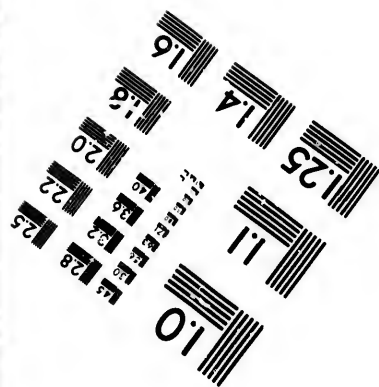
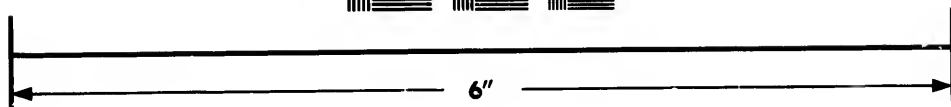
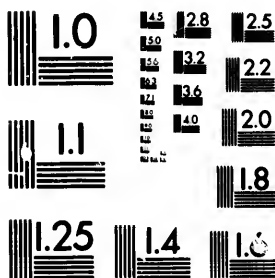


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEDSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

28
25
22
20
18

**CIHM/ICMH
Microfiche
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH
Collection de
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

01

© 1983

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distortion le long de la marge intérieure
- Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- Additional comments:/
Commentaires supplémentaires:

- Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached/
Pages détachées
- Showthrough/
Transparence
- Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression
- Includes supplementary material/
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- Only edition available/
Seule édition disponible
- Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image/
Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	14X	18X	22X	26X	30X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12X	16X	20X	24X	28X	32X

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

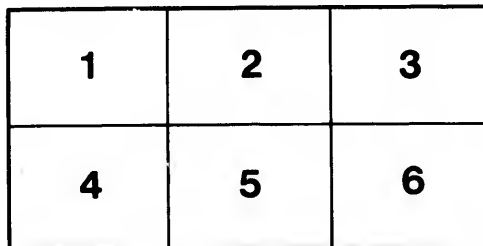
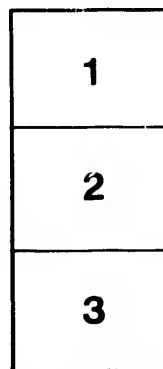
REGIS COLLEGE LIBRARY

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

REGIS COLLEGE LIBRARY

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

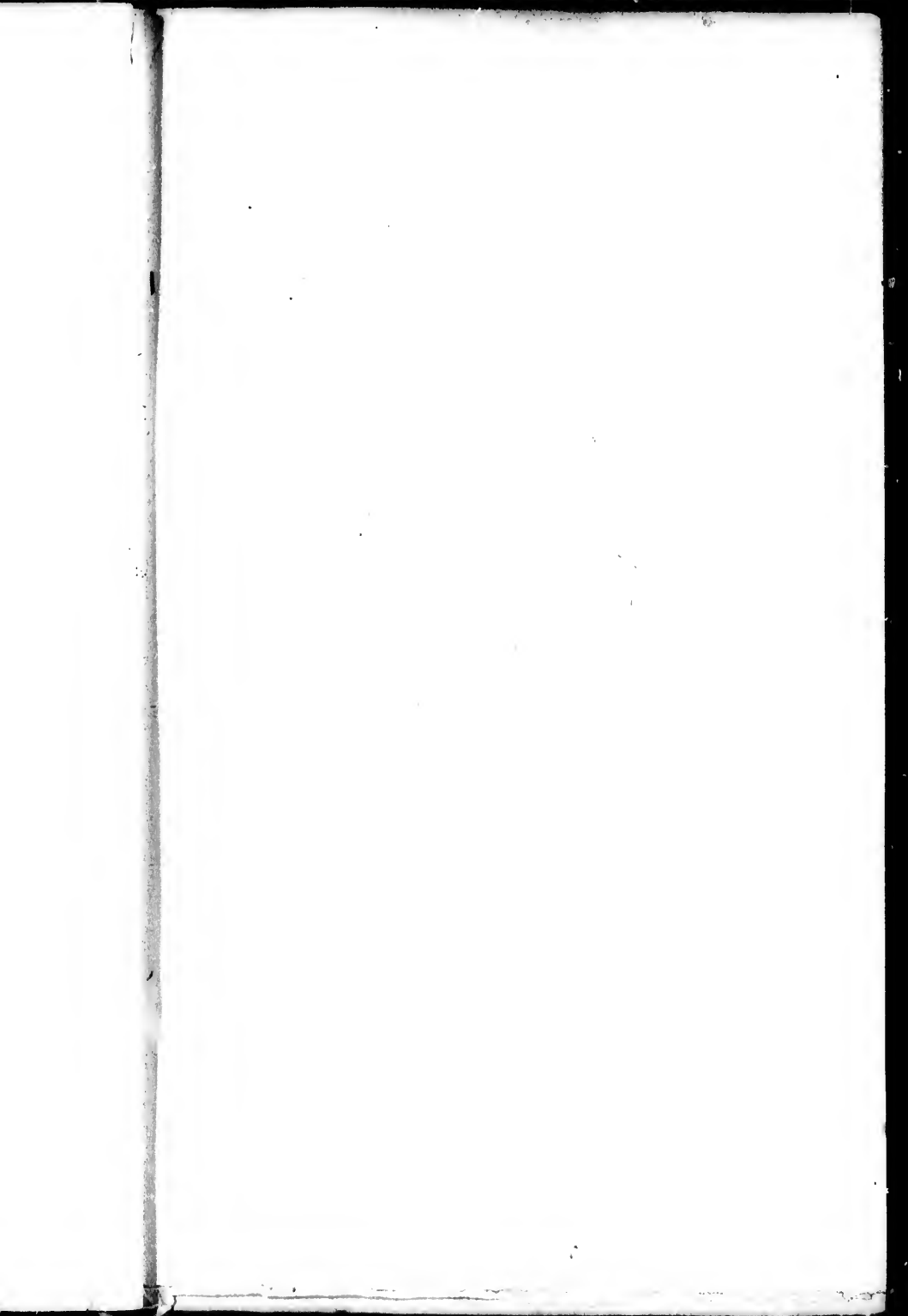
Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

tails
du
odifier
une
image

rrata
to

pelure,
n à

THE
HOLY ISLE





ST BRIDGID
Abbess and Patroness of Ireland

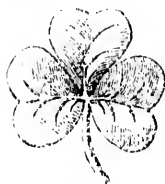
THE
HOLY ISLE

OR
A SEQUEL

H-BR
2206
H72

TO THE
LIFE OF ST. PATRICK.

Sancta Trinitas,



Unus Deus.

MONTRÉAL
J.-B. ROLLAND ET FILS

ST. VINCENT STREET, 12 AND 14.

1870

12,778

18, 19

THE
LIFE OF ST. BRIDGID,

ABBESS, AND PATRONESS OF IRELAND.

9

THE
LIFE OF ST. BRIGID

ABBESS, AND PATRONESS OF IRELAND.

“ O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory! for the memory thereof is immortal: because it is known both with God and with men: and it triumpheth, crowned for ever.” — *Wisd. iv. 1.*

NEXT to the glorious St. Patrick, St. Bridgid, whom we may consider his spiritual daughter in Christ, has ever been held in singular veneration in Ireland. Even in the neighbouring kingdoms of England and Scotland, as a foreign writer affirms, this great Saint has, after the glorious Virgin Mother of God, been singularly honoured and revered. A pity then it is, that we have known so little of her hitherto, and that our means of knowing much are still so scanty. We are not able to give more than a biographical sketch; but the facts are so in-

teresting, and above all so edifying, as in some measure to compensate for their fewness.

BIRTH OF ST. BRIGID — HER EARLY PIETY — SHE
EMBRACES THE RELIGIOUS STATE AND FOUNDS SEVE-
RAL MONASTERIES — HER SAINTLY DEATH.

ABOUT the year of our Lord 453, was St. Bridgid born. The place of her birth was To-chard or Taugher in the vicinity of Dundalk, though her illustrious father Dubtach, and her mother Brocessa or Brotseach, of the noble house of O'Connor, usually resided in Leinster. During her youth every attention, which parents of distinguished rank and eminent piety could employ, was assiduously paid to her education. Great things were expected from her ; during her infancy her pious father had a vision, in which he saw men clothed in white garments pouring, as it were, a sacred unguent on her head, thereby prefiguring her future sanctity. While yet very young, Bridgid, for the love of Christ our Lord, whom she chose for her spouse and to whom she was

in some
ss.
— SHE
OS SEVE-
was St.
was To-
undalk,
and her
e noble
n Lein-
, which
minent
paid to
ed from
ner had
n white
ed un-
ng her
, Brid-
om she
he was

closely united in heart and spirit, bestowed every thing at her disposal on his suffering members, the poor, and was the edification of all who knew her. She was surpassingly beautiful ; and fearing that in consequence efforts might be made by her many suitors to dissolve the sacred vow by which she had bound herself to our Lord, she besought him to render her deformed and to deprive her of that gracefulness of person which had gained for her such admiration. Her petition was instantly heard, for her eye became swollen, and her whole countenance so changed, that she was permitted to follow her vocation in peace, and marriage with her was no more thought of.

After a short interval, and when she was about twenty years old, * the young virgin made known to Maccaille, a bishop and a disciple of St. Patrick and who had seen over her head a pillar of fire, her determination to live only to Jesus Christ, her heavenly Bride-

* The age of twenty years was that required by the Irish Church for making the monastic vows.

groom, and he quite approved of her pious resolve, and consented to receive her sacred vows. On the appointed day the solemn ceremony of her profession was performed after the manner introduced by St. Patrick, the bishop offering up many holy prayers, and investing Bridgid with a snow-white habit and a cloak of the same colour, after she had put off her secular ornaments. While she inclined her head on this happy occasion to receive the sacred veil, a miracle of a singularly striking and impressive nature occurred; that part of the wooden platform adjoining the altar on which she knelt recovered its pristine vitality, and put on, as all the bystanders witnessed, its former *greenness* and verdure, retaining it for a long time after. At the same moment Bridgid's eye was healed, and she became as beautiful and lovely as ever.

Encouraged by her example three or, as some say, eight other ladies made their vows with her, and in compliance with the wish of the parents of these her new associates, the Saint agreed to found a religious residence

for herself and them in the vicinity. A convenient site having been fixed upon by the bishop, a convent, the first in Ireland, was erected upon it ; and in obedience to the prelate Bridgid assumed the superiority. Her reputation for sanctity became greater every day, and in proportion as it was diffused throughout the country the number of candidates for admission into the new monastery increased. The bishops of Ireland, soon perceiving the important advantages which their respective dioceses would derive from similar foundations, procured that the young and saintly abbess should visit different parts of the kingdom and, as an opportunity offered, introduce into each one the establishment of her institute.

While thus engaged in a portion of the province of Connaught, a deputation arrived from Leinster to solicit the Saint to take up her residence in that territory ; but the motives which they urged were human, and such could have no weight with Bridgid. She was insensible to every argument founded on friendship and family connections (for, as we have already said,

she was of Leinster descent, and had spent in that province a great portion of her youth) ; it was only the prospect of the many spiritual advantages that would result from compliance with their request that induced her to accede, as she did, to the wishes of the respectable body which had petitioned her. Some time after, the Saint taking with her a number of her spiritual daughters, journeyed to Leinster, where they were received with many demonstrations of respect and joy, the people exulting at the great spiritual good which they were about to confer on the province. The site on which Kildare now stands appearing to be well adapted for a religious institute, there the Saint and her companions took up their abode. To the place appropriated for the new foundation some lands were annexed, the fruits of which were assigned to the little establishment. This donation indeed contributed to supply the wants of the community, but still the pious sisterhood principally depended for their maintenance on the liberality of their benefactors. Mercy having grown up with Bridgid from her very

childhood, she contrived out of their small means to relieve the poor of the vicinity very considerably, and when the wants of these indigent persons surpassed her slender finances she hesitated not to sacrifice for them the moveables of the convent. On one occasion, when their distress was unusually grievous, the spouse of Christ, imitating the burning charity of St. Ambrose and other great servants of God, sold some of the sacred vestments that she might procure the means of relieving their necessities. She was very generous and hospitable too, particularly to bishops and religious, and so humble that she sometimes attended the cattle on the land which belonged to her monastery.

The renown of Bridgid's unbounded charity drew multitudes of the poor and necessitous to Kildare; the fame of her piety attracted thither many persons of distinction also, who were anxious to solicit her prayers or to profit by her holy example. In course of time the number of these so much increased, (and what an additional proof does it not afford of the thirst for spiritual improvement indulged by

our ancestors!) that it became necessary to provide accommodation for them in the neighbourhood of the new monastery, and thus was laid the foundation and origin of the town of Kildare.*

The spiritual exigencies of her community and of those numerous strangers who resorted to the vicinity having suggested to our Saint the expediency of procuring the locality to be erected into an episcopal See, she represented it to the prelates, to whom the consideration of it rightly belouged. Deeming the proposal just and useful, Conlath, a recluse of eminent sanctity, illustrious by the great things which God had granted to his prayers, was at Bridgid's desire chosen the first bishop of the newly erected diocese. In process of time it became the ecclesiastical metropolis of the province to which it belonged, probably in consequence of the general desire to honour the place in which St. Bridgid had so long dwelt. Over all the

* Kildare got its name from there being a very high oak-tree near St. Bridgid's habitation. *Kil* signifying cell, and *Dara*, oak-tree.

convents of her institute established throughout the kingdom a special jurisdiction is said to have been exercised by Conlath and his successors in the See of Kildare ; but the evidence supplied by historians on this point is by no means of a conclusive character : the only inference that can be deduced from their statements is, that, in virtue of his dignity as Metropolitan, the bishop of Kildare was specially charged with the care of the Bridgidine convents established within the province.

The desire of the holy abbess for the permanent residence of a prelate at Kildare being accomplished, she applied herself unreservedly to the care of the community over which she immediately presided, and was to them in her every act what a devout author means by “ a mirror of life and a book of holy doctrine.” Her sanctity was attested by many miracles. She was constantly occupied in promoting the good of others ; she often cleansed the lepers, healed the sick and languishing by her prayers, and obtained sight for one blind from his birth. Nor was the spirit of prophecy

wanting to her : numerous were her predictions of future things.

The most eminent persons of her time either visited, or corresponded with, St. Bridgid. Besides several others, St Albeus, bishop of Cashel or Emly, and St. Brendan of Clonfert, conferred with her on religious subjects ; and the celebrated Gildas is said to have sent her, as a token of his esteem, a small bell cast by himself.

After seventy years devoted to the practice of the most sublime virtues, corporal infirmities admonished the Saint that the time of her dissolution was nigh. It was now half a century since by her holy vows she had irrevocably consecrated herself to God, and during that period great results had been attained, her holy institute having widely diffused itself throughout the green Isle, and greatly advanced the cause of religion in the various districts in which it was established. Like *a river of peace*, its progress was steady and silent ; it fertilized every region fortunate enough to receive its waters, and caused them to put forth spiritual

flowers and fruits with all the sweet perfume of evangelical fragrance. The remembrance of the glory she had procured to the Most High, as well as the services rendered to dear souls ransomed by the precious Blood of her divine Spouse, cheered and consoled Bridgid in the infirmities inseparable from old age. Her last illness was soothed by the presence of Nennidh, a priest of eminent sanctity, over whose youth she had watched with pious solicitude, and who was indebted to her prayers and instructions for his great proficiency in sublime perfection.* The day on which our abbess was to terminate her course (Feb. 1st. 523) having arrived, she received from the hands of this saintly priest the blessed Body and Blood of

* “ Nennidh was a student, perhaps at Kildare, when St. Bridgid, happening one day to be with some of her nuns near the monastery, saw him *running very fast and in an unbecoming manner*. Having sent for and inquired of him whither he was running in such haste, he replied, as if in jest, *To the Kingdom of Heaven*. Whereupon the Saint gravely said, *I wish I deserved to run along with you to-day to that Kingdom, pray for me that I may reach it*. Affected by these words, the young man besought her to recommend him to God that he might pursue a steady course towards heaven. She promptly acquiesced, and the consequence was his commencement from that moment of a life of perfection.”—Dr. Lanigan, 9 ch. 5 section, Eccles. History.

her Lord in the divine Eucharist, and, as it would seem, immediately after her spirit passed forth, and went to possess him in that heavenly country where he is seen *face to face* and enjoyed without danger of ever losing him. Her body was interred in the church adjoining her convent, but was some time after exhumed, and deposited in a splendid shrine near the high altar. Cogitosus, who lived two centuries later, thus describes the church which then contained this valuable treasure: "The church of Kildare enclosed an ample space of ground and was of a height proportioned to its extent. The building was divided into three compartments, each one of them remarkable for the vastness of its dimensions, yet by the ingenuity of the architect one roof, skilfully adapted, covered the entire. The eastern division of the structure terminated at North and South by two of its exterior walls, while a wooden partition extending to the North and South, and separated by a small interstice from the eastern extremity of the church, formed the enclosure of the sanctuary. Adjoining the latter, and at its northern

and southern points, were two doors, by one of which the bishop and his assistants entered to celebrate the holy Mass and perform the other public offices; while by the other the nuns were admitted on the days on which they were to receive the holy Communion. The nave of the church was again divided into two parts with separate entrances. One division was appropriated to the male portion of the congregation, the other was exclusively reserved for females. The appearance of the edifice was very pleasing, continues the same author, by the number of windows distributed through the entire building. On the eastern extremity, the limit of the sanctuary, was a variety of sacred images, which met the eye the very moment one entered the porch of the church, and the interstices were filled up with suitable decorations. At both sides of the altar stood the sacred shrines of St. Bridgid and St. Conlath, which were adorned with a profusion of precious metals, exquisitely wrought, studded with costly gems and stones of great price, and surmounted by diadems of gold and silver,

types of the glory with which the Lord rewards his faithful servants.”

In the following (the 9th) century, the country being desolated by the Danes, the remains of St. Bridgid were removed in order to secure them from irreverence, and being transferred to Down were deposited in the same grave with those of the glorious St. Patrick. The Bridgidines, the order founded by this holy virgin and her most precious memorial, continued to flourish for centuries after her decease and gave many saints to Ireland.

l rewards

ury, the
es, the re-
n order to
ing trans-
the same
Patrick.
l by this
memorial,
after her
land.

THE LIFE
OF
ST. COLUMBA

ABBOT, AND APOSTLE
OF THE NORTHERN PICTS.

THE LIFE
OF SAINT COLUMBA

COLME OR COLUMKILLE.

CHAPTER I.

AFTER having attempted to write the life of our illustrious St. Patrick, and that of his spiritual daughter St. Bridgid, the saintly patroness of Ireland, it is but meet and may be expected that we should also endeavour to furnish the biography of the holy Columba or Columkille, who living almost in the same era, filled with the same spirit and enclosed in the same shrine, has ever been deemed with them one of Erin's chief patrons, his name being interwoven with theirs in the reminiscences of Irish piety.

This Saint was born about the close of the

year 521, so that as a spiritual star he began to rise in the firmament of the Irish Church just as St. Bridgid had disappeared therefrom to shine in heaven. His birth and future eminence were predicted during the lifetime of St. Patrick, perhaps by the holy Apostle himself. By his father, Mancanava, the blood of the Nialls, princes of Tyrconnel, flowed in his veins; while by his mother, Aethena, who drew her origin from an illustrious family in Leinster, he was connected with Caithir, the reigning monarch of Ireland.

Previously to his birth a dream or vision of singular import admonished Aethena that her child was to be specially blessed by the Most High. While asleep one night, it seemed to her that an Angel approached, bearing in his hand a robe of unparalleled beauty, which having presented to her he after a short interval withdrew, and spreading it forth suffered the wind to carry it away. Disappointed at this strange proceeding, Aethena anxiously inquired why she had not been permitted to retain this beautiful garment, and her interrogatory was met

by the reply that it could not be allowed to remain with her. Meanwhile and as the Angel spoke Aethena kept her eyes steadfastly fixed on the mantle which was now balanced in the firmament, and as it ascended towards the heavens she perceived that its dimensions became so expanded that it extended over mountains, forests and distant plains. The novelty and grandeur of the spectacle increased her regret for the loss of so extraordinary and magnificent a costume ; but while feeling thus sadly, a voice consoled her with these words, “ Woman, grieve not, for thou shalt bring forth a son, who will guide innumerable souls to heaven and be counted among the prophets of the Most High. ”

This promise must surely have brought comfort to Aethena : our business is now to show how it was fulfilled. In early youth, or we might perhaps say infancy, Columba, owing to the piety of his parents, was committed to the tutelage of the venerable priest by whom he had been purified in the waters of baptism. Even then the whole tenor of his conduct

showed how strongly imbued he was with religious principles, for even then did he furnish presages of his future sanctity. "From his very childhood," says Adamnan his biographer, "Columba was devoted to those exercises of piety which befitted his tender years; and so holily solicitous was he for the preservation of spotless purity of mind and body, that by the superior sanctity of his manners, though dwelling upon earth, he was already ripe for heaven."

But it was not alone by the pious life of the saintly Columba that the special predilection of heaven in his regard was made manifest, by the exercise of his omnipotence too did our Lord display the extraordinary love with which he cherished him. It happened that while he was with Cruthenan, the holy priest who superintended his education, this good ecclesiastic returning home one day after the discharge of some sacred function beheld, as he approached his dwelling, the house illuminated with a pure and serene light, and as he entered he saw over the head of his pupil, Columba, a

luminous globe of fire, as if suspended in the air, from which there was emitted a clear and steady radiance. Filled with amazement at this marvellous scene, the venerable man prostrated himself on the floor and admired in profound silence this expressive indication of the spiritual effulgence with which the soul of his favoured charge was illuminated by Heaven. Columba was singularly favoured in various ways; even when still a little boy, he recited the psalms together with Brugacius, bishop at Rathenaigh, whither he had accompanied his preceptor, whom that prelate had invited to spend with him the Christmas festival.

But the time had now arrived, when it became necessary to direct more particularly the attention of the young Saint to those studies in which candidates for the sacerdotal ministry should be skilled; and to afford him an opportunity of pursuing such learning with advantage he was transferred from the house of Cruthenan to the school of Moville, whose president was then St. Finnian, renowned among his countrymen for learning and sanc-

tity. In early life this holy man had had the good fortune to be placed under the care of Colman and Cælan, two ecclesiastics of whom there is honourable mention in the ancient annals of Ireland; by their advice he had passed over into Britain in order to profit by the lectures which were delivered by Nennius at his seminary of Whitethorn; after some time he returned to Ireland, and began to impart to the youth of his own vicinity that learning which he himself had journeyed so far to acquire. The fame of this new teacher soon spread through the island, and drew to his school numbers of the youth who aspired to the service of the altar.

Columba, among others, here devoted several years to sacred studies, and with all the success which had been anticipated. His proficiency in evangelical perfection was equally rapid, so that he was soon raised to the holy order of deaconship.

While officiating in that character on one occasion, his ministry was honoured by Heaven in the following extraordinary manner,

the miracle of Cana being renewed at his instance. When the bishop of the diocese on a certain morning was about to celebrate the Eucharistic sacrifice, Columba, who was charged with the care of the altar by his office, found *they* had *no wine* in the monastery, and that it could not be procured without considerable delay. Without more ado he went to a neighbouring fountain, and having filled a vessel, which he had taken with him, from its limpid source, he prayed that the Name of the Lord might be once more magnified by a renewal of the wonder effected at the marriage-feast. He was heard; for on the instant the water again felt the power of the Divinity, and Columba full of rapture at the sight exclaimed, as he returned to the assembled clergy, “ Here is wine, which our Lord Jesus has furnished for the celebration of his Mysteries !”

When the period arrived which terminated the holy deacon's residence in the monastery of St. Finnian, feeling desirous of becoming still more perfect in virtue and learning, he did not on leaving Moville return at once

home, but for some time placed himself under the tuition of a certain master, named Germanus, who had recently come from a foreign country and had already acquired a high reputation in Ireland for piety and literature. The same special providence, which had hitherto watched over and illustrated the opening career of our Saint, still continued its loving care of him. His new preceptor clearly saw that he was a cherished object of the divine predilection, having, among other proofs, evidence that the Almighty on a certain occasion revealed to him the judgment which he was about to visit on a guilty individual.

CHAPTER II.

BUT the time at length came in which our Saint was to do great things for God, and to realize the projects which he had long conceived for promoting his glory. The fervent Columba was now in his twenty-fifth year ; and perceiving from the example of the holy men

of his time, as well as of those who had already passed to a glorious immortality, that the great object which he had in view would be best attained by multiplying throughout the land monastic institutions, he determined on labouring for their establishment, that the edifying example of the members should be everywhere felt; their observance of evangelical perfection invariably furnishing a powerful incentive to the national piety.

Convinced that his native locality had a stronger claim on his exertions in the good cause, to Tyreconnel did Columba wend his way to solicit from his princely relatives, still in power, a convenient site for a monastery, with as much of the adjoining land as might be deemed sufficient for its maintenance. He succeeded: such a request was quite in accordance with the noble and generous spirit that has ever characterized true Irish piety; and the monastery was erected full soon on a gentle eminence adorned with a rich grove of majestic oaks, whence its derived its appellation of *Doire Calgaich*. When the internal economy

of the the new fabric was satisfactorily arranged, when hymns of praise and canticles of joy were sung, and above all when the adorable Victim of our salvation was offered within its sacred precincts, the holy founder prepared to visit other parts of the country to make them partakers of similar blessings.

Dairmagh, now Durrough, was the next territory in which he erected a monastery; and here too were his efforts blessed with most complete success, for in a short time this structure might complete with its parent-house at Tyrconnel in conferring great advantages on the community at large, as well as upon its immediate vicinity.

The day was now at hand when Columba was to be elevated to the priesthood; and how did he prepare to enter upon and receive so great a dignity? We may imagine something of the holy reverence, the angelic fervour, which he, who had been brought up in the shadow of the sanctuary, and inviolably faithful to his first grace, brought to the priesthood; his great interior lights, the result of his purity

of heart and strict union with God, enabling him to see more clearly that none but Saints, or such as resolutely strive for the perfection of sanctity, are fit to *stand before the Lord to minister* in his sight, to interpose between him and his people, and, so to speak, “to make by the word of their mouth the sacred Body of the Incarnate Word.”

It was to Etchen, bishop of Meath, that the holy candidate had recourse for ordination. This prelate was descended from an illustrious family in Leinster, but he had stronger claims to the veneration of his countrymen than any which can be derived from a glorious ancestry. Etchen, notwithstanding his noble birth, was remarkable for apostolic simplicity, and emulating the example of the first founders of the Catholic Church was distinguished for the practice of the most exalted virtues. Columba, on arriving at his habitation, found this humble prelate at the plough, discharging during the hours which his episcopal functions left free the laborious duties of a husbandman. He was welcomed with all that kindness and

charity which religion inspires, and having made known the object of his visit was duly ordained priest.

Some of our ancient writers assert that in commendatory letters from some of the bishops, which Columba produced on this occasion, there were instructions to Etchen to promote him not only to the priesthood, but even to the episcopacy, and that it happened through some inadvertence on the part of the prelate that this was overlooked. When apprised of his mistake, he urged the new priest to permit him to supply the rite of consecration unintentionally omitted; but Columba, conceiving that the occurrence was directed by divine providence, could not be prevailed upon to acquiesce, and formed the resolution, which he ever after faithfully kept, of remaining for life in the subordinate rank of the priesthood.

After his ordination Columba returned to Durrough, and ere departing thence met with one of those trials, which are not wanting to prove the humility and meekness of the Saints

of God, but which ended to his glory. The holy man, it seems, had adopted certain measures regarding his monastery, which, being disapproved of by some of the neighbouring prelates, were deemed a necessary subject of inquiry at a synod then sitting in a place named Geisille, in the vicinity of Durrough; and the result of this inquiry was a resolution to visit the holy founder with an ecclesiastical censure.

Apprised of the matter under debate, the Saint proceeded to the synod, which he reached just as the prelates had determined to impose upon him this severe punishment. As he entered, Brendan, abbot of Birr, an ecclesiastic of high character and great influence, rose to salute and welcome him, which was at once protested against by the bishops, it being, they said, a great impropriety to show any mark of attention to a person whom the council had condemned. " Ah, " replied the abbot, " had you seen what the Lord has been pleased to manifest to me to-day regarding this his elect whom you are censuring, you would not have

passed that sentence. Wrong it is, and the Lord by no means excommunicates him in virtue thereof, but rather more and more exalts him."

The synod was surprised at this remonstrance of holy Brendan, and at once the individuals composing it, each and all, anxiously inquired in what manner God had manifested his approbation of Columba and his measures. The good abbot then informed them that, while the Saint was on his way to the council, he saw a luminous pillar preceding him and blessed Angels accompanying him through the plain. "I dare not therefore," he continued, "treat him with disrespect, for I see that he is a man preordained by God to be the guide of nations to eternal life." This extraordinary announcement, made by a witness whose sanctity was incontestible, induced the council to reconsider the proceedings which they had adopted against Columba, and the result was so favourable that without further delay the sentence of excommunication was reversed, and each person present emulated his brother in treating

with respect and veneration *him whom the King of heaven had chosen so to honour.*

After leaving Durrough, which took place immediately, it would seem, on the dissolution of the synod, our holy Cólumba exercised his zeal by erecting monasteries in several parts of the kingdom, similar to those already established in Durrough and Tyrconnell.

The rule which he gave to his monks has not been transmitted to us by any Latin writer, and the Irish copies of it which have been preserved have hitherto eluded the skill of the most patient antiquary. Venerable Bede, in various parts of his works, has borne most honourable testimony to their virtue. In glowing colours he paints their chastity, their poverty, and their obedience, the essential virtues of the monastic state, as well as their patience and indefatigable efforts to attain the summit of Christian perfection. No motives save those of charity could induce them to leave their cells, except at the hours appointed for religious duties and manual labour. If they ever appeared in public, it was to reconcile enemies,

to instruct the ignorant, to extirpate vice and plead the cause of the unfortunate.

That much of their time was devoted to prayer and contemplation there is good reason to believe, as well as that their repasts were few and exceedingly austere, their holy founder himself being of such mortified habits that his fast was continual and that when he reposed the floor was his bed and a hard stone his pillow. He must moreover have taught his children to love well that prop, that necessary bulwark, that *sine qua non* of the monastic state, *holy silence*, except in time of recreation, or when duty or necessity required the contrary; otherwise the happy consequences which resulted, the glorious fruits which were produced by his conventual establishments, would never have consoled his piety and crowned his labours.

Unhappily for the glorious cause in which St. Columba was so engaged, the party feuds and dissensions which disturbed the peace of his own kinsfolk interfered with the ulterior designs which his zeal meditated. So long as

he could hope that his influence would conduce to the termination of the hostilities carried on between the chieftains and princes of his family, he was willing to labour for the restoration of union and peace ; but when the continued renewal of contests and disputes, which he thought had been composed by his decisions, taught him how unavailing had been his efforts, he resolved to leave Ireland and thus set aside a hindrance which could not fail to mar his exertions in the cause of Heaven.

The northern parts of Britain presented at this juncture many attractions to induce the Saint to select that region as a fit theatre for his future labours. On the northern Picts the light of the Gospel had not yet shone. It is true that the Scots, a neighbouring colony from Ireland, professed Christianity ; but the glories of religion had been almost shorn of their splendour, and it required an apostolic zeal to reinvest them with all their interest, and to rekindle the sacred fire now slumbering under the embers of sinful indifference.

The prospect of rescuing the Picts from their idolatry, and of reviving among the Scots, connected with him by the ties of kindred and country, the fervent piety which so pre eminently distinguished their common ancestry, afforded, though fraught with difficulty, the purest pleasure to the soul of Columba; and this pleasure was heightened by the hope, that in this region also he might be able to diffuse those monastic institutions which had so much benefited Ireland, and had become its pride and glory.

In the vicinity of that part of Caledonia, where St. Columba chose to begin his new career, there is a cluster of isles known at the present day by the name of The Hebrides. These isles, or at least some of them, seem to have then been subject to the prince, who ruled over the Scottish colony which had settled in Caledonia. The sequestered site of the Hebrides admirably adapted them for the seclusion of the monastic life; and in such a retreat, as they afforded, the Saint felt convinced that the followers of his institute might devote

themselves most freely to the holy exercises of the cloister.

His connection with Conall, the sovereign of the aforesaid colony, (for Conall, like Columba, was lineally descended from the Dalriadan dynasty,) gave reason to hope that he might obtain permission to found a monastery in one of these islands. He sought it, and was successful. Hy, the smallest of them, now distinguished by the name of Icolmkille, was generously bestowed upon him by the prince for his use and that of his children in Christ. Taking twelve of these with him Columba sailed from Ireland, and the weather proving propitious all safely arrived at Hy of the Hebrides. The great things operated there for God deserve a new chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE first care of Columba and his monks, on arriving at their destination, was to erect a monastery and build a church. A period of nearly two years seems to have been engrossed in the

completion of these undertakings, and in the settlement of disciplinary matters connected with the new establishment. When these were arranged, the Saint proceeded to execute his purpose of evangelizing the Picts, who occupied all that part of Scotland northward of the Grampian mountains. No missionary had as yet appeared in this inhospitable clime; the formidable barrier, which separated its inhabitants from their southern neighbours, hitherto preventing the glad tidings of salvation from being wafted to their coast. The work seemed reserved for our own Columba; and to it he went, accompanied by a few only of his disciples, with all the zeal and firmness which ever characterizes the truly apostolic man.

The news of his arrival having reached the ears of Brude, the sovereign who held dominion in these parts, he shut himself up within the walls of the royal residence at Inverness, hoping there to remain undisturbed from the intrusion of the man of God. Fearing however, that the solicitude of the latter for his conver-

sion should prove superior to this precaution, he moreover issued orders that, if the Saint approached, the palace-gates should be closed against him. The apprehensions of the prince were realized; for, anxious to obtain the regal sanction, the royal mansion was the first place which Columba visited.

Finding on his arrival that the very posterns were socured against him, and that all access to Brude was denied, the Saint nowise dismayed, (calling to mind this promise of his divine Master, "Amen I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say to this mountain, Remove from hence; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you,") fearlessly advanced to the palace-gate, and impressed upon it the sacred sign of the cross; when lo! by the power of him, who dying for us thereon shivered "the brazen gates" and burst the chains of satan, the royal portals yielded on the moment and expanded widely, to the amazement of the pagan bystanders. This was sufficient; confounded at "the power which was given to" the holy missionary, the monarch

came forth attended by all the members of his council, welcomed him with every demonstration of kindness and respect, gave him all the permissions he required, and never failed in their after-intercourse to evince the courtesy displayed at this first meeting.

The ministers of the national superstition were the only persons from whom the missionaries had now any reason to fear opposition, and they gave it ; for, despite of the sanction of the king, they used every artifice to render unavailing the labours of the saintly men. An entire family being converted by the blessed Columba to the Christian faith, their deadly hatred was so provoked that they were disposed to view with pleasure any misfortune befalling its individual members. To their great joy one of the children grew sick and died soon after baptism, which they at once proclaimed to be the punishment of its parents' apostacy, and a certain proof of the superiority of the potency of their gods over the God of the Christians. Columba being apprized of this circumstance, and fearing for the faith of his

neophytes, repaired without delay to their abode.

On arriving there, he first endeavoured to console the sorrowing parents by enlarging on the divine power, and by exhorting them to look with confidence for relief to the one true God; he next proceeded to the room where the body of the deceased lay, and obliged all to withdraw while he poured forth his prayer to God for the restoration to life of the departed child. At the close of his fervent orison, directing his eyes towards the lifeless remains, he exclaimed, "In the name of the Lord Jesus arise, and stand upon thy feet." The command was obeyed, the child was instantly restored to life, and the Saint taking him by the hand led him to the apartment in which his parents disconsolately remained. We may guess but cannot tell their joy and their gratitude. Surely now they blessed the hour in which they embraced Christianity, and were more strongly confirmed in the belief of its mysteries: the people too assembled in crowds to witness the wonder which Columba had wrought; they testified by

their acclamations their grateful acknowledgments to him, and their faith in the omnipotence of the God whom he came to preach unto them.

The interests of his monastery at Hy required that the Saint should occasionally interrupt his apostolic labours in Pictland in order to revisit it. However, his stay was very short, being prolonged only as much as was absolutely necessary for the infant establishment: for, as soon as it was possible, he tore himself from his dear religious to resume his mission. And what a sacrifice of self, even in its *minimum* and apparently lawful form, was here! That Columba would have preferred communing with God in the seclusion of the cloister, and governing that little and most peaceful flock committed to his care, was but natural; but, like all saintly "hooded men," he only thought of subjecting nature to grace, knowing full well that, when we leave God *for* God, we are most certain of finding him.

It cannot be doubted that St. Columba's zealous exertions were crowned with great

success, the vast majority of the inhabitants of Pictland being gained over to the belief and practice of the Gospel. Even during his first visit there, he was enabled to erect some few churches and religious houses, and to appoint spiritual instructors for the religious wants of the new converts and for propagating during his occasional absence the holy Catholic faith. Who these were we are not aware, the event being but imperfectly recorded.

It is said that our Saint penetrated into the Orkney Isles, and with some success; but of his proceedings there we know little. Of those which took place in the Hebrides or Western Islands, (which he also blessed with his presence, frequently visiting them, indefatigably preaching in them, supplying them with missionaries, erecting churches and founding religious communities.) there is more extant. Among these islands, Hymba, where he established a monastery, over which after some years he placed his maternal uncle, Erwan, seems to have been his favourite retreat, just as Sabhal or Saul, in our own green isle was

that of his glorious and saintly progenitor in the faith, St. Patrick. On various occasions, and at different intervals, he made it his abode.

There it was visited by four holy that he was founders of monasticism in Ireland—by Comgall, Cainnech or Canice, Brendan of Clonfert, and Cormac Hua Liathain:—there while he was celebrating Mass for them, Brendan a very bright flame like a burning pillar rising from his head, which continued from the moment of the consecration to the termination of the sacred mysteries. It was there also, that on another occasion he had some extraordinary celestial visitations, which lasted for three days and three nights consecutively. There were several monasteries also founded by himself, or in virtue of his obedience by his disciples, in an island called Ethica, one of which was governed by Baithen who subsequently succeeded him in the abbacy of Hy.

While thus engaged, the Saint was at times obliged to exert himself in defence of the new converts against certain marauders, who

though nominally Christian practised the illicit trade of plundering. On one occasion he proceeded to excommunicate some of the leaders, who were members of the royal house of the British Scots; but he did so at the risk of his life for one of their partisans rushed upon him with a spear, but providentially without effect. Adamnan says, that the name of this assassin was *Lamh-dess* or *Right hand*; and that on his advancing against Columba, Findulgan, a monk of Hymba, where this transaction occurred, being clothed in an outer garment of the Saint, threw himself between him and Lamh-dess, who, notwithstanding he used all his might, was not able to transfix it.

The apostolic labours of St Columba were not confined to the territories of the Picts and Western Islanders, he superintended also the ecclesiastical affairs of the British Scots, and formed some religious establishments in their kingdom. One of them near Loch-Awe in Argyle was governed by one of his monks named Cailten, of whom it is related, that he died at Hy, the parent-house if we may so call

it. The holy abbot Columba, foreseeing that the death of this monk was nigh, sent for him that he might give him his blessing, as being in some sort necessary to his terminating his course in the true spirit of monastic obedience.

In traversing the southern part of this kingdom, our Saint visited St. Kentigern, bishop of Glasgow, and spent with him a few days. Nor is it improbable that he visited South Britain, then possessed by the Anglo-Saxons, for there were Christians of that nation in Hy before his death, converted in all probability by himself or his disciples.

Meantime he did not neglect to watch vigilantly over his other monasteries, not only those in Scotland and the isles, but also those which he had founded in his own dear and more cherished land. Thither did he often send messengers on business connected with his monasteries or with other pious objects. On one occasion he dispatched to Clogher in all haste Lugaid Laithir, one of his monks, (whom Adamnan calls his legate by excellence,) with a box containing a benediction, which when

dipped in water was to cure the saintly virgin Mangina, whose limb was broken at her returning from the holy mysteries; which it did most effectually, and instantly on its application.

St. Columba was frequently visited by persons from Ireland, who were either his former friends, or who wished to become so, or who desired to receive his advice on various matters. These and all other strangers he received with the greatest kindness and treated most hospitably. Besides the holy men already mentioned, Columbanus, bishop in the province of Leinster, came to see him.

The holy abbot conceived a great friendship for this prelate, so that, being apprized of his death by revelation he gave orders in the morning that the monks who were preparing for their respective occupations should refrain from work on that day; and when all was ready for the holy mysteries, the whole community, clothed in white garments as on a Sunday, proceeded to the church along with the Saint. When the choir had come to a part

of the service, in which the name of St. Martin used to be commemorated, the saintly abbot cried out, "To day you must sing for the holy bishop Columbanus;" and thus they became informed of his death.

Another visitor of St. Columba's was Aidan a very religious man, who had lived twelve years with St. Brendan of Clonfert. On the day before his arrival the Saint said to the brethren, "We intend to fast to-morrow as usual, because it will be Wednesday; but, in consequence of the arrival of a stranger, the fast will be broken." The event verified the prediction. Aidan did arrive; and St. Columba's dispensation with so holy an ordinance, observed by the whole Irish Church, establishes his claim to great prudence and discretion.

We shall mention but one more of those visitors, namely, Cronan, a Munster bishop, who through humility did all that he could to prevent its being known that he belonged to the episcopal order. Not having yet understood that he did, Columba desired him on the Sunday to celebrate Mass, "*Christi Corpus ex*

more conficere." He did so ; and when he came to the division of the consacred Host, he called upon Columba to join him as a priest in breaking the Lord's bread , *Ut simul quasi duo presbyteri Dominicum panem frangerent.* Coming up to the altar and looking him in the face, the Saint said, "Christ bless thee, brother ; do thou alone break it according to the episcopal rite, for now we know thou art a bishop. Why hast thou hitherto endeavoured to conceal thyself, so as not to let us pay thee that veneration which we owe thee ?

That Columba was held in the highest veneration, as well by the clergy and people as by the monarchs of his time both in Ireland and Britain, is too well known to require proof. A very remarkable instance of it occurs in his having been the person applied to for inaugurating or, as his biographers express it, *ordaining* Aidan, king of the British Scots, after the death of Conall ; with which request he complied not until after being commanded by an Angel, preferring much that Eugene, Aidan's brother, should sway the sceptre.

He subsequently became very friendly towards the latter; and for his sake chiefly it was that he assisted at the assembly of Drumceat in Ireland, wherein some differences between him and Aidus, the supreme monarch of the green isle, were to be adjusted. This was the last of the several visits with which our Saint favoured the land of his birth, and it is referred to the year 590. He was accompanied by some of his monks together with his royal friend; and having after a stormy passage entered lough Foyle and landed near the mouth of the river Roe, they proceeded to Drumceat to meet the states-general of the kingdom. Aidus, at first rather insolent and disrespectful towards St. Columba, changed his tone altogether, when he found that he came only to establish peace between him and the king of the British Scots.

The respective claims of the royal opponents were simply these: Aidan, the Scottish monarch, asserting a hereditary right to the sovereignty of Dalriada in Antrim, demanded that the inhabitants of that territory should be re-

lieved from the tribute paid by the other Irish principalities to the supreme monarch; while, on the other hand, Aidus contended that, as the aforesaid territory formed a part of his realm, it could not be exempt from the subsidy required from the several states of the kingdom by him and his successors in the monarchy.

The decision of the matter being at length referred to St. Columba, he, feeling unwilling to pronounce upon it, advised that it should be submitted to St. Colman, a person deeply skilled in civil as well as ecclesiastical lore. St. Colman decided for Aidus; but, to heal the dissensions which had arisen, he proposed that a solemn covenant should be entered into between him and Aidan to render mutual assistance, the one to the other, against any enemy who might invade their respective dominions. This proposal was received with joy, and being entered into, gave general satisfaction.

Another subject of no small national importance was subsequently discussed. The bards

had incurred the displeasure of Aidus and several leading members of the national council, being, as it was said, a proud and venal order who bestowed praise on, or loaded with censure, the nobles and other great men not according to merit, but just as they were prompted by passion or interest. Their fate seemed decided, their proscription was about to be determined on, when our saintly abbot, who, at the same time that he protested against such an abuse, still loved like a true patriot the institutions of his country, claimed toleration for *the sons of song*. He pleaded their cause so successfully, that the assembly contented itself with limiting their number and obliging them thenceforward to observe certain regulations.

The assembly being dissolved, our good St. Columba prepared to leave Drumceat; but, before he set out, his pity for the sufferings of Scanlan, prince of Ossory, detained in prison by Aidus for some political cause, induced him to petition for his release. Though disposed to receive favourably any request from such a

holy man, the fearsor perhaps the prejudices of the monarch against the unfortunate prince prevented his acquiescence; so, perceiving that further interference would not avail, Columba consoled the royal captive with the assurance that he should survive his imperial master, and be restored to, and govern for many years, his native principedom.

From Drumceat St. Columba proceeded to transact business far more to his mind, and according to his spirit, the visitation of his monasteries. The number which he visited on this occasion we cannot ascertain. To that of Derry, as lying within a short distance of Drumceat, he undoubtedly went; as also to that of Durrough, his favourite, then governed for him by Lasrean. In this latter he remained even for some months, arranging various disciplinary matters; during which time he visited Alitherus, abbot of Clonmacnois, who, with his whole community and the people of the surrounding country, received him with all manner of respect and veneration.

Having accomplished the business which

took him to Ireland, the Saint set out for his adopted country, and, making the northern part of Ulster his way, had an interview with St. Comgall of Bangor, and another with Conall, bishop of Coleraine.* Taking shipping soon after, he sailed for Hy, where he landed in safety.

CHAPTER IV.

Nor small, we may suppose, was the joy of the community at Hy on beholding once more in the midst of them their dear father in Christ: nor was his own less. It must indeed have been consoling to him to find himself once more in the calm seclusion of his cloister, after the noisy world whence he had just emerged. To hear again the vesper-peal and matin-toll in the still midnight, to view at golden prime the angelic features of *those meek ones*, to whom the Lord, for whom they had *left all*, had

* In the infancy of the Irish Church it was usual to appoint bishops over small districts, so that the number of Irish Sees was then very numerous.

given the inheritance of *the land*. Truly our Saint could better relish those delights on returning from the external world, as things are better appreciated by contrast.

It was now the year of our Lord 593, and thirty years had our earth performed her revolution round the brilliant orb which illumines her, since Columba had settled in that lonely and sequestered isle. He had often prayed to the Most High that at the termination of such a period he might pass from this exile, and he now looked with confidence for the grant of his request. But while indulging in this delightful anticipation, blessed Angels were sent to apprise him that, in consideration of the prayers poured forth by the British and Scottish churches, it was decreed in heaven that he should yet remain four years more on earth. The tidings cost him many tears, but they were accompanied with perfect submission to the divine will; the blessed man at once renounced his anxiety *to be then dissolved and go to Christ*, since such was his good pleasure.

With greater earnestness than ever did he

now labour to consummate his perfection, and attain more and greater sanctity. We have already spoken of his corporal austerity; but this is only one virtue; Columba was eminent in all. One thing particularly distinguished him, great cheerfulness of countenance and mildness of disposition: and this is no small matter; for nothing edifies us more than that those, who profess to serve God, should be cordially sweet and amiable to men. Columba too was a great lover of labour; he knew not what it was to be unemployed, but continually occupied himself, when not engrossed by missionary duties, in "praying, reading, writing, and in doing something for the common good." And these were greater things, than the gifts of prophecy and miracles which he possessed in an eminent degree.

At length the four years, which were to terminate the labours of the holy man, were drawing to their close. It was Saturday, the 8th of June, and with that calm serenity and imperturbable peace with which Saints die, Columba, attended by Diermit, one of his

monks, proceeded to examine if there was sufficient corn in the granary to supply his dear children with bread until the new harvest should be reaped. Having discovered that there was, he blessed the barn, and being quite satisfied that all his obligations to the brethren were now fulfilled, he revealed to Diermit with an injunction of secrecy that his hour was come, and that he should be called out of life before the next day had dawned. The monk thereupon besought him to impart his benediction to the monastery; he complied, standing on the summit of an adjoining eminence.

He then returned to his poor cell, and continued transcribing a portion of the Holy Scripture* until the bell summoned all to choir,

* Transcribing holy books was a favourite occupation of St. Columba. He left behind him 100 manuscripts, says A. Butler. (*Lives of the Saints*, 9th June.) "The celebrated Book of Kells is the autograph of St. Columba, and consists of a copy of the four Gospels. One of the first paintings in this wonderful volume, (for there are several, all proving that even in the 6th century we had in Ireland a style of illumination peculiarly national, and for the age of no small merit,) is the Blessed Virgin with our infant Saviour in her arms, a halo of glory round her head, and Angels above her. In the last page is written, I beseech thy Blessedness, holy Presbyter Patrick, that whosoever holds this book may remember Columba."—*Dublin Review*, June, 1846.

when, closing the last page with the appropriate verse, *Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono.* — “They who seek the Lord shall not want any good,” (Ps. 33)—he said, *Let Baithen* (his successor in the abbacy) *finish the rest*, and then proceeded to the church with the rest of the community. The devotions being ended, he returned to his cell, and there reclining on his rocky couch, delivered some instructions to Diermit to be communicated to the brethren.

At midnight the tolling of the bell summoned the monks again to prayer, and the holy abbot, the first to respond to the call, was already in the church and in earnest prayer before any one had arrived. Diermit was the first who appeared, and he found the Saint with his strength rapidly declining quite absorbed in God as he lay before the altar. In an instant all the monks were assembled about him, and bitterly bewailed their loss. The holy man had still sufficient strength left to recognise them, and looking upon them with “his brow” irradiated by “heaven’s own smile, he with Diermit’s

help raised his right hand, and thus imparted to them his last benediction. Soon after, on Sunday morning, the 9th of June he passed to a glorious immortality.

For three days and as many nights the obsequies of St. Columba were unremittingly celebrated, and at the close of that time his sacred remains were with all religious solemnity deposited in the tomb.

His memory was for ages most dear to the northern nations; his monastery was selected for the sepulchres of the kings of Ireland, Scotland, and Norway; and the provincial bishops, though preserving in their episcopal functions the superiority of their rank, submitted in other points to the mandate of the abbot of Hy, as the legitimate successor of St. Columba. Singular honour this, and unparalleled in Church History; but far greater honour did the Saint receive, and greater bliss does he now enjoy, in the glorious kingdom of which holy David said, *Satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua* — “ I shall be satisfied when thy glory shall appear.” (Ps. 16.)

TRANSLATION

OF THE RELICS OF ST. PATRICK, ST. BRIDGID,
AND ST. COLUMBA.

DURING the incursion of the piratical Danes, in the ninth century, the holy remains of St. Bridgid were for security transferred from Kildare to Down, and deposited with those of St. Patrick; and soon after St. Columba's sacred relics were removed from Hy and laid in the same resting-place. The memory of this event was indeed long and faithfully preserved, but gradually the remembrance of the precise spot in which the holy remains lay became obliterated both from the minds of clergy and people; perhaps because originally the knowledge of the circumstance was for greater security confined to a few.

The extraordinary veneration entertained for this saintly trio by the glorious St. Malachy, who occupied the primatial See of Armagh in the year 1136, made him desirous to discover their hallowed tomb; and as every means devised by his ingenuity for procuring such

information had proved unavailing, and as human exertion had failed, he had recourse to *omnipotent* prayer, and with a holy importunity besought our Lord to reveal to him what he was so anxious to know. He was heard; for, after having persevered for some time in urging this pious request, on a certain night while still communing upon it with God in the church, a ray of light resembling a sun-beam was seen by him to pass along the sacred edifice until it reached a particular spot, when it ceased to advance. Convinced that the divine Majesty had appointed this means of enlightening him on what he was so much interested in, the holy primate had the place dug up, and when the earth was removed, the bodies of the three blessed Saints were discovered in the same grave. When exhumed, Malachy had them deposited in new coffins, and once more enclosed in their sepulchre.

On learning the circumstance from the holy prelate, De Courcy, lord of Down, concurred with him in sending deputies to the Holy See to solicit permission from the Pope to deposite

the sacred relics more honourably, and to remove them to another part of the church. Urban III. then filled St. Peter's Chair, and having personal knowledge both of St. Malachy and De Courcy, he instantly ordered Vivian, cardinal priest of St. Stephen's, to proceed to Ireland to assist at the celebration of the intended ceremony. He did so; and on the appointed day the 9th of June, the Feast of St. Columba, *the translation* took place with the usual solemnities, the venerable remains being interred in the place prepared, in the presence of fifteen bishops and a numerous assemblage of priests.

To preserve the memory of this consoling event it was immediately decreed that the anniversary of *the translation* should be thenceforward kept as a solemn festival throughout Ireland, which decree has long since, for just reasons we presume, ceased to be in force.

nd to re-
h. Urban
d having
chy and
ian, car-
oceed to
e intend-
appoint-
of St.
with the
as being
presence
emblage

onsoling
the an-
thence-
ughout
ee, for
be in

LIFE
OF
SAINT MALACHY

ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

w
th
se
tic
na
ab
de
pr

p
w
v
F

LIFE
OF SAINT MALACHY

ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

CHAPTER I.

Ireland was converted to Christianity, as we have seen, in the fifth century. During the three succeeding centuries it was the principal seat of learning in Christendom. This distinction was owing to the apostolic lives of the native ecclesiastics, who were never known to abuse the great immunities and secular endowments conferred on them by the Irish princes.

This change from idolatry to the Gospel took place when the Roman empire in the West was torn to pieces, and when pagan nations were seizing on the greater part of Europe. Providence, ever watchful over the Church,

erected in that remote island an asylum for its repose and extension. For three hundred years the Catholic youth of the Continent flocked thither to be instructed in the science of the Saints, and in the literature which leads to it.

In the ninth century however, the Holy Isle began to feel the grievances, which followed the invasion of the sanctuary in other countries. It was infested in its turn by heathen barbarians, who, under the name of Normans ravaged the maritime districts of England, Scotland and France, and finally made settlements in them all. Nothing sacred escaped their depredations: wherever they prevailed, they massacred the clergy, demolished the monasteries and burnt their libraries. Amid this state of things the civil power became weakened; for kings contending with foreign armies and often with vassals equally dangerous, lost much of their authority. The national assemblies were seldom convened; and when convened, they lacked the power or the wisdom to restore or reform the former Constitution.

Great relaxation of piety and morality was also gradually introduced; vice and ignorance succeeded to Christian virtues and knowledge.

Factions among the governors of provinces ended in a dissolution of the Irish monarchy on the death of Malachy II in 1022, and through the accumulation of so many evils that nation had in a great degree sunk into barbarism. Such was its sad condition when the great Saint, whose life we here relate, was born.

CHAPTER II.

Malachy, called in Irish Maol Maadhog O Morgair, was a native of Armagh. His parents were persons of the highest rank; both were very virtuous, especially his mother who was most solicitous to train him up in the fear of God. Not content with procuring him pious tutors whilst he studied grammar at Armagh, she never ceased to instil into his tender mind at home the most perfect sentiments of piety, which became deeply imprinted on his heart

by that interior Master, in whose school he was from his infancy a great proficient.

He was meek, humble, obedient, modest, obliging to all, and very diligent in his studies. He was temperate in diet, fought against sleep, and had no inclination for childish sports. He far outstripped his fellow-students in learning, and his professors in virtue. In his studies, as well as in his devotions and little practices of penance, he was cautious to shun as much as possible the eyes of others. For this reason he spent not as much time in churches as he desired to do, but prayed much in retired places, and frequently raised his pure heart to Heaven in such a way as not to be observed. When his tutor took a walk with him alone, this beloved scholar often remained a little behind to send up with more liberty, and as it were by stealth, short ejaculations from the bow of his heart which was ever bent.

To learn more perfectly the art of dying to himself and of living wholly for God, St. Malachy put himself under the discipline of a holy recluse named Imarius, wholed a most

auste
Arma
and r
other
melan
youth
to be
const
so s
state
so m
rega
ing
to e
attai
hims
beco
ting
bein
they
with
blin
T
his

austere life in a cell near the great church of Armagh. This step astonished the whole city, and many censured him severely for it, while others laughed at him. Some ascribed it to melancholy, fickleness, or the rashness of youth. His friends reproached him, not able to bear the thought that one of so delicate a constitution, and possessing accomplishments so suitable for the world, should embrace a state of such rigour, and (in their eyes) one so mean and contemptible. Our Saint however regarded not their censures, but by persevering with humility and meekness he learnt to conquer both himself and the world. To attain to the perfect love of God he consigned himself during life, as it were, to the grave — becoming, as it were, a dead man, by submitting himself wholly to the rule of another — not being like those who undertaking to teach what they have never learnt, and to gather scholars without having ever been at school, become blind guides of the blind.

The simplicity of the disciple's obedience, his love of silence, and his fervour in prayer

and mortification, were the marks and the means of his spiritual advancement, which both endeared him to his master and edified those who had at first condemned his choice. The raileries of the latter were soon converted into praises, and their contempt into admiration. Many, moved by the example of his virtue, desired to be his imitators and companions. St. Malachy prevailed on Imar to admit the most fervent of these petitioners, and they soon formed a considerable community. Our Saint was a model to all the rest, although he ever looked upon himself as the most unworthy of that religious body.

A disciple so meek, so obedient and devout, could not fail to advance apace to the summit of evangelical perfection. Celsus or Ceallach, archbishop of Armagh, judged him worthy of Holy Orders, and obliged him, notwithstanding all his resistance, to receive the order of deacon, and some time later the priesthood, when he was twenty-five years old, though the age required by the Canons for priest's orders was thirty years. The extraordinary merit of St.

Malachy
that

It
bish
trud
885
usu
suffi
bish
Mac
the
son
sors
bish
duly
tyra
I
his
peo
the
gur

Malachy was a just reason for dispensing with that rule.

CHAPTER III.

It is certainly a mistake to say that this archbishop was a married man. Out of the fifteen intruders into the See of Armagh from the year 885, eight were married men. They however usurped the temporalities only. They had a suffragan or vicar, who was a consecrated bishop and who performed all the functions. Maol-Brigid, who was the first archbishop of the fifteen of this family, was a charitable person; but the thirteen following were oppressors of the See. St. Celsus, the present archbishop and the last prelate of that family, was duly elected, and he put an end to that tyranny.

Having ordained St. Malachy he made him his vicar to preach the word of God to the rude people. Many and grievous and inveterate were the evil customs, which most horribly disfigured that Church, and which our Saint was

delegated to extirpate. Wonderful was the zeal with which he discharged that commission: abuses and vices were defeated and dispersed before his face; barbarous habits were abolished, and diabolical superstitions were banished; in a word, whatever squared not with the rule of the Gospel could not stand before him. He seemed to be a flame amidst a forest, or a hook for uprooting noxious plants. With a giant's heart he appeared at work on every side.

He made several regulations in ecclesiastical discipline, which were authorized by the bishops. He settled the regular solemn recitation of the canonical Hours in all the churches of the diocese, which had been omitted even in the cities since the Danish invasions; and in this part of his work it was of service to him that from his youth he had applied himself to church-music. What was of much greater importance, he renewed the use of the sacraments, especially of Penance, Confirmation and regular Matrimony.

St. Malachy, fearing that he was not sufficiently skilled in the Canons of the Church to

carry out a thorough reformation of discipline, and often labouring under great anxieties of mind on this account, resolved to repair for some time to Malchus, bishop of Lismore, who had been educated in England and had become a Benedictine at Winchester, and who for learning and sanctity was at this time reputed the oracle of all Ireland. Being courteously received by this good monk, he was diligently instructed by him in all things appertaining to the divine service and to the care of souls, and at the same time was employed by him in the ministry of his church.

Ireland was anciently divided into two parts, the southern and the northern. This partition was made, about the year 492, by a line drawn from the mouth of the Liffey at Dublin to Galway. At the present epoch it was cut up into several little kingdoms.

It happened that Cormac, king of Munster, was dethroned by his wicked brother and in his misfortunes had recourse to Malchus, not to recover his crown, but to save his soul, fearing him who takes away the spirit of princes, and

being averse to the shedding of blood for temporal interests. At the news of the arrival of such a guest the good bishop made preparations to receive him with due honour; but the king would not consent to his desires, declaring that it was his intention not to think any more of worldly pomps, but to live among the priests, to put on sack-cloth, and to labour to secure for himself by penance the possession of an eternal kingdom. Malchus made him a suitable exhortation on the condition of his sacrifice and of a contrite heart, assigned him a small house to lodge in and bread and water for his sustenance, and appointed St. Malachy to be his master. Through our Saint's exhortations the king began to relish the sweetness of the heavenly food of the soul; his heart was softened to compunction; and, whilst he subdued his flesh by austerities, he washed his soul with penitential tears, never ceasing to cry out with David, "Behold, O God, my baseness and my misery, and pardon me all mine offences".

The sovereign Judge was not deaf to his prayer; he heard it, not only in the spiritual sense

in w
to to
grac
him
king
done
soug
sible
him
able
bish
and
ple
mit
aad
jeet
the
nou

ed
sa

in which it was uttered, but also with regard to temporal favours; he granted him his holy grace which he implored, and also restored him to his earthly throne. For a neighbouring king, moved with indignation at the injury done to the majesty of kings by his expulsion, sought out the penitent, and finding him insensible to all motives of worldly interest pressed him with those of piety and justice; not being able yet to succeed, he engaged the learned bishop and our Saint to employ their authority, and to represent to him that justice to his people and the divine honour obliged him to submit. With the succours of this king therefore, and by the activity of many of his loyal subjects, Cormac was easily placed again upon the throne: and he ever after loved and honoured St. Malachy as his father.

CHAPTER IV.

Benehor, now called Bangor, was founded by St. Comgall about the year 550, and is said to have had sometimes 3000 monks at

once. From it swarmed many other monasteries in Ireland and Scotland. This great abbey, situated in the county of Down, was at present in a desolate condition. The buildings had been destroyed by Danish pirates, who massacred here in one day 900 monks. Its revenues were possessed by an uncle of St. Malachy till it should be re-established. This uncle, resigned it to his holy nephew, that he might settle it in regular observance, and that he himself might become a monk therein under the direction of his nephew. By the care of our Saint it became again a flourishing seminary of piety and learning, though not so vast as it had formerly been. St. Malachy governed this house for some time, and was in his deportment a living rule, a mirror, or a book laid open, in which all might learn the true precepts of religious conversation. He always went before his flock in all monastic observances, and did moreover other penances and actions of perfection which no man was able to equal. He worked with his brethren in hewing timber and in similar manual labour.

Several miraculous cures of sick persons added to his reputation, but the whole tenor of his life was the greatest of his miracles. The composure of his mind, and the inward sanctity of his soul, appeared in his countenance, which was ever modestly cheerful.

A sister of our Saint who had led a worldly life died, and he recommended her soul to God for a long time in the sacrifice of the altar. Having intermitted this for a month, he one night seemed to be advertised in his sleep, that his sister was waiting sorrowful in the churchyard and had been thirty days without food. This induced him to resume his custom of saying Mass, or of having Mass said for her every day. After some time he saw her admitted to the door of the church, then into the church, and later to the altar. At the altar she appeared in joy, and in the midst of a troop of happy spirits. This vision gave him great comfort.

In the thirtieth year of his age St. Malachy was chosen bishop of Connor, now in the county of Antrim; as he peremptorily refused to

acquiesce in the election, he was at length obliged by the command of Iunar and Celsus to submit.

Entering on the exercise of his functions, the new bishop found that his flock were Christians in name only, but in their manners worse than pagans. He would not however run away like a hireling, but resolved to spare no pains to turn these wolves into sheep. He preached in public with an apostolical vigour, mingling sweetness with a wholesome severity; and when they would not come to the church to hear him, he sought them in the streets and in their houses, exhorted them with tenderness, and often shed tears over them. He offered to God for them the sacrifice of a contrite and humble heart, and sometimes passed whole nights weeping and with his hands stretched forth to heaven in their behalf.

The remotest villages and cottages of his diocese he visited, going always on foot, and receiving all manner of affronts and sufferings with invincible patience. The most savage hearts were at length softened into humanity

and a sense of religion. The Saint restored the frequent use of the sacraments among the people; and as he found amongst them very few priests and those both slothful and ignorant, he filled the diocese with zealous pastors, by whose assistance he banished ignorance and superstition, and established all religious observances and the practice of piety. In the whole comportment of this holy bishop nothing was more admirable than his patience and meekness. All his actions breathed that spirit in such a way as often to infuse the same into others.

Among his miracles St. Bernard mentions that a passionate woman, who had been intolerable to all that approached her, was converted into the mildest of creatures by the Saint commanding her in the name of Christ never to be again angry, hearing her confession, and giving her a suitable penance. From that time no injuries or tribulations could disturb her.

After some years the city of Connor was taken and sacked by the king of Ulster; upon which St. Malachy retired with a hundred

and twenty disciples into Munster, and there with the assistance of Cormac built the monastery of Ibrae, which some suppose to have been near Cork; while others place it in the isle of Beg-Erin, where St. Imar formerly resided. During the time our Saint was governing this holy family in the strictest monastic discipline, the archbishop, Celsus, was taken with his last illness. On his death-bed he appointed St. Malachy to be his successor, conjuring all persons concerned, in the name of St. Patrick, the founder of that See, to concur in that promotion, and to oppose the intrusion of any other person. This he not only most earnestly declared by word of mouth, but also recommended by letters to persons of the greatest interest and power in the country, particularly to the two kings of upper and lower Munster. He did so out of a zealous desire to abolish a most scandalous abuse, which had been the source of all other disorders in the Churches of Ireland. For two hundred years the family, to which Celsus belonged and which was the most powerful in the country,

had usurped the archbishopric as an inheritance. When there was no clergyman of their kindred they intruded a layman and a married man of their family, who administered and enjoyed the revenues of that See, and even exercised a despotic tyranny over the other bishops of the island.

Notwithstanding the precautions taken by St. Celsus, and although St. Malachy was canonically elected after his death, still Maurice, one of the above-mentioned family, got possession.

CHAPTER V.

St. Malachy declined to accept the office of Archbishop of Armagh, alleging the dangers of a tumult and of bloodshed; but three years later Malchus, bishop of Limerick and Papal legate in Ireland, assembled the bishops and great men of that island, and threatened St. Malachy with excommunication if he continued his refusal. Hereupon he submitted, but said, "You drag me to death. I obey in hopes of

martyrdom ; but on this condition that if the business succeed according to your desires, you will permit me to return to my former spouse and to my beloved poverty, when all things are settled. " They promised that he should have the liberty of so doing, and he then took upon himself that charge, and exercised his functions with great zeal throughout the whole Province, except in the city of Armagh, which he did not enter for fear of bloodshed as long as Maurice lived, which was two ears more.

Five years after the death of St. Celsus Maurice died ; and to complete his iniquities, and increase his damnation, he named his kinsman Nigellus for his successor. King Cormac however and the bishops resolved to instal St. Malachy in that See ; and accordingly, in 1133, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, he was acknowledged as the only lawful Metropolitan.

Nigellus was obliged to leave Armagh, but he carried with him two relics held by the Irish in great veneration ; and the common

people were foolishly persuaded that he, who had those relics in his possession, was archbishop. These relics were a Book of the Gospel which had belonged to St. Patrick, and a crosier, called the Staff of Jesus, which was covered with gold and ornamented with rich jewels. By this fallacy some still adhered to him, and his kindred violently persecuted St. Malachy. One of the chief amongst them invited the Saint to a conference at his house, with a secret design to murder him; he however, against the advice of his friends, went thither, offering himself to martyrdom for the sake of peace, and was accompanied by three disciples who were ready to die with him. The courage and heavenly mildness of his countenance disarmed his enemies, as soon as he appeared in the midst of them; and he, who had designed to murder him, rose up to do him honour; and a peace was concluded on both sides. Niggellus soon after surrendered the sacred book and crosier into the hands of the archbishop.

Several of the Saint's enemies were cut off by visible judgments. A raging pestilence,

which broke out at Armagh, was suddenly averted by his prayers. He also wrought many other miracles

Having rescued that Church from oppression and restored discipline and peace, he insisted upon resigning the archiepiscopal dignity according to agreement, and he ordained Gelasius, a worthy ecclesiastic, in his stead. He then returned to his former See; but as the two Sees of Connor and Down had been long united, he again divided them, consecrated another bishop for Connor, and reserved to himself only that of Down, which was the smaller and poorer. Here he established a community, with whom he attended to prayer and meditation, as much as the other duties of his office would permit him. He regulated every thing, and formed great designs for the divine honour.

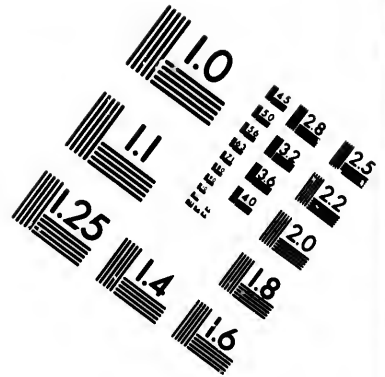
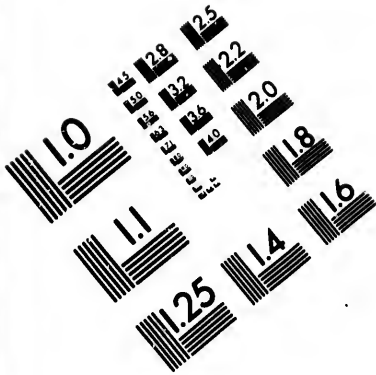
CHAPTER VI.

To obtain the confirmation of many things, which he had done, he undertook a journey to Rome. One of his motives for going thither

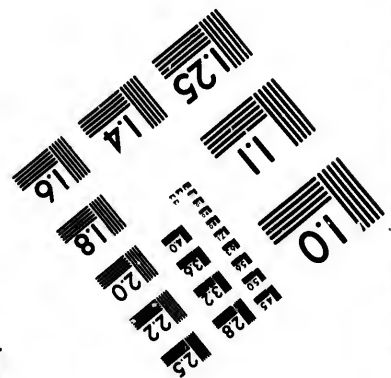
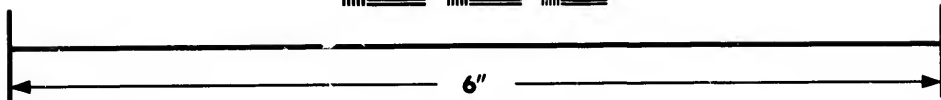
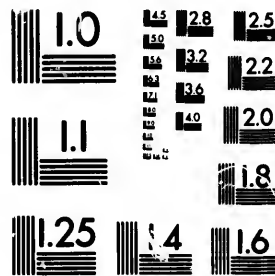
was to procure Palls for two archbishops : namely, for the See of Armagh, which had long been deprived of that honour on account of the neglect and abuses of the late usurpers ; and for another metropolitan See, which St. Celsus had contemplated, but which had not been confirmed by the Pope. The great metropolitan See of Armagh was erected by St. Patrick in the year 444. The great church was built in 1262 by the archbishop, Patrick O'Scanlain, a great benefactor to this See. The other metropolitan See, contemplated by St. Celsus, was perhaps that of Tuam, to which a Pall was first granted in 1152.

St. Malachy left Ireland in 1139 ; remained some time at York with a holy priest, named Sycar ; and on his way through France visited Clairvaux, where he first became acquainted with St. Bernard, who conceived the greatest affection for him on account of his sanctity. Our Saint was so edified by the wonderful spirit of piety manifested at Clairvaux, that he earnestly desired to join the monks of that place in their holy exercises, and to end his days in





**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

1.5
1.8
2.0
2.2
2.5
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0

1.0
0.7

their company. Proceeding on his journey, he restored to health the child of the host with whom he lodged at Yvrée in Piedmont, when the infant was in a dying state.

Pope Innocent II. received St. Malachy with great honour, but would not listen to his petition for leave to spend the remainder of his life at Clairvaux. His Holiness confirmed all our Saint had done in the Holy Isle, made him his Legate in that Island, and promised him the Pall.

On his return to Ireland St. Malachy called again at Clairvaux, where he gave the monks a second time his blessing. Not able to stay himself with those servants of God, he left his heart with them. Four of his companions remained there, and took the Benedictine habit in the Cistercian branch of that illustrious Order. These afterwards returned to Ireland, and founded the abbey of Mellifont, the parent-house of many others of that Order in those parts.

St. Malachy went home through Scotland, where king David earnestly entreated him to restore his son Henry to health, who was then

lying dangerously ill. Our Saint said to the sick prince, " Be of good courage ; thou wilt not die this time. " He then sprinkled him with holywater, and the next day the prince had perfectly recovered.

St. Malachy was received in Ireland with the greatest joy. He discharged his office of Papal legate with great zeal and benefit, preaching everywhere, holding synods, making wholesome regulations, abolishing abuses, and working many miracles. One of these St. Charles Borromeo used to repeat to his priests, when he exhorted them to be watchful and diligent in administering in due time the sacrament of Extreme Uction to the sick.

The lady of a knight, who dwelt near Benchor, being at the point of death, St. Malachy was sent for ; and after suitable exhortations, he was preparing to ancint her. It seemed however to her friends better to postpone that sacrament to the next morning, when she might be better disposed to receive it. St. Malachy yielded, though with great reluctance, to their earnest entreaties. Having made the sign of the

cross on the sick woman the holy bishop retired to his chamber. In the early part of the night he was disturbed by an uproar in the house, by lamentations and cries that their mistress was dead. The bishop hastened to her room and found that she was a corpse. Thereupon lifting up his hands to heaven, he said with bitter grief, "It is I who have sinned by this delay, and not this poor creature." Desiring earnestly to render to the departed what he had robbed her of, as he said, by his neglect, he continued by the side of the corpse, praying with bitter tears and sighs. From time to time he turned towards the bystanders and said to them, "Watch and pray." They passed the rest of the night in reciting psalms and other prayers. At break of day the deceased lady opened her eyes, sat up, and recognising the prelate saluted him with a devout bow. At this sight all present were exceedingly amazed, and their sadness was turned into joy. St. Malachy anointed her without delay, knowing well that by the sacrament of Extreme Unction sins are remitted, and the body receives

benefit according to what is most expedient. The lady recovered, and lived long enough to perform the penance imposed on her by the Saint; then she relapsed, received the usual succours of the Church, and happily departed.

CHAPTER VII.

At Benchor St. Malachy built a church of stone, on a plan such as he had seen in other countries, and at beholding which the natives of the place were struck with admiration. He also rebuilt or repaired the cathedral of Down, famous for the Tomb of St. Patrick, and to which the bodies of St. Bridgid and St. Columba had been removed. The ancient Irish Annals state that many stone churches had been erected in Ireland before the time of our Saint.

Moved by his zeal for the re-establishment of the church in the Holy Isle in all its former splendour, St. Malachy made a second journey to France in order to meet Pope Eugenius III., who had come into that kingdom. Pope Innocent II. had died before the two Falls, which

he had promised, could be prepared and sent. Celestine II. and Lucius II. died in less than a year and a half. This affair having been so long delayed, St. Malachy convened the bishops of Ireland, and was deputed by them to make fresh applications to the Apostolic See.

In his passage through England, whilst he was lodging with the canons at Gisburn, a woman was brought to him who had a loathsome cancer in her breast. He sprinkled her with water which he had blessed, and the next day her breast was perfectly healed.

Before he arrived in France, the Pope had gone back to Rome. He would not however cross the Alps until he had paid another visit to his beloved Clairvaux. He arrived there in October, 1148, and was received with great joy by St. Bernard and the rest of the monks.

Having celebrated Mass with his usual devotion on the feast of St. Luke, he was attacked with a fever which obliged him to take to his bed. The good monks were very active in attending him ; but he assured them that all

their pains were to no purpose, as he should not recover. However sick and weak he might be, he would needs rise and crawl down stairs to the church that he might therein receive Extreme Unction and the holy Viaticum, which he did lying on ashes that had been strewed on the floor.

After earnestly begging that all would continue to pray for him after his death, promising them in return to remember them before God; after also tenderly commending to their good prayers all the souls that had been committed to his charge, he sweetly rested from his labours on All Souls' Day in 1148, in the fifty-four year of his age.

He was buried in the chapel of our Lady at Clairvaux, and was borne to the grave on the shoulders of abbots. At his burial a youth was present, one of whose arms was struck with a dead palsy so that it hung useless by his side. St. Bernard calling this young man, and taking up the lifeless arm applied it to the hand of the deceased Saint, and it was restored as St. Bernard himself testifies. At his burial

also, after singing a Mass of Requiem for his soul, St. Bernard added a prayer to implore the divine assistance through the intercession of St. Malachy; having been assured of his glory by a revelation at the altar, as his disciple Geoffroy relates in the fourth book of his life.

St. Malachy was canonized by Pope Clement II. or III., in a Bull addressed to the General Chapter of the Cistercians, in the third year of his pontificate.

“Two things,” says St. Bernard, “made St. Malachy a Saint: perfect meekness, and a lively faith.” By the first he was dead to himself, by the second his soul was closely united to God. *He sanctified him in faith and mildness* (Eecl. XI. 5.). It is only by the same means that we can be sanctified. How perfectly St. Malachy was dead to himself appears from his holding the metropolitan dignity so long as it was attended with extraordinary dangers and tribulations, and from his quitting it so soon as he could enjoy it in peace. How entirely he was dead to the world, he showed by his love

of sufferings and of poverty, and by the state of voluntary privations and of self-denial in which he lived, even in the midst of prosperity, being always poor to himself and rich to the poor. In him St. Bernard also draws the true portrait of a good pastor when he tells us, that self-love and the world were crucified in his heart, and that he joined the closest interior solitude with the most diligent application to all the exterior functions of his ministry. He seemed to live wholly to himself; and yet so devoted was he to the service of others, that he seemed to live wholly for them; charity to others withdrew him not from the strictest watchfulness over himself, nor did the care of his own soul hinder him in any way from attending to the good of his neighbour.

THE LIFE
OF
ST. LAURENCE O'TOOL
ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

La
O'To
who
ers o
Mal
bapt
O'T
O'B
Leir
(th
tho

THE LIFE
OF
ST. LAURENCE O'TOOL

ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

CHAPTER I.

Laurence was the youngest son of Maurice O'Tool, a rich and powerful prince of Leinster, whose ancestors for many ages had been rulers of the territories of Hy-Murray and Hy-Mal near Dublin. The name given to him in baptism was Lorcan; his name in Irish was O'Tuathail. His mother was the daughter of O'Brian, a chieftain of an ancient family in Leinster, which continued in power till (through their inflexible adherence to the Catholic religion and opposition to the puritans,)

they were stript of property and power under Oliver Cromwell. St. Laurence, it appears, was born about the year 1125.

The monarchy of Ireland, which existed almost six hundred years under the Hy-Nial race, was dissolved in 1022, on the death of Malachy II. From that period until Henry II. of England invaded it in 1171, Ireland continued for the greater part of the time in a state of anarchy; some assuming the title of king of Ireland, but exercising the regal power in those parts only which acknowledged their authority. On the death of Malachy II., Donchad, the son of Brian Boruma, took the title of king of Ireland; and after him Dermot Mac Malnambo, king of Leinster, assumed the same title; their power however did not extend beyond a moiety of the island. Donchad died in Rome in 1064, and Dermot was killed in the battle of Odba in 1072. To them succeeded Tordelvach O'Brian, who was acknowledged in Leinster and the two Munsters. He was an excellent prince, and died a great penitent in 1086.

After an interregnum of eight years Murer-tach O'Brian, the son of Tordelvach, was declared king of Ireland in one part, and Donat Mac Loghlin in the northern moiety. It was just at this time that St. Malachy was born. For twenty-five years the nation was involved in a state of ruinous hostility between those chieftains; and then came another interregnum of fourteen years, in the middle of which St. Laurence O'Tool was born, soon after St. Malachy had been chosen bishop of Connor. At the end of this second interregnum Tordelvach O'Conor, king of Connaught, took the title of king of Ireland, and was supported by powerful factions. He reduced the southern provinces to his obedience by force of arms. He was reluctantly submitted to, especially as none of his ancestors for the previous 770 years had reigned over Ireland.

When St. Laurence was ten years old, his father delivered him up as a hostage to Dermot Mac Murchad, king of Leinster. This barbarous king kept the child in a desert place, where he treated him with great inhumanity

until his father, being informed that his son had by such usage fallen into a bad state of health, obliged the tyrant to put him in the hands of the bishop of Glendaloch, in the county of Wicklow. This pious prelate carefully instructed him in the service of God, and at twelve years of age sent him back to his father.

Maurice took Laurence with him when he went to thank the good bishop. At that visit he mentioned to the prelate his design of casting lots, in order to decide which of his four sons should be destined to the service of the Church. Our Saint was present at the moment, and was justly startled by such a mad and superstitious project; but, glad to find so favourable an overture to his desires, cried out with great earnestness: "There is no need of casting lots; it is my most heart-felt desire to have for my inheritance no other portion than God in the service of his Church." Hereupon his father, taking him by the hand, offered him to God by delivering him to the bishop, in whose hands he left him, having first recommended him to the patronage of St. Coemgen, founder of the great

monastery there, and patron of that diocese, which has since been united to the See of Dublin.

The bishop of Glendaloch performed excellently the part of an Ananias towards his pupil; and the holy youth, by his fidelity in corresponding with the divine grace, deserved to find the Holy Ghost an interior master of all virtues, especially humility and the spirit of prayer.

On the death of that prelate, who was also abbot of the monastery, St. Laurence was chosen abbot in 1150, though but twenty-five years old; and he shunned the episcopal dignity only by alleging that the Canons require in a bishop thirty years of age. The Saint governed his numerous community with wonderful virtue and prudence; and in a great famine, which raged during the four first months of his administration, he was, like another Joseph, the saviour of his country by his boundless charities.

Trials however were not wanting for the exercise of his virtue; for some false brethren, whose eyes could not bear the refulgence of

his virtue, the regularity of his conduct, and the zeal with which he condemned their disorders; attacked his reputation by slanders. To all their charges he opposed no other arms than silence and patience.

CHAPTER II.

Tordelvach O'Conor died in 1156, and was succeeded by Murertach Mac Loghlin, king of Tyrone. This latter was a very valiant prince; in the year 1161 his title, as king of Ireland, was acknowledged through all the provinces; and thenceforth he reigned with an authority as extensive as that of any former monarch of Ireland. Blinded however by his success, he made a very unjust invasion on the privileges of the people of Ulad, which cost him his life in the battle of Literluin in 1166.

The Normans took possession of Dublin in 838, in the fifth year of the reign of Nial Cailinne, three hundred and thirty-four years before it was given up to the *Norman* king of England, Henry II. No *English* monarch be-

tore him possessed a foot of land in Ireland.

As Dublin had been thus occupied by heathen barbarians in the ninth century and the Christians expelled, the succession of bishops in this city was interrupted till those pagans were converted to the Catholic faith. That succession therefore is not found in the Irish annals before Donat or Dunan, who was promoted to the See of Dublin in 1038, and died in 1074.

It is not probable that St. Patrick, who established a church in Dublin in the fifth century, would leave it without a bishop, and thus deviate from his universal practice in other places. Moreover, we find mention made of St. Livinus in 633, of St. Wiro in 650 or later, of St. Rumold in 775, and Sedulius, styled abbot of Dublin, who died in 785. That these and other prelates had a fixed See at Dublin before the invasion of the Normans in 838, there is no reason to doubt, nor is there any proof to the contrary.

Donat was followed by Gilla Patrick, who was drowned at sea in 1084. His successor

was Dongus O'Haignly, who died of a pestilence in 1095, the year after the birth of St. Malachy, the Archbishop of Armagh. Samuel O'Haignly came next, and died in 1121. At the death of this last, St. Celsus, archbishop of Armagh, was appointed guardian of the spiritualities of Dublin for some time, until the election of Gregory who died in 1161.

During the episcopacy of Gregory, in the year 1152, Cardinal John Paparo, legate of Pope Eugenius III., conferred on the See of Dublin the archiepiscopal dignity. This legate brought from Rome to Ireland four Palls for four Metropolitans, and assigned respective suffragan bishops to each. The four metropolitan Sees were, - Armagh in Ulster, Dublin in Leinster, Cashel in Munster, and Tuam in Connaught.

Between the two first a controversy had continued for a considerable time concerning precedence; but at length it was finally decided, both by Papal and by regal authority, that the archbishop of Armagh should be entitled *Primate of all Ireland*, and that the

archbishop of Dublin should be called *Primate of Ireland*; like Canterbury and York in England. It may here be noticed that from the time of the Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland, in 1171, Dublin has been the metropolis of the whole Island, the seat of the government and of the chief courts of justice, and the second capital of the British empire.

Shortly after the death of Gregory, St. Laurence O'Tool was unanimously chosen to fill the new metropolitan See of Dublin, in the thirty-sixth year of his age; and was consecrated in 1162 by Gelasius, the successor of St. Malachy.

In this exalted station our Saint watched over himself and his flock with fear, and with unwearied application to every part of his office, having always before his eyes the dreadful account, which he would have to give to the Pastor of souls.

CHAPTER III.

St. Laurence's first care was to reform the

manners of his clergy, and to provide for his Church worthy ministers. His exhortations to all were most powerful, because they were enforced with vigour and sweetness, animated by an apostolic spirit, and strongly impressed by the admirable example of his own life. Every one, who had a spark of piety in his breast, was ashamed to see himself fall so infinitely short of that bright pattern.

About the year 1163 he induced the secular canons of his cathedral of the Holy Trinity to become regular canons. This cathedral church was built for secular canons in the centre of the city by king Sitricus and bishop Donat in 1038. The change made by St. Laurence continued until the reign of Henry VIII. in 1541., when it took the name of Christ-church. The principal cathedral is dedicated to St. Patrick.

The Rule adopted by the canons of Holy Trinity was that of Arouasia, an abbey founded in the diocese of Arras about 1080. This abbey obtained such reputation for sanctity and discipline, that it became the parent-house of a

numerous congregation. St. Laurence himself took the religious habit, and always wore it under his episcopal attire. He usually eat with the religious in the refectory, observed their hours of silence, and always assisted with them at the midnight office. After that office he remained a long time in the church in private prayer before a crucifix, and towards break of day he went to the burial-place to pour forth certain prayers for the souls of the faithful departed.

He never eat flesh; and he fasted on all Fridays, oftentimes without taking any sustenance at all, at other times bread and water only. He wore a rough hair-shirt, and used the discipline frequently. Every day he entertained at table thirty poor persons, and often many more, in addition to the great number supported by him in private houses. All found in him a father both under temporal and spiritual necessities. He was most indefatigable in the sacred duties of his charge, especially in assiduously announcing the word of life to his flock.

To watch over and examine more narrowly into his own heart and conduct, and to renovate his interior spirit, he used often to retire for some days into close solitude.

When he became bishop he was succeeded, as abbot of Glendaloch, by one so notoriously unworthy of that position as to be in a short time expelled. On his expulsion another was canonically elected — young, pious and learned, — under whose care piety and discipline flourished in that house. From that date St. Laurence frequently made choice of Glendaloch for his retreats; but he usually hid himself in a solitary cave at some distance from the monastery, between a rock and a lake, in which St. Coemgen had dwelt. When our Saint came out of these retreats, he seemed like another Moses coming from conversing with God, full of heavenly fire and divine light.

St. Laurence found the greatest part of his flock so blind with the love of the world, and so enslaved to their passions, that the zealous pains he took seemed lost upon them. He threatened them with the divine judgments, in

case they did not speedily and effectually reform their lives by sincere repentance; but like Noe, when he preached to a world about to be destroyed by the deluge, he appeared to them to speak in jest, until on a sudden they were overtaken by those calamities which he had foretold — calamities, which served to purify the elect, and to bring many, who had before been deaf to the Saint's remonstrances, to a sense of their spiritual miseries.

CHAPTER IV.

On the death of Murertach Mac Loghlin in 1166, a majority of the states assembled in Dublin to provide a successor. In that convention Roderic, king of Connaught, was elected monarch of Ireland, and no former king was inaugurated with greater solemnity. The reluctant chiefs were soon brought to recognise his title. It was however a temporary submission to an authority, which was obtained from the influence of factious men rather than from definite laws, and which therefore could

not be durable. During the three first years of his power Roderic reigned with splendour; until his country was invaded by the Norman king of England, Henry II., in October 1171.

This invasion was caused by Dermot Mac Murchad, king of Leinster. He had laid violent hands on the wife of Tigernan O'Ruarc, prince of Breffny and administrator of Meath. Tordelvach, who was at that time monarch of Ireland, took cognizance of the injury, and obliged the violators to restore that princess to her family together with her effects. So slight a reparation, for a public as well as a domestic crime, involved bad consequences.

Dermot, growing daring from impunity, became intolerable to his vassals. He despoiled them by various acts of tyranny; and Roderic, the son of Tordelvach and now monarch of Ireland, was under the necessity of expelling him from the government of Leinster. To gratify his revenge and to recover his former power, Dermot solicited the aid of Henry II.

England was in the utmost consternation and dread on the accession of Henry II. to the

thron
the S
tion o
in th
and h
mit s
those

Th
and t
tance
and f
nal f
ceedi
of P
The
men,
amor
Wat
Lein
D
brok
Der
bow
Dul
nu

throne, lest he should set aside all the rights of the Saxon people and of individuals, in imitation of the founder of the Norman line of kings in that country. He was a powerful monarch, and he scrupled not, when now solicited, to permit some of his subjects to join their arms to those of the Irish tyrant.

The times were favourable to that attempt; and the adventurers found but a weak resistance from a monarch who was badly obeyed, and from a people who were divided by internal factions. Dermot's success in this proceeding was principally due to Richard, earl of Pembroke, commonly called Strongbow. The earl was accompanied by several noblemen, who brought with them the best soldiers among their vassals; and having landed at Waterford, he overran the greatest part of Leinster and Ossory.

Dermot died in 1171, and the earl of Pembroke was left his heir, as his wife, Eva, was Dermot's daughter. In right of his wife Strongbow claimed the principality of Leinster, took Dublin sword in hand, and massacred a great number of the inhabitants.

In this dreadful disaster the good pastor was employed in relieving the distressed, in imploring for them the compassion of the conquerors, and in inducing the sufferers to make a good use of their afflictions at least.

This invasion of Ireland was begun by private noblemen, and their success gave umbrage to the court. Henry II. therefore commanded the earl of Pembroke and his associates to return to England; but they declared that they only conquered Ireland in his name. Thereupon Henry went himself to Dublin in 1171, and received in that city the homage of some of the princes and petty kings, and was acknowledged by them as Lord and Sovereign of Ireland.

CHAPTER V.

Some time after this event St. Laurence was obliged, for the affairs of his diocese, to go over to England to see the king. Henry II. happened to be then at Canterbury, and the archbishop accordingly proceeded thither. The re-

noun of his sanctity had gone thither before him, and he was in consequence received by the Benedictine monks of Christ Church with the greatest honour and respect, and was requested by them to sing the conventual Mass on the next day. That whole night he spent in prayer before the shrine of St. Thomas, who for his firm resistance to the tyranny of Henry II, had been martyred on the 29th of December in 1170, and to his intercession St. Laurence recommended himself and the business which took him to England.

On the following day, as the holy archbishop was advancing to the altar to officiate, a maniac, who had heard much of his sanctity and who was led on by the idea of making so holy a man another St. Thomas, gave him so violent a blow on the head as to knock him down. All present concluded that he was mortally wounded, and showed their grief by their lamentations. The Saint coming to himself however, asked for some water and blessed it, and then had his wound washed with it. This was no sooner done than the blood was imme-

diately stanced, and the archbishop celebrated Mass.

To this miracle the writer of his life was an eye-witness; and he assures us that the fracture in the Saint's skull was to be seen after his death. The king ordered the frantic assassin to be hanged, but the prelate interceded in his favour and obtained his pardon.

The third General Council of Lateran was held at Rome in 1179 by Pope Alexander III., for the extirpation of heretical errors and the reformation of manners. There were present in it about 300 bishops. St Laurence proceeded from England to Rome, in company with four English bishops, the archbishop of Tuam and five other Irish prelates. Our Saint laid before his Holiness the state of the Church in Ireland, and begged that effectual remedies might be applied to the many disorders prevailing in that country, and that care might be taken for guarding the liberties of the Church in that island. The Pope was wonderfully pleased with the wise and zealous proposals of the archbishop, and so convinced of his prudence and piety that he

readily made the regulations suggested to him. He also made St. Laurence O'Tool Legate of the Holy See in the Kingdom of Ireland.

As soon as the Saint had returned home, he began vigorously to exercise his legatine powers, by making salutary regulations and reforming the manners of the clergy. He found the whole island afflicted with a terrible famine, which lasted for three years. He laid on himself an obligation of feeding every day fifty strangers and three hundred poor persons of his own diocese, in addition to the many others whom he furnished with food and the other necessaries of life. Several mothers, who were reduced so low as not to be able to support their own children, placed them at the archbishop's door or where he could see them; and our Saint took charge of them all, sometimes providing for three hundred of them at a time.

Henry II. of England became offended with Roderic, the monarch of Ireland, and St. Laurence undertook another journey to England in order to negotiate a reconciliation between

them. The Norman tyrant would not hear of a peace; and he set out for Normandy, as soon as he heard of the archbishop's arrival. The latter awaited at Abingdon for three weeks the return of the king, and then went to meet him in France. Henry, who had always hitherto repulsed him, was now at last so moved by his piety, charity and prudence that he granted him every thing he asked, and left the whole negotiation to his discretion.

Through this negotiation Roderic O'Conor, the last Irish monarch of Ireland, entered into a treaty with the Norman king of England — the best that could be obtained under the circumstances, though far from being honourable to himself or profitable to his nation. The fallacious allegiance of most of his subjects had been dissolved, when he attempted to make terms with the invader. This treaty was made in 1175.

This Roderic O'Conor was not of the O'Brien family, but was chief of the Connaught Hy-Brune race.

CHAPTER VI.

Having negotiated this treaty of peace, our holy archbishop was obliged by a fever, which seized him upon the road, to stop his journey. He took up his quarters in a monastery at Eu, on the confines of Normandy. On entering this house he uttered these words of the psalmist, *This is my resting place for ever : in this place will I dwell, because I have chosen it.*

He made his Confession to the abbot, and received the Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction from his hands. To one, who put him in mind to make a Will, he answered with a smile: "Of what do you speak? Thank God, I have not a penny in the world to dispose of." In fact, whatever he possessed always became immediately the treasure of the poor.

Our Saint ended his journey here below on the 14th of November, 1180, and was buried in the church of the abbey at Eu.

Theobald, archbishop of Rouen, and three

other commissioners, by order of Pope Honorius III. took official information of several miracles wrought at the tomb through the intercession of this servant of God, and sent an authentic relation thereof to Rome; and Honorius published the Bull of the Canonization of St. Laurence O'Tool in 1226, in which he mentions that seven dead persons had been raised to life by our Saint

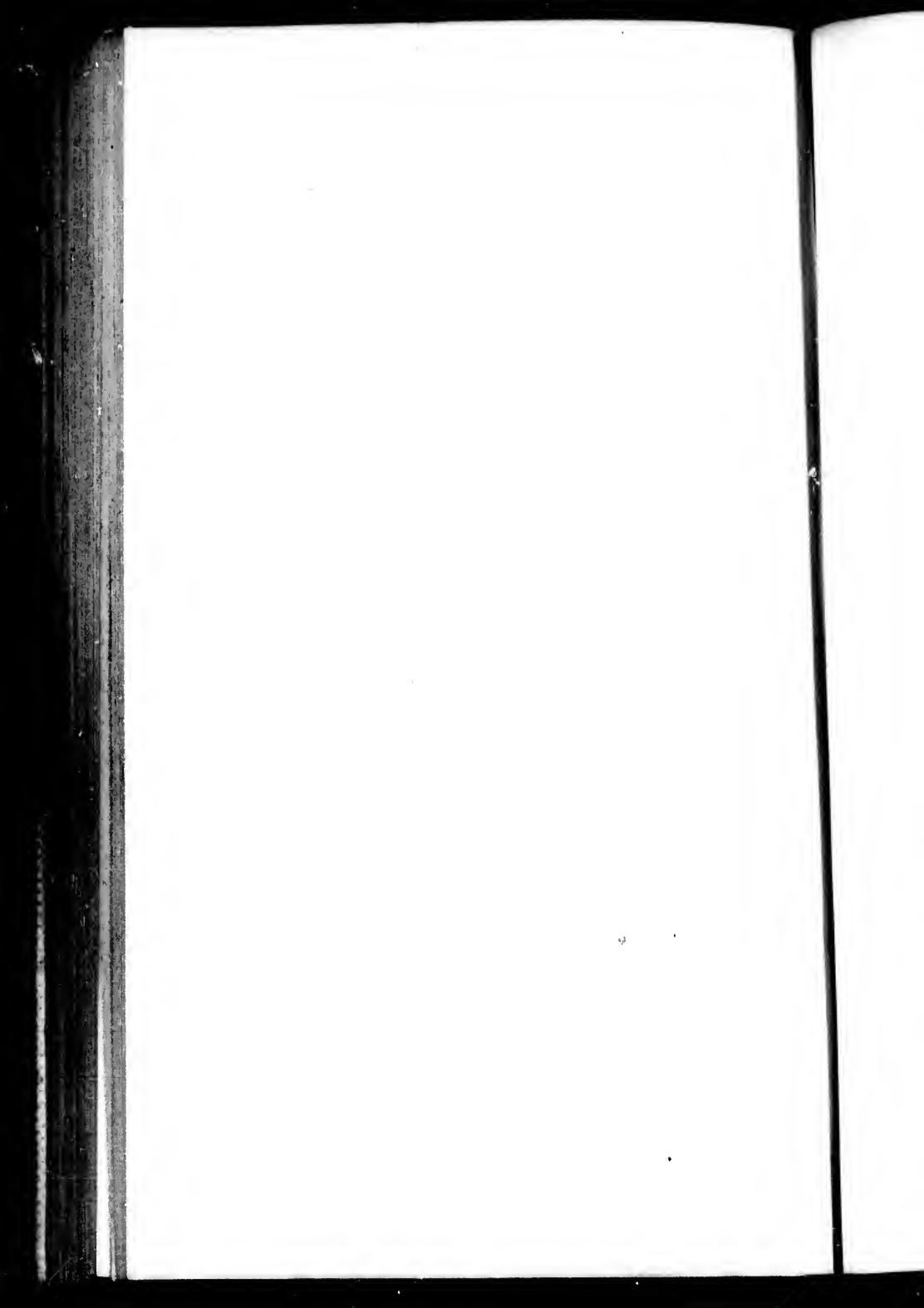
In 1227 Theobald caused his body to be taken up and enshrined. The abbey of our Lady at Eu still possesses the greater part of his holy relics, though some churches in Paris and elsewhere have been enriched with certain portions.

The holy life, the zeal, the prayers and miracles of St. Laurence were not able to awaken many of those hardened sinners, whom he laboured to convert. How few among the Jews, especially among the Pharisees, obeyed the voice of our Redeemer himself! If a pastor's labours were constantly attended with easy success, he would not meet with any thing to exercise his patience, by which he is to pur-

chase his own crown and perfect the sanctification of his soul.

No amount of obstinacy, of malice or perverseness must either disturb or discourage him. The greater the blindness, and the more desperate the spiritual wounds of others are, the more tender ought his compassion to be, the greater his earnestness in praying and labouring for their recovery and salvation.

He is never to despair of any one of his flock, so long as the divine mercy waits for his return. If opportunities of exhorting fail, or if charitable remonstrances only exasperate so that prudence makes them unseasonable for a time, he ought never to cease importuning the Father of mercies in their behalf.



THE LIFE
OF
SAINT PALLADIUS

PROTOAPOSTLE OF IRELAND.

ha
th
S
A
th
t
i
i
c

THE LIFE
OF
SAINT PALLADIUS

PROTOAPOSTLE OF IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE name of Palladius shows this Saint to have been a Roman, and most authors agree that he was deacon of the diocese of Rome. St. Prosper in his chronicle states that, when Agricola, a notorious Pelagian, had corrupted the Churches in Britain with the insinuation of that pestilential heresy, Pope Celestine at the instance of Palladius, the deacon, sent thither in 429 St. Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, in quality of his Legate, who, having ejected the heretics, brought the Britons back to the Ca-

tholic faith. The interest felt by St. Palladius for the British islands stopped not here; for it seems not to be doubted that he was the same person of whom St. Prosper again speaks when he says, that Pope Celestine sent Palladius in 431, as the first Bishop to the Scots then believing in Christ.

From the lives of the Saints, Albeus and Declan, of Ibar and Kairan Saigir, Usher proves that these four Saints preached separately in different parts of Ireland (which was their native country) before the mission of St. Patrick. St Ibar had been converted to the Faith in Britain; the other three had been instructed at Rome, and were sent back from that city to their own country, and (according to the histories of their lives) were all honoured with the episcopal dignity. St Kairan Saigir preceded St. Patrick in preaching the Gospel to the Ossorians, and was seventy-five years of age on St. Patrick's arrival in the Holy Isle.

Hence it is easy to understand what is said of St. Palladius, that he was sent to the Scots who already believed in Christ; because,

though their number may have been small, still there were at that time some Christians in the island. St Prosper in another book, after praising Pope Celestine for his care in delivering Britain from the Pelagian heresy, adds : "that he also ordained a bishop for the Scots; and that thus, whilst he laboured to preserve the *Roman* island Catholic, he likewise made the *barbarous* island Christian." Usher observes that this can be understood of Ireland only; for although a part of the North of Britain (that is, Caledonia or Pictland) was never subject to the Romans, yet it could not be considered as a distinct island.

It is clear from Tertullian, Eusebius and others that the light of the Gospel had penetrated beyond the Roman territories in Britain, namely into Caledonia, near the times of the Apostles. The people therefore, who had lately begun to receive some knowledge of the Faith when St. Palladius undertook his mission, and are called Scots, were doubtless the inhabitants of Ireland. The Irish writers of the lives of St. Patrick say that St. Palladius had preach-

ed in Ireland a little before St. Patrick, but that he was banished by the king of Leinster, and went to the northern parts of Britain, where (according to them) he had at first commenced his mission. It is therefore not to be doubted that he was sent to the whole nation here called Scots, several colonies of whom had passed from Ireland into Britain, and had gained settlements in a part of it, afterwards named from them Scotland.

CHAPTER II.

The Christian faith had penetrated into England in the times of the Apostles, and had received an increase by the conversion of king Lucius in the year 180. In this remote province the Church seems to have escaped the cruel persecutions to which it was doomed elsewhere until the end of the third century, and this state of peace would have been favourable to its extension. It is clear that the number of Catholics in England was immense, when St.

Germanus of Auxerre went thither along with St. Lupus.

“ Being arrived in Britain they were met by a *great multitude* of people, and the fame of their sanctity and learning soon filled *the whole country*. They confirmed the Catholics in all parts and converted the heretics, preaching often in the highways and fields where the churches were not large enough to contain the crowd. ”

Such being the vast extent of the Church in England previously to the arrival of St. Palladius in Ireland, the Faith would doubtless have passed over to this latter island long before his preaching therein, especially as the language spoken in the two islands was similar.

At a later period, when the Germanic invaders (whom the Celts of Britain and Ireland called *Saxons* and the people of the rest of western Europe *Angles*) had driven the original inhabitants of England to the western parts of their island, we find that the intercourse between the Celts of Ireland and those in Cornwall and Wales was frequent and intimate ;

hence we may justly infer that it existed to some extent at an earlier date.

As the Germanic invaders of Britain were known on the Continent as Angles, although a portion only of them belonged to that tribe; so in a similar manner the people of Ireland at this epoch were all styled *Scots* by foreign nations, although one tribe only of the Irish bore that name in their own island. The Scots or Scuits, that is, the Irish, are represented by some eminent writers as a rude and barbarous race in the fourth and fifth centuries. Even in our days, when the intercourse of nations is so great and universal, the statements of writers is but too often very false or very exaggerated as to the condition of all countries but their own; how much more would the same be the case, when that intercourse was extremely limited, it is easy to imagine.

That some barbarous customs prevailed in Ireland during those ages cannot be denied; and that some prevail in this nineteenth century, in some of the States of modern Europe, is a matter of fatal experience. In the docu-

ment
of the
ter the
of o
were
were
in t
They
men
know
youth
cour
expo
and
the
prio
of t
sup
tent
and
and
of t
vin
am

ments still preserved in the native language of the ancient Irish, we find it stated that, after the reform of the Fileas in the first century of our era, houses and landed endowments were set apart for those philosophers, who were by common consent left undisturbed in the midst of the most furious civil wars. They were to be exempt from every employment except that of improving themselves in knowledge, and of instructing the principal youths of the nation in their colleges. In the course of their researches they discovered and exposed the corrupt doctrines of the druids; and king Cormac O'Quin took the lead among the Fileas in their attack upon those pagan priests, and declared publicly for the Unity of the Godhead, and for the adoration of one supreme Creator of heaven and earth, omnipotent and merciful. The example of that monarch, and the disquisitions of the Fileas on religion and morality, paved the way for the reception of the Gospel : and as the doctrines of our divine Saviour made the quickest progress among the nations which were most removed

from barbarism, the conversion of Ireland within so short a time after it was actively attempted by St. Palladius and St. Patrick is a striking proof that the natives of that island were not the rude barbarians they have been represented to be.

CHAPTER III.

The length of time, during which St. Palladius preached the Gospel in Ireland, is not known. According to what is stated it must have been less than a year, but that statement is very questionable. After leaving that island, he directed his course to the northern parts of Britain, to impart the blessings of heavenly truth to the Scots who had emigrated thither.

There he laboured with great zeal and with great success, and converted many.

Scottish historians tell us that the Faith was first planted in the northern parts of Britain about the year 200, in the reign of king Donald and when Victor was Pope at Rome (193 to 202). This is likely to have been the case, and to have resulted from the recent great ex-

tension of the Church in the southern half of that island, in consequence of the embassy sent to Rome by king Lucius in 180 during the Pontificate of St. Eleutherius.

However, they all acknowledge that St. Palladius was the first bishop in those regions, and all style him their first Apostle.

St. Palladius died at Fordun, the principal town of the small courtly of Mernis, situated on the southern side of Aberdeen and distant from it fifteen miles, about the year of our Lord 450. His sacred relics were preserved with all religious respect in the monastery at Fordun, as Hector Boetius and Camden testify.

In the year 1409 William Scenes, archbishop of St. Andrew's and primate of Scotland, had them enclosed in a new shrine enriched with gold and precious stones.

In the breviary of Aberdeen the feast of St. Palladius is put on the sixth of July, as it is in other Scottish calendars; but in some British calendars the fifteenth of December is assigned to this Saint.

God's ways are not our ways. Men had se-

lected St. Palladius to be the Apostle of Ireland, but God doubtless had chosen another for that great office. To our eyes he appears to have failed in the work that was set him; but who knows the share he may have had in the rich harvest, through his prayers and holy life?

It is not difficult to conceive how painful and laborious was the mission of St. Palladius. He fled not from labour nor from hardships; for, where there is sincere love, labour is a pleasure, or else is not felt.

It is a proof of sloth and impatience for a man to look back on the past and to count his labours, or even to think too much of his trials and sufferings, in so glorious an undertaking as that of working in the Lord's vineyard.

St. Palladius pressed forward, surmounting every obstacle, even all those which a fierce nation must have opposed to the establishment of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

In reading the lives of the great heroes of Christianity, of the great apostles whom our good

God
coun
with
grati
ding
who
been
exar
lead

God raised up for the spiritual benefit of our country, ought not our hearts to be impressed with the most lively sentiments of love and gratitude for his merciful providence in providing us with such holy and zealous men, by whose ministry the light of the true Faith has been conveyed to us, and by whose bright example the path is clearly pointed out that leads to heaven.

THE LIFE
OF
SAINT COMGALL
ABBOT.

Saint Comgall was one of the most illustrious founders of monasticism in the Holy Isle. It is certain that St. Patrick himself established monasteries in Ireland, having without doubt learnt the benefits of the monastic state whilst he was with St. Martin in France. It is also certain that to that state the Holy Isle owes most especially, under God, all its greatness and renown for religion and learning. Hence St. Comgall must be venerated as one of the greatest benefactors of that Isle.

He was born of noble parents, in the North of Ulster, in the year 516; and was brought up by St. Fintan in his monastery of Cluain-Aidnech, in Queen's county. The rule of this Saint was very austere. His monks lived on the fruits of the earth only, which they tilled with their own hands. Trained in that school of Christian perfection, of piety and of monastic discipline, St. Comgall came forth an accomplished master, and in the year 550 founded the most celebrated of Irish monasteries the great abbey of Benchor or Bangor, in the county of Down, which was the most numerous and the most important among the Celts of Ireland, as was that of Bangor in Wales among the Celts of Britain. This latter was in its most flourishing condition at the time of the death of St. Dubritius, about the date of the commencement of the Irish Bangor.

By means of this establishment St. Comgall propagated the monastic rule far and wide. At Benchor and in other houses he had under him three thousand disciples.

It was at this epoch that the monastic insti-

illus-
Holy
esta-
thout
state
It is
y Isle
reat-
ing.
ne of

tute attained its greatest lustre in Ireland, on account of the eminent sanctity and vast learning of its members, who made it truly a holy Isle and a mart of literature. Ireland then abounded in monasteries which were so many schools of sacred science, and in which countless persons led a retired life, devoted to prayer and penance and to sacred studies. Sequestered from the distractions of secular business, and even from ordinary intercourse with the world; conversing freely by contemplation with God and his Saints purified in heart and mind by their mortified life; spreading sanctity and science around them by their example and instructions -- these monks were the giants of old.

Among these monasteries Benchor took the lead, and among the masters of piety and learning St. Comgall became one of the most distinguished. All the holy men of that period sought his friendship or acquaintance, and ancient writers extol his prudence and holiness, and are even profuse in their commendations of him.

As a tree is known by its fruits, so may St. Comgall be estimated by two of his most eminent children, St. Columban and St. Gall, who went to spread in foreign lands the teaching of their holy father and master.

To disengage themselves more perfectly from the world and all earthly ties, St. Columban and St. Gall with eleven other brethren desired, like Abraham, *to go out of their country and from their kindred and out of their father's house*. Having obtained from St. Comgall with difficulty his leave and blessing, they passed through Britain into Gaul about the year 585. Columban preached in all places through which he journeyed, and the sanctity of his life added great weight to his discourses. He was so humble, that he always contended with his twelve companions for the lowest place. They were all of one mind; their modesty, patience and charity made them the admiration of all; if any one of them was guilty of the least fault, they all joined in reforming his error; every thing was in common among them, nor was there heard among them any contradiction or

harsh word; and in fact, wherever they took up their abode their example inspired universal piety. St. Columban appointed that his monks should not eat until towards evening, and then only the simplest food—herbs, pulse, or meal moistened in water, and a little bread; and the food to be proportioned to their labour. He prescribed that every day should be spent in fasting, prayer, reading, and (apt on Sundays and Festivals) in manual labour. In his rule he inculcates obedience, poverty, disinterestedness, humility, chastity, mortification of the senses and of the will, the never doing any thing according to self-will, silence, and prudence in discerning between good and evil; and he adds that he received these rules from his fathers, that is from St. Comgall and others at Benchor.

Many other abbots, bishops, and Saints came out of St. Comgall's nursery.

The fervour with which the Irish embraced the Faith at the preaching of St. Patrick, and the intensity that was imparted to that first fervour by the monastic system, abated not for

several ages. In 674 Marianus Scotus enters this remark in his chronicle, "Ireland is filled with holy men." Nor did the reputation of its schools decline. Two Irismen, going to France in 794 were there admired for their incomparable learning, and gave birth to the renowned Universities of Paris and Pavia. King Alfred consulted in 891 three learned Irishmen in his projects for the advancement of literature in England. The English in those days flocked to Ireland, as is frequently mentioned in the histories of eminent men among them; thus in the life of Sulgenus, in the 8th century, we read,—

“ With love of learning and examples fired
To Ireland, famed, for wisdom, he retired.”

Long did St. Comgall live to perform his part, under the blessings of Providence, in sowing the seed that produced so rich and plentiful a harvest. He died in the year 601, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, having governed the abbey of Benchor fifty years, three months and ten days.

He, who desires to preach to others with

success, must first preach to himself by treasuring up in his own mind lessons of true piety, by imprinting deeply on his heart the sentiments of all virtues, and by practising first what he would afterwards teach others. Empty science fills the soul with pride and vain glory, and teaches not the language which infuses virtue into others.

INDEX.

The life of St. Bridgid.	5
The life of St. Columba.	21
Translation of the relics of St. Patrick, St. Bridgid and St. Columba	64
The life of St. Malachy.	67
The life of St Laurence O'Tool	99
The life of St. Palladius	125
The life of St. Comgall.	158

END.

ur-
ty,
nti-
rst
pty
ry,
ses

5
21
64
67
99
125
158

