

CHAPTER XV.

Objections considered.—The supposed Inconsistency of the Monks of Iona sending Bishops, or Improbability of their being applied to for such a Mission, if unfriendly to the Order;—The Culdees said to have been merely the Episcopal Chapter of the Diocese in which they resided.—Asserted, that there were never any Culdees at Iona, or within the Territories of the ancient Scots; and that they made their first Appearance at St Andrews.

IN the progress of this investigation, I have considered the principal exceptions to the arguments brought to prove, that the ecclesiastical power, established at Iona, bore a striking analogy to the presbyterian form. Before leaving the subject, it may be necessary to advert to some of the objections that have been made to this hypothesis.

1. It may seem a powerful objection to this scheme, that, when application was made, on different occasions, by the

Saxon princes to the monastery of Iona, for bishops, those who resided there had no scruple to ordain and give a mission to pastors of this description. ¹ On the other hand, it may appear inconceivable, that “the English would, once and again, have concurred so heartily with those who wanted to abolish the episcopal order in Scotland, while they still kept it up among themselves.” ²

So little weight is there in the last part of this objection, that it scarcely merits a reply. Those, who made application to the seniors at Iona, were principally concerned about the preaching of the word of faith; and it may naturally be supposed, that, in the first instance, at least, they scarcely passed a thought about the form of ecclesiastical government. With the same propriety might it be argued, that they would not have applied to those who were schismatical as to the mode of observing Easter; because the Angles, when they submitted to the authority of Rome, viewed the Scottish clergy in this light. By the use of the appellation *English*, an ignorant reader might be led to suppose, that the correspondence had been maintained even after this became the general designation of the inhabitants of South-Britain. But the intercourse with Iona was long previous to this time; and was maintained only for about thirty years. The influence of Rome at length so far prevailed, that none were received from this island, who refused submission to papal authority.

¹ Ledwich, p. 107, 108. *Life of Sage*, p. 50, 51.

² Keith's Catalogue, Pref. xviii.

Of this we have a striking proof from the conduct of Wilfrid, a Saxon monk, who carried on the debate with Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, about the time of observing Easter. Bede merely says, that king Alchfrid sent the presbyter Wilfrid to the King of France, who caused him to be consecrated a bishop. ¹ But the good man was, perhaps, ashamed of the real reason of this mission. Wilfrid was so violent, that he would not submit to Scottish ordination. William of Malmesbury speaks it fairly out: "But he persisted in refusing to be ordained by Scottish bishops, or by those whom the Scots had ordained, because the apostolical see scorned to have any fellowship with them."²

The other branch of the objection deserves more attention. No pastor can have any reasonable prejudice merely against the name of *Bishop*. For it is of scriptural authority; and was originally given, in common with that of *Presbyter*, or *Elder*, to all who were *overseers* of the flock. Our excellent translators were well assured, that there was a number of *Elders* in the church of Ephesus; and that not only the Apostle Paul gave them all, without exception, the designation of *Bishops*, but that "the Holy Ghost had made" them all "bishops." But here carnal policy prevailed over conviction. They could not but know, that if they translated the term *ἐπισκοπος*,

¹ Hist. iii. 28.

² Sed perstitit ille [Wilfridus] negare, ne ab Episcopis Scottis, vel ab iis quos Scotti ordinaverunt, consecrationem susciperet, quorum communionem sedes asprenaretur apostolica. De Gest. Pontif. Angl. Lib. iii.

as they did every where else, in its proper sense, as being the very origin of our word *bishop*, they would give a fatal stab to the *divine right* of episcopacy; and therefore, according to the dictates of worldly prudence, they substituted *overseers*.

The objection is solely to the abuse of the name. In early ages, such was the piety of the ministers of religion, such their humility, that no idea of pomp was attached to this designation. This was eminently the character of "the family of Hij:" and they could scarcely form the apprehension, that one of their own number, merely because he received the name of *Bishop*, would lord it over his fellows who had conferred on him this character. For, after the most impartial investigation of this subject, of which I am capable, I have not found a shadow of proof, that any of those, sent forth as bishops from that island, were ordained by such as claimed a dignity superior to that of presbyter.

1. I am much disposed, indeed, to think that all the difference which they, in a more early age at least, admitted between presbyter and bishop, was, that they conferred the latter title on those only who were delegated to a particular charge, as to that of planting a church among the Angles, or who were to have a pastoral relation to a certain people; whereas the presbyters, although they by themselves dispensed ordinances in the vicinity of their monastery, or assisted the bishop on his mission in preaching and baptising, were

viewed merely as preachers at large, without having any such pastoral relation.¹

Bede uses the terms *Bishop* and *Priest*, with respect to what was transacted at Iona, as if they admitted of no difference of signification as to office. When speaking of that bishop who had been sent to King Oswald, but, meeting with no success, returned home, he with the same breath gives him both designations; using both the term *Antistes*, and *Sacerdos*: and the import of both, nay, the great dignity of his office,

¹ Since writing this, I have observed that the celebrated Sir Peter King gives a similar view of the character of a Presbyter, in the first ages of Christianity. This he gives, as the result of the most diligent research, and most impartial enquiry. "The definition of a presbyter may be this: A person in holy orders, having therefore an inherent right to perform the whole office of a bishop; but being possessed of no place or parish, not actually discharging it, without the permission and consent of the bishop of a place or parish."¹

It would appear, indeed, that the Presbyter-monks of Hii, in their occasional administrations, acted as authorized by their abbot; who, though himself only a presbyter, seems to have thought that, as having a fixed charge, he had all the essentials of primitive episcopacy.

The work referred to is written with great candour and mildness. The author clearly shews, by quotations from the writers of the first three centuries, that presbyters differed not from bishops in order, but only in degree. He was afterwards made Lord Chancellor of England.

The account, given by Jerome, nearly corresponds to what seems to have been the practice at Iona. "At Alexandria," he says, "from the time of the Evangelist Mark, to that of Heraclas and Dionysius, bishops, the presbyters always nominated one as bishop, chosen from among themselves, and placed in a higher degree."²

¹ Enquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the Primitive Church, p. 73, 74.

² Alexandriae a Marco Evangelista, usque ad Heraclam et Dionysium Episcopos, Presbyter semper unum ex se electum, et excelsiori gradu collocatum, Episcopum nominabant. Hieron. Epist. ad Evagr.

is made to lie in this, that he was a preacher.¹ It was in his room that Aidan was sent. It is indeed said, that he deserved to be made a bishop, and that he was ordained. But, besides the circumstance of his being ordained by the *conventus seniorum*, it may be difficult to prove, as we have formerly observed, that he was a preacher before. As it is admitted, that in these monasteries there were laymen,² can it be shewn that Aidan was any thing more before his ordination as a bishop?

2. There is undoubted evidence, that, in these early times, the term *bishop* was used in a sense very different from that attached to it afterwards. Of this the most ample proof might be brought from the general history of Christendom. But I shall confine myself to that of our own islands. Ninian is called a bishop by Bede; and he probably received the title during his life. He says, that the Southern Picts

¹ De non accepto quem miserant, Predicatore dolentes. Hist. L. V. § 5.

² "Neither is it to be forgotten, that those ancient monks were of no order, nor indeed men in orders at all (as Jerom notes among others) but mere laymen, out of whom the clergy were commonly chosen: their monasteries, and particularly those of the Britons, Irish, and Scots, having been schools of all good literature; and many of them in the nature of universities, as to name no more, the British and Irish Bangor, the Scottish I-colum-kill and Abernethy, where were taught history, philosophy, theology, with all the liberal sciences." Toland's Nazareus, p. 33. "Some abbots were not so much as priests; but either deacons, or sub-deacons.—Some abbots were laymen, as the Irish Saranus above-mentioned, Fullan that was Abbot at Cnobheresburgh, and Swithert, Abbot of Docore. The senior monks likewise, which govern'd under them, and were like the senior fellows of our colleges, might be such as were not in orders." Lloyd's Histor. Account, p. 169.

were converted “ by the preaching of Nynias,” as he gives his name, “ the most renowned bishop,—who had been instructed, at Rome, in the faith and mysteries of truth, whose episcopal see, of the invocation of St Martin the bishop, and stately church, the nation of the Angles is now possessed of.”¹ This place was not within the Pictish territories, as Mr Pinkerton shews in his Enquiry,² but among the Cumraig Britons. Ninian receives the same designation from Alcuin, Boece, Leslie, and a variety of writers. Yet he seems to have been no more a bishop than was Columba. Nor could Bede use the term in that canonical sense which was become common in his own time. For he afterwards says; Pethelm is “ Bishop of Candida Casa, or Whithern, which, in consequence of the increase of the number of the faithful, has been lately added to the list of episcopal sees, and had him for its *first* prelate.”³ In the MS. History of Durham, under the year 664, and long after the age of Ninian, it is expressly said; “ Candida Casa as yet had no bishop.”⁴ William of Malmesbury also, in his account of the bishops of this see, although, after Alcuin, he calls Ninian a bishop, using the term in its loose and general sense, says, that, “ towards the end of Bede’s life, Pethelm was made the *first* bishop;”⁵ that is, as Selden

¹ Hist. iii. 4.

² Vol. II. 265, &c.

³ And he was thaere stowe the aereste biscop. Hist. Alfred’s Transl. V. 24.

⁴ Candida Casa necdum episcopum habuerat. MS. Cotton. Libr.

⁵ Sub extremo Bedae tempore primus factus est episcopus Pethelmus. Ap. Pref. Selden. ad Decem Script. xii. xiii.

explains it, "according to the canonical ideas of the episcopacy then generally received throughout Christendom."

The character of the Irish bishops, in early times, may assist us in judging of the rank of those who were ordained at Iona; especially as Columba, who was not a bishop, but an abbot and presbyter, is designed not only "primate of the Scots and Picts,"¹ but "primate of all the Irish bishops."² Till the year 1152, they seem to have been properly *Chor-episcopi*, or Rural Bishops. In Meath alone there were fourteen bishoprics; in Dublin thirteen. Their number, it is supposed, might amount to above three hundred.³ They, in the same manner with the Scottish and Pictish bishops, exercised their functions at large, as they had opportunity.⁴ "That *Bishop* in Ireland," says Toland, "did, in the fifth or sixth centuries (for example) signify a distinct order of men, by whom alone presbyters cou'd be ordain'd, and without which kind of ordination their ministry were invalid; this I absolutely deny; as I do that those bishops were Diocesan Bishops, when nothing is plainer, than that most of 'em had no bishopricks at all in our modern sense; not to speak of those numerous bishops frequently going out of Ireland, not call'd to bishopricks abroad, and many of 'em never preferr'd there."⁵

¹ Colgan. Trias. p. 498.

² *Omnium Hiberniensium episcoporum Primas.* Notker. Balbul. Martyrol. 9. Jun. V. Smith's *Life of Columba*, p. 151, 152.

³ Ledwich's *Antiq. Irel.* p. 82, 83.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 106.

⁵ Nazarenus, *Lett.* ii. p. 37, 38.

We have a similar account of the Irish bishops in that rare and curious work, the *Monasticon Hibernicum*. “ It is to be observ’d,” says the author, “ that Colman having been a bishop in England, was no sooner settled at Inisbofinde, but that place became a bishoprick ; so that St Colman, who had before been called Bishop, of Lindisfarn, was afterwards stil’d Bishop of Inisbofinde ; and the same saint going afterwards to Mayo, that place was likewise a bishoprick, which was united to that of Inisbofinde : so certain it is that formerly, in the British islands, bishopricks were not regulated and settled, but the bishops were moveable, without being confin’d to any certain diocese. This is the reason, that, in the first ages, we find so many bishops in Ireland ; for in St Patrick’s days there were three hundred and fifty at one and the same time, though, as Colgan owns, there were never near so many bishopricks in Ireland. It is very likely, that, when the ancient historians speak of so great a number of bishopricks, in Ireland, they only meant those abbies, in which these moving or titular bishops were abbots ; and those houses, that were so numerous, ceas’d to be bishopricks the very moment the titular bishops and abbots happen’d to die or to shift their monasteries.”¹

3. We have formerly seen, that the Abbots of Hij, because of their great authority and extensive influence, were sometimes called *Bishops*. Besides the proofs already mentioned, it may be observed, that, for this very reason, in relation to that monastery, the terms *Abbas* and *Episcopus* seem to have been used as synonymous. Hence Sigibert speaks of “ Adam-

¹ P. 82, 83.

annus the presbyter and abbot of the Scots.”¹ As the prelacy gained ground, the rage for multiplying bishops, in preceding times, also increased. On this principle, as would seem, Spotswood includes both Columba and Adomnan in his list of the early bishops of Scotland, appended to his history. According to Fordun, Regulus was only an abbot.² The Register of St Andrews, however, makes him a bishop.³

4. During several centuries, none of those who were called bishops, in Scotland, had dioceses. Hence, in ancient deeds, they are simply designed *Episcopi*, or *Episcopi Scotorum*. The latter title was that taken by the bishop of St Andrews so late as the year 1188; as appears by the seals of Robert, Ernald, and Richard.⁴ No satisfactory reason can be assigned for this loose mode of designation, but that none of these bishops had a fixed charge. It is admitted, that “it was altogether consistent with the universal practice of the church, in the earliest ages, to consecrate bishops who did not enjoy distinct jurisdiction.”⁵ There seem to have been no regular dioceses in Scotland, before the beginning of the twelfth century. The foundation of diocesan episcopacy was indeed laid in the erection of the bishopric of St Andrews. In this erection, we may perceive the traces of a plan for changing the whole form of the ecclesiastical government, as

¹ Adamannus Presbyter et Abbas Scotorum. De Scriptor. Ecclesiast. c. 64. ap. Selden. Pref. ut sup. xi.

² Scotchron: Lib. ii. c. 60.

³ Pinkerton's Enquiry, i. 460.

⁴ V. Andersoni Diplomata, Fig. 100.

⁵ Caledonia, i. 322, N. (f).

it had hitherto been exercised within the Pictish dominion. This seems to be the true meaning of two passages, in ancient writings, to which the attention of the public has formerly been called on this subject. Mr Pinkerton has justly denominated one of them “a very singular passage.” It occurs in the register of the priory of St Andrews, in relation to Grig, the Gregory of our historians. “He first gave freedom to the Scottish church, which till that time was in servitude, by the constitution and custom of the Picts.”¹ “This surely refers,” says Mr Pinkerton, “to the subjection of the Pictish churches to Hyona; from which they were delivered by erecting St Andrews into a bishopric. Our clergy, in gratitude, gave much fabulous praise to Grig, as was their custom in such cases; and say that he conquered Ireland, and most of England.”²

Now, the foundation of this honourable ascription to Grig, was his erection of St Andrews into a bishopric. For, according to Fordun and Wyntoun, Kellach, who seems to have been the first bishop of this see, lived in the time of Grig, who began to reign about the year 883. The same honour is given to this prince in the *Elegiac Chronicle*.

*Qui dedit Ecclesiae libertates Scoticanae,
Quae sub Pictorum lege redacta fuit.*³

The erection of this bishopric might be viewed, by those in the interest of Rome, as the emancipation of the Scottish

¹ Et hic primus dedit libertatem ecclesiae Scoticanae, quae sub servitute erat usque ad illud tempus, ex constitutione et more Pictorum.

² Enquiry, ii. 269.

³ Gale, *Scriptores*, i. 596.

church; especially as St Andrews seems to have been directly opposed to the monastery of Dunkeld, which had been erected in imitation of that at Iona, and as its substitute in respect of power. One thing, as we have formerly seen, which renders this highly probable, is, that Tuathal is called both "Archbishop of Fortren," and "Abbot of Dunkeld." It must be admitted, however, that, so far as the transactions of Grig are explained by Fordun, this could not be the only thing implied. For he says, that he "gave liberty to the persons of ecclesiastics," apparently meaning that he delivered them from the cognisance of civil judicatures. But his language may include both. For he clearly distinguishes between the church and the persons of her ministers. "He gave," says the historian, "with the consent of the nobility, perpetual liberty both to the church of God, and to ecclesiastical persons; which was confirmed by Pope John VIII."¹

There is another passage, which deserves more particular attention. It occurs in the more modern History of Durham, in the account given of Turgot, prior of that see, who was made Bishop of St Andrews. "In these days," it is said, "all the right of the Culdees, throughout the whole kingdom of Scotland, passed into the bishopric of St Andrews."² He was consecrated by Thomas, Archbishop of

¹ *Quin et ecclesie Dei perpetuam, ac personis ecclesiasticis, consensu principum, libertatem concessit, &c. Scotichron. Lib. iv. 17.*

² *Anno ab incarnatione Domini Millesimo CVIII., ac tempore regis Malcolmi et S. Margarete electus fuit Turgotus, Prior Dunelmensis, in Episcopum S. Andreae, consecratusque est Eboraci iii. kalendas Augusti, et steit*

York, in the year 1109. Sir James Dalrymple makes no further use of this passage, than to oppose the idea of the Culdees having ceased to exist from this time.¹ But there is no evidence that this was the idea of the original writer. Nothing is here asserted, which might lead us to conclude that they were even immediately deprived of their revenues, that is, of the temporal *rights* which they enjoyed. This could not be meant; for their privation, in this respect, was gradual. The learned Selden seems justly to view the term *Ius* as denoting the right, which they had long claimed and exercised, of electing and ordaining bishops, without the interference of any others in order to their consecration.² Had the writer meant to speak of their temporal rights, or even of the privileges attached to particular priories, he would most probably have used a different term. At any rate, had these been in his eye, he would have spoken of *rights* in the plural, as referring to the whole extent of their property. But when he speaks of “*the right of the Culdees throughout the whole kingdom of Scotland,*” it is evident, that he must refer to one distinguishing privilege, belonging to them as a body, by virtue of which their jurisdiction had no limit, save that of the kingdom itself. And what could this be, but the right of choosing, without any *conge d’elire* from the sovereign, and of ordaining, without any consecration from a superior order

per annos septem. In diebus illis totum jus Keledeorum per totum regnum Scotiae transivit in episcopatum S. Andreae. *Histor. Dunelmens.* MS. Cotton. V. Selden. Pref. ad Decem. Scriptor. VI. et Usser. Primord. p. 1052.

¹ Collections, p. 279.

² Prefat. ut sup.

of clergy, those who were called *bishops*, in a general sense, or *bishops of Scotland*, as exercising their authority somewhat in the same unlimited way in which the Culdees exercised theirs ?

This right is said, *transire*, to pass, which, “with lawyers,” as Selden observes, “denotes the legal transference of a right or dominion, so that it entirely belongs to the person to whom it is thus transferred.” The bishop of St Asaph conjectures, that “it might be the right of confirming the elections of all the bishops in Scotland. This had been done by them” [the Culdees], he says, “as being the primat’s dean and chapter ; but was now taken from them, and performed by the primat himself. For this interpretation, I think there is ground enough in the account that a Culdee of St Andrews hath given of the foundation of his church ; where he says, that the archbishoprick of all Scotland belongs to that city, and that no bishop in Scotland ought to be ordain’d without the consent of the *Seniors* of that place.”¹

Here the learned prelate finds himself under the necessity of conceding, to the Culdees, a very extraordinary power. But this power must originally have centred in the monastery of Iona. This monastery, then, must have been to all

¹ Historical Account, p. 143. Here he quotes Usser. Primord. p. 659. [Leg. 651.] The passage referred to is this ; Ex hac itaque civitate Archiepiscopus esse debet totius Scotiae, ubi Apostolica sedes est : nec absque consilio Seniorum istius loci ullus episcopus in Scotia debet ordinari. Usher thinks that the writer of this was the same person who falsely passed under the name of Bede.

intents the primacy of Scotland, of the country, at least, which has now received this name. This power must have belonged to the college, as the *chapter*, if it must be so. But who was the primate? No bishop, from all that we have seen; but the abbot himself. Thus the Bishop of St Asaph finds it necessary to admit, however reluctantly, what he elsewhere tries to set aside, the testimony of Bede, with respect to the subjection of "all the province, and even of the bishops themselves, in an unusual manner," to this abbot. Even after he has made an ineffectual attempt to shew, that the province, referred to by the ancient writer, could signify only a single diocese; he inadvertently gives up the point in controversy, making all the bishops in Scotland to be at least so far *subject* to the Culdees, that they had the "right of confirming their elections."

It should also be observed, that he supposes not only a transition as to the power, but a very important change with respect to the exercise of it. This right formerly belonged to the *Keledei*, to them as a body, or at least to their college. But at this time it "was taken from them, and performed,"—by whom? by the dean and chapter, in correspondence to their supposed rank before? nay, but "by the primate himself." Here we have the admission of a change, from something which strikingly resembles presbytery, to the very *acme* of prelacy. All the right of the Culdees, "throughout the whole kingdom of Scotland," although at this time they were very numerous, is transferred to a single person.

But the bishop's attachment to prelacy has, in this instance, carried him farther than he was warranted to go, according to the authority to which he refers. For his "Culdee of St Andrews" does not attribute this *right* to "the primat himself;" but says, that "no bishop in Scotland ought to be ordained without the council of the seniors of that place." Now, to whom does the Culdee give the name of seniors? Undoubtedly to his own brethren. For, as we have seen from Bede, this is the very designation that had all along been given to the members of the college of Iona. This seems indeed to be admitted by Bishop Lloyd. Sir James Dalrymple carries it farther with respect to the bishopric of Glasgow. For in Pope Alexander the Third's bull to the dean and chapter of that see, it is said, that, "in the electing of the bishop, they must have *consensus religiosorum virorum civitatis*, which must be meant of the laicks; and it's like also the laicks had the same share in the settling the Culdees, who were their pastors." I question however, if, in that age, the term *religiosus* was extended to any laics, save those who adhered to some monastic rule.

When the Bishop of St Asaph quoted the narrative of the Culdee on this subject, had he subjoined the words immediately following those which we have already considered, he would have given a just exhibition of the design and tendency of this transference of power, from the Culdees to the bishopric of St Andrews. "This is *Rome the second*, formed

¹ Collections, p. 134.

after the model of the first; this is the chief city of refuge; this is the metropolitan city of Scotland.”¹

As Turgot was the first bishop, who was introduced at St Andrews from another country, he was the first who was consecrated by a foreigner. Thus, a very important branch of the *right*, which belonged to the Culdees, was lost by this extraneous consecration. Notwithstanding all the pains, however, which were taken by the king and the bishop to unhinge the more ancient form of ecclesiastical government, we are under a necessity of concluding, that Turgot found his situation very uncomfortable. It is justly said by Keith, that there was a “misunderstanding betwixt the king and him.”² After he had continued about six years at St Andrews, “as, from certain causes which sprung up, he could not worthily discharge his office, he made preparations for going to Rome, that he might spend his life according to the counsel of the pope. But that this plan might not be carried into execution, the breach was widened between him and the king; and, from vexation of spirit, he fell into melancholy. He received permission, on account of his infirmity, to reside for some time at Durham;” where, in less than three months, he died.³

Thus, Alexander, notwithstanding his great zeal for chang-

¹ Haec est Roma secunda a prima; haec est civitas refugii praecipua; haec est civitas civitatum Scotiae. Ap. Usser. Primord. ubi sup.

² Catalogue, p. 6.

³ Cum causis emergentibus digne non posset episcopale officium exercere, Romam ire disposuit, ubi consilio et iudicio domini papae Paschalis vitam suam transigeret. Sed ne id ad effectum perduceret, invalescentibus inter ipsum et regem causis, prae angustia spiritus decidit in melancholiam, &c. Simeon. Dunelm. ap. Dec. Script. col. 207, 208.

ing the form of religion, soon learned that it was scarcely possible to retain his own authority, in connexion with those who were so much devoted to a foreign jurisdiction. But, although disappointed with respect to Turgot, and, according to the general account, also as to Eadmer, who was chosen to succeed him, but would not submit to be consecrated by any other than the Archbishop of Canterbury; he was determined virtually to take even the right of election into his own hand. Accordingly, as we learn from the Chronicle of Mailros, he caused Robert, Prior of Scone, to be chosen to the vacant bishopric.¹

On the whole, it plainly appears from our history, that it was during the age of Turgot, that the Scottish bishops began to have distinct dioceses. "The bishops of the Scots," says the learned Camden, "exercised their episcopal functions every where without distinction to the time of Malcolm III., about the year 1070, when their dioceses were confined to certain limits. Afterwards, in the lapse of time, this hierarchy was established in Scotland."² This seems to have taken place somewhat later, although within the age of Turgot. "At the accession of Alexander I, 1st Jan. 1106-7, he found prelates performing their undefined functions within the Scottish territory."³

II. It has been objected, that "the convent of Culdees constituted the chapter, and had the election of the bishop;" and that, in some instances, they "would needs be canons

¹ *Fecit eligi* Rodbertum Priorem de Scona in Episcopum Sancti Andree. Ad Ann. 1124. ap. Gale. V. et. Simon. Dunelm. ap. Twysden, p. 272.

² *Britann. ap. Selden. Praef. ad Dec. Scriptor. xxi.*

³ *Caledonia, i. 676.*

regular, and would erect themselves into a canonry, not only without the consent, but even against the declared will of the bishop their patron and founder.” †

That they submitted to act as dean and chapter, in some sees, is undeniable. That they might occasionally manifest an eagerness to do so, as has been asserted with respect to those of Monimusk, might easily be accounted for. The introduction of canons regular, we have seen, was particularly intended for accomplishing the exclusion of the Culdees from the exercise of their ancient privileges. As they could not be blind to this design, it is very natural to suppose, that they would contend for the liberty which they still retained by charter, however much it had been abridged. Many of them would rather submit to be canons regular, although they hated the institution, than be brought down to the level of mere laymen. But neither their submission to act as the chapter, nor any anxiety to have a place in it, can be sustained as a proof that they never enjoyed any higher authority. Their being retained as the chapter in some bishoprics, and admitted into it in others, affords a presumption, nearly amounting to proof, that their power had, in former times, been much greater. For, is it at all conceivable, that men so much disliked by the Roman clergy, and, in their mode of life, so different from the canons, would be preferred to them, or even associated with them, without some urgent necessity? And what was this necessity? The strong plea arising from almost immemorial possession, and the strong prejudices of the people in their favour. The new bishops, and their adherents, well knew that they were persecuting those,

† Keith's Catalogue, Pref. viii. xiii.

who had formerly been superior to themselves in authority ; those, to whom, in fact, the bishops owed all the authority which they possessed, however “unusual the manner” in other countries. We know that, during the reign of James the Sixth, there were many presbyterians in Scotland, who submitted to a more moderate kind of episcopacy, received episcopal ordination, and sat in the synods in which bishops acted as perpetual moderators. Would any sound reasoner hence conclude, that they were friends to episcopacy? It cannot be doubted, that they acted this part, because they did not think of any more eligible plan of conduct. Far less would any one dream of inferring from this fact, that presbyterial church-government had not been previously established in Scotland.

In several places, afterwards erected into episcopal sees, as we have already seen, the Culdees had monasteries erected long before ; as at Brechin, Dunkeld, Dunblane, &c. But they had establishments in many other places that were never converted into episcopates. Were they the chapter at Dunfermline, at Lochleven, or at Scone? Had they bishops in all these places? For, to the friends of the hierarchy, a Culdee establishment seems to resemble a hive of bees, that cannot exist without a queen. If they all had bishops, for performing what are exclusively viewed as episcopal duties, they could only be of an inferior class ; for there must have been a considerable number of bishops in the district of Fife alone. If they did exist, how are all their names buried in oblivion ; whence is there not even a vestige of the office in these places? If there were foundations of Culdees without

bishops, their acting in an episcopal see as the chapter, can be sustained as no proof that they depended on the see, or were the creatures of the bishop.

The extent of their possessions, in an early period of the episcopate of St Andrews, is a strong proof that their establishment preceded that of the see. They received several important donations from Bishops Malduin, Tuthald, and Modach, who had most probably been Culdees, and elected by them. But they seem to have had considerable endowments, before the see itself was erected. Ungus II., King of the Picts, who died A. 833, gave the *Boar's Raik* to St Regulus. Yet this appears to have been the property of the Culdees; as it is designed *Baronia Caledaiorum infra Cursum Apris*.¹ This gift must have been made about sixty years before the election of Kellach, the first bishop of St Andrews. Brudi, the last King of the Picts, who died A. 843, gave them the isle of Lochlevin. This proves their celebrity, at least in the neighbourhood of St Andrews, long before the erection of the bishopric.²

III. It has also been objected, that “we read of no Culdees, that ever were at Hy, or in any other place where the Scots anciently dwelt. But, as oft as they are mentioned, we find them still at St Andrews, which was in the country of the South Picts; and they are not said to have been there till it had been many years the see of a diocesan bishop.”³

¹ Dalrymple's Collections, p. 131, 132.

² V. Ruddiman. Introd. ad Diplom.; Caledonia, i. 437.

³ Lloyd's Historical Account, p. 140.

How little foundation there is for the last assertion, we have already proved. It has also been seen, that, as Ungus gave the *Boar's Ruik* to St Rule, and as it appears that it was in fact the property of the Culdees; if any faith can be given to this story, we may reasonably infer that they were accounted the legitimate successors of the Abbot Regulus and his thirty companions. The account, which Fordun gives of him and his followers, perfectly corresponds with that given of the monks of Iona. "Having laid the foundation of a monastical *cell*, these blessed men went through the country, not on horseback, but, like the apostles of old, in pairs, every where preaching the word of God." But, should we view the story with respect to Regulus as a mere legend, it must at least leave a strong impression on the mind, that there were men of this description, who held lands at St Andrews, in consequence of a royal endowment, a considerable time before the eversion of the Pictish monarchy.

The account which the learned Stillingfleet has given of the Culdees, is truly ludicrous. "St Andrews," he says, "was called *Kilremont*;—*Kil*, as appears by the Scottish historians, was a place of devotion; *Kilruil* was the church of Regulus;—and Kilremont, as being the royal seat, and the principal church, for *Remont* is *Mons Regis*; and from hence the clergy of this church were called *Killedees*, from which title the fiction of the ancient Culdees came."²

¹ Scotichron. Lib. ii. 60.

² Origin. Britann. Pref. LVI.

These worthy prelates seem actuated with such zeal against the Culdees, that they will not allow them common historical justice. Under this obnoxious name, the ghost of presbytery so haunts them, that they shrink back from those proofs of existence that are far stronger than any which they have ever been able to produce in support of diocesan episcopacy. Bishop Nicolson discovers the same temper, and cannot conceal the reason of it, when he calls Dr Lloyd's work "an undertaking becoming a bishop of our English church;" adding, "The story of the Culdees" is "an argument put into the mouths of our *schismatics* by Blondel and Selden, out of the abundant kindness they had for our establishment."¹

But "we read of no Culdees that ever were at Hy." I shall not urge, as a proof, what Dr Smith has said respecting the disciples of Columba, that "they themselves seem to have assumed no other name than that of *Famuli Dei*, or servants of God; or, in their own language, *Gille-De*, which was Latinized into *Keledeus*."² For I do not know that there is any evidence, from ancient writers, of their having assumed this name. Did it appear, that they had thus denominated themselves, even in the Latin language, it would not only settle every dispute with respect to the origin of the name, but would be a sufficient reply to the objection.

If, however, we may credit an intelligent and well-informed writer, the name *Culdee* is, even at this day, not unknown

¹ Scot. Historical Library, part II. p. 93.

² Life of Columba, p. 161, 162.

at Iona. He views them indeed as prior to Columba. "The first Christians," he says, "that possessed themselves of I were, in all probability, the Culdees.—As they affected retired places, as their name imports, they could not in any country find a place more happily suited to their purpose. One place in I is still called the *Culdee's Cell*, [Gael. *Cathan*, or *Cothan Cuildich*, N.] It is the foundation of a small circular house, upon a reclining plain. From the door of the house a walk ascends to a small hillock, with the remains of a wall upon each side of the walk, which grows wider to the hillock. There are evident traces of the walls of the walk taking a circuit round, and enclosing the hillock." ¹

But although it were certain that the name had never been used in Iona, this would by no means prove that the same class of religious persons did not exist there. Names arise often from accident ; or from some very trivial circumstance, which totally escapes the most accurate investigation of succeeding ages. Names, which seem to have been quite unknown in a preceding age, appear at once, in the history of nations, as if they had been long familiar, and universally known. We have but very few instances of the use of the name *Jew* before the Babylonian captivity ; and all these occur only a little time before this event. ² Would any one

¹ Statist. Acc. xiv. 199.

² Jer. xxxiv. 9. xxxviii. 19. lii. 28. It occurs only in another passage, 2 Kings, xvi. 6. ; and this respects an event in the reign of Ahaz, which took place about an hundred and forty years before the captivity. But this book was undoubtedly compiled, by an inspired writer, from the records of former ages, after the return from Babylon.

hence conclude, that the Jews were not the same people with those formerly known by the name of *Israel*? Yet, as we know, that the name *Jews* originated from the circumstance of the great majority of those, who adhered to the family of David, when the ten tribes apostatised, being descended from the patriarch Judah ; we are assured, that the same reason for this distinctive name existed nearly three hundred and forty years before the captivity, more than four hundred before it came to be generally used.

That the Culdees of St Andrews, in almost every respect, resembled those of Iona, cannot be doubted by any unprejudiced mind. Their mode of life, their doctrine, their opposition to the Roman corruptions, all point out the same society. Can it be supposed, that they would receive the sovereignty of several islands from the Pictish monarch ; and that neither he, nor any of his successors, although making a profession of Christianity, would ever invite any of them to the seat of government, or retain them there ? Was this at Abernethy ? and whence the strength of its religious foundation, but from those men who had been so early patronised by the crown ? Do we not know that Columba sent his disciples throughout Pictland ; and have we not seen, that a certain *right*, with respect to the election of bishops, is attributed to the Culdees at St Andrews, apparently, the same which Bede ascribes to the monastery at Hij ?

From the Annals of Ulster we learn, that “ the family of I,” or Hij, was “ expelled by King Nectan beyond Drum-Albin,” A. 716. But they were only sent, from an island,

into what was to it the mainland, indeed, as would appear, into the territory of the Southern Picts; and thus must have spread themselves, although they had never done it before, through modern Perthshire, Angus, and Fife. Although a considerable number of them were driven from Hij, there is no evidence that they were subjected to personal suffering. The learned author of a very interesting work on the antiquities of our country, while he denies that the Culdean establishments afford any proof in favour of presbytery, discovers more candour on this subject than the Bishop of St Asaph has done. "In the united kingdom beyond the friths," he says, "there remained, at the epoch of the union, in 843, A. D., various cells, which had been settled, in early times, by *Columbans*; and still continued the abundant fountains, whence flowed religious instruction to a confiding people. One of the first acts of the reign of Kenneth, was to shew his respect for the memory of that apostle of the Scots and Picts, by building a church, wherein the reliques of the saint were deposited, in A. D. 849. [Chron. in Innes's App. No. 3.] The site of this sacred depository has not yet been fixed by antiquaries. Yet, was it at Dunkeld, where Kenneth built the church, which he dedicated to Columba. Thus Dunkeld, and its church, became sacred to Columba, who equally became the patron saint of both. A religious house was here built, upon the same system as the original establishment at Iona."

¹ Caledonia, i. 427, 428.

Bishop Lloyd has said, that the name Culdee “is not found in any other place where the Scots dwelt,” save in St Andrews. But he has certainly forgot that the name was well known in Ireland, where “the Scots dwelt” before their settlement in this country, and whence Columba and his companions came. The Irish antiquaries confess, that they do not know when it was introduced. Yet it was commonly used there, as early as at St Andrews; which clearly shews, that it was not transferred from the latter to the former. “*Ceile-De*, both name and thing, cannot be deny’d by any man, who’s tolerably versed in the language of the Irish, or in their books; one of which, a chronicle mostly in verse, entitul’d *Psalter Na’rran*, was written by a Keldee, Aonghus *Ceile-de*, Latiniz’d Aeneas Colideus, about the year 800.”¹

Whatever be the origin of *Ceile-de*, of which *Culdee* seems to be merely a corruption, there is no good reason to doubt that the first part of the word is incorporated with the name of the founder, in the designation of Columkill, given to the island of Hij. While Dr Shaw explains *Keledee* as “a word compounded of *Ceile* or *Keile*, i. e. a-servant, or one devoted, and *Dia*, in the genitive *De*, i. e. God, q. d. the servant of God, or one devoted to him,” he subjoins; “A church or place of worship was called *Kil*, because it was set apart for divine service.”²

After all, how little Bishop Lloyd felt the force of his own objection, and how much he must have been at a loss for ar-

¹ Toland’s Nazarenes.

² History of Moray, p. 251, 252.

gument, when he introduced one of so trivial a nature, appears from what he had previously said concerning the origin of the name: "Thus as Columba was called by the Irish *Columbcylle*; that is, 'Columb of the cell,' so all those that lived in such houses might be, and *I doubt not were*, called by their names, with the addition of *Kyldee*, that is, such a one of the cell-house."¹

After the concession made by the author of Caledonia, that "there remained—in 843,—various *cells*, which had been settled in early times by Columbans," &c. it is rather surprising that he should say: "There does not appear to be any appellation, in the maps of Scotland, which bears the least analogy to the Culdean monks."² He seems to adopt this idea, because he views the term *Kil* as primarily signifying a *retreat*. But the testimony of Bede, with respect to the origin of the name of Icolmkill certainly deserves some notice; as the venerable writer was so well acquainted with the history of the island. He says, that "Hij is now by some called *Columbcill*, the name being compounded from *Columb* and *cella*."³ Although he substitutes the Latin word, it is evidently used as synonymous with the Gaelic *ceile* or *cill*.

The Celtic term does not in fact differ in signification from the Latin, and may be radically the same. For as *cella* properly denotes a private chamber, it is deduced, by ety-

¹ Historical Account, p. 138, 139.

² Caledonia, i. 434. N.

³ Hist. Lib. v. c. 10.

mologists, from *cel-are* to conceal: ¹ and what is this but a *retreat* or place of retirement? The sense of the term, as embodied in the designation given from Columba, and explained by Bede, is confirmed by Jocelin, a monk of Furness, who flourished about the year 1140. In his life of St Patrick, he says that Columba was called *Coluimcille*, and was the founder of a hundred monasteries. ² The purport of his language evidently appears from that of Notker Balbulus, who wrote in the tenth century. "In Scotland, in the island of Ireland, deceased St Columba, surnamed by his own people *Columkilli*, because he was the institutor, founder, and governor of many *cells*, that is, monasteries, or churches, whence the abbot of the monastery over which he last presided [Iona,] and where he rests, in opposition to the custom of the church, is accounted the primate of all the Hibernian bishops." ³ By the way, we may observe, that the claim of superiority, on the part of the monastery of Hii, was acknowledged, even in Ireland, so late as the tenth century. This translation of the term is still admitted. "For, in the language of the country,"

¹ *Cella*, dicta quod nos occultet et celet. Isidor. Orig. Auct. Ling. Latin. col. 1195.

² — §. Columba, qui *Coluimcille* dicitur, et centum coenobiorum extitit fundator, Vit. S. Patricii c. 89. Messingham, p. 42.

³ In Scotia insula Hibernia depositio Sancti Columbae, cognomento apud suos *Colum Killi*, eo quod multarum cellarum, id est, monasteriorum vel ecclesiarum, institutor, fundator et rector extiterit, adeo ut Abba monasterii, cui nouissime praefuit, et ubi requiescit, contra morem ecclesiasticum, primas omnium Hibernensium habeatur episcoporum. Martyrologia, ap. Messingham, p. 182.

says Dr Smith, “ he is called *Colum-cille*, (or Colum of the Cells), from his having founded so many churches and monasteries. ¹ Thus it appears that *killi* or *cille* is viewed as the plural.

When we find the same form of combination, not only in the neighbourhood of the Culdees, but in what is supposed to have been their original seat ;—not only the names *Kilmenie*, *Kilconquhar*, *Kilrenny*, *Kilbirnie*, &c. but *Kilremont* and *Kilreul* ;—it affords a strong presumption of analogy between the name of the *Keledei* as a body, and the names of the places that have been denominated from individuals, many of whom, in all probability, belonged to this very society.

With respect to the Irish Culdees, it may be added, that Colgan mentions Comganus *Kele-De*, or *Keledeus*, and also Aengusianus *Keledeus*. ² The latter seems to be the same person to whom Toland refers. ³ Have we any reason to suppose that the Culdees of St Andrews emigrated to Ireland, after they were ejected from their offices and possessions here ? “ In the greater churches of Ulster,” Archbishop Usher says, “ as at Cluaninnis and Daminnis, and principally at Armagh, in our own memory, there were priests called Culdees, who celebrated divine service in the choir. Their president was stiled *Prior of the Culdees*, and acted as præcentor.” ⁴

Their influence in Ireland was similar to that which they had so long enjoyed in Scotland. “ Corruption,” says a learn-

¹ Life of S. Columba, p. 1.

² V. Smith's Life of Columba, p. 162.

³ See above, p. 354.

⁴ Primord. p. 354.

ed writer of that country, “ was powerfully retarded by the firmness of the hierarchy and the Culdees. The latter were looked up to as the depositaries of the original national faith, and were most highly respected by the people for their sanctity and learning.”¹ It was not, indeed, till the eleventh century, that Ireland was completely subdued to the Roman authority.² Here also we perceive the same opposition to this society. Wherever the influence of Rome prevailed, the Culdees were removed, and Columba himself was not supplicated as a patron and saint before the year 1741;³ although, in ancient times, acknowledged as “ the primate of all the Irish churches,” and “ of all the Irish bishops.”

Giraldus Cambrensis, who went to Ireland with King John in the year 1185, thus describes the island Monaincha; “ In North Munster is a lake containing two isles: in the greater is a church of the ancient religion, and, in the lesser, a chapel, wherein a few monks, called Culdees, devoutly serve God.”⁴ On this passage Dr Ledwich observes; “ We may easily understand what Cambrensis meant by the church here being of the *old religion*. The Culdees, its possessors, had not even at this period, when the council of Cashel had decreed uniformity of faith and practice, conformed to the reigning superstition; they devoutly served God in this wild and dreary retreat, sacrificing all the flattering prospects of the world for their ancient doctrine and discipline.”⁵

¹ Ledwich's Antiq. p. 94.

² Ledwich, p. 117.

³ Antiq. of Irel. p. 113, 114.

⁴ Life of S. Columba, p. 1.

⁵ Topograph. II. c. 4. p. 716.

The same Cambrensis gives an account of Culdees in Wales. "The isle of Bardsey," he says, "is inhabited by religious monks, quos Coelicolas vel *Colideos* vocant." ¹ Goodall seems to admit that the Culdees had been introduced into the north of England, in consequence of the conversion of the inhabitants of that region by missionaries from Hij. For he says; "As to the Culdees, it is very certain, that there was a sort of monks, and secular priests too, who went under that appellation, not only among the Scots, but also among the Britons and Irish, and even among the northern English, who were first converted by the Scots, particularly in the cathedral of York, [Monast. Anglican. tom. 2. p. 367, 368.]" ²

I have given a more full answer to this objection than it deserves, partly to shew its extreme futility; but especially, because the warm friends of diocesan episcopacy have been so eager to avail themselves of even a shadow of argument, in their attempts to disprove, not only the authority, but the early existence of a society, to which the cause of religion, in this country, has been so deeply indebted.

¹ Pref. to Keith's Catalogue, viii.

² V. Primord. p. 637.