ST. MARGARET.

EARLY LIGHT-BEARERS OF SCOTLAND

By

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PIONEERS, OH PIONEERS!

The dates of the lives and deaths of most of these Saints can only be given approximately as the chronology of their time is very vague.

Acknowledgments are due to the Editor of "Life and Work," and also to Mr. A. Scott Rankin, the artist, for the generous use of three line drawings as illustrations.

INTRODUCTION

In order to read the stories of these early Scottish Saints aright, and to gain a clear understanding of the various districts of Scotland in which they laboured, it will help us to remember what the late Bishop Dowden wrote in the first chapter of his *Celtic Church in Scotland.*

"It is well to recall to mind that the present boundary line between Scotland and England had no existence in the days of the Roman occupation of Britain, nor indeed for many centuries after the last of the Roman legions had quitted the country for ever. The whole island, as far as the line between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, was known as Britain—north of that line was the region known as Caledonia, or Alban."

For Scotland was in Ireland in those days, which sounds a very paradoxical statement.

But if we look at a map of the period just prior to the retirement of the Romans, we will see that the Scots inhabited the north of Ireland, from whence a small colony had crossed the sea and settled in what we now know as Argyllshire.

The north and west of Scotland, north of the Forth and Clyde, was inhabited by the Picts, who were divided into two great tribes. That of the Northern Picts, who occupied the country north of the Grampians and the other mountain ranges which extended across Scotland at this point; and that of the Southern Picts, who had settled in what are now the counties of Kincardine, Angus, Perth, Fife, Stirling, etc., which lie north of the Forth, but south of the ranges of hills of which we have spoken.

There was also a small colony of these people settled in the south of Wigtonshire and Kirkcudbright, who were known as the Niduari Picts.

To the south of Agricola's Wall—that is, to the south of the line between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, Cumbria or Strathclyde stretched between Dumbarton on the north, and the river Ribble on the south—while the Anglian Province of Bernicia, which formed part of the Kingdom of Northumbria, extended from the Forth to the Tyne.

Now it is certain that Christianity had been introduced into Cumbria during the Roman occupation by soldiers and camp-followers who had accepted the Faith in their own lands. St. Ninian's upbringing is a proof of this. But converts were

probably few, and their religion would be apt to degenerate into a mixture of paganism and superstition.

So, roughly speaking, we are justified in saying that for all lasting purposes, St. Ninian was the first to carry the Gospel to the Niduarian and Southern Picts, and possibly to some of the Britons who lived south of the Solway. St. Kentigern was the Apostle of Cumbria or Strathclyde. St. Columba laboured among the Scots of Argyll and the Northern Picts.

St. Cuthbert shares with St. Aidan the honour of carrying Christianity to Northumbria, and his name will never die as long as the Lammermuir Hills and the Cheviots, Melrose and Durham, Holy Island and Farne remain. The Church of St. Cuthbert under Edinburgh's Castle Rock, and the massive Cathedral on its proud eminence overlooking the Wear at Durham, mark the boundaries of his labours and his episcopate.

Lesser, or rather, less well-known Saints—such as St. Serf, St. Machar, St. Drostan, St. Boisil—went out from the Religious Houses founded by these Pioneers of the Faith to work in more circumscribed areas.

And when, after being firmly established in the land, the Celtic Church fell from its first estate—largely owing to external causes such as the inroads

of the Danes, and warfare between various tribes which gave rise to a general feeling of insecurity—and became lacking in fervour, lax in discipline, and slovenly in worship, St. Margaret arose, and by her personality and labours relit the lamp of zeal and devotion in the Church of her adoption. At the same time she lifted it out of its isolation, and merged it in the larger life and fellowship of the Catholic Church of Christendom, as it was understood in those days.

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ST. NINIAN OF WHITHORN

A.D. 360—A.D. 432

ST. NINIAN, with whose life and labours the earliest records of the introduction of Christianity into Scotland are connected, was born somewhere about the year A.D. 360. He first saw the light on the shores of the Solway, either in Cumberland, or, as is more generally supposed, on the opposite coast, in what is now known as Wigtonshire. This district was in Roman territory, for by this time these foreign conquerors, who did so much to civilize our island, especially in the south, had extended their beneficent rule as far north as the Wall of Antonine, which ran, roughly speaking, between the Forth and the Clyde. Ninian's father was a native-born British Chieftain, who was also a Christian, for the Faith had been introduced into our land in the wake of the Roman army, carried by Christian traders, camp-followers, priests, or even by Christian soldiers themselves.

The Romans were wise in their methods. They did not sweep away all British authority, but allowed some of the petty chieftains to retain a

certain amount of power over their own countrymen, provided, of course, that they themselves acknowledged the supremacy of Rome. So Ninian must have grown up in surroundings which had a certain rude dignity about them, and doubtless Roman officers were occasional visitors at his father's house. In this way the boy would acquire more cultured ways and a wider outlook than he would have done had he lived in some remote region untouched by foreign influence.

Baptised in infancy, and given the name of Ninian, the boy seems to have enjoyed a thoroughly Christian upbringing. He is said to have been curiously grave and mature for his years, and of great personal piety. He must have received a certain amount of education, for he was able to read what parts of the Bible he could obtain, and he early determined to become a priest. Not content with the teaching of the Christians around him, whose knowledge of religion was probably very meagre and rudimentary, he resolved to make the long and perilous journey to Rome in order to obtain fuller instruction in the Christian Faith than was available at home.

For in those days Rome was not only the centre of the world as regarded civilization and government, it was also the centre of the Church's work,

and Ninian could learn many things in that city, that he could never learn in Britain. With a clear-sighted wisdom far beyond his years, he seems to have realized that in the Imperial City he would gain experiences which would fit him, in days to come, for the work of establishing and guiding the Church of God in his own land.

So, when he was nearing manhood's estate, the intrepid youth set out on his pilgrimage. Doubtless the way was long, and demanded great powers of endurance, for it is more than likely that he travelled most of it on foot. But in other respects it would be an easier journey than we may at first suppose. For relays of Roman soldiers would be constantly coming and going—veterans returning home, fresh drafts coming out to take their places, and Ninian, being of noble birth, and probably well known to officers who had been stationed near his father's house, may easily have found travelling companions. The Roman roads, also, were good and straight—it was said of them, and truly, that "all roads led to Rome."

So if a traveller set out on one of these highways, with his face in the right direction, and followed it steadily, up hill and down dale, there was no fear but that he would arrive, in due time, at the Imperial City. And so, we are told by one of his

two biographers, Ailred of Rievaux, Ninian reached his destination. He crossed the Britannic Sea, entered Italy by the Gallican Alps, and arrived, after a prosperous journey, at the city of Rome.

It must have been an extraordinary experience to the young country-bred Briton, coming as he did from one of the wildest and most remote parts of his native land, to enter the Imperial City, at that time in the zenith of its glory, with the buildings which we only know as magnificent ruins then untouched and unspoilt; and to envisage the life of its inhabitants. There was much which was purely pagan, for Christianity had outlived the days of persecution, and had become more or less popular. It was smiled on by the Emperor, who allowed the clergy a great deal of liberty, and exempted them from many duties which other citizens were called on to perform. He also relieved them from all taxation.

In consequence of this, very many of them had fallen into lax and luxurious ways. They were fond of riches and fine clothes, and had, in many cases, almost forgotten the nature of the sacred office to which they had been called. We can imagine the disappointment this must have been to the young traveller, who doubtless expected to find that every priest in the Holy City was already a saint.

Had the young Briton possessed a weaker character, the sight of all this luxury and carelessness might have had a very bad influence, and he might well have lost his high ideals, and, going with the crowd, have flung himself into the gay and reckless life around him. But he was made of sterner stuff. He had not left his father's house, and travelled well-nigh a thousand miles, without having a definite purpose in view, and he was not to be diverted from it by the manifold temptations that must now have lain thick about his path.

He wanted to be better instructed in the Christian Faith, and he also wanted to know more about the order and rule of the Church. So, like a sensible youth, he betook himself to the supreme source of authority, who might also be expected to be the chief example of holy life. He went to the Pope, and explained to him where he had come from, and for what reason, and asked him to help him in his quest. Pope Damascus received him very kindly, treating him, we are told, as a son, and took the trouble to see that he was placed under wise and sober teachers, who could instruct him in those things wherein he needed enlightenment. For all the clergy were not like those of whom we have spoken, who have been described to us by the great St. Jerome himself.

Up on the Coelium Hill were monasteries filled with monks like St. Augustine, who took their vows seriously, and lived consistent and holy lives. And it is probable that Ninian was sent to live in one of these. Here he was taught the "discipline of Faith, and the sound meanings of Scripture," and here he learned that "on him, and his fellow-countrymen many things contrary to sound doctrine had been inculcated by unskilled teachers."

What these things were we have no means of knowing, but it is probable that the pagan superstitions and practices of their neighbours had had their influence on the little remote and scattered community of native Christians in far-away Galloway.

Be that as it may, in the years, and they were many, which he spent in Rome, the young Briton's faith was strengthened, and his life disciplined, and he was fitted and trained to become, as he did, one of the great pioneers of the Gospel. He must have been well over thirty, and already a priest, when the Pope consecrated him Bishop, and sent him forth on the mission for which he was so well equipped, to convert to the Faith of Christ those of his countrymen who were yet heathen, and to bring back to the Faith those who had erred or gone astray.

So Ninian turned his back on Rome, and set his face towards his own bare, bleak, untutored, barbarous land. But there was one visit which he was determined to pay before he settled down to his hard and colossal task.

On his return journey he must needs pass through Gaul, and he thought it well worth while to turn a little out of his way, and visit the saintly Bishop Martin of Tours. Everyone knows St. Martin—the splendid soldier saint. The son of an officer of high rank, he was born in A.D. 316 and brought up to follow in his father's footsteps. In his boyhood he had heard the story of Our Lord's life, and wished to become His follower. But his parents were pagan, and they did not want him to become a Christian, so they hurried him into the Imperial Army, hoping that the constant change and the exciting life would put all such ideas out of his head.

For a time they succeeded, but when Martin's regiment was sent to Gaul, the old longing after a purer faith rose again in the young officer's heart. He began to frequent Christian services, he even put down his name as a catechumen. But there the matter rested. He either had not the courage, or else he had not the zeal, to go forward to baptism. At last, after many years of military

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service, he was with his regiment at Amiens, where he was in command. One bitterly cold night, as he was riding past the city gates, he chanced to see a beggar, almost naked, crouching against the wall, half dead with cold. No one cared much for the poor in those days, and no one would have blamed Martin had he ridden on.

But his heart was soft, and he remembered what the Master whom he longed to serve had said about the poor; so, taking off the warm cloak he was wearing, he cut it in two with his sword, and gave one half of it to the beggar.

That night he had a dream. In it he saw into heaven, and there in the midst of angels and archangels sat Our Lord on a throne, wearing the half of a soldier's cloak. Martin knew it to be his, and, as he was gazing at the scene in awe and wonder, it seemed to him that the Wearer pointed to the cloak, and said—"Behold the covering given to me by Martin, yet but a catechumen."

The vision faded, but Martin had learned his lesson. If the Master Whom he served in secret could so own him in heaven, he was no longer going to act the coward on earth. Without delay, he openly professed himself to be a Christian, and was baptised. Moreover, he left the army, and became a monk, for in that way he felt he would

better serve the Lord Christ. In after days he became Bishop of Tours, and was noted all over Europe for his wisdom, his zeal, and his piety.

He founded a monastery and a school on the outskirts of his Cathedral City, which became famous for the number of men and boys who went there to be trained as monks, or instructed in the Faith.

It was to this Religious House that Ninian wended his way, feeling perhaps that the manner of life he would meet with there might be of more use to him in his future work than the more sophisticated life he had lived in Rome. He received such a warm welcome at the monastery at Tours that he spent a considerable time there. Bishop Martin was now an old man, but he seemed to recognize a kindred spirit in this younger brother who was setting out to engage on so great a task, so he gave him all the counsel and advice in his power, not only about spiritual matters, but about practical affairs as well.

There is one thing that we may be certain that they did discuss, and this was how to build a church of stone. For Ninian, who was accustomed to worship in small, but well built edifices, felt that he must try to introduce the knowledge of such buildings into his own country.

At last he bade his new-found friend farewell, and resumed his journey. From what old writers tell us, we gather that Christianity still lingered in his native province, for he was met by a large company of people who gave him a joyous welcome, and were quite willing, apparently, to listen to his teaching, and to cast out any erroneous doctrine which had crept into their faith and practice.

Building his work on the pattern given him by St. Martin, Ninian determined to found a monastery and school, which would be the centre of his activities. Here he might gather together a band of men who would devote themselves to the religious life, and whom he could train and send out as missionaries. Here, also, parents who desired to have their children instructed in the Faith could send their boys. So he looked about for a site, and his choice fell on a piece of land which jutted out into the sea on the shores of what we now call Wigton Bay. He may have chosen this locality because it was near his birthplace, or what is perhaps more likely, because it was a remote and lonely spot, and was out of the way of the intermittent warfare which was now being carried on further north between the Picts, Scots, and Romans.

Here he founded his monastery, and here he planned his Abbey Church, which he intended

should be of stone, and an object lesson to his fellow-countrymen. But no one but himself had seen an entirely stone building, so he had to send far afield for his workmen. It is probable that he had foreseen all this, and had arranged that Bishop Martin should provide the builders.

For we know that he obtained masons from Tours, who, doubtless to the wonder of the half savage Picts, hewed the stones, and fixed them firm and sure in their places with mortar, and so raised a strong, solid building that was both wind and watertight, very different from their draughty buildings of hewn timber, or wood and wattle.

The stone that was used was of a light grey colour, and gave its name of "Candida Casa," or White House, to the church. At least the country-folk called it so. To Ninian and his fellow-Christians it bore another, and more sacred designation. For just as it was being finished, in A.D. 397, news came that St. Martin of Tours had passed to his rest, and Ninian, in his grief and affectionate remembrance, gave to his Abbey Church the dedication of St. Martin.

Opinions differ as to the exact spot on which the great missionary founded his settlement. It may have been on the Isle of Whithorn, where the

remains of a small chapel are still to be traced. Or it may have been a few miles inland, where the little town of that name stands, and where the ruins of a beautiful Cathedral Church, built, of course, long after Ninian's time, can still be seen.

Wherever it stood, this little Christian outpost, small and mean as it would have appeared to our eyes, with its tiny huts, and its primitive stone church, was a place of the greatest importance in the history of our land. For, as far as we know, it was the first centre at which the Christian Faith could be definitely taught, Christian worship continuously carried on, and from which missionaries could go forth to irradiate the thick darkness of heathenism with the light of the Gospel.

Following St. Martin's teaching, St. Ninian laid his foundations truly and well. He first of all gathered round him a number of men, who, with him as their Abbot, as well as their Bishop, formed a tiny community. Then, as he gained the confidence of the parents, boys were entrusted to his care, to receive the rudiments of education, and to be brought up as Christians. When this work was fairly established, he turned his attention to the evangelization of the Niduarian Picts, who, as we have seen, had settled in this part of the country.

Not content to confine his labours to the immediate neighbourhood, he and the monks whom he gradually trained went further and further afield, preaching, as is believed, to the native Britons in what is now Cumberland and Westmorland, and more especially to the Southern Picts, who inhabited the stretch of country lying between the Grampian Hills and the Firth of Forth.

He seems to have left his monastery definitely for a period to undertake this work, and to have had good success. For the monk, Ailred of Rievaux, tells us, without giving details, that Ninian "girding himself as a strong wrestler to overcome the devil . . . went to the Southern Picts, who still worshipped idols deaf and dumb, and preached the Gospel to them." Many were converted and baptised, and at last when the "good Bishop had confirmed in faith and good works those whom he had begotten in Christ, and having set all things in order," he bade farewell to the brethren, and returned to his own church, leaving behind him, doubtless, monks to carry on the work which he had begun.

A beautiful description has been given of this pioneer Saint, as he moved up and down the country with his message. "No crowd could disturb his tranquillity, no travelling hindered his

meditation, nor did his prayers grow lukewarm through fatigue. Wheresoever he went, he lifted up his soul to celestial things, either in meditation or in prayer."

"Whensoever he turned aside from his journey and indulged in rest either for himself or for the beast he rode, he brought out a book which he carried with him for the purpose, and took pleasure in reading or chanting."

Ninian, or Ringan,[1] as the people often called him, laboured in Galloway for some thirty-two years, and many legends are associated with his name. Most of them, like other traditional stories related of the early Saints, are silly and childish, plainly creations of fancy, but there are two told of our hero, which are well worth repeating. The first because it may contain an element of truth —the second because it is so homely and quaint. It is said that a great aid to his mission in its early days were the circumstances attending the conversion of a British King called Tudvallus. This King, who had opposed St. Ninian's teaching by all means in his power, was suddenly stricken with blindness, and, needless to say, could find no cure. Terrified at the prospect of living the rest of his

[1]To this day this name is preserved in "Appleringie," an oldfashioned name for the sweet-smelling shrub, southernwood.

life in darkness, and advised by his friends to do so, he sent messengers to the Saint, entreating him not to return evil for evil, but to come and help him.

The good Bishop went at once, glad, doubtless, to have an opportunity of talking with his enemy, and, after giving him a gentle reproof, laid his hands on him and blessed him, thereafter touching his eyes with the Sign of the Cross. Instantly the blind man received his sight, and becoming a Christian, extended ever afterwards to Ninian and his monks all the help and protection which it was in his power to give.

Now comes the second story—it has to do with leeks! One day, when Ninian was having dinner with his monks, no "pot-herb," or vegetable, appeared on the table. The Abbot naturally asked the lay-brother who was in charge of the garden what was the cause of the omission—for, if it chanced to be a fast-day, it was a very grievous omission indeed.

"Truly, father," answered the monk, "the leeks and suchlike are finished, and the rubbish I have dug into the ground, and what I have newly sown has not had time to grow up."

"Go back to the garden," said the Saint, "and whatever you find there, bring to the table."

Greatly wondering, the lay-brother obeyed—for he dare not do otherwise—but he thought to himself that it was a useless errand.

But lo! where he had but yesterday sown leeks was a bed of that vegetable, not only full grown but bearing seed. With a handful of those he returned awestruck to the refectory, and laid them down before the Abbot.

This great Saint died somewhere about the year A.D. 432 and was buried in a stone coffin which was laid beside the altar of the church which he had built with such loving care, and which, because of his relics, became a noted place of pilgrimage in after years.

A weeping concourse of clergy stood around "sounding forth with their voices celestial hymns —with their hearts' sighs and tears." And well might they weep, for that day they had lost a true Father-in-God whose like they would hardly see again.

St. Ninian was the great proto-missionary of Scotland—the forerunner of all the noble men who followed him. He stood alone in his day and generation, and the times in which he lived are so dim and remote that we know very little about him. But the influence of his life and work are far-reaching. The Torch of Faith lit by him in Gallo-

way and Cumbria burned low in after years, but it never went out, but maintained a feeble light until, well-nigh a century afterwards, St. Kentigern appeared to revive, strengthen, and enlarge the work of his predecessor.

St. Ninian is known also as the introducer of the monastic system into Scotland. His monastery school became one of the most famous in Britain, and boys were sent to it from all quarters—not only from the surrounding districts, but also from Ireland and Wales. These, on their return home, no longer as boys, but as youths and grown men, naturally carried his teaching and his methods with them.

Monasteries and schools after the pattern of Whithorn were thus established in other countries. We see this influence in the early training of St. Columba.

One relic of the Saint still remains to us. This is his bell—known in past days as Clog-Rinny, or Ringan's Bell.

It is a small quadrate iron bell, 6½ inches high, and measuring 4½ by 4 inches at the mouth, which is preserved in the National Museum in Edinburgh. These bells, we learn from Bishop Dowden, were not church bells, and were never hung. They were the private property of Bishops and Abbots, and

were used to call the monastic brethren to prayer. They were regarded with peculiar reverence, and as time went on they were endowed, in the minds of the common people, with awesome and supernatural powers.

ST. PATRICK OF IRELAND

A.D. 387—A.D. 471

If, as is generally supposed, St. Patrick first saw the light of day in the neighbourhood of Alclwyd, or Dumbarton, his name may well be included among those of Scotland's Light-bearers, even though he bore the light of the Gospel to the people of Ireland rather than to his own countrymen. And we must remember that if, in the case of St. Patrick, Alban's loss was Ireland's gain—so, in the case of Columba, Ireland's loss was Alban's gain, and so the balance was made even.

The saint was of superior, if not of noble birth, for his father, Colpornius, who was a deacon, and the son of a priest, combined with his religious duties the office of a "decurion," or town-councillor in the little town of Bannaven-of-Tabernia, in, or near which he lived. Moreover, Colpornius owned a small farm with a villa attached to it, in which, doubtless, the family resided.

These facts prove the truth of the quaint old rhyme:—

"St. Patrick was a gentleman,
And come of decent people."

For they tell us that the "Travelling Man," as the Saint has been called, was a member of rather an outstanding family, and that his forebears had been Christians for at least two generations. They tell us also that he had been reared in ordered and cultured surroundings, for Bannaven-of-Tabernia was plainly a Roman settlement, as the[1] "office of Decurion originated in the municipal system of the Roman Empire" and such a post would only be given to a responsible and tried man, which is a tribute to the worth of Colpornius the farmer deacon.

But a godly upbringing does not seem to have had its expected effect on the boy Patrick, or Sucat, as he was called in early years. For he tells us himself in his *Confessions*, a biographical sketch of his life which he is supposed, on good authority, to have written in his old age, "that in his youth he and his companions knew not God, for they had gone back from Him, and had not kept His commandments, neither had they been obedient to their priests, who used to warn them for their salvation."

These words give us a vivid picture of a group of careless boys who had paid little or no attention to the teaching of their parents and clergy, and who

[1] Refs. Dowden.

ST. PATRICK.

doubtless cared more for open-air sports and games than for attending church and saying their prayers.

But through much tribulation the future Saint was to be prepared for his lifework. For one day, when he was a boy of sixteen, working on his father's little farm, a band of fierce Irish marauders landed in the neighbourhood, and, swooping down on the unprotected country-folk, carried a number of them into captivity, Patrick among the rest. The unfortunate prisoners were taken to Ireland, and there sold into slavery.

Our hero fell to the lot of a rich man named Milchu, who owned land in Dalaradia, or what we now know as Antrim. Milchu made his foreign slave his herdsman, and for six long years the lad herded cattle and sheep on the slopes of Slemish Mountain, and among the woods and bogs which lay at its base.

His story reminds us of that of St. Cuthbert, two hundred years afterwards, who spent his boyhood in herding sheep on the sides of the Lammermoor Hills in Berwickshire. But their lots, so alike in their later years, were very different to begin with. Cuthbert was a free man, receiving a wage, with a comfortable home within reach, and a fond foster-mother to attend to his wants. Patrick was a slave, without home, money, or friends, and his master

probably regarded him as of less value than one of the beasts which he tended. But in the darkness and dreariness of slavery the young man remembered his childhood's lessons, and turned his heart once more towards God. And day by day his soul grew and the unseen became more and more real to him.

He now began to pray, and he tells us how the "Holy Spirit burned within him," for the habit of prayer so grew upon him that "he would rise before daybreak, and go out into the woods, or climb up on the mountainside, and there pour out his soul before God, even when the snow lay thick on the ground." We do not know all that he prayed for, but we may be certain that amongst his other petitions was one that he might be rescued from slavery, and be restored to his native land.

This prayer was granted, for one night when he was fast asleep, a strange angelic voice sounded in his ears. "Patrick," it said, "thou fastest well! Soon shalt thou return to thine own land." Then he awoke. But it was to the same daily toil, the same hopeless drudgery. In the face of this, we can imagine how hard it would be for the eager young man to wait, and trust, and hope.

But soon he heard the voice again, "There is a ship ready, but it is far away—far away on the sea-shore." Once more Patrick woke, but this time he

felt the need of action. The coast was fully seventy miles from where he was, but he was strong, and he could walk to it. So, leaving his flocks and herds, he fled, with his face to the sea.

After some days of hard travel he arrived at the coast, and there, sure enough, was a ship ready to sail. Rejoicing at this token of God's good providence, he made haste to get on board. But the captain met him, and put off, perhaps, by his poor clothing and unkempt appearance, and wondering, also, where the money for his passage was to come from, refused to take him with him.

Greatly distressed, Patrick retraced his steps to a rude hut where, apparently, he had obtained shelter on the previous evening. On the way, he knelt down to lay his disappointment before God, and to ask for help and guidance.

The answer came sooner than he expected, for his prayer was not finished before he heard the voice of a sailor whom the captain had sent to recall him. "Come back quickly," said the messenger, "they are waiting for thee." Patrick sprang to his feet, and gladly returned to the ship. "Come, we will take thee on trust," was the captain's greeting—(meaning perhaps that he would trust that he would be paid somehow)—and when all were aboard, the ship set sail.

It was a troublesome and weary journey. The travellers sailed for three days—then they landed on some desert part of the country, whether in Ireland or Alban, or even in Gaul, Patrick does not relate. He only tells us how their food ran short, and how they were in danger of starving.

Evidently the young slave had been talking to these heathen mariners about the One True God, and explaining what wonders He could perform. For in this extremity one of them asked the cogent question—"What sayest thou, Christian? Thy God is great and powerful. Why then canst thou not pray to Him for us? For we perish with hunger, and we can here find no inhabitant."

"Turn ye in faith to my Lord God," was Patrick's reply, "to Whom nothing is impossible, and ye shall be satisfied for He has abundance everywhere."

So they knelt down while Patrick prayed. And no sooner was his prayer ended than a herd of swine came crashing through the forest, some of which they killed and so had meat in plenty. Later they found some wild honey, which they proceeded to eat with great rejoicing. But as Patrick was about to take his share one of his companions happened to say that honey was "an offering," and the young Christian, fearing that meant that it was offered to idols, would not partake of it. It seems that in

these pagan times idols were actually worshipped in Ireland, for in one early life of St. Patrick,[1] it is said that he "saw the chief idol of Ireland, Cann Cruaich, covered with gold and silver, and twelve other idols about it, covered with brass."

After this trying experience the travellers reached inhabited country, and there their journey ended.

Patrick must now have been about twenty-two years of age, and no one can tell with certainty how the next twenty years of his life were spent. It is believed by some that he went to Gaul, and then to Rome, and that he spent nine years in retirement on an island, probably the island of Lérins in the Mediterranean where St. Honoratus had founded a monastery. He may also have visited Tours in his travels, as the claim was made that he became acquainted with the saintly Bishop Martin.[2] When, or where he was ordained and consecrated, we have no certain means of knowing.

But we seem to have reached solid history when we find him, a Bishop of forty-five, once more amongst his own people in Strathclyde.

His sojourn there was brief, for an inward voice was urging him to cross the stormy Irish Sea, over which, in his boyhood, he had been taken as a

[1] The Tripartite Life.
[2] Jocelin, Monk of Furnis. But the dates do not agree.

slave, and to carry the Gospel to the people among whom he had been forced to dwell for six bitter years. Indeed, he tells us that a direct call to this missionary enterprise was given to him in a dream. For he dreamt that he saw a man from Ireland, who came to him with a handful of letters. The stranger gave him one of these, and he hastened to read it. The letter began with the phrase, "the voice of the Irish," and the words conjured up in the reader's mind a multitude of people, many of whose faces had been familiar to him in bygone days, all crowded into a wood.

And they cried thus to him, "We pray thee, holy youth, to come and henceforth walk among us."

This was Patrick's call to his life-work.

He woke, "pricked to the heart," as he thought of these people, whose language he knew as he knew his own, lying in heathen darkness, and he vowed that from henceforth he would spend his strength in spreading the light of the Gospel in their land.

Grown man as he was, his plans met with much opposition. For his parents, by which may be meant his father and mother, or merely his relatives, remembering the ferocity of the Irish and what had happened to Patrick in his youth, remembering also the many years in which he had been absent from them, besought him not to expose himself to

fresh dangers, but to settle down beside them for the remainder of his life.

But dangers had no terror for our hero, and to settle down was the last thing he desired to do. Doubtless he regarded the suggestion as a temptation of the devil. So he set sail, along with some companions who seem to have accompanied him from Gaul.

He landed in what is now called Wicklow, and some ancient writers say that the King of Leinster drove him out of his dominions. Another writer, probably with more truth, says that the Saint's conscience had troubled him because three-and-twenty years before he had obtained his freedom by running away from his master—whereas, as a slave, he, or someone who could have redeemed him, should have bought it from his owner. So he determined to ease his conscience and put things right, by going back to Milchu, who was still alive, and paying a double ransom. That is, paying a bodily ransom in money, and a spiritual one by endowing his old master with the knowledge of the Christian Faith.

So he and his companions returned to their boat, and sailed northward. They seem to have been very short of provisions, for they landed on a small island off Skerries. This island is now known as

Inis Patrick, and was probably at this time uninhabited. Here they tried to catch fish, but were unsuccessful, and in great distress through hunger they fared yet further north, and eventually landed at the south-west corner of Strangford Loch.

Here the great missionary, who seems to have been a most prudent and far-seeing man, hid his boat, and with his companions proceeded to explore the surrounding country. Very soon they met a swine-herd, who, alarmed at their foreign dress, and taking them to be pirates, turned and ran to his master, a chieftain of noble birth named Dichu.

At the suggestion of pirates this warrior seized his sword, and, followed doubtless by his vassals, sallied forth to meet the invaders. But instead of a barbarous robber he was confronted by a sweet-faced man of noble and dignified presence, who was unarmed, and yet who could speak to him in his own tongue. Greatly wondering, he invited the stranger and his companions to his house, where they appear to have remained some time. For we are told that after listening to Patrick's teaching, Dichu became a believer in Christ, the first of the Scots to profess the Faith.

The *Confessions* go on to tell how Patrick left his boat in the charge of Dichu, and travelled

on foot with his companions to the country where he had served so long as a slave, with the intention, as we have seen, of converting his old master, Milchu.

But as the old story, plainly half legendary, runs, when Patrick had reached the hill of Slemish, and was standing gazing on the well-known country stretched out before him, suddenly the house which Milchu still inhabited burst into flames, and in a very short time it was burned to the ground. Milchu perished along with it; for it was said that, instigated by the devil, he set fire to his house, and allowed himself to be burned to death, rather than run the risk of having to pay deference to the admonitions and teaching of his former slave.

Be that as it may, we read that Patrick returned to Dichu, who gave him a piece of land on which he could build a monastery, and also a barn or granary, in which he could hold services in the meantime. This building, afterwards turned into a church, was known in later years as "Sabhal Patraic, or Patrick's Granary, and the place where it stood, and where a church now stands, is still known by the name of Saul.

St. Patrick always regarded Saul as a special place of retreat, and in later years he often retired here when in need of rest and quietness.

It has been a cause of wonder why Christianity, in name at least, spread so much more rapidly in Ireland than in any other part of the British Isles. The answer lies to a great extent in the habits and characteristics of the people of that date, and to the policy which St. Patrick adopted towards the condition of affairs which he found obtaining in the island.

Ireland was before all else a country of clans and tribes, ruled over by petty kings and chieftains. As in Africa to-day, if a chief were influenced, his people were influenced also and followed the lead which he gave them. So the wise and far-seeing missionary went straight to these kings and chieftains and expounded the new Faith to them. When they accepted it, as quite a number did, nominally at least, their people accepted it also, and Patrick was at liberty to found monasteries, churches, and schools in that territory. He also obtained a certain amount of authority from these rulers to go up and down among the people, teaching them in their own tongue, and training their sons to be their future priests, thus founding a widespread and indigenous church.

We see this principle running through the stories which have come down to us of St. Patrick's never-ending journeys.

After establishing his first little religious settlement at Saul, and changing the barn into a church as an earnest of what would happen all over the land in later days, he set out for the Hill of Tara, where the chief kings of Ireland had their royal residence. When he arrived in the neighbourhood of this hill, the Festival of Easter was so near that he waited with his followers at a place called Ferta-fer-Feic—now known as Slane.

Here he proceeded to hold his Eastertide services. But it chanced that the date of the Festival that year coincided with that of a pagan festival, the rites of which prescribed that every fire in the country must be extinguished, and none lit again until the King's fire was relit on the Hill of Tara. Anyone who trangressed this order was to be put to death.

Now it chanced that the time appointed for the relighting of the pagan fire fell on Easter Eve, and Patrick and his followers, wrapt deep in their own devotions, paid little heed to what was going on around them, and lit their Paschal Fire on the Hill of Slane, quite regardless of the fact that the Hill of Tara was still wrapped in darkness.

The King, who was named Laoghaire, was terribly indignant at this flouting of an old established custom, which to these pagan people doubtless bore a deep religious and tribal meaning.

"Let us go and look into the matter," cried the monarch in wrath, "and let us kill the men who are doing such wickedness against our religion." And he ordered chariots to be yoked and made ready, and set out in the small hours of the morning to punish the offenders. His Druid priests went with him, and persuaded him not to venture too near the alien fire.

Patrick was summoned to appear before him, and many are the miraculous events that are said to have taken place. Indeed they are so very miraculous that we cannot believe them. The plain facts seem to have been that the great missionary seized the opportunity of appearing before King Laoghaire and his courtiers, that he preached the Gospel of Christ in their hearing, and that the King submitted to baptism. This was not, we fear, because he believed, but because he was afraid that the Apostle of this new Creed could exercise spells and witchcraft upon him, if he refused to accept the truth of his words. Whatever was his motive, his action gave Patrick a foothold in his country, and the great missionary could go about his work in peace and safety, gathering his converts round him, and when they were instructed, and had learned to read, settling them in little monasteries from whence they could sally forth in their

turn, carrying the Light of the Gospel wherever they went.

During the remainder of the Saint's life, he always followed the same policy.

We hear of him going to the neighbouring town to preach to Carbri, brother of King Laoghaire, but this chieftain would not listen to him, threatening to kill him if he did not pass on. Then he visited Laoghaire's youngest brother, who received him in his house with great joy, and was baptised.

This Prince's acceptance of the Gospel was by deed as well as by word, for he gave the stranger a site for a "Church for the God of Patrick." This site was twenty yards long, and we are told that the Prince measured it with his own feet.

In this manner St. Patrick seems to have covered the length and breadth of the land during the remaining forty years of his life. For though he lived to be an old man, we can hardly believe the historian who tells us that he was a hundred and twenty years of age when he died.

We find him spending seven years in Connaught, and several more in Donegal, then known as Tirconnel and Dalaradia. It was during this period, so legend tells us, that the Saint collected all the toads and snakes on the mountain of Croagh-Patrick in the county of Mayo, and drove them into

the sea. And from that day to this, no venomous snake has been seen in Ireland. He visited Meath and Leinster, where he baptised many notable persons. We read of him in Queen's County and Ossary, and in Munster, where, as in Connaught, he spent seven years. In this province, true to his custom, he went at once to Cashel, the royal seat of the monarchs of the country, and then "all the idols fell down before him." After this the King of Munster came out to meet him, having doubtless heard of him beforehand, and conducted him to his palace with every sign of respect.

This ruler eventually accepted the Faith and was baptised, and a quaint story is told of the ceremony. The good Bishop was carrying his pastoral staff, which probably was just a plain piece of wood bent at one end like a shepherd's crook, and sharpened at the other to enable it to be stuck in the ground. During the service he inadvertently drove the sharp end through his convert's foot, and the neophyte, thinking it was part of his initiation into the Christian Faith bore the pain unflinchingly until the ceremony was over.

The dates of all these missionary journeys cannot now be given, or the order in which they came, but we know that in the course of them Patrick and his followers succeeded in converting large numbers

of people to the Faith of Christ, and in founding very many churches and monasteries.

Perhaps the most outstanding event in these journeyings was when he came to that district of Ulster now known as Armagh, and received from the ruling chieftain a piece of ground on which the Anglican Cathedral—the See Church of the Primate of All Ireland—stands to-day. There is also a Roman Catholic Cathedral near-by.

Here is the story, partly true, partly mythical. In Patrick's time the district round Armagh was ruled by a chief of the name of Daire, who appears to have heard of Christianity, and to have had some acquaintance with the Saint. Patrick was desirous of obtaining a piece of land on which to build a church and monastery which would serve as a religious centre for that part of the country, and his choice fell on a hill near which the chieftain lived. So he went to Daire with the bold request that he would give him this high piece of ground. But Daire refused. Possibly because the hill was a prominent landmark in the countryside, and might well be utilized as a fortress.

But he did not altogether ignore the holy man's request. At the foot of the hill was a level place, known as Ferta Martyrum, because of two graves which were situated there, and this he handed over

to Patrick and his followers. Here the great missionary erected his tiny little settlement—how tiny it was may be gauged by the following description which has come down to us from very early sources. "The way Patrick made his Ferta (or Sepulchral Church) was as follows—seven score feet in the Less, or fort, and seven and twenty feet in the great house. Seventeen feet in the kitchen which also served as a refectory, and seven feet in the oratory."

The "Less" it may be explained, was the circular earthern rampart which enclosed the other buildings, giving the whole the appearance of a fort. It is clear that only a very few persons could live together in such a circumscribed area.

But we know that St. Patrick and one or two of his monks settled down here for some considerable time, and that the daily round of services were carried on in the microscopic chapel.

Then trouble arose, and now history merges again into legend. For one day one of Daire's knights came down from the chieftain's castle, leading his master's horse which he carelessly left to feed in the deep luxuriant grass which surrounded St. Patrick's little settlement, and which belonged of right to the Saint.

Now our hero might be a saint, but he could look

after his own property and he feared not the face of man. "Daire has acted very foolishly in sending brute animals to disturb the small holy place which he gave to me," he remarked, and straightway his remark was carried to that chieftain. The latter took no notice of the rebuke, however, and left his horse to graze in the meadow all night. In the morning it was lying dead, though there seemed nothing to account for its death.

The news was carried to Daire, who at once sent men to kill St. Patrick and his friends. But as they went, a grievous sickness fell on Daire, and he was like to die. "It is because of the Christian," cried his wife, who perhaps was attracted by Patrick's teaching. "Let someone go quickly and obtain his blessing, and let it be brought to us, and thou shalt recover. And let those who went forth to kill the holy man be overtaken and recalled."

This was done. Two of Daire's followers were sent to the Saint with the message, "Lo, Daire is sick. Let something be carried unto him from thee, if peradventure he may be healed."

When Patrick heard the message, he speedily blessed a vessel of water, ordering that some of its contents should be sprinkled on the horse, which would then revive, and the rest carried and sprinkled over Daire, when the same result would ensue.

And it all came to pass as the Saint predicted. The horse came to life again, and Daire recovered. The chieftain was so grateful for his escape from death that with his own hands he carried a very valuable present down to the Saint. This was a wonderful brazen cauldron, which had been fashioned beyond the seas, and which would hold three firkins. "This cauldron is yours," he said to Patrick, expecting no doubt a most humble and obsequious acknowledgment. "Gratzachan—I thank thee," replied Patrick quietly.

Angry at this calm reception of a costly gift, Daire returned home. "What a fool the man is," he said to his servants, "to say nothing more than 'thank you' for a priceless cauldron of brass. Go and take it away from him." The men, expecting to meet with trouble, told Patrick that they had orders to remove the cauldron. "Thank you, take it away," was all the answer they received. "Well, what did the Christian say when ye took back my gift?" asked Daire, when they returned home. "He only said 'thank you' again," was the answer. Daire was very puzzled. The Christian Bishop's calm detachment from material things made a deep impression on him. "'Thank you,' when I give, and 'thank you' when I take away," he exclaimed; "the man's words are so good that the cauldron

shall be returned to him"—and with his own hands he carried it back once more.

"The cauldron shall remain with thee," he said to Patrick, when he had deposited the huge metal pot at the Saint's feet, "for thou art a steady and imperturbable man. Moreover, that portion of land which thou didst so desire, I will now give thee as fully as I have it and dwell thou there."

St. Patrick had put little store on the gift and the withdrawal of the cauldron, but he received the grant of land with deepest thankfulness. For in it he saw a benefaction given through him to God, where a really great church could be built, and a sufficiently large monastery and school erected to house all the men and boys who were likely to gather round him for training in the religious life, and for education.

So he gladly accompanied the chieftain and his wife to view his newly acquired property. When they reached the plateau on the summit of the hill they found a roe with her little fawn lying snugly sheltered in the grass. "What good fortune," cried the Saint's followers, "let us catch the fawn and kill it. It will make a savoury dish." But their master rebuked them, and, lifting the little creature, he put it on his shoulder, and carried it into a place of safety, the roe trotting trustfully beside him.

After taking possession of the site he built his church just over the place where the roe and her fawn were found.

It is thought that this great apostle of Ireland died in the year A.D. 481 but the date is uncertain. He was at Saul when he was taken ill, at the little monastery which he had founded on the ground given to him by Dichu, many years before.

This place, which is situated about two miles from Downpatrick, had, as we have seen, always been regarded by the Saint as a place of rest and retirement. So it seemed fitting that he should end his days there.

But it was said (perhaps by the monks of Armagh) that he would fain have died at Armagh, which was perhaps the largest and most important of his foundations. Ancient writers tell us that old, frail, and ill as he was, he actually set out to travel thither. But the effort proved too much for him, and he was forced to return to Saul, where he died.

After his death there was a bitter quarrel between the people of Saul and the people of Armagh, as to where he should be buried. Bloodshed might have followed, had not the matter been settled by a method which seems to have been common in early days. For we read of it later in the life of St.

Kentigern, and with some slight variation in the life of St. Cuthbert. The body of the Saint was placed on a bier drawn by two untamed oxen, and the animals were allowed to take their own road, the idea being that where they stopped there would the Saint be buried. They halted at Dun-da-Leth-Glaisse, formerly the site of the residence of the chieftain of the district, now known as Down-patrick. This was afterwards chosen as the Episcopal City of the Diocese of Down, and the present Cathedral is built close by the spot where the great missionary is said to be buried. A rough monolith engraved with the word "Patric" marks his resting-place in the Cathedral graveyard.

"A very ancient and beautiful hymn known as 'St. Patrick's Breast-plate' is believed to have been written by the Saint during the period when he was encamped with his followers at Slane, near the Hill of Tara, where he braved the wrath of King Laoghaire and his Druid priests by lighting the Paschal Fire and afterwards boldly proclaiming the Faith he had come to preach."

Here is part of it, translated by the late Mrs. C. F. Alexander, and as we read it we can understand the comfort and inspiration it must have been to this valiant soldier of the Cross to repeat it to himself as he took his way through bog and briar and thicket

to batter down the strongholds of pagan unbelief, or to die in the attempt.

"I bind unto myself to-day
The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One, and One in Three.

I bind this day to me for ever
By power of faith, Christ's Incarnation,
His Baptism in Jordan's river,
His death on Cross for my salvation.
His bursting from the spicèd tomb,
His riding up the Heavenly way,
His coming at the day of doom,
I bind unto myself to-day.

I bind unto myself to-day
The power of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, His might to stay,
His ear to hearken to my need.
The wisdom of my God to teach,
His hand to guide, His shield to ward;
The word of God to give me speech,
His heavenly host to be my guard.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all who love me,
Christ in mouth of friend or stranger.

I bind unto myself to-day
  The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
  The Three in One, and One in Three.
Of whom all nature hath creation,
  Eternal Father, Spirit, Word,
Praise to the Lord of my salvation.
  Salvation is of Christ the Lord."

ST. PALLADIUS OF FORDUN

A.D. 450

In the hundred years that elapsed between the death of St. Ninian and the appearance of St. Kentigern, three men seem to have been raised up by God to keep the Lamp of Faith alight in our northern land. And although their stories are well-nigh lost in the confusing mists of time and tradition, and they are little more than names to us, there is a preponderance of evidence that they really lived and laboured in our country. They are among the number of those of whom it has been said that—"such figures flit past us like shades in the dark background of history, but some of the buildings associated with their names, though not founded in their time, keep alive their memory, and attest the belief in their existence."

The first of these is St. Palladius, who is believed to have been sent from Rome about the year A.D. 430 to be the first Bishop of the Scots, who, as we have seen, inhabited the north of Ireland.

For some unknown cause, possibly in consequence of persecution, he was obliged to resign his

charge within a year of his arrival, and to leave the country. He sailed for Britain, and tradition has it that his boat was caught in a storm, and driven round the north of Scotland and down the North Sea, until it found harbour on the coast of what we now call Kincardineshire. The date of his arrival in Alban, therefore, practically coincides with that of the death of St. Ninian, and the landing of St. Patrick in Ireland.

Ancient historians tell us that Palladius travelled inland, and settled at a place called "Ford-dun on the plain of Girgin."

Here he laboured to spread the Faith among the Southern Picts, some of whom may have listened to, or at least heard of, the preaching of St. Ninian and his monks, who, in their missionary journeys penetrated into this region not so many years before.

How long the Saint lived after his arrival at Fordun cannot be known, but, as his memory was much revered in this district in after years, he must have laboured there long enough to leave a deep and abiding mark. For in later days pilgrims visited his church, and a well, "Paldy's Well," near which he is said to have been buried, bore his name.

For many centuries a fair, known as "Paldy's

Fair" was held in the little village of Fordun on the day of his Festival, July 6th. But the most abiding result of his sojourn in Alban was the training of two disciples, St. Ternan and St. Serf, to whom he handed on the duty of keeping alight the Torch of Faith.

According to one tradition St. Palladius was martyred, but this is open to doubt.

ST. SERF OF CULROSS

d. A.D. 500

ST. SERF, or as country-folk often called him, Saint Sair, is, as we have seen, one of the two early missionaries who are believed to have been closely associated with St. Palladius. About this association, there are differences of opinion owing to differences about dates, so much so that some authorities think that there must have been two holy men of that name. But we must remember the long centuries, fifteen of them, that have passed since the days in which these early Pioneers of the Faith lived, and the meagre and vague chronology which has come down to us.

As the author of the *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*[1] writes, in connection with both St. Serf and St. Ternan, "that they contributed to the conversion of the Southern Picts we may hold as certain, on the evidence of universal tradition. There is also every reason to believe that they really were what they are said to have been, the

[1] The Rev. George Grubb.

disciples of Palladius, and that they received Episcopal Ordination from him."

Accounts differ as to how St. Serf came to Fife. Some ancient historians say that he was a native of the district, and that he was found there by St. Palladius and trained by him. Others tell us that he was one of that Saint's original followers, and landed with him in Alban.

Others again put forward a wonderful story, which is clearly mythical, about his being a grandson of a King of Arabia, born in the East. After many wanderings, which included visits to Constantinople and Rome, and a difficult journey over the Alps, he, along with a band of followers, crossed the North Sea, and landed at Dysart in Fife. Here he received permission to take the land of Fife, "from the sea of the Britains, as far as the mountain which is called Okhel (Ochil Hills) as his sphere of work."

It is at this point that we touch authentic history. Wherever the Saint came from, he already knew, or soon became acquainted with, Bishop Palladius of Fordun, and was by him consecrated Bishop and set to work in the regions the limits of which have already been given.

Bishop Serf chose Culenros (Culross), on the upper reaches of the Forth as his place of abode.

It must have been forest-land, for we read how he and his companions set to work to clear away the thorns and thistles which abounded in that place. On the ground thus prepared, he erected a tiny church, monastery and school, and also laid out a cemetery, which seems to have been one of the first acts of these early pioneers of the Church.

Probably they felt that they could not bury their dead, whether of their own monastery, or of their converts, in ground on which battles might be fought or pagan rites celebrated. So they set apart, as soon as might be, a piece of consecrated ground—a God's Acre—to which the bodies of all Christian folk could be brought to lie.

From this centre he and his monks went forth to preach the Faith on the northern and southern slopes of the Ochil Hills, and in that part of the country which we know as Fife. We hear of him preaching at Tullibody, at Tillicoultry and Alva, where for many centuries there was a well that bore his name. An ancient bridge, St. Serf's Bridge, still spans the River Devon, and carries the old road which runs through the Ochils to Strathern. The name was given in memory that the Saint had passed that way.

It was in this Strath that the good Bishop is said to have had an encounter with a dragon that had

taken up its abode in a cave at Dunning. Like St. George, St. Serf slew the dreaded beast; and the cave in which he wrought this great deliverance has ever since been known as the Dragon's Den.

At Dysart there was a cave which the Saint used as a place of retirement and meditation, and here tradition has it that he had a long argument with the Devil. But, alas! we are told that the Devil got the better of the argument.

Although he seems to have travelled most diligently up and down the districts allotted to him, it is perhaps true to say that St. Serf's greatest work was done at home, in his little monastery at Culross. For here he had a famous school, and trained many boys in sacred learning. These boys would go forth, either as monks, or devout laymen, to prove pillars of the newly founded Church in the next generation.

It was at Culross, as we shall read later, that St. Kentigern and his mother were driven ashore when the future missionary was but an infant of a few hours old. And it was St. Serf, then advanced in years, who sheltered the outcasts, and who proved a true foster-father to the helpless infant.[1] Little could the Saint have dreamt, as he lifted

[1] Here, again, there is difficulty about dates, but St. Serf may not have died till later.

the half-frozen mother and child from the boat, that long centuries after his death his own name would be best known, not because of what he himself had done, but because he had succoured, befriended, and trained the great Missionary-Founder of the Diocese of Glasgow in Scotland, and St. Asaph in Wales.

St. Serf died either at Dunning or Culross—accounts differ. Here is a quaint account of his funeral which implies that he died in Strathern.

"After many miracles and divers works—after founding many churches—when he had bestowed peace on the brethren, in the cell at Dunning, on the first day of the Kalends of July, he yielded up his spirit, and commended it to the Great Creator. After his death, his disciples and well-nigh all the people of the whole province conveyed his corpse to Culross, and with Psalms and chantings they interred him honourably."

For many centuries a procession was held at Culross on his Festival, the inhabitants marching round the little village carrying green boughs. At Keith-hall, in Aberdeenshire, a bank—St. Sair's Bank—existed, on which the parish church was built—and a fair, St. Sair's Fair, was held. Later, this fair was transferred, under the same name, to Culsalmond.

ST. TERNAN OF BANCHORY-TERNAN

d. A.D. 455

LESS is known of St. Ternan than of St. Serf. It is said that he was baptised and trained by St. Palladius, which would imply that his parents were Christian, or at least brought him to baptism, and that he was brought up in a monastic school or college, founded by that Saint.

When he was a grown man, and fit for the responsibility, Palladius consecrated him Bishop, and sent him to rule among the Northern Picts. There is a quaint legend told of this period of his life. It is said that, like St. Ninian, he visited Rome, and that the Pope gave him a bell, which, as we have seen, was one of the appendages of a Bishop or an Abbot. But though those bells were quite small, and could be easily carried, Ternan felt that it would be an encumbrance, and when he set out on his return journey, he left it, rather ungratefully, behind him.

But the bell, the "Ronecht," as it was called, had miraculous powers, for it promptly followed him to Alban. Finding that it had come so easily

to his hand Bishop Ternan used it at his home at Banchory, and there it was preserved until the Reformation. It is recorded that whenever the Saint went on tour his bell followed him.

St. Ternan spent his life fulfilling his commission to preach the Gospel among the Northern Picts who inhabited the valley of the Dee, probably journeying further north as well. He gave his name to Upper Banchory or Banchory-Ternan, as it came to be called.

Like other monks of old, he must have been able to read, and to appreciate the value of books, for we learn that he had copies of all four Gospels. And he took care of them—for his copy of St. Matthew's Gospel was treasured at Banchory after his death, and it was enclosed in a metal case adorned with gold and silver. St. Ternan died and was buried at Banchory somewhere about the year A.D. 455.

ST. KENTIGERN OF GLASGOW

A.D. 514—A.D. 601

ALL that we know about this Saint's birth and parentage comes to us from tradition, although the sure light of history very soon begins to shine on his boyhood's days. It is said that his mother was Theneu, the daughter of Loth, a Pictish King, who ruled part of the Lothians.

For after the Romans left the country, the Picts did not keep within the boundaries of their own province, but established themselves in various parts of Alban.

As for his father, nothing authentic is known of him at all. Legend has it that he was Eugenius II, King of the Scots. Anyhow, the infant was an unwanted child, and shortly before his birth, his grandfather, enraged at the disgrace of his daughter, and following the cruel custom of his tribe, caused her to be thrown from the summit of Traprain Law, in the hope that the fall would kill her. The Princess escaped unhurt, however, and the King Loth, not content with this barbarity, ordered her to be taken to Aberlady Bay, and placed in a

ST. KENTIGERN

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coracle, or hide-covered boat, from which the oars had been removed.

This frail craft and its unhappy occupant were then towed far out to sea, and left to their fate, which must have seemed certain destruction.

But God "stood within the shadows," and kept "watch upon his own,"—for instead of being driven further out to sea, the winds and tide drifted the little boat round the Isle of May, past Inchkeith and Inchcolm, and up the narrowing Forth, till it was stranded safely on the shore at Culross. During that eventful voyage a baby boy was born who was destined to revive the work which had been so faithfully begun by St. Ninian, and to carry the light of the Gospel from the Clyde to the Forth, and down to the borders of Wales. At Culross, as we know, there was a tiny monastery, ruled by Bishop Serf, who had a school there where he trained boys for the service of the Church.

He was an old man now, and on this particular morning, after having said Matins and Mass in his little chapel, he went down to the water's edge for a breath of fresh air. What was his astonishment to see a stranded boat, and in it an exhausted and shivering girl, trying to shelter a new-born babe in her arms.

At the pitiful sight all the Saint's wonderment was swallowed up in compassion. "Mochohe! Mochohe!" he cried, which in our tongue means: "My dear! my dear!"—and straightway he hurried the girl and her baby away to warmth and food and comfort. After her terrible experience it must have seemed to poor Theneu as if she had gained an earthly paradise. Whether his Rule allowed her to live under the same roof as her protector we do not know—it is hardly likely. But at any rate she remained in close touch with him, and after due instruction in the Christian Faith, she was baptised along with her infant son. To the latter, St. Serf gave the name of Kentigern, which means the "Lord's Chieftain."

The old man practically adopted the child, and brought him up amongst the other boys who attended the monastery school. Kentigern was very lovable and sweet-natured, quick to learn, and easily moved to repentance for any fault, and we find him speedily growing very dear to his master's heart, for we know that Serf, in his tenderness, gave him the pet name of "Munghu" or "Mungo," which means either "dearest friend," or "lovable and dear."

There are many legends told about his boyhood, and two of them are so quaint and pretty it is

worth while recording them. Besides, these legends are commemorated in some of the devices which form the armorial bearings of the City of Glasgow. If we look at that Coat of Arms carefully we will notice engraven on it a tree, a bird, a fish, and a bell. All these are connected with some story in the life of the Saint. At least three of them are—for the fourth, the bell, is simply the Bishop's Bell.

The earliest is connected with the bird. St. Serf's love of his foster-son caused great jealousy among the other boys, and they were constantly on the watch to see how they could belittle their school-fellow in the eyes of his protector.

Now St. Serf had a pet robin, which was so tame that it would eat crumbs out of his hand, and perch on his shoulder when he chanted the Psalms in church, flapping its wings as if it, too, would join in the worship of Almighty God.

One day, when the Bishop was in his cell, the boys began to play with the bird, and handled it so roughly that they killed it. Then, to hide their fault, and also to vent their spite upon their school-fellow, who had not been with them when they indulged in their cruel sport, they threw the little mangled body away, and declared that it was Kentigern who had killed it. The boy said nothing,

but, distressed as he thought of the Bishop's grief when he should hear of the death of his pet, he picked up the dead bird's body, and carried it into the church. Here he made the sign of the cross over it, and prayed that its life might be restored. And lo! his prayer was answered, for it was instantly restored to life, and, rising in the air, flew to greet its master and perch on his shoulder as he entered the sacred building.

The second story tells how there was a rule in the monastery that the boys should take it in turn to rise in the early morning to attend to the fire, which was never allowed to go out. For a lamp had always to be kept lit in church, and, if this lamp went out, it was necessary to have a flame from which to re-kindle it. One morning, when it was Kentigern's turn to undertake this duty, he rose at cockcrow to replenish the fire, and found that it was black and cold. The other boys had risen secretly in the night and extinguished it, in order that their schoolfellow might get into trouble. Because to kindle a fire in those days was a slow and difficult matter, and it seemed as if there would be no lights on the altar for the daily Mass.

At first Kentigern was so hurt and disheartened that he thought of running away, but when he came to the hedge which surrounded the little

monastery he paused, and, as the old chronicler puts it, "came to himself," and he determined to do the braver thing, and go back and live down his companions' unkindness. So, breaking off a twig of hazel from a bush which grew beside the hedge, he carried it to the hall, and laid it on the lifeless embers. Then, invoking the aid of the Holy Trinity, he blew on it, and instantly tongues of flame sprang up, and the fire was soon burning cheerfully. This legend explains the tree in the Glasgow City Arms.

At last the enmity of his fellows seems to have proved too much for Kentigern. Or was it an inward call which caused him to steal away from his home and his dearly-loved foster-father, and cross the Forth secretly one evening? We do not know, but our hearts go out in sympathy to the aged Bishop, who, hearing of his darling's sudden departure, followed him to the river's edge, and cried out in despair across the stream, "Alas, my dearest son, light of mine eyes, staff of mine old age, why dost thou desert me? why art thou leaving me? Return, that thou mayest shortly close mine eyes!" But Kentigern felt that for him there could be no return. He was now verging on manhood, and he must take up a man's work.

"I must go whither the Lord calls me," he explained to the aged Saint, to whom he owed all

that he was, and all that he knew. And reluctantly St. Serf agreed. So they took a sorrowful farewell of each other, knowing that there was little chance of their meeting again on this side the grave. And after St. Serf had raised his hands in blessing, they turned in different directions, and never saw each other again.

Wishing, perhaps, to reach a part of the country where he was unlikely to meet any of his former companions, our hero fared west. Again a legend tells us the incidents of his journey, and yet it is a legend that may quite well be founded on fact. It is said that as he travelled he came to the house of a holy man named Fergus, who was lying at the point of death. He stayed with the dying Saint, and cared for him, and promised to attend to his burial, which Fergus said would be arranged by God.

True enough, when the godly man had passed away, and St. Kentigern had placed his body on a cart, drawn by two oxen, in order to convey it to some graveyard, the oxen started off on their own accord, going straight to a place called Cathures, on the banks of a stream known as the Molendinar, at which in bygone days St. Ninian had obtained a piece of land, and consecrated it as a graveyard. Here Kentigern buried

his new-found friend, and here, it is said, he built himself a cell, which was probably only a hut formed of mud and wattles.

Other authorities tell us that he lived in a cave. Be that as it may, when this young Apostle of Christ took up his abode on this lonely spot, he had laid the foundation of the city of Glasgow, for the great Cathedral we find there to-day stands on or near the place where Kentigern—known to the common folk as "Mungo, the Beloved," first raised his cell.

The teaching of St. Ninian, who lived and laboured almost a century earlier than the time of which we are writing, must have penetrated into these regions many years before, and converts to Christianity must have been made, but people had forgotten, and the Lamp of Faith had burned low, so Kentigern had to set to work to kindle it afresh.

The picture of him that is presented to us during these years is a refreshing one. He seems to have been so healthy in body, and so sound in mind. He preached the Gospel of Christ to the country-folk who lived in the neighbourhood, and in time gathered a little band of converts to be his helpers, as St. Ninian had gathered them at Whithorn, and St. Serf had gathered them at Culross.

So we see how the torch was handed on by the Light-bearers of these early days.

And he taught them other things as well. By his example he showed them that a man should keep his body as clean as his soul—for he bathed every morning in the Molendinar Burn. By the hardness of his life—he slept on a rock with a stone for his pillow—and the plainness of his food—he lived on bread, milk, cheese, and butter—he taught them not to pamper their bodies. By the simplicity of his dress, which consisted of a hair-shirt, a goat-skin coat, and a cowl like a fisherman's, he showed them how a man could go through life following the highest, and yet possessing very little. And the white alb and stole which he wore over his rough garments, spoke to them of purity without and within.

As time went on, he went further and further afield, striding through the whole country of Strathclyde, from Clyde to Forth, and from Forth to Ribble, grasping in one hand his pastoral staff, which we read was not rounded, or gilded, or gemmed, but was of simple wood, and merely "bent," while in the other he carried his Office Book. He is described as having been of "middle height, though inclined to be tall, fair to look upon, and of a cheerful countenance, and of such

great strength that he was almost unwearied in the endurance of any labour, whether of body or mind."

It was during these strenuous and busy years that Kentigern became a Bishop. It is probable that he had been ordained both deacon and priest before he left Culross. But the King of Strathclyde appears to have been a Christian, and to have desired to have a Bishop in his kingdom—so did the clergy and other Christian people, of whom, our chronicler says, there were very few.

So Kentigern was asked to fill the office. At first he refused, for he was very young, only, it is supposed, about twenty-five years of age. But when King, clergy, and people begged him to agree for the sake of the church, which had fallen to such a low estate that we are told "that many were unbaptised, many had fallen into heresy, many were sunk in deadly sin, and many had been taught by men who were ignorant of the law of God," he consented.

When we remember how brightly the flame of religion was burning in Ireland at this period, and how low it had sunk in Scotland, we are not surprised to learn that an Irish Bishop was summoned to consecrate Kentigern, who doubtless would receive at the same time much good advice about how to carry on his future work.

For some twelve years longer Kentigern lived at the little monastery which he had founded on the spot where he had first reared his cell, and from which, as from all other Celtic monasteries, missionaries went out by two and two to preach and to teach in the remote regions of the district for which they were responsible. Protected by the King, whose name is uncertain, who had called him to take up office, Kentigern was able to rule his diocese in peace and security, to direct the work of his monks both at home and on their journeys, to care for and nourish the little scattered flock of Christ of which he had been given the oversight, and to take part himself in the work of evangelizing the pagan Britons, who still formed the majority of the inhabitants.

But evil days were in store. The good King died, or was dethroned, and was succeeded by a King named Morken, who was a heathen, and a bitter opponent of the new Faith. One of his first steps was to drive Kentigern from his kingdom, and try to undo the good work which he had accomplished. The young Bishop, for even now he was only about thirty-seven, does not seem to have thought of taking refuge in Ireland, as we might have expected him to do, but turned his eyes to the Celtic Church in Wales.

Travelling slowly southward, he passed through Carlisle, and hearing that the people "in the mountains," which we would now translate as the Lake District, were still pagan idolaters, he remained for a time among them, preaching and teaching. Memories of his sojourn are still preserved to us in the dedication, under his name of St. Mungo, of some nine churches in this region—the most notable being the parish church of Crosswaite at Keswick.

Then he travelled further south, following the sea coast, proclaiming the gospel wherever he went, until at last he reached the most westerly point of South Wales, where at Menevia stood a monastery and Cathedral Church governed by Bishop David, afterwards the patron Saint of that country.

This good man welcomed his exiled brother warmly, and for some time our hero found a home here. But the urge was ever upon him to be up and doing in the cause of Christ, and he yearned for an opportunity to settle down in some remote and pagan part of the country, and to gather converts round him, and found a monastery and school as he had done at Cathures.

The opportunity came when the Welsh King, hearing of his piety, and of the persecution which he had suffered, granted him a piece of land at

Llanelly in the north of his kingdom. Here we call in the aid of legend again, but though part of the narrative is purely legendary, the rest of the story affords us what may well be a perfectly true picture of what these early pioneers of the Cross went through, and the method in which they founded and built their religious settlements.

We are told that when Kentigern and his companions, for many of his converts followed him to Llanelly, reached the land allotted to them, they found it covered with dark primeval forest. Hesitating where to go, and engaged in eager discussion as to the most suitable place to settle, their way was suddenly blocked by a huge wild boar, which turned and trotted ahead of them, looking over its shoulder at intervals to see if they were following. Presently it came to a little eminence in a cleared part of the forest, and here it halted, tearing up the soil with its tusks, shaking its head, and grunting.

Kentigern took this as an indication that here was the spot designed by God as his future home. So, patting the head of the boar, he gave it his blessing, and, well content, it returned to its lair.

After its departure the Bishop made haste to take possession, as it were, of the site, by planting a Cross on the summit of the low hill, then, wrapping themselves in their gowns, and lying down under

the shelter of some forest tree, the little party went to rest. Next morning they were awake by day-break, and as the old story tells us, "worked like bees." Some of them felled trees, others carried them to the site where Kentigern himself measured them and had them cut according to his plans. Others again levelled the ground, and laid strong foundations. So, speedily, a tiny church was erected, with cells and other buildings.

And, doubtless, as in the case of all religious settlements of the period, a mound or rampart was raised around it, to protect it from wild beasts or any unfriendly intruder. All was of wood and earth for, as the historian relates, "of stone they were not able to build, nor was it then the custom."

Kentigern lived in his Welsh monastery twenty long years, until it must have seemed like home to him, and his former life at Culross and Cathures very far away. The King who had given him ground in the first place, afterwards helped him to build what must, in those days, have seemed a really fine church, and the monastery was enlarged so as to accommodate the numerous students who thronged from every part of Wales, to study under, and to be trained by, this great-hearted servant of God. These in their time went out to teach others, and so the good news of the Gospel was spread.

The Saint must now have been well over fifty, and it seemed natural that he would end his days in Wales. But once more the call came for him to leave his present surroundings, and fare forth on other work. For one day a travel-worn messenger came to the door of his monastery, bearing the news that King Morken of Strathclyde was dead, and that another King, "Rydderch Hall," or Roderick the Bountiful, had succeeded to his throne.

This Roderick was a Christian, who had been baptised in Ireland and there brought up in the Faith, and when he came to his new kingdom and found that in the last twenty years much that had been done by Kentigern had been undone in his absence, he made up his mind that, if possible, the good Bishop should be brought back, and reinstated at Cathures, which by this time was beginning to be known as Glasghu. So the messenger, as well as bearing the news of King Morken's death, bore also a request from the new King that Bishop Kentigern should return and take possession of his old diocese again.

The Saint hesitated. It meant another painful uprooting, and he had looked forward to ending his life in the "glorious monastery" which now stood beside his Abbey Church. So that night he

gave no answer, but when all the brethren had gone to rest he withdrew into his little oratory, and prostrating himself on the ground before the altar, begged that light might be shed on his path. His prayer was granted, for in a vision he saw an angel stand beside him. "Return to Glasghu to thy church," commanded the heavenly visitant, "and there shalt thou be for a great nation, and the Lord will make thee to increase among His people."

After that, there was no delay. Kentigern appointed one of the monks called Asaph to fill his place, took a sorrowful farewell of his brethren and scholars, and accompanied by a band of followers who refused to leave him, set out for his old home in Strathclyde. He left a good work partially completed behind him, for the foundations of the diocese created by him were well and truly laid, and, under the name of St. Asaph, which it acquired from his successor, it exists to this day.

Kentigern and his party were met at Hoddam, in what is now Dumfriesshire, by King Roderick, and here he remained for a considerable time. Then he went on to Cathures.

He found that much that he had accomplished twenty years before had been undone by the flood

of paganism which had overrun the country during Morken's reign, and a great deal of missionary work had to be begun afresh. But although he was now up in years, Kentigern never faltered.

Doubtless the first little buildings which he had erected had long since disappeared, but he built others, and the church which he raised was the first Cathedral Church of Glasgow. For we must remember that a Cathedral is not so named because of its size or magnificence, but because the Bishop's official chair is placed within. Indeed, in those days the Cathedral Churches were so small and plain and poor, that no one thought of using the high-sounding name of "throne," they spoke of the "Bishop's Stool."

After his return to Scotland the Saint carried on his labours for more than twenty years. Endowed with great physical powers, he went up and down his diocese until he was an old, old man, strengthening the faith of his people who were already Christians, and trying to convert the pagans and lead them to the worship of the One True God. And he did not confine his labours to Strathclyde, we are told that he went down into Galloway, and tried to revive the faith of the Niduarian Picts, whose forbears had been converted by St. Ninian, and we hear of him also preaching in the

north, near the sources of the Dee, while he sent some of his monks as far as the Orkney Isles. Indeed he was so zealous and faithful that it was said that "St. Mungo's work was never done."

It is in connection with this period of his life that the legend which links his name with another emblem in the Arms of the City of which he was patron, was created.

This is the fish with the ring in its mouth. The story is very quaint though it may not be particularly edifying. It is said that a certain petty king or chieftain gave a beautiful ring to his wife, whom he loved dearly and trusted implicitly. But she, ungrateful woman, let her affections stray in the direction of a young officer belonging to her husband's court. And, in an evil moment, she gave him this ring as a love token.

The careless youth, who does not seem to have been worthy of such misplaced affection, wishing, perhaps, to boast of his conquest, placed the ring on his own finger.

There were quick tongues to carry the tidings to the King. He, poor man, would not believe the story at first, but finding his erring squire asleep on a bank one day, he saw the Queen's ring on his finger with his own eyes. Greatly incensed, he cautiously drew it off without waking

the Knight, and threw it into the depths of the Clyde. Then he went home, taxed the Queen with her unfaithfulness, and demanded to see the ring which he had given her. She replied that she had mislaid it, and went off to her apartments to search for it. In reality she sent a frenzied message to her squire to return it at once. The confession had to be made that he had lost it! Then the trouble began.

The King, mad with righteous anger and disappointment, would have punished the Queen with death at once, but the courtiers, pitying the unhappy lady, pleaded for three days' delay, during which time she was confined in a dungeon. In her necessity, she sent a message to Bishop Kentigern confessing her fault and begging him to intercede for her with the King. The Holy Man, so the legend proceeds, did exactly what we would not have expected him to do. He used whatever miraculous powers he had to help the lady to cover up her fault and further deceive her husband.

For he sent a fisherman to the banks of the Clyde, and told him to bring the first fish he caught back to him—the Bishop—without delay. The man did as he was bid, and returned to St. Kentigern with a salmon in his hands. This the Bishop cut open, and there was the precious ring, which he sent at

once to the Queen. She, with a great affectation of innocence presented it to her husband, who naturally was dumbfounded, and had no further word to say!

One more story, and this time an authentic one! About the time that Kentigern was obliged to fly to Wales, another great missionary, whose name, perhaps, takes precedence over all others in Scotland, St. Columba, came over from Ireland, and settled in Iona. He chose for his field of labour the country of the Dalriadian Scots—which we now call Argyll. He and his missionaries travelled further north than Kentigern, to the country north of the Caledonian Canal.

But though his work did not lie in Strathclyde, Columba was so interested in his brother who was labouring there, that he arranged a meeting, and journeyed "once errand," from Iona to visit St. Kentigern. The meeting took place on the banks of the Molendinar Burn, and was attended with a certain degree of ceremony. The Bishop and the Abbot—for we must remember Columba never held episcopal rank—divided their followers into three bands, for the visitor seems to have brought many of his monks with him.

When the news of his approach was brought to St. Kentigern, the latter marshalled his large

family in front of him—first the school children, then the novices, then the monks—he himself, carrying his pastoral staff, bringing up the rear. Meanwhile Columba had marshalled his forces in the same order. When the two processions came in sight of each other, they broke into song. Chanting the Psalms in alternate verses, with many joyful "Alleluias" interspersed, they came nearer and nearer till they met and their leaders fell on each other's shoulders and embraced.

Then the Abbot was taken to the Bishop's cell, and the stranger monks found lodgings with their new-found brethren. Some days were spent by all in close and affectionate fellowship, and when they parted the two great Light-bearers exchanged their staffs. It is said that that given by Columba to Kentigern was afterwards taken to St. Wilfrid's Cathedral Church at Ripon, and was preserved there till the Reformation.

St. Kentigern lived to a ripe old age. The date of his death is uncertain. It has been given as A.D. 601. His body was buried in his little Cathedral Church.

Five hundred years later, the "Sair Sanct for the Croon," David of Scotland, while only Prince of Cumbria, helped the then Bishop of Glasgow, Bishop Achaius, who was also Chancellor of

Scotland, to erect a great and stately Cathedral over the place where the Beloved Mungo—for so he is best known in Glasgow, rested.

This was burned down within a few years, but Bishop Jocclin, who had come from his Abbot's Stall at Melrose to succeed Bishop Achaius, set to work at once to rebuild it, and the greater part of his building remains to us to-day. It carries the dedication of St. Mungo.

It is believed that the dust of the Saint lies here—and a square stone slab in the floor of the lower church, or crypt, of the choir, marks his grave, and nearby is his well.

Nothing further is authentically known about the Princess Theneu, Kentigern's mother, except the facts that after her baptism she lived a consistent Christian life, that she died before her famous son, and that she was buried a little further to the west on the banks of a stream that was afterwards known as St. Theneu's, or St. Enoch's burn. Her name, in its corrupted form, is also perpetuated in that of St. Enoch's Church, and St. Enoch's Station.

ST. COLUMBA OF IONA

A.D. 521—A.D. 597

ALTHOUGH Columba was not of Scottish birth, no record of those who carried the light of the Gospel to Scotland would be complete without his name.

It was the autumn of A.D. 521, so the old story runs, and the Princess Aethena, wife of Fedhlimid, half brother to Murchertach, the first Christian King of Ireland, was looking forward to the birth of her child. Strange prophecies had been uttered about the expected infant. It had been predicted a hundred years before, that out of the north, where Aethena's forbears and those of her husband reigned, should come a Dove which would bring light to Ireland, and enjoy the friendship of Alban.

One night the Princess had a dream, or mayhap a vision. An angel of the Lord stood by her, and offered her a mantle of wondrous beauty, tinted with the colour of every flower that grows. It was a thing of delight, but as she feasted her eyes upon it the angel took it gently out of her hands, and sent it floating into the air. Aethena looked after it wistfully, half frightened at the strange happening.

ST. COLUMBA.

"Why dost thou take it from me?" she asked.

"Because this cloak is of such exceeding honour, that it can no longer be kept by thee," was the reply.

The Princess gazed after the receding cloak with regret, for she had never seen anything so beautiful in all her life. And, lo! to her astonishment, instead of growing smaller as it drifted further and further from her, it grew bigger and bigger until it covered the mountains and the wooded valleys, and reached even over the sea to Alban.

"Oh woman, be not grieved at thy loss," whispered the angel softly, "for thou art about to bear a son of like beauty to the mantle, who will be numbered among the prophets of the Lord, and will be the leader of innumerable souls to the heavenly mansions." Then Aethena awoke, having understood from the vision that the child who would be born to her was destined for a lifework that would take him far from his home, and that by him many souls would be led from earth to heaven.

On the 7th of December the child was born, in Gartan, in what is now known as Donegal. At his baptism he received the names of Crimthann—a "wolf"—and "Colum"—or Columba—a Dove. One is inclined to smile at the combination, for it

would seem as if his parents were determined to prepare for all eventualities. If their son became a mighty warrior like his ancestors, he could be known as Crimthann—if he followed a more peaceful calling, then Columba would be more appropriate. As we know, the wolf very soon dropped out, the "Dove" remained, and will remain, all down the ages.

Remembering the prophecies, and also the vision, the child was reared with great care. As soon as he had grown beyond infancy, he was committed to the charge of a devout priest named Cruthnechan—then, as he grew older, he was sent to a monastic school at the head of Strangford Loch, ruled over by St. Finnian of Moville. Here he remained for seven years. It is interesting to note that these early schooldays must have brought the boy what was perhaps his first knowledge of the ways and customs of the country to which his future life was to be devoted—for St. Finnian had, in his early youth, studied at the monastery of Candida Casa, in Galloway, founded by St. Ninian. At Moville, Columba was ordained deacon.

After this he went for a time to the school of a Christian Bard called Gemman, who is said to have settled near St. Finnian's monastery, and to have made a bargain with the Abbot offering his poems

in exchange for the secret, well known to the monks, of how to fertilize the soil.

We know, from verses of his, written in after life, that the young deacon had poetic talents, and apparently he wished to gain a little of what might be called secular culture, by spending some time in the company of a bard. These men were the professional poets and chroniclers of Ireland, and they were officially recognised and allowed certain privileges. But as time went on, they degenerated more or less into beggars, and became such a nuisance that in later years they might have been banished altogether, had not Columba pleaded that, instead of this hard sentence, their numbers might be reduced, and their bands of pupils and followers made smaller. When he had learned all that he wished to learn from the bards, the young deacon spent some years at another very famous religious school—the monastery of Clonard, presided over by an Abbot who, like the Abbot of Moville, bore the name of St. Finnian, and who had been a pupil of St. David in Wales. This school was attended by so many scholars that it has been likened to a mediæval university.

Columba was now twenty-five years of age, and ready to embark on some projects of his own. Returning to his native district he founded a

monastery on a wooded hill overlooking Lough Foyle. It was surrounded by oak trees, from which it took its name of "Dair Calgaich," the Field of the Oaks. This name lingers in that of the modern Derry.

Having seen this Religious House firmly established, Columba did not rest on his oars. Travelling southward into Meath, he obtained a piece of land from one of the Princes of the country—and choosing another grove of oak trees, he built another monastery there, to which he gave the name of "Dair—Magh," the modern Durrow. From these two Religious Houses his pupils went, in later years, to found other establishments of the same kind, in which the rules and discipline learned from their master would be strictly observed.

Soon after the foundation of his second monastery, Columba was ordained priest by a bishop named Etchen, who lived in the Province of Meath.

For fifteen years longer the zealous young missionary laboured in Ireland, founding monasteries, and causing churches to be built, until the Irish added another syllable to his name, and Colum, the Dove, who had long since dropped his first, and more warlike name of Crimthann, became Columbkill —or Columbcille—the "Dove of the Cell," as a reminder to all how many communities had been founded and governed by him.

Then, when he was forty-two years of age, came his call to what was his distinctive life-work. Opinions differ as to how it came. Some are inclined to think it was through the leadings of God's providence and the ordinary events of every-day happenings.

Others cling to an old story, which, though not historically authenticated, has long centuries of tradition behind it. Perhaps the truth lies in a judicious blending of the two. To begin with, we must remember that before Columba was born many Scots from the North of Ireland had crossed the narrow strip of sea that separated them from the country which later bore their name, and settled in the western part of what we now call Argyll.

These emigrants were Christians, and so was the Prince, Conal, who ruled over them in Columba's day. Indeed Conal, who has given his name to Conal Ferry, near Oban, was a relative of the zealous Irish monastery-builder.

Somewhere about the year A.D. 560, these Scots suffered a terrible defeat from the Northern Picts, headed by their King, Brude. When Columba heard that his countrymen were in danger of being exterminated by these heathen Picts, into whose dominions they had ventured, he may well have

made up his mind to go to their aid, carrying with him—"not the might of temporal warfare, but of those spiritual weapons which alone can curb and restrain unregenerate nature."

In short, he may have left Ireland for no other reason than to strengthen the faith of the overseas Scots, and to try to convert the Picts.

On the other hand, tradition tells us that on one occasion his old master, St. Finnian of Moville, allowed him to examine a very rare and valuable Psalter—or, as some say, a Book of the Gospels, which was a special possession of Finnian's and much prized by him.

As the possession of such a manuscript added to the fame of a Religious House, it is plain that the good Abbot had given way to the sin of selfishness, for he wanted to keep the book to himself. Columba, on his part, if the legend be true, fell first into the sin of covetousness, then of dishonesty—for he locked himself in the church at night and copied the manuscript by stealth.

Some inquisitive person, however, must have had his suspicions aroused, for he looked through the keyhole, saw the visitor at work, and went and told Finnian. The latter was very angry, and demanded the copy which his visitor had made. Columba refused to give it up, and the quarrel

was referred to the King of Meath. That monarch gave a decision which Bishop Dowden tells us was based on that laid down in the Brehon Law—"To every cow her calf belongs, and to every book its book-child."

So Columba had to give up his copy, but he felt angry and resentful. Letting the natural man in him gain the mastery for the time, he retired to his native district, raised his clan, and persuaded its members, in order to avenge the injustice which he considered he had suffered, to rise against the King of Meath.

Over this trivial cause a great battle was fought at Cooldrevny, near the town of Sligo, in which Columba and his followers were victorious, and three thousand of the enemy were slain. But repentance followed swift on victory, and with a heavy heart Columba repaired to his confessor, Molaise, who at that time lived on the Island of Innesmurray, off the Sligo coast.

The penance laid on our hero was heavy to bear. It was, that he should leave his beloved island, and go and work among the Picts in Alban, till he had won as many souls for Christ, as he had slain men on the field of Cooldrevny. With an almost broken heart Columba bent to the rod. With twelve companions he set sail in a frail wicker boat covered

with hide for Alban, and landed on the Island of Oronsay. But when he went to the highest part of that island, he found that from it he could still see Ireland. So, determined to make his sacrifice complete, he re-embarked, and sailed still further eastward, till he came to the Island of Hii—which for long centuries we have known as Iona—and here his voyage ended.

It is probable that the real truth embodies both these opinions. As a writer on the subject has very truly remarked—"the two accounts are not inconsistent. St. Columba determined to engage in missionary work—this may have been on account of the judgment of Molaise—but the choice of his field of labour may have been determined by the thought of the heathen Picts, and the necessity for strengthening the faith of the Scots."[1]

This Island of Hii, or Iona, forms part of the Inner Hebrides, lying about a mile to the west of the Island of Mull, and separated from it by a deep and narrow channel. It is about three miles long, and a mile and a half broad, and while on one side it looks straight out to the horizon over the wild and stormy Atlantic, from the higher ground on the east a good view can be obtained of the

[1] The Rev. H. T. Lawlor.

mountains on the mainland, and also, on a clear day of the Coolin Hills in Skye.

Most of it is covered by heather, but a fairly flat and fertile plain runs across the middle of the island, from east to west, and this is capable of cultivation.

It was on the Eve of Whit Sunday, May 12th, A.D. 563, that Columba's osier-ribbed, daub-pitched coracle reached a little rocky bay on the east side of the island, and its occupants sprang ashore. This bay still bears the name of "Port-na-Churiach," the bay of the Surf-bark.

To the inhabitants, accustomed to men coming and going between Hii, Mull, and the mainland, the landing of thirteen seafarers, even if they wore monks' habits, might have seemed no very extraordinary occurrence, but, looking back through the centuries, we may adapt the words spoken by Bishop Latimer at the stake, and say that by that coming was lit a candle in Alban, that by God's grace has never been put out.

For hundreds of years thereafter Iona was the centre from which radiated the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ—and from which missionaries went forth, not only to the mainland of Scotland, but to Orkney, Shetland, Caithness, to the Faroe Islands, and to the North of England as well.

To Iona came St. Oswald and his brothers, when, as boys, they had to fly from their father's murderers. They arrived as pagan children—when they left, they were mature Christian men.

The Northumbrian Church—the Church of Oswald and Aiden, Cuthbert and Bede, which derived its existence direct from Iona, has been called the "brightest jewel in Columba's crown."

Through the influence of St. Ebba, Abbess of Coldingham, and her spiritual daughter, Princess Etheldreda, the light was carried from Northumbria to the Fenland of East Anglia. Kings and holy men came to Iona for comfort and spiritual refreshment in their lifetime, and here their bodies were brought for Christian burial.

The strangers were probably received kindly by the islanders, for, as we have seen, King Conal of Argyll, or Dalriada, as it was then called, was a Christian, and a kinsman of Columba's. And a great number of the Scots who inhabited these regions were Christians also. When Conal heard of Columba's arrival, he gave the island as a free gift to the Saint, so that he could regard it as his permanent home. Columba accepted this benefaction joyfully, and at once set to work with his monks to build a church and monastery which were to be the centre of their activities.

As a very minute description of this little settlement has come down to us, it is worth while to pause for a moment and try to picture for ourselves the humble buildings which were erected on that wind-swept island, and the daily lives of the men who lived there.

The church would be built of hewn oak brought from the mainland, thatched with reeds or heather —for Bede tells us that when a bishop from Scotland built a church at Lindisfarne this was the manner of his building, and it was after "the manner of the Scots." Round it stood the cells or huts of the brethren, fashioned of wood or wattles, in the interstices of which clay had been firmly pressed to form solid walls.

On a slight eminence, a little apart, stood the hut of the Abbot—for as we have seen, though Columba was priest and Abbot, he was never consecrated Bishop. There was also a refectory, where meals were served, and one or two spare chambers where guests could be accommodated, for Columba held the duty of hospitality in high esteem.

All these were enclosed by a high vallum, or rampart, formed of earth mingled with stones. Columba probably built this after the Irish fashion and Irish ramparts had been known to rise to a

height of fifteen feet. Outside this enclosure would stand a mill, a cow-shed, a stable, a barn, and a kiln.

There are no traces left of this early monastery, but it must have stood on or near the site where in later years the mediæval buildings, which we can still see, arose.

As time went on, and boys were sent from the adjoining islands and from the mainland to Iona to receive some simple education, and to be instructed in the Christian Faith, dormitories would be built, and a library, where manuscripts of the Gospels could be stored and copied. The monks were clothed in white gowns of hand-woven material, above which they wore natural-coloured woollen cloaks, with hoods which could be drawn over their heads. Their heads were shaven in front from ear to ear, but at the back their hair was so long that it fell on their shoulders. They went bare-foot, except when on a long journey, when they wore sandals.

The life of the community was divided into three parts, and the monks would take their share in it according to their ability. The older men, when at home, attended all the services in church, made copies of the Psalter and the Gospels, and trained and instructed the scholars.

To the younger and stronger monks fell the task of tilling the land, reaping and grinding the corn, caring for and milking the cows, fishing, and catching the seals which frequented the rocks and which proved a welcome addition to the daily fare of the brethren. It is interesting to read that the monk who baked the bread in St. Columba's time was a Saxon—not a Celt.

Wednesdays and Fridays were fast days, except when a stranger arrived, and during the weeks between Easter and Whitsunday. Hard beds were the fashion, for everyone slept on boards covered with straw—and Columba himself, up to the time of his death, slept on the rock which formed the floor of his cell, and used a stone for his pillow.

The Saint is represented as being tall, and of stately presence, with very brilliant eyes, and it is evident that he had a strong sense of dignity, and insisted that his position as Head of his Community should be recognised. For he was always attended by a faithful servant and friend named Dairmit, and when strangers arrived on the island they had to send him a formal request for an interview. But along with his natural reserve and dignity he had a very tender heart, and was always ready to comfort and sympathize with those who came to him for counsel and help.

For the first two years Columba and his companions contented themselves by working among their countrymen who had settled in Dalriada. These had been born of Christian parents, but doubtless many of them had fallen away, and had grown up in semi-heathenism, owing to the distance from their Mother Church in Ireland, and their proximity, on north and east, to the pagan Picts.

But at the end of that period the Saint determined to fare further afield. So about the year A.D. 565 he set out on a long and dangerous journey to visit the King of the Northern Picts, whose castle was situated near the mouth of the River Ness, some hundred and fifty miles from Iona. This monarch, whose name was Brude—he who had defeated the Scots—was still a heathen, indeed we are told that he was an idolater, although no one can tell the nature of his idolatry, or what rites he practised. Probably he was under the domination of the Druids, who in those days, in Scotland at least, were not so much priests as sorcerers and magicians, resembling the medicine-men and witch-doctors of Africa to-day.

As Columba could not speak the Pictish language he took with him two monks of Irish birth, Comgall and Cainnech, who had been his fellow students, and whom he probably summoned from Ireland.

These two men were afterwards famous in Irish Church history, for Comgall became Abbot of Bangor in County Down, and Cainnech gave his name to the city and Cathedral of Kilkenny.

It must have been a long and arduous journey for the three valiant soldiers of the Cross, for not only had they to traverse the wild passes of the highland mountain ranges, but when they reached the other side, they would find themselves in an absolutely isolated and uncharted land. And they would have to make their way through tangled forests, over endless morasses, and round deep and dangerous lochs. Doubtless they preached the Gospel to any of the inhabitants whom they came across.

At last they came to King Brude's castle, only to find it bolted and barred against them. For the King had seen them coming, and, puzzled, doubtless, by their strange attire, desired to know what manner of men they were before he opened his gates.

Here we must tell one of the many legends which have sprung up around the life of this great Saint. It is said that he walked straight up to the door of the Pictish fortress, and made the Sign of the Cross. Then he laid his hand on the door, and lo! it flew open at his touch. Awed by this evidence

of authority, King Brude advanced humbly to meet him, and listened with attention to what he had to say.

But if the King thus welcomed the stranger with his Gospel of love and peace, Broichan, the chief Druid and magician—who, it is said, had been King Brude's foster-father—had far other ideas.

If this new religion were introduced into the country, his profession was gone. So he tried, by every means in his power, to drive away the newcomers. It is said that when the Saint and his companions were singing evensong, according to their custom, outside Brude's castle, Broichan and some of his friends came near, and with all kinds of diabolical noises attempted to drown the sound. Columba, however, whose voice was naturally strong and clear, sang the forty-fourth Psalm with such vigour that the strains of it were heard far and wide.

As a result of the Saint's labours King Brude accepted Christianity, and after due instruction was baptised, along with many of his people. Thereafter he gave every assistance in his power to Columba and his followers, who now made the conversion of this wild and savage people their first concern.

The monks returned to the Mother House in Iona after this first missionary journey, but time and again they sallied forth anew, the great Abbot himself at their head, and penetrated into the most remote glens teaching the Faith of Christ to the men and women and children who lived there.

And as the community grew larger, little bands of monks were sent forth, not only to go up and down the country, but to settle in it, and to found tiny monasteries which would carry on the traditions of their Mother House, and yet be in themselves centres of light and learning.

The stories of St. Machar's life, and of many others, are examples of this.

Being such a keen missionary himself, it was natural that Columba should take a great interest in the work which another of our early Light-bearers was carrying on in the adjacent kingdom of Strathclyde. This was St. Kentigern—or "St. Mungo the Beloved"—about whom we have been reading. For these two great missionary Saints lived practically at the same time, St. Kentigern being three years older than St. Columba.

Although the Saint had made Alban his adopted home, he always kept in close touch with the land of his birth, and the church of his baptism. Messages were sent regularly to and fro between the little

island and the Irish mainland—and Irish Bishops and Abbots came to visit Columba, and to render help in any time of need. Nor was this friendship at all one-sided. When any crisis arose in the Irish Church, or in the councils of the Irish nation, Columba set sail, and crossed the wide expanse of waters, to give his countrymen the benefit of his presence and advice. The visit we know most about was when, in A.D. 590, he set out, accompanied by King Aidan—King Conal's nephew and successor—to attend the great Council of Drumceat, near the monastery founded by him in early years at Derry. His object in doing so was threefold. In the first place King Aidan had a dispute to settle with Aidus, King of Ireland, and he felt that the Saint's wise and moderate judgment might help in the decision. Then, along with other matters, the question of the tribute which the Scottish settlers in Alban had hitherto been forced to pay to the chief King of Ireland had to be discussed, as had also the question of the bards who, during the years that had elapsed since Columba had studied poetry under Gemman, had become greedy, arrogant, and overbearing, threatening people with violence if they did not contribute to their support. Consequently there was a risk of this profession being abolished altogether. Indeed, one of the

Irish kings had already pronounced a decree of banishment against all bards and their followers in his kingdom. Columba, loving both his country and his countrymen, desired the good of both, and by his wise and tolerant advice all those matters were satisfactorily adjusted.

Peace was now restored between the Princes. The Scots in Dalriada were exempted from paying tribute to Ireland, and the bards were allowed to continue their calling, but their trains of followers were cut down, only a few being allowed to each bard, so that their maintenance should not be a burden on the country-folk.

Columba was now an old man, and he seems to have had a premonition that this was his last visit to his beloved fatherland. For he visited the two monasteries that he had founded in his youth, Derry and Durrow, and made a prolonged stay at the latter. He also went out of his way to have an interview with St. Comgall of Bangor, who, years before, had accompanied him on his mission to King Brude. After visiting the Bishop of Coleraine also, he returned to Iona.

Some three years after this visit the great Abbot completed his thirtieth year at Iona, and as the infirmities of age grew upon him, he began to have a deep desire to "migrate to God," as the swallows

migrate to a sunnier clime. Another of the legends that circle round his name tells us how, one day, two of his followers standing at the door of his hut, saw his face light up with exceeding brightness, then become clouded and sad.

They enquired the reason, and after some persuasion their master told them that on that very day he had completed the thirtieth year of his sojourn in Alban; and that he had been earnestly praying that the Lord would deliver him from his labours here, and call him to his Heavenly Fatherland. In answer a vision had been granted to him. He had seen two angels sent from the throne of the Highest to lead him thither. But they had suddenly paused, and were even then standing on the other side of the Sound, and were preparing to fly back whence they came.

"For," said the Saint sadly, "the prayers of many churches have gone up to God that I should linger in the body a little longer, and for four years I must still abide with you on earth. At the end of that period I shall depart suddenly and with no sickness, to the Lord, and His angels will come to meet me."

This prediction came true. After the additional four years of his warfare were accomplished the aged Saint, now too old to walk any distance, was

conveyed in a cart to visit some of the brethren who were engaged in very heavy work on the west side of the island, and to their great sorrow he told them that it was the last time he would travel abroad. Never more would they see his fatherly face watching them at work. There is a spice of humour in the way he rebuked their mourning. "I might have gone at Pasque," he said (Easter having fallen early that year), "Christ the Lord had conceded this to me if I wished it. But in order not to mar the joyous Festival I preferred to delay the day of my departure a little longer."

Then, as he was driven away, he lifted up his hand and blessed the island and its inhabitants, praying that from that moment poisonous reptiles should be harmless to hurt either man or beast, as long as the islanders continued to observe the commandments of God.

At the end of the same week, on the Saturday, the Saint, accompanied by his faithful attendant, Diarmit, went to bless the barn near the monastery, and the winnowed corn that was lying therein. When he had done so, he gave thanks because he foresaw that the monks would have bread enough for the coming year. Then he turned to his devoted follower, and whispered that he had a "little secret"

to impart to him, the secret being that he knew that this was his last day on earth, and that at midnight he would depart to a better country. "The Lord hath revealed it to me," he added triumphantly.

On their way home the aged Abbot was so exhausted by his effort that Diarmit and he sat down by the path to rest themselves awhile. And lo! there ran up to him the old white pack-horse, which for many a year had carried the milk vessels between the byre and the monastery.

It placed its head on his breast, and whinnied and cried, as if it had been a human being. Diarmit would have drawn the faithful beast away, but his master forbade him to do so. "Let him alone," he said, "let our friend alone. Let him pour out his grief into my bosom. For it is plain that the Creator Himself hath in some way made it known to him that his master is about to leave him." Then, as the animal was turning away of itself, he raised his hand and gave it his blessing.

Further on, he mounted a little eminence which commanded a view of the monastery. Lifting up his hands he blessed it also, saying, "This place, small and mean as it appears, shall be honoured not only by the Kings of Alban and their people, but by the rulers of strange nations, and those

subject to them. By the holy men also of other churches it shall be held in reverence."

When he returned home, with his usual diligence he began to transcribe a Psalm—the xxxiv. But when he had written the tenth verse, "They who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good," he paused. "Here at the end of the page I must stop," he said, "let Baithene (his successor) write what follows."

For some time thereafter he remained silent then when the bell rang for the Midnight Office he rose hastily, and with what little strength remained ran into the church in front of his brethren, and knelt in prayer before the altar.

The faithful Diarmit, following a little distance behind, saw for a moment the whole church lit up with unearthly radiance, which, however, faded in a few seconds. In the darkness that followed—for the brethren had not yet come in with their lamps—Diarmit cried, "Father, where art thou," and groped his way to the front of the church. Here he found the Saint lying before the altar, and sitting down beside him, he raised him in his arms, and supported his head on his bosom.

The brethren, having now assembled with their lamps, saw that their beloved Abbot was dying, and burst into cries of mourning and lamentation.

But these were soon hushed as Columba's eyes opened. With a wonderfully radiant expression he looked round the sacred building, seeing doubtless the holy angels coming to meet him, as he had foretold. He was too weak to raise his hand, but Diarmit raised it for him, and, speechless though he now was, the dying Abbot moved it gently to and fro, to give his children his last blessing. And in the very act his soul departed to the Country where he had so often longed to be. His death took place in the early hours of Sunday, June 9th, A.D. 597, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

Chanting Psalms, his brethren carried his body back to his cell, and there it was reverently wrapped in fine linen.

Vigil was kept over it for three nights and three days, then it was laid to rest. The stone which had served the Saint so long for a pillow was afterwards set up to mark his grave.

A few days after his death two monks travelled from Ireland to visit Columba in Iona. On their journey to the coast they fell in with two brethren who had just come from that little island and were on their way to Derry. "Is your holy father, Columba, well?" asked the monks. "Truly he is well," replied the strangers, "for he is with Christ."

For a hundred years, so history tells us, Columba's body rested in its first grave. Then it was taken from thence and carried to Ireland, where it was placed in a richly ornamented shrine. This removal took place owing to the inroads of the Danes, who descended on Iona, and burned the church and the monastic buildings.

Twenty years later, this shrine was brought back by Abbot Diarmit, and placed in a stone church which had been built in what was considered a safer situation. But the Danes returned early in the ninth century, at a time when Diarmit was absent, and an Irish Abbot, named Blaithmac, was in charge.

When this holy and courageous man heard of the approach of the heathen hordes, he knew the reason of their coming. The fame of the shrine had reached them, and they coveted the gold and silver with which it was adorned. "Take it away speedily, and bury it," he said to the brethren, "and do not tell me the chosen spot."

The brethren did as he commanded, and thereafter repaired to their cells or to the church, to fortify their souls against death by prayers and tears. Blaithmac, brave man as he was, had already entered the church, and begun to celebrate the Holy Communion. While he was doing

so the fierce Norsemen reached the monastery, and rushed through it, killing every monk they found. Entering the sacred building, their leader strode up to Blaithmac. "Tell us where the shrine is?" he shouted; "give up the gold."

Blaithmac, attired in his sacred vestments, turned and faced the intruder calmly. "I know not, truly, what gold ye seek," he said, "or where it may be placed in the ground. But if it were permitted me to know, Christ permitting, never would these lips tell it to your ears."

Almost ere the words were spoken, the Abbot was hacked to pieces before the altar.

Four years later Diarmit returned, and built an oratory over the spot where the shrine was concealed, and tradition says that for many years it rested there along with the shrine of the martyred Abbot Blaithmac. Doubtless it was this oratory which King Magnus of Norway refused to enter, out of reverence for those who rested there, when he raided the Hebrides in A.D. 1098. In after years some of St. Columba's relics were carried to Dunkeld by Kenneth MacAlpine when the church which this monarch had built there superseded Iona as the ecclesiastical centre of the kingdom.

This great missionary Saint and Abbot was also a poet of no mean order. Chief of his writings

which have been preserved to us is his Altus, a poem of twenty-two verses, each beginning with a letter of the alphabet, arranged in due order. The first verse shows something of the grandeur and solemnity of the whole.

[1]"Ancient of Days, enthroned on high,
The Father Unbegotten He
Whom space containeth not, nor time,
Who was, and is, and aye shall be.
And One-born son, and Holy Ghost,
Who co-eternal glory share.
One only God, of Persons Three,
We praise, acknowledge, and declare."

[1] This is the rendering of the late Bishop Mitchell of Aberdeen, by permission of his widow.

ST. MACHAR OF ABERDEEN

d. A.D. 600

THIS Saint, who is also called Maurecius and Mochumma, was the son of an Irish chieftain. He seems to have been a very sweet and biddable boy, who, from his earliest childhood, was inclined to all that was good and holy. One very charming legend tells us that when he was an infant, angels were heard singing songs around his cradle, lulling him to sleep, and giving him happy dreams of Paradise.

As a youth he showed no inclination to follow the footsteps of his father and to become ruler after him; so he was sent to be trained as a monk at one of the monasteries founded by the great Abbot Columba.

It is said that when Columba was about to cross to Alban, on what was to prove his life-work, and Machar stated his determination to accompany him, the Abbot begged the young man to return to his father, and to the duties which in the future would naturally fall to him. But Machar was obdurate, and replied in words some of which might be pondered by young missionaries to-day.

"It is thou who art my father," he said, "and the Church is my mother. And my country is where I can gather the largest harvest for Christ." And Columba made no further protest.

When Machar was a little older he was sent to preach the Faith in the Island of Mull. Here again legend steps in and tells us that in this place he was attacked by a wild boar which he promptly turned to stone, and that he also healed seven lepers. The latter story may not be legend at all, however, but solid truth, if the disease were other than leprosy, and the outcome of scanty food and uncleanly habits. For Machar's knowledge of hygiene and of the simple rules of healing, acquired at the monastery at Iona, rudimentary as they would seem to us, must have been much in advance of that of the islanders of Mull.

Then greater responsibility was laid on the young monk's shoulders. He was consecrated Bishop, and sent, with twelve companions, to the mainland, his orders being that he was to found a monastery and settle down when he had found a spot where a river flowed in the form of a Bishop's Crook. The search for such a site took the little company far afield. They crossed the channel and tramped across Scotland, ever keeping to the north-east. But although they pursued their way

along the banks of many rivers, they saw none that curved like a Bishop's Crook until they came to the mouth of the Don, in what we now know as Aberdeenshire.

Here at last they found the spot described by their Abbot, and here they setttled, building a church and living round it in their little huts. This is supposed to have been about the year A.D. 570. From this tiny settlement they sallied forth to bring the folk of the neighbourhood to the Faith of Christ. Apparently they met with good success, for we read that many were brought to the Faith, many churches erected, the worship of false gods extinguished, and "idols cast down."

We are again indebted to legend for a long story as to how St. Machar accompanied St. Columba to Rome, and was afterwards Bishop of Tours. But this is plainly false. St. Columba never visited Rome, and there has been no Bishop of Tours who bore the name of Machar. So we may assume that he finished his life of missionary service in his little monastery on the banks of the Don, and that he was buried in the church which he had erected there.

This church was superseded by a great mediæval cathedral, founded by King Edgar in A.D. 1357, and completed by Bishop Gavin Dunbar early

in the sixteenth century. At the Reformation this beautiful old building, which was dedicated to the Saint, was terribly defaced and despoiled, but it has since been restored, as far as may be, and it serves as the parish church of old Aberdeen.

Many place-names in the district commemorate St. Machar—St. Machar's Well, Macharshaugh, Macharmuir, and others.

ST. DROSTAN OF DEER

d. A.D. 600

THIS Saint, whose chief memorial is the *Book of Deer*, the most ancient Scottish document in existence, was a scion of the Royal House of the Scots, and a nephew of St. Columba. Having pondered deeply in his boyish years over the sacred Mysteries of the Incarnation and the Passion of our Lord, he determined as he grew to manhood to dedicate his life to the service of God.

In order that he should receive a sound grounding in religion, his parents sent him to Ireland to be trained under his uncle, who had not as yet left his native land. The youthful Drostan entered the monastery of Dalquhongale (Holywood), and became a monk there. Years passed, and the Abbot of Dalquhongale died, and Drostan, now grown to manhood, succeeded him. But the office of Abbot did not satisfy him, he craved for a more solitary and meditative life, and we find him at Glenesk in Angus, where he built a cell and lived as a hermit.

He cannot have shunned the society of his fellow-mortals altogether, however, for we read that he founded a little church on the lonely banks of Lochee, and although all trace of this building has long since disappeared, the memory of its founder lingers in the names "Drostie's Well," and "Drostie's Meadow." We do not know how long this phase of Drostan's life lasted, but it was brought to an end by a visit from his uncle, who had now come to Iona, and who, keen missionary as he was, perhaps thought his nephew might be doing better work for Christ by helping him in his missionary journeys than in living alone thinking chiefly of his own soul.

Be that as it may, we find the two travelling in company, and arriving at Abbordoboir (Aberdour) in the most easterly part of Buchan. It is thought that the Mormaer, or Ruler of Buchan, whose name was Bede, had one of his Raths, or forts, here, and that a considerable number of people lived round the Rath—so it was an excellent place in which to commence their missionary labours.

The Mormaer, moreover, was inclined to be friendly, and presented a piece of ground to Columba and his companions, granting them certain privileges along with it. Here they settled

down for a time, and here they built a church which in after years bore St. Drostan's name.

But Columba could never rest, he must always be up and doing in the service of his Master, and after some time spent at Abbordoboir he and his companions travelled some twelve miles inland to where another of the Mormaer's "cities" stood, on the banks of the River Ugie.

The high-sounding word "city" probably meant the little cluster of huts which stood on the level ground by the river, watched over by the chief's Rath, which was situated on one of the neighbouring hills. St. Columba saw the possibility of such a site, and boldly asked Bede to give him ground there. But the monarch, thinking, possibly, that he had done enough for the stranger, refused. Then, according to ancient story, the Hand of God intervened. Bede's son fell ill, and was like to die, and the despairing father begged the holy man to intercede with his God on behalf of the child. Prayers were offered, and the boy recovered, and in gratitude for this mercy a large tract of land was handed over to the missionaries.

Here a quaint story comes in. The monks thought at first of building this house on a piece of ground at some distance from the city, but as

they were digging the foundations a mysterious voice was heard to say authoritatively:

"It is not here
Ye'll build Kirk o' Deer,
But on Top Tillery,
Where mony corps mun lie."

So the builders changed their site, and built their little monastery and church on Top Tillery, a wooded hill almost completely encircled by the river Ugie. This rhyme does not agree very well with another story, which is certainly more authentic, which says that Columba, when he had installed Drostan as Abbot of this new house, and had invested him with all authority, prepared at last to depart to Iona. But ere he set out on his homeward journey he blessed the new buildings, and predicted that no one who came against them in battle would have the victory.

This little ceremony was the cause of the monastery receiving its name, for Drostan was so moved at the departure of his beloved friend and master that tears of sorrow ran down his face, and Columba, his heart torn also by the parting, pointed to the little settlement and exclaimed: "Henceforth let 'Dear' be its name."

We know little of St. Drostan's after-life. Doubtless he worked as his fellow-missionaries worked,

going out and converting the heathen Picts who dwelt in the surrounding country. And doubtless he lived to a good old age, and departed, at last, in peace.

His bones are known to have been preserved in a stone chest which rested in St. Drostan's church at Aberlour as late as the beginning of the sixteenth century. The *Book of Deer*, which we have mentioned, was the "Gospel Book" of St. Drostan's monastery, although it was not written in his day. It is in ninth century script, and contains the whole of the Gospel of St. John, and part of the other three Gospels, along with fragments of an Office for the Visitation of the Sick, and part of the Apostles' Creed.

A collection of memoranda of grants given to the Abbots of Deer by Celtic Chiefs in early days, which gives us most interesting glimpses of the condition and habits of the country at that time, are written in Gaelic on blank pages and on the margins.

This most valuable and unique memorial of the ancient Abbey and monastery which was founded by St. Drostan and his followers is now preserved in the University Library at Cambridge.

St. Drostan's foundation, of which no trace remains, must not be confounded with the mediæval

monastery founded at the beginning of the thirteenth century by William, Earl of Buchan, who brought Cistercian monks from Kinloss in Moray. This Cistercian House succeeded St. Drostan's little Celtic establishment, and the ruins of the more stately building can still be seen adjoining the kitchen garden of the mansion house of Pitfour.

ST. BALDRED OF THE BASS

d. A.D. 608

ST. BALDRED OF THE BASS has been called by an old writer the "Apostle of the Lothians." And we may accord him this title, although in later years he was completely overshadowed by the great Apostle of Northumbria, the saintly Bishop Cuthbert.

Baldred must have been born about the middle of the sixth century, as the date of his death is given as A.D. 608. Early historians differ as to his nationality, and the religious community from which he came. One account says that he was of Scottish extraction, and was sent out from Glasghu by St. Kentigern, another, with more probability, records that he was a Saxon and was sent from Lindisfarne. For the Bishops of Lindisfarne held jurisdiction, in early days, over that part of Northumbria which extends from the Tyne to the Forth and inland to Teviotdale—so the Lothians were subject to this authority.

Be that as it may, we know from an authentic source that Baldred, impelled by ardent desire for

propagating religion, devoted himself to the Picts, and instructed them in the Way of Christ.

From Simeon the historian monk of Durham and others, we learn the boundaries of the district for which the Saint was responsible. It embraced that part of the country which stretches between the sea and the river Leader on the east and west, and from Inveresk to the Lammermuirs on the north and south. Here Baldred preached the Gospel, and here he founded a "College," or monastery, at Tyningham near the mouth of the East Lothian Tyne.

From Tyningham the work spread, and churches were founded at Auldhame and Prestonkirk. Some authorities add Whitekirk to the list, but the evidence of this is not so well authenticated.

But although these churches would serve as places of worship for Baldred and his brother monks, and for the converts who lived in the immediate neighbourhood, churchgoing as a regular custom does not seem to have been common in these early days. Doubtless the country was too wild and inaccessible, the villages too remote. For Bede tells us that the people did not go to church, but that the priests went out into the villages, and on their arrival the people flocked out to meet them, and listened eagerly to their

prayers and preaching. In this way, those who were already converted were strengthened in their faith, while to those who were still heathen the Light was carried.

The Sacraments appear to have been administered to the faithful in the villages, often in the open air. This explains the portable altars carried by the missionaries, one of which was found in St. Cuthbert's coffin. It consists merely of a little square of wood, overlaid with silver, which had been consecrated to its sacred use, and could be placed on any ordinary bench or table.

So while St. Columba and St. Kentigern, with their followers, were spreading the Gospel of Christ among the northern Picts and in Strathclyde, and St. Machar and his twelve monks were founding their monastery at the mouth of the Don and preaching in what we now know as Aberdeenshire, St. Baldred and his companions, however few in number, were labouring in the same cause along the fertile seaboard of the Lothians.

However vigorous a missionary he may have been, Baldred had the spirit of a hermit, and like so many of these early pioneers of the Gospel, he felt it necessary to have some place of retreat to which he could retire for long periods of quiet prayer and meditation. His choice fell on the Bass

Rock, and here he lived, for the most part, in his later years, going over to the mainland at intervals in order to supervise the monastery and churches which he had founded, and to take part in frequent missionary journeys.

Three quaint legends are told of this hermit-saint. Two are connected with his life, one with his death.

It is said that in his days a rock, which lay between the Bass Rock and the shore, was the cause of many wrecks. The good Saint was aware of this, and was grieved in his heart at the serious loss, both of lives and of boats. So after much prayer and fasting he rowed over to the rock, and climbing up on it, he seated himself, and nodded gravely. Instantly it removed itself to the shore, where it can still be seen, and is known as St. Baldred's Cobble. Another rock, situated off the coast at Tyningham, which is said to rock to and fro in storms, bears the name of St. Baldred's Cradle.

At Prestonkirk, where the Saint lived for some time, a well of exceptionally pure water, which tradition tells us had miraculously burst forth for his use, is called St. Baldred's Well.

The good man is supposed to have died, worn out by his missionary labours, in the house of the parish priest of Auldhame, about the year A.D. 608.

In connection with his death, legend again steps in. As was perhaps natural, the monks of his three foundations quarrelled among themselves as to his place of burial.

Tyningham, Auldhame, and Prestonkirk each claimed, for one reason or another, the honour of receiving the body of their Saint.

At last the brethren, worn out with arguing, laid the matter before a very wise man, who was famed for his sanctity.

"Spend the night in prayer," said he, "and by the morning light will come." The brethren did as he directed, and lo! when the night was ended, and the cold March morning broke, three bodies of the Saint lay on the bier—one for Tyningham, one for Auldhame, and one for Prestonkirk!

St. Baldred of the Bass must not be confounded with a later Baldred, or Baethere, who lived a hundred and fifty years later, and who was an anchorite at Tyningham.

ST. BOISIL OF MAILROS

d. A.D. 664

TRAVELLING by rail on the North British route from Edinburgh to Carlisle, we pass, four miles south of Melrose, the station and village of St. Boswells. To people who know the district, the name is associated with a change of trains if one is proceeding to Jedburgh, Kelso, or Berwick, or with sheep and cattle sales which take place in its large auction mart.

Very few people link up the name with the Saint whom it commemorates—Boisil, the kindly and generous-hearted monk who was Prior of the little monastery of Mailros, which lay, surrounded by forests, on the banks of the Tweed just opposite Bemersyde, and a few miles south of the Melrose of mediæval and modern times.

Yet such a man existed, and possibly his pupil, the great St. Cuthbert, Apostle of Northumbria, would never have reached the spiritual heights which he attained, had it not been for Boisil, who proved to him a true Father-in-God.

We do not know the date of the good man's

birth, or where he was trained, indeed all that we know about him comes to us second-hand as it were. For the Venerable Bede, who is his biographer, if such scanty notice as we have of him can be called biography, obtained his information from Herefrith, an Abbot of Lindisfarne, and Segfrid a monk of Jarrow, who had both, in earlier days, lived at Mailros along with Boisil.

But we do know that the Abbot of the little monastery, Aeta by name, was absent one day when a goodly youth named Cuthbert, who described himself as a shepherd, knocked at the door, and begged for admission.

The porter might well have been puzzled how to answer his request, for the lad was on horseback and was accompanied by an attendant, had not gentle Prior Boisil happened to be near at hand. With the strange prophetic instinct which seemed to be his in a remarkable degree, the Prior, after looking keenly at the youth exclaimed, "Behold the Servant of the Lord," and gave him a hearty welcome. He was not in the position to admit the stranger to the novitiate, but on Aeta's return he gave such a good report of him, and vouched so earnestly for his motives, that the Abbot received Cuthbert into his community sooner than he might otherwise have done.

Thereafter Boisil seems to have taken the young novice under his special care. A great lover of the Scriptures, he trained his pupil to study such portions of the Bible as were then available, especially the Psalms and the Gospels, and he took him with him as his attendant when he went out to preach, as was his wont, up and down the countryside. For Boisil was a great evangelist, and the country-folk of the neighbouring hamlets and villages knew him well.

He also spoke to the young monk very often about the Holy Communion and the benefits which were received from a devout reception of that great Mystery. "How good a Jesus we have," he would exclaim over and over again, when talking of it.

As we shall see, Cuthbert's later life showed the result of this early training and example. In the year A.D. 661 Boisil predicted that a great pestilence would visit the country after three years, and that many of the monks would suffer from it, including the Abbot, Cuthbert, and himself. He foretold that the Abbot and Cuthbert would recover, but that he himself would die. Which things came to pass. For in the year A.D. 664, a grievous pestilence broke out, and among the sufferers were the Abbot and Prior of Mailros.

How many more of the brethren were affected, history does not relate.

Cuthbert was the first to be attacked, and he was tenderly nursed by his friend and spiritual father. When his patient, weak and ill with fever, became low-spirited, Boisil encouraged him by predictions of the importance of the work which God, in His providence, intended him to do. "Thou shalt not die, but live," he said, "and thou shalt become a bishop, and do great things for the Church." But as the young man's strength returned, the good Prior had graver things to say.

"In seven days, I too, will fall victim to the disease," he said, "And I shall not recover, so while there is time, learn as much as thou canst from me."

"And what will be best for me to read, that can be finished in seven days?" asked Cuthbert, sad and grieved at his friend's prediction.

"The Gospel of St. John," replied Boisil, "which we can read in that time, and confer on as much as is necessary."

So during this Indian summer, as it were, the two friends, master and pupil, sat with the manuscript of the Gospel on their knees, and the one explained and expounded, while the other listened.

Then the blow fell, for blow it was to Cuthbert,

although we are told that Boisil departed to the Lord with great joy. It is interesting to know that the pupil succeeded his master in the office of Prior. In A.D. 1030 St. Boisil's remains were translated, at the same time as those of the Venerable Bede, to Durham Cathedral, where they were buried, as was fitting, near those of his dearly-loved pupil, St. Cuthbert. The parish, ancient village, and church of the district where he had spent his life were dedicated to Boisil after his death. But with the passing of the years the parish acquired the name of Lessunden, or "manor place of Edwin," and the ancient village gradually disappeared. But even after the Reformation there was a chapel standing which bore the Saint's name, the stones of which were used in the building of the present parish church. In later days the present village of St. Boswells came into being.

ST. CUTHBERT OF NORTHUMBRIA

A.D. 636—A.D. 687

As we study the lives of the early Christian missionaries, it is fascinating to trace the links that formed the chain which connected them, and to see how one Light-bearer shed his light in his own special field of labour, and yet handed on the torch to others.

It was a far cry in those early days from Argyll to Northumbria—from Iona to Lindisfarne, and yet the torch that brought the light of the Gospel to the Saxon kingdom was lit on the little island lying far away in the Western Sea. As we will see, when reading the life of St. Ebba, her three brothers, the sons of King Ethelfrid of Northumbria were sent, as children, for protection to St. Columba's monastery, and there they were taught the Christian Faith, and were baptised.

When Oswald, the second son, regained his father's throne in after years he vowed, like a true servant of the Cross, that he would introduce Christianity into his kingdom, which still lay in heathen darkness. To help him in the difficult

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task, he sent some of his nobles to Iona to ask the Abbot to send one of his monks to teach the people of Northumbria the Faith which in his youth he, the King, had learned in the island monastery.

We can fancy the joy with which the request was received. The monks had cast their bread on the waters, when they harboured and trained the royal exiles, and now they were finding it again in this door of opportunity which was opening to them. With glad hearts they selected one of their number, Corman, and sent him away with the messengers. But Corman was not a success, he proved gloomy and hard, and soon he retraced his steps to his northern home.

Then a very simple and kindly monk named Aidan was sent, as well as one or two companions to accompany him, and so the Light was carried to Northumberland.

For Aidan proved to be the right man for the post, and he became eventually the first Bishop of Lindisfarne, which was the precursor of the See of Durham. He chose the island of Lindisfarne as his place of residence and the centre of his work, perhaps it reminded him of Iona. Here he built the little church in which was set up his "Bishop's Stool," as the episcopal throne was called in these far-off days, and here he erected his monastery and

college where he educated twelve boys, who, in after years became pillars of the Church.

Aidan did not confine his work to the island. He often crossed to the mainland, and went up and down his diocese, teaching and preaching, and when the time was ripe, founding little monasteries in which he placed a few of his disciples so that they could carry on the good work; and, in their turn prove Light-bearers. One of these tiny monasteries he planted at a place called Mailros on the south bank of the Tweed, at a spot some two miles below where the modern town and ancient Abbey of Melrose stands to-day. And he chose Eata, who had been one of his twelve boys, and was now one of his most trusted monks, to be the Abbot and Head of the little family who made their home there. This was about the year A.D. 635.

Now let us see how, in the providence of God, the links fitted in.

About this time a baby boy was born in a comfortable home on the banks of the Leader, a little stream which flows into the Tweed not far from Melrose. Tradition has it that his parents died when he was eight years old, and that afterwards he lived with a foster-mother named Kensped, who was a Christian, having learned the Faith from the monks

of Mailros, whose monastery was not many miles away. This Faith she taught to her foster-son, Cuthbert, for so the boy was called. Being a thoughtful lad, although very strong and merry and good at all outdoor sports, he pondered the truths learned from her, and tried to fashion his life in accordance with them.

He doubtless heard much about the monks from Kensped, and their way of life so attracted him that we read that even as a young boy he would rise in the night to say his prayers, and would dutifully keep the fasts of the Church.

An incident which occurred when he was a lad, and which he himself related to a friend in later years, deepened the sense of vocation which he always seems to have had. He was playing with some other boys, and in their joie de vivre they began to twist and throw themselves into all sorts of fantastic and ridiculous positions. Presently one of the younger children ran up to Cuthbert with tears in his eyes. "Cuthbert, priest and Bishop, why do you give yourself up to these trivial things? It ill becomes you to play with children, when the Lord has appointed you to be a teacher of virtue."

We can hardly believe such prophetic words were spoken among a group of healthy country children, but there seems no doubt that something

was said which made a deep impression on our hero's mind, young as he then was.

He was now beginning to herd sheep on the slopes of the Lammermoor Hills, but we must not think of him as a mere uncouth serf. He was of better birth, being of the rank of the vassals to whom the Saxon lords handed over the care of their vast flocks of sheep and cattle, and who were well paid for their services. In the long, quiet days when he was much alone, the sense of vocation must have been growing stronger, and the call to the religious life sounding more clearly in his ears.

At last, when he was fifteen, the decisive moment came.

It was an August evening in the year A.D. 651 and Cuthbert was, as usual, tending his sheep far up among the hills. Perhaps he had wrapped himself in his cloak and lain down to sleep in the heather. Suddenly he saw a strange light in the sky. It may simply have been the glory of an autumn sunset, when the clouds are touched with gold, and form themselves into all manner of glorious pictures. It may have been that a vision was really vouchsafed to the eager youth, and that he saw what is generally withheld from mortal eyes. But whatever it was, it seemed to him that the heavens were opened, and that he saw a

company of angels bearing a spirit of surpassing brightness through their golden portals.

Next day news came that the holy Bishop Aidan of Lindisfarne, of whom the boy must often have heard, whom he may perhaps have seen and even spoken to, had died at the very hour at which the vision had appeared.

There and then the shepherd boy decided to follow in the saintly Bishop's footsteps. How close was to be his following he could not then have anticipated. Leaving his sheep as soon as might be, he said farewell to his friends and neighbours, and, accompanied by an attendant, rode down the peaceful valley of the Leader, and presented himself at the door of the well-known monastery of Mailros.

We might have expected that he would have chosen to enter the larger monastery of Lindisfarne, both on account of its size, and also because of its close association with Bishop Aidan, but he chose the more homely house of Mailros, largely, we are told, because of his admiration for Boisil the Prior, a kindly, saintly man, of whom, if he did not actually know him, he must have heard a great deal.

When he arrived at the little monastery Eata, the Abbott, was absent, but the Prior was at home. As we have seen in the story of his life Boisil chanced

to be near the gate when the youth arrived and poured out the story of the Call which had come to him from God. Boisil received him kindly and "kept him by him," until Eata's return, when Cuthbert was admitted to the Brotherhood and began his training as a monk.

He had much to learn, for probably he could neither read nor write, these accomplishments belonging, in those early days, almost entirely to the cloister. During the next few years the young novice would be much occupied in his studies—in learning to understand the Scriptures more perfectly, especially the Psalms and the Gospels, of which he would make copies; and in taking part in the services of the Church. In all these exercises he seems to have found a special helper in Prior Boisil, who had taken a great liking to him, and who treated him as if he were his son.

His country training stood him in good stead, for we read that he could turn his hand to anything. And as the monks farmed their own land, provided their own food, and made their own clothes, this fair-haired young giant, for Cuthbert was very tall and strong, was a great acquisition to their ranks. For he could not only tramp long distances over the hills, preaching and teaching as far as he was able, but he could plough, and sow, and reap, and

care for the beasts, and do joiner work; and when he had shorn the sheep which fed in the meadows surrounding the monastery, he could card and spin the wool, and weave it into the coarse cloth from which the clothes of the inmates were fashioned.

After he had spent a few years at Mailros, Cuthbert had a short change of scene. For King Aelfred, Oswald's nephew, who now ruled Northumbria, decided to found a monastery at a place called Inrhipum (Ripon), and as he knew what splendid men "Aidan's boys" had become, he called on Abbot Eata of Mailros to go there, and found the new Religious House.

Eata was no longer young, and he might have thought that to have founded the monastery at Mailros was enough. But that was not the spirit of the early pioneers. So he set out on this new venture, taking with him a little band of monks, among whom were Boisil and Cuthbert. Looking back across twelve long centuries, we can picture the little party setting out in their homespun habits and cloaks from their cosy dwellings on the wooded banks of the Tweed, and tramping steadily southward, either by the sea-coast and Bamburgh or straight over the Cheviot Hills, and down through what are now known as the Yorkshire Dales, till they reached Inrhipum, where, according

to the instructions given by King Aelfred, they were to settle.

Their procedure would be the procedure of all these pioneer monks. They would choose their site, level the ground, cut down trees, and in a very short time a little wooden church, surrounded by a group of primitive huts and out-buildings would arise.

Then the ground round the tiny settlement would be cleared of wood and undergrowth, and in due course, cultivated. Monks would go out in all directions to preach to the country-folk, and when the latter had listened to their words, and had been baptized, an effort would be made to induce some of the older men to throw in their lot with the strangers, and also to get some of the boys to come and live at the monastery, and acquire the rudiments of learning. Passing travellers, or anyone who wished to know more of the monks or their Faith, were entertained—for we read that Cuthbert was appointed Guest-master, and that, in spite of his youth, he proved a kind and sympathetic host.

A beautiful legend is told of this part of his life. The country round Ripon was very bleak and bare, and one winter day, when it was covered with snow, a poor tired pilgrim knocked at the door of

the monastery. The stranger was well-nigh exhausted with the cold, and Cuthbert, with his usual courtesy, helped him into the guest-room, and seated him at the fire. Then he ran for hot water, and washed his travel stained feet, which were so numbed with cold that they were as if they were frost-bitten. So the young guest-master, in order to heat them, opened his tunic, and held them to his own warm breast.

Then he laid the table, and begged the stranger to seat himself, while he ran to the bakery to fetch a nice, crisp, newly-baked loaf. On his return, he found, to his astonishment, that his guest had vanished, and on looking out of the gateway in order to see which way he had gone, he could not see even a trace of his footprints in the snow.

Greatly wondering, he returned to the guest-room, and there on the table lay three hot loaves, which smelt so fragrantly, and were so white, that he knew they had not been baked by mortal hands. And at the sight of them he bowed his head and worshipped, for he perceived that he had, all unawares, entertained, not an earthly pilgrim, but one of God's angels.

The little company of Celtic monks from Mailros only remained at Ripon for about three years. Then they were sent back to their old home.

The reason for this was the controversy that arose at that time about the proper date on which to observe the Festival of Easter, and other lesser matters. We all know that the date of Easter varies according to the first full moon after the Spring equinox. In the early days of Christianity, astronomical calculations were made in a certain manner and the Celtic or British Church took its dates from those. But as time went on, and as astronomical knowledge became more perfect, the ecclesiastical authorities in Rome found that these first calculations were not very accurate, and changed their reckoning, and kept Easter on a different date.

This did not matter as long as the two parts of the Church did not come into conflict, but when St. Augustine came from Rome in A.D. 597 he naturally brought Roman customs along with him, and, sixty years later, the new method of reckoning was introduced into Northumbria by Wilfrid, afterwards Bishop of York.

Wilfrid, like Eata, had been one of Bishop Aidan's boys, and had visited Rome in order to see how the affairs of the Church were conducted there. Wilfrid had great influence, which he used to try to make the Celtic Church conform to the Roman use, and the King, who had been his

pupil, supported him. But Eata and his monks clung to their Celtic tradition, and when they were given the choice of remaining at Ripon, and keeping Easter on the Roman date—which, we are bound to admit, the greater part of Christendom did—or going back to Mailros and following their own way, they preferred the latter course, and retired to their old home, while Wilfrid was installed as Abbot of Ripon.

Probably things were going on as they had always done in the little monastery by the Tweed, but changes were approaching. Within three years of their return, a terrible epidemic known as the Yellow Plague broke out in the south of England, and gradually spread to the north. Multitudes of people died, among them Tuda, fourth Bishop of Lindisfarne. Soon it reached Mailros, and, as we have seen, both Prior Boisil and Cuthbert were attacked by the disease. Cuthbert, now about twenty-eight years of age, was brought very near to death, and the community was aroused to spiritual effort on his behalf. For one whole night they prayed continually for his recovery, and in the morning, hoping to encourage him in his weakness, they told him what they had done. The effect was instantaneous. "Then, if you have prayed, why am I lying here?" exclaimed the young

monk. "It is not possible that God should neglect your prayers! Give me my stick and my shoes." And he got out of bed, and tried to walk. Weak at first, he persisted in his efforts, and was soon restored to health. "But," the chronicler adds, "though the swelling on his thigh died away, to outward seeming, it struck inwardly, and he felt pain all his life afterwards." So, like St. Paul, our hero had to do his work carrying a thorn in the flesh. The good Prior died, and, as he was an old man, his brethren doubtless took his loss more or less philosophically.

As a result of the blanks left by this visitation, the figures in our story were, so to speak, shuffled. Abbot Eata was given charge of Lindisfarne, as well as of Mailros, and he did Cuthbert the great honour of appointing him Prior of Mailros in Boisil's place. Doubtless the young Prior had more responsibility than his old friend had had, as Eata must have spent a good deal of time at the parent House.

But like Ninian, Kentigern, and Columba, Cuthbert did not spend all his hours within monastic walls. A true missionary, he reverted to his old habits when he returned from Ripon, and the country-folk of the Cheviots and the Lammermoors used to look forward to the visits of the hardy

Prior who came to their doors at all times of the year—in summer heat and in winter snow; who knew, from his own experience, all about the ailments of the sheep and cattle, who understood the country dialects, and who could sympathize with them in all their difficulties and troubles. It is said that not a village was so distant, not a mountain-side so steep, not a cottage so poor, that it escaped Prior Cuthbert's zeal.

No wonder that the message he brought found a ready entrance into their hearts, for it has been said of him—that "Cuthbert always knew what to say, to whom, and how to say it." And, in regard to the way in which he entered into the troubles of the poor, a saying of his own has been preserved—"to comfort and advise the weak is equivalent to an Act of Prayer." So zealous was he in his missionary labours that it is said that he preached through all the country from the west of Berwickshire to the Solway.

Many beautiful stories and legends are told of him in these years. We read that when he was on one of his journeys, preaching to the Picts of Galloway, he was sailing along the coast in a little boat, accompanied by two of his monks. They landed, on St. Stephen's Day, at the mouth of a river, said to be the Dee. They intended to remain

here for a few hours, but a storm came on, and they were storm-stayed for twelve days. It was a bleak, isolated spot, and without much food or shelter they were nearly starved. At last the hearts of the two monks failed them, and they gave themselves up for lost. But Cuthbert remained strong and cheerful, and admonished them to trust in God, "Who," he said, "had pledged Himself never to fail His servants."

It was now the Eve of the Epiphany, and they certainly were in great straits. Cuthbert therefore called on his despairing companions to make one more effort, and to join him in praying very earnestly that help might be sent to them, reminding them how God had opened up a way for His people through the Red Sea, and fed them in the desert. They spent the night in prayer, and when the dawn broke, there, at the foot of the rock, lay three pieces of dolphin's flesh, cut up and ready to cook! Long afterwards the people of the district erected a little chapel in memory of the Saint, near to the spot where he and his companions had been shipwrecked. It bore his name, and not only a church, but a town and a county perpetuate it to-day, Kirkcudbright—the Church of Cuthbert.

Another story tells of how the Saint and his monks were in danger of being driven ashore on

the coast of Fife during a snow-storm. Once more the monks lost heart. "Alas, father, what shall we do?" they cried. "The snow blocks the roads on land—the way over the sea is barred by the storm." "*But the way to Heaven is always open,*" replied their intrepid leader calmly, and bent himself over his oars.

A third story tells of Cuthbert's love and care for all wild creatures.

One day he was preaching in the valley of the Teviot, accompanied by a boy as an attendant. They had forgotten to bring any food with them, and as it was towards afternoon Cuthbert asked his little companion if he was wondering where his dinner was to come from. The boy confessed that he was hungry, and that he was puzzled as to where they were going to get anything to eat. "Be assured, my son, that the Lord will provide for those who trust in Him," replied the Saint, "for He hath promised that the righteous shall not need to beg their bread." Just then an eagle came in sight, carrying a large fish in its mouth, and alighted on the bank of the river. Seeing it, the boy ran eagerly forward, and beating back the bird, seized the fish and hurried to his master. But the latter met him with a smiling rebuke. "Didst thou not give part to our hungry fisherman?"

he asked—and the little lad, much abashed, cut the fish in half and ran back with one of the pieces and laid it in front of the eagle. Then, taking up the remainder, his master and he walked on till they came to a little hut where there was a fire, and there they broiled the fish and shared it with the inmates.

But once more a change was coming over our hero's life. For Eata, who was now Bishop as well as Abbot of Lindisfarne, asked him to come to help him there, and to undertake the duties of Prior. Cuthbert obeyed, and except perhaps for a few brief visits, the little community at Mailros knew him no more.

It must have been a somewhat drastic change from the sheltered House, which lay nestling down between the wooded hills, almost encircled by the River Tweed, to the bleak island of Lindisfarne—Holy Island, as we call it to-day—which lies off the coast of Northumberland, ten or twelve miles south of Berwick-on-Tweed.[1] But the new Prior had plenty to occupy him, for he found a good deal of dissension in the Mother House.

Both Eata and he had by this time adopted the Roman customs, feeling that it was better to fall

[1] We speak of Lindisfarne as an island, but it can be reached from the mainland at low tide.

in with the Rule observed by the greater part of the Church, and not have one party arguing against another. But the Bishop whom Eata had succeeded, whose name was Colman, who had come from Iona, had been determined not to yield at all in the matter, and he had done what Eata had done over the same question at Ripon years before. He had thrown up his work, and with his monks had returned whence he came. But he had not taken every monk who clung to Celtic ways along with him—a few still remained at Lindisfarne, and kept up the controversy with their Anglo-Saxon brethren.

Cuthbert might have ordered them to obey him and to conform to the new ways, but he showed his consideration and forbearance by reasoning with them, and overlooking their rudeness when they taunted him with his own change of views. When they went too far, and he felt very much annoyed, he simply dismissed them for the night, and met them next morning as if nothing had happened. His patience bore fruit, and after a time there was peace.

In other ways St. Cuthbert's life at Lindisfarne was much what it had been as Prior of Mailros. He ruled his House, he instructed the younger monks and novices, and he travelled about, often

spending weeks on the mainland, teaching the country-folk about the Lord Christ.

But vigorous and active as he had always been, this Shepherd-Saint must have had a curious detachment of spirit, which caused him to wish to get away from everyone, and to be alone with God. We see it first when, as a boy of fifteen, he turned his back upon ordinary life and entered the cloister. And now, when he was a man of some forty years of age occupying a great position, and engaged in most important and satisfying work for the Church of Christ, we find it so deepened and intensified that it drove him to leave everything and to obtain permission from his Abbot to retire to some unfrequented spot, and there live the life of a hermit.

To us, in these busy, restless days, it might have seemed a mad thing to do, a throwing away of his influence and his talents. In those days, such a line of action was more common. And who can tell what the Church has gained by such lives, cut off from worldly activities, certainly, but spent in communion with God, and in prayer and intercession for all men.

Bishop Eata seems to have regarded it in this light, for he gave a ready consent, and Cuthbert retired into solitude. At first he only went to a

little islet, quite close to the shore at Lindisfarne. Indeed it could be reached at low water by stepping over the rocks. But soon he found this was too near the monastery to afford him the sense of quietness and detachment for which he longed.

So he asked leave to go to the Island of Farne, lying out to sea, where he would be completely isolated from his fellow-men. Farne Island is one of a group which lie opposite Bamburgh, some miles from the mainland. It consists of about five acres of grass-land besides a large quantity of rock. Simeon of Durham, an old historian of the tenth century, says that the island was ill-suited for a human dwelling, being without water, fruits, or trees.

But Cuthbert was not deterred by these disadvantages. He must have known that water was to be found, for Bishop Aidan had used the island as a place of retreat before him, and even if the visits of that holy man had been of no long duration, he must have been able to find drinking water while he was there. As for trees and fruits, Cuthbert felt he could live without them, and the brethren could bring him supplies of bread from the Mother House until he could grow his own corn.

The little wind-swept island had another disadvantage, which, in these days, might well have

prevented anyone going there to live alone. For it was said to be haunted by demons. But Cuthbert's valorous soul was not to be daunted by such reports. If it were haunted by demons, there was One Who was greater than they, and in His power he would drive them out. So he persuaded some of his brethren to row him over to Farne, and there and then he took possession of the island in the Name of Jesus Christ, praying that the devils might be cast out, and, as Bede quaintly tells us, "the wicked spirits withdrew."

Doubtless the brethren stayed and helped him to rear his little cell. This was shaped according to the common beehive pattern, being quite round and about "four poles" from wall to wall. The walls were formed of stones and turf, and were higher than a man. But the Saint, wishing to see nothing but the sky, made his cell higher still, by hewing out the rock on which it stood, so that the floor was on a much lower level than the ground outside. The roof was formed of poles, thatched with straw, and the little building was divided into two parts, one of which served as an oratory, the other as a dwelling room.

Later, a larger cell was built, near the landing-stage, for the brethren and any strangers who might desire to visit him. Near here a well of water was

found, and another was discovered springing out of the rock on which Cuthbert's hut was built, so there was no fear that he would die of thirst.

Our hero next turned his attention to providing food for himself, for he had sufficient common-sense to know that provisions could not always be brought to him from Lindisfarne, and that, if nothing would grow on the island, there would be no alternative for him but to return home. So obtaining from the monastery some simple implements for tilling the soil he broke the hard surface of the ground, gathering out the stones with his own hands, and when it was thus prepared he sowed a crop of wheat. For many weeks he watched and waited. Alas! not a single green thing appeared. It was plain that the soil and climate of Farne Island was not suitable for growing wheat.

Nothing daunted, the Saint begged his brethren to bring him some barley. "Either the nature of the soil, or the Will of God, does not allow wheat to grow in this place," he said, "perhaps barley will answer. If not, I had better return to the monastery than be supported by the labour of others." He was not allowed to bear this trial, however. The barley, though sown late, came up at once, and bore an abundant harvest. Thenceforth the hermit's food was assured to him.

For nine long years Cuthbert lived this strange and lonely life. Yet perhaps it was not as lonely as it seemed. Kind and gentle as he had ever been, the birds which came in great numbers to nest on the island grew to be his companions, and he must have spent many hours watching them, and learning all about their habits. The eider-ducks—St. Cuthbert's ducks, as they are called—were his special favourites, and they became so tame that he could move about the rocks where they bred, and even stroke them, without their moving from their nests.

His brethren from Lindisfarne rowed over to see him at times, and to consult him about any of their difficulties. And often he had other visitors, for the fame of his wisdom and kindly understanding of the human heart had spread abroad, and people said to one another, that if anyone needed advice and comfort in his sorrows and perplexities there was a hermit who lived on a rocky island off the coast of Northumbria who could give it to him.

For he was so saintly and yet so human that he was "the friend of God, and yet skilled in the healing of human suffering."

So rich and poor alike, who were in sorrow or distress, or who were troubled about their sins, would travel to Bebbenburg (Bamburgh) and hire

a boat and row over to Farne, and kneel outside Cuthbert's cell, and through the little window would open their hearts to him, and lay bare their sins. And they always left feeling happier, for it is said that no one went away from this holy man without comfort, "no one returned home with the same sorrow of mind that he had brought." Truly, St. Cuthbert, like St. Barnabas, was a Son of Consolation.

But those peaceful days were drawing to a close. For during the years in which Cuthbert had prayed and meditated on Farne, deep and far-reaching changes had been taking place on the mainland, both in Church and State. Aelfred, the Prince who had founded Ripon, and summoned Eata from Mailros to rule over it, had died, and Egfrid his brother reigned in his stead, while a priest from Rome, named Theodore, had been made Archbishop of Canterbury.

Up till now, the boundaries of a Bishop's Diocese had really been the boundaries of the kingdom in which he chanced to dwell. He was, in fact, the ecclesiastical head of a district—just as the King was the civil head. Thus Bishop Aidan of Lindisfarne had been Bishop of Northumbria, and had lived under the protection of King Oswald. Bishop Augustine at Canterbury had been Bishop

of Kent under the protection of Queen Bertha and King Ethelbert, and so on. But Theodore, who was a wise and prudent man, saw that it would be for the good of the country as well as for the good of the Church, if there were more, and smaller, dioceses, and if the various bishops learned to look to Canterbury for guidance and support, rather than to their own kings.

So he journeyed through England, taking counsel with the Kings and Bishops of the various provinces, and when he reached Northumbria, he called a council at Twyford, near the river Alne, at which King Egfrid and all the clergy of Northumbria were present.

Here it was agreed that the great and unwieldy Diocese of Lindisfarne which extended from the North Sea to the Solway, and from the Humber to the Forth, should be divided in two, and that one part should remain the Diocese of Lindisfarne, and the other become the Diocese of Hexham.

Of course Eata was already at Lindisfarne, and when the assembly was asked who should be the new Bishop of Hexham, there was only one name on everybody's lips—that of Cuthbert, the Hermit of Farne.

So messengers were sent to him, asking him to return to ordinary life and take up his new duties.

But to their astonishment, he steadfastly refused. "He had no wish to be a Bishop," he said, "so King Egfrid must find someone else to undertake the office." Back went the bewildered messengers with this unlooked-for answer, for surely no one who had been called to it would reject the honourable position of a Bishop. King Egfrid would take no refusal, however, and sent them back to Farne, only to meet once more with disappointment. Then the King decided to go in person. Along with some of his nobles, and a company of monks from Lindisfarne, as well as a Bishop named Trumwine, who had been set over the Picts, he set sail for Farne. When they reached the landing-stage, Cuthbert was there to greet them, and they all fell down on their knees before him and begged him to leave his hermitage and come back and take his share in guiding the Church of God.

After much persuasion, Cuthbert consented, only doing so after he had heard that Eata was willing to go to Hexham as Bishop, and leave the more secluded and more familiar district of Lindisfarne to him.

This was in the autumn, and as his consecration was fixed for the following spring the hermit had still the whole winter to spend in his loved retreat before he took up his new duties. But when Easter

drew near, he was obliged to bid a sad farewell to the little island, with its peaceful and hallowed memories. And on Easter Sunday, March 26th, A.D. 685, he was consecrated in the Cathedral Church at York by Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury and seven other Bishops—King Egfrid and his nobles standing by.

Immediately afterwards he travelled north, to meet Bishop Eata, for after his long years of solitude he appears to have felt the need of human sympathy at this new crisis in his life. And it was not at Lindisfarne that the two friends met, as might have been supposed, but at the little, old, homely monastery at Mailros, where, long years ago, Cuthbert had exchanged the life of a shepherd for that of a monk. They spent some time together here strengthening and encouraging each other, then they departed each to his own sphere of labour.

If the people who remembered Cuthbert as the simple Prior of Lindisfarne who went up and down the country preaching the Gospel in season and out of season, thought that the nine solitary years spent as a hermit would have changed him, they got a happy surprise. For the new Bishop was just the same kind, great-hearted missionary that he had been when he held the office of Prior. Dressed

in the habit of a simple monk, he once more tramped up and down the countryside, teaching in the villages of his large Diocese, administering the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, and tending the sick and dying with his own hands.

And we Scottish folk need not think of him labouring entirely in what we now know as England. His jurisdiction extended all over the south-east of Scotland. We hear of him visiting Abbess Ebba in her monastery of Coldingham, as well as his old haunts at Mailros; and doubtless the country folk of the Lammermuirs knew and loved him, as well as those of the Cheviots. And his eyes must often have rested on the Bass Rock, and Arthur's Seat, and North Berwick Law.

It is recorded that sometimes, when he went out to confirm those who had accepted the Faith, the districts were so wild that there was "no church or fit place to receive him." So his people pitched a tent for him, and cut down branches from the trees to make shelters for themselves, and here both he and they would remain for two or three days, while he taught the enquirers, baptised the unbaptised, administered the Rite of Confirmation, and celebrated the Holy Communion. In times of plague or pestilence, which in those days were always hanging over the people, he was always to

be found in the affected villages, tending the dying, comforting the mourners. "Do you think that any remain who have need that we should visit and converse with them?" he would ask the monk who accompanied him, "or have we now seen all the sick here, and shall we go elsewhere?" No wonder he was greatly beloved, and that it was said of him that "Bishop Aidan's mantle had fallen on him." Than which no higher praise could be given.

But this true Father-in-God was not destined to hold his office long. After he had been Bishop for two years his strength began to fail, and he had a strange premonition that the time of his departure was near. And his heart turned to Farne and to the little cell where he would fain be at the end.

So he determined to resign his charge, and give what time remained to preparing for the great change which he knew was at hand. But first he went round his Diocese, visiting all the churches and exhorting his spiritual children to stand fast in the Faith. Then, laying down his Pastoral Staff, he retired once more to his little cell at Farne. This is said to have been done on Christmas Day, in the year A.D. 686.

A band of his monks stood sorrowfully on the beach at Lindisfarne as he embarked. "Tell us,

Reverend Father," said one of them sadly, "when we may hope for your return." "When you shall bring my body hither," replied the Bishop calmly, as he stepped into his boat, and pushed off from the shore.

For two months the Saint enjoyed the quietness and solitude which he loved so well, then his disease increased with sudden severity, and he became dangerously ill. Herefrid, the Abbot of Lindisfarne, has preserved for us the account of the last days of this wonderful missionary.

Herefrid and some of his monks had been on a three days' visit to the island, living as usual at the guest-house by the landing-stage, and on the morning of their return the Abbot went up to the Saint's cell, to ask, as usual, for his blessing. He found Cuthbert in great pain, but as the old ailment from which he had suffered ever since he had plague at Mailros often affected him in this way, he thought little of it.

"Father, give us your blessing," he said, "for it is time to put out to sea and return home." "Do so," replied Cuthbert with rare unselfishness, "and return home in safety. But remember, when the Lord hath taken my spirit, bury me near this cell, by the Cross which I have raised outside. And wrap my body in the linen winding-sheet

which Abbess Verca of Tynemouth gave me for my burying."

Alarmed at his words, Herefrid begged him to allow some of the monks to remain with him, but Cuthbert would not agree to this. "Go home now," he said, "and God will direct you when to return." So, with heavy hearts they left him, intending to go back as soon as possible.

But a violent storm arose, and for five days no one could cross the six miles of stormy sea that lay between the two islands. Then when calmer weather came, the anxious Abbot rowed across with a few companions. They found Cuthbert lying in the guest-house, to which he had managed to crawl, to greet, as he said, any of the brethren who came over to visit him. We can well believe how, in his increasing weakness, his stout heart had failed somewhat, and he had longed for their coming.

Abbot Herefrid was distressed at his appearance, and the total lack of any signs of food. "But how have you supported life, my reverend Bishop?" he asked. For an answer Cuthbert turned up the covering on which he lay, and showed him five onions, one of which was half eaten.

"This has been my food for five days," he replied. "When my mouth became dry and parched, I cooled it by tasting these."

We can quite imagine that at the moment the Saint was half delirious with pain and exhaustion, and it is a comfort to know that the Abbot had the common-sense not to spend time either in mourning or praying, but set to work at once to warm some wine, and to see that his patient drank it, after which he made him more comfortable.

There was now no question of the sufferer being left alone, and Herefrid ordered two experienced monks to remain with him and nurse him.

So for the last two weeks of his life, loving and skilful hands ministered to the Bishop. During those weeks the Abbot arrived from the monastery at Lindisfarne craving a boon from the Saint. For the community had been so grieved when Herefrid returned and told them that their Bishop desired to be buried at Farne, that they sent their Superior over to beg that he would allow his body to be carried to Lindisfarne, so that it could rest among them.

When Herefrid laid the request gently before the dying man, the latter hesitated. "It has been my will," he said, "to rest in the body here, where I have fought my little wrestling (such as it was) for the Lord, and where I desire to finish my course, and whence I hope to be raised up by a merciful Judge to a crown of glory."

In his unselfishness he also explained that, if in the future he was looked on as a Saint—which in spite of his humility, he recognised as a possibility—the monks might be troubled, and indeed, incur some danger, through the criminals who might fly to his shrine for "sanctuary." But when the Abbot represented to him how gladly the community would incur any risk as long as they had his bones resting among them, he consented, only stipulating that, if a heathen invasion took place —which was quite a likely thing to happen —his coffin should be lifted and carried away, so that his body might rest among Christian people.

When he was seen to be actually dying, he was carried, at his own request, back to his cell, and here the end came at midnight, on Wednesday, March 20th, A.D. 687.

As soon as he was dead, one of the monks ran with two lighted torches to the highest point of the island, where the great lighthouse stands to-day, and flashed the news to their anxious brethren who were keeping watch on the watch-tower at Lindisfarne, that the soul of their beloved Father-in-God had departed to the Lord.

Next morning all the monks of the Mother House assembled on the shore to give a sad welcome

to a boat which came over the sun-lit water. In it was seated Abbot Herefrid, his two attendants, and a stone coffin, containing the body of Northumbria's greatest Saint.

Solemnly the precious burden was lifted ashore and carried to the church, the monks and singing-boys chanting the penitential Psalms. At the door of the sacred building the coffin was opened, and the body of the dead Bishop was vested in priest's vestments, sandals were placed on his feet, and the sacred vessels used for Holy Communion laid on his breast. Then it was closed again, and deposited in a hastily prepared resting place on the right side of the altar.

Eleven years later, the coffin was lifted and enclosed in a magnificent shrine, which doubtless the monks of Lindisfarne expected would remain there for ever, and bring fame and glory to their island church.

Their dreams have been fulfilled, but in a far different way from what they expected. St. Cuthbert's bones rest at Durham, not at Lindisfarne, and over them has arisen a grander and more magnificent Sanctuary than they, in their simplicity could ever have dreamed of—and thousands of pilgrims, both in mediæval and modern times, have found their way to Durham Cathedral, to stand

beside St. Cuthbert's grave, and also beside that of his biographer, the Venerable Bede.

But before Cuthbert was buried here, there were great vicissitudes to be gone through, and the story of these is almost as interesting as the story of his life.

For in A.D. 875 almost two hundred years after his death, Halfdene the Dane landed on the coast of Northumbria with his heathen hordes, and marched through the land, leaving bloodshed and ruin behind him. He burned Tynemouth Priory to the ground, and proceeded northward destroying every church he came to.

News was carried to Lindisfarne that he was on his way to pillage that monastery. The Bishop of that day, Eardulf by name, recognising that the only safety for himself and his monks lay in instant flight, and remembering the wish that Bishop Cuthbert had expressed on his deathbed, which had been handed down as a tradition in the community, hastily opened the Saint's shrine, and took out his coffin, in which he placed the head of St. Oswald, and some bones of St. Aidan.

When all was done the coffin was enclosed in an outer chest of wood, and wrapped in a bullock's hide to protect it from the weather, and with this hallowed burden in their midst the monks

bade farewell to their island home and fled across the sands to the mainland. For seven years they wandered through the country seeking a resting-place, but finding none. We hear of them going up and down Tyneside, and over by the Rede Swire. Then they attempted to cross to Ireland, from whence the founder of their Order had come, but after embarking in the west, at the mouth of the River Derwent, they were driven back by a terrible storm. It was during the storm that a very precious copy of the Gospels, written in Anglo-Saxon and beautifully illustrated, was lost. It was thrown up, however, on the beach a few days afterwards, and was found to have suffered very little damage from its immersion. This book is known as the "Durham Book," and is now preserved in the British Museum. It is an interesting relic, for tradition has it that it was from this volume that the young monk, Cuthbert, read to Prior Boisil as the latter lay dying of the plague.

After their unsuccessful attempt to reach Ireland the band of monks turned their footsteps north and visited Whithorn in Galloway. Perhaps they thought of settling down on that holy ground, and laying the bones of their much-loved Bishop beside those of St. Ninian. But finding a flourishing monastery in

existence there, they turned their faces once more to the south.

After this we find them wandering, with their heavy burden through Cumberland, Westmorland, and Teesdale, until they reached the Yorkshire dales.

Here at last they found rest at Cuncachester, or, as we now call it, Chester-le-Street. Why they chose this site on which to build a church and monastery we do not know, but the community made it their home for over a century, and the Bishops of Lindisfarne took up their abode here, only they were now known as the Bishops of Bernicia.

But at the end of that period there was another Danish invasion, and their monastery was threatened. So once more they lifted their burden, which doubtless had rested during all these years in their little church, and moved on.

Their leader at this time was a Bishop named Aldhun, and he led the monks to Ripon, where they abode for four months, the precious relics resting in the Abbey Church. This Aldhun appears to have made up his mind to return with his flock to Lindisfarne, the ruined, almost forgotten home of the Community.

But in the Providence of God this was not to be.

And here, as in all these early stories, we find history touching the fringe of legend. For tradition tells us how, as the weary band of men were trudging northward over the rough ground which lay between them and the coast, the wheels of the handcart on which rested the relics of the Saint, stuck to the ground, and, try as they would, they could not move them.

Anxious and perplexed by this strange happening, the good monks knelt down and prayed for guidance. Their prayer was answered. For St. Cuthbert himself appeared to one of them, and indicated that his bones should be taken to a place called Dunholme, and that there they would find their final resting place.

But this seemed only a new perplexity. For no one knew where Dunholme was.

At this moment, two milkmaids appeared. One of them had apparently lost her cow, for she asked the other if she had seen it. "It is at Dunholme," was the answer. The girl went off to seek the cow, and the monks followed, strengthened in their faith as to the guidance they had received being of Divine origin by the fact that the wheels of the cart no longer stuck to the ground.

We may smile at the story, which is commemorated by a sculpture representing two milkmaids

and a cow, which finds its place on the outside of the wall of the Chapel of the Nine Altars at the east end of Durham Cathedral, but we cannot overlook the fact that for well-nigh a thousand years St. Cuthbert's bones have rested on the high horse-shoe shaped tableland which runs above the River Wear, which was known to the men of earlier times as Dunholme, and on which the Cathedral and Castle of Durham stand to-day. For here the monks felt they had reached Journey's End, and thankfully they laid their burden down. Over it they raised a little church of wands and branches to protect it from the weather.

Then a more substantial shelter of stone was erected, which, however humble it may have been, was at least watertight. Then, but not till then, Bishop Aldhun set the monks to build huts for themselves.

When these were completed, and the little community had settled down, the good Bishop determined to build a really handsome church as a memorial of their beloved Saint, and in which his bones might find their final resting-place. It was a big undertaking for a mere handful of men, especially as all the stone had to be quarried and hewn and carried up the hill to Dunholme by their own labour.

But having bravely begun, they were not left to labour alone. For when the country-folk heard what was afoot, and how a fitting memorial was to be raised to the Saint who had been so much beloved by their forefathers, they begged to have a share in the good work.

So, led by the Earl of Northumbria, they left their homes, dragging their rude hand-carts with them, and lived in a great camp down on the level ground beside the Wear. The men quarried and hewed the stones, the women harnessed themselves to the carts—sometimes fifty would be harnessed to one cart—and dragged them up the hill where the Great Church—the "White Church," as it was called, was rising under the hands of the monks.

When it was completed, St. Cuthbert's coffin was carried into it, and doubtless Bishop and Earl, monks and country-folk, felt overjoyed at what they had accomplished.

But a greater and more magnificent edifice was to arise—the stately Cathedral which we see to-day. This was begun in A.D. 1093 by Bishop William de Carileph, and finished in A.D. 1429. As soon as the choir was built and roofed over, the coffin of the Saint was taken there, and laid on a stone slab which can still be seen in the floor

behind the High Altar, and which now covers his grave.

Before the Reformation, the coffin lay *on* the slab, not under it, enclosed in a wonderful shrine of green marble, enriched with gold and jewels. In A.D. 1104 and again in A.D. 1827, the hide-bound coffin, with its inner case, was opened to make sure that it was really St. Cuthbert's bones which rested therein. No doubt at all could be entertained, for from records preserved from the first occasion we learn that the body was found, clothed in the vestments in which it had been vested at Lindisfarne four hundred years before. The coffin also contained a head—that of St. Oswald, and a quantity of bones—being those of St. Aidan, Abbot Eata, and others. These were removed and placed in an outer coffin, but St. Oswald's head was left in its resting-place along with St. Cuthbert's comb, cross, and tiny portable altar, all of which had been buried with him. Additional robes were then wrapped round the body, now, of course, merely a skeleton, and the coffin was replaced.

At the Reformation the shrine was despoiled, and in A.D. 1542, the coffin was buried. In 1827 the grave was again opened, and the coffins—the inner and outer, were found to be falling to

pieces. So a new coffin was made in which the sacred remains were reverently enclosed, and returned to their resting-place.

Portions of the old coffins, along with pieces of the vestments, and the Saint's cross, comb, and tiny altar were removed, however, and placed in a case in the Cathedral Library, once the monk's refectory.

As we stand beside the case and gaze down on these extraordinarily interesting relics, they seem a tangible link between us and the man who handled them more than twelve hundred years ago—Cuthbert, the shepherd boy—Cuthbert the Bishop—Cuthbert, Northumbria's Hero-Saint.

ST. EBBA OF COLDINGHAM

d. A.D. 683

AMONG the many tourists who, in these days of rapid transit, visit the Berwickshire village of St. Abbs, or climb to the summit of the great bluff which bears the name of St. Abb's Head, how many are there who know anything about the royal lady from whom both places take their name?

To learn who she was and what she did, we must go back for more than thirteen hundred years to the time of a great Saxon King named Ethelfrid, who was a heathen, for as yet no missionary of Christ had penetrated into his dominions. Ethelfrid the Ravager, men called him, for he was a fierce and mighty warrior, yet he was a wise and just monarch and his people loved him. So there was much mourning when, in A.D. 617, he was killed in battle, fighting against Raedwald, King of the East Angles.

The cause of the quarrel was this. Ethelfrid's sister was married to a Saxon Prince named Edwin (he who gave his name to Edinburgh), and this Edwin claimed the throne of Northumbria, and

Raedwald supported his claim. It was natural that on Ethelfrid's defeat and death, Edwin seized the throne and ruled the kingdom, and it must be remembered that he thought it was right and just that he should do so.

But his victory brought terror and dismay to four fatherless children who were left in the Royal Palace of Bebbanburg, or Bamburgh, and their guardians.

For the King had left three boys behind him—the Princes Eanfrid, Oswald and Oswy, and one little girl, the Princess Ebba. Long and anxiously the Northumbrian nobles who remained loyal to the memory of their late master must have debated the question as to what was best to do for these royal children. So cruel and barbarous were the times that it did not seem as if their lives would be safe should they remain in Northumbria, and if they were sent further south they might fall into the hands of King Raedwald, who had slain their father. Or worse still, if they went west to Mercia, they might become the victims of the fierce and cruel Penda, ruler of that land.

At last the suggestion was made that the boys, at least, might be sent far away to the north, to a little island called Hii, where some men who professed the Christian Faith had settled, and built

a dwelling-place for themselves, and a school, where boys might be fed, cared for, and educated; and, as we should express it to-day, "brought up as gentlemen." True, they would be taught this strange new belief, and would probably profess it as they grew to manhood, but what did that matter? Better be a Christian and have a chance to live, than a worshipper of Thor and Odin, and be murdered in early boyhood.

So reasoned the anxious Northumbrian thanes, little knowing that through their decision God was working out His plans for the conversion of their country to the very Faith which they held in such light esteem.

So the little Princes were sent to Hii, or Iona, without delay, and they grew up there, and all three of them returned and sat, after Edwin's death, on their father's throne. They had all become Christians, but Eanfrid, when he became King, lapsed into heathendom, and it was left to Oswald and Oswy to establish the Faith of Christ in their kingdom, which they did right nobly.

As for little Princess Ebba, we do not know where she was sent, for, being a girl, she would not be in such danger, even if she remained in England, as her brothers would have been.

One thing we know, wherever she spent her

early days, she learned the New Faith, and grew up an earnest and devout Christian. When the light of history first shines on her career we find that her brothers Eanfrid and Oswald had died, the latter fighting for the Faith against King Penda, and Oswy, the youngest of the three, reigned in Northumbria.

In those days it was the recognised custom for Kings to look on their women-folk as mere assets to further their own ends. They gave them in marriage to Kings and Princes with whom they desired to form or strengthen alliances, often without the consent, or even against the will, of the poor maiden.

So when the King of Scots was looking about for a wife, Oswy thought it would be to his advantage if his sister became Queen of that land. But Ebba would not listen to the suggestion. Her sister-in-law, Queen Eanfleda, daughter of King Edwin, had a cousin, the Abbess Hilda, who, after founding a small monastery at Hartlepool, had founded a double monastery at Streanshalch—or Whitby—and Ebba was determined to follow her example.

More liberal than most monarchs of his time, Oswy did not press the marriage, but allowed his sister to carry out her own wishes, and gave her a piece of land on the banks of the Derwent,

not very far from Newcastle. Here she founded her first little monastery, which was known as Ebba Castrum, or Ebba's Castle; and the name still survives in that of the village of Ebchester.

But it almost seems as if Ebba wanted to emulate St. Hilda, for she looked about for some spot where she could found a bigger and grander Religious House, and at last she found one to her liking, much further north, in a district called Coludi, or, as we say, Coldingham. Here on a high, bleak promontory, which jutted out into the sea, and which in many ways resembled the headland on which Hilda's Abbey was built, she erected a double Religious House—one part for men, the other for women, and also raised an Abbey Church.

As we have said, this promontory, and the village which lies a little to the south still commemorates her name—St. Abb's Head, and St. Abbs.

Here she reigned as Abbess for thirty years, and, although she figures less in history than her famous contemporary, St. Hilda, her influence, both in Church and State, cannot have been much less. For the Religious House over which she ruled was famous as being one of the largest and most important in Northumbria, and she herself possessed great power and authority. Many

devoted monks and nuns, who had been trained under her, must have gone out from Coldingham, as the House was then called, during these thirty years to found smaller religious settlements, and to act as Light-bearers to the surrounding districts. This famous Abbess ranks high in the band of Royal Saxon ladies—Hilda, Ebba, Elfleda, Etheldreda, Cuthburga, Frideswide, and others, who did so much in early days to spread the Gospel in our land.

With one of these Royal ladies, Princess Etheldreda, the foundress of Ely Cathedral, St. Ebba and her monastery have a close connection. For this Princess took refuge there at a time when she was in great distress, and did not leave it until a few years later when she had become a nun. Her story is very interesting.

She was the daughter of Anna, the Christian King of the East Angles, and, like many other Royal maidens, she wished to enter the cloister rather than face marriage with any man whom her father might choose for her. But this was not permitted, and she was given in wedlock to Tonbert, Prince of the Fen-men. He seems to have been a fine, generous-hearted man, and, for a wedding gift, he gave his young bride the largest and most fertile island in the Fens—the Isle of Ely.

Three years later he died, and his widow determined to found a monastery and build a beautiful church on the island, which would be a memorial to her husband, and be the glory of the Fen-land.

But she was not allowed to carry out her design. For once more politicians stepped in. Northumbria was a Christian country—at least its King was a Christian. So was the King of East Anglia and his dominions. For in those days if a King were a Christian, his subjects were supposed to be Christians also. So, in order to join the two countries in a strong bond of union, it was proposed that the widowed Princess of the Fen-land should wed King Oswy's son, Prince Egfrid. Poor Princess Etheldreda! she must have been sadly perplexed. For it seemed to her that God had given her her life-work—which was to build a monastery and church at Ely, and try to create a centre of Light for the ignorant Fen-folk. And here were all her relatives telling her that God had given her another and a different task, to marry this Northumbrian Prince, and so weld her country and his more closely together.

For a long time she fought against the wishes of her friends, then at last she yielded and married Prince Egfrid. But she only married him for the sake of peace, as we say, and when she did so it

was with the determination to be his wife in name only, and that she would live her own life and make rules for herself, almost as if she were living in a convent.

Of course she was wrong. But we cannot judge her too harshly, for we must remember that these old times were difficult to live in, especially for women, who could not choose for themselves in matters like marriage, as girls and women can do to-day.

But, quite naturally, her husband was very angry, and used all the means in his power to make her behave in a normal manner, especially when his father King Oswy died, and he became King of Northumbria. There must have been constant quarrelling, and at last Etheldreda left the Castle of Bamburgh, and fled for sympathy and protection to Abbess Ebba at Coldingham, who, as we have seen, was her husband's aunt. The Abbess received her kindly, and made no attempt to send her back to her husband. Probably she thought that a forced marriage was no marriage at all, and remembered with gratitude the time when her brother would fain have given her to the King of the Scots, then, finding how earnestly she desired a life in the cloister, had generously given her complete liberty.

So she sympathized with her visitor, and if an old story be true, helped her to escape from her husband, by sending her out to hide, along with two attendants, when King Egfrid, enraged at her flight, rode to Coldingham with a company of men-at-arms, and, demanding entrance to the convent, searched it through and through for his missing wife.

At last he made the best of a bad job, and divorcing Etheldreda, married another princess.

Free at last to do what she wished and to carry out her plans, Etheldreda remained for some time longer at the bleak northern monastery, undergoing her training as a nun, and doubtless learning all she could from the Abbess about the founding, building, and ruling of a Religious House. Then she was professed, and received the veil from the hands of Wilfrid, Bishop of York. She was now fully equipped for the task of founding her long-thought-of monastery, better equipped, in fact, than if she had never come to Northumbria, so bidding farewell to the friends she had made there, and probably taking one or two of them with her, she returned to her own land.

There, on the Isle of Ely, she built a church and monastery, which, like that of St. Hilda and St. Ebba, was what is known as "double," being both

for men and women, and there, in later years, she died.

Nothing remains to-day of the early Saxon building which stood on St. Abb's Head, and only a small part of the great Religious House which succeeded it further inland.[1] But when we visit the beautiful and stately Cathedral Church of Ely, still standing in all its proud splendour, it is pleasant to think that it is closely connected with Scotland, and that it was at Coldingham that its foundress and patron Saint was trained for her great work.

For nearly thirty long years the Abbess Ebba laboured amongst her monks and nuns, ruling and guiding her large family, and furthering the spread of the Gospel. Her life, like the life of all these remarkable women of old, must have been very full and interesting. Besides the constant demands which her community made on her, she would enjoy the friendship of the great and celebrated churchmen who lived in Northumbria in her day. Bishop Wilfrid of York, Bishop Aiden of Lindisfarne, and later, the far-famed Bishop Cuthbert

[1] The Benedictine Priory, founded in 1098 by King Edgar, was situated some distance from the coast, where the modern village of Coldingham now stands. It was partially destroyed by the Earl of Hertford in 1545, at the time that the Abbeys of Melrose, Kelso, Jedburgh, and Dryburgh were defaced and ruined by the same rude hands. The choir of the church has been restored, however, and is now used as Coldingham parish church.

of Lindisfarne, must have been occasional guests at her house. Added to this she would have all the dignity and consideration which her relationship to King Oswy and King Egfrid would secure.

But towards the end of her life, a heavy blow fell upon her. She was getting old, and perhaps her community had so increased in numbers that the members had got out of her control. No one can now give the reason, but things were not as they should be. And the Lady Abbess was ignorant of the fact.

At last one evening, two monks, who had been together in the country, craved to speak to her, and the heaviness of their faces showed that what they had to say was baneful and grievous.

One of them, a monk of Scottish birth named Adamnan, had, while they walked, burst into tears as he approached the well-loved monastic buildings. When his companion asked the reason, he told him how, while saying his Office the night before, a vision had been granted to him. A stranger had suddenly appeared by his side, and had congratulated him on the way he was spending his time.

Adamnan, who was very humble-minded, replied that "because of his wickedness he had great need of wholesome watching and earnest prayer."

"You are in the right," said the stranger, "but few of your companions act as you do. For I go about this monastery constantly, and have looked into everyone's chamber, and I have found none of them except yourself busy about the care of his soul. The monks were feasting, drinking, talking, and the nuns were adorning themselves like brides. And for this conduct a heavy judgment from heaven is ready to fall on this place and devour it with fire."

"Why did you not sooner acquaint me of this," asked the poor Abbess in consternation. "I was afraid to do so, lest you should be too much afflicted," answered Adamnan; "yet you may have this comfort, that the calamity will not happen in your days."

Horrified by what she had heard, so Bede tells us, St. Ebba managed to bring her sons and daughters to repentance, and restore order in her house. Shortly afterwards she went to her grave in peace, about the year A.D. 683. But when she was dead, disorder once more prevailed in the monastery, and, true to what had been revealed to Adamnan, fire broke out one night, and the buildings were utterly destroyed.

Whether the inmates perished in the flames or not, history does not relate.

If this Abbess of Coldingham failed in her latter days to keep a sufficiently vigilant watch over her household, the error was atoned for right nobly by another Abbess of the same name, two hundred years later. For we are told by another chronicler, Roger of Wendover, that in the year A.D. 870, an innumerable multitude of Danes landed in Scotland under the command of Yuguar and Hubba, men of unspeakable wickedness and unheard-of daring.

As was their brutal custom, they over-ran the land, committing nameless atrocities wherever they went, and leaving destruction and desolation in their train. Sweeping southward along the coast, they approached the Abbey of Coldingham, long since rebuilt, and now a convent for women only.

The Abbess had heard of the savage doings of these wild Norsemen, and knew only too well what treatment she and her nuns might expect. It seemed to her heroic mind that martyrdom was preferable. So calling her daughters together she announced the approach of the Danes, and laid before them the peril they were in. Doubtless there were many fair young women among her spiritual children. To them she specially addressed herself. "Your beauty is your danger," she said, "mutilated and disfigured, perchance your enemies will

pass you over. If you follow my example, I hope, by the Divine mercy, we will escape from the cruelty of the barbarians."

So saying, she drew a knife from the folds of her robe, and cut off her nose and upper lip. True to their profession of obedience, and fired by her example, the nuns did the same. A few hours afterwards the Norsemen arrived and beat in the doors, expecting no doubt to find a huddled group of terrified women on whom they could work their wicked will. But the sight that awaited them was so dreadful, and the faces of the poor disfigured nuns so terrible, that they did not linger a moment, but retired in haste and confusion.

Their leaders, however, angry of being baulked of their prey, gave orders that the convent should be set on fire, and burned to the ground, along with all its inmates. So the sufferings of the poor brave women were soon at an end, and they attained the grace of martyrdom.

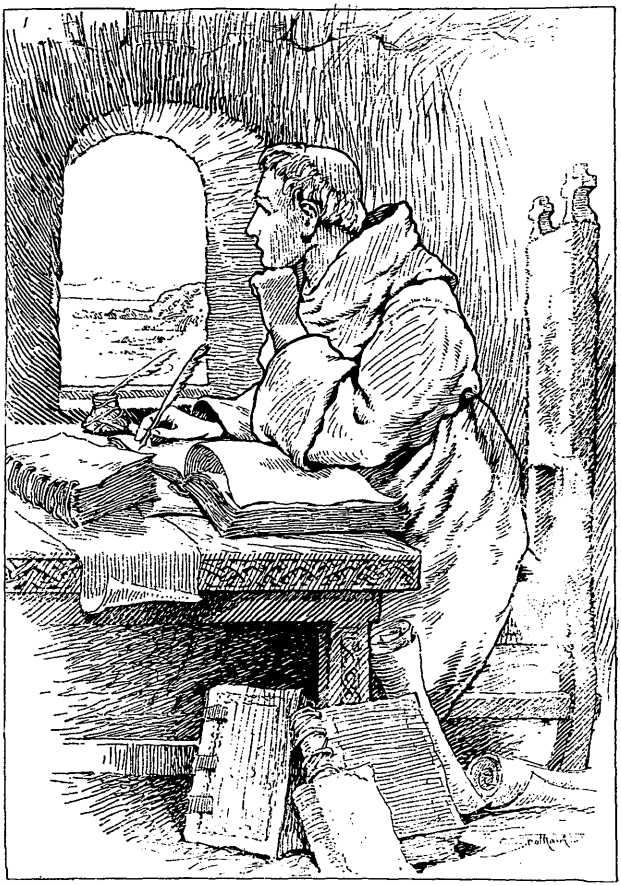
ST. ADAMNAN OF PERTHSHIRE

A.D. 624—A.D. 704

ST. ADAMNAN, ninth Abbot of Iona, was an Irishman, as was his great predecessor, St. Columba. Indeed it is said that he belonged to the same clan as that famous Abbot and Founder of his Order.

Adamnan was born twenty-seven years after Columba's death, and when he was still a boy in Ireland an incident took place which, as we shall see, affected his whole after-life, and greatly increased his opportunities of usefuless.

He seems to have been a pupil at one of the monastery schools where the scholars were divided into groups of six, one of whom went out in turn to beg for food to support himself and his five companions. It chanced one day, when Adamnan was engaged in this task, that he met a body of horsemen riding along. It was the powerful chief Finnachta and his followers. The boy made haste to get out of the way, and in so doing, tripped on a stone and fell, breaking the jar which was slung on his back, and which contained the



ST. ADAMNAN

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provisions which he had acquired through begging. Naturally he was very distressed, but the kindhearted chief made haste to comfort him, saying, "Be not sad for thy loss, I will protect thee."

Finnachta carried out his promise, and in after years when he became King, and Adamnan was qualified to do so, he acted as that monarch's spiritual adviser. This explains the important and successful part which Adamnan played in later life, both in Irish and Saxon history.

After a period spent in Ireland as a grown man Adamnan crossed to Iona, and entered the monastery there, under the fifth Abbot, Abbot Seghine. Here he lived for many years, and when the eighth Abbot, Failbhe, died, he was elected as his successor.

From all we can learn about him, Adamnan seems to have been well fitted to take up such a responsible task. For the Venerable Bede tells us that he was a "good man and a wise, and excellently versed in the knowledge of the Scriptures"—while another writer says that "he was possessed of wonderful prudence, humility, and piety." As we shall see, he had a very enquiring mind, and he took a wider view of life than might have been expected from a man of his time and up-bringing.

Perhaps this is why he touched life at so many points, and left his mark so deeply both on the Church and on the literature of his day.

To begin with, he was very friendly with King Alfred the Learned, as he was called, who had newly ascended the Northumbrian throne. For that monarch had taken refuge in his youth first in Ireland, then in Iona, through fear of his brother, King Egfrid, who ruled the kingdom before him.

Now Egfrid, good King as he had been, had often raided the Irish coasts, and brought back large numbers of Irish captives to act as slaves in his own dominions, and when he died, and Alfred ascended the throne, we find Abbot Adamnan acting as intermediary between the friends of these poor captives and the new King whom he had known in earlier years.

Indeed, we have an account of the tender-hearted Abbot setting out in his coracle to "Saxon-land" to plead his cause in person, and crossing an estuary where the "strand is so long, and the flow so rapid, that if the best steed in Saxon-land, ridden by the best horseman, were to start from the edge of the tide when it began to flow, he could only bring his rider ashore by swimming, so extensive is the strand, and so impetuous the

tide." No mean description of the Solway Firth. We are glad to know that Abbot Adamnan succeeded in his mission, and returned with sixty liberated captives whom he sent back to their homes.

The next thing we find him doing is repairing the monastery at Iona, which seems to have fallen into a ruinous state during his predecessor's reign. And as Iona was bare of trees suitable for building purposes, he sent twelve boats to Lorn, to bring back timber.

Later on, the reconstructed monastery received a most interesting guest, of whose learning and experience the Abbot was quick to take advantage. The visitor, a French Bishop named Arculf, who had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Palestine, Damascus, Constantinople, and Alexandria, had been driven out of his course during his return journey by a violent storm and landed somewhere in the Hebrides. He found his way to Iona and spent the winter there.

Quick to learn all he could about other lands, especially that land which had been hallowed by the God-Man, Adamnan plied Arculf with questions, and wrote down everything that dignitary told him, and embodied it in a book which bore the title *Concerning the Holy Places*. We can still

read a great part of what was written therein, for Bede quotes it at length in his *Ecclesiastical History*. It is very curious and interesting to read the description of the Holy Places, given by a traveller who visited them at that early date. Adamnan also wrote the well-known *Life of St. Columba*.

Following the example of the Founder of his monastery, this good Abbot seems often to have visited the mainland of Scotland, and to have preached and taught in certain districts. His name is most notably connected with Perthshire. Indeed, it has been said that he was the best-loved Saint next to St. Columba in the northern part of that county. He and his monks must often have passed through Glen Lyon, which was the most direct route from Iona to the north-eastern part of our land.

Indeed, the Saint is believed to have settled for a while at Balgie, in the middle of the glen, and here he is said to have restored an old church dedicated to St. Brendan. He also erected a mill, known as "Miltom Eonan"—Eonan being one of the numerous forms of his name. This mill was used for a thousand years, and near it, at the end of his life, Adamnan is believed to have been buried.

He also founded a church at Forglen, on the

east bank of the river Deveron, and a monastery and church at Dull, in Argyll.

This famous and keen-minded Abbot was a great traveller. We know that he made at least three visits to Northumbria. The object of the first of these visits was, as we have seen, to persuade King Alfred to release Irish prisoners. We have no knowledge of the errand that took him so far afield on the second occasion, but we know that he went to King Alfred's Court for the third time as an ambassador of his nation, though history does not relate what the question at issue was. On this third visit, he resided for a considerable time in Northumbria.

During this period he was impressed with the Rule and customs of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Especially in regard to the date on which its members observed Easter—for, as everyone knows, there was a divergence of opinion on certain matters between the Celtic and the Anglo-Saxon churches.

The matter had been discussed some forty years before at the Conference at Whitby, where it was generally decided to follow the Roman use, but monks from Iona, who were then living at Ripon, would have none of this, and in consequence returned to their northern home.

The clergy whom Adamnan met during his stay in Northumbria, notably the Abbot and monks of Jarrow, at which monastery he may have resided, tried to persuade him not to "presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either in relation to the observance of Easter, or any other decrees whatever, considering the small number of his followers seated in so distant a corner of the world."

It was sage advice, and Adamnan took it, and went home to Iona determined to bring the monks in his own monastery and in all other monasteries which followed the Columban Rule, into step, as it were, with the rest of their brethren of the Catholic Church.

But, greatly to his distress, he failed. Old customs and well-known ways had too firm a hold on the zealous, if somewhat narrow-minded ecclesiastics. And we must not greatly wonder. It was as if some city minister from Edinburgh or Glasgow went to a remote and isolated Highland parish, and tried to make the worshippers abandon their much-loved customs, which had been handed down to them from their forefathers, and adopt, what to them, were new-fangled ways.

So Adamnan, thoroughly convinced in his mind

that the change which he advocated would be for the good of the Church in the end, crossed over to Ireland, where the same customs prevailed as at Iona, and told of his experiences and his decision. Here he met with success, for Bede tells us that "all who were not under the dominion of Hii (that is, the Columban Order), came into the Catholic Unity, and kept the legal time of Easter."

Apparently the Saint rather dreaded the strife which he knew would arise between him and his brethren if he went home before that great Feast, and if he attempted to observe it on the date fixed by the greater part of Christendom. So he remained in Ireland until Easter was over. Then he returned to Iona. And as he was, according to to Bede, a great lover of peace and unity, "the Divine Goodness ordained that he should be taken to Everlasting Life before he should be obliged, on the return of the time of Easter, to quarrel more seriously with those who would not follow him in the truth."

So we may say that this far-seeing and peace-loving Saint was happy in the circumstances of his death, which took place on September 23rd, A.D. 704 in the seventy-seventh year of his age.

It was to Adamnan and his mother that the Irish owed a law which forbade women to fight in battle, as they had done up to this time. It is said that the Saint, during one of his visits to his native land was crossing a plain with his old mother on his back, when they saw two bands of men and women fighting against each other, and in course of the fray, some of the women received dreadful wounds. The old lady, so the story runs, dismounted from her filial steed, and seating herself on the ground, declared firmly that she would not leave that spot until her son promised to have women exempted for ever from the horror of taking part in battle, and from the call to accompany their menfolk on warlike expeditions. Be this as it may, we know that in A.D. 697 at a synod of ecclesiastics and priests which was held at Birr, in the centre of Ireland, at which our hero was present, an enactment was solemnly promulgated, exempting women from fighting. This enactment was known as the Law of Adamnan, or the Law of the Innocents.

Many places in Scotland are associated with this Saint under several variations of his name. The ruins of a very early chapel bearing his name are to be found at Forvie, in Aberdeenshire. The church at Aboyne was dedicated to him, and in

that parish there is St. Skeulan's Well, and St. Skeulan's Tree. At Tannadice there is St. Arnold's Seat, at Campsie, St. Adamnan's Acre, while a Chantry in the old Church at Dalmeny bore the same dedication.

St. Adamnan is said to have been "little and diminutive."

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND

A.D. 1046—A.D. 1093

IT was in the year A.D. 1017 and the mind of Knut the Dane, King of England by force of arms, and also by the free choice of the majority of Englishmen, was in sore perplexity. He was now a Christian and an upright man, despite the savagery and bloodshed of his youth, and he desired, above all else, to give peace to his newly acquired kingdom.

But although Edmund Ironside, the Saxon heir to the throne, was dead, he had left behind him two infant sons, twins, the Aethelings Edmund and Edward, and as long as they were alive in the land the men who had supported their father's claim, would support theirs also, and so a rival faction would be perpetuated.

"Kill the babes, and have done with them"—so the more hardened of his nobles counselled. And to have followed their advice would have meant nothing in those barbarous times.

But Knut hesitated. In his heart he wanted the children out of the way so as to make his throne more stable, but they were English Princes, while

he was of foreign descent, and somehow, though he had committed many murders on English soil, he shrank from adding those of the babes to the number.

In his perplexity he consulted his wife, Emma of Normandy, widow of Aethelred II, and step-grandmother of the helpless infants. Her advice was Machiavellian. "Do not kill the children on English soil," she counselled. "Send them to your half-brother Olaf, King of Sweden, and let him know that you will be grateful if he will cause them to disappear."

So to Sweden the babes were sent, and doubtless Knut thought that he had heard the last of them.

But King Olaf was a Christian also, and his heart was tender, so he got rid of his responsibility, not by putting his little visitors to death, but by passing them on to King Stephan of Hungary, who was so religious and noble a King that his country chose him in after years as her Patron Saint.

It is believed that Edmund, the elder of the twins, died in early childhood, at least nothing authentic is known of his later life—but Edward grew to manhood's estate, under the fostering care of King Stephan and his Consort Queen Gisela, sister or daughter of Duke Henry of Bavaria.

Stephan, Gisela, and Duke Henry were all devout Christians, indeed we are told that the chief concern of the King was the winning of his people from the worship of idols to Christianity. So the young Anglo-Saxon Prince grew up in a genuinely religious atmosphere, and his marriage to a Princess named Agatha, who was a near relative both of Queen Gisela and Duke Henry, and who is said to have been endued with great holiness of life, would strengthen all that was good and virtuous in his character.

To this young couple were born three children, Edgar, Christina, and Margaret, and it is needless to say that, with such devoted parents and guardians to watch over them, these little ones were trained from infancy to be loyal children of the Church, of which their elders were staunch supporters.

At this time great numbers of people all over Europe were embracing the monastic life—partly from a desire to escape the wickedness of the world, and partly, especially in the case of women, for the sake of security in an age when no one's life, outside the walls of a Religious House, was safe. And we gather, from what afterwards transpired, that the two little Saxon Princesses looked forward to spending their lives in a convent, and regarded

this as a natural and desirable lot. Christina, as we will see, achieved her childhood's ambition—for her sister, God, in His Providence, had a far other destiny.

When the Princess Margaret was about eleven or twelve years old, the first great upheaval in her life took place. Away in far-off England, Knut the Dane had died, and had been succeeded in turn by two of his sons, Harald and Harthacnut. Knut had fulfilled his ambition, and brought peace to the land—his sons had brought a fresh outburst of bloodshed and violence.

Therefore, when Harthacnut died, the nation looked with longing to the old race of Kings, and called Edward, brother of Edmund Ironside, and uncle of Edward the Aetheling, to the throne. This monarch, known to us as Edward the Confessor, having no son, turned his eyes to Hungary for an heir, and sent an envoy to request his nephew to return with his family to England.

After some delay, the Aetheling accepted his uncle's invitation, and in A.D. 1057 returned to his native land. He never saw his royal relative, however, for he died almost immediately on his arrival in London. He was buried beside his grandfather in St. Paul's Church, and, when the funeral was over, all that was left for good King

Edward to do was to take the widowed Princess Agatha, who must truly have felt a stranger in a strange land, and her three fatherless children to live with him in his palace at Westminster.

There our heroine spent nine happy years, during which she grew from childhood to early womanhood. A girl's character is very largely formed while she is in her 'teens, and these nine years which Margaret spent at the cultured and stately Court of her uncle had a strong and abiding influence on the whole of her future life.

Deeply religious by nature and early training, her devotion would be fostered by the many pious observances which were followed at Edward's Court. For that saintly but somewhat weak-minded monarch would have made a better monk than a king. It has been said that his aim was not so much to build up a kingdom, as to build up a church and monastery in honour of St. Peter, and he spent the last fourteen years of his reign, and the tenth part of his yearly income, in accomplishing this object. To him we owe the magnificent *West* Minster—so called to distinguish it from St. Paul's Church and monastery in the *East* of the city.

Doubtless many skilled architects and builders came from overseas to help in the work, and noble

travellers and eminent ecclesiastics would tarry in London, as they came or went, to mark its progress. The girl Princess must have watched the building, and the carving, and the painting, and doubtless was brought to the notice of, and introduced to the famous men, both lay and clerical, who found hospitality at her uncle's Court.

So her horizon widened, and her love of beauty, and reverence and care of all that pertained to the worship of Almighty God, grew apace.

At the same time her education was not neglected, for, although from the date of her leaving London, and that of Lanfranc's arrival to fill the See of Canterbury, it seems impossible that she could have been his pupil, as has sometimes been stated, she was trained under the supervision of devout and learned Benedictine priests. They naturally would impress on her mind the lesson which she had already learned in Hungary, that the Church must in all things conform to the pattern of Rome. This is an important fact to remember in view of the conflict which she had in later years when she was brought into contact with the Celtic Church in Scotland.

The two Princesses were watched over by a noblewoman who bore the title of the Mistress of the Maidens. Possibly other girls of noble birth

shared their studies. They learned to read the Gospels in Latin, also the Lives of the Saints; and Turgot, the priest who afterwards wrote an account of her life, tells how, even at this early period, Margaret began to live a very strict life, endeavouring to love God above all things, and to store her mind with holy thoughts and aspirations.

The royal sisters occupied much of their time in needlework, and became experts in all manner of church embroidery, especially in the gold embroidery known as Opus Anglicum. They had another experience, which had far-reaching results. For, when they arrived at Westminster they found there, so historians tell us, a youth named Malcolm Canmore—Malcolm of the Big Head—whose father had been King of Scotland, and had been murdered by one of his thanes who had possessed himself of the crown. So the lad had fled for protection to the English Court.

Malcolm had been at Westminster for some years, and had learned to speak the English tongue and to leave off some of his barbarous ways. But he was still rough and uncouth, and when he departed, along with an army provided by the good King, in the hope of driving out the usurper and regaining his father's throne, Margaret and her sister thought his going no loss, and

congratulated themselves that they had not been born Scotswomen.

But they had not seen the last of rough and uncultured Malcolm Canmore. For when, in A.D. 1066 the gentle Confessor died, and his successor Harold was defeated and killed by William the Conqueror at Senlac, the position of the Saxon Royal Family became fraught with danger.

What if the Conqueror, to make safe his own throne, put them to death?

So once more poor Princess Agatha and her children set out to seek a home, and naturally their thoughts turned to the land of their birth. Embarking in what must have been a slow-sailing vessel, they set out on their long and perilous journey. But a storm arose, and they were driven out of their course, and eventually landed in Scotland.

It seems strange to us that the vessel should have been driven so far out of its course. But if it was impossible to cross the channel or the North Sea, the fugitives probably made Scotland their goal, as they would prefer to throw themselves on the mercy of Malcolm, rather than remain within the realms which William the Norman was so ruthlessly and successfully subjugating to himself.

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On the other hand, they must have known that the Scottish King had recently invaded Northumbria, as a reprisal for some of William's doings, and the ferocity of his conduct there, and the barbarous methods with which he carried out his warfare, cannot have commended him as an ideal protector.

But when news was brought to Malcolm, in his rude tower, called by courtesy a Palace, at Dunfermline, that some relations of the King who had succoured him in his youth had arrived by ship on the Fifeshire coast and intended to ask for his protection, he did not hesitate as to his duty. Attended by his nobles, he hurried down to the little bay—now known as St. Margaret's Hope—where the ship had come to anchor, and giving the new-comers a courteous and kindly welcome, conducted them back to his Palace.

That Palace, as we have seen, was but a rude tower. It was built on a high rock overlooking a thickly wooded stream, and was surrounded by very dark and trackless woods. To the weary travellers it might appear a place of safety, but in comparison with the stately apartments to which they had been accustomed at Westminster, and also at the well-remembered Castle of Rakvar in Hungary which had been given by King Stephan

to Edward the Aetheling, and which had been his children's early home, it must have looked a most bare and uncomfortable place of abode. Indeed, they must have regarded both their host and his surroundings as half barbaric.

But doubtless they expected their sojourn to be merely temporary, and having arrived in Scotland in the autumn, they would look forward to the spring, or early summer, when the storms of winter would be over, and they could make another attempt to cross the sea and reach their native land.

But as the months went by it was plain that for one of them at least it would be difficult to carry out this programme. For it grew more and more evident that King Malcolm, who was a widower, and nearing forty, was beginning to "yearn," as an Anglo-Saxon chronicler puts it, "for Edgar's sister as his wife."

Poor Margaret! Consternation must have reigned in her heart. For, in spite of her youth—she was only twenty-two—and her beauty, she had set her heart on carrying out her childhood's determination to become a nun along with her sister.

But it was not given to many Princesses in those days to carry out their own wishes, and although at first her brother Edgar seems to have sympathized with her in her distaste for such a destiny,

he was soon won over to the opinion of his mother and such friends as had accompanied his family on their flight, that it would be politic to favour the King of Scotland's suit. Indeed, seeing that they were all completely in that monarch's power, there seemed nothing else to be done.

So, as Turgot, Prior of Durham, and afterwards Bishop of St. Andrews, wrote in after years, in an account of her life which he compiled at the request of one of her daughters, the poor young Princess Margaret, "by the desire of her friends, rather than by her own—yea, rather by the appointment of God, was married to Malcolm, son of Duncan, the most powerful King of the Scots."

The ceremony took place in the royal residence at Dunfermline, and was performed by Bishop Fothad of St. Andrews, but the exact date is unknown. It was probably in the year A.D. 1069 or A.D. 1070. Shortly afterwards, her relatives took their departure, and Margaret was left alone in her new home.

Many girls in her position would have allowed the loneliness and uncongenialness of her surroundings to overwhelm her, and would have sunk down to the level of those with whom she was obliged to associate, rather than have striven to

lift them up to see and embrace her ideals. But if ever a human being had a call from God to carry out His Will and Purpose, it was that fair young Saxon Princess, and, realizing the fact, she recognized her vocation, and strove with all her might cheerfully to fulfil it. An old Anglo-Saxon chronicler and historian, Simeon of Durham, defined this vocation in a few terse, but expressive words: "She was to increase God's praise in the land, and to direct the King from the erring path and bend him to a better way, and his people with him, and to suppress the evil customs which the people had formerly used—even as afterwards she did."

Like a wise woman, she began her reforms in the circle of which she was the centre, i.e., with her husband and her household. The King being a rough, warlike, untutored man, it was natural that his Court should be rough and warlike also. The young Queen, accustomed, both at King Stephan's and King Edward's Court, to better and more dignified ways of life, tried to bring some of the same dignity and order into her husband's household. She interviewed personally the traders who came by sea to the coast of Fife and ordered them to bring with them on their future voyages "divers merchandise," chiefly brightly coloured

cloth and other materials for wearing apparel, along with ornaments and "costumes of different fashions."

Some of these were used in the Palace, thereby increasing her husband's dignity in the eyes of his courtiers, and making his bare and comfortless abode more like a Royal Residence. The rest was offered to anyone who could afford to buy it, and from henceforth, says Turgot, "the people went about in new costumes of different fashions and various colours, so that they might have been supposed to be a new race."

Doubtless this only applies to the nobles and their ladies, but as suitable clothing always tends to increase self-respect, Margaret's efforts even in this direction were not without their fruit in an increased sobriety of bearing and courtesy of manner, among those whom she tried to influence.

She also persuaded her husband to employ a better class of attendants and saw to it that, when he went out riding, a band of these should accompany him, as befitted a monarch. She attended to the appointments of the royal table, which before her coming had doubtless been very rude and bare. Obtaining plate and vessels, either of gold or silver, or overlaid with these precious metals, she herself tried to give the uncouth nobles, by

precept and example, some idea of gentle, cultured manners.

For, when she first came to the Palace, she was much disturbed by their behaviour. Directly each of them had finished eating, he hurried from the table without paying any attention to the others. In order to change this custom, and induce the unmannerly knights to remain seated till all were finished, and a decorous grace said, she promised to all who would remain behind for the purpose a drink of wine out of a special cup which she herself sent round. Needless to say, the knights remained, and the custom of handing round a "Grace Cup" after dinner prevailed long after the originator had gone to her rest.

Although in her heart she always clung to the ideal of austere simplicity which she would have embraced, if, like her sister, she had been able to enter the cloister, she felt it her duty to dress as befitted her royal rank. So she moved among her ladies and her courtiers clad in splendid apparel, deeming it meet to do so, yet all the while reminding herself that all the gems and gold in the world were but dust and ashes compared with the fear of God, and lowliness of heart.

At the same time that she was trying to accomplish all this, she was taking stock of the Church,

and seeing what reforms she could initiate there. For the Church of her adopted country, isolated as it had been from the rest of Christendom, stood much in need of reformation. The actual buildings were poor, dirty, and neglected. So she at once began to render them more fit for the worship of God by gathering together a band of highborn women, and instructing them in all the arts of needlework which she herself had been taught at Westminster. They met in one of the rooms of the Palace, and here they shaped and fashioned fair linen coverings for the neglected altars; and embroidered in solid gold embroidery, and with silks of many colours, hangings for the sanctuaries, and vestments for the priests.

Not content with these labours, she caused a magnificent church to be built at Dunfermline, as a memorial of her marriage, and dedicated it to the Holy Trinity. This building, which was probably the finest in Scotland at that time, she furnished with beautiful altar vessels of solid and pure gold, and placed a jewelled Crucifix above the Holy Table, which, it would seem, was something of an innovation. She also gave Crucifixes to other churches, notably to the Cathedral Church of St. Andrews.

Besides seeing that the churches were more fittingly appointed, and more reverently cared for,

the young Queen was not afraid to protest openly against the bad customs which had crept into the life of the Celtic Church. And it was not only these bad customs that troubled her, it was the fact that the Church of her adopted country was separate in many ways from the rest of the Universal Church, which, generally speaking, acknowledged the authority of Rome, and in which she had been brought up.

To understand her feelings, and also the great work which she did for religion and culture in Scotland, we must pause here and realize the situation of the Church in Britain at that date.

In the Anglo-Saxon Church in England there was a native clergy, it is true, but these men had been trained in the tradition of St. Augustine and Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury. These two heroes of the Faith had come from Rome, although originally Theodore was a Greek monk from Tarsus, and had brought with them all the culture and learning and experience which was to be gained in the Imperial City, which was the centre of Church life in their time. They had received their commission direct from the Pope. They could read and write, and they taught their monks and clergy to do the same. Theodore, along with one of his friends named Hadrian, traversed the

whole kingdom, establishing schools, introducing Choral Services, and even founding little libraries. He and his successors brought learned men from the continent who could teach the Anglo-Saxon monks much, not only about Church services, but about architecture, education, and medicine as well.

Thus we see that the Church in those days was almost always not only a great religious force, but also a great cultural and educational power. Everything that was elevating, philanthropic, and progressive, emanated from her.

But in Scotland this was not so. The Church there held no communication with the outside world, except perhaps with Ireland, where the same conditions largely prevailed. It was narrow, provincial, isolated. And its clergy, being for the most part illiterate, had no wider vision, knew of no better way. And Margaret, having had experience of a wider, better-ordered ecclesiastical life, set herself to do away with abuses, and raise the Celtic Church to a higher and more universal level both of custom and observance.

For instance, in England, and all over Europe, the fast of Lent was observed for forty days—in Scotland it lasted only thirty-six. In the rest of the Catholic Church every communicant was bound to approach the altar on Easter Sunday,

if they never did so at any other time. The Celtic Church had become listless and slack, and its priests allowed their people to neglect the Sacrament altogether. More than this. The most sacred service of the Church was celebrated in some places with what to Margaret seemed "barbarous rites," although it may well be that their barbarity consisted merely in the fact that they were not those to which the greater part of Christendom was accustomed. Such marriages as were forbidden by the rest of the Church were allowed in Scotland. Sunday was utterly neglected, buying and selling going on as usual; indeed many fairs and markets were held on that day. Which things were a sign that religion in the Northern Kingdom had sunk to a very low ebb at the time of which we are speaking.

Nothing daunted, Margaret called a Council of Clergy, and laying these points before them, spent three days in trying to convince them that it would be good for their Church, and for the spiritual welfare of their people, if they remedied these abuses, and brought their customs into line with those of the rest of Christendom.

As we read the account of this Council, as given by Turgot, it is interesting to note that the argument against all communicants making their communions

at Easter, was one which still obtains, occasionally, in regard to church membership in the remote Highlands to-day—that "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself." This was met by the shrewd Queen pointing out that if no one who was imperfect could approach the Holy Table, then it must remain for ever unapproached.

In the end she was victorious, and gained her points, which is perhaps to be partly explained by the fact that while she spoke English, her opponents spoke their native tongue, and King Malcolm, who was at home in both languages, was present as interpreter. And, as Turgot says, "The King who by this time was beginning almost to worship his saintly wife, was prepared both to say and to *do*, whatever she might direct as to the question at issue."

But whatever were their motives for yielding, the Celtic clergy assented to Margaret's demands, and, stimulated, perhaps by the reverent services which they attended in the great Church of the Holy Trinity, which now stood close to the Royal residence, they amended their lives, repented of their slackness, ruled their flocks more zealously, and in many ways brought their observances and customs nearer those of their fellow-Christians.

As a result, their little native Church gained a broader and richer and more wide-flung vision as it came into closer fellowship in Law and Order with the parts of the Church in other countries which owed their unity to their common obedience to Rome. It became no longer an isolated unit, but part of a great whole. And though it might lose some of its native individuality, as the "Celtic" was merged in the "Mediæval," yet it gained far more than it lost, in its increased breadth of outlook and in its union with its brethren in other lands. It also gained greater opportunities of usefulness which the better learning and better skill in the arts of literature and medicine brought to it by monks from England and France, afforded.

When we turn to the account of the daily life of this gifted and saintly woman, as given by Turgot, we wonder how she found time or strength for all that she set herself to do. She was not only a great Queen, she was nurse and benefactress to the sick and hungry and desolate as well. Added to this, she was an anxious and careful mother—and, above all, her life was steeped in prayer and devotion as few lives have ever been.

It was natural that in a country as rude and uncivilized as Scotland was in those days, little or no attention was paid to the sick, the aged, the

orphan, or the widow. It was in the monasteries and convents that the impulses of love and mercy arose which took stock of such unfortunates, and relieved their needs. And Margaret may almost be said to have been "Convent-bred." At least, she had learned by precept and example from her earliest directors that "Charity without works is dead."

The accounts of her days, and also of her nights, sound almost incredible, and even if the good Bishop, who loved and revered her so much, has embellished by ever so little the tale of his saintly mistress's devotion, enough remains—true beyond all doubt—to prove what an extraordinarily unselfish, devoted, and consecrated woman Margaret must have been.

When she went outside the Palace, either on foot or on horseback, her attendants carried with them a supply of food and garments, and these she distributed with her own hands to the crowds of poor people, orphans and widows, who, we are told, came to her as they would to a much beloved mother, and none of whom ever left her without being comforted.

If supplies ran short, she appealed to her attendants and rich followers to give her any garments they could spare to make up the deficiency.

And these were freely given, for the donors knew that the generous Queen would, when she returned home, pay them double the value of their gifts. Having gained in her youth some skill in leechcraft, and in the knowledge how to deal with wounds and sores, she imparted these valuable lessons to her ladies, and in the morning she sat with them in the outer hall of the Palace, receiving all who came to her for aid, cleansing and dressing the most loathsome sores and scars.

Her stalwart husband, who worshipped her for her goodness and holiness, was as clay in her hands.

He became, we are told, "out of love to her," most attentive to works of justice, mercy, and almsgiving. He was in the habit of offering at Mass, especially on Maundy Thursday, gold coins, which were laid on the altar. The Queen knew where he kept these coins, and when her own store of silver had run down, and some specially needy beggar appeared, she would go and help herself to one or two.

The King, passionate enough at times, would only smile at such pious thieving—or, as a joke, would lead her, coins in hand, to her chaplain, and asked that she should be tried for her offence.

She had a peculiar care and tenderness for children, though she was strict in the upbringing

of her own. She kept nine little destitute infants, who were orphans, under her care, and every morning they were brought to her, and she fed them with her own hands, taking them on her knee, and giving them food, suitable for their tender years, with her own spoon.

Not content with these charities, she let her compassion go out to numberless Saxon slaves, who had been carried from their own land to Scotland in her husband's numerous, and it must be confessed, very savage and blood-thirsty raids. These unfortunate people, often of high birth, were scattered all over the country, serving rough and merciless masters, and their lot must have been most unhappy. Margaret sent out secret spies to find the slaves who were the most inhumanly treated or oppressed, and these she ransomed, and helped them to return to England.

She took thought for the many pilgrims who visited the church at St. Andrews from all parts, and erected what we should now call hostels for them on both sides of the Firth of Forth, where they could find shelter and rest. She also provided food, and servants to attend to their needs. More than this, ships were waiting to convey them across the estuary, free of charge. And as long as the names North and South Queensferry remain, the

memory of Margaret's thoughtful provision for pious wayfarers will not be forgotten.

But it was during the fasts of Advent and Lent, that the Queen's devotion rose to its full height, and attracts our astonished interest. As we read the account of her ceaseless devotions and charities during these seasons, we can only say, with wistful consciousness of how far we would lag behind, could we endeavour to copy her, "there were giants on the earth in those days." But we also realize that her zeal was mistaken, and must have rendered futile many of her attempts at prayer. The late Bishop Dowden writes, "it must have been impossible to maintain an intelligent attention throughout such prolonged Services."

After she had taken a little rest at the beginning of the night she went into church, and there she said the "Matins of the Holy Trinity," the "Matins of the Holy Ghost," the "Matins of the Blessed Virgin," and the "Vespers of the Dead," before going on to recite the Psalms. Then came Matins and Laud; and thereafter the King and the Queen washed the feet of six poor persons, and gave them alms.

After this, the Queen allowed herself some much needed rest, but was afoot by daybreak continuing her devotions. She then fed her little orphans,

and proceeded to the great hall, where three hundred poor people were seated at tables, and where she and her husband, in the presence of the chaplain and a few others, "waited upon Christ in His poor."

When it was time for the Queen's own repast, which was a very frugal meal indeed, she did not begin it until she had waited on other twenty-four poor persons, who seem to have been regular pensioners, as they accompanied the Court wherever it went. It was no wonder that by her prayers, her fasts—which she kept most rigorously—and her labours, Margaret brought a very long-drawn-out illness upon herself, which eventually led to her comparatively early death.

Eight children were born to this devoted couple, for all historians agree that the marriage, which might not at first promise great felicity, proved a very happy one.

These were Edward who fell in battle along with his father, Ethelred, who died young, Edmund, who did not always walk worthy of his mother's teaching, but repented before his death; Edgar, Alexander, and David, who reigned in turn in Scotland; Matilda and Mary, one of whom was married in England, the other in France.

Margaret brought up her children very strictly,

and with only one end in view. Like the mother of Albert, late King of the Belgians, she would have said that the first aim of her life was to make them good Christians, whatever else might befall them. She found time to instruct them herself, calling them to her knee, and carefully teaching them about Our Lord, as far as their age would permit, and admonishing them to love Him always.

She took care that their tutors and governesses did not spoil them. She urged them to correct their faults, to whip them if necessary, and to teach them to live "peacefully and affectionately among themselves." She saw to it that they respected the Lord's Day, as Sunday was generally called at that time, and that they always accompanied her to church. And in teaching them their duties she taught the nation also, for when the Queen and her children went to church, other people who professed to be Christians felt constrained to do the same.

An old monk of Douai in France has left on record the chief virtues which Margaret aimed at for her children—here are some of them:—

"Rather to die a thousand deaths than to commit one mortal sin.

"To give Soveraigne honour and absolute adoration to the Most Holy Trinity.

"To be charitable to the poor, to protect orphans, and relieve them in their necessities.

"To abhor all obscene language and uncleanness.

"To converse with persons of blameless lives, and to follow their judgments and counsels.

"To be firm, constant, and unchangeable in maintaining the Catholic Faith."

To judge from the accounts that have come down to us of the lives of her sons and daughters in later years, this teaching bore rich and abiding fruit. For those of her sons who lived to manhood's estate were famed for their abstemiousness, their extensive charity, and their frequency in prayer—while the title "good Queen Maud," shows the place the Princess Matilda occupied in the hearts of the English people over whom she was destined to reign as Queen, as wife of Henry I.

The story of Queen Margaret's life is almost entirely free from legends and other medieval accretions. But there still exists, after an interval of almost nine hundred years, one of her most cherished possessions, about which a very interesting story is told. This is a little shabby book of manuscript, which we find in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. It is an illuminated Book of the Gospels, and it is practically certain that it belonged to the Scottish Queen.

Probably it was given to her when she was a girl at Westminster, and she carried it with her when she set out on the journey which led her unexpectedly to a throne.

It was one of her greatest treasures, and Turgot writes that it was beautifully adorned with jewels and gold, and ornamented with the figures of the four Evangelists painted and gilt. The capital letters throughout the volume were also resplendent with gold. To-day the jewels are gone, but the gilded lettering remains; and the dull colouring of the robes of the Evangelists can still be traced.

The story tells how, when the Queen and her attendants were on a journey, the chaplain, who carried the book, let it slip from its wrappings as the party were crossing a river, and did not discover its loss until he was called upon to produce it. Instant search was made, and at last it was found at the bottom of the stream. It was wide open, and the action of the water had kept the leaves in constant motion, so that the little covering of silk which protected the letters of gold had been washed away. Everyone expected the book to be ruined, yet it was taken out of the river so perfect, uninjured, and free from damage that it looked as if it had not even been touched by the water.

It was carried to the Queen, who, after this, esteemed it more highly than ever.

"As for me," adds Turgot, "I am of opinion that this Miracle was wrought by Our Lord, because of His love for this venerable Queen."

One wonders, as one looks down on the little brown volume, if this is the book which King Malcolm, who was quite unlettered, used to take in his great hands, and kiss reverently, because it belonged to the woman whom he loved and reverenced above all others.

Margaret died on the 16th of November, A.D. 1093, at the comparatively early age of forty-six or forty-seven. Doubtless, as we have said, her want of proper rest and lengthened fasts hastened her end, for Turgot tells us that, on "account of her excessive fastings, she suffered, to the end of her life, from very acute pain."

The story of her death is well known. She appears to have been seriously ill for six months, for during that time she seems to have been unable to sit on horseback; or, indeed, to rise much from her bed. In this weak condition she was obliged to leave her residence at Dunfermline, and proceed, with her younger children, to Edinburgh Castle.

For her husband had gone on one of his raids into England, accompanied by two of his sons;

and it was thought safer for her to be in the Castle, perched high on its rock, than in the Royal House at Dunfermline which was only protected by trees.

It was the month of November, and snow lay on the ground, and the Queen, who was gradually growing weaker, seems to have been haunted by a strange sense of disaster. Rising from her bed one day, she was helped into the little chapel which she had caused to be built on the summit of the rock. This is probably the little building which is still standing there to-day, and which seems, as we enter, to link us back with those far-off times.

Here she heard Mass, and certain in her own mind that her days were numbered, she received the Holy Communion to "fortify herself for her departure."

Then she returned to her chamber, and growing rapidly worse, ordered her chaplain and other priests to stand before her, and commend her soul to Christ with their Psalms. She also asked that the Black Rood of Scotland, a massive gold Cross with the Figure of Christ carved in black ivory upon it, should be brought to her. Holding this in her hands, she repeated for herself the Fiftieth Psalm.

As she was doing so, her son Edgar entered the room, splashed with mud, and wearied with long

riding. He was the bearer of heavy tidings, for his father and his elder brother had been killed four days before, while besieging Alnwick Castle.

We can fancy how the young man would hesitate to convey the woeful news, and would try to say something cheering. But his mother was not to be deceived. "Tell me all," she said. "By this Holy Cross I adjure thee to tell me the truth." Then the tale of disaster was recounted by the weary and grief-stricken Prince.

The dying Queen neither murmured nor rebelled. Her death was in keeping with her holy life. Thanking God meekly that He had thought her worthy to endure such sorrow at the end of her days, she repeated the prayer "Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to the Father's will, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, hast by Thy Death given life to the world, Deliver me." With these words she passed to her rest.

There was no time left to her children for quiet mourning. For already Donald Bane, her husband's half-brother, who, hearing that Malcolm had gone to England, had hastened from the Highlands with a band of savage followers, was clamouring at the gate of the Castle, and preparing to force an entrance. So her sorrowing sons, priests, and attendants, laid her body, as reverently as haste

would allow, in a wicker basket, and gathering the younger children together, fled secretly, under cover of a dense "haar," or sea-fog, out of the "West Yett," a little postern in the west wall of the Castle, and clambered perilously down the rock. Thence they escaped to the Forth, and, crossing the river, arrived safely with their sacred burden at Dunfermline.

Here the worn-out body was "honourably shrouded as became a Queen," and buried before the High Altar of the great Abbey Church which she had built. It is said that the remains of her husband, which for twenty years found a resting-place in Tynemouth Priory, were eventually brought home and laid beside those of his wife.

ST. MAGNUS OF ORKNEY

d. A.D. 1115.

To understand the story of St. Magnus aright we must go back to the days of his great grandfather, Sigurd the Stout, who was Earl of Orkney, Caithness, and Sutherland, towards the end of the tenth century.

Sigurd died a Christian, but the manner of his conversion savoured more of the battlefield than of the Church. For it is said that, when one of the Kings of Norway, Olave Tryggvasson, was raiding the northern shores of our island, he landed in Orkney, took its Earl prisoner, and offered him the choice of accepting the Faith of Christ, or going to instant death.

Sigurd chose the first alternative, and was baptised.

It is said that he married the daughter of King Malcolm II, of Scotland, but we know little more of him save that he met his death at the battle of Clontarf in Ireland, where he had gone to render assistance to his countrymen, for he was of Irish descent.

He left one son, Thorfin, who grew up under the protection of his grandfather, King Malcolm, and by him was installed as Earl of Caithness and Sutherland. Later in life he gained possession of Orkney, Shetland, and part of the Hebrides. Thorfin was a wild, careless fighting-man, and although he was by birth a Christian, his religion counted but little in his youth and mature manhood. But as age advanced he grew more thoughtful, and was truly sorry for the lawless crimes which he had committed. As was common with penitents of noble birth in those days, he made a pilgrimage to Rome, and on his return he built Christ Church at Birsay, on the mainland of Orkney, in the year A.D. 1064. Thorfin left two sons, Paul and Erlend, who seem to have been joint heirs of their father's dominions, for it is said of them that they "ruled the islands in great harmony."

Earl Paul married a Norwegian Princess, and had one son, Hakon; Erlend's wife was Thora, an Orcadian lady of noble birth, and she and her husband had two sons, Magnus and Erlend. It is with these three cousins that our story is concerned. From his earliest years Earl Magnus seems to have been an extraordinarily good and holy child. Indeed the old chronicler who writes his life testifies that "from the earliest days of his

childhood he was illuminated and instructed by the teaching of the Holy Ghost." Knowing in what flattering terms these old writers described the special Saint about whom they were writing, this description might not impress us much, were it not for the fact that everything we are told about the little boy bears out the truth of it.

We read that he possessed a kindly nature, and was noted even as a child for his good manners and his steadfastness. At the same time he was "glad spoken and blythe, gentle of speech, obedient and reasonable, kind and dear to everyone." When quite young, he, along most likely with his brother and cousin, was sent to school, probably at one of the little Celtic monasteries which still survived in the island, although the Norsemen had destroyed a great many of these settlements. Here they would obtain what simple learning was available, and we are told that Magnus became well grounded in the Holy Scriptures.

They were rough and warlike days in which the boys grew up. We read how the Norsemen, under King Harald, Sigurd's son, came across from Norway with a mighty army, intending to sail southwards and raid the coasts of England, and how his wife and his two daughters came with him. The latter remained with their kinsfolk in Orkney,

but Earl Paul and Earl Erlend joined the fierce Vikings, and fared south with them.

Doubtless the three cousins, who must now have been quite big boys, paid much attention to their Norwegian guests, and shared in the general mourning when the curious, highprowed boats came sailing back, with their father and uncle safe on board, but bearing the heavy tidings that King Harald, Sigurd's son, had fallen in battle.

On hearing the news, one of his daughters, the Princess Mary, died suddenly, and the soothsayers said that her father and she had only one life between them.

The Earls Paul and Erlend seem to have been most devoted brothers, for they had their possessions in common, and ruled them without dissension or jealousy. But things changed when their sons grew up. For the two cousins, Hakon and Erlend became very arrogant and were always fighting and disputing as to which should be the most important. Hakon, Earl Paul's son, wished to be overlord to Earl Erlend's sons, "for," said he, "I am of better family. My mother was a Norwegian Princess, while your mother was only an Orkney woman, even though she was of noble birth."

Of course young Earl Erlend would not listen to this reasoning, and tried to kill his cousin, while

his brother Magnus took little part in the strife because of his peace-loving nature.

But as time went on, and the strife continued, Magnus also seemed to lose his boyhood's love of God, and his innocency and purity of heart, and became, for a few years, as wicked as his companions. Like them, he lived by rapine and spoil, and if he did not slay people himself, he found no fault with those who did.

At last the two older Earls, Paul and Erlend, called a meeting to see if all this discord could not be stopped and matters arranged between their sons. At this Council it was agreed that the islands should be divided into two parts, and that Erlend and his sons should rule one part—Paul and his son, the other. So things rested for a time, then strife broke out afresh.

Not content with ruling his father's territory, Hakon molested the islanders who gave allegiance to his uncle and cousins, and at last the latter said that there could be no peace until Hakon was outwith the country. So, as the general feeling was against him this turbulent Prince set sail for Norway, where he stayed for a time at the Court of King Olaf the Silent. Then he proceeded to Sweden.

Now, although the King of Sweden was a

Christian, and tried, by all means in his power, to root out old superstitions and pagan customs in his kingdom, there were still many magicians and soothsayers in the land. There was one spaeman in particular who was famous throughout the country for the wonderful way in which he could foretell the future, and Hakon, who had a great desire to know what life held for him, sought him out.

The spaeman was very surprised that a Christian Prince should come to him and ask him to tell his fortune, "for," said he, "men of thy Faith do not believe in men like me. 'Twould be better if thou went to consult thine own kinsmen, and see whether they be able to foretell the future or no."

But as Hakon went on begging him to tell him his fortune, the spaeman consented, and predicted that the young Prince should gain possession of the Orkneys, and rule there as overlord.

Greatly delighted at this prediction, Hakon turned his face to the west again, and on his way home spent a few weeks in Norway, at the Court of King Magnus Bareleg, brother of King Olaf the Silent. Here he heard from those who had come overseas that Earl Erlend and his sons, Magnus and Erlend, were the favoured rulers in Orkney, and that his father, Earl Paul, had become of little account.

Angered beyond measure at this news, he tried to persuade King Magnus Bareleg to go over with him to Orkney, accompanied by a band of vassals, and place him—Hakon—on the throne. "Take care I do not place myself on the throne," was King Magnus' unexpected reply; and when he heard it, Hakon spoke no more of the matter.

But King Magnus Bareleg meant what he said, and setting out with a large fleet of ships manned by a body of fierce fighting men, he landed in Orkney in A.D. 1098, and taking the two brother Earls, Erlend and Paul, prisoners, sent them over to Norway, where eventually they died; while he himself took possession of the throne for his son Sigurd, who was then only nine years old.

Thereafter, in order to make all the Lords of the Western Isles submit to his rule, he set out with his ships and his warriors on a raiding voyage round the west coast of Scotland, and he forced the three young Earls—Erlend, Magnus, and Hakon, to accompany him, which was a very good way of settling their quarrels.

Earl Magnus, our hero, was now man-grown, he was tall and bold, and of a great strength, and wondrous fair of countenance, and King Magnus Bareleg, because he was so well-looking, took him as his table-swain, and he served the King

continually. We read that the young man had repented of the sins of those years in which he had lived as other young men, and that he had turned again to God with all his heart. The Viking fleet fared out from Orkney, and came to the Hebrides, where all the inhabitants were conquered, and their King taken prisoner.

But when they reached Iona, that Island of the Saints, King Magnus, because he was a Christian, would not fight there, but granted peace and safety to all men. And because he had shed blood, he would not as much as enter the little chapel where Columba's body rested, but stood on the threshold, and gazed at the tomb for a space. Then he shut the door, and locked it, so that no sacrilegious foot might step therein.

The warlike host sailed down to Wales, and fought a great battle in the Menai Straits with two Welsh Earls, Hugh the Stout and Hugh the Brave. When the strife was beginning, and everyone was picking up their arms, the young Earl Magnus did not follow their example, but, going to his accustomed seat in the prow, sat down there.

"Why dost thou not prepare thyself for battle?" asked Magnus Bareleg in surprise.

"Because I have no quarrel with any man," was the answer, "therefore will I not fight."

Then the King's anger arose, and he jeered at the goodly youth. "Thou can'st go below, if thou art such a coward," he scoffed, "for it is not religion, but fear, that hath brought thee to this mind."

The young Earl made no answer. He remained quietly where he was, and when the battle began, he took out his Psalter, and recited it so devoutly and earnestly that his voice rang out above the clash of arms. All through the long and desperate struggle the young nobleman kept his place, praying for the dead and dying on both sides, and he seemed to have a charmed life for although arrows flew in hundreds round him, and the clash of steel resounded on every side, and men fell mortally wounded at his feet, no ill befell him.

At last, when Hugh the Brave had been slain, the Welsh took to flight—and Magnus Bareleg was left victor. It is said that Earl Erlend, Magnus' brother, fell in this battle also.

After this conflict the Norse King took a deep dislike to Earl Magnus. Perhaps he was shamed by the young man's behaviour, for his conscience must have told him that he, too, had no quarrel with the Welsh, and therefore he had no right to attack and vanquish them. At any rate he now

treated his table-swain so harshly, that Magnus resolved to escape.

So on the homeward voyage, when the ship lay close to the mainland of Scotland, he rose one night, and putting what we should call a "dummy" in his bed, so that his absence would not be discovered for some time, he jumped on shore, and fled as speedily as he could.

In the morning, when he was missing at table, the King enquired if he were ill. Someone went to where he slept, and the trick he had played was discovered. The ship was searched without result, and when it was certain that he had fled, spoor-hounds were let loose on the land.

Now when Magnus sprang on shore he had injured his foot, so he could not run very fast, and the spoor-hounds soon overtook him. But by this time he had reached a wood, and he climbed up into a huge oak tree. The hounds crowded round the trunk of the tree and tried to leap into its branches in order to tear him down. But Magnus had brought with him a heavy staff with a metal tip, and with this he struck the foremost dog, who sprang back with a howl of pain, and hearing this, all his comrades put their tails between their legs, and made for the ship.

The King now sent his men ashore, and they searched the wood, but the young Earl remained in his oak tree, and they never saw him. When the search had died down, and the ships had sailed away, he pursued his road inland till he came to the Court of King Edgar, the gentle God-fearing son of the Blessed Queen Margaret. Here he remained for some time, and we read that later he made his abode with a Welsh Bishop.

Doubtless it was during these years that his soul grew and his faith deepened, and he came to see that nothing mattered but to love God and serve Him. In short, to quote the words of a scribe called "Master Robert," who wrote his life, he grew into a "holy man."

Possibly he had dreamed of ending his days peacefully at the Scottish Court, or in the quiet and repose of some monastery, but a very different life—and death—awaited him. Soon he heard that his father, Earl Erlend, had died in Norway, and not long afterwards news came that King Magnus Bareleg had been killed fighting in Ireland. And yet again messengers arrived bearing tidings that his cousin Hakon had taken possession of the whole Earldom of Orkney, although half of it belonged by right to him.

So, as it seemed to be his duty to look after the territory of which he was now master, he fared across the sea to Norway, and appealed to the new King of that land. King Eystein, for so he was called, supported his claim, and ordered Hakon to give him his father's half of Orkney, Shetland and Caithness.

As the Kings of Norway were virtually the overlords of these islands Hakon was obliged to submit to Eystein's decree, and for nine years there was peace.

It was during those years that Earl Magnus came to Scotland and married a beautiful maiden of royal birth, whose name has been lost to us. During those years, also, he ruled his dominions so justly and prudently, seeking in all things to please God rather than man, that his subjects began to look on him with awe and reverence, and to whisper to each other that he deserved the name of Saint.

Like the great Queen of Scotland, whose son was his friend, he spent some time each day in seeking out the poor and needy, and succouring them for the love of God. While all the chieftains of his blood, including first and foremost his cousin Hakon, spent their time in reiving and rapine and despoiling their neighbours, he set his face firmly

against all such evil ways, and meted out speedy punishment to any of his subjects, be they rich or poor, who indulged in these cruel pastimes. In a coarse and impure age, his conduct was without reproach—in a time when rulers regarded their subjects as of little more value than cattle, he occupied himself in caring for their affairs, and trying to teach them how to live peaceable and godly lives. In fact—with far less in the way of early training to help him, and with far fewer aids due to his position, this young Orcadian ruler sought to do for his country what Queen Margaret had done for Scotland thirty or forty years before.

Dissensions having broken out anew between the cousins, however, Magnus once more left his northern home, and, sailing to the south of England spent a year at the Court of Henry Beauclerk. When he returned to Orkney at the end of that period, he found that Hakon had again seized his earldom.

After a further period of strife and unrest, the cousins agreed to meet on the Isle of Eglishay, and try to adjust their differences. One of the conditions of this meeting was that they were each to bring only two ships, and to have the same number of followers, so that one could not threaten or overawe the other. Magnus, as might have been

expected, kept strictly to this agreement, and arrived at the island in due course, with two boat loads only, and as many men as they would hold. Hakon, on the other hand brought eight warships crowded with followers armed to the teeth.

As soon as Magnus saw them approaching, he knew that treachery was intended, and that his men would have no chance against such numbers in the case of an onslaught.

So he determined to do all in his power to prevent a general conflict even if it cost him his life.

In vain his followers assured him that they would stand by him to the death.

"I am unwilling to endanger your lives for my sake," he said. "If peace cannot be established between me and my cousin, God's Will be done. I would rather suffer for other's wrongs and falsehoods, than myself be guilty of such crimes."

Persuaded in his own mind that the end of his life was approaching, he set himself to prepare for it as a Christian should.

Gathering his men together he retired with them to a small church in the centre of the island, and there spent the night in prayer—"not because of fear or dread, but rather to commit his care to God."

In the morning he caused the Holy Eucharist to be offered, and partook of the Holy Communion.

Scarcely was the service over when some of Hakon's men burst into the church, and, seizing Magnus, hurried him to where their leader was. The young Earl saw what was determined, and was much more concerned about the crime that his cousin meant to commit than his own death, for to him death was but the entrance to the Heavenly Country where his heart had long dwelt.

So, coming to Hakon he knelt before him, and begged him not to take the sin of murder on his conscience. "I will make thee three offers," he said, "take one of them, rather than let me, thy kinsman, be slain, innocent, as some will say."

Earl Hakon hesitated. "I will hear what thou offerest," he replied. "My first offer," answered Magnus, "is that I shall fare abroad to Rome, or even to Jerusalem to seek the Holy Places, and so make atonement for us both. I will take two good ships out of my land, furnished with brave men, and equipment. And I swear never to return to Orkney again." This offer Earl Hakon and his followers rejected.

Then the prisoner made his second offer, which was that he and two of his friends be sent to

Scotland and put in ward there, and never allowed back save by Hakon's permission. But once more his suggestion was not acceptable to his cruel cousin and his followers.

Then the saintly Magnus put forth his third, and most costly offer. It was that he might be tortured—a limb cut off, or an eye torn out, if it offered any satisfaction to his cousin. "For," said he, "I am more concerned for thy salvation than for the life of my body."

It is said that Hakon would actually have agreed to this, but his retainers were nobler than he. "Kill Earl Magnus," they cried, "or die thyself, for from this day there shall not two of you reign over this land. But we will not have Earl Magnus tortured."

Then Earl Hakon began to repent, but it was too late, for now his followers were determined on the murder. So with tears running down his face he called for his cook, a fellow named Lifolf, to strike his cousin down. The latter asked for a brief time for prayer, and falling on his knees, he prayed for himself and for his murderers. Then he commended his spirit into the hands of God, asking that His Angels might come to meet it, and bear it to Paradise. After that he calmly rose and stood before Lifolf.

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"Strike at me with all your might," he said, "for it beseems not to behead chiefs like thieves." He then made the Sign of the Cross, inclined his head, and fell at the second blow.

Such was the martyrdom of St. Magnus of Orkney, who has been described truly by the old chroniclers as a "glorious Knight of God." He died on the 16th of April, somewhere about the year A.D. 1114 or 1115—the date being fixed by the fact that he is known to have ruled for twelve years after Magnus Bareleg's death, which occurred in A.D. 1103.

Earl Hakon ordered his body to be buried where it fell, but afterwards, at the request of Magnus' mother Thora, he allowed her to carry it to Birsay, and bury it in the church—"Christ's Kirk"—which his father-in-law had built there.

This church, and the village in which it was built, were very important places in those days, for the Bishop of Orkney, who was nominally under the jurisdiction of the Scandinavian Bishops of Hamburg, had his seat there, so it was the centre of the island's life.

But when, some twenty years after Magnus' death, his nephew, Earl Rognvald Kali, came from Norway to rule in Orkney, the latter planned to build a great Cathedral at Kirkwall, and dedicate

it to the memory of his saintly uncle. Here the relics of St. Magnus eventually found a resting place, but not before there had been a good deal of controversy with Bishop William of Birsay over their removal.

This good man, who ruled the church in Orkney for sixty-six years, seems to have had a presentiment that if the martyr's bones were removed from Birsay to Kirkwall, the latter would become the more important place—for at that time Kirkwall was only a trading village, composed of a few small houses.

So he opposed the suggestion that St. Magnus' bones should be taken from their resting-place in the little Kirk of Christ at Birsay, and carried to the great church on the other side of the island which Earl Rognvald had built. Indeed, little to his credit as it was, he would not at first admit that Magnus had deserved the name of Saint, which was freely given to him by everyone else, or that he had shown any special holiness in his life or that miracles of healing were being performed at his tomb, as medieval tradition affirmed.

But according to these same old traditions, the Saint himself intervened, and gave directions as to his final resting-place. For "Master Robert," whose life of St. Magnus abounds with quaint

legends, affirms that the Saint appeared in a dream to a franklin named Gunni, living in the adjoining island of Westray, and bade him go to Bishop William and tell the dream boldly, saying, "thus speaks Magnus, 'I would fare out of Birsay east to Kirkwall, and I trust that God will grant me of His mercy, that those who seek me there with true faith may be healed of their pains.'"

Gunni seems to have hesitated to set out on his errand, so the Saint appeared to him in a second dream, and bade him, not only to tell the Bishop his words, but also to see that others were by when he did so, adding, "if thou dost not do this thou shalt suffer punishment in this world, and more in the next."

Terrified by this threat Gunni lost no time in seeking the Bishop, and finding him surrounded by a great crowd of men, he delivered the Saint's message.

There could now be no delay. The treasured bones were lifted, and carried reverently in procession across the island to Kirkwall, and placed in a shrine prepared for them in the cathedral, above the High Altar.

The Bishop's seat was also removed, as the Bishop had feared, from Birsay to Kirkwall, but probably the good Prelate's resentment did not last long,

for a Palace was built for him and his successors, beside the great church which bore the saintly martyr's name, and in which his relics rested. And because of the miracles which were supposed to be wrought at his tomb, Kirkwall became a place of pilgrimage, and a town of importance, more suited, as doubtless the Bishop in after years realized, to be the "See City" than the little village of Birsay, with its much smaller church.

Many Scandinavian Jarls and Bishops were buried in St. Magnus' Cathedral in after years, but their tombs have long since disappeared, as has also the shrine of its patron saint.

In the beginning, and again in the middle of the eighteenth century, however, bones were discovered concealed in a pillar on the north side of the choir, and in the wall of the south side of the same. On both occasions these were believed to be those of St. Magnus, but the supposition now is, that they are those of his nephew, St. Rognvald, founder of the cathedral, who was canonized in later years, or of a young relative of St. Magnus, who bore the family name of Erlend.

In 1919, during the restoration of the cathedral, a small coffin or chest, containing a skull and some bones, was found in a pillar on the south side of the choir. Owing to the condition of the skull,

which showed a deep cut, evidently made by a sharp instrument such as a battle-axe, they are believed, with a fair amount of certainty, to be the relics of Orkney's martyred Saint, which had been removed from their shrine at the Reformation, and placed here for safe keeping.

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