

famine and pestilence visit the island sanctified by the labours of Sts. Patrick, Brigid, Columba, and Brendain, relief and sympathy shall come to them from these new people to whom they had first imparted the meat and drink of spiritual life. Take now the repose of sleep; then retrace your way to your remote isle; and work while it is light for your neighbour's salvation and your own."

The angel ceased to speak; but they enjoyed the extraneous light of his heavenly features for some short space, and then all faded but the ruddy light of their decaying fire. The night passed, and so did many succeeding ones; and they measured back their woodland course, and found their bark as they had left it, moored in a quiet creek; and guiding it eastwards, they landed on the blest "Island of the Birds," on the day preceding the Festival of Palms.

The always sweet melody of the birds grew wilder, sweeter, and more heavenly, as the blessed bark approached their shore; and most delightful and consoling were the communications of the saints and these temporary exiles from Paradise. High Mass was celebrated by St. Brendain and two of his priests, on the great day of the Pasch; and the assistants remained entranced during the portions in which the spirits sung their hymns,—echoes of those long since heard in heaven. The Holy Sacrifice began two hours before noon. To the assistants and celebrants it seemed much shorter than an ordinary Mass; but when it came to an end, the trees were flinging long shadows towards the east.

They did not quit the happy island till after celebrating Pentecost. They then began to feel that the amount of happiness they were enjoying, though of a spiritual nature, was more than it behoved to await a servant of God during his mortal pilgrimage. So they sorrowfully bade adieu to the blessed exiles, and trusted themselves once more to the wide deep. They reached the coast of Eirinn in safety; and of the later silent labours of the saint and his holy assistants, there remains but a scanty record. Their days were occupied in labour, in instructing the ignorant, in praying, in converting the few pagans that remained, and in founding religious houses: an exciting history cannot be

constructed out of materials such as these.

Another voyage varied the after life of our saint; but it was only a visit to the holy isle of Iona in the Hebrides, to St. Columba, the Apostle of the Pictish nation. He was called to his reward when on a visit to his sister, at her religious house of Clonfert, in Galway. As may be readily supposed, he loved to look on the wild scenery of the wave-worn western coast of his country: the mountain to which he has left his name still enjoys a wide view of the sea-cliffs and the broad Atlantic.

NOTE.—It will readily be believed that the sermons addressed to the more or less learned congregations of our days must differ in some degree from the instructions given to unlettered assemblies of those ages that possessed no printed books, or that were painfully passing from a pagan to a Christian life. Parables, allegories, striking histories, and miraculous events in saints' lives were frequently introduced in the homilies of St. Eloy, St. Hilary, St. Martin, and all the preachers of their eras; and from time to time these were collected, and written down by monks skilful at the pen, and read, on proper occasions, in the chieftain's hall and the monastic refectory. Hence the name "legend," from *legenda*—subjects fit to be read for edification. The most famous collection of this kind is the *Legenda Aurea* of St. Jacobus a Voragine, copies of which, printed by Caxton, are still extant. The voyage of St. Brendain, originally written for Queen Adelaide, wife of Henry Beaufort, is preserved in that work; and the curious may read it at full length in the *Dublin University Magazine* for May, 1852, in a learned and loving article contributed by Denis Florence MacCarthy.

There is no selfishness where there is a wife and family. There the house is lighted up by mutual charities; everything achieved for them is a victory; everything endured is a triumph. How many vices are suppressed, that there may be no *bad* example! How many exertions made to inculcate a *good* one!

The Romans were so anxious to encourage marriage, that they punished unmarried persons by rendering them incapable of receiving any legacy or inheritance by will, except from near relatives. And those who were married and had not any children could take no more than half the estate.