

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Monasteries of Crusay and Oronsay.—Of Govan;—Abercorn;—Inchcolm;—Tynningham;—Aberlady;—and Coldingham.—Of the first Missionaries to the Orkney Islands.—Churches and Chapels dedicated to Columba.

BESIDES these places, a variety of others might be mentioned. In *Crusay*, and *Oronsay*, two of the western isles, monasteries were founded by Columba, which, like other Culdean establishments, were at length given to the canons regular. ¹ The isle of Oronsay “is adorned,” says Martin, “with a church, chappel, and monastery. They were built by the famous St Columbus, ² to whom the church is dedicated. There is an altar in this church, and there has been a modern crucifix on it, in which several precious stones were fixed. The most valuable of these is now in the custody of *Mack-Duffie*, in black *Raimused* village, and it is used as a

¹ Spotiswood’s Account, p. 420. Keith’s Catalogue, p. 329.

² Martin still improperly gives his name in this form.

catholicon for diseases.”¹ Pennant views it as more probable that the monastery was founded “by one of the lords of the isles, who fixed here a priory of canons regular of Augustine, dependent on the abbey of Holyrood, in Edinburgh.”² But the settlement of *canons regular* here, in a late age, so far from being a proof that this monastery was not originally peopled by Culdees, is a strong presumption that it was.

In the Statistical Account, this monastery is given to a different order of monks; although, I suspect, erroneously. “There was,” it is said of Colonsay, “a monastery of Cistercians in this island. Their abbey stood in Colonsay, and its priory in Oronsay. The remains of the abbey were, with Gothic barbarity, torn asunder not many years ago, and the stones put into a new building. The walls of the priory are still standing, and, next to Icolmkill, is one of the finest religious monuments of antiquity in the Hebrides.”³

Dr Smith has observed, that “Adomnan, besides the chief monastery of Iona, mentions several more in the Western Isles; such as that of Aehaluing, in Ethica; Himba, or Hinba, and Elen-naomh; also Kill-Diun, or Dimha, at Lochava or Lochow.”⁴

According to Colgan, Columba founded the monastery of Govan on the Clyde.⁵ But the accounts of this foundation vary so much, that no certain judgment can be formed. “The church of Govan,” it is said by another writer, “ap-

¹ Western Islands, p. 246.

² Voyage to the Hebrides p. 269.

³ Vol. XII. 330. ⁴ Life of St Columba, p. 151. V. Messingham, p. 181.

⁵ Life of St Columba, *ibid.*

pears to have been originally mortified by King David I. to the church of St Mungo at Glasgow. The deed of mortification is entered in the chartulary of Glasgow.”¹ Fordun gives an account quite different from both these ; but such as shews the conviction of his age that this was a very ancient foundation. “Contemporary with St Columba,” he says, “was St Constantine, king of Cornwall, who, having renounced an earthly kingdom, began to fight under the heavenly King, and came to Scotland with St Columba, and preached the faith to the Scots and Picts. He founded a monastery of brethren near Clyde, over whom he presided as abbot. He converted the whole country of Kintyre, where he himself suffered martyrdom for the faith, and received burial in his own monastery at Govan.”²

It has also been said, that Columba and his successors extended their jurisdiction over the monastery of *Abercorn*.³ This monastery, we are told, “was one of the most ancient in Scotland. It is several times mentioned by Bede, though he gives no particular account of it. Towards the end of the seventh century, it was the residence of a bishop Triumvin. At this period the territory of the Northumbrians extended to the Frith of Forth ; but in the year 684, Aegfrid their king was defeated and slain by the Picts, on which Triumvin left Abercorn ; and from that time it is uncertain whether the monastery continued, as there seems to be no-

¹ Statist. Acc. XIV. 290.

² Scotchchron. lib. iii. c. 26.

³ Forbes on Tithes.

thing recorded in history with respect to it. To this old religious establishment we must refer the names of many places, such as Priestinch, St Serf's Law, Priest's Folly, &c.

“ About the year 1170, a dispute arose concerning the patronage of the church of Abercorn, between John Avonale, or Avonale, Lord of Abercorn, and Richard, second Bishop of Dunkeld. The latter succeeded, as was to be expected, in these times of increasing church power. In the year 1460, the whole lands belonging to the Bishop of Dunkeld on the south side of the Forth, consisting of Abercorn, Cramond, Preston, and Aberlady, were erected into one barony, to be called the barony of Aberlady.”¹

It seems highly probable, that the monks here were Culdees. As the lands of Abercorn, with those of Cramond, belonged to the bishopric of Dunkeld, originally a Culdean establishment, we may reasonably conjecture that they were an early donation, made perhaps because the same rule was observed here, as at Dunkeld; especially as the church of Cramond was dedicated to Columba. A charter, dated A. 1478, contains the grant of a sum “ to be levied from different tenements in Edinburgh, the Canongate, and Leith, for the support of a chaplain, *divina celebranti et in perpetuum celebraturo annuatim*, at the parochial altar of St Columba, situated within the parish church of St Columba of Nether Cramond.”² This opinion gains strength, from the probability that this mmoastery was founded by Oswald, king of North-

¹ Statist. Acc. xx. 396, 399.

² Wood's State of Cramond, p. 73.

umbria,¹ who, as he had received his education among the Culdees, still retained the warmest attachment to the society.

There is reason to think that some of the *Orkney Islands* were subdued to the christian faith by the Culdean missionaries. We learn from Adomnan, that while Columba resided at the court of Brudi, king of the Picts, there was at the same time there the *regulus*, or petty prince, of the Orkneys. Columba, knowing that Cormac, one of his disciples, with some of his companions, had been searching for some island as a place of religious retirement, solicited Brudi, that, if Cormac should land in any of these islands, he would earnestly recommend him to the protection of this prince, lest any violence should be done to him or his associates in his territories. Adomnan adds, in the style of writing common in his time, that “the saint said this, because he foreknew in spirit, that after some months the same Cormac would go to the Orkneys; which accordingly took place afterwards: and, in consequence of the recommendation of the holy man, Cormac was delivered from imminent danger of death in these regions.”²

¹ Caledonia, 1. 325.

² Alio in tempore Cormacus, Christi miles, de quo in primo huius opusculi libello,—conatus est eremum in oceano quaerere.—Iisdem diebus Sanctus Columba cum ultra Dorsum moraretur Britanniae, Brudeo regi, praesente Orcadam Regulo, commendavit dicens: Aliqui ex nostris nuper emigrauerunt desertum in pelago intransmeabili inuenire optantes, qui si forte post longos circuitus Orcadas deuenierint insulas, huic Regulo, cuius obsides in manu tuo sunt, diligenter commenda; ne aliquid aduersi intra terminos eius contra eos fiat. Hoc vero Sanctus ita dicebat: quia in spiritu praecognouit, quod post aliquot menses idem Cormacus esset ad Orcadas venturus. Quod ita postea

Although we have no subsequent accounts of the success of these missionaries, there is ground to conclude, from collateral evidence, that they settled in some of these islands. For Wallace, in his account of the Orkneys, has supplied us with an authentic record of Thomas, Bishop of the Orkneys, dated A. 1403, which throws considerable light on this subject. In this "we are told," as Mr Pinkerton has observed, "that when the Norwegians conquered the Orkneys, they found them possessed, *duabus nationibus, scilicet Peti et Pape* by two nations, the Pets and Papas." The reasoning of this learned inquirer, on this subject, is so convincing, that I shall make no apology for transcribing it.

"The first of these nations," he says, "was palpably the Piks, called *Pets* by the Scandinavians, as Saxo's *Petia*, or Pikland, and the name *Petland fiord* for Pikland frith, in Icelandic writings, may witness. The Papas, by the usual confusion of long tradition here called a nation, were clearly the Irish papas or priests, long the sole clergy in the Pikish domains; and who, speaking a different language from the Piks, were by the Norwegian settlers, regarded not as a distinct profession only, but as remains of a different nation. Thus Arius Frodi [*De Islandia*, p. 11.], who wrote about 1070, tells us that the Norwegians, who colonized Iceland, found there Irish *papas*, who were driven out, but left their Irish books, *baecr Irscar*, behind them. *Papey*, one of the

euenit, et propter supra dictam sancti viri commendationem de morte in Orkadibus liberatus est vicina. Vita S. Columbae, lib. 11. c. 17. ap. Messingham.

Orkneys, in all likelihood, derives its name from being a chief residence of the Papas." ¹

Barry adopts the same theory, adding ; " There are several places here, which still retain the name of *Papay* or *Papalay*, which, when viewed with attention, seem to have something strikingly peculiar. They are all in a retired situation, distinguished for the richness of their soil and the variety of their natural productions. When all these circumstances are considered, along with some venerable ruins which some of them contain, we are almost compelled to believe that they once were the abode of men of that sacred character." ²

There are other more minute circumstances, which confirm the idea, that these islands were formerly inhabited by the followers of Columba. The church of Burness, in the island of Sanday, was dedicated to St Colm. In the foundation of the cathedral church of Orkney, confirmed by Cardinal Beaton, on the application of Lord Robert Stewart, Bishop of Orkney, A. 1544, the sub-chantor, Sir Matthew Strange, is designed prebendary of St Colm. He also subscribes the deed, as *prebendarius Sancti Columbae*. Malcolm Halero, another of the witnesses, is designed, *archidiaconus Zetlandiae, ac prebendariae* [prebendarius ?] *Sanctae Trinitatis*. ³

It is not certain, however, that this church was dedicated to the apostle of Iona. For, as a learned writer has observed, " Keith has another St Colm, a bishop and confessor, in

¹ Enquiry, ii. 297.

² History of the Orkney Islands, p. 107.

³ Statist. Acc. xv. p. 419, 421.

Scotland, A. D. 1000, under the 6th of June." He subjoins ; " In Dempster's Menologia, under the 6th of June, there is ' Kirkue Colmi Orcad. apostoli ;' and in Dempster's Nomenclature of Scottish writers, there is St Colmus Epis. Orcad. 1010, A. D. The St Colm's Kirk, in the isle of Sanday, in Orkney, was, perhaps, named from this St Colm, who was the apostle of the Orkneys, at the end of the tenth century." ¹ Camerarius mentions, under the sixth of June, Columba confessor and presbyter. He views the island, called *Inchcolme*, in the Frith of Forth, as named from him ; but says that he was " a different person from Columba, the holy abbot." ²

The writer lately quoted, who has paid so much attention to the antiquities of Scotland, justly remarks : " The numbers, and distances, of the churches, which were dedicated to Columba, are proofs in confirmation of Bede, and Adamnan, and Innes, of the extent of his authority, and of the influence of his name. There are Kilcolmkill, the oldest church, and burying ground, in Morven ; Kilcolmkill, in South Cantire ; Kilcolmkill, in Mull ; Kilcolmkill, in Isla-Island ; Kilcolmkill, on the north-west of the same isle ; Kilcolmkill, in North-Uist ; Kilcolmkill, in Benbecula ; Kilcolmkill, in Skye ; Kilcolmkill, in Sutherland ; Colmkill, in Lanerk ; there are Columbkil-isle, in Loch Erisport, in Lewis ; Columbkil Isle, in Loch Columkill, whereon there are the remains of a monastery, dedicated to St Columba ; Inch Colm, in the Frith of Forth, on which a monastery was founded by Alexander I. A. D. 1123, and dedicated to St Columba ; Eilean Colm,

¹ Caledonia, i. 321, N.

² De Scotorum Fortitudine, p. 153.

a small island in Tongue parish ; there was formerly St Colm's Kirk in the island of Sanday, in Orkney. There is St Colm's Isle in the Minch, on the south-east of Lewis, which, with St Mary's Isle, and some other isles, are called the *Shiant* Isles ; and, in Gaelic, *Eileanan Sheanta*, which means the blessed or consecrated islands. The parish church of Lonmay, in Aberdeen-shire, was dedicated to St Columba. There is the parish of Kirkcolm, in Wigtonshire. In the parish of Caerlaverock, there was a chapel dedicated to St Columba ; to him was dedicated one of the chaplainries, which was attached to the cathedral of Moray, &c." ¹ We have formerly mentioned the chapel at Colms-lee, from the name of Columba abbreviated, and Anglo-Saxon *leag*, a field, pasture, or *lee*. ²

It appears that this saint was held in great veneration at Kilwinning also ; where there was a monastery of peculiar celebrity in times of popery. It was not founded, indeed, till the year 1140, when the power of the Culdees was on the wane ; and it was possessed by monks of the Tyronensian order, who were brought from Kelso. ³ But there are still vestiges of the regard that was here paid to Columba. "The fairs," we are told, "in all the towns and villages connected with the monastery, were named after some particular saint, who was afterwards accounted the protector, or particular saint of the place ; such as, St Anthony, *St Colm*, or *Columba*, St Margaret, St Bride, or Bridget. The days on which these fairs are held, are still called after the saint whose name they bear ; as *Colm's-day*, Margaret's day, &c." ⁴

¹ Caledonia, i. 320, 321, N.

² Ibid. ii. 179.

³ Keith's Catalogue, p. 249.

⁴ Statist. Acc. xi. 143.

Martin mentions more churches, in the Lewis isles, as dedicated to Columba. Besides "St Columkil, in the island of that name;—St Collum in Ey, St Collum in Garten;"¹ also, St Columbus's [Columba's] Chapel, in Harries.² He gives a particular proof of the strong attachment of the inhabitants of Benbecula to the memory of Columba. "There is a stone," he says, "set up near a mile to the south of Columbus's church, about eight feet high, and two feet broad. It is called by the natives the *Bowing-stone*; for when the inhabitants had the first sight of the church, they set up this stone, and there bowed and said the Lord's prayer."³

There was also a chapel, dedicated to Columba, in the isle of Troda, which lies within half a league of the northernmost point of Sky, called Hunish. In Hadda-Chuan, also, that is, Hadda of the ocean, which is about two leagues distant from Hunish-point, there is another chapel dedicated to the same saint. "It has an altar in the east end; and there is a blue stone of a round form on it, which is always moist. It is an ordinary custom, when any of the fishermen are detained in the isle, by contrary winds, to wash the blue stone with water all round, expecting thereby to procure a favourable wind, which the credulous tenant, living in the isle, says, never fails, especially if a stranger wash the stone. The stone is likewise applied to the sides of people troubled with stitches, and they say it is effectual for that purpose. And so great

¹ Western Islands, p. 27.

² Ibid. p. 47.

³ Ibid. p. 88.

is the regard they have for this stone, that they swear decisive oaths on it.¹

“*Kirkubrith*, in Galloway,” says Hay, “belonged to the monastery of men in Iona.”²

Sir James Dalrymple has given a charter of William the Lion, in which he makes a donation of several churches and chapels in Galloway, belonging to the monastery of Iona, to the canons of Holyrood-house. Those mentioned are, the churches of *Kirhecormach*, of *St Andrew*, of *Balenecros*, and of *Cheleton*.³ Whether *Kirhecormach* be an error for *Kircuthbert*, I shall not pretend to determine. Different saints of the name of *Cormac* appear in the Scottish calendar. But there was a church, dedicated to *Cuthbert*, in *Kirkcudbright*: and another, also within the burgh, called *St Andrew's Kirk*,⁴ which seems to be the second mentioned in the charter.

It does not appear, that this alienation was immediately directed against the Culdees. For the *Cluniac* monks seem to have been previously settled here: and it has been said that these churches were taken from them, because, according to their constitutions, they were not permitted to perform

¹ *Ibid.* p. 167, 168.

² *Scotia Sacra*. V. *Regist. Inch-Colm*, p. 95.

³ *Sciant—me dedisse—Deo et ecclesie Sanctae Crucis de Edenesburch, et Canonis in eadem ecclesia Deo servantibus, in liberam et perpetuam elemosinam, ecclesias sive capellas in Galweia, quae ad jus Abbatiae de Hii Colunchille pertinent, — scilicet ecclesiam quae dicitur Kirhecormach, et ecclesiam Sancti Andreae, et illam de Balenecros, et illam de Cheleton.* *Collections*, p. 271.

⁴ *Statist. Acc.* xi. 28, N.

the functions of a curate.* If, however, William had been as partial to the Culdees, as to the canons regular, he could easily have found priests of the former description to supply these charges, without alienating, from the abbey of Icolmkill, churches which had been so many ages under its jurisdiction.

Perhaps we ought also to reckon the abbey of *Inchcolm*, an island in the Frith of Forth, as a Culdean settlement. This abbey, indeed, was founded by Alexander I., about the year 1123; and the religious, whom he placed in it, were canons regular. But it was dedicated to St Columba, Abbot of Iona, and had been formerly possessed by one of his followers. Veneration for the memory of Columba is assigned, by our writers, as the very reason of the royal foundation. It is said, that the king, when attempting to cross at the Queen's Ferry, being overtaken by a violent storm from the south, urged the mariners to run into the isle Acmonia; where at that time lived a certain hermit, who, devoted to the service of St Columba, diligently attended to the duties of religion, contenting himself with such slender support as he could derive from the milk of one cow, and from the shell-fishes on the sea-shore. The king, and his company, being confined here for three days by the storm, were supported by these means; and, because, from his youth, he was attached to St Columba, and had vowed to him, when in danger of perishing by the storm, that, if he arrived safely at this island, he

* Spotiswood's Acc. p. 452.

would erect some monument worthy of his memory, he afterwards founded and endowed the abbey here. ¹

Kentigern, or St Mungo, who has been viewed as the founder of the see of Glasgow, might with propriety be numbered among those who adorned the name of *Culdee*; as, for many years, he was the disciple of St Servan, at Culross. The famous Baldred, or Balthere, was the disciple of Kentigern. ² He inhabited a cell at *Tynningham*, in Haddingtonshire, where a monastery was afterwards erected. ³ This was burnt by Anlaf, King of Northumbria, A. 941. Two arches of elegant Saxon architecture, the sole remains of the ancient church, give additional beauty to the lawn which surrounds the seat of the Earl of Haddington.

Baldred, according to Simeon of Durham, died in the year 606-7. ⁴ Three places contended for the honour of retaining his dust; Aldham, Tynningham, and Preston. Aldham is the same with Whitekirk. In the account of lands belonging to the abbey of Holyrood-house, "the baronie of Aldhamrie, alias Whitkirk," is mentioned. ⁵ In Latin it was denominated *Album Fanum*, and *Alba Capella*. ⁶ This place was greatly celebrated in times of popery. Hither many pilgrimages were made. It was under pretence of a pious expedition to Whitekirk, in order to perform a vow which she had made for the safety of her son, that the queen-mother

¹ V. Regist. Inch-Colm, p. 53. Spotiswood's Account, p. 415, 416.

² Hay's Scot. Sacr. p. 30.

³ Bed. Opera, p. 231.

⁴ Decem. Script. p. 11.

⁵ Hay, ut. sup. p. 280.

⁶ Lesl., Buchanan.

cozened Crichton the Chancellor, and carried off James II., in a chest, to Stirling.

Such was the credulity of these times, that it was believed, that the body of the saint was in all these places : and this, of course, afforded an irrefragable proof of the doctrine of transubstantiation. Camerarius gravely says, that, “ for the termination of the dispute between these parochial churches, it was at length effected, by the prayers of the saint himself, (for nothing is impossible with God,) that each of them should enjoy this treasure.”¹ Major asserts the doctrine, as supported by this fact.²

The Breviary of Aberdeen contains some particulars with respect to Baldred, which I have not met with any where else.

“ This suffragan of Saint Kentigern,” it is said, “ flourished in Lothian, in virtues and in illustrious miracles. Being eminently devout, he renounced all worldly pomp, and, following the example of John the Divine, resided in solitary places, and betook himself to the islands of the sea. Among these, he had recourse to one called *Bass*,³ where he

¹ De Pietate, p. 120, 121.

² Hist. Fol. 30.

³ During the tyrannical reigns of Charles II. and his brother James, many worthy men were confined on this barren rock, which had been converted into a state prison. But it does not seem to have been observed, that, if we can give any faith to legendary narrative, it was selected, in an early age, as a place of voluntary seclusion from society.

Concerning the etymon of the name, Mr Chalmers observes; “ Gibson says, in his notes on that macaronic poem [*Polemiddinia*] that *bas*, in the old Danish ‘ loca inter *cautes* angustiora significat.’ But he does not quote his authority. According to Andreas, *basse*, in the Islandic, signifies pinnaculum.

led a life without all question contemplative and strict, in which, for many years, he held up to remembrance the most

And this signification does apply, indeed, to the nature of the thing, whatever may have been the origin of the application." Caledonia, ii. 402, N. (k). I have had occasion formerly to take notice of the great inaccuracy of a writer, who appears as if an authorised censor of all his contemporaries. This note, like many others in the work, contains a variety of blunders. Although "Gibson does not quote his authority," this might easily have been found by one searching for the etymon of a term, in that very Lexicon which Gibson must have used. For the words given, by Gibson, appear in the definition of the term immediately preceding that which Mr C. has adopted as the natural etymon. Both terms occur in the Islandic Lexicon of *Andreas*, as Mr C. *uniformly* designs him. But although I should be *censured* for it, I must beg leave still to call the learned glossarist by his own name; lest foreigners should think that those in this country, who pretend to quote continental writers, have never seen their works. For any man who has read even the title of this Lexicon, or has looked into the preface, must be convinced that the name is not *Andreas*. The work is entitled, *Lexicon—adornatum et scriptum à Gudmundo Andree Islando*. This is equivalent to *Gudmund, the son of Andrew*, or, as he would be called, even in Denmark, *Anderson*. The Islanders, often without adding *Filius*, in a Latin work, subjoin the name of the father in the genitive. Of this different examples occur in the preface to that Lexicon; as *Arngrimus Ione, Olaus Haraldii*. Sometimes it is expressed more fully; as *Gretterus Asmundi filius*.

From the mode in which this glossarist is quoted, "*basse, pinnaculum*,"—one might suppose that he had referred to the pinnacle or battlement of a castle. It would have been more fair to have given the full definition; *Pinnaculum à tergo in securi Romana*; which he explains by *hellebarda*, apparently referring to the knob on the hinder part of the axe. As this was "the origin of the application," it seems difficult to perceive how it "does apply to the nature of the thing," that is, of the rock called the Bass.

Although I am not satisfied that Gibson's etymon is the true one, it is certainly preferable to this; especially as it has some support from similar terms. *Isl. baust* or *bust* is explained by the same *Gudm. Andree*, "fornix, culmen, fastigiun." The word thus signifying an arch or vault, the designation might be supposed to allude to the arch in this rock. *Suio-Gothic basing*, evidently a diminutive from a monosyllable, denotes a hill; *collis, Ilhre*.

blessed Kentigern his instructor, in the constant contemplation of the sanctity of his conduct.”¹

In this work, we find a miracle ascribed to the worthy Baldred, that must have rendered him an inestimable acquisition to a people living on a rocky coast. “There was a great rock between the said island [the Bass] and the adjacent land, which remained fixed in the middle of the passage, unmoved by all the force of the waves, giving the greatest hinderance to navigation, and often causing shipwrecks. The blessed Baldred, moved by piety, ordered that he should be placed on this rock. This being done, at his nod the

What connection there is between this rock, and *bass*, a *mat*, it is not easy to divine. But this writer, finding a *bass* of one kind in his way, could not deny himself the pleasure of wiping his shoes at my door, as he passed. This term, he says, I have “derived from the Teut. *bast*, cortex,” and thus “changed the form of the word, to suit *my* purpose.” Notwithstanding this strong language, I have in fact given this as the opinion of others, rather than as my own; as any one must see, who will take the trouble to look into the Scottish Dictionary. I have certainly used less freedom with the *form* of this word, than he has done with the signification of *Isl. basse*, in the abbreviated definition which he gives of it; whether to “suit his purpose” or not, I do not presume to determine. To derive the name of a rock in the sea, from the knob of a Roman axe, has certainly a considerable semblance of the conduct which he, in the same note, attributes to “Scottish glossarists, who inount to the moon, for what they may find on earth.”

¹ Beatus Baldredus ipsius beati Kentigerni dum mundo viveret suffraganeus virtutibus et clavis miraculis in Laudonia floruit, vir sane deuotissimus, omnem seculi pompam eiusdem curam vanam relinquens, ac diuinum quantum valuit insectatus est Johannem solitaria deserta et sequestra loca et ad marinas insulas se transtulit. Inter quas maritimas insulas, ad vnam nomine Bas applicuit, vbi vitam indubie contemplatiuam duxit et artam; in qua per longa temporis curricula beatissimum Kentigernum preceptorem suum sueque vitesancitatem contemplanda commendabat memorie. Marcius, Fol. C3. b.

rock was immediately lifted up, and, like a ship driven by a favourable breeze, proceeded to the nearest shore, and henceforth remained in the same place, as a memorial of this miracle, and is to this day called *St Baldred's coble* or *cock-boat*."'

Here a different account is also given of the ubiquity of the saint's body. We are informed, that, the inhabitants of the three parishes which were under his charge, as soon as they knew of his death, assembled in three different troops at Aldhame, where he breathed his last, severally begging his body. But, as they could not agree among themselves, they, by the advice of a certain old man, left the body unburied, and all separately betook themselves to prayer, that God himself, of his grace, would be pleased to signify which of these churches was to have the body of the saint. Morning being come, a thing took place, that has *not often had a parallel*. They, being all assembled, as before, in their different troops, found three bodies, perfectly alike, and all prepared with equal pomp for interment. Each of the companies, of course, departed, well pleased; and each parish erect-

▪ Scopulus ingens et per naturam grandis, qui inter dictam insulam et vicinorem terram medio in itinere fixus permansit, et immobilis marinis fluctibus se prebens equalem, nauibus et reliquis nauigantibus permaximo prebens impedimento, qui interdum naufragio nauibus dare consuenerat, pro quibus beatus Baldredus pietate ductus super eundem scopulum sese collocari constituit: quo facto eius nutu scopulus ille illico de sursum erigitur, et velut nauicula prospero agitata vento ad proximum litus accessit, qui hactenus ibidem in huius miraculi memoria permanet, et vsque hodie tumba seu scapha beati Baldredi nuncupatur. Ibid. Fol. 63, 64. A rock on the shore is still pointed out as *St Balred's chair*. But it lies rather too far to the eastward, to correspond to the description given above.

ed a monument over that body of the saint which had fallen to its share. ¹

It has been conjectured, that the Culdees had a seat at or near *Aberlady*, in the same county. "There are still visible," it is said, "the vestiges of a small chapel on the north-west corner of the church-yard." ² The same account is given by Mr Chalmers. "There appears to have been here," he says, "in early times, an establishment of the Culdees: And, *Kilspindie*, the place of their settlement, near the village of *Aberlady*, on the north-west, is supposed to have derived its name from the Culdees; *Cil-ys-pen-du* signifying, in the British speech, *the cell of the black heads*; and the word is pronounced *Kilyspendy*. The cell of the Culdees near *Aberlady*, was, no doubt, connected with the Culdee monastery of *Dunkeld*. When *David I.* established the bishopric of *Dunkeld*, he conferred on the bishop of this diocese *Kilspindie* and *Aberlady*, with their lands adjacent, the advowson of the church, and its tithes, and other rights." ³

¹ Audito—trium ecclesiarum parrochianos pastorem suum mitissimum et mansuetum de hac vita ad celos ascendisse, in tribus turmis ad locum corporis *Baldredi suavissimi* accesserunt.—Inuicem magno desiderio corpus postularunt.—Quod cum inuicem concordare nequinerant, cuiusdem senis invito consilio, per noctem corpus inhumatum reliquerunt, et oracionibus sese omnes separatim contuierunt, ut ipse ex sua gracia gloriosus Deus signum aliquod immitteret cui ecclesie corpus sancti viri conferendum. Mane autem facto res nec frequenter auditu comparatur, conuenientes sicuti prius cum suis turmis dispersi tria corpora equalia simili exequiarum pompa preparata inuenerunt.—Quelibet parrochia unum corpusculum cum tumulo leuantes. *Ibid.* Fol. 62, a.

² *Trans. Antiq. Soc. Scotl.* p. 513.

³ *Caledonia*, ii. 520.

Coldingham has also been numbered among the original seats of the Culdees. "Certainly," says the learned Selden, referring to the language of Bede, "I cannot but suspect, that, in *Coludi urbs*, the name of the ancient Culdees lies hid, or is more obscurely exhibited; as having been ennobled, above other places, by the residence of a greater number of this society, or perhaps by their more solemn convention."

This was undoubtedly the most ancient nunnery in North-Britain. It is supposed that it was founded during the reign of Oswald, who died A. 643. In the year 670, it was under the government of Ebba, who was not less distinguished by her virtues, than by her royal descent.

It does not appear, however, that any stress can be laid on the name, as indicating that this was originally a seat of the Culdees; for, in this case, according to analogy, the initial syllable would most probably have been *Kil* or *Cil*. But there seems to be as little ground for asserting, that "the prefix is plainly from the Saxon *Col-den*, the *Cold vale*." Nor does this etymon derive much support from what is added: "This kirktown is the *Urbs Coldona* [l. *Coldana*] of Bede, saith Gibson, in his *Explicatio nominum locorum*, subjoined to his Saxon Chronicle. The coincidence is decisive, as *Coldana*, and *Coldene*, or *dean*, are the same in substance."² This is not precisely what Gibson says. Explaining the name *Coludesburh*, which occurs in the Chronicle, he says; "*Urbs*

¹ Pref. ad Dec. Script. xi.

² Caledonia, ii. 351.

Coldana, et *Coludi urbs*, Bed." If *Coldana* is used by Bede, I have not been so fortunate as to find the place. *Coludi urbs* occurs in three places. ¹ By Alfred, it is rendered, as in the Saxon Chronicle, *Coludes burh*. The phrase, *Coldana et Coludi*, appears in the margin of Ptolemy, among the *Acquipol-lentia*; ² and to this Gibson might possibly refer. But the *Κολανα* of Ptolemy could never be viewed by our Scottish topographer as the same with the modern Coldingham; as he has himself placed it in Lanerkshire. ³ *Coludi*, or *Coludes*, must be viewed as the original name of Coldingham; and surely, there is no great resemblance between either of these and *Col-den*. Although "between the church and the sea, there is a place called *Cold-mill*," ⁴ it will not prove that the monastery was designed from the bleakness of its situation. If it stood there in the Saxon period, it was most probably denominated *Coludes myln*.

While Ebba presided here, "there was in the same monastery," as we are informed by Bede, "a man of the Scottish race, called Adomnan, who led a life entirely devoted to God in continence and prayer, so that he never tasted food except on the Lord's day and on Thursday; frequently spending the whole night in prayer." ⁵ He, we are told, informed the abbess of a revelation which had been made to him, that the judgment of God was shortly to come on the monastery, because of their corruptions. It was afterwards consumed by fire.

¹ Hist. lib. IV. 19, 25. Vit. Cuthb. c. 10.

² Geograph. p. 33.

³ Caledonia, i. 61.

⁴ Ibid. ii. 351.

⁵ Hist. lib. IV. 25.

The name of this devotee is another circumstance on which Selden rests his supposition. The hypothesis, indeed, is not liable to the charge of anachronism. For that Adomnan, who is here mentioned, resided at Coldingham, between the years 671 and 679, when the monastery was burnt. He, who had the same name, was this very year made Abbot of Hij, and died A. 703. ¹ As we learn from Bede, that many of the inhabitants of Coldingham, among whom was his co-presbyter Aedgils, left it on account of that destruction; ² Adomnan might be one of these; and, being a Scotsman, might go to Hij, where he had most probably received his education. The austerity of his life might point him out as the most proper person for filling the vacancy at Hij.

This Adomnan has by Camerarius been called Abbot of Coldingham. ³ But although there were monks, as well as nuns there, in this early age; the abbess, like Hilda at Whitby, seems to have had the supreme authority. Other writers call him a monk; and this seems to have been the only character which he had at Coldingham. But although he had received no higher designation, even from writers of an earlier age, it would not amount to a proof, that, after he retired from this place, he had not been advanced to greater dignity. Bede, indeed, does not say that Adomnan, Abbot of Hij, was the same person. But his silence on this head affords no evidence that he was not, but rather the contrary. Trithemius,

¹ Usser. Primord. p. 702.

² Hist. lib. IV. 25.

³ De Pietate, p. 90.

Usher,¹ and Smith,² view him as a different person. Bale, Possevin, and others, consider him as the same.³

It may be added, that the celebrated Ebba, mentioned above, must have had her education among the Culdees. She was the daughter of Edilfrid, king of Northumbria, who, being slain in battle, was succeeded by Edwin, king of the Deiri. In consequence of his succession, Ebba and her seven brothers were either exiled, or found it most safe to betake themselves to Scotland.⁴ The illustrious Oswald, afterwards king of Northumbria, was one of them. It was in consequence of his education among the Culdees, as we have seen, that he afterwards applied to the *elders of the Scots* for a spiritual instructor to his subjects.

According to the Aberdeen Breviary, she and her brothers, while in a state of exile, were received and kindly nourished by Donald Brek, king of Scots.⁵ Fordun dates this event in the reign of his father Eugenius IV. Bede seems uncertain, whether it was among the Scots or Picts that they received protection. “During the life of Edwin,” he says, “the sons of Edilfrid, with a great company of noble youths, were in a

¹ Primord. p. 702.

² Not. ad Bed. Hist. IV. 25.

³ V. Messingham, p. 142.

⁴ — Succeedens Adwinus rex Deirorum, septem filios Athelfridi, viz. Eanfridum, Oswaldum, Oslafum, Oswinum, Oslan, Oswudum, et Oslacum, et unam filiam Ebbam, ex regno patris sui expulit. Hi quidem omnes, cum multis nobilibus, amicorum diligentia, fuga lapsi, supremaque coacti necessitate, Scotiam adveniunt, &c. Scotichron. lib. iii. c. 40.

⁵ Ebba virgo gloriosa sancti Osvaldi Northumbrie regis soror vterina, que cum suis septem fratribus in terra Scotorum exilio religatis et a Donaldo Brek Scotorum rege reuenter cum rege Osvaldo fratre et fratribus recepta et nutrita. Sepulta est in suo monasterio *Colludi* dicto, &c. Augustus, Fol. 87. a, b.

state of exile among the Scots *or* Picts, and were there instructed in the doctrine of the Scots, and received the grace of baptism. ¹

It is also said in the Breviary, as above referred to, that Eba was buried “in her own monastery, called *Colludi*.” It would also seem, that from her the promontory of *St Abb's Head* derived its name. It is said, that, when seeking refuge in Scotland, she was driven in on some part of the coast near this headland; and afterwards, when chosen abbess, that, from gratitude for her preservation, she built a church or chapel on the promontory, at her own expence. ²

¹ Tempore toto quo regnavit Aeduini, filii praefati regis Aedilfridi qui ante illum regnaverat, cum magna nobilium juventute apud Scottos sive Pictos exulabant, ibique ad doctrinam Scottorum catechizati et baptismatis sunt gratia recreati. Hist. lib. III. i.

² Statist. Acc. xii. 57, 58.