

to France, Switzerland, and even to Germany. True it is, that another beacon-light might often be seen glowing on the mountain-tops, and painting the Scottish sky, in early history. True also, that the messenger of another cross than that of Culdees, might be seen speeding onwards with his mystic symbol, across the Scottish moorland and fen, at an early period of Scottish history. Yet the horrors of the beacon-light or bonfire, which glared from mountain-top, warning fierce and barbarous clans to assemble for the foray or the fight, were in some measure allayed even then, by the preaching of the Culdees, as they were afterwards doomed to vanish, under the proclamation of the Gospel they taught, and in which they believed. The mystic cross of Yew—scorched in the flames, and dipped in the blood of a goat, terrible omen of bloody deeds of darkness—was also destined to drop from the hand of the grim bearers, to be replaced by that symbol of peace and reconciliation—the cross of Christ—carried by the Culdees from the Island of Iona, to their benighted brethren, on the mainland of Scotland. And interesting and instructive, it certainly is to mark the progress of two grand principles which may be seen at work in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, between the arrival of the Culdees and the period of the Reformation from Popery. Not, indeed, that those principles are by any means confined to that period of history, for they may, under different forms and manifestations, be traced throughout all history, and constitute its casual essence. Ever since the fall of man, truth and error have been the two combatants, who have ever remained in closest conflict. A record of their deeds, their triumphs and defeats, their struggles and aspirations constitute history. During the portion of history, in question, truth was represented by the Culdee Preachers, and error, first, and in its darkest form, by the Druidical Priests, and afterwards, and in forms sufficiently dark, by the Priests of Rome. Gradually, the light of truth penetrated even the dark groves consecrated to Druidical worship. The light “shone more and more unto the perfect day.” A cloud, however, soon arose, which darkened the ecclesiastical sky. Error assumed another of its Protean forms. Rome supplanted heathenism, and for a time seems to have gained complete victory over the truth. About the 11th century, the primitive form of Christianity in Scotland disappeared, and monks of every order and friars of every description thronged the land. From this period, till the Reformation, dark, indeed, was the state and prospects of the Church. The learning and piety of the Culdees were destined to be succeeded by the ignorance and superstition of Romish ecclesiastics, of the lowest and most beggarly description. Ritualism flooded the land, and extinguished almost every spark of spiritualism in worship, superstition threw its sombre shadow across the national mind, and ignor-

ance prostrated and paralyzed the national energies. Still, we think it would not be difficult to show that the teaching of the Culdees aided very materially in forwarding the Reformation in Scotland, and moulding its specific character. From the days of Patrick Hamilton, back through the night of Romanism, we might be able to trace occasional glowings of that light, which, under God, was kindled in Scotland, by Columba. The might of Romanism was great enough to impress, but not to extinguish it. It might not appear brightly burning, as of old, still it smouldered quietly in many portions of the land, and required but the breath of the Reformers to fan it into a flame. Culdeeism, like a golden thread, might thus be traced along the dark background of Romish History in Scotland, connecting Patrick Hamilton and Wishart with St. Columba and his disciples. At some periods, the thread becomes very clouded and difficult to trace, yet never does it appear to have been actually broken. It has also been thought that Culdeeism contributed towards moulding the particular form which the Church of the Reformation assumed in Scotland. Presbyterians have sometimes regarded the Culdees as their forefathers, not only in doctrine, but even in discipline; they have been found anxious to make them not merely Protestants, but Presbyterians. On the contrary, Episcopalians regard them as the Fathers of the Scottish Episcopacy, and even Romanists speak of them advocating the peculiarities of the Romish Church. One thing at least is certain—Romanists they were none. It is equally certain that they corresponded exactly, neither with the Church of England, nor yet with the Church of Scotland. But what of this? they were something greater still, advocates of the truths of God's Word, guides on the way of salvation, champions of learning and of religion. And miserable indeed, must that spirit of sectarianism be, which cannot rest contented with this, or feel grateful to God, for holy and learned men, whatever might have been their ecclesiastical peculiarities. We care but little about the form of their Church Government, provided it suited the state of society among which they existed, and was successful as means to an end, that end being fitting men for the duties of a present life, and the enjoyments of a future. And if this form was the Episcopal, we think none the less of these old divines and apostles of the truth. They merely adopted that form which was afterwards adopted by one of the fairest daughters of the Reformation, the Established Church of England—a Church which Christendom must ever regard with gratitude and pride, as the fostering mother of such profound learning and such genuine truth and piety, and which has handed down to posterity the ablest and most masterly defences of our common truth. And if the old chroniclers be entitled to our belief, St. Columba and his followers were equalled in their piety, only by