

influence of pretty much the same circumstances that had exalted them. Yet even this contributed to their further exaltation; for in many instances those churches who felt aggrieved by the arrogant pretensions of these metropolitan bishops, applied to the bishops of Rome for their interference and protection;—and by a dexterous management of the influence which those applications gave them, they rose by degrees to the enjoyment of a very widely extended power in the church. That power was still farther increased by their sending men devoted to their interests on special missions to the several countries where Christianity had been planted; and these men were promoted in dignity by them according as they succeeded in bringing the churches to which they were sent under their influence. The bishops of Rome were as yet orthodox in doctrine, but their zeal for the suppression of heresy was at the same time made an additional means for the advancement of their ambitious schemes. But in after ages we find them extending and securing their power by means that tended directly to the corruption and subversion of every thing like the true religion.

Palladius having settled in Scotland, appears to have given himself diligently to the spreading of the gospel in destitute parts of the country; but, true to the advancement of the piety of Rome, we find him introducing a new order into the church, by ordaining bishops, and sending them over the country.

About the same time, there was one Ninian, who flourished in Galloway. He was born in Britain, but had been educated in France under his uncle, Martin, the bishop of Tours, and had prosecuted his studies for some time at Rome. He labored extensively, and is said to have been the means of converting the southern Picts to the faith of Christ.

About this time, Patrick, the famous saint, was sent into Ireland. He was born in Scotland, near Dumbarton, but had been in Ireland for some years in his youth. He spent several years in France, and having made great proficiency in learning, travelled to Rome. Celestine, the bishop of Rome, hearing of his good qualities, and particularly that he had been in Ireland, made choice of him as a missionary to the inhabitants of that country. A number of other preachers accompanied him from Scotland, and it is said that such was their diligence that almost the whole country was brought to embrace the religion of Christ. This is the common account handed down by historians; but from the advanced state of both learning and religion in Ireland, in the early part of the following century, only a few years after this, I am inclined to believe that the gospel had been introduced from Scotland at a much earlier period, and, even at this time had made considerable progress in some places. This appears the more likely when we consider that, from the earliest settlement of the two countries, there had been frequent intercourse kept up between them, and that upon the overthrow of the Scottish monarchy in the year 380, a number of the

Scots, who were at that time well instructed in the Christian religion, took refuge in Ireland.

Although the church in Scotland was in some respects in a very happy state, the gospel being enjoyed in its purity, and the ministry being diligent and devoted; yet an intercourse had been opened up with Rome by the introduction of men who were friendly to the ambitious schemes of the Roman bishop, which afterwards led to the subjection of the church to Rome. The very zeal which the bishops of Rome showed, in sending able men to assist in spreading the gospel more widely, was improved as a means of more widely extending and securing their own power and influence. These men, who had been sent from Rome to Scotland and Ireland, there is every reason to believe, were good men, and labored devotedly in spreading the gospel; but still, being accustomed to look upon the bishop of Rome as the head of the church, and their superior, and acting, as they did, in obedience to his directions, their influence on those among whom they labored, even without any very direct effort, would soon have the effect of leading some to look towards the Papal chair with something more than an ordinary degree of respect and veneration.

From this time we can trace the progress of prelacy in Scotland. Those who were the immediate successors of Palladius, in consequence of the spirit of Romish ambition imbibed from him, managed to acquire a certain degree of pre-eminence amongst their brethren. But it does not appear that they had any very well defined or distinct authority, and having no separate dioceses, they were only called bishops of the Scots, or Scottish bishops, and exercised their functions, indifferently as to place, wherever they came, amongst those who recognized their pre-eminence. During several hundred years the distinction between them and other ministers seems to have been more nominal than real. It was not until the eleventh century that there were any such officers as diocesan bishops, with separate and distinct dioceses in Scotland. Although Palladius so far ingratiated himself with those among whom he labored as to be able to introduce into the ministry the new order of prelatical bishops, it was very far from being acquiesced in, or submitted to, by the Scottish church at large. Indeed, the subjection of Scotland to the power of Rome was no easy task, nor was it effected at once; it was the work of ages, and frequently called forth the stoutest resistance on the part of the Scottish Christians.

In the reign of Conal II., which commenced in 558, there were some excellent laws enacted for the benefit of the church, by which the temporal maintenance of the ministers was regulated and secured. Mansees and glebes were now, for the first time, assigned them. Conal himself is described as having been an excellent and pious prince, so much so, that he is said to have been nothing inferior to the Caidets, who in that age observed a most strict discipline.