THE PRE-REFORMATION CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Rev. D. M. Barrett, O. S. B., in American Catholic Quarterly Review.

Part I.—Continued.

The Cluniac Benedictine abbey of Paisley, founded in 1164 by Walter Fitz-Alan, High Steward of Scotland, and ancestor of the House of Stuart, was remarkable for the striking beauty of its situation, as well as for the splendid adornments of its buildings. It stood on a level meal near the clear waters of the little river Cart, in view of undulating, wooded slopes and lofty hills. The abbey precincts were enclosed by a wall of dressed stone, upwards of a mile in length. They consisted of spacious gardens and orchards, and even a park for fallow deer. The wall was adorned with carven statues, and shields bearing coats of arms. In a niche was enshrined the image of Our Lady; beneath it was inscribed:

"Hac ne vade via, nisi dixeris Ave Maria. Sit semper sine væ, qui tibi dicit Ave."

A stately gate house led to the monastic buildings. The church was entered at the western end by a door set in a fine Early English arch, and at the north through a deep porch, surmounted by a chamber known as a parvise. This latter was the ordinary entrance. The porch, we may remark, was a common feature in the mediæval churches. Many parochial rites, such as the commencement of the marriage ceremony and of the baptism of infants were performed there.

The church measured nearly 220 feet in length. Its graceful pointed arches were supported by clustered pillars, and a richly carved triforium ran over the aisles. The choir was longer than the nave—not an uncommon feature in the Cluniac churches; it contained stalls for twenty six monks; these had been provided by Abbot Tarvas in 1459. The same devout Abbot procured the great brass book-stand, the chandeliers of chased silver, and the beautiful tabernacle—"the quhilk is nocht in Skotland and the maist costlie"—as well as the rich hangings of cloth of gold and silver to decorate the sanctuary on festival days. In the south transept was an elaborately carved chapel, where the body of St. Mirin, one of the ancient missionaries of the country, lay in a gorgeous shrine, and was an object of devotion to numerous pilgrims. In its external adornments, also, this fine church was very striking. Its central tower and steeple rose to the height of 300 feet. Such was Paisley in its glory—a worthy House of God in which the daily choral office celebrated His praise.

Other religious orders could boast of buildings no less magnificent than those of the monks. Jedburgh, belonging to the Black Canons, Dryburgh to the White Canons, were gems of archi tecture. Many of the churches of the friars, too, were famed for their beauty. That of the Observantines at Edinburgh was so magnificent that a foreign friar, Cornelius, could hardly be persuaded to take possession of it, thinking it incompatible with the poverty required by his rule. It needed the intervention of the Pope to settle his scruples. The Franciscan Church at Haddington was known as the "Light of Lothian," from the costly lamps which illuminated its beautiful windows by night. It was in the decorated style, and measured 210 feet in length.

Collegiate and parish churches, also were often built with great magnificence. The stately church of St. Giles, Edinburgh's glory, escaped almost unscathed—as regards its exterior—the frenzy of fanatical reformers. The almost barbaric splendor of the exquisitely carved Roslin Chapel, near Edinburgh, is proverbial.

Such buildings would have been meaningless had the worship for which they had been erected been wanting in grandeur. That this was not the case is evident from the inventories of vestments and church furniture still extant. Aberdeen Cathedral possessed no less than thirty six copes, of which ten were of cloth of gold, and others of rich velvet. It had also thirteen full sets of High Mass vestments, and a plentiful supply of hangings and other adornments. Holyrood Abbey could boast of various crosses, candlesticks, censers, cruets, etc., of gold or silver, besides many precious chalices and vestments. The same might doubtless be affirmed of all the great cathedrals and minsters.

With regard to the splendor of the ritual observed within them, we are able to gain an insight as to its nature by comparing it with the contemporary ceremonial of England and other countries. It may perhaps bring the subject home more closely if we venture to describe in detail the celebration of some solemn feast as a worshipper would see it carried out in Glasgow cathedral in the sixteenth century. Glasgow is selected as being one of the Scottish cathedrals in which the Sarum Rite was followed. That rite, differing in many details from the Roman, to which Catholics are now accustomed, was introduced at Glasgow by Bishop Herbert in the twelfth century, and was observed there up to the Reformation.

A visitor to St. Mungo's on the eve of the feast in question will await, with the crowd of laity who throng the nave, the entrance of the Archbishops and canons. The festal pealing of the bells announces the approach of the prelate, and soon a stately procession sweeps through the great western entrance—only opened for such occasions—and passes up the nave to the jubilant welcome of organ and singers. Twelve officials lead the way. One bears aloft the archiepiscopal cross, the others carry maces of solid silver. Thirty canons in their choir dress of surplice and furred hood surround the Archbishop, and a crowd of attendants bring up the rear. The brilliant throng passes through the gates of the choir, the "rulers of choir," or cantors, each robed in silken cope and bearing a silver staff of office, range themselves across the western end, near the beautiful Rood-screen and the solemn even song commences.

The canons, seated in their stalls on either side, join in the chanting with the help of the great choral books bound in white leather, which form part of the church's rich treasury. The altar, decked for the feast, is resplendent with magnificent silken frontal—perhaps that one "powdered with crowns of gold," or that "of red silk with ornamentation of flowers and leaves," which figure in the inventory of this cathedral; above the altar, in the silver pyx which hangs from the carved and gilded canopy of the "Sacrament House" by chains of precious metal, is the Blessed Sacrament, surrounded by ever burning lights. At the Magnificat two priests in copes jointly incense the High Altar; then, passing by opposite aisles down the church, offer the same act of honor to each of the twenty altars of the upper church. Vespers ended, the prelate and his attendants depart in the same stately array with which they came.

But it is at the Pontifical Mass on the morning of the festival that the ceremonial is most impressive. Entering in the same state as for Vespers, the Archbishop and canons, together with the interior clergy, prepare to take part in the solemn procession with which the rite commences. Soon the spectator sees it issuing from the great gates of the choir. Three clerics, clad in albs and silken tunics and walking abreast, bear aloft three richly chased processional crosses of precious metal. Acolytes, thurifers, attendants follow. Cantors in copes, deacons and subdeacons—five, or even seven of each—vested in tunicles, canons wearing rich copes, follow in due order. The Archbishop in his precious mitre and cope, bearing his pastoral staff—his cross borne before him—forms the principal figure in this magnificent assemblage. Passing down the aisle, the procession makes the circuit of the vast church and returns to the choir. After the office of Tierce has been sung the Mass begins. The cantors commence the solemn chant of the Introit as the celebrating prelate and his train of assistant ministers enter from the sacristy beyond the choir, clad in their vestments. With stately rhythm the august rite proceeds. Five deacons and as many subdeacons, and on the highest festivals seven of each order, take part in the function. During the Canon of the Mass the sanctuary presents a spectacle of imposing splendor. On the highest step of the altar is the Archbishop in his jewelled vestments, below him the long line of deacons, lower still the subdeacons; in the choir are canons in copes and clergy in surplices. It is a scene of magnificence such as the Catholic Church alone can furnish, and one which might be witnessed in many a cathedral of Scotland in Catholic ages.

The ceremonies of the Church, imposing as they were in themselves, were rendered doubly so by the assistance of kings and nobles with their vast trains of attendants. The power and authority of the Church was all the more impressed upon the minds of the faithful when the great ones of the earth, in common with the lowliest, had to bend the knee before the King of Kings. It was the delight of James IV. to assist at the canonical office in the choir of St. Mungo's, where he was privileged to occupy a stall as honorary canon. Edward I. of England, when staying in Glasgow, made more than one devout visit to the shrine of St. Mungo, in the beautiful under croft of the cathedral. Edward III. spent at Melrose the Christmas festival of 1340, and assisted at the solemn offices celebrated by the monks. Many more examples may be found in history.

The splendor with which monarchs took part in religious celebrations may be imagined from the descriptions extant of the progress of James IV. on one of his numerous pilgrimages to the Shrine of St. Ninian in Galloway. When proceeding in state, with his queen, to offer thanks for the latter's delivery from the danger of death at the birth of her first child, the retinue was most imposing. The queen travelled in a sumptuous litter. Seventeen carriage horses were employed to convey her wardrobe and effects, and four more for those of the king. It may be remarked, in passing, that James made no less than fourteen pilgrimages to the same shrine between the years 1501 and 1512. He also made pilgrimages to the Isle of May and to St. Duthac's shrine at Tain in Ross shire.

But it was not as worshippers merely that kings and nobles proclaimed themselves humble sons of the Church. They loved to minister to her needs out of their worldly substance. Hence, such scanty records of the Religious Houses as survived the downfall of Religion give many instances of their generous benefactors. The munificence of King David I. has been already mentioned. Other monarchs were not slow in following his example in establishing foundations. William the Lion, Malcolm IV., Alexander II., Alexander III., Robert the Bruce, are conspicuous benefactors of the kind. Alexander II. was a munificent founder of monasteries for Dominicans, who owed to this liberal donor no less than eight of their houses—those of Edinburgh, Berwick, Ayr, Perth, Aberdeen, Elgin, Stirling and Inverness. Nobles imitated their sovereigns. Dryburgh Abbey was founded in 1141 by Hugh de Morville, Constable of Scotland; Crossraguel by Duncan, Earl of Carrick, in the twelfth century; Paisley, as we have seen, by Fitz-Alan, and so with others.

Benefactions continued to flow into the treasuries of Religious Houses from such sources all through their history, until in the sixteenth century,—our standpoint—the Abbey of Abroath could boast of an annual rental equivalent to $50,000 (£10 000) of our money.

We may have given, some may think, undue prominence to the external splendor of fabric and ceremonial and the *eclat* which resulted from the subserviency of kings and powerful nobles; but it is well to bear in mind that man's soul is reached through the senses, and that all this grandeur of form and beauty of worship were important factors in raising his thoughts to higher things than this present world, and keeping them in mind of the Supreme Being to whose honor it all tended. No Catholic will maintain that Scotland was benefited, either spiritually or æsthetically, by the wholesale hewing down of churches, battering of images and carvings, burning of vestments and stamping out of ritual.

Yet the Church of Scotland in the sixteenth century has something else to boast of beyond buildings and ritual. All throughout the ages she had been the generous patron of letters. Looking back to preceding centuries, the reader of history is struck by the fact that in Scotland, as in most of the countries of Europe, learning was the exclusive privilege of the clergy. Among a rude and warlike people this was only to be expected. When the bulk of the population have to be ready to take up arms at almost any moment, who but the clergy are capable of fostering the arts of peace? That this was eminently the case in Scotland, her historians testify. "During the long period," says one of them, "from the accession of Alexander III. to the death of David II. (1249-1370) it would be impossible, I believe, to produce a single instance of a Scottish baron who could sign his own name. The studies which formed the learning of the times were esteemed unworthy of the warlike and chivalrous spirit of the aristocracy and universally abandoned to the Church."

If we glance at the list of men distinguished for any branch of learning in the earlier period of Scottish history, it will be evident that although the laity, as yet, despised letters, the clergy held them in high esteem then, even as they did in later ages. To begin with the twelfth century, Goderich, Bishop of St. Andrews, was an author of some note in his day. He wrote, among other works, "Meditations on the Psalter" and "Hymni de Sanctis." Another renowned scholar was David Scotus, a professor in the Scots monastery of Würzburg and historiographer to the Emperor Henry V. He wrote the "Iter Imperatoris," "De Regno Scotorum," etc. Adam, a Premonstratensian Canon, who left Scotland for a French monastery of his order, was another writer of the same period. One still more distinguished than those mentioned above was Richard of St. Victor, a native of Scotland, who became an inmate of the monastery of St. Victor, at Paris. John *a Sacro Bosco*, a Canon Regular of the monastery of Holywood, near Dumfries, was a distinguished scholar at the University of Paris at this period, and became professor of mathematics there. His writing were still in repute three centuries later.

In the following century Scotland could boast of Hugo Bentham, Bishop of Aberdeen (1272), who was renowned for his knowledge of canon law. In the same century we meet the name of Simon Taylor, a Scottish Dominican, who studied at Paris and afterwards returned to his native land, where he effected an important reform in Church music. Another noted Scot who flourished in the thirteenth century was the famous Duns Scotus, the *Doctor Subtilis* of the Franciscan Order. His favorite pupil, John Bassoll, another Scottish member of the same order, became professor of philosophy at Paris, and afterwards studied theology and medicine at Rheims. Arnold Blair, a Benedictine monk of Dunfermline, who had studied at Paris, flourished at the end of the century. He was distinguished as a scholar, and wrote a life of Wallace, whom he served as chaplain.

The first Scottish historian, John Fordun, belongs to the next century. He was probably a chantry priest of Aberdeen, but scarcely anything is known of him beyond the fact that he was a Scottish ecclesiastic. His "Scotichronicon" was continued up to the middle of the fifteenth century by Walter Bower, the learned Abbot of Inchcolm, a House of regular Canons. Contemporary with Fordun was Andrew Wyntoun, Prior of St. Serf's Monastery, Lochleven. He wrote a metrical chronicle of Scotland, concerning which Tytler, the historian, remarks: "Where is the student who is an enthusiast in the history and antiquities of his country who would not rather read the quaint and homely descriptions of the Prior of Lochleven than the pages of modern writers where vigor, freshness and originality are so often sacrificed to insipid elegance?" In the same fourteenth century flourished the Scottish poet, John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen, who wrote a graphic and spirited poem describing the life and actions of the Bruce. "It is in every respect," says Tytler, "a remarkable production for so early an age as the middle of the fourteenth century, and contains many passages which, in the strength and purity of the language, in the measured fulness of the rhythm, and the richness of the imagery, are not inferior to Chaucer."

When we come to the beginning of the sixteenth century we find the roll of learned ecclesiastics considerably increased. Hector Boece, the well-known historian, a priest of learning and scholarship, studied at Paris, and became the close friend of Erasmus. He was the first Principal of Aberdeen University. His brother, Arthur, was also a distinguished scholar, and possessed remarkable eloquence; he became a canon of Aberdeen. John Bellenden, Archdeacon of Moray, translated Boece's history from the Latin. He was also the author of a translation of Livy. John Major, at one time Vicar of Dunlop, Ayrshire, was another famous writer of the period; he became principal of St. Andrews. Florence Wilson, another Scottish priest who became an accomplished scholar, was a native of Elgin. He wrote, among other philosophical works, "Dialogues on Tranquility of Mind." The works of this writer were remarkable for profound learning and grace of style. Gavin Douglas, the witty and learned Bishop of Dunkeld, besides composing many poetical works, was the first to translate Virgil into English. Dunbar, a native of Lothian, and priest of the diocese of St. Andrews, was also held in high esteem as a poet. "The genius of Dunbar and Gavin Douglas," says Sir Walter Scott, "is sufficient to illuminate whole centuries of ignorance." This list does not pretend to be exhaustive, but it is sufficient to show that Scotland was not behind her contemporaries in producing remarkable scholars; those scholars being found, almost without exception, amongst the clergy.

TO BE CONTINUED.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

Some of the "Idolatrous" Prayers Uttered by Catholics.

A Protestant entering a Catholic Church, no matter where it may be, sees fourteen paintings on the wall representing "The Way of the Cross"—that is, scenes from the journey made by the Redeemer from the judgment seat of Pilate to the hill of Calvary and the crucifixion there. At many, perhaps all, of them he sees devout Catholics kneeling and repeating prayers

If this Protestant happens to be bigoted or ignorant, the comment is: "See the idolators praying to graven images."

Suppose we see what the "idolators" are saying to "to the graven images."

The first of these "stations" represents Jesus after He had been scourged by Roman soldiers and crowned with thorns. The "idolator" is kneeling in front and says in part: "My adorable Jesus, it was not Pilate; no, it was my sins that condemned Thee to die. I beseech Thee by the merits of this sorrowful journey to assist my soul in her journey to eternity."

At the second station, which represents Jesus carrying the cross, the "idolator" says in part: "I beseech Thee by the merits of the pain Thou didst suffer in carrying Thy cross to give me the necessary help to carry mine with perfect patience and resignation."

At the third station, when Jesus had fallen beneath the load of the cross, the "idolator" says: "My Jesus, it is not the weight of the cross, but of my sins, which has made Thee suffer so much pain."

And again at the eighth station, when Jesus said to the weeping women, "Weep not for Me, but for your children," this "idolator" says: "It is Thy love more than the fear of hell that causes me to weep for my sins."

At the eleventh station, when Jesus was nailed to the cross, the "idolator" says: "My Jesus, loaded with contempt, nail my heart to Thy feet that it may ever remain there, to love Thee and never quit Thee again. * * * Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always, and then do with me what Thou wilt."

And so it is to the end of the fourteen stations, when Jesus died, was buried and rose again "to redeem the quick and the dead," and every one of these fourteen prayers ends, "And then do with me what Thou wilt."

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