the apparently demented man should be left at liberty, and that for the purpose of trying "whether the God of the Christians would avenge the death of Kilian," if the man were really guilty of it. This proposal was agreed to, and the assassin was liberated. But Divine

vengeance fell upon him, for he is said (in a paroxysm of passion or of madness) to have torn himself with his teeth until he expired.

Nor was Geilana permitted to live. She is reported to have been seized with an evil spirit, and after much suffering and torment, died wretchedly.

We can well conceive how the evil spirit of remorse must have taken possession of her, and how the just indignation of Gozbert must have added to the weight of the self-reproaches of her guilty conscience.

XIII.

TIGERNACH AND MARIANUS SCOTUS.

“THE lordly Shenan, 'spreading like a sea,' forms two large lakes in its course. Both are more than twenty miles in length, and from four to five in breadth. The one, Lough Ree, extends from Lanesborough to Athlone; and the other, Lough Dergh, from Portumna to Killaloe. They are fine sheets of water, and the lower part of Lough Dergh presents scenery exceedingly beautiful and picturesque; and when the river leaves the lake, and continues its rapid course by Castle Connell to Limerick, the beauty of the scenes on either side of its banks is not diminished, but rather increased, by the narrow and shallow nature of its stream. However, the general character of the Shannon is sluggish and slow, especially in that portion of its course between Athlone

and Portumna. In winter the banks of this locality are so low that the adjacent country is often inundated for miles, and the efforts of certain Government Commissioners, employed to improve the navigation of the river, have tended to increase the evil. Dams have been formed at Meelick, and other places, to throw a greater body of water than before existed upon certain fords which obstructed the navigation, so that vessels of considerable tonnage might be enabled to pass over them. This plan, well intended, but badly executed, has entirely failed, for the simple reason, which might easily have been foreseen, that the railways have diverted the traffic to their own courses. Thus, while thousands, if not millions of acres of fertile land are periodically laid under water (and sometimes at most inconvenient seasons), the attempted improvement of the navigation of the river has brought no improvement to its traffic. The best course to repair the disaster would be to break down the dams, to deepen the fords at Castle Connell, Meelick, Banagher, Shannon Bridge, and Athlone; and thus, by drawing off the water, to improve the lands which now suffer from the continual inunda-

tions. But this by the way. The slow-flowing river does not present many picturesque scenes on either of its banks in that narrow portion of it which connects Lough Ree with Lough Dergh ; but there is one on the Leinster side of the river, about eight miles from Athlone, which is of great interest to the historian and the antiquary. This spot contains the ruins of the once famous Abbey of Clonmacnoise, the burial-place of the ancient Irish Kings, and whose schools for learning were once of European reputation. It was founded by St. Kieran, about the year 548, and built upon a piece of ground that was possessed by the King, Diermit, before he became Monarch of all Ireland.

Diermit had a great regard for St. Kieran, and at his request the Monarch laid with his own hands the foundation of the Monastery. Clonmacnoise is called by the people of the country the Seven Churches ; and as there are many other ruins of the same kind in Ireland besides Clonmacnoise, especially the famous one at Glendaloch, in the County of Wicklow, so often visited by tourists, they were doubtless intended to represent the Seven Churches of Asia, and thus add an argument to the view

that the Christianity of Great Britain and Ireland was much influenced by the East, if not wholly derived from it. The churchyard of Clonmacnoise contains several buildings of great interest. Here are two of these round towers about which there has been so much learned controversy, and which still continue to exercise the acumen and to baffle the ingenuity of the antiquary. Here are two exquisitely sculptured crosses, which evince a very high degree of art in those olden times. Here also are a great many ancient grave slabs, sculptured and inscribed with the names of eminent persons who flourished about 1000 years ago. Dr. Petrie supposes the north cross to have been executed at the beginning of the 10th century.

Tiernach, or Tigernach, the subject of the present memoir, was Abbot of Clonmacnoise. He was a famous annalist, and had industriously collected and preserved various documents, and the history of events connected with his country, down to the very year of his death. His annals are remarkable as being the chief source from whence writers in after times drew the materials for their histories. Dr. O'Connor says of him, "We have fragments preserved by Tigernach of

Irish writers who flourished as early as before the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, whose names, whose periods, and whose very words are preserved, and the antiquity of whose idiom confirms the ancient date which the annalist himself ascribes to them."

The dates of some ancient eclipses have been noticed by Tigernach, and as these could only have reached him with any accuracy through written documents, an inference may be drawn that his annals reach as far back as the conversion of Ireland to Christianity. It was from his work that the celebrated Marianus Scotus derived much of his information, and the following notice from Florence of Worcester's Chronicle will show how much the latter was indebted to Marianus, and through him to Tigernach, for his learning: "A.D. 1028. This same year was born Marianus of Ireland, by whose study and pains this excellent Chronicle was compiled from various books." Hence we may conclude that the annals of Florence of Worcester were composed up to the middle of the eleventh century by Marianus Scotus, and that Marianus derived most if not all of his information from Tigernach. They were both

monks of the same Monastery, and being similar in their pursuits, we can well understand how readily the lore of the one might be communicated to the other.

The name of Tigernach was once well-known to fame, but it is now almost utterly forgotten. Few, probably, of the readers of these pages have ever heard it, and yet Mr. Moore thus speaks of him in his history: "Of that class of humble but useful writers, the annalists, who merely relate, says Cicero, without adorning the course of public affairs, Ireland produced in this century two of the most eminent perhaps in all Europe,—Marianus Scotus and Tigernach." The pages of the latter are most valuable, not only for the facts which they preserve, but also for the proofs they afford of still earlier writings, and which otherwise would have been lost for ever to the world of literature. Besides the dates of the eclipses above mentioned, and which must be very valuable to astronomers, metrical fragments are scattered through his annals, cited from ancient books which were then in existence, though no other traces of them now remain. Mr. Moore thinks that Tigernach had access to some library or libraries

of books of every description ; for he gives very numerous references, and the correctness of his citations from foreign authors with whose works we are acquainted, may be taken as a surety of the genuineness of his extracts from the authors which are lost. A manuscript of his exists in the British Museum. He died Abbot of Clonmacnoise, A.D. 1088.

The name of Marianus Scotus is well known amongst historians. Rose, in his Biographical Dictionary, calls him a Scotchman, and thus furnishes another lamentable instance of the mistakes of even very learned men respecting the word Scotus ; but, that Irishmen were named "Scoti" before the twelfth century, is a fact which cannot reasonably be disputed, and indeed is now very generally acknowledged. With regard to the native country of Marianus there can be no doubt. The exact words of Florence of Worcester are as follows :—(at A.D. 1028) "Hoc anno natus est Marianus, *Hibernensis*, probabilis Scotus ; cujus studio et labore hæc chronica præcellens est de diversis libris coadunata." There may be some ambiguity about the words "probabilis Scotus," but there is none whatsoever respecting the word "Hiber-

nensis." Nor can there be any difference of opinion concerning the part which Marianus took in the composition of the history; the sentence, "by whose diligence and toil this most excellent chronicle was compiled," establishes the authorship beyond all controversy, and the confession that the annals were taken from various books then extant, evidently asserts that there were other historical books then in existence of still more ancient dates, from whose stores Marianus derived his knowledge. He is described as a very diligent author, and wrote several works besides his History. It is said that a Commentary upon the Epistles of St. Paul, a copy transcribed by Marianus himself, still exists in the Imperial Library at Vienna; and there are other works of his preserved in the British Museum, that most valuable repository of all things rich and rare, and where the civility and courtesy of the attendants, and librarians, almost equal the treasures they guard and superintend.

Very little is known of the youthful days of Marianus Scotus. He probably received the early part of his education at the Monastery of Clonard, and as he endeavoured to correct the

error of the Dionysian Cycle, he doubtless obtained there a knowledge of mathematics and astronomy. "In one of the chief merits of a chronicler (saith Mr. Moore), that of skilfully turning to account the labours of his predecessors, Marianus appears to have been pre-eminent." And a learned antiquary (in speaking of the use thus made by him of Asser's interesting Life of Alfred) says, "that enamoured with the flowers of that work, he transplanted them to shine, like stars, in his own pages." From Lanigan we learn that "his reputation for piety was very great, and that as to learning he was considered one of the first men of his times. The chronicle, which he continued down to A.D. 1083, exceeds anything of the kind which the middle ages have produced."

It has been conjectured that Marianus was author of some notes on the Gospel of St. Mark, which, as well as his comments upon St. Paul's Epistles, are to be found in the library of Vienna. Commentaries upon the Psalms have also been ascribed to him, though Lanigan thinks that in all probability they were written by another Marianus, who lived at Ratisbon.

Like many other distinguished Irishmen of that period, he left his native country (about the year 1056), and joined a religious community at Cologne, which was composed principally of his own countrymen. From thence he travelled to Fulda, where he remained as a recluse ten years. Afterwards he sojourned for some time at Mentz, and died in the year 1086.

Living in that age when superstition assumed much of the form and semblance of religion, he could not altogether escape its baleful contagion. It is true that in many cases superstition is better than open infidelity. There may be some rays of truth obscured in the cloud of error, which yet may pierce the veil and shine into the soul as converting principles, and turn the minds of some "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;" but still that circumstance is no palliation or excuse for the practices of those middle age observances, which had more of paganism in them than of Christianity, and which, while they may possibly have saved a few from infidelity, plunged thousands into soul-destroying errors.

There was a Monastery at Padderborn, which

by some unfortunate accident took fire and was totally consumed, 1058. All the monks were doubtless too glad to escape from the devouring element,—all, except one. He became desirous of the glory or the crown of martyrdom. Nothing could induce him to leave his cell. He must show his attachment to the very walls of his Monastery, even unto death. He had sworn not to leave it, and his oath must be kept at all hazards. Perhaps he might have thought that his Patron Saint, or the Patron Saint of the Institution, would interpose at the last hour and rescue him from destruction. None appeared, and so he perished in the flames.

He had his reward, so far as this world is concerned, and gained the reputation of a martyr and a saint. That his almost insane attachment to the letter of his oath may have proved an excuse before the eyes of the all-Seeing and all-Merciful Judge, for the wilful destruction of his life, we may charitably hope; but that honours should be paid to his memory, and to the very mat on which he lay, and which by some chance, or miracle, was not burned, is a sad evidence of the darkness and religion,

or rather irreligion of the times. This monk was named Paternus, and the great, and learned, and pious Marianus made a pilgrimage from Cologne to Padderborn to worship at his tomb, and knelt on the mat as on a holy relic, which had been the last resting place of the self-immolated recluse. From Padderborn Marianus returned to Cologne; after some time he repaired to Fulda, a town about fifty-eight miles north-east of Frankfort, and lived in its celebrated Monastery for ten years. He was removed from thence by order of his ecclesiastical superiors, to Mentz; for what reason does not appear, whether as a favour or a punishment. If it was the latter, it was doubtless for some contumacious assertion of his opinions, contrary to the assumed authority of the Roman Church, and which that Church has ever refused to tolerate, even in matters of science and history. In Mentz he remained shut up as a recluse until the day of his death, which took place two years previous to that of his old friend and associate in the same useful, but dry path of literature, Tigernach.

TIGERNACH.

THE following notice of Tigernach has been kindly communicated to the author of these sketches by the learned Dr. Reeves, whose researches amongst the ancient records of Ireland are only equalled by the judgment and discernment with which he treats them. The obit of Tigernach Ua Braoin (O'Brien), is thus recorded by the Irish annals, at the year 1088: "Tigernach Ua Braoin, chief successor of Ciaran and Cornan (*i.e.*, Abbot of Clonmacnois and Roscommon), died at Jurdaidle Chiarain (a church in connection with Clonmacnois): he was a paragon of learning and history."

This was the celebrated annalist, of whom we know little more, save what may be gathered as to his learning and accuracy, from the inestimable Chronicle which he compiled. In his note on the above passage, with annals of the Four Masters, O'Donovan thus writes: "Tigernach questions the veracity of all the most ancient documents relating to Ireland, and makes the true historical epoch begin with Cimbaeth, and the founding of the palace of Earnham Macha, about the 18th year of Ptolemy Lagus, before Christ 305. *Omnia monumenta Scotorum usque Cimbaeth incerta erant.*" His quotations from Latin and Greek authors are numerous; and his balancing their authorities against each other manifests a degree of criticism uncommon in the iron age in which he flourished. He quotes Eusebius, Orosius, Julius Africanus, Bede, Josephus, and others. It is stated in the Dublin copy of the "Annals of Innisfallen," at A.D., 1088, that this remarkable man was of the tribe of Sil-Muiredhaigh (pronounced Sheel Murray); and Dr. O'Connor boasts in a note that he was of the same race as the O'Connor's of Connaught, who were the principal family of

the Sil-Muiredhaigh. ("Annals of the Four Masters," vol. ii., p. 932.)

No vellum MSS. of the Chronicle has been preserved, but there are three on paper, and of considerable accuracy, though, unfortunately, all suffering from a chasm between the seventh and ninth centuries. Two of these are preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford: Rawlinson, No. 488, and Rawlinson No. 502. These formerly belonged to Sir James Ware, from whom they passed to the Clarendon Library, then to the Chandos, at the sale of which they were bought by Rawlinson and presented to the Bodleian.

The third is in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. From these the text was printed, but carelessly, accompanied by a Latin translation, which is very unsatisfactory, in the second vol. of Dr. O'Connor's "*Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptures*," a very rare book, printed for private presentation by the Duke of Buckingham, whose chaplain Dr. O'Connor was at Stowe.

The same author, in his descriptive catalogue of the MSS. in the Stowe Library (vol. i., p. 192), devotes a long article to an account of Tigernach and his remains.

There are also notices of this Annalist in Harris Ware's "*Irish Writers*" (vol. ii., p. 67), and in O'Reilly's "*Irish Writers*" (p. 81).

Mention is also made of the Chronicle in Thomas Jones' "*Critical Essay*" (vol. ii. p. 504), and more fully in "*Journal des Scavans*" (Tome iv., p. 64; Tome vi., p. 31).

It is to be lamented that justice has not yet been done to this writer by an accurate and faithful publication of the Chronicle. It was proposed some years since to the English Master of the Rolls, to print this work in his historical series, but the objection was made that the Chronicle was already printed and translated. But it was represented that the imperfect way in which Dr. O'Connor had done his work rendered a more scholarly performance of the task a

great literary desideratum ; and it is to be hoped that ere long the editing of it will be undertaken by a competent hand, in a style similar to that in which the "Chronicon Scotorum" and the "Annals of Lough Cé" have been published in that series.

A work of such antiquity, such accuracy, and so important among the materials for Irish history, deserves the highest respect and the earliest attention.

On the name Tigernach, see Reeves' "Adamnan's Life of St. Columba" (p. 80), and Zeus's "Grammatica Celtica" (vol. i. pp. 100, 151, 158, 162.)

XIV.

JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA.

AMONG the famous men whom Ireland sent forth in the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, not one has been more celebrated than John Scotus. His personal piety is admitted by all, even by those who opposed his doctrines ; and his learning, as well as the subtlety and acuteness of his intellect, were the themes of universal admiration. Indeed, the latter qualities led him into disquisitions perilously gratifying to his peculiar tone of mind, and into those pantheistic errors which subsequently deformed his religion and his philosophy. His views would have formed a most useful counterpoise to that scholastic theology which was even then making progress in the Church, had not his errors, some of which may be found in the writings of Origen, brought him into a certain disrepute, and thus

spoiled his influence. When will men learn not to be wise beyond that which is written, and to confine their imaginations and their intellect within the regions of revelation and of certainty? How many a great genius has been destroyed by its own impetuous soarings! How many a great cause has been defiled by the swooping down of mere human thought and speculation, upon the richest feast!

However, though the mysticism which John Scotus introduced into his writings, and those daring speculations on the nature of the Godhead, which none can ever make with impunity, caused him much trouble, and brought upon him no little censure, still none ever doubted the extensiveness of his learning, and the elegance of his scholarship. Both were very admirable, especially for the age in which he lived. Archbishop Usher has preserved in his *Sylloge* a letter written by a contemporary of John Scotus to Charles the Bald, in which great praise is given to him for his translation of the works attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, and which John Scotus had made from the Greek into the Latin language, by command of the King. In this letter, Anas-

tasius the Librarian, who wrote it, expresses his great surprise at the learning of such a "barbarous" man, and declares it to be very wonderful that one who came "from a country at the very end of the earth, and so far removed from intercourse with men," could have been able to comprehend such treatises as these of the Areopagite, and to have been able to translate them out of the Greek language into another tongue. "I allude," saith he, "to John the Scotchman, who I have also heard is a holy man in all things. But this has been effected by that Artificer the Spirit, who hath made him alike brilliant and eloquent. For had he not, through grace, burned with the fire of charity itself, he never, doubtless, would have thus undertaken to speak with the gift of tongues; for his mistress Charity hath taught him that, by which he hath edified and instructed many."

We are not acquainted with the date of John's birth. That he was an Irishman is manifest from his name Erigena, or, as it is sometimes spelled, Eringena. He went to France about the year 847, and became a great favourite with the King, Charles the Bald, who

frequently admitted him as a guest to the royal table.

The following anecdote is related in Lardner's "Europe during the Middle Ages,"—

"Of the terms on which he lived with Charles the Bald, a characteristic instance is given by William of Malmsbury. One day, John, being at table with the Monarch, each opposite to the other, no sooner were the meats removed than the cup began to go merrily round. After some jokes, Charles perceiving that the philosopher was awkward, like all his fellows, in the polite usages of life, asked,—'What is the distance (or difference) between a sot and a Scot?' (*Quid distat inter sottum et Scotum?*) 'The breadth of this table,' was the reply. The king deserved his answer, and bore the retort with infinite good humour and grace."

William of Malmsbury has this notice of him:—

"At this time Johannes Scotus is supposed to have lived: a man of clear understanding and amazing eloquence. He had long since, from the continued tumult of war around him, retired into France to Charles the Bald, at whose request he had translated the 'Hierarchia of Dionisius,' the Areopagite, out of the Greek into Latin. He composed a book also, which he entitled, '*περι φύσεων μερισμῶν*,' of the division of nature, extremely useful in solving the perplexity of certain indispensable inquiries."

In the subsequent part of the notice the English chronicler falls into a mistake, and erroneously confounds Erigena with another John Scotus,

whose name was Atheling, and who was killed at the Monastery of Malmsbury by the monks, or by the scholars, for his bold reproofs of their errors or their vices. John Scotus Erigena died in France, and therefore there is no doubt that William of Malmsbury confounded Erigena with Atheling, and thus the inscription, which the chronicler records as having been written on the tomb at the left side of the altar at Malmsbury, may be accounted for.

Some time after his arrival in France, Erigena was employed by Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, to refute the errors of the Monk Gotteschalchus, who had written a very subtle treatise on the subject of predestination; and who seems to have advocated very strongly the awful doctrine of reprobation. The history of Gotteschalchus is not without its interests and its uses. It proves that the mysterious doctrines of the foreknowledge and foreordination of God were as much agitated in the ninth century as in the days of Arminius and the Synod of Dort, and that the celebrated five points of Calvinism had their favourers and defenders as much in those early days as in more modern times; and also, that, unhappily,

the same "odium theologicum" existed quite as much in mediæval as in the puritanical days, upon which it is especially charged.

Gotteschalcus was a monk of Orbaix, in the diocese of Soissons. His piety, and the excellence of his personal character are denied by none : and if his religion savoured somewhat of the superstition of the age in which he lived, it is not to be wondered at. His offer to subject his opinions to the trial of ordeal by fire, and his readiness to submit to such an ordeal as a test of their truth, could only have proved his confidence or rashness, but could never have afforded, except to a superstitious mind, the slightest ground of belief ; and, indeed, when the trial came, though not in the form he had demanded, his courage miserably failed him. His opinions were condemned in a Council held at Mentz, in the year 848, and he was sent from thence to Hincmar in whose diocese he had been ordained. The Archbishop assembled a Council at Quiercy, in 849, by which Gotteschalcus was condemned a second time. Upon this Hincmar degraded him from the priesthood, and ordered him to be whipped with the greatest severity ; nor did the punish-

ment cease until the unfortunate monk was compelled to burn, with his own hands, a treatise which he had written in justification of his opinions, and which he had presented to the Council of Mentz. He was then imprisoned in the Monastery of Hautvilliers, where he died in the year 868, "maintaining with his last breath" (as it is said) "the doctrines for which he suffered." Gotteschalcus had many followers. His very name, derived from words signifying "Servant of God," may have had its attractions. The magnetism of his personal piety, which none ever gainsayed, drew many in his train, and the persecution which he suffered at the hands of his violent and bitter enemies, who are accused of mingling much personal feeling with religious zeal, created pity and sympathy even in the hearts of those who did not adopt his principles. Besides, it is very probable, that conclusions were drawn from premises laid down by him which he himself would have refused to sanction. This is too common in all controversies. Such conclusion may be legitimately drawn, and most logically correct, yet it is questionable whether punishment should be inflicted on any one who does not admit such conclusion as his doctrine,

and as the principle upon which he is prepared to act. This is confessedly a difficult subject, but one thing is very clear,—we ought to be quite sure that in such cases the premises *are* fairly stated, and that the conclusion is correctly drawn.

In Mosheim's history, vol. ii., page 348, there is a note which says, "All the Benedictines, Jansenists, and Augustine monks, maintain, almost without exception, that Gotteschalculus was most unjustly persecuted and oppressed. The Jesuits are of a different opinion, and think that the monk in question was justly condemned and deservedly punished." Hence it is plain that men judged not according to facts but in accordance with their own peculiar opinions.

Charles the Bald summoned a Council, which met at Quiercy in the year 853, at which the opinions of Gotteschalculus were condemned; but another Council, assembled at Valence, in Dauphiny, A.D. 855, vindicated and defended them, and declared the decisions of the Council of Quiercy null and void. The Council of Valence was composed of the clergy of three provinces, Arles, Vienna, and Lyons. The Archbishop of Lyons, Remi, presided, and its

decrees were confirmed by two subsequent Councils, at Longres and at Tousi. The latter was held in 860, and attended by the Bishops of fourteen provinces who supported the cause of the persecuted monk. In the fourth volume of Archbishop Usher's works will be found a long treatise upon the opinions of Gotteschalcus, and what is more pertinent to our present subject, a synopsis of the answer which was written by John Scotus, and in which answer he fell into many errors.

There are nineteen chapters in this work of John. Much controversy arose respecting them; for his speculations were still bolder than those of his opponent, though in another direction. Hence, though the champion of the orthodoxy of that day, he found no favour with many Churchmen. Perhaps his subsequent enunciation of opinion upon a different subject may have caused a more rigid scrutiny into all his doctrines; for another controversy arose in those days, in which John took a most active part. It has arisen in various other periods of the Church's history, from that time to this; and probably it may form the great cause of disputation and strife, if not of separation and schism,

in our own age and country. This question was the manner of our Lord's presence in the Holy Eucharist.

Paschasius Radbert, Abbot of Corbey, endeavoured to determine with accuracy the exact mode in which Christ presents Himself at the celebration of His Holy Supper. Strong and isolated passages respecting His bodily presence may be found interspersed throughout the works of the Fathers; but no attempt seems to have been made by any to draw these vague opinions into a focus, and to give that literal interpretation which necessarily resulted in the doctrine of Transubstantiation and all its idolatries, until Paschasius Radbert, in the ninth century, wrote his celebrated treatise "concerning the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ."

This work was presented to Charles the Bald in the year 845, who ordered Ratramn or Bertramn, a Monk of Corbey, and John Scotus, to draw up a clear exposition of the Divine teaching on the subject. The opinions of Radbert may be summed up in these two propositions: "First, that after the consecration of the bread and wine, nothing remained of these symbols but the outward figure, under which

the body and blood of Christ were really and locally present ; and secondly, that the body of Christ thus present in the Eucharist, was the same body that was born of the Virgin, that suffered on the cross, and was raised from the dead." * The work of John on this subject is unfortunately lost ; that of Bertramn is extant, and a translation of it was published in Dublin in the year 1753. Mosheim says, "Johannes Scotus, whose philosophical genius rendered him more accurate, and shed through his writings that logical precision so much wanted, and so highly desirable in polemical productions, was the only disputant in this contest who expressed his sentiments with method, perspicuity, and consistency." Moore, in his history of Ireland, has a long notice of John Scotus Erigena, and quotes a number of authors who give him the highest praise for his learning and intelligence. Mr. Moore was a Roman Catholic, and thus expresses himself upon this remarkable controversy : "In stating, as he is said to have done, that the Sacrament of the Eucharist is not the 'true body and the true blood,' he

* Mosheim.

might have had reference only to the doctrine put forth then recently by Paschasius Radbert, who maintained that the body present in the Eucharist was the same carnal and palpable body which was born of the Virgin, which suffered on the cross, and rose from the dead; whereas the belief of the Catholic Church on this point of doctrine has always been, that the body of Christ is under the symbols—not corporally or carnally, but in a spiritual manner.” We do not think that the dogma so expressed would be accepted by the Doctors of the *Roman* Catholic Church in the present day, though doubtless it was the opinion of many enlightened Romanists of Mr. Moore’s acquaintance; and it certainly is not the doctrine of the Council of Trent, which follows the opinion of Paschasius Radbert almost to the letter.

Seven Latin poems by Erigena are said to be extant; one is given by Usher in his *Sylloge*. They are the lines in which he dedicates to his great patron, Charles the Bald, the translations he made of Dionisius, and which had then great favour in France, from an erroneous opinion that he was the veritable St. Denys. They are written in hexameter and pentameter verses,

and the first eight lines, of which the following is a translation, may serve as a fair specimen of the rest,—

“This offering, my Charles, to thee I pay :
Deign graciously to accept a stranger's lay !
Before thine eyes his duty is to spread
This work, with Grecia's sacred nectar fed.
Greatest of Franks, whom royal crowns adorn,
Not thine the task the Ausonian muse to scorn ;
Known well to thee is ancient Attic lore :
And if, through me, upon this Gallic shore
Some glittering sparks of Grecian light may shine,
With favour look on this attempt of mine.”

The exact date of the death of John Scotus is not known, probably he was dead in 875, when Anastasius' letter respecting him was written. He never took holy orders, or monastic vows, and hence his influence and reputation at the Court of Charles the Bald must have been due to his eminent learning, his great social qualities, and his personal character. The eloquent eulogy of Mr. Moore may form an appropriate close to this short sketch :—

“In addition to the honour derived to his country from the immense European reputation which he acquired, he appears to have been in the whole assemblage of his qualities, intellectual and social, a perfect representative of

the genuine Irish character in all its various and versatile combinations. Combining humour and imagination with powers of shrewd and deep reasoning—the sparkle upon the surface as well as the mine beneath—he yet lavished both these gifts imprudently, exhibiting on all subjects almost every power but that of discretion. His life in its social relations seems to have been marked by the same characteristic anomalies: for while the simplicity of his mind and manner and the festive play of his wit endeared him to private friends, the daring heterodoxy of his written opinions alarmed and alienated the public, and rendered him at least as much feared as admired.”

XV.

MALACHY O'MORGAIR,

ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH, A.D. 1134.

BEFORE the middle of the 12th century, the Irish Church was not subject to the Roman See. It was Malachy O'Morgair, who brought her into this subjection. The history of this individual is full of interest, and rests upon authority that cannot be questioned; for his life, written by the great St. Bernard, is still extant, and may be found at page 1928 of the large folio volume which contains his works (Antwerp, 1620). From a most conscientious motive, and from a desire to remedy certain evils that existed in the Irish Church, Malachy paid a visit to Rome for the purpose of obtaining the pall, the emblem of subjection to the Roman See. On his way thither he stopped at Clairvaux, in France, of which Abbey Bernard was then Abbot, and passed some time in the enjoy-

ment of his society. St. Bernard was greatly taken by his unaffected piety and zeal, and gave him letters of introduction to the Pope, Innocent II. Furnished with these, Malachy proceeded to the eternal city, was most favourably received, and was instructed by the Pope as to his mode of procedure: that he was to return to Ireland, call a Council or Synod of his people, and demand in due form that pall which was to be the emblem of their union with and subjection to the See of Rome. Malachy obeyed; returned to his own country; summoned his Synod, and made the required demand in due form. Some delay having occurred in obtaining an answer, Malachy again set out for Rome, and again visited Clairvaux, was taken ill, and died there. St. Bernard so admired the man that he wrote his life; and from this work we gather a most authentic account of the state of the Irish Church at that day, and are assured of this especial and important fact,—that up to that period the Irish Church had existed as an independent branch of the Church Catholic, and was subject to no foreign rule.

Malachy was born in Armagh about the year

1095. He is described by St. Bernard as having sprung from a noble family, and was blessed with a mother, "*Mente, quam sanguine, generosior,*" who carefully instilled into his youthful mind the principles of true religion and virtue; and as he grew in years he seemed to grow in grace and knowledge. At that time very great evils certainly existed in the Irish Church. The Primacy had been usurped by the reigning family of the north for upwards of two centuries.* It was asserted that a low state of morals existed there, that the marriage bond was disregarded, and that even incestuous intercourse was too common amongst the people.

Lanigan, the great Roman Catholic historian of the Irish Church, declares that these accusations were exaggerated, if not false; and explains the allegations of St. Bernard in the following manner. In the ancient marriage ceremonies there were two parts: "*Sponsalia de futuro,*" and "*Sponsalia de præsenti.*" "The latter was similar to the matrimonial contract now used, and was valid, '*ipso facto,*' even before its consummation." The former is called

* Bernard: "Life of Malachy."

in English "betrothing;" and such "espousals" were entered upon with great solemnity. "There are several decrees of Councils prohibiting persons from breaking in upon this contract, and one even so late as that of Trullo, which declares it downright adultery for a man to marry a woman that was before betrothed to another." "This clears up the whole mystery of Irish marriages." * "They were usually contracted only by '*Sponsalia de futuro*;' a very old mode, much like that of the ancient Jews, whose marriages used to be valid some time before the parties went to cohabit together."

The other charge of criminality may also be explained and refuted in the following manner. Seven degrees of consanguinity, within which it was held unlawful to contract matrimony, were prohibited in the Roman Church. The Irish Church certainly did not observe these degrees. She was not subject to the Roman laws, probably knew nothing about them; or if any of her members were acquainted with them, they also knew that violations of the rule, through the system of dispensations continually occurred;

* Lanigan, vol. iv., p. 71.

which dispensations have been used (as in the royal families of Portugal and Spain) even down to our own times. Hence no attention was paid to the prohibited degrees, except probably those mentioned in the Book of Leviticus; and hence too the charge of criminality. However, evils enough of various kinds were painfully prominent at this period, not only in Ireland, but in all parts of Christendom; and it was doubtless in order to provide a remedy that Malachy placed his Church under the dominancy of the Roman See. The latter has had much to answer for. Her usurping powers have caused frightful evil; but some meritorious actions must in all fairness be assigned her. In mediæval times the Roman Church stood forward as the bold asserter of the people's rights against the tyranny of States and the oppression of the great nobles. Religion might have faded away altogether from the minds of men, and the fire been completely extinguished upon the altars, if it had not been for the exertions which she made to keep it alive and to continue its sacred light. The morals of men were most corrupt; and the feudal system inflicted upon the unfortunate serfs such tyrannical proceedings

that not unfrequently every law, human and Divine, was violated. The Roman See certainly endeavoured to stem this torrent of iniquity; and, by bringing "the powers of the world to come" to bear upon the powers of this world, she effected many a righteous deliverance for the persecuted and oppressed. That she herself became subsequently a persecutor and an oppressor was owing to that rebound which is so common in all human affairs, and perhaps the natural result of that irresponsible power to which her success and her usurpations had raised her.

"The strifes and confusions and every evil work" which existed in his times in Ireland may have induced Malachy to think that a most efficacious remedy presented itself in the power of the Church of Rome. She caused wars to cease in other parts of Europe, she put down enmities, she relieved the oppressed and set the captive free in other quarters,—why could she not exercise the same wholesome influence among the Irish Princes, and thus repress their constant internal feuds and wars? She preached a pure code of laws, and, in theory at least, her morality was that of the Divine Founder of Christianity.

Hence he sought that union, and admitted that supremacy which fell as a fatal incubus upon his country. He adopted an erroneous principle; and such conduct will always, some time or other, produce evil effects. Nor is it peculiar to Malachy and his times to do evil that good may come. Melancholy instances may be furnished from even very modern history.

The annals of the four Masters give painful evidence of the wretched state of Ireland in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The incursions of the Danes had caused as much evil there as in England; and even after the battle of Clontarf, in 1014, in which the Danes were conquered, lawlessness and rapine overspread the country, and each man's hand was raised against his fellow. Lanigan states "that several of the Irish Princes and chieftains had imbibed the spirit of the Danes, sparing neither churches nor monasteries nor ecclesiastics, according as it suited their views." "This was one of the sad effects of the contests between various powerful families aspiring to the sovereignty of all Ireland; and again between divers members of the said families quarrelling among themselves

for precedence." The following melancholy detail of outrages is gathered from the four Masters, by King, in his admirable history :—

"The Church and village of Ardbraccan were burned in A.D. 1109 : Clonmacnoise was plundered and laid waste in 1111, and again in 1115 ; the Abbot of Kells and others were killed there on a Sunday, in 1117 ; Cashel and Lismore were burned in 1121 ; Emly was burned in 1123 ; and the steeple of Trim Church, with a large number of people shut up in it, was burned in 1127."

These were dreadful atrocities, committed within a few brief years ; and it is not to be wondered at that those who loved their country should be at their wit's end to devise a remedy for the suppression of them. When we add to these the scandalous usurpation of the Primacy by the reigning family of Ulster, we can well account for the desire of Malachy to seek for a refuge and a remedy in that power which was then certainly the most powerful in Europe. Nor perhaps did he see the full consequences of the subjection into which he brought his Church. He might only have looked for union and a closer fraternity, and might not have seen that in obtaining these he also obtained a master, and that the influence of Rome would

only be exerted for those who fully admitted her supremacy.

The boyhood and youth of Malachy were passed virtuously and religiously. When walking with his master Imar, he used often lag behind, that he might pour out his soul in ejaculatory prayer; that species of prayer which St. Paul doubtless means when he says, "Pray without ceasing;" and which is the truest evidence of a spiritual frame of mind. Nor "while learning the fear of the Lord did he neglect the ordinary lessons of his school;" and so much did he advance in diligence, zeal, and piety that he was ordained deacon and priest before the canonical time, by Celsus, Archbishop of Armagh, who not long after entrusted him with "vicarial authority for regulating the affairs of the diocese." Malachy immediately began to effect many needful reforms; some of which were very gratifying to the Romish historian. "He banished barbarian rites, introducing Church ones, and endeavoured to abolish all the old superstitions, of which no small number were to be found in the country;" nor was there any vice or irregularity which he did not exert himself to overthrow. He also

did that which was very pleasing to St. Bernard: he changed the old Irish use for the Roman. *

“He employed himself in establishing in all the churches the Apostolical constitution and the decrees of the Holy Fathers, and especially the customs of the Holy Church of Rome; and hence it is that at this day (that is about A.D. 1150) there is chanting and singing in those churches at the canonical hours, according to the manner of the whole earth: for heretofore this was not done even in the city of Armagh itself. Malachy had learned singing in his youth, and introduced it into his own Monastery, where as yet neither in the city nor in the whole Bishopric the people knew not, or would not sing.” †

This passage in St. Bernard's Life must have reference either to the singing of the Roman offices, or that singing had decayed in the Church, which is not improbable in those barbarous times: for we learn from Adamnan that chanting was used in the Irish Churches in the days of St. Columba. Malachy also restored the practice of confession, which, saith Lanigan, had been much neglected; “there not being as yet any *general law of the Church* prescribing the use of it at certain times.” He also took care that confirmation should be ad-

* Bernard's “Life of Malachy,” chap. iv.

† “Life of Malachy.”

ministered more frequently, and “new-modelled the contract of matrimony,” especially with regard to betrothals and actual marriages in face of the Church, rendering the latter necessary in every case.

After carrying on the work of a reformer for some time, Malachy felt that he himself had need of more instruction, and a better knowledge of the discipline of the Church. Accordingly he retired from his active duties for a while, and placed himself at Lismore, where there had been a very celebrated school in former days, and where at that period its Bishop, Malchus, was famous for his learning and virtue. Malachy remained for some years under the care and instruction of this venerable Bishop, and doubtless received much benefit from his studies. Malchus, although an Irishman, had been a monk of Winchester, and left his convent there only when he was called to undertake the episcopal office at Lismore; and thus united the prudence and discretion of the English character with the zeal and fire of the Irish race. But Malachy was not suffered to remain in his beloved retreat. Indolence is very apt to enshrine itself in the student’s library, and mental

activity sometimes degenerates into bodily sloth. Hence it was very fortunate for the future career of Malachy that Archbishop Celsus, and his former master, Imar, wished so much for his return to active life, and wrote to him to that effect. He obeyed immediately, considering that the purpose for which he came to Lismore was effected, and that his mind was now stored with that learning of which he had formerly felt so much in need. Upon his return, his first work was to repair and restore the ruined Monastery of Bangor, in the county of Down, for the necessity of such places as the centres of missionary exertion still existed; and from thence he was removed after a short period, when only about thirty years of age, to the Bishopric of Connor. This diocese was in great disorder. The description given of it by St. Bernard is a most melancholy one, and of course it was taken from Malachy's own lips. "Nowhere had he found people so profligate in their morals, so ungodly in their faith. Their laws were barbarous, their lives were filthy; no Church discipline could be exercised amongst them; they were Christians in name, but Pagans in reality." Then follows a passage which shows

that other gravamina existed than those which may have been righteously called forth by the ungodly condition of the people, and which may have given a certain colouring to the description. "They paid no tithes, they gave no first-fruits, they kept not to lawful wedlock, nor did they go to confession. None were to be found either to impose a penance or submit to it. The voice of preacher or chanter was not heard in the churches. What then must the soldier of the Lord do? He could only retreat in disgrace, or engage in a combat which involved him in great personal danger."

Malachy did not hesitate as to the course which was fitting for him to adopt. He threw himself into the forefront of the spiritual battle, and by God's grace triumphed over many enemies, and reformed some evil lives. According to the account of St. Bernard, he found all his flock to be wolves, and no sheep among them; but he did not despair, and used every possible endeavour to turn the wolves into sheep. In the day time he admonished and threatened the careless, and during the night he prayed and wept for them by turns. In the streets and villages he used to address per-

sonally those who would not come to church; and by his visits (which were generally performed on foot) to the country parts and towns, he "sought out persons to bring to Christ." This mode of conduct, together with his patient endurance of the ill treatment, the revilings, the bitter taunts and curses that assailed him in his labours, produced a beneficial effect at last upon the people, "everything was changed for the better, and a great improvement produced."

The time had now arrived when Malachy was to be called to a higher office,—to be the successor of St. Patrick, and Primate of all Ireland. About the year 1129, Celsus, Archbishop of Armagh, died, and by his will appointed Malachy his successor. Celsus was the last of the usurping Primates. Eight of them had been married men, and all of them seemed to have been without orders up to the time of Celsus. Lanigan contends that they had bishops under their control who performed all ecclesiastical functions; still the custom was very scandalous, it redounded greatly to the credit of Celsus that he should have endeavoured to reform such a great abuse, especially since his

family were to lose so much by the abolition of the usurped right.

Malachy's retiring disposition made him unwilling to accept so high an office as the Primacy; and it was not until three years had elapsed, and until a meeting of the Bishops and Princes had been convened, who were excessively urgent, and even forced him with threats to accept the proposed dignity, that he finally consented. Nor did he succeed to the office without much opposition. One of the old usurping race, named Maurice, had seated himself in the primatial chair; and after his death (which happened in a few years after the death of Celsus) another, named Nigellus, or Niel, who had been appointed by Maurice as his heir, succeeded to the usurped Primacy. However, this scandalous state of things was drawing to its close. The Princes and nobles of Ireland themselves seemed ashamed of it; and the "King and Bishops and faithful of the land assembled to introduce Malachy into Armagh." He thus succeeded to this high office, though not without much trouble and opposition from the old usurping race. After he had set the ecclesiastical affairs of the diocese in order,

he retired (as had been previously agreed on) to his former position at Connor, or rather to its neighbouring diocese of Down, where he remained for a few years; having appointed in his place at Armagh "Gelasius, a good and faithful man, the clergy and people consenting to the appointment."

But although Malachy had withdrawn from the Primacy, he still continued to exercise great influence in the affairs of the Irish Church. It was during this period of his life that he paid his visit to Clairvaux and to Rome. Innocent the Second received him with great respect and attention. Malachy passed a month there, visiting the churches, and frequenting them for the purpose of prayer. Innocent appointed him his Legate for Ireland; but with respect to the palls, he advised that a demand for them should be made by the Irish Church assembled in solemn Synod, without which they could not be granted in due order. "In this way, with the consent and by the common desire of all," said Innocent, "you can send for the pall by respectable agents, and it shall be given you."

After the return of Malachy to Ireland, he carried on the work of reformation which he

had commenced at the beginning of his ministry. As Papal Legate he held visitations in various parts of Ireland; and doubtless his influence was ever exercised for good, and for the spiritual benefit of his nation. He was a light shining in a very dark place; and though some of his doctrines and practices would not meet with the approbation of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, and though much superstition attached itself to many of his proceedings, still men must be judged according to the age in which they live, and historians must take into account the surroundings and the influences which have encompassed them. At that period unless miraculous circumstances attended the career of saintly men, their sanctity was thought little of; and hence their biographers were too ready to accept, or invent, as miracles, those events, which (to give them credit for their highest attainment) might only have been answers to fervent prayer. Many of the miracles and wonders which St. Bernard relates in his life of Malachy may be inserted in this category; and the love and zeal which he felt for his friend's reputation may have led him to exaggerate portions of his history.

The question of the palls lay in abeyance for some years after Malachy's return from Rome. It was distasteful to the Irish Princes and people; and when the Council recommended by Innocent was at last assembled at Holmpatrick, but few attended; and it was only on the fourth day of the sitting of the Council that the question was proposed. There were present fifteen Bishops and about two hundred priests; "a very inconsiderable number indeed," says King, "compared with others that had met not long before to deliberate upon matters apparently less weighty than that which was to be discussed at Holmpatrick." However, Malachy's influence prevailed. A decision was made in favour of the measure; and, procuring himself to be elected as the messenger of the Irish Church, he set out once more for Rome, or rather for Clairvaux, where he had heard that Pope Eugenius (who had been a monk of that convent) was there on a visit. The Pope had departed from Clairvaux before the arrival of Malachy, who no doubt was much disappointed at being unable to meet the great intimate of his friend St. Bernard upon his own ground, and in his own convent.

The pall which Malachy was so anxious to obtain, and for which he spent so much time and toil, did not reach Armagh during his life. Shortly after his arrival at Clairvaux he was seized with a violent fever, and died in a few days. He loved the place so much that, upon his former visit, he expressed his great desire to live and die there, and the latter part of his wish was granted. He peacefully breathed his last in the presence of his much-loved friend St. Bernard, and the brethren of the community, on the 2nd of November, 1148, in the fifty-fourth year of his age.

The following quotation from Roger de Hoveden may furnish an appropriate conclusion to this short history of Malachy O'Morgair.

“In the year of grace 1151, Pope Eugene sent four palls by his Legate, John Papiro, into Ireland, to which country no pall had ever been sent before, and established four Archbishops in four localities: namely, Armagh, Dublin, Cashel, and Connaught.”

The latter of course means Tuam.

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