

acknowledged no standard of doctrine save that of the evangelists and apostles. The foundation of his instruction and his instrument in converting was the word of God. He ruled his clergy with authority, yet not as a Bishop, but a senior Presbyter admitting them to his counsels and making them co-workers with himself. All succeeding Scottish Abbots of Iona were Presbyters, and took precedence of Bishops. Kings in Scotland and Ireland were often crowned by the Abbot of Iona. He never asked the aid of their arms in his apostolic work, but their reverence for him was shown by the desire of so many of them to be near him in the silent cemetery. He exercised an independent jurisdiction. Not long after the death of Columba, men of his spirit and true apostolic succession went forth from Iona; St. Aidan, for example, who evangelized England from the Tyne to the Humber, and restored Christianity when almost stamped out by the Danes. In Lindesfarne he established the Mother Church which developed afterwards into Durham Cathedral and College, and owed for centuries allegiance to the Abbot of Iona, who was Primate of all Scotland and the North of England, and never once acknowledged dependence on the Bishop of Rome.

Columba's ecclesiastical system was also educational. The curriculum consisted in the study of the Latin language and of religious Latin literature, especially the Latin Bible, with the doctrines of Revelation as then defined and classified, and the practice of religious duties, observances of devotion, and the training necessary to the proper performance of their religious functions. Much time was spent in copying portions of the Bible, which was their foundation of doctrine. They had subsidiary aids in such commentaries and summaries as their learned men prepared. They also devoted part of their time to original composition, writing both prose and verse in Latin and Irish and to preserving a record of passing events. In presence of the people among whom they labored the main thing was the preaching the everlasting gospel, without the use of breviaries or missals, of pictures, or images, as aids to devotion; nor do we ever read of their praying to Saints, or adoring the Virgin. Celibacy was commended, but not commanded. The tonsure or peculiar cut of the hair which was shaven close over the forepart of the head was practised, and the use of the Cross as a sacred sign, but