

and details, from the sketch furnished to the Scottish Antiquaries in 1785, and copied in the *Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, with an authentication of its general accuracy, on the authority of a correspondent at whose request the original had been inspected in its new Canadian reliquary. In its general form it most nearly resembles the head of the short episcopal crosier borne by St. Luke, in the beautifully illuminated Gospels of MacDurnan, in the Library at Lambeth Palace, which have had the middle of the ninth century assigned as their date.* It is an exceedingly simple form, suggestive of a primitive age of art, and yet adorned with such rich and tasteful skill as to constitute—apart from its singularly interesting historical associations,—a valuable example of the workmanship of the early age to which it must be assigned, and of the primitive civilization which followed in the wake of that Christianity taught by St. Fillan and other Christian missionaries, to the first converts from among the pagan Celts of North Britain.

This ancient Scottish relic is still in the possession of Alexander Dewar, the lineal representative, in all probability, of the favoured follower of King Robert, to whom, according to no improbable tradition, it was confided on the field of Bannockburn, five hundred and forty-five years ago. Could the protection which the prejudices and superstition, no less than the national and family pride of earlier generations, secured for it as a sacred and chartered heirloom, be guaranteed to it under the charge of a Canadian yeoman, its fittest place would still be in the keeping of the Dewars, to whose custody it was entrusted, under such remarkable circumstances, and who have been, through poverty and exile, faithful to their trust. But removal from Strathfillan to the clearings of the New World has broken the charm. It only remains in the keeping of its present custodian because no one has hitherto been found able or willing to pay the price he demands for the precious relic; and it is earnestly to be desired that, ere it is too late, it should be secured within the safe keeping of one of our great national collections, before, as apprehended by its former describer in 1785, it "find a ready passage to the melting pot;" or, like the documents which accompanied it to Canada, it perish in some chance conflagration, such as yearly consume hundreds of the frail wooden houses of Canadian settlers.

* *Archæol. Journal*, vii. p. 20.