

The life of St. Columba. [with an appendix] The apostle and patron saint of the ancient Scots and Picts and joint patron of the Irish, commonly called Colum-Kille, the Apostle of the Highlands / by John Smith.

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THE
L I F E
OF
S^T. C O L U M B A,
THE APOSTLE AND PATRON SAINT OF THE
ANCIENT SCOTS AND PICTS,
AND
JOINT PATRON OF THE IRISH;
Commonly called
COLUM-KILLE, the APOSTLE of the HIGHLANDS.

BY JOHN SMITH, D. D.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF CAMPBELTON;
HONORARY MEMBER OF THE ANTIQUARIAN AND HIGHLAND SOCIETIES
OF SCOTLAND

S. COLUMBA, cognomento *Kille*, Abbas Hienfis, Scotorum et Pictorum
Apostolus, et utriusque Scotiæ Patronus; *Appen. Vit. St. Pat.*—
Hiberniæ Albanæ, et Insularum Hebridum Patronus; *Colgan.*—
Seminator religionis in universa fere Hibernia et Albania; *Quat.*
Magistri.—Nulli post Apostolos—secundus; *Notker.*

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TO
HIS GRACE
THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, PRESIDENT,
AND
TO THE OTHER MEMBERS
OF THE
HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND,
THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE OF ST. COLUMBA,
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

THERE is implanted in the mind of man a principle of curiosity, which makes him desirous of knowing the manners and customs of others in distant places and in former times. This desire is particularly strong in regard to what relates to one's own country. We then feel a more than ordinary interest in viewing those customs, manners, and modes of thinking and acting, which prevailed in the days of our forefathers.

To satisfy this curiosity, no mean is so likely as the particular history, anecdotes, and memoirs of the men who, in their time, made the greatest figure in their country. In this view, the following account of St. COLUMBA may not, perhaps, be unworthy of the perusal of such as wish to know something of the state of religion and society in the Highlands about twelve hundred years ago.

No man ever lived to whom the Highlands and Isles of Scotland were more indebted than to St. Columba; and, perhaps, few lived to whom the British isles in general were under stronger obligations. It was Columba who kindled that torch which, in the darkest ages, shed its kindly rays far beyond the limits of the Highlands, and which contributed much to enlighten even the south of Britain: for, according to the testimony of the venerable Bede, England was indebted, for many of its most learned and pious divines, to the seminary of learning established by Columba, in a remote and obscure corner of the Highlands. Such are the revolutions effected by Time in this world of strange vicissitudes!

In a period in which biography is so much in vogue, an account of the life of so extraordinary a man, and of such a benefactor to his country and to mankind, may claim some little attention from those who may perhaps at this day be, in part, indebted for their comforts to the fruits of his labour and instructions. The conqueror of kingdoms may claim our admiration; but the enlightener and civilizer of nations deserves our love, esteem and respect. The memory of the one, without any imputation of ingratitude, may be suffered to perish; but the memory of the other deserves to be honoured.

The general taste at present is for books of a light, gay, and amusing cast. But why may not even the readers of such books diversify their amusement, and bestow an hour or two on the perusal of the history of a man, who may now be considered as so singular and extraordinary a character, that his life may well pass for novel? If, in the midst of gaiety, this should for a moment dispose them to be serious, where would be the great harm? Or, should it lead them to reflect for a little on the power of religion, with its pleasures and prospects, as exhibited in the life of Columba, what reason can they have to think that they should afterwards repent it, or that the time was not well bestowed? Among the many expedients which they use for passing the time, might they not try, for once, how the reading an account of the life of a saint would pass a little of it?

To the man who is truly pious and religious, the life of Columba cannot fail to be entertaining and useful. It will show him the power of Divine grace upon the soul, and the progress that may be made in holiness by a man entirely devoted to God, and aspiring to as high a degree as possible of glory, honour, and immortality. The contemplation of such a life will attract his regard, and powerfully

engage him, in part at least, to follow the example.

But the life of St. Columba is calculated to be still more useful to those in holy orders; as it furnishes them with a lively example of fidelity and zeal in the discharge of their important office, and with a fair copy of every grace and virtue that should adorn the sacred character. To examine how other men in the same profession have discharged the duty to which we are called, what manner of men they have been, and what manner of works they have done, may lead us to consider what we ourselves are, and how we ought to act, so as to obtain the WELL-DONE of our LORD, when we shall be called to give an account of our stewardship*.

A laudable spirit for propagating the gospel in foreign parts is at present gone abroad. To

* The following pages were chiefly drawn up at first with this view, and intended to accompany some discourses or *Lectures on the Nature and End of the Sacred Office*, but which the Bookseller chose to separate; that such as wished only for the one might have it without the other. Most of the Notes, and the Appendix, were, in consequence of this, drawn up partly for the sake of other readers, and may be passed over by such as do not choose to be interrupted by such matters as they contain.

the missionaries employed in this important work, it may be useful to have the example of a man who devoted his life to the same business; to know the means which he used, and the manner in which he acted, so as to have attained such wonderful success. For few, if any, since the days of the Apostles had more success in preaching the gospel to the heathens, than the venerable St. Columba.—May God, for Christ's sake, endow all who are engaged in the same office with a portion of the same spirit !

the two former countries, and the latter
might it may be said to have the character
of a man who devoted his life to the study of
the subject, and who, in the end, had
the reputation of being a man who had
attained to a high degree of skill in his
work, and the day of the American
physician, according to the Journal of the
American Medical Association, is a day
of the future, and who are expected
to be the same, with a portion of the
Journal of the American Medical Association.

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THE
L I F E

OF

ST. COLUMBA.

THE life of St. Columba^a, the Apostle of the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland, and the founder and first abbot of the famous monastery of Iona^a, was written by two of his

^a The venerable Bede, Cambden, and some others, call him *Columbanus*. In the language of the country, he is called *Colum-cille* (or Colum of the Cells), from his having founded so many churches and monasteries. The addition of *cille*, seems to have been early made to his original name Colum. "Sanctus COLUMBA abbas, quem Angli vocant Colum-killum, doctrina et virtutibus mirabilis, in illo glorioso coenobio quod in insula Yi construxerat degens," &c. *Vita Kentigern*. Another eminent Irish saint, of the name of Columbanus, who flourished about the same period, is often confounded with St. Columba.

^a Its ancient name was *I*, *Hu*, or *Aoi* (as written in the

successors, Cummin and Adomnan³. The former of these wrote about sixty, and the latter about eighty-three years after the death of the saint; so that they had very good opportunities of coming at the knowledge of every part of his life and character.

But, unhappily, it seems not to have been the

Annals of Ulster), which were Latinized into Hyona, or Iona. The common name of it now is I-colum-kill (the Isle of Colum of the Cells), included in one of the parishes of the Island of Mull. Its venerable ruins still command respect; and the popular belief, founded upon a prophetic distich ascribed to St. Columba, is, that they may yet recover their ancient splendour.

An I mo chridhe, I mo ghraidh
 An aite guth manaich bidh geum bà;
 Ach mun tig an saoghal gu crìch
 Bithidh I mar a bha.

O sacred dome, and my belov'd abode!
 Whose walls now echo to the praise of God;
 The time shall come when lauding monks shall cease,
 And lowing herds here occupy their place:
 But better ages shall thereafter come,
 And praise re-echo in this sacred dome.

The first part of the prophecy was literally fulfilled for ages, till the present noble proprietor (the Duke of Argyll) caused the sacred ground to be enclosed with a sufficient wall. Before then, the cathedral was used sometimes as a pen for cattle. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

³ Both wrote in excellent Latin, such as perhaps no other composition of those times can rival.

object of those good men to delineate the real life and character of the saint, but to give a marvellous detail of visions, prophecies, and miracles, which they boldly ascribe to him. It is but candid to suppose that they themselves believed what they wrote, and that their writings may have been of use in those ages of credulity and fable; although, in our more enlightened times, they rather disgust than edify in that antiquated form. It is therefore necessary, if we would peruse the life of this great and holy man with patience and with profit, to strip it of that marvellous garb with which it has been so long invested, to separate the fact from the fable, and to show the saint in his real character.

In attempting this, I shall make no further use of that mass of wonders which I mentioned, than as it serves to illustrate the character of Columba, or the spirit of the times in which he lived. Of those marvellous relations I do not profess to believe any; nor would I be so bold as to deny them all. In circumstances such as those in which Columba stood, called forth to extirpate an old and inveterate superstition, and to establish the true religion upon its ruins, to surmount the prejudices of a barbarous people, and to contend with powerful and artful priests, we cannot, without presumption, say

how far it might be fit that God should countenance the labours of his faithful servant, and vouchsafe him even by signs and wonders, as he often did to his ministers in such cases, a clear and decided victory. A reflection somewhat similar to this is made by one of his biographers, after mentioning the issue of a contest to which the saint was challenged by the Pictish priests or druids³, before an immense crowd of spectators near the royal palace at Lochness⁴.

But of these matters, as we must allow ourselves to be very incompetent judges, it is our wisdom to be silent. The life of Columba is abundantly uncommon and interesting without them; and his example, as it will in that case be the more imitable, will be also the more useful: and with a view to imitation in usefulness only do I attempt to unfold this holy man's life and character⁵.

³ The druids are said to have had a college in I, before the time of St. Columba; and tradition still points out their burying ground, by the name of *Cloadh nan Druìdnach*.

⁴ Adomn. l. ii. c. 25. "Deus omnipotens—talibus miraculorum virtutibus, coram plebe gentilica, illustre suum manifestavit nomen."

⁵ "Nam si miracula falsissima concedamus, nequaquam sequitur ad historiam, geographiam, moresque pertinentia nullius esse fidei; cum Livius plenus sit miraculorum, et miracula Vespasiani apud Tacitum notissima." *Pinkerton Pref. ad Vit. SS. Scot.*

Columba was a native of Ireland, descended from the royal family of that kingdom, and nearly allied to the kings of Scotland ⁶. Like many others who made a conspicuous figure in the world, his birth is said to have been preceded by some extraordinary circumstances. Maveth, the disciple of St. Patrick, is said to have predicted the birth and name of Columba, and the lasting glory which he should acquire by converting the Western Isles to Christianity ⁷.

His mother also, when with child of the saint, dreamed one night that a person, whose figure and mien seemed to denote him to be more than human, had presented her with a veil or garment of the most beautiful texture and colours; that in a little time, however, he resum-

⁶ His father was Felim the son of Fergus, who was grandson of the great Nial, king of Ireland; and the mother of Felim was Aithne, daughter of Lorn, who first reigned, in conjunction with his brother Fergus, over the Scots or Dalreudini in Argyllshire. In those times noblemen were not seldom the preachers of the gospel; and it is probable they may be so again, when they shall find that neither their persons nor their property can be secure without it.

⁷ Adomn. Præf.—sicuti nobis ab antiquis traditum expertis compertum habetur. “In novissimis (inquit) temporibus sæculi, filius nasciturus est, cujus nomen COLUMBA, per omnes insularum oceani provincias divulgabitur notum; novissimaque orbis tempora clare illustrabit.”

ed his gift, and raising and expanding it in the sky, allowed it to fly through heaven. As it flew, it continued to extend itself on all hands, over mountains and plains, till at length it covered an expanse which her eye was not able to measure. Finding what she had once possessed thus gone out of her reach, and likely to be irrecoverably lost, she could not help expressing her sorrow and regret, till the angel thus addressed her: "Be not grieved at not
 " being allowed to retain this valuable gift but
 " for a very short time. It is an emblem of
 " that child of which thou art soon to be the
 " mother: for him hath God ordained, as one
 " of his prophets, to be extensively useful upon
 " earth, and to lead an innumerable company
 " of souls to heaven⁸."

Columba was born in the year 521, and his parents being thus, as they believed, admonished of the part which their son was destined to act in life, and to which they soon perceived his genius and early disposition to piety to be peculiarly adapted, lost no time in providing him with such education as tended to qualify him for the sacred office. They first put him under the care of Cruinechan, a devout presbyter, who discovered, as he thought, in his

⁸ Cum. i. Ad. iii. 1. Angelus Domini in somnis, &c.

disciple while yet a child, extraordinary symptoms of his future glory and greatness⁹.

Some time after he studied under Finnian Bishop of Clonard, a man (according to Ware¹) of considerable learning, who was so much charmed with the piety of Columba, that though he was yet but a youth, he used to give him the appellation of SAINT; and believed, from his uniformly holy and regular life, that he had obtained from God an angel from heaven to be his companion and guardian².

Fenbar, also a bishop and saint, is mentioned as one of Columba's masters³; and likewise Gemman, a teacher of Leinster, who, like his other masters, used to give his pupil the name of SAINT; and notwithstanding the great disparity of their years, seems to have treated him rather as a companion and friend, than as a scholar; sometimes asking his opinion about the most dark and mysterious dispensations of Providence. Under him the piety of Colum-

⁹ Ad. iii. 2. Spiritus sancti gratiam super suum intellexit alumnus cœlitus effusam.—Globum quippe igneum super pueruli dormientis faciem vidit.

¹ Script. Hibern. p. 10. He died in 552.

² Cum. 4. Ad. iii. 4. En—Sanctum Columbam qui sui comœtus meruit habere socium angelum cœlicolam.

³ Ad. ii. 1. Apud S. Fendbarum—Sapientiam sacræ scripturæ addiscens.

ba, now in deacon's orders, became so distinguished, that his fame was already spread over a great part of the kingdom, to which the following incident seems to have contributed not a little. One day as the old man read his book in the fields, a young girl, pursued by a barbarian, fled to him for protection. He immediately cried to his pupil, who was reading at a little distance. The aid of both was unavailing; the ruffian, with one thrust of his spear, left her dead at their feet. "Ah!" said Gemman, "how long will God, the righteous Judge, allow this atrocious deed to go unpunished?" "The soul of the murderer," replied Columba, "may yet be in hell as soon as that of the murdered in heaven." At that instant they observed the unhappy man fall dead at some distance, a sacrifice, it is probable, to the violence of his own passions, though ascribed by the people to the appeal which was made to heaven by Gemman and Columba ⁴.

Our saint spent also some time under St. Ciaran ⁵, the father and founder of the monastery of Clon, upon the Shenan. For this man, so

⁴ Ad. ii. 26.

⁵ He preached to the Attacotti or Dalreudini of Kintyre, and died in 594. *Ware*. From him the parish of Kil-chiaran, of late called Campbelton, takes its name. (*Stat. Acc. of Campbelton*). Several traditions concerning him are still preserved

venerable for his piety and zeal in preaching the gospel, Columba retained always the strongest affection, and wrote a sacred ode upon his death, in which he celebrates his virtues⁶.

in the parish. One of them is, that he had an old horse which used to beg for him, and bring to his cave whatever the charity of the well disposed in the neighbourhood had put in his panniers. One day a wicked fellow put out the poor horse's eyes, in consequence of which he lost his way, fell over a rock, and perished. Next day the culprit was stung by a serpent, and his life despaired of; upon which the faint being called, prayed for him, and applied unguents, by which his life was saved; but with the loss of his eye-sight. Such traditions, in favour of religion and morals, are more than harmless. The estimation in which this faint was held in his lifetime may be judged of from the vision of St. Baithen, who dreamed that he had seen three splendid chairs prepared in heaven, one of gold, one of silver, and one of glass; and all agreed in the interpretation of their being intended for Ciaran, Lafran and Columba. *Colgan. Vit. S. Molassii.*

⁶ The beginning of this ode or hymn, with some other hymns, preserved by Colgan (*in Traide Thaumaturga*) may be seen in the appendix.

There is also extant a beautiful Irish ode of his, being a *Farewell* to his monastery in Ireland, when he set out for Scotland. The imagery of this piece is singular. Seven angels, Uriel, Ithiel, &c. are represented as having the charge of this monastery, each his own day in succession throughout the week, and then returning to give the recording angel an account of what passed in the monastery; an idea well calculated to excite in the monks the strictest attention to conduct, and the strongest desire to excel.

How much Columba was loved and revered by his companions, during his stay in this place, appears from the wonderful veneration with which he was received when he came to visit them some time afterwards⁷. All the people in the monastery and its neighbourhood poured out to meet him, kissed him with the utmost reverence and affection, and singing hymns and psalms of praise, led him to their church, surrounded with a rail of wood, carried by four men, to prevent his being incommoded by so immense a multitude⁸.

Whether he remained in the monastery of Clon till the death of Ciaran is not mentioned; but in the succeeding year, the 28th of his age, we are told that he founded the monastery of Darmagh or Durrough⁹, where a copy of the four Evangelists, which he had transcribed, was extant, according to Ware, in the last century, when this author wrote his history.

⁷ Circa, 550.

⁸ Ad. i. 3. Universi undique—hymnisque et laudibus resonantes, honorifice ad ecclesiam perducebant: quandamque de lignis pyramidem erga sanctum deambulantem constringentes, a quatuor viris æque ambulantibus supportari fecerunt: ne videlicet sanctus senior Columba ejusdem fratrum multitudinis constipatione molestaretur.

⁹ Ad. i. 3. cum not. Pinkert. et Bede, iii. 4. (now Derry.)

It was probably in the interval, betwixt founding this monastery and coming to Britain, that Columba visited several foreign countries, in which his piety, learning, and other accomplishments, procured him the highest regard and esteem. From some of the eastern churches he is said to have borrowed the model of his monastic rule¹; in Italy he is said to have founded a monastery; and in France he was solicited by King Sigibert, who made him large promises, to remain with him. But Columba, whose ambition was to be useful rather than great, told him, that he was so far from coveting the wealth of others, that for Christ's sake, he had already renounced his own².

How much time Columba spent in travelling, or when he returned home, we cannot say. Indeed, the chronological notices in the memoirs of his life which are left to us, are so few as to preclude every attempt at a regular series of his history. We have, however, abundant materials for developing his life and cha-

¹ Sir R. Twissden, on the Rise of Monastic States.

² Columbanus ipse (ut Abbas Walafridus scribit), a Sigiberto Francorum rege magnifice pollicitatione ne regno suo decederet invitatus, respondet, "Non decere videlicet ut alienas divitias amplecterentur qui nomine Christi suas dereliquissent." *Camden in Hibern.*

rafter ; and this is what we have already professed to be our object.

Ireland had now for a long time enjoyed the light of the Gospel, and abounded in saints and learned men, while the isles and northern parts of Scotland were still covered with darkness, and in the shackles of superstition. On those dismal regions, therefore, Columba looked with a pitying eye, and, however forbidding the prospect, resolved to become the Apostle of the Highlands. Accordingly, in the year 563³, he set out in a wicker boat covered with hides⁴, accompanied by twelve of his friends⁵ and fol-

³ Vid. Cum. 22. et not. Pink. Bede says two years later. “ Anno 565, venit de Hibernia presbyter et abbas, habitu et vita monachi insignis, nomine Columbanus, Britanniam ; prædicaturus verbum Dei provinciis septentrionalium Pictorum, hoc est, eis qui arduis atque horrentibus montium jugis, ab australibus eorum sunt regionibus sequestrati.” iii. 4.

⁴ Called in Gaelic *curaich*; the place where he landed in Icolmkill is still called *Port-a-churaich*.

⁵ Hence probably the monks of Iona got the name of “ the Apostolic Order,” to which none were better entitled.

Epitome Biblioth. Gesneri.

“ This was the origin of the order of the *Culdees* in Scotland ; an order of which Columba was the founder. He and his followers were distinguished for learning, purity of faith, and sanctity of life. Bede, in what he meant as a censure, commends them highly, when he says, ‘ They preached only such works of charity and piety as they could learn

lowers, and landed in the Isle of Hi or Iona, near the confines of the Scottish and Pictish territories⁵. This place he probably chose, as being conveniently situated for his attending to the important concerns which he had to manage in Ireland, as well as for carrying on the work which he had in view in Scotland. Besides, if he should succeed in procuring a grant of it, he might discover in it those properties which were generally sought for in the site of religious houses⁶.

Columba was now in the 42d year of his

‘ from the prophetical, evangelical, and apostolical writings.’
 “ They firmly opposed the errors and superstitions of the
 “ church of Rome, till towards the end of the 12th century,
 “ when they were at length overpowered and supplanted by a
 “ new race of monks, as inferior to them in learning and
 “ piety, as they surpassed them in wealth and ceremonies.”

See *Ledwich's Antiq. of Ireland*.

⁵ “ *Insula Pictorum* quædam monstratur in oris,
 “ *Fluctivago* suspensa falo, cognomine *Hii*,
 “ *Qua sanctus Domini* requiescit carne *Columba*.”

Vit. Blaimhac.

Bede says, that Iona belonged then to the Picts. The Irish Annals, and after them Usher, say it belonged to the Scots; and Adomnan, who knew best, seems in effect to say the same, when he tells us that their territories were separated by the *Dorsum Britannia* (or Drim-albin); “ *inter quos utroque dorsum Britanici montes distermini.*” Ad. ii. 46.

⁶ *Perambulavit igitur (Kentigernus) terram, explorans situs locorum, qualitates aëris, glebæ ubertatem, pratorum et*

age, and needed all his vigour of mind and body in encountering those difficulties which presented themselves when he undertook the conversion of the northern Picts to Christianity. The nation was in so barbarous a state, that some of them, regardless of the sanctity of his character, made more than once an attempt upon his life ⁷; and the king, not more civilized than his people, ordered his gate to be shut when the holy man first approached it ⁸. The priests or druids, too, as they were most interested, so they were most forward to oppose him ⁹, and wanted neither eloquence,

pascuarum ac silvarum sufficientiam, et cætera quæ expectant ad edificandi monasterii commoditatem. *Vit. Kentig.*

⁷ Ad. i. 35. Trans dorsum Britanniae (Drim-albin), &c. Here an enemy, in the dead of night, set fire to the village in which he slept. At another time, in the Isle of Himba, a ruffian, called *Lamb-des*, rushed upon him with his spear, which, one of his disciples, *Finduchan*, hastily stepping in to save his master, received in his own bosom, and was saved only by the thickness of his *cuculla*, or leathern jacket, from being transfixcd. Id. ii. 25. The *cuchul craicinn* is mentioned in old poems. In the rude state of all societies, men were partly dressed in skins; but so are they in its most polished state also.

⁸ Id. ii. 36. Rex (Brudeus) fastu elatus regio, munitionis suæ non aperiret portas. Brude reigned from A. D. 557 to 587.

⁹ Magi (Hibern. Druidh) in quantum poterant prohibere conabantur. Id. i. 38. et ii. 33, 35.

influence, or art, to effect their purpose. The country itself was wild, woody, and mountainous, and greatly infested with wild beasts, from which the life of the faint seems to have been more than once in imminent danger⁹. And, what appears to have been the greatest difficulty of all, he was so little master of the dialect of that people, at least of some among them, or for the first while, as to need an interpreter when he preached to them the words of salvation¹.

Besides all this, the austerity of his own manners, sometimes fasting for whole days, and watching and praying for whole nights²; submitting to constant fatigue of body and anxiety of mind abroad, or the most intense application to study at home³; and withal so self-

⁹ Id. ii. 27, 28.

¹ Id. ii. 33. Some antiquaries think, that the language of the Picts and Irish Scots, at this period, differed only in dialect, and that this only instance, in which mention is made of an interpreter, may refer to some stranger of another nation. Indeed Columba, in his general intercourse with the Picts, seems to converse with them, in their common language, with ease; and the names of the persons and places mentioned are generally Irish or Gaelic. This subject admits of discussion.

² Id. iii. 18.

³ Nullum etiam unius horæ intervallum transire poterat, quo non orationi, aut lectioni, vel scriptioni, vel etiam alicui operationi incumberet. Id. i. 1.

denied and crucified to the world, as to reject what we are now accustomed to consider as its innocent comforts and enjoyments ⁴;—these were, all of them, circumstances very unfavourable in appearance to his making many profelytes: And we may add, that the strictness of his *monastic rule* ⁵, which imposed heavy spiritual tasks, enforced by the sanction of bodily chastisements, would also seem an unsurmountable bar to his gaining many disciples to his cloisters.

Notwithstanding all this, however, the labours of Columba were attended with a very astonishing degree of success. In the course of a few years, the greater part of the Pictish kingdom was converted to the Christian faith; monasteries were erected in many places, and churches every where established. Columba, as Primate ⁶, superintended and directed all

⁴ At the age of 76, Columba's bed was the bare ground, and a stone his pillow. Id. iii. 23.

⁵ Holstein. Cod. Regul. “Dura et laboriosa monasteriola imperia,” are his own words in speaking of it. Ad. ii. 40.

⁶ *Notker* says, he was “Primate of all the Irish churches;” which he was made at the council of *Drimceat*. *Forbes* (*on Tilhes*) observes, that he and his successors extended their jurisdiction not only over all the ecclesiastics of the Highlands and Isles, but also over the monasteries of Dunkeld, Abernethy, Kilri-

the affairs of the Pictish, and much of the Scottish and Irish churches, and was highly revered, not only by the king of the Picts⁷, but also by all the neighbouring princes⁸, who courted his acquaintance, and liberally assisted him in his expensive undertakings⁹. Wherever he visited abroad, he was received with the highest demonstration both of respect and joy; crowds attended him

mont (or St. Andrew's), Abercorn, Monimusk, Kirkcaldy, &c. Bede (iii. 4.) and many others have remarked as singular, that Columba and his successors, though only abbots, should exercise a jurisdiction over bishops. But though Columba was not ambitious of high titles, he had the best right to the superiority of all the churches and monasteries which he himself had founded; and these were very many, both in Scotland and Ireland. Magnus Odonellus (*Vita Colum.*) says that above 300 churches had been established by Columba. Jocelin (*Vit. S. Pat.*) calls him "the founder of 100 monasteries;" and the Irish Annals (4 *Magist. ann.* 592.) say, that, next to St. Patrick, he was the chief instrument of establishing the gospel in almost all Ireland: "Columba, apostolus Albanie, id est Scotie Albienfis, precipuus post S. Patricium præco veritatis, et feminator religionis in universa fere Hibernia."

⁷ Sanctum et venerabilem virum regnator (Brudeus), suæ omnibus vitæ reliquis diebus, valde magna honoravit honorificentia. Ad. ii. 36.

⁸ Ad. iii. 5. et i. 14, 15.

⁹ Estates in different parts of the kingdom, as in Galway, &c. were annexed to his monastery. Vid. *Pennant's Tour*.

on the road; and to the place where he lodged at night, the neighbourhood sent stores of provisions to entertain him¹: And when the multiplicity of his business allowed him to stay at home, he was resorted to for aid and advice, as a physician both of soul and body, by multitudes of every rank and denomination². Even the place of his residence was considered as peculiarly holy; and to sleep in the dust of it became, for ages, an object of ambition to kings and princes³. His monastery was the chief seminary of learning at the time, perhaps, in Europe, and the nursery from which not only all the monasteries, and above 300

¹ Vit. Kentig. c. 39. Ad. i. 3. et i. 51. Conallus episcopus Culerathin collectis a populo pene innumerabilibus xeniis, beato viro hospitium præparavit, turba frequente multa, &c.

² Rex (Brudeus) misit, &c. Ad. ii. 34. Rex Rodercus de Petra *Cluoith*, misit, &c. Id. i. 15.

³ According to Buchannan, 48 kings of Scotland (too many), four of Ireland, and eight of Norway, were buried in Iona.

In Adomnan frequent mention is made of Aidan (or *Aodh-an MacGhabbrain*), who reigned over the Scots in what is now called Argyllshire; of Brude, who reigned over the Picts at Inverness; and of Roderic, who reigned over the Strath-clyde Britons, and lived at *Petra Cluoith*, or Dun-Briton, now corrupted into Dumbarton, except by the Highlanders, who still call it by the old name.

churches, which he himself had established, but also many of those in neighbouring nations, were supplied with learned divines and able pastors ⁴.

How then are we to account for this great and rapid success of Columba; for there is no certainty of his having been endowed either with the gift of prophecy, or with the power of working miracles? No doubt the Providence of God smiled upon his labours; and perhaps we might discover a coincidence of favourable circumstances in the history of the times. But we are more concerned to seek for the cause in the character and conduct of the man; by which he was rendered so eminently qualified for the sacred office, and so successful, under God, in the discharge of it. The investigation of this subject is deserving of the attention of ministers, and not unworthy of the curiosity of men.

That Columba's talents were of a very superior kind, is not to be doubted ⁵. An uncommon greatness of soul is marked in every

⁴ "Qui insulam *Hii* incolebant monachi *Scoticæ* nationis, scientiam divinæ cognitionis, libenter ac sine invidia, populo *Anglorum* communicare curabant." *Bede Hist.* v. 23. See more on this subject in the Appendix.

⁵ —ingenio optimus. *Ad. i. 1.*

part of his extensive schemes ; and the happy execution and success of them are pregnant proofs of wisdom, perseverance, zeal, and abilities.

Firmness and fortitude are no less conspicuous in Columba's character. When he came to Britain, he seems to have been well aware of the difficulty of his undertaking, and of the time and toil which it should cost him to accomplish it. But instead of shrinking back, he only prayed to God to give him thirty years of life⁷, which he devoted to his service, hoping that by the aid of Divine grace, he should in that period accomplish his designs.

We must also allow Columba a very extraordinary share of address, personal accomplishments, and colloquial talents, when he could so effectually recommend himself wherever he went, though a perfect stranger, as to be soon respected, loved and cherished ; and when he could gain such ascendancy over so many princes, as to be revered and patronized by all of them, when all of them were in a state of barbarism, and seldom at peace among themselves ;—a sure proof this, that his conduct was always guarded with the utmost caution and prudence ; that he never stepped out of his

⁷ Cum. 16. et Ad. iii. 22.

own line, nor took any concern whatever in state affairs, when he could by any means avoid it. Once, indeed, he put the crown on the head of the Scottish king Aidan; but he seems to have done it with reluctance, and pleads the strong necessity of having been compelled to it by a supernatural agent⁸.

The same prudence and address may be discovered in his having been able to maintain good discipline, order and subordination in so many monasteries, and so remote from one another;—to direct the religious affairs of a great part of several nations, differing considerably in language and customs;—to superintend the education of youth, and furnish so many churches with fit pastors;—and to do all this in such a manner that the growing love and veneration of men seem to have invariably kept pace with his years. To which we may add, that his sagacity in discovering probable effects from known causes, may have probably acquired him the reputation of being a prophet.

⁸ Angelus sanctum [dum recusaret] percussit flagello, cujus livosum in ejus latere vestigium omnibus suæ diebus permanfit vitæ; hocque intulit verbum, “Si nolueris, &c. percutiam te iterato: et sic per tres noctes, &c.” Ad. iii. 5. et Cum. 5.

This powerful argument could not be resisted.

To these talents, which were accompanied with the most engaging address, and a pleasant cheerful countenance, was joined another very essential property in a preacher, a most powerful and commanding voice, which Adomnan says he could on occasions raise so as to resemble peals of thunder⁸, and make it to be distinctly heard at a mile's distance, when he chanted psalms.

That these natural endowments of Columba were highly cultivated by the best education and learning which the times could afford, is clear from the mention already made of so many of his masters. A particular account of his studies, indeed, is not transmitted to us; but they seem by no means to have been confined to that profession which he followed, but to have extended much further into the general circle of science. For his knowledge of physic, or skill in healing diseases, was so great that his cures were often considered as miracles⁹. And in the history, laws, and customs

⁸ Ad. i. 38. "Vox ejus—instar alicujus formidabilis tonitruum elevata est." "Qui ultra mille passuum longinquitatem stabant, sic clare eandem audiebant vocem, ut illos quos canebat versiculos, etiam per singulas possent distinguere syllabas."

⁹ Ad. ii. 4, 5, 7, 6, 34, &c. In some of Columba's cures, supposed by Adomnan to be miraculous, mention is made of

of different nations, he was so well versed, that he made a principal figure in the great council held at DRIMCEAT, about the right of succession to the Scottish throne ¹.

But whatever degree of knowledge and education Columba might have received in his earlier years, he never ceased, by intense study and application, to add to it. Every moment which so active and pious a life could spare from its main business, was devoted to study ².

his sprinkling the diseased person or beast with water, in which a cake or medicament had been infused, and of his making use of water into which he had put some stone or fossil. From this probably sprung some superstitious practices, not yet quite extinct in the Highlands, where many families have some pebble or crystal (called *leug*), and sprinkle diseased cattle with the water in which it has been immersed. Columba's medicine is lost, and only the form of administering it is retained.

¹ Magna concio Drimacet, in qua fuit Columkill, &c. *Annal. Ulton.* ad ann. 574. *O'Conner's Dissert. et O'Flaherty's Ogygia.* The contest was between *Aodb Mac-Amireich* king of Ireland, and *Aidan* king of the Scots. This Aidan (or *Aodhan MacGhabhrain*), who was then king of the Scots (*Dalreudini*), had his residence in Kintyre, and was the most famed of all the old Scottish kings for his warlike exploits. We find him sometimes conquering in Ireland, and sometimes carrying his arms to the other hand, as far as Northumberland.

² Ad. i. 1. "Vel scriptioni vel lectioni," &c. Id. iii. 18. In Himba per tres dies totidemque noctes, neque manducans

Sometimes he heard his disciples read, and sometimes he read himself; sometimes he transcribed, and sometimes read what had been transcribed by others³. In his life, we find mention made occasionally of various books of his writing and copying⁴; and as he wished his usefulness to man to be commensurate with the moments of his life, and to make a part of the ultimate preparation for heaven, he spent some time in transcribing the Psalter, on that very night on which he knew and told he was to be translated to eternal day⁵.

neque bibens—scripturarum sacrarum obscura quæque et difficillima—discere, &c.

³ Id. i. 35. et i. 23. “In hoc tuo psalterio, nec una superflua reperietur litera, nec alia deesse; excepta *I* vocali, quæ sola deest.”

It was by thus teaching the use of letters, and establishing a seminary of learning, that Columba did the greatest service to his country. He thus kindled a light which shone in a dark place for many generations, and by its kindly beams cherished the seed which he had sowed, and brought it forward to an abundant harvest. Without this, all his personal virtues and personal labours could have produced but a comparatively small and temporary effect.

⁴ Ad. ii. 8, 45, &c.—folium S. Columbæ, &c.—libris stilo ipsius descriptis, &c. no less than 300, says Odonellus.

⁵ Ad. ii. 23. et Cum. 20. They are only the ignorant or ungrateful who give monks the epithet of *lazy*. To them we

In the character of Columba, talents, learning, and a constant application to study, make a very conspicuous figure ; but a still more striking part of it, is an early, uniform, and strong spirit of piety. Devoted from his birth to the service of God, and ardently bent on the pursuit of holiness, he seems to have almost reached the goal before others think of starting in the race. The appellation of *saint* was given him, as we have already seen, while he was yet a child. But far from resting in any measure of sanctity acquired in early life, he incessantly laboured after higher and higher degrees of it to his latest day. In every moment, in every motion, and in every action of his life, he seems to have maintained upon his spirit a lively sense, a strong impression, and al-

owe the preservation of almost all that has reached us of the learning, arts and sciences of the ancients. To them we owe many useful inventions, and especially the first lessons in agriculture, the most important of all arts to mankind. In the rude and predatory age of Columba, with what pleasure must we read of his monks at their daily labour in the field, of heaps of grain in his granary, of presents of it sent to his neighbours to sow their land, and of his having a Saxon baker in his monastery, when there was not another, we may believe, in the whole kingdom ? We are still more agreeably surprised to find monasteries in those times furnished with orchards, as appears from the mention made of their apple trees. *Ad. iii. 10. et ii. 2. &c.*

most a clear vision of the presence of God. And surely a saint, without being accounted a visionary, may be allowed to see with the eyes of the mind, and by the light of divine truth, the presence of spiritual essences, with as clear and satisfying a conviction of their reality, as that which he has of outward objects, in open day. Such seems to have been the case with Columba¹; and therefore we need not wonder, if, in every thing, small and great, he had so constant a regard to God. “When do you purpose to sail, Columba?” said the Magician or Druid², Broichan. “On the third day hence,” replied the saint, “if it be the will of God, and that I am then alive.” “You cannot,” says Broichan; “for I will raise contrary winds, and spread over you mists and darkness.” “All things,” answered the saint, “are under the controul of the Omnipotent God; and every motion of mine is undertaken in his name, and entirely guided by his direction³.”

In every affair of lesser moment, Columba

¹ Gratia Sancti Spiritus super eum abunde effusa—arcana manifestata videbat—et luce clarius aperta mundissimi cordis oculis patebant. *Ad. ii. 18. et Cum. xiii.*

² *Druidh* is still the Gaelic name for a magician. The person named here was probably the chief Pictish priest.

³ *Ad. ii. 35.*

shows the same regard to God, and the same spirit of piety. If he only ascended his little car, when a car became necessary, he implored upon it the benediction of Him who only could give it power to carry, and whose providence could keep it from falling ⁴. If the milk from the fold passed him every day, every day it had his solemn benediction ⁵. If he looked on the corn by which his family was to be fed, he could not fail of saying, Blessed be God! or God bless it ⁶! If the wind blew this way or that, he took occasion from it, either to pray to God, or to thank him; with an eye to such of his friends as the course of it concerned ⁷. If he visited a pious friend, the first salutations were mixed with alleluiahs, and the soul had its spiritual entertainment before the body was yet refreshed.

⁴ Id. ii. 44. Currum ab eo prius benedictum ascendit.

⁵ Id. ii. 15. Juvenis portans vasculum novo plenum lacte, dicit ad Sanctum, ut juxta morem tale benediceret onus.

⁶ Id. iii. 23. Horreum, quod intrans Sanctus cum benedixisset, et duos in eo frugum sequestratos acervos, hoc intulit verbum cum gratiarum actione, inquiens, &c.

⁷ Id. ii. 43. Nostris commembribus in periculo constitutis mente compati debemus fratribus, et Dominum exorare cum eis, ut Austrum flantem ventum, in Aquilonem convertat; qui videlicet Aquiloneus ventus navem Cormaci de periculis retrahat. Et post gaudenter grates Deo agit,—quia Austrum in Aquilonarem convertit flatum, &c.

“ Saint Columba, or Columkil,” says the author of the Life of Kentigern, “ left his island
 “ of *Xi*, to see the faint of Glasgou. When
 “ he approached the monastery, all went forth
 “ with sacred songs to meet him; while he
 “ and his party also came forward, singing
 “ their melodious alleluiahs. And after these
 “ godly men had met, abundance of spiritual
 “ entertainment preceded their bodily refresh-
 “ ment ⁸.”

Perhaps some, who judge only by the manners of modern times, may suppose some ostentation is here mixed with piety. But the manners even of saints, taking a tincture from the times, are very different now from what they were then; and piety, even where it may be genuine and true, is much less fervent. In those primitive and pious times, if two good

⁸ Omnesque (ex parte Kentigerni) canebant, *In viis Domini quam magna est gloria Domini! Et iterum subjunxerunt, Via justorum recta facta est, et iter sanctorum preparatum est. Ex parte Sancti Columbæ, dulcisona modulabant voce, Ibunt sancti de virtute in virtutem; videbitur Deus deorum in Syon cum alleluia.*—Convenientes—divinorum eloquiorum prius spiritualibus epulis saginati, postmodum corporeo alimento sese reficiunt.—Alter alterius baculum, in pignus quoddam et testimonium mutux dilectionis in Christo suscepit.—After having thus exchanged staves, in token of mutual regard, the two saints spent a few days together “ in conversing on divine subjects, and on matters relative to the salvation of souls.” *Vit. Kentigerni*, c. 39. et 40.

men walked together on the road, they could solace themselves under the fatigues of their journey by singing the Psalms of David, and refresh themselves when they sat down by reading a portion of the scriptures². If they did so now, they would be rated as wrong-headed enthusiasts, or charged with ostentation, and perhaps hypocrisy. Columba's piety, however, was so far from being ostentatious, that its lustre was nowhere so conspicuous as in retirement and solitude. Hence the strong desire of some of his disciples to find an opportunity of being sometimes the secret witnesses of the earnestness, or rather ecstasy of their master's private devotion. And from the accounts which they give us of what they saw and heard, we cannot greatly blame their curiosity¹.

These accounts, it is true, have somewhat of a miraculous air, in the relation of Cumin and Adomnan; and perhaps they ought to be re-

² Ninianum (cum Plebia fratre) suo more laborem itineris hymnis solari Davidicis;—et cum repausarent,—sacra lectione recreabant animos. *Vit. Ninian. c. 9. Vid. etiam Jerom. ad Nepot.*

¹ Frater-explorator (sanctum) expansis manibus ad cœlum orantem, oculosque ad cœlum elevantem conspiceret;—et sancti angeli advolantes induti albis vestibus, &c. *Ad. iii. 16. 21, &c.* Alio in tempore dum intra obferatam domum in Himba—carmina quædam spiritualia, et ante inaudita decantari ab eo audiebantur. *Id. iii. 18.*

ceived with some grains of allowance. Yet it is not for us to say, whether a man of such exalted piety, and of so heavenly a frame of mind, under labours which needed uncommon support and consolation, might not, on some special occasions, have enjoyed a higher degree of communion with God, and stronger manifestations of his favour, than fall within the experience, or perhaps belief of ordinary Christians. In these accounts, we find frequent mention of a heavenly light seen at times to shine around him, while engaged in devotion². This is so foreign to our experience, that we might find it easier to doubt or deny the truth of the fact, than to give a satisfying account of it. But in things that are too high for us, modesty becomes us. We

² Ad. i. 1. Cœlestis ingens claritudinis lumen, et in noctis tenebris et in luce diei, super eum aliquando, quibusdam ex fratribus, diversis et separatis vicibus apparuit effusum.

Id. iii. 19. Sicuti nullius æstivum et meridionalem solem rectis et irreverberatis potest intueri oculis, sic et illam cœlestem claritudinem ille *Virgnous*, qui viderat, sustinere nullo poterat modo.

Id. c. 20. Alia itidem nocte quidam de fratribus, *Colgius* nomine, totam videt ecclesiam cœlesti luce repleti, &c.

Id. c. 17. Alio in tempore, dum missarum solennia celebrarentur, S. *Brendanus* quemdam crinosum igneum globum, et valde luminosum, de vertice S. *Columbæ* ascendentem vidit.

know that such appearances were familiar to other holy men, when those angels who were their ministering spirits did, for wise and gracious purposes, manifest their presence. Thus, when the angel who instructed Daniel manifested himself, it was as the appearance of lightning; when the angel appeared to Peter, a light shone in the prison; and when our Saviour, after his ascension, manifested his presence to Saul in the way to Damascus, and to John in Patmos, a heavenly glory shone around with so much brightness, that mortal eyes could not endure its splendour. It is not for us to limit the Holy One of Israel, and say when, or when not, such manifestations were necessary or proper. It is not for us to say, whether God might not favour such a man as Columba, and in such circumstances, with some extraordinary manifestations of his presence, and with some sensible manifestations of the presence and society of celestial beings³. Be this as it may, he himself, as well as his disciples, was under the influence of such a belief, as appears from his having been heard (when not aware

³ Ad. iii. 16. Adomnan says, that one of Columba's private praying places was, from these manifestations, called in his time *Cnoc-aingeal* (the Hill of the Angels); which name it still retains.

of it) as addressing his speech to attendant spirits⁴. And it is certain, that this belief would greatly contribute to enliven his piety, and animate his devotion. Nor is it improbable that it was founded in reality, if we consider that he was so far from wishing to have these matters published, that, under the sanction of a solemn promise or oath, he commonly charged the few who accidentally came to know them, that, in his lifetime at least, they should never speak of them⁵.

⁴ Id. iii. 15. It may be observed here, that Columba addresses angels in a style the very reverse of prayer or invocation, considering them only as fellow-servants or ministering spirits. “Angelo Domini, qui nunc inter vos stabat, *jussi*,” &c. “I bade an angel of the Lord, who just now stood among us, to save one of the brethren just falling from the top of a high house: and, how amazing is the speed of angels! quick as lightning, and in the twinkling of an eye, the angel reached him, though at a great distance, before he reached the ground, and saved him from suffering the smallest hurt.”

A man falling from the top of a very high house (“*de culmine enormis fabricæ*,” *Notker*) and not hurt, was no bad proof of the miraculous interposition to which Columba ascribed his safety. The attendance of angels is a pleasing consideration to the pious Christian.

⁵ Id. i. 44. *Flexis genibus, per nomen excelsi Dei mihi promittas, hoc te obscurissimum sacramentum nulli unquam hominum, cunctis diebus vitæ meæ enarraturum.* Id. iii. 16.

Of Columba's piety, however, a more unequivocal proof was, his having lived, I may say, a life of prayer and of praise. To public prayers, morning and evening, he was so attentive, that he seems never to have allowed himself to dispense with the performance of them, in any place, or on any pretence whatever. Thus, in the midst of infidels, enemies, scoffers and disturbers of his devotion, when he had no house to cover him, we find him keep up his custom of glorifying God by stated and public worship⁶. When at home, this service was performed by him in the church, where we find him punctually attending, even on the last day of his life⁷.

Besides these public prayers, the monastic *rule* of Columba enjoined other very considerable exercises. It required the monks to “assemble thrice every night, and as often in the day. In every office of the day they were to use prayers, and sing three psalms. In the offices of the night, from October to February, they were to sing thirty-six psalms and twelve anthems at three several times :

⁶ Ad. i. 38. Sanctus, cum paucis fratribus, extra regis (Brudei) munimentum, dum vespertinales Dei laudes, ex more, celebraret—magi prohibere conabantur—Sanctus 44 m (nunc 45 m) psalmum decantare cœpit, &c.

⁷ Ad. ii. 23.

“ through the rest of the year, twenty-one
 “ psalms and eight anthems ; but on Saturday
 “ and Sabbath nights, twenty-five psalms and
 “ as many anthems ⁸.” And all this the saint
 himself performed with such alacrity, that he
 was the first to enter the church to midnight
 vigils on the very night on which he died ⁹.

Of Columba's private prayers no particular
 account can be expected. But from the fre-
 quent mention which is occasionally made of
 his praying in his closet, and in his little ora-
 tory, and of his retiring frequently in the day-
 time to solitary places, remote from the tumult
 and interruption of men ; and of his going to
 the church, or some retired place, in the night-
 time, while others slept, we see that his life
 and soul was in this holy exercise. So much
 so, indeed, that, though at times his private
 prayers were not prolix ¹, yet when in places
 in which he could attend to prayer and con-
 templation without being interrupted, we find

⁸ Holstein. Cod. Regul. Cit. ap. Walker's *Ir. Bards*.

⁹ Ad. ii. 23. Media nocte, pulsata personante clocca, festinus surgens ad ecclesiam pergens ; citiorque cæteris, &c.

¹ Post non prolixam orationem (says *Fergus*, who had himself prayed privately about an hour in a winter night), ecclesiam orationis studio, aliis quiescentibus, &c. Columba ingreditur, &c. Ad. iii. 19.

him sometimes continuing in it for whole nights and days, without either eating or drinking ².

² Ad. iii. 8, 19, 20, 21, &c. Per tres dies totidemque noctes, intra obferatam et repletam cœlesti claritudine domum manens, nullum ad se accedere permetteret, neque manducans, neque bibens. De qua videlicet domo immensæ claritatis radii per rimulas valvarum, et clavium foramina erumpentes noctu viscebantur.

A fast of three days, upon extraordinary and important occasions, was not in those times uncommon. The other Columbanus, when he and his companions formed a purpose of going to convert the *Sclavi*, kept such a fast. B. Columbanus jussit triduanum jejunium fieri, et incessanter misericordiam Domini implorari, ut eis suam indicaret voluntatem. *Vit. S. Magni*. Some there were who made such fasts their ordinary practice. Adamannus, monasterii in Anglia quod Colodi dicitur, præpositus, natione Scotus, vir austeræ conversationis, et sanctæ vitæ, ita ut, præter Dominicam et quintam feriam, nihil in hebdomada penitus comederet, sæpe etiam noctes integras pervigil in oratione transigeret. Claruit A. D. 670. *Frithem. de Script. Eccles.* In austerity of life, some of Columba's followers seem to have exceeded their master; and fasting (then thought an excellent mean of bringing the body into subjection to the soul, or of "taming the beast by "flinting him in his food"), though now gone out of fashion, was always one of the marks in their character.

Hic sacra Beati membra Cumini solvuntur;
 Cujus cœlum penetrans anima cum Angelis gaudet.
 Hunc misit Scotia fines ad Italicos senem,
 Ubi venerandi dogma Columbani servando,
 Vigilans, jejunans, indefessus, sedulo orans,
 Mitis, prudens, pius, fratribus pacificus cunctis.

It seems also to have been his invariable rule, to undertake no work, nor engage in any business, without having first invoked God ³. If about to officiate in any ministerial duty, he would first implore the Divine Presence and aid to enable him to discharge it properly ⁴. If he himself, or any of his friends, were to go any whither, by sea or land, their first care was to implore God to be propitious, and their last words at parting were solemn prayer and benediction ⁵. If he administered medicines for

It is remarkable that most of these saints lived to extreme old age: this died in his 96th year. *Chron. Bobiense*. Many lived to 100, St. Patrick to 120.

³ Dei—in cujus nomine omnes nostri motus, &c. *Ad. ii. 35*.

⁴ Id. ii. 9. Infans ad baptizandum offertur iter agenti (in Ardnamurchan) Sanctus ad proximam declinans rupem, flexis genibus paulisper oravit; et post orationem surgens—aquam benedixit, in qua infantulum baptizavit. From this it appears that baptism was then performed by immersion; as indeed it was over all the Christian church till the beginning of the 14th century, except in cases of extreme necessity, in which aspersion was allowed. The baptized was immersed three times; in the name of the FATHER, of the SON, and of the HOLY SPIRIT. The adults were clothed, except their head and feet. It is a wonder that this significant and apostolic mode was so easily laid aside, when so many frivolous questions, about matters of less importance, were so keenly agitated. *Vid. Basnage Lect. Antiq.*

⁵ Venientes—ut ipse a Domino postulans impetraret prof.

the cure of any disease, he accompanied them with prayer to the God who healeth⁶. If he administered even counsel or advice, he would accompany it with prayer to him who disposeth the heart to listen; and sometimes he would accompany that prayer with fasting. His best advices, for instance, could not remove some unhappy difference between *Lugne* and his wife in *Rachlin*. He therefore adds, “You two and I must spend this day in prayer and fasting⁷.” This produced the desired effect; for the penitent wife at length confessed, that she found he could obtain from God what to man seemed almost impossible.

In seasons of danger and alarm, whether public or private, he always had recourse to prayer, as the most effectual way to prevent, or cure, or bear, every evil to which man is subject. And the better to recommend the same course to others, he used to observe and instance the return of prayer. Thus, he ascribes it to uncommon wrestling in prayer,

perum ventum, et—Vade in pace, &c. Id. ii. 14. et i. 18, 19, &c.

⁶ Pineam tradit cum benedictione capsellam, invocato Dei nomine, &c. Id. ii. 5. Laborans ophthalmia petram salis, &c. benedictam, &c. ii. 7.

⁷ Id. ii. 42.—A much better expedient than the fashionable divorce of modern times,

that a raging pestilence passed by his monastery; and to the same cause (their having prayed and fasted) he ascribes its having carried off only one in the monastery of that man of prayer, Baithen ⁸.

He recommended prayer still further, by representing it as extending its efficacy to future times, and to generations yet unborn; and Adomnan gratefully acknowledges, that at least Columba's own prayers were in his days productive of signal blessings. "In our times," says he, "we are preserved from another pestilence, so that though it raged through all Europe, it hath not visited our territory; and though we walked, for two years, in the midst of its repeated devastations and ruined villages in England, the kingdom of our good friend Alfred ⁹, none of us was ever hurt

⁸ Sanctus in Hyona—remotiorem ab hominibus locum, aptumque orationi in saltibus quæsit: ibique forti conflictu dimicabat, &c. Ad. iii. 8.—Jejunii et orationibus, &c.

⁹ The people of Northumberland were converted to the Christian faith in the reign of Oswald, by Aidan and other pious monks of Iona, in consequence of which there was much intercourse between them for a long time after, and many of the churches and monasteries throughout England were planted with divines from this seminary. We learn from Bede (v. 16.) that Adomnan, on the occasion here alluded to, had been mediating for a peace between Alfred and his countrymen; that he had presented Alfred with a copy of his

“ by it. Thanks be to God, the efficacy of
 “ our venerable Father’s prayers hath surely
 “ reached us’.”

Can any one conceive such virtue to be in prayer, and not be devoted to it? It is certain none could be more so than Columba; yet he never neglected the use of ordinary means, in conjunction with prayer. Thus, at

Description of the Holy Land, and obtained from him many presents. He says that Adomnan was “ vir bonus et sapiens, “ et scientia scripturarum nobilissime instructus:” to which Trithemius adds, “ Secularium quoque literarum non ignarus, dulcis eloquio, vita et conversatione præclarus.”

The conversion of Oswald’s people is said to have been facilitated by a vision recorded by Adomnan. Before a battle in which Oswald was to engage with Cathon king of the Britons (A. D. 635), he dreamed that he had seen a person of angelic form, whose head seemed to reach the clouds, and whose lucid robe covered almost his whole army. This person told him he was Columba, and assured him of the victory; which he accordingly obtained. This relation Adomnan had from his predecessor, who had heard it from the mouth of Oswald; who might naturally enough have such a dream upon such an occasion: although it may also be said, from better authority than Homer, that “ dreams at times “ descend from God.”

* Ad. ii. 47. In the 6th century about a third of the human species is computed to have been cut off by pestilence. *Gibbon’s Hist.* In the 7th century, also, it raged very much in Britain. *Bed. Hist.* iii. 27. Annals quoted by Colgan (An. 684) say that it raged for three years, and affected

a time when he was in imminent danger at sea, we find him labouring hard in oozing the boat with a bucket ²; and in the ordinary exercise of his office, we have seen that he was far from thinking that the most intense prayer could supersede the necessity of equal intenseness of study.

Of the efficacy of intercessory prayer he had the highest opinion, and never failed to recommend and practise it. Accordingly, when he had intimation given him that any person, however distant or unconnected, was in danger of any kind, he would immediately retire to the closet or church, to plead in his behalf ³; or prayed where he was, if the emergency was too sudden to admit of his going elsewhere ⁴. He would also, when their case presented it-

every species of animals, of which the greater number perished.

² Ad. ii. 11. The mariners, however, more pious than many of their brethren in our times, insisted on his betaking himself to his proper business, prayer.

³ Id. ii. 41. *Ad ecclesiam currit, flexisque genibus, pro misellula in Hibernia (in angustiis parturitionis laborantis) Christum de homine natum exorat.*

⁴ The efficacy of prayer depends, not on the place, but on the heart: yet the heart is apt to be impressed more in one place than in another. The very sight of a place appropriated to prayer, helps to put the pious heart in a praying frame.

self to his mind, though engaged in company or conversation, dart up sudden and sometimes audible ejaculations in their favour, while his change of countenance discovered how much his heart was concerned ⁵.

Nor did he show his sense of the virtue of intercessory prayer only by his own intercession for others, but also by requesting theirs for him, and by ascribing some of his deliverances more to their prayers than to his own. Being once, for instance, overtaken by a tempest in the dangerous gulf of *Coire-urecain*, and in great danger of being lost, he told those who were with him, that he relied more on the intercession of his friend St. Kenneth, for obtaining a deliverance on that occasion, than on his own prayers. Kenneth knew that his friend was then at sea (as he probably let him know of it, in order to have the benefit of his intercession), and observing the tempest coming on just as he was sitting down to his meat, cried, "It is not the time to eat when Columba is in danger;" and flew to the church in such haste, that though he had but one of his slip-

⁵ Ad. iii. 15. In tuguriolo scribens, subito immutatur facies, et hanc puro de pectore premit vocem, "Auxiliare, auxiliare!"—The danger of a monk in *Durrough* had presented itself to his mind.

pers on, he would not wait to put his foot in the other. This was about the ninth hour; and very soon after, the tempest abated; which made Columba afterwards say, that they were obliged to Kenneth for not waiting for his shoes⁶.

In order to excite men thus to pray for themselves, and intercede for others, he used to observe, that God's end in bringing his saints sometimes into danger, was to give an opportunity, and to excite themselves and others, to perform this duty with more frequency and greater intenseness. " Though *Columan* the son of *Beogna* be just now in such jeopardy in the eddying gulf of *Coire-vrecain*, lifting both his hands to Heaven for assistance, yet God will not leave him to perish, his purpose being only to excite him

⁶ Ad. ii. 12. Cognovi, o Caimniche, quod Deus tuam exaudiret precem,—valde nobis profuit tuus ad ecclesiam velox cum uno calceamento cursus. Kenneth died abbot of Achabo in Ireland, A. D. 600. One of the Hebrides near Iona, where he probably resided for some time, still bears his name, and has been lately celebrated in a beautiful Latin ode by Dr. Johnson.

" Parva quidem regio, sed religione priorum

" Nota, Caledonias panditur inter aquas.

" Voce, ubi Kennethus populos docuisse feroces

" Dicitur, et vanos dedocuisse deos," &c.

Boswell's Tour.

“ to pray more fervently for his deliver-
“ ance ⁷.”

Thus, in the most unpromising situations, he encouraged a trust in Providence, and cheered men with the hopes of deliverance from their dangers, if they prayed and did not faint. This trust he had in the highest degree himself, and expressed the highest satisfaction whenever he perceived it firmly fixed in the heart of a disciple, “ A huge sea monster has
“ been seen last night in the course which you
“ are to take to-day, my dear Baithen, and it
“ may probably meet you.” “ And if it
“ should,” replied Baithen, “ both it and I
“ are in the hands of God.” “ Go in peace,
“ my son ; thy faith is sufficient to save thee
“ from the danger ⁸.”

⁷ Ad. i. 10. Columbanus filius Beognai nunc in undosis Charybdis *Brecani*, &c. This dangerous gulf lies between Jura and Craignish.

⁸ Ad. i. 19. This Baithen, the cousin, favourite disciple, and immediate successor of Columba as abbot of Iona, was also much renowned for his wisdom, learning and sanctity. In a very ancient account of his life (*Acta SS.* 9 Jun.), it is said that no man ever saw him idle, but always engaged in reading, praying, or working : That, next to Columba, he was deemed to be the best acquainted with the Scriptures, and to have the greatest extent of learning of any on this side of the Alps : That, for his zeal, prudence, sanctity, strict discipline, and primitive simplicity of manners, Columba himself used to compare him to John the Evangelist : That he

The intercession and prayers of the church, or congregation of Christians, he especially recommended, and regarded so much, that on the greatest emergency, by night or by day, he had always immediate recourse to it⁹. Thus

was so much given to prayer, that even in the necessary intercourse and conversation with his friends, his hands, though concealed under his mantle, might be observed to be every moment lifted up to that praying attitude to which they were so much habituated: That whatever work he was engaged in, his communion with God was so close, and his attention to prayer so constant, that he would not allow so much time as intervened between his swallowing two morsels of meat, or between his reaping a handful of corn and putting it in the sheaf, to pass without his putting up an ejaculation to Heaven; and that his humility was such, that none could be more careful to conceal his earthly treasures than he was to avoid all ostentation of his heavenly graces.—After this account of him, we need not wonder at his biographer hinting, that even the devil was obliged to keep his distance, and to leave the district of Baithen. On one occasion, however, we find him peeping through the windows, to observe whether each and all in the family devoutly implored the blessing of God upon their meal before they began it, and solemnly returned thanks when they had done.—If he still follows this practice (and there is no reason to think that he has slackened his diligence), he must be highly gratified by seeing these matters managed now pretty much in the way that he would wish.

⁹ Id. i. 22. *Fratres intempesta nocte suscitatus Sanctus, ad quos in ecclesia congregatos dicit, "Nunc Dominum intentius precemur—nam perpetratum est peccatum, pro quo valde est timenda judicialis vindicta."*

Id. ii. 43. *Fratres ad oratorium convocans, prefatur,— "Fratres, pro Cormaco orate, qui nunc patitur, &c.—nos,*

when, on a certain day, he had notice of Aidan king of the Scots, one of his friends, being about to engage in battle, he quickly ordered the bell to be rung to summon all his monks to the church, in order to join their united prayers for victory and safety to Aidan¹.

Nay, the better to recommend the prayers of the church, he ascribed to them not only more efficacy than to those of any one saint, however dear to God, but the power of almost changing the determined purpose of God himself. One day, as two of his disciples talked to him, they observed his face brighten with unusual and incomparable joy; and in a moment after saw this placid and angelic sweet-

“ tris commembribus compati debemus, et Dominum exorare cum iis.”

¹ Id. i. 8. Sanctus—subito ad suum dicit ministratorem, “ Cloccam pulsa.” Cujus fonitu fratres incitati ad ecclesiam ocius currunt—“ Nunc intente pro Aidano rege et populo Dominum oremus,” &c. Usher refers this to the battle of *Leth-reidh*, A. D. 590.—Columba judged, that when the state protects the church, it owes to it, in return, its prayers, and a ready co-operation in maintaining the good order of society. St. Paul directed Christians to pray for kings and rulers, when the king was Nero, and the rulers his cruel instruments of persecution. How much more should the church obey the Apostolic precept, when its kings and queens are its *nursing fathers* and *nursing mothers*?

ness of countenance changed into grief and sadness. With difficulty they extorted from him the following account of these various appearances, on condition that they should keep it a secret till after his death : “ Thirty years
 “ which I prayed God to give me in Britain,
 “ are now expired ; and I have much longed,
 “ and prayed, and hoped, that at the close of
 “ them I should obtain my dismissal, and be
 “ called to my everlasting home with God ;
 “ and just now I was above measure glad, on
 “ seeing the descent of the holy angels to
 “ conduct my spirit. But on a sudden they
 “ are stopped at yonder rock ; for, the united
 “ prayers of the churches to spare my life a
 “ few years longer, have prevailed over my
 “ most earnest requests, and changed the purpose of God with regard to me. Four years
 “ more I must remain on earth ; and then,
 “ without sickness or pain, this frame shall be
 “ dissolved, and I enter into the joy of my
 “ Lord ². ”

² Ad. iii. 22. *Facies mirifica et lætifica hilaritate effloruit, oculosque ad cælum elevans incomparabili repletis gaudio, &c.*
 “ Angelos enim sanctos de excelso vidi missos throno.—Sed
 “ ecce subito retardati—quia Dominus multarum magis ecclesiarum pro me orationes exaudiens dicto citius immutavit,” &c. Whatever the reader may think of such visions, he will be pleased with the following sentence, in which Co-

It was the custom of Columba, to remark how, and when, God answered his prayers; and failed not, on such occasions, to acknowledge his goodness with praise and thanksgiving. Sometimes, too, he would call his friends to join him, especially if they had joined in the request. “God, my brethren, hath heard
“the voice of our supplication at such a time;
“he hath delivered our friends from danger;
“and it becomes us now to render to him our
“united thanks³.”

But what throws the most beautiful lustre on this part of our saint's character, and shows how much his pure spirit was engaged in the high concerns of his ministry, is, that even in his sleep, his mind, all awake, used to go on with the continuation of those prayers and intercessions which he had been urging at the throne of mercy through the day. When the

Columba describes the faculty of the *Seer* in language that would seem to have been dictated by experience: “Sunt nonnulli
“quamlibet pauci admodum, quibus Divina hoc contulit gratia, ut etiam totum, licet non semper, totius terræ orbem,
“cum ambitu oceani et cœli, uno eodemque momento, quasi
“sub uno solis radio, mirabiliter laxato mentis sinu, clare et
“manifestissime speculantur.”

³ Id. ii. 43. et iii. 13, &c. It is still customary for persons in distress to ask the prayers of the congregation—I never heard a congregation asked, by any one, to return thanks for having obtained relief, but *once*. Compare Luke xvii. 15.

weakness of the body required rest, the willing spirit still carried on the delightful work, and pleaded the cause of his people with his God ⁴.

The prayers of Columba were not more remarkable for their frequency than for their fervency, which was strongly marked by his attitude, voice, and countenance. His attitude, though he sometimes stood, and was often prostrate, was commonly that of kneeling, with his eyes raised up, and his hands spread towards heaven ⁵. From his extreme sensibility of heart, and earnestness of spirit, his voice was often attended with cries and tears ⁶; and devotion shone in his face with so vivid a lustre, that the bystanders used to ascribe the uncommon fervency and animation which appeared in it to some irradiation of the Divine Presence upon his countenance, as well as upon his spirit ⁷.—Who can wonder if a business called *the pleasure of the Lord* prospered so

⁴ Ad. ii. 42. Nocteque subsequenti (post nempe diem orationis et jejunii) sanctus in somnio pro iis deprecatus est, &c.

⁵ Id. iii. 16. Stantem et expansis manibus ad cœlum, oculisque ad cœlum elevantem, &c. Id. iii. 13. Sanctus inter fratres pariter prostratos, &c. Id. ii. 33. Flexis genibus, &c.

⁶ Id. ii. 31. Flexis genibus et flebili voce, &c. Id. iii. 13. Post intentam et lacrymosam, &c. Id. ii. 43. Post orat. abstergens lacrymos.

⁷ Id. iii. 17. et iii. 23. et Cum. xii. Dum missarum solen-

astorishingly in the hands of a man so zealous and active, and at the same time so devoted to prayer,—and to such prayer too as we have been describing? To the minister who thus liveth, and thus prayeth, all things are possible.

So pious and devout a man as Columba, must have been possessed of a heavenly mindedness rarely to be met with. Accustomed so much to be in company with God, and impressed with so lively a sense of the presence of angels or ministering spirits, he must have been deeply tinctured with their likeness; and in his temper and conduct resembled, while he was yet on earth, the holy inhabitants of heaven⁸. Elevated as he was above every selfish and sublunary view, he had no end or aim but to glorify God and to save souls. It is not therefore without reason that his biographers compare him to one of the prophets or apostles of God⁹, for he had no ordinary share of their spirit.

Besides, it has been already observed that

nia ex more Dominica celebrantur die, facies venerabilis viri, florido respersa rubore videtur, &c.

⁸ *Ad. i. 1. Quamvis in terra positus, cœlestibus se aptam moribus ostendebat.*

⁹ *Id. iii. 1. Quasi unus prophetarum Dei, inter ipsos connumerabitur—animarum dux innumerabilium ad cœlum. Id. ii. 33.—Apostolicus homo.*

Columba was descended of noble parents, and nearly allied to the royal families of both Scotland and Ireland; so that he must have had large worldly prospects, if worldly prospects could have allured him. Nay, he seems (from his answer to Sigebert, to have been born not only to large prospects, but to large possessions. Yet of these, as of encumbrances retarding him in his heavenly progress, he divested himself, by allowing them (as we are told by Odonellus) to devolve upon his three uncles; leaving it to their own generosity to give him back such portions as they chose, in order to endow his first monasteries. Hence, when upon some occasion St. Ciaran was considering whether his own zeal for God was equal to that of Columba (for between those holy men this was the only rivalry), he was humbled by a dream or vision, in which an angel seemed to have shown him an ax (an emblem of the profession of his father, who was a carpenter), saying, "This is what you have given up for the love of God, but Columba has given up a kingdom which was to have come to him by his father's."

The uncommon talents, education, and address of Columba, would also qualify him for

rising very high in the scale of worldly preferment, if this could attract him ; but instead of that, when actually offered him, it could not divert him from the purpose which he had already formed ². It would appear that he considered the things of this world, both small and great, as equally beneath his notice, except in so far as they contributed to make him more useful and holy, and to forward his progress to heaven.

Such was the estimate which he seems to have made of this world himself, and which he laboured also to impress upon others ; teaching the sons of power and ambition, that even a kingdom, if obtained at the expence of innocence, was dearly bought, and could not be long preserved : and exhorting those in humbler stations never to be greatly concerned about the frail and perishing things of the present life. “ Beware, I beseech you, my son,” said he to a young ambitious prince ³, “ that

² Omnem mundanæ celsitudinis gloriam aspernatus ; parum ratus summos secundum seculum honores ultro oblatos, solo Abbatis munere contentus. *Id.*

³ *Aodh-flan*, son of King Dermot.—The counsel was thrown away ; for he murdered *Sui-ne*, the son of *Columan*, King of Temora ; and in four years and three months after, the denunciation here threatened had its accomplishment, *Aodh* in his turn being murdered by *Sui-ne's* son *Connal*. *Ware.*

“ you do not attempt to enlarge your possessions by the commission of bloodshed and murder ; for, if you do, God will soon deprive you and your family of the inheritance of your fathers.” At another time, seeing one of his monks in great grief about a small loss which he had sustained, “ Why, my brother,” said he, “ should you be grieved on account of the loss of such perishing things as these *?” And indeed, in this case, the things lost were not the monk’s, but Columba’s own ; so that his exhortation or precept was enforced by his own example.

Thus, in the eyes of Columba, heavenly and divine things shone always with such lustre as to darken the brightest objects of human ambition ; objects which he considered, and represented, as often hurtful, rather than useful, to those who attain the largest share of them. Hearing his servant Dermot and another, who travelled with him one day through the dreary wilds of Ardnamurchan, speaking (probably with some envy) of the state of kings, and talking particularly of *Beothan* and *Eachan*, two joint kings of Ireland, “ O my children,” said he, “ how empty and unsatisfying are the

* Ad. ii. 39. Noli, frater, pro fragilibus contristari rebus, &c.

“ things you speak of; nay, how pernicious
 “ often are they to their owners; for the first
 “ account you may probably hear of these
 “ kings, is, that their enemies have killed them
 “ for the sake of their possessions ⁵.” On another
 day, as they were travelling towards Temora,
 he addressed those who were with him in the
 same manner. “ There is Temora,
 “ crowded with people, strong in military power,
 “ abounding in nobles, and adorned with
 “ a royal palace, and filled with riches and
 “ stores of provision; but the time is approaching
 “ when it shall be left desolate, a monument
 “ of the instability of human grandeur.
 “ Why should we love or admire the things
 “ that are transient and vanishing ⁶?”

Indeed all his conversation generally aimed
 at turning the thoughts of men from earthly
 things, however great or desirable, to things
 more durable and solid. Almost every particle
 of it which is left upon record, and that is
 not a little, favours of heaven and a heavenly
 turn of mind. Its constant tendency is, to e-

⁵ Ad. i. 12. On that very day they learned at *Lios-moir*
 (Paradisus Muirbolc?) that this had actually happened; both
 being slain by Cronen, son of Tighearnach, in the battle of
 Glengevin, A. D. 572. *Ware*.

⁶ *Odonnel*. i. 84.

dify and profit as the case required, and as opportunity was given. And his condescension, affability, and aptness to teach, were such, that he seemed never at a loss to make every time, and place, and person, suit his purpose. To every person he had something to say, by which he insinuated himself into his favour, and took occasion to edify him, in such a manner as suited his exigency and capacity. If he met but a child, he would ask whose he was, and give his benediction⁷. If in the course of his peregrinations he had occasion to meet a poor man, or perhaps to lodge with him in his hut, he would begin perhaps with asking how many cows he had, and wishing God to bless them to him till they should become a large fold; and so lead him by degrees to subjects of higher importance⁸. If he should be in the company of nobles or kings, he would give the discourse a tendency either to make

⁷ Ad. i. 10. Cujus est filius hic?—Sanctus benedixit, dicens, &c.

Id. ii. 20. Nefanus valde inops, Sanctum gaudenter hospitio recepit, ministrans secundum vires. Sanctus inquit, Quot báculos haberet? Ille ait quinque. Ad centum crescant—et semen tuum benedictum, &c.

Id. ii. 22. De quantitate et qualitate substantiæ interrogat; et benedicens—“Deo donante habebis, &c.

⁸ Id. i. 14.

themselves good, as we have observed above, or to incline them to do good to others; and no other use do we ever find him making of his great influence. Meeting one day with a prince of the Orkneys, at the palace of King Brude, he told the king, that some monks had lately sailed with a view of making discoveries in the northern seas, and begged he would strongly recommend them to the prince who was then with him, in case they should happen to land in the Orkneys. They did so, and owed their lives to the recommendation of Columba⁹. Thus he would never neglect an op-

⁹ Ad. ii. 43. Such expeditions of the monks of Iona are frequently mentioned by Adomnan. His late editor, Mr. Pinkerton, thinks they were in quest of the Thule of the ancients, and observes, that the Norwegians found Irish monks in Iceland when they first discovered it about the year 900. Their object undoubtedly was, to discover any land which the gospel had not yet reached, that they might preach to its inhabitants the glad tidings of salvation. Nor were they less zealous in rousing men to a greater regard for the truths of the gospel, by preaching it in its native purity and simplicity, where it was already professed. We meet with some of them in almost every country in Europe, and their learning and sanctity always procure them respect and honour. The number of them that went to France, Italy, and other foreign countries, was so great, that the Bollandine writers observe, that "all saints whose origin could not afterwards be traced, "were supposed to have come from Ireland or Scotland." (*Vit. S. Blier.* 11 Jun.) The zeal of the monks of Iona in

portunity of turning the conversation to some purpose that was useful, and of doing good to

disseminating knowledge and true religion, in those dark ages, is indeed astonishing. It flamed in the bosom of age, no less than in the veins of youth. Cumian, at the age of 70, set out for Italy, where he became a bishop; and Columan, afterwards bishop of Lindisfarn (which he resigned rather than change his way of keeping pasch) could not have set out for England from Iona, before he had arrived at the age of 80, as may be inferred from the account of his life by Colgan. The account which Bede (iv. 4. et iii. 26.) gives of Columan and the other divines that went from Hii to England, is interesting and curious. They instructed a certain number of the youth (*e. g.* Aidan had the charge of twelve): They lived in the most plain and frugal manner, supporting themselves by the labour of their hands, and solicitous only to improve the heart: Except some cattle, they had no wealth: If they got any money from the rich, they immediately gave it to the poor: Their houses were barely sufficient for their own accommodation; for they never pretended to lodge or entertain the rich, who had nothing to get from them when they came, but the word of God, preached in the church. If the king, with five or six attendants, chose at any time to take a refreshment with them after the service was over, he must have contented himself with the plain and daily fare of the brethren. Bede adds, that they brought religion at that time into such repute, that a clergyman or monk was every where received with joy as a servant of God; that when they travelled the road, people ran to them to get their blessing; and that when they went to any village, which they did only when they had occasion to preach, baptize, or visit the sick, crowds gathered to hear them. In short, says he, the cure of souls was their great concern.

both the souls and bodies of men. The conversation that was idle he discouraged strongly, though he did it gently, and also the mirth that was unseasonable and unbecoming¹.

From the notion which some entertained of his being able to foretel future events, a man asked him one day how long he had to live. If your curiosity on that head could be satisfied, said the saint, it could be of no use to you. But it is only God, who appoints the days of man, that knows when they are to terminate. Our business is to do our duty, not to pry into our destiny. God in mercy hath concealed from man the knowledge of his end. If he knew it was near, he would be disqualified for the duties of life, and if he knew it were distant, he would delay his preparation. You should therefore be satisfied with knowing that it is certain; and the safest way is to believe that it may be also near, and to make no delay in getting ready, lest it overtake you unprepared.—Of another, who held a similar conversation with him, he asked how long he thought himself he had to live. The other replied, seven years. Consider then, said he, how much good may be done in such a space

¹ Ad. i. 12. O filioli, quare inaniter sic confabulamini, &c. i. 43.—inutilia profertis verba.

of time ; but as you know not if it may be seven days, or even seven hours, it is now time to begin and to make ready².

So grave and serious was the constant tenor of his conversation, that it is said he was never observed to have uttered an idle word, nor to have made the slightest deviation from truth, even in joke or compliment. Odonellus relates that his disciple Baithen declared so to king Aidan, and mentions one or two unsuccessful experiments which were made by the king, to try whether the saint could be made to deviate from the strict account given of him by Baithen. Columba commanded the respect of kings by speaking the truth, and the truth only, without using any idle words, compliment, or flattery. Aodh, king of Ireland, asked him, whether he thought he should be saved. You have little chance for that, said Columba, unless you expiate the errors of your past life by a speedy and sincere repentance, and by the exercise of good works for the future³.

As the conversation of Columba was heavenly, so his life and actions were alike useful and holy. Every thing he did was suitable to his profession, and bespoke the *man of God*⁴. When

² Colgan. Vit. 5ta Columbæ.

³ Id. ibid.

⁴ Ad. i. 1. Opere sanctus.—ab omni integer labe. Id. iii. 23.

we consider his devotion, we should almost think he had left no room for activity; and when we consider his usefulness and activity, we shall almost think that he had no time left for devotion. But they both harmonized so sweetly, that instead of interfering they mutually served to assist each other. And indeed the only way to do much business, is to be much in prayer, especially in the sacred office. In any office, to be good, and to do good, are but one and the same study, though too many think they may be separately pursued. In Columba they were both so intimately united, that *holiness unto the Lord, and usefulness to man*, were stamped on all his actions ⁵.

How much his character was marked with the first of these we have already seen, and the other is equally manifest, from his having been constantly engaged in doing all the good in his power to the souls and bodies of men. From

⁵ Such was the sanctity and the usefulness of Columba's conduct that king Aidan, not being able to find in it any thing that was either wrong or useless, had the curiosity to ask him (as Odonellus relates) whether he had so much as any inward motion or propensity to sin? To this unnecessary question Columba answered, as became a saint, that like all men, he had such motions and propensities; but that he would not take the whole world, with all its honours and pleasures, and consent to yield to one of them.

pure love to the souls of men he gave up every worldly prospect and profession, and submitted to a life of the utmost self-denial, and toil, and danger, and anxiety. With what activity and zeal he laboured for the souls of men, we need no other evidence than the great and rapid success of his ministry. For close application and activity he was indeed noted from his early youth. When he studied under Finnian, every night on which it fell to his share to grind the corn with the *quern* or hand-mill, he did it so expeditiously that his companions alleged that he had always the assistance of an angel in turning the stone, and envied him much on that account. His future life is marked with the same close application and diligence⁶. He

⁶ From the early diligence and disposition of Columba, his master was enabled to predict his future greatness. Of the many scholars whom he had at the time, and of whom some made a great figure afterwards, he foresaw that none would reach the fame of Columba. In a vision of his, recorded in the life of St. Ciaran, it is said that he saw two stars of extraordinary brightness. The one of them, which denoted Ciaran, continued to shine in its place; but the other, which was by far the brightest, moved towards Britain, but continued to enlighten Ireland as well as Britain with its beams: This one, he said, denoted the light of Columba's heavenly doctrine, and his ardent charity and love to mankind. "Columbam, fulgentissimum Hiberniæ et Britannicæ fidus, cœlestis doctrinæ luce, aureo charitatis nitore, cristallina puritate, repleturum, &c." *Golgan. Trias.* p. 464.

slept little, was never idle, and never employed about any thing that was useless ⁷. In a life so busy, and by a soul animated with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, he hath shown how much may be accomplished. His zeal, like that of the *ministers* above, was indeed *a flame of fire*; strong, active, penetrating and cheering. It not only moved him to devote his life to God, but to fill every moment of that life with labour and action: insomuch that with watching and praying, and the discharge of the other various parts of his ministry, he lived, to all the purposes of such a life, more in one day than ordinary pastors perhaps in many weeks or months. It is not by sitting still, and going through set exercises at stated times, that ministers can hope to make conversions. Columba did not so make his. Unweariedly and incessantly we find him going about, through his immense charge or diocese, from house to house, and from kingdom to kingdom; and wherever he is, every word, every deed, proclaims the faithful minister, diffusing everywhere the blessings of the gospel,

⁷ Vigiliis assuetus, somnique parvus; nunquam nisi actioni alicui intentus; nunquam in actione otiosa vel inani repertus. —Una actionum ejus omnium meta, Dei gloria, et animarum salus. *Odonell. vit. Columbae.*

establiſhing grace in ſouls, and peace in families.

It has been already obſerved that the ſaint had always ſomething ſuitable to ſay to every perſon, of every age and condition. Yet he ſeems to have paid the moſt particular attention to the young; well aware of the importance of early piety, and of the greater probability of ſucceeding in his endeavours to impreſs a ſenſe of religion, when he had to work on tender ſouls. The young therefore he regarded with peculiar care; encouraged them to come to him on all occaſions, and to ſhare in his inſtructions, prayers and benedictions⁸. Even before they were capable of learning, he wiſhed to cultivate their acquaintance and to conciliate their favour, by the moſt endearing tenderneſs and condeſcenſion; that by having their affections pre-engaged, he might afterwards the more eaſily convey his inſtructions. Hence, when the ſaint makes his appearance, the little children rejoice to ſee him, and they run to meet him; and he embraces them and takes them in his boſom⁹. If only the elder children of the family ſhould be preſented to him, he would ſay, Have you not

⁸ Ad. i. 10, 13, 16, &c.

⁹ Odonell. ii. 10.

some that are younger than these? I wish to see them¹. They are all sent for, and little *Eachan Bui* (Fair-haired Hector), when he saw the faint, ran up to him, and laid his head on his bosom. The faint affectionately kissed him, blessed him, hoped he would survive his father, and afterwards leave children to succeed him. How amiable is the faint when thus courting the affections of children! How lovely is old age and holiness thus delighting to associate themselves to infancy!

As the happiness of multitudes depends on the temper and character of those who are destined to fill the higher ranks of life, he attended more especially to such, had them often with him, endeavoured to impress their minds with a just opinion of worldly greatness, and to inspire them with the love of peace; the source of long life to themselves, and of happiness to those about them².

By this I mean not that Columba had any respect of persons in any of his sacred ministrations. In what related only to the individual, and did not affect the interests of society at large, the souls and persons of the lowest shared in his labours and concern, as well as

¹ Ad. i. 9.

² Ad. i. 14. et i. 13.

those of the highest. The family mentioned above, in which he spent a day of fasting and prayer with a view to establish peace in it, and about which he was so anxiously concerned, that his soul went on with the intercession of the day during the sleep of the night, is mentioned to have been of the lower rank or plebeian order³.

Columba indeed, like a true minister of the Prince of Peace, and of that Gospel which proclaims it, laboured for nothing so much as to bring this blessing not only to families and to individuals⁴, but even to kingdoms. In the great council of Drimceat, already mentioned, he mediated so effectually between the Scottish and Irish kings, that both agreed to refer their respective claims to his own decision. This he modestly, and perhaps wisely, declined, that he might not incur the displeasure of either, but persuaded them to refer the matter to Colman the son of Comgel, a man "well versed in sacred and profane literature, and especially in the antiquities of Ireland." His great influence was in like manner exerted in preserving peace between the Scots and Picts, and in composing their differences, when any

³ Id. ii. 42.

⁴ Id. ii. 16.—inter rusticanos—judicavit.

difference arose. Equally respected by both, we find him going backwards and forwards from the one court to the other, always zealous and always successful in his endeavours to prevent or terminate the dire calamities of war. Thus, by his great influence, he often saved a torrent of bloodshed both in Scotland and Ireland. The same deference was paid to his counsels in both kingdoms, and the most momentous affairs often referred to his decision. Cairbre, the son of Lugid Lamdarg, missing a stroke aimed at a stag, killed his brother; which gave rise to a violent contest between him and a remaining brother, about the inheritance of the one that was killed. In vain did the king and clergy of Ireland attempt to settle the difference. The contending parties, however, agreed to refer it to the decision of Columba. They accordingly came, with a numerous train to Iona, where the saint reconciled them, and saved Ireland from a civil war. Happy would it be for every age if the quarrels of kings and kingdoms could be settled, as they were then, by being referred to such an umpire¹.

There was nothing about which Columba was more anxious, or in which he was more

¹ Vid. *Annal. Ult.* 574. "Concio Drimaceat, in qua Columkil, &c. *Colgan.* vit. 5ta. *Boeth.* l. ix. et *Mag. Odon.* ii. 23.

successful, than in maintaining peace in all the churches and religious societies under his care; nor was there any thing that seemed to give him so much concern as the apprehensions which he had that this peace might one day be disturbed, by such foolish disputes as those which afterwards took place concerning the feast of Easter². Columba however maintained the peace of the church in his day, and with his dying breath left it in charge to his disciples to have peace among themselves³.

How ardently he loved peace may be inferred from its having been one of the three things which, on a particular occasion, he is said to have solemnly asked of God, at *Tulach nan Salm* (the Hill of Psalms). The first was, that he might never refuse any person in a reasonable demand, lest this should hurt his usefulness: the second, that the love and zeal which he had for God in his heart should never be abated: and the third, that all his friends and relations might live in amity and peace among themselves; and, if at any time they should not, that God would rather punish the

² Ad. iii. 23. Multa, revelante spiritu sancto, prophetavit de illa quæ post dies multos ob diversitatem Paschalis Festi orta est inter Scotiæ ecclesias discordia.

³ Id. iii. 23.

fault himself than allow them to hurt one another ⁴.

But this love of peace in Columba never hindered him from exercising the strictest discipline and order ; well knowing that without this no lasting peace could be maintained. He admonished and reproved with freedom, and, when the case required it, with sharpness ⁵. If that did not serve, without any regard to persons, he proceeded to higher censures. Thus, at the hazard of his life, he excommunicated some of the nobility of the kingdom (the sons of Connel), after having first admonished and reproved them to no purpose ⁶. Nay, when he saw no prospect of their reformation, after every mean of reclaiming them was tried, he seems to have thought it mercy to their own souls, as well as to society, to request of God, if he had no purposes of mercy in reserve for them, to shorten the time of their doing mischief, and to check, by his Providence, the evil which could not be restrained by either law or religion.

These cases, however, were very rare, and extremely desperate, in which we find the faint

⁴ Colgan. vit. 5ta.

⁵ Id. i. 40, 41.

⁶ Id. ii. 25.

proceeding to this last appeal.—John, one of the excommunicated sons of Connel, continued to persecute and harass the good, and to live by rapine and plunder. Thrice had he robbed the house, and carried off the effects of a worthy hospitable man who used to lodge the saint whenever he came his way. On the third time Columba met him as he was carrying off his booty, and earnestly entreated him to leave it. He followed him all the way to his boat (which lay at Camus in Ardnamurchan), and even waded after him into the sea with his fruitless petitions. The plunderer and his company (which seem to have been of much the same cast with his followers on a former occasion, when one of them attempted to kill Columba) scorned and laughed at him. The saint at length, lifting both his hands to heaven, prayed to God to glorify himself by avenging and protecting his people. He then sat down on an eminence, and thus addressed a few who were along with him. “God will not always bear to have those who love and serve him to be thus treated. That dark cloud already forming in the north, is fraught with this poor man’s destruction.”—The cloud spread—the storm arose—and, between Mull and Colonsay, overtook and sunk a boat, which no doubt the greed of plunder had too deeply loaded.—His

fate, though just (so concludes with a tender concern the chapter), is much to be lamented ⁷.

If Columba was attentive to keep discipline and order among his people, much more was he solicitous to do so among his clergy. He seems indeed to have had nothing more at heart than to promote the purity and usefulness of the sacred order, and therefore he paid always the strictest regard to whatever related to their ordination and discipline. He appears to have been not only careful to examine into their talents, views, morals, and earliest habits of life, but even anxious to know if they were born of pious parents. He might probably reckon on something of the nature of the stock being communicated to the scion, as well as on the effect of good example, early discipline, and timely instructions in piety. On this last account he was particularly anxious to know if the mother, who has the first moulding of the soul in the cradle, was herself truly religious and holy ⁸.

⁷ Ad. ii. 23. *Misere quidem ! sed digne.*

⁸ Ad. i. 17. *Colgium [postea primarium] de sua interrogat genetrice, si esset religiosa, an non ? &c.* Plato, in like manner, makes it one of the requisites of a priest, that he should be born of pious parents. Mothers especially have the first forming of the mind, and if they are pious themselves, it may

Whenever he discovered any young persons of parts and piety (in doing which he shows great penetration⁹) he was particularly careful to cherish them himself, to recommend them to others, and in due time to promote them, when their parts were well cultivated, and their piety well proved. 'He himself " was from his earliest years inflamed with ardent zeal to attain to Christian perfection ', " and he reckoned piety in youth to be the best, if not the only security for sanctity and usefulness in riper years.

Of how much importance he thought it to have churches supplied with such pastors as had been distinguished for their early piety, appears from the earnestness with which, a short time before his death, he recommended to his successor the care and promotion of a young man of whom he had justly, on this ac-

be expected that they will do all they can to make their children pious also. On the mother it much depends, whether the children shall, through eternity, have their portion with angels or with devils. How important is their trust! How solicitous should they be to discharge it well!

⁹ Id. i. 3. Hic puer, quamvis vilis videatur—bonis moribus et animæ virtutibus—sapientia quoque et prudentia crescit,—et grandis est futurus.—Hic, erat *Erneus*, postea per omnes Scotiæ ecclesias famosus et valde notissimus.

¹ *Odonell*. iii. 34.

count, conceived the highest hopes.—“Take particular heed, I beseech you, Baithen, to what I am now to say to you. After I shall be with Christ, which I earnestly look and long for, a youth of parts, piety, and study, named *Finten*, will readily come over from Ireland, and make one of your monks. But I beg you may not detain him here. Let him be the father of a monastery in Leinster, where he will faithfully feed the flock of Christ, and lead very many souls to glory ².”

When any probationer had not turned his attention to the ministry till he was far advanced in life, and consequently wanted those advantages which early habits of study and early devotedness to the sacred office might furnish, or when the character or qualifications of such were anyhow doubtful, he was remarkably cautious of receiving them, till they were long tried, and gave satisfying evidences of their fitness.—A man of this description came to him one day from Connaught, requesting to be put in orders. The saint, after some questioning and examination, seemed rather desirous to divert him from his purpose, however well he might have thought of his intentions. With this view he set before him the strictness

² Ad. i. 2.

of his monastic *rule*, and all the hardships and labours to which the sacred life was subject. The candidate heard them all without being in the least staggered. Be it so then, says Columba : but before I administer the vows to you, I require of you first to spend seven years of probation in a monastery to which I shall send you; that of Acha-luing in Ethica³.

As he was thus careful himself about the piety, parts, preparation, and views, of those whom he admitted to the sacred office, so was he much grieved, and moved with uncommon indignation, when he heard of any unworthy person having been ordained or admitted to the ministry by another. Being one day informed that *Aodb du' mac Sui'ne*, a man of high descent, but a regicide, long inured to crimes, had professed to change his mode of life, and had been afterwards admitted into holy orders, he uttered the following dreadful sentence, which Adomnan delivers as a prophecy, and says it

³ Ad. ii. 40.—The long course of education and probation required of his disciples by Columba must have contributed much to their usefulness, as well as to the fame which they acquired for learning, when the clergy of other parts of Europe were wofully ignorant. In the life of St. Munn, one of Columba's disciples, it is mentioned that his education took up eighteen years; in which there is no reason to think that he was singular.

was all fulfilled.—“ Perish the hand which *Finchan* laid upon that cursed head, and let it be dead and buried while himself is yet alive. As for *Aodh*, he will return to his former course of life, as the dog to his vomit, and be killed (as he did kill) by the edge of the sword¹. ”

To preserve the purity of his monks, and indeed of all good men, he taught them, as a matter of the highest consequence, to avoid as much as possible the company and conversation of the wicked, when their character was such as did not afford any prospect of their being reclaimed: His own practice was to have as little intercourse as possible with such, any further than necessity or piety required². Observing one day a man of this hopeless stamp about to land on his island, he immediately sent *Dermot* with orders not to allow him to set foot on the isle, but to send him instantly back to Mull³. On the other hand, he so strongly recommended the company of the good, and urged so much the advantage of having them always for associates, that he a-

¹ Ad. i. 36.—*Dermot* I. of Ireland was killed at Rathbeg by this *Aodh*, An. 565. *Ware*.

² Odonell. iii. 42.

³ Ad. i. 22.—*Ne hujus insulæ cespitem calcet.*

scribed Cormac's want of success, in an undertaking of great importance, to his not taking with him a man of much piety who wished to attend him⁴.

After what has been said it is almost unnecessary to add, that none ever showed greater affection and regard to such of the sacred order as lived and acted according to the spirit of their office. To them he seldom or never speaks without using the most tender and endearing names of brother, son, or child, or blessed, or some other expression of the same amount. But when he heard of any of them being openly profane, or formal and hypocritical in their profession⁵, or inattentive to the authority, dignity, and gravity becoming their sacred character, or countenancing and giving their presence to vain and idle amuse-

⁴ Id. i. 6. The zeal of Columba's disciples to discover unknown countries, in which they might propagate the gospel, was noticed before; and for this zeal none was more distinguished than Cormac, whose voyages into the ocean are often mentioned by Adomnan. Indeed all of them seem to have the same spirit. One of them (St. Mochon) being urged by his father to remain in his native country, replied, "You are indeed my father, but the Church is my mother, and wherever I can reap the best harvest, and do most service to the cause of Christ, that I consider as my country."—*Odonell*, iii. 24.

⁵ Ad. i. 35. et 21.

ments, though they should not otherwise share in them, he failed not to denounce against them, above all finners, the heaviest judgments of heaven⁶. Such was his sense of the sanctity of the office, his love for the souls of men, and his zeal for the service of God, that he could never see an unworthy person in this office, without expressing the strongest indignation. Seeing once an unholy priest officiate in celebrating the Eucharist, though he was not within his jurisdiction, he could not help being moved so far as to cry out—Ah! what a combination of clean and unclean things is here! the symbols of the sacred oblation of Christ administered by wicked hands⁷.

It would be doing great injustice to the character of Columba not to observe, that though his zeal, at some rare times, was thus moved with indignation against enormous vice, or clerical profaneness, yet he was habitually a man of great meekness and sweetness of temper, who had brought all his passions to subjection, and ruled his tongue by the strictest reins⁸. This, if we had no other evidence for

⁶ Ad. i. 17. Si quando videris pincernam in cæna ludentem, &c. scito te mox moriturum, &c.

⁷ Id. i. 41.

⁸ Linguam continuis cohibebat habenis. *Odonell.* iii. 41.

it, might easily be inferred from the general esteem and regard of all ranks for him, especially of his monks and servants. This general love and regard is seldom procured by the severer virtues, or even by good offices alone ; they must be accompanied by the softer graces of affability, meekness, condescension, and tenderness. For, though we may give our esteem to the former, we give our love only to the latter ; and these Columba possessed in a very high degree. All persons, rich or poor, who had occasion to see him, or even to solicit him, in regard to the concerns of soul or body, were sure of being received with a tender and cordial embrace, of being treated during their converse with every possible mark of benevolence, and dismissed with the most affectionate farewell and benediction⁹. Every caution which a deep concern for their welfare could suggest, he would give before he could part with them. “ This day, I beseech you, my son, take not the straight course to Ethica¹, but

⁹ Ad. i. 25, 18, 19, 20, 46, &c. Emigransem osculatus benediceret, &c.

¹ The Ethica so often mentioned by Adomnan, is probably the Island Eig, or Eic ; *th* being mute in Gaelic, and *a* but the Latin termination. It lay to the north of Iona, and Baithen leaving Iona in the morning, with a fair wind, got to Ethica before three o'clock in the afternoon. *Ad. ii. 15.*

rather sail round by the coast and small islands, for there are some whales in the channel, and I cannot think of your being in fear or danger ².”

Indeed, the near interest which Columba took in every thing that concerned his friends was so great, that he himself considered it as a frailty. This amiable virtue, he thought, might carry off his attention too much from the contemplation and pursuit of divine and heavenly objects ³. For, even when out of his sight, his friends and acquaintance were always present to his mind ⁴; inasmuch that if the wind but changed, he considered how that change might affect them, and consequently how he should pray or praise in regard to them. “Fourteen days now has the wind been from the north since Cormac left us. The danger to which he is driven, far beyond the reach of land, must surely be extreme. Let us, my brethren, go all to the church, and earnestly intercede with God in his behalf.” There, with bended knees and weeping voice,

² Id. i. 19.

³ Natura sum fragilis, et carnalium amicorum et propinquorum amore frequenter occupor. Quanto enim plus inferiora, tanto superiora et cœlestia minus diligimus. *In Vit. Molas. ap. Colgan.*

⁴ Ad. ii. 43. Absens corpore, spiritu tamen præsens, &c.

he prays to Him who rules the wind; and when it changes he gratefully returns to render thanks ⁵.

Towards his monks he always behaved with such meekness and love, as endeared his person to them so much, that any of them would willingly save his life at the expence of his own (of which an instance has been already noted), and perform whatever he desired, though at the hazard of perishing in the attempt ⁶. When he addressed them, it was always with the compellation of "brethren," or "children." When any of them offended himself, he forgave him ⁷; when any of them offended God, he prayed for him ⁸. His affection for them indeed was so great that he could hardly deny them any request, even the most unreasonable. When two of his monks, on a certain occasion, wished to know the cause of that wonderful joy which they perceived in his countenance, he strongly, but softly, checked their curiosity, and expressed his extreme unwillingness to disclose what he wished to keep

⁵ Ad. ii. 43. Flexis genibus et flebili voce Dominum ventorum, &c.

⁶ Id. ii. 28.

⁷ Id. iii. 16.

⁸ Fili, peccasti, et nisi ego orarem, &c.

secret.—“ Depart in peace, I beseech you, and do not urge me further about this affair.” They clung to his knees, they wept, they humbly entreated him to comply.—“ I cannot see you so sad, because I love you, said he, and will tell you, in the confidence that you will not, at least in my lifetime, reveal it⁹.” Is not this the picture of a meek and tender parent, with his little children around him?

Even his domestics, or working monks and servants, he generally addressed by the tender compellation of “ little children¹,” and instead of reproving them for any fault which did not proceed from design, would rather excuse and comfort them. One of them being ordered one day for Ireland, allowed the tide to carry away the leathern bottle (which he had for holding his milk) while it was steeping within the sea-mark. His master saw his concern, and said to him—My brother, be not concerned; to-morrow, when the tide returns, we may probably find the bottle².

⁹ Ad. iii. 22.

¹ Id. i. 12—filioli, &c.

² Id. ii. 39.—Bottles were then made of leather, as in other places in ancient times. Yet it appears from Adomnan (ii. 34.) that they had then some glass utensils, as he mentions the breaking of a glass cup used for drinking. How

Towards Dermot, especially, his pious and constant attendant, he discovers on all occasions rather the affection of a parent, than the authority of a master. With what tender concern, for instance, does he hang over his bed when he was thought at the point of death, and how earnestly does he request of God to heal and spare his servant Dermot, as long as he himself should remain in the present world³. His prayer was heard; and for at least thirty-four years, to the honour of both, he and Dermot lived together, and we may believe that death could not long divide them.

they vitrified their walls in a much earlier period is more inexplicable. An inquiry into the state of the arts in the Highlands, in ancient times, and into the causes of their decline afterwards, would afford matter for much curious investigation. The inquirer would probably meet with many facts that would lead him to suppose the population and civilization of the Highlands to have been in very ancient times superior to what they are even at present. It is at least 1500 years since a royal palace in Argyllshire, called Beregonium by historians, and *Bailenrigh* (the king's town) by the natives, ceased to be the residence of kings; yet, within these few years, a man who had been casting peats beside it, alighted upon the pipe by which the water had been conveyed under ground to the citadel.—See *Stat. Acc. of Ardbhattan*.

³ Ad. ii. 30.—ad lectulum stans—"Exorabilis mihi fias precor, mi Domine, et animam mei ministratoris pii, de hujus carnis habitaculo, me superstitute non auferas."

Every part of Columba's domestic character is marked with sensibility and tenderness. Even in the necessary labours imposed upon his monks, his feeling soul took a share, and ministered to them every consolation in his power. For this purpose would he visit them at their work, carried in a wain or wheel-carriage¹, when by reason of age or infirmity he could not go otherwise; so that their joy and happiness in his service was by themselves confessed to be greater than they could express by language. From the toil of the day they always returned home cheerful and glad at night, and from the love which they bore to their master, they felt not the weight of their burden. There is something, said one of the oldest of them, which makes me so happy and glad, that even when I am bearing this burden I do not perceive the weight of it².

¹ Adomnan has occasion to make frequent mention of chariots or wheel-carriages, and mentions it as miraculous, that Columba had travelled in one for a whole day without the wheel's having fallen off the axle, although, by neglect, it had not been secured by the axle-pin. It is to be regretted that Adomnan gives only thus some incidental hints of the state of society in the time in which he lived. From these, however, it appears that there has been a great falling off at a later period.

² Id. iii. 23. et ii. 29.—et i. 37.—Vespere redeuntes—unus ex eis senior—Quoddam in tantum lætificat—ut me oneratum non sentiam.

For the monks of other monasteries, even the most distant of his jurisdiction, he had the same tender regard, entered deeply into their joy or sorrow, grieving when they were grieved, and rejoicing when they rejoiced. On a certain winter's day, which was excessively cold, the saint was observed to be in the utmost distress, and even to weep bitterly. His servant, Dermot, took the liberty to ask the cause of his sorrow, and got the following answer:—
 “It is not without reason, my child, that I am this day so sad. My monks in *Durrough* are, at this inclement season, sadly oppressed by Laifran, who keeps them at hard labour to build him a larger house.”—Soon after he learned that Laifran had relented, and put a stop to the work till the weather should be milder; upon which he rejoiced exceedingly, communicated the glad tidings to his brethren, and blessed the relenting heart of Laifran³.

³ Ad. i. 29.—Laifran, or Lafran, “a man of zeal,” was the name of several saints and monks. One of them is called *hortulanus*, and *hortularius*, “the gardener.” Many of those saints employed themselves occasionally in practising and teaching useful arts as well as sciences; taking every method to make themselves acceptable and useful in order to benefit and civilize mankind. Hence some of them are designed by the arts which they occasionally taught and practised. One of the St. Ciarans is called *Saighr*, or “the carpenter;” and St.

The tenderness and sensibility of Columba were indeed exquisite, and easily interested

Senach is denominated *Faber*, “the smith,” or rather “a maker of iron;” as may be inferred from a passage in Odonellus, in which he is said to have been, on a certain occasion, employed in melting and forging that metal (“liquendis cudendisque ferramentis occupatus”). This gives some probability to the current tradition, that the Highlanders possessed the art of making their own iron; that the slag or dross frequently to be met with on the mountains, marks the stance of their forges; and that the posterity of those artists are those who still bear the surname of *Mac-an-Fhuibher* or *Mac-an-Fhaibher* (Lat. *Faber*), and call themselves in English MacNuier and MacNair; the *fh* and *bh* being mute in the Gaelic words.

Of what sciences were taught in Iona, besides divinity, we have no particular account. But as Columba was himself well skilled in physic, we may believe that he would not fail to teach his disciples a science that would contribute so much to their usefulness. The *Olla Ileach*, and *Olla Muileach*, the ancient and famous line of physicians in Ilay and in Mull, must no doubt have derived their first knowledge from this seminary. I had from Major Maclachlan, in the neighbouring island of Luing, a MS. in the Irish character and language, on the subject of medicine and surgery, which appeared, from being compared with Astruc's specimens, to have been of a most remote antiquity, and it is most likely that it was written by some of the learned men in Iona. That they studied the laws, customs, and histories of nations is plain, from their having been the persons whom Aidan carried with him to the council of Drimkeat, to vindicate his title to his throne (upwards of 100 of them, according to *Odonellus*, iii. 2. having accompanied him for that purpose), and also from the

him not only in what concerned his friends and domestics, but any part of the human race however distant. One evening, as one of the monks came to speak to him after grinding the corn, he observed his master's countenance (which always used to be serene, cheerful, and pleasant) so full of terror and concern, that he ran hastily back, greatly alarmed, and unable to account for so extraordinary and unusual an appearance. After a little time, however, he took courage, went back, and requested to know the cause. The saint told him that he had just learned that a city of Italy was destroyed by lightning, by which above 3000 souls had perished ⁴.

To those who were nearer hand, Columba gave more substantial proofs of his regard than outward signs. He discharged every social duty with the utmost care, doing good to all, and giving cause of offence to none. His

claims of the rival kings having been referred to St. Columba, and when declined by him to St. Colman Eala, who has the character of having been "well versed in sacred and profane literature, and particularly in the antiquities of Ireland." How well they studied the languages appears from the excellent Latin of Cumin, and of Adomnan, who discovers also his knowledge of Greek and Hebrew; and wrote a geography of the Holy Land.

⁴ Id. i. 28.---Supposed to be Civitas Nova, *Notker in Martyrol.*

caution in this last respect was extremely great. His monks had one day cut some stakes and wands to repair their houses, of which, perhaps, the sides as well as roof were made of wicker, or wands woven on stakes ⁵. The possessor of the ground from which they were taken was somewhat displeased, although such things were at that time, and for ages after, considered as no man's property, and indeed of no value in a country over-run with wood. Yet the saint, when he heard of it, could not bear to have any man offended, and therefore immediately sent him a valuable present of barley for feed, and to enhance its value, and show his benevolence, he sent his benediction along with it ⁶.

⁵ Such houses were afterwards plastered with clay, and made no uncomfortable habitations. Adomnan mentions that a celestial light was seen to dart through the key-hole of a house in which Columba had been privately praying; from which it may be inferred that the house had no other chinks in it, otherwise this would not be particularly mentioned. The reason that we see so few remains of buildings prior to the use of lime, is, because many of them were constructed in this manner. Some buildings however of very remote antiquity were built in the most sufficient style. The walls of one of these erected on the promontory of Kintyre, are above eleven feet in thickness; for what purpose it is difficult to say.

⁶ Ad. ii. 3.

In every shape, indeed, his benevolence exerted itself towards all within his reach, and moved him to compassionate alike the souls and bodies of men. If they were in prison, he visited and comforted them⁷; if in bondage, he redeemed them⁸. Silver and gold, it is true, he had not often; but what he had he cheerfully gave away. A valuable spear, embellished with ivory, is the price of one; and

⁷ Id. i. 11.

⁸ Id. ii. 40. et ii. 34. Slavery is utterly inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel; and so hostile to it was Columba, that, contrary to his usual practice, he not only refused to give medicines to a master that was sick, but also assured him that his disease would soon prove fatal, if he did not accept the condition upon which he offered his assistance, and give liberty to his female-slave, which till then he could not prevail with him to do. Of slaves or captives there seem to have been but a few instances in the jurisdiction of Columba, and his zeal in their behalf must have soon procured their liberty. We do not find that this kind of slavery prevailed afterwards in the Highlands. In Ireland it did; and Giraldus Cambrensis (i. 18.) says, that at a general convocation of the clergy, &c. in 1170, the calamities which the Irish then suffered, were ascribed to their having been in the practice of buying slaves from England, partly stolen, and partly sold by their parents; and that it was then ordained that all the English slaves in Ireland should have their liberty. Colgan, who cites the passage, wishes that the English would, in their turn, follow this example; lest, as they were deeper in the guilt, their punishment would be more severe.

restoring the sick master to health is done on condition of obtaining release to another: contrary to his usual practice of giving his trouble, skill, and medicine freely⁹. For, whenever he heard any was in sickness, he not only visited him, and prayed for him, and that too with such tender emotion as showed how much his heart was affected¹, but also administered medicines, with which he often sent messengers as far as other kingdoms².

When the ailments of his patients were of such a nature as to allow them to travel, he encouraged them to come and stay with him, that he might be the better enabled to understand their diseases; and that, if he could not restore them to health, he might at least prepare them for dying. The value of an immortal soul, capable of everlasting happiness or endless misery, he knew to be inconceivably great; and the right improvement of the few

⁹ When the rich, however, chose to make him presents on this account, he did not refuse them. We find one of the kings of Ireland, on the recovery of his son, rewarding Columba with 30 head of cattle; and another of them, on a similar occasion, makes him a gift of lands for building and endowing the monastery of *Drim-eliabh*. *Odonell*. i. 56, 60.

¹ Id. ii. 31, 32.

² Id. ii. 4, 5.

precious moments allowed by Heaven for its probation, to be a matter of unspeakable consequence. If, therefore, he might help any one whose moments of grace had not yet expired, to form one good purpose, perform one good deed, or if he could excite one pious sentiment in their soul, he knew it would be of more value than if he could give them a kingdom. Such opportunities, therefore, as conferred the power of doing this, he eagerly sought for; and when the duty of residence (with which he seems unwilling to dispense but when the reason was great and urgent) did not permit his going from his charge at home, he wished to have those who approached near their end brought where he was.—Go, said he to two of his monks, to the cell of *Diun*, at Loch-ava, and tell *Cailtan* to make no delay in coming hither. *Cailtan* came, and the saint told him, that as he understood his life was near a close, he wished to have him with himself, that, as a lover and friend of his soul, he might help him to finish his course with the greater comfort ³.

Such was the hospitality of Columba, that, without being sent for, any one might come, and assuredly rely on being made welcome, not only for days, but for months or years, if

³ Ad. i. 31. He died within a week.

this were to do him service¹. Two strangers, on a certain Sabbath day², cried on the other side of the little frith that separates *Hy* from Mull. Make haste, said Columba, and bring the strangers over. They came; the saint saluted them; and having inquired into the cause of their coming, they told him that they came with an intention to remain with him during that year. The saint probably perceiving that their state of health would not permit them to live so long (as he hinted to some others), recommended to them to enter into the number, and to commence the life of monks. They did so, and died within the space of a month.

Hospitality, in a country thinly inhabited, and in a rude state of society, is a virtue of the first order. Columba therefore recommended it strongly by his preaching, and en-

¹ Id. iii. 7. Peregrinus ad sanctum perveniens, per aliquot apud eum menses in Hyona commanebat.

Id. i. 32. Ut hoc anno apud te peregrinemus venimus.

² Perhaps the circumstance of its being the Sabbath day, is mentioned in order to show that Columba preferred the exercise of mercy to the observance of a positive precept; as he himself set so strict an example of observing the Sabbath, that when he travelled, he always remained wherever the sun went down upon him on Saturday evening, till it rose on Monday morning (*Colgan.* p. 410.). Without a due observance of the Sabbath, small must be the influence and effect of religion.

forced it by the sanction of promises and threats³, but more especially by his own example; without which the preacher must always preach in vain. Besides, Columba's manner of discharging this duty, and his attentions to his guests, were such as greatly enhanced the merit of the performance. Before the guests have yet arrived, he orders the water to be got ready for bathing their feet, to refresh them after the fatigues of the journey⁴; and, like a true minister of that religion which prefers mercy to sacrifice, he dissolves even the solemnity of a fast, for the sake of discharging the duty of hospitality to the weary and hungry traveller⁵.

Columba's own regard to hospitality, and its vast necessity and value in such places and times, may account for the high indignation which a man of so meek and mild a spirit ex-

³ Ad. ii. 20, 21.

⁴ Id. i. 4.

⁵ Id. i. 26. This fast is said to have been on the 4th day of the week (or Wednesday), and called "the customary fast;" whence it appears that they kept on this day a weekly fast; a practice which, Colgan says, continued in the Irish church till the beginning of last century when he wrote. The day observed by the Romish church was Friday. Adomnan calls the days of the week by their ordinal number after the LORD's day; not by their Roman names.

pressed upon an occasion on which its sacred laws were most atrociously broken, and the crime complicated with murder. Taran, a Pictish exile of noble descent, was anxiously recommended by the saint, for a few months, to the care of a powerful man in Ilay, of the name of Feradach; who, instead of protecting as he promised, ordered him, after some few days, to be put to the sword. The saint, who probably considered himself as accountable for the exile, soon heard of his having been murdered by Feradach, and thus gave vent to his emotion:—"It is not to me, but to God, that the poor unhappy man hath lied. His name shall be blotted out of the book of life. It is now midsummer, and in autumn, before he shall have tasted the flesh of his hogs, after they shall have fed upon the nuts, he shall suddenly die, and suffer the just reward of his crimes."—Feradach hoped to belie the prophecy, by procuring the earliest nuts, and killing a boar which ate of some of them, before the usual time. But on the very day, or rather at the very instant, when it was just brought to him, and when he thought to have tasted of it, according to Adomnan, he fulfilled the prediction⁶.

⁶ Ad. i. 24 Extensam manum, priusquam ad os converteret, expirans, mortuus, retro in dorsum cecidit.

This, and one or two similar denunciations in the life of Columba, will be ascribed by some to a prophetic impulse, and by others to a spark of passion, struck, even out of a sanctified heart, by the collision of a very strong provocation. Accordingly, some will perhaps place them to the score of merit, and others to that of defect or foible. I shall only observe that whatever may be thought of these instances, Columba's ordinary and habitual frame of spirit was of the most placable and forgiving nature. Few, if any, ever gave him more trouble or opposition than the Pictish priest, or *Druidh*, Broichan⁷. Yet when he heard, as he travelled near his place of residence, that this man was thought to be a-dying, he made all possible expedition to heal him⁸. And though it is well known that the bards, in Columba's time, were become a nuisance to society in

⁷ Broichan had the merit, however, of dealing in a more open and avowed manner than some of his brethren. Odonellus (ii. 11.) relates, that when Columba first landed in Iona, on Pentecost eve, some druids who had been there, disguised themselves in the habit of monks, and pretended they had come to that place to preach the gospel, with a request that he and his followers might betake themselves to some other place; but that Columba immediately discovered the imposture, and that they resigned the field to him.

⁸ Ad. ii. 34.

general, and extremely adverse to the views of those who propagated the Christian religion, yet at the great council of *Drimceat*, when all the other members unanimously agreed upon their being put to death, and an end being put to the order, Columba alone interceded in their behalf, and by his great influence the bards were saved ⁹.

⁹ O'Conner and O'Flaherty, cit. ap. Pink. in *Ad.* i. 50. The bards from their connection with the druids, whose superstition was to be set aside, were very troublesome to the first preachers of Christianity, some of whom were not disposed to show them the same charity with Columba. Poor St. Colman was so provoked by them as to wish at length that the earth might swallow them as it did Korah and Abiram (*Vit. S. Colm.* 7 Jun.). But Columba was not only fond of their poetry (*Ad.* i. 42.), and a poet himself, but of a different spirit; though he too was often teased by them. Odonellus mentions one occasion on which they threatened to lampoon him for not giving them, when at the time he had nothing about him to bestow: and such was his tender regard for his character, that he was obliged to wipe the sweat from his face with his hand, before he got clear of them. Afterwards, however, they were very grateful for his intercession in their favour; and Dallan, the chief of them, exerted all his skill to praise him. When he had recited but a part of the poem to the saint, who seemed to be much pleased with it, Baithan, fearing that even his master might be elated with the praise, as well as pleased with the poetry, put him upon his guard, by telling him that he saw a black cloud of *cacodæmons*, or evil spirits, hovering over his head. Columba took the hint, ordered the poet to stop, and never to repeat the poem after-

When the injury or provocation was directly offered to himself, he was equally ready to forgive, and even to return his enemies good for evil. A thief had gone from Colonsay to Mull, with a view of carrying away some of the saint's property on a small adjoining island¹. Before he could get off, he was discovered, apprehended, and brought to the saint, who thus addressed him: "Why do you thus go on in the practice of stealing your neighbour's goods, and breaking the commandment of God? For the future, come to me whenever you are in need, and you shall have what you have occasion for."—At the same time he ordered some wedders to be killed and given him, that he might not return empty to his poor family. And learning soon after that he was not likely to live long,

wards; adding, that no man should be praised until he had reached the goal and finished his course. Dallan waited till Columba did so; and then published his poem, which was well known in Ireland till very lately (if not still) by the name of *Ambra Cholum-chille*, or the Eulogy of Columkille. *Colgan*, p. 432.

¹ Ad parvam insulam, ubi marini nostri juris vituli generantur et generant: ut de illis furtim, suam replens naviculam, &c. It is to be regretted, that Adomnan did not transmit the knowledge of the now unknown art by which Columba was able to make a property of seals or sea-calves, so as to put it in the power of any one to steal, or fill his boat with them.

he ordered a fat mutton and fix measures of corn to be sent to him; which, as he died about the time in which the supply arrived, served the occasion of his funeral ².

It is only in those cases in which finners were past all hopes of reformation that Columba gave them up: and even then, his severe sentence might be uttered as the last effort of a gracious spirit to rouse and to reclaim them. If, after all, finners went on and died impenitent (an event which we cannot suppose his threatenings would hasten), no man could be more grieved. The severest groans that ever broke from his heart, were those to which he gave vent, when he heard of finners having died in their impenitence ³.

But when any person repented of his sins, none could possibly show more regard and tenderness. On the top of the eminence above his monastery, Columba sat one day, looking out most anxiously for the appearance of a sail from Ireland. Dermot was near him; and to him he expressed his concern at not seeing a vessel which he expected to arrive on that day, with a man who had fallen into

² Ad. i. 42.

³ Id. i. 44.—Gemitu ingemuit mœsto—quod mutuis vulneribus transfixi, &c.

some grievous sin, for which he now laboured under the sincerest sorrow and repentance. Dermot soon after told him that he perceived a sail making towards the port. Then, said the saint, let us quickly rise and meet the penitent; for Christ himself receives the penitent. Fechnus landed; Columba ran to embrace him; mingled his tears of joy with the tears of sorrow shed by the other, while he thus addressed him: "My son, I beseech thee take comfort; the sins which thou hast committed are forgiven; for it is written, *A broken and a contrite heart God will not despise* ⁴.

In speaking of the benevolence and tenderness of Columba's heart, we must not omit his charity in relieving, and procuring relief for, the needy, by every method in his power ⁵; besides praying for the blessing of God to increase their store ⁶.

In one of the accounts of his life, published by Colgan, we are told, that after he had erected the monastery of Durrough, he ordered a hundred poor persons to be served with victuals every day at a certain hour, and appointed an almoner for that purpose. One day a mendicant came to apply for a share of this charity, but was told by the almoner that

⁴ Ad. i. 30.

⁵ Id. ii. 38.

⁶ Id. ii. 20.

he could have nothing, as the appointed number had been already served. He came the second day, and was told in like manner that he was come too late, and that for the future he must come earlier, if he expected his share of the charity. The third day, however, he came as late as before, and when the almoner gave him the same reply as formerly, he bade him go and tell from him to the abbot that he ought not to limit his charity by any precise rules which God had not prescribed, but always to give while he had, in whatever number, time, or manner, the poor should apply to him. Columba, upon receiving this message, ran hastily after the mendicant, who had then assumed a heavenly form; which gave him to understand to whom he was indebted for the counsel. From that day forward he laid aside his rules, and gave to all objects, at all times, provided he had any thing to bestow. If at any time he had not, his tears would flow, till God enabled him to relieve their wants. Hence, adds the writer, he was esteemed, what he really was, the common father and patron of the poor and needy¹.

Next the salvation of souls, the object which

¹ *Colgan. Trias.* p. 377 et 438.

most engaged the heart of Columba was charity. St. Mobith, who had just built a church, brought St. Ciaran, St. Kenneth, and St. Columba to see it, and desired each of them to say with what things he would have it filled, if he had his wish. Ciaran, who spoke first, said he would wish to have it filled with holy men ardently engaged in celebrating the praises of God. Kenneth said his wish would be to have it filled with sacred books, which should be read by many teachers, who would instruct multitudes, and stir them up to the service of God. And I, said Columba, would wish to have it filled with silver and gold, as a fund for erecting monasteries and churches, and for relieving the necessities of the poor. And to you, said Mobith, God will give the power to do what you now wish to perform².

Even Baithen, who had so much of the spirit of his master, thought that Columba sometimes rather exceeded in the exercise of alms-deeds, or charity. One day as the reapers were employed in cutting the corn, Baithen came home before them to see if their victuals were ready, and was much dissatisfied at finding that Columba had given to the hungry the most of what had been made ready for the

reapers. But his master, with a mild and tranquil voice, told him that God would repay with interest whatever was given away for his sake, and that he would find that what remained would, with God's blessing, be enough to satisfy the reapers³.

Of all Columba's virtues, indeed, none was more conspicuous than charity⁴. He never saw any man, in any distress, without doing all he could to relieve him; and nothing grieved him more than to see a rich man void of charity to the poor; an evil which he laboured so much to cure, that on one occasion we find him refusing to partake of a rich man's entertainment, till he brought him to a sense of his sin in this respect, and to a promise of amendment⁵.

His detestation of avarice is strongly marked by an incident recorded by Odonellus. Two mendicants, the one noted for his careful, the

³ Id. p. 411.

⁴ Sed inter reliquas omnes ejus virtutes singularis prærogativa charitatis et misericordiæ facile principem locum tenuit. Neminem uquam in aliqua corporis vel animæ necessitate constitutum intelligebat, cui, qua poterat, ope vel opera non contenderit subvenire. Cum laborantibus laborabat, cum infirmantibus infirmabatur; cum flentibus semper, et cum non flentibus sæpe flebat. *Ibid.* p. 437.

⁵ Ad. i. 51.

other for his dissipated turn of mind, applied to him at the same time for charity. To the first he gave a little money, but to the last a great deal more. Some who were with him at the time, expressed their disapprobation at his giving most to the one who, in their opinion, was the least deserving. Columba desired them to inquire what use each made of what he gave them. They did so, and found that the first, who happened to die immediately after, had put up what he got with ten pieces of gold which he had sewed in his garment; while the other had taken the first opportunity of spending what he had got, and giving all about him a liberal share of what he had purchased^c.

In any of the sacred order, especially, he was so shocked at seeing a want of charity to the poor, or that avaricious and tenacious turn of mind from which it springs, that this made one of the rare provocations, which, as already observed, made him lose the calm tenor of his soul, and, for a moment, give place to the feelings of an indignant spirit.—*Gallan*, one of the clergy of your diocese, said he to Bishop *Colgion*, I understand is just now dead. His

^c Mag. Odonell. iii. 53. See Poem against Avarice, in the Appendix.

heart was hard and avaricious; and his soul is now with devils ⁷."

On the other hand, he showed the highest regard, and gave the warmest commendation, to every person of distinguished charity. Here, said he on a very public occasion, is the gift of a rich man who has mercy for the poor; and therefore, mercy shall eternally reward his bounty ⁸. He was particularly delighted when at any time he discovered a high degree of this amiable virtue in a man of mean or ordinary circumstances.—In the inland parts of Scotia⁹, says Adomnan, lived *Colum Coilrin*, a smith by occupation, remarkable for his virtues, and above all, much given to alms-deeds and charity. In an advanced age he died; of which Columba, having got immediate notice, thus spoke to those who were with him at the time: "Happy man! who, with the labour of his hands, hath obtained from God such eternal rewards in heaven: for, whatever he could make of his trade, that he gave to the poor in

⁷ Ad. i. 35.

⁸ Id. i. 51.

⁹ When Adomnan wrote, Scotia or Scotland was one of the names for Ireland, which afterwards came to be appropriated to this country, when the Scottish nation had attained to considerable power in it, after their return from Ireland, into which they had been driven by the Picts.

charity. And now his soul is conducted by the holy angels to the glory and joy of the celestial paradise¹."

Compassion, indeed, was so strongly marked on the soul of Columba, that he was disposed, on all occasions, to exercise it, not only to his own species, but to every creature under heaven. Some person had once the presumption to request of him to bless his dagger. "God grant then, said the saint, it may never shed a drop of the blood of either man or beast²."

The following incident will further illustrate this part of Columba's character: A crane had one day taken its flight across the seas from Ireland, and, by the time it drew near the shore of Iona, was so spent that it was obliged to alight in the water. The saint foresaw that this was likely to be its fate, and had already ordered one of his monks away, though it was at the most distant part of the island, to take up the poor bird, and save its life. Bring it, said he, to the nearest house, feed it, and take all the care you can of it for three days, till it be well refreshed, and recover its strength, so as to be able to cross the sea again to its native home. The monk obeyed, and the saint was

¹ Ad. iii. 9.

² Id. ii. 30.

thankful.—“For this act of mercy and hospitality, may God command on thee his blessing, my dear brother.”—“What a beautiful picture (says the late editor of Adomnan) have we in this chapter of the benevolence of Columba ³.”

Another incident of the like nature occurs in the account which we have of the transactions of the saint's dying day ⁴. He had been to see and to bless the provision of his monks, from whom he was on that day to be taken away. On his return to the monastery, he sat down on the way to rest him. His old white horse, which used to carry the milk vessels betwixt the monastery and the fold, observed him, came where he was, reclined his head upon his breast, and, as if sensible of his master's near departure, began to express his grief by groans, and even tears. Dermot offered to turn him away, but the saint forbade: Let him alone, said he, let him alone, for he loves me, and I will not hinder him on this occasion to drop his tears in my bosom, and show the bitterness of his grief. To thee

³ Pinkerton in Ad. i. 49. The title of this chapter in Adomnan is “Of a certain circumstance which, though small, ought not, I think, to be overlooked.”—Pity if it had, for it is owing to those softer tints that pictures charm us.

⁴ Ad. iii. 23.

God hath given reason; but see (that they might not be despised), he hath planted affection even in brutes; and in this, even something like a prescience of my departure. Now, my faithful and affectionate friend, be gone, and may you be kindly cared for by Him who made you!

It is with particular pleasure I observe in how high a degree Columba possessed another and higher species of charity than that which I have been speaking of; I mean the liberality and candour of his sentiments, in allowing a share in the mansions of the blessed to the truly virtuous of every persuasion. When men, unenlightened by the gospel, lived according to the light of nature and of conscience (dim as it was), God, he believed, would accept them for their having improved the talent which they received, without exacting of them any account of the talent which they received not. The honest Heathen, who had a disposition to receive the gospel, if he had a tender of it, obtains at his dismissal, like the Christian saint, a convoy of holy angels. Travelling one day along the side of Lochness, and having got intelligence of a worthy Heathen in the neighbourhood being at the point of death, he made no scruple to say to those

about him, that the angels were already come down from heaven to conduct the soul of that man to glory. At the same time he did not think it unnecessary, at least not improper, to hasten his pace, and if he could overtake it, give him an opportunity, which he probably heard the man had wished for, of being initiated into the Christian faith by baptism¹.

It deserves to be noticed, as a matter very congenial to this candour of soul, that Columba is said to have forever maintained a cheerfulness of countenance, and an angel-like aspect², which strongly attracted the love of

¹ Ad. iii. 14.—A similar instance is mentioned (i. 33.) of a man in Sky, “naturale per totam bonum custodiens vitam,” &c. This man, who appears to have been a stranger, and probably a Roman officer (*primarius cohortis*), landed here by some accident, is the only instance in which we find Columba using an interpreter; so that it is highly probable the northern Picts used, with perhaps some difference of dialect, the same language with the Scots. In most cases we find the conquerors, being the fewest in number, have adopted the language of the conquered.

² Id. i. 1.—*Aspectu angelicus*,—*hilarem semper faciem ostendens*.—*J. Finmuthensis*, in his account of Columba (ap. *Colgan*. p. 332.) makes this a part of his short, but comprehensive character of him (*aspectu angelicus, sermone nitidus, opere sanctus, ingenio perspicax, et consilio magnus*), “his countenance was angelic, his speech elegant, his conduct holy, his understanding clear, and his designs magnificent.”

the beholder, and at the same time showed how much his soul was filled with that heavenly joy which is the fruit of the SPIRIT, and the present portion of the genuine sons of God³. Some may perhaps think that the austere and mortified life which Columba led was inconsistent with this cheerfulness of aspect and joy of spirit. But if we make a due allowance for the difference of the times, the force of this objection will entirely be removed. His sleeping on the bare ground, for instance, with a stone for his pillow, was no extraordinary mortification for a monk, when the luxury of the rich could afford, perhaps, but a little straw⁴. Besides, it was prudent for him to inure himself from choice to those habits of life at home, to which he must have generally submitted from necessity when he travelled abroad. The life of Columba was indeed mortified and self-denied, but had in it nothing irrational or unmeaning; nothing that looked like superstitious penance, or tormenting himself with unmeaning hardships.

³ Ad. i. 1. Sanctorum specie, sancti spiritus gaudio in intimis lætificabatur præcordiis.

⁴ Feather beds, however, were not at that time unknown. That of Roderick king of Strath-Clyde is mentioned. *Plumatiuncula*; lectulus plumis confertus. *Du Cange*.

Accordingly, one of his biographers observes, that notwithstanding his austere and toilsome life, by which he was much spent and extenuated, yet he was comely in his dress and outward appearance, of a florid countenance and cheerful aspect; inasmuch that he looked like one who lived in a nice and delicate manner⁵.

Useless and ostentatious austerity he avoided himself, and disliked in others. Hence, we find him sharply reproving a person who, by way of doing penance, affected to impose upon himself hardships which neither God nor his spiritual guides required⁶. He looked upon

⁵ Odonell. iii. 43.—*Exteriora forma et corporis habitu speciosus, genis rubicundus, et vultu hilaris, quasi homo in deliciis enutritus, semper apparebat.*

⁶ Ad. i. 21.—From the title and first line of it (*Colgan*. p. 472.), it would appear that one of Columba's Irish poems was intended to correct some mistakes of this nature.

“Fioruisge maith a ciall maith a tuigse.”

“From the Fountain of Truth nothing can flow but what is agreeable to reason and sound judgment.”—The writers of the *Acta SS.* (ii. 233.) have therefore much mistaken the meaning of a phrase in Adomnan (iii. 16.), of Columba's going out to pray “in hiemalibus,” though they might have understood it from the substantive supplied in the next page of their edition “hiemali nocte.” They understand it of the practice of some saints, especially of Britain and Ireland, who used to subdue the body with the rigours of cold, by praying at night in the midst of ice and snow, and even immersed to the neck

every part of religion as a pleasure, and practised it from choice, not as an imposed task or burden. No wonder then if it filled his heart with joy, and his countenance with gladness, for this is always its genuine effect on every one who rightly understands its doctrines, and sincerely obeys its precepts. This is, besides, the most effectual means to recommend our holy religion to others who are yet strangers to its power. Yes, cheerfulness is, indeed, *the beauty of holiness*, and contributed no doubt to Columba's acceptableness and usefulness, in conjunction with his affability, tenderness, and lowliness of mind; for lowliness of mind or humility shone in the character of Columba as much as any other quality, though he did not at any time affect or make a show of it?

He was not only easy of access to all who came for either charity or instruction, as also affable and cheerful, as became one who was filled with so much inward joy, but so humble

in cold water. This fashion, which never prevailed much, has passed away. But it may serve to make us think how little we do, for what others did so much. If they erred on one extreme, let us take care that we do not err upon another, which is more dangerous.

Q. Marg. and K. David of Scotland, used to wash the feet of six beggars every night to exercise and show their humility; not considering that if the proud or evil spirit thus went out of *one*, he must have entered into *six*.

as to condescend to the meanest service by which he could do good, and to take a share in grinding the corn, and other manual labour of the monks. The preference to which he was entitled he never assumed, being always disposed to think less highly of himself than of others ⁸.

The greatest saints are always the most humble: a truth of which this man is an instance; although he had more temptation to pride than most men of his own or any other age. Courted, visited, and loved by all the petty kings and princes of Scotland and Ireland ⁹; revered and almost adored by the great body of their people, who crowded the roads where he travelled, and brought their gifts to entertain him where he lodged ¹; obeyed by armies of monks in both kingdoms; and his company sought after by their bishops and abbots ², who, without any mark of envy or emulation, acknowledged his vastly superior

⁸ Omnibus necessitatis vel utilitatis causa accedentibus se colloquio affabilem, benignum, jucundum, et interioris lætitiæ a spiritu sancto infusæ indicia hilari vultu prodentem, se semper exhibebat. Tantæ erat humilitatis ut in manuali, &c. *Odon.* iii. 42. et 39.

⁹ Ad. iii. 5. et i. 15. et i. 10.

¹ Id. i. 51.

² Ad. ii. 13. et iii. 17, &c.

merit—what fuel was this to inflame his pride, if the last spark of it had not been quite extinguished ! But we find Columba the same meek and lowly man to the very last, and so little uplifted with all the honours that could be done to him, that upon an occasion on which a whole country poured out to meet him, and surrounded him with hymns of joy and songs of gladness, his whole attention is taken up with a poor boy, whom he had singled out of the crowd, on account of something in him which he thought a promising sign of piety and future usefulness. On what might glorify God or benefit man his thoughts were intent, and not on the glare of the triumph ³.

Of modesty, a virtue near akin to humility, Columba's biographers frequently observe that he had an uncommon share. The Office for his Festival says, that virgin-modesty was one of the particular graces given him by God ; and Odonnellus says, that his modesty was such that he could hardly look at any woman directly in the face ⁴. Nor is it improper to

³ Id. i. 3.

⁴ It deserves to be remarked, that notwithstanding this modesty of Columba, none could be bolder in the discharge of his duty; in doing which he feared not the face of man.

observe that this modesty is remarked to have been one of the guards by which the avenue of the eyes was defended against the entrance of any illicit thought that might infect his pure mind: for without strictly guarding the avenues of the senses, even saints ought not to presume on being secure from temptation. Columba, zealous of angelic purity and evangelic perfection, watched these doors with diligence, that nothing might enter in to hurt himself, nor so much as an idle word come out to hurt another. Perhaps some may think his caution was excessive, and that his vigilance and labour both were more than were necessary. His own answer to some who told him so was, *For every idle word we have an account to render.* He who does not strive shall never be crowned; he who does not run shall never win the race. To enter heaven requires all

When, by imposition of hands, he constituted Aidan king, he not only told him his duty plainly, and charged him to observe it, and to teach his children in the fear of God to do the same; but also denounced the heaviest judgments against him and them if they did not. "In that case," said he, "the lash which I endured from the angel, on thy account, shall be laid upon thee, and the sceptre shall be wrested from the hands of thy children." *Cumin et Ad. iii. 5.*

our exertion, and can never be expected by the secure and indolent⁵.

From spiritual pride Columba was so free, that he avoided mentioning any of those special vouchsafements which were made to his soul: or if the importunity of any who chanced to discover the effects of them, extorted from him a reluctant account of them, it was under promise or oath that as long as he lived they should say nothing of the matter⁶. And though no man was more instant or earnest in prayer, he is ready to ascribe the favours which he receives, not so much to his own prayers for them, as to the prayers of others⁷. How amiable is such humility, and how well-becoming every follower, and especially every minister, of the meek and lowly Jesus! And how incompatible is pride with their character, with their office, and with their usefulness.

With pride, or even pomp and magnificence in any clergyman, Columba had no patience; nor could he see it without being moved with

⁵ Nemo dormiens coronabitur, nemo securus possidet regna cœlorum, &c. *Offic. S. Col. et Odonell.* iii. 41.

⁶ Id. iii. 7.—Nullo modo in hominum notitiam passus fit—ut jactantiam devitaret, &c. Id. i. 44. Sancti et Apostoloci viri vanam evitantis gloriam, &c.

⁷ Id. ii. 12.

indignation and denouncing its downfall. Observing one day a man driving his carriage along the plain of *Bres*, in much state, and only intent on his amusements, he asked who he was; and being told he was a rich clergyman, he replied, "He may be so now, and enjoy his amusement and pleasure; but he is a poor man, indeed, on the day on which he dies¹." To see a clergyman depart from the gravity and sanctity of his character, or pass in diversion and idleness the time that should be devoted to the duties of his calling, is what Columba, with all his meekness, could never bear. So awful, in his opinion, was the nature of the sacred character and office.

After so large an account of Columba's life and character, it may be expected that something should be said of his doctrine. A man of so much concern for the souls of men, we should naturally suppose to be faithful in declaring to them the whole counsel of God. And for this his early education, and unwearied perseverance in study rendered him peculiarly qualified. His passion for studying the scriptures, especially, was most intense, when the other parts of ministerial duty allowed him to indulge it. Thus we find him

¹ Ad. i. 39.

sometimes engaged for whole days and nights in exploring dark and difficult passages of scripture, and accompanying his study and application with prayer and fasting ².

Hence, Columba, and his disciples for several generations, had a clearer and better knowledge of the gospel than most of their contemporaries, and taught it to the people in its native purity and simplicity. With the errors which at that time prevailed in the Church of Rome they seem not to have been in the least tainted ³. Columba, instead of submitting to the spiritual tyranny of that church, withstood her errors, borrowed his monastic institutions from some Eastern churches, and declared that only to be the counsel of God which he found in the scriptures. It was by proofs produced only from them, that his conduct was directed and his doctrine confirmed ⁴. The venerable

² Ad. iii. 18.

³ Mr. Pinkerton justly observes, that till the end of the 9th century, Iona was the Rome of Scotland; and we may add, of at least a great part of Ireland. See *Appendix*. That Columba should have kept clear of the errors which prevailed in his time is the more remarkable, as Odonellus says he visited Rome in person, which may be also implied in the Office for his Festival, in which he is celebrated for having visited distant places; and of these the chief at the time was Rome.

⁴ Ad. i. 22.—“Prolatis sacrae scripturae testimoniis,” was

Bede, with all his zeal for the Church of Rome, allows the divines of *Hii* (or Iona) to have possessed the highest knowledge of divinity, and acknowledges how much the churches throughout Britain were indebted to them, for their preaching the gospel so zealously, and accompanying it with such purity and simplicity of manners⁵. At the same time he laments how long they wanted the only thing which, in his opinion, they needed in order to be perfect—the rites of the church, especially the right knowledge of the Pasch and Tonfure⁶.

the rule by which he taught his disciples to support their doctrine.

⁵ How the missionaries from Iona were qualified to preach the gospel (as Bede tells us) to the Saxons, or people of England, who had a different language, is a matter that requires to be explained, and points out, perhaps, a method which in such cases deserves to be imitated. To accomplish their object, they brought some Saxons to Iona, from whom they might learn the language of the country to which they were going; as well as educate them for returning, when fit for it, to teach their countrymen. Thus we find Adomnan mentions several Saxons in Iona, such as St. Pilo, a Saxon; St. Gueren, a Saxon; and a Saxon baker, or *piſtor* (*Edit. Pinkert.*) which the editions of the Bollandines, Colgan, and other Catholics have printed *piſtor*. But as Columba had no images, he had no occasion for a painter.

⁶ Bedæ, Hist. iii. et v. 23.—Qui insulam *Hii* incolebant monachi ut gens quæ noverat scientiam divinæ cognitionis.

If St. Palladius and St. Patrick, who preached the gospel in Ireland before St. Columba, were sent by the Pope of Rome, as many authors affirm, it is probable that Columba may have differed in some points from those who taught before him; and for this difference of opinion, which might lead him to reject the traditions and usurpations of man, it was perhaps owing that he ran the hazard of being excommunicated before he left Ireland, notwithstanding the holiness of his life, which his opponents themselves confessed to have shone as a light from heaven⁷. This intended indignity, how-

populo Anglorum communicare curavit.—Domino curante postea ad ritum Paschæ et Tonfuræ perducti sunt.—Ut ad perfectam vivendi normam pervenirent.—The Nicene council, in the 4th century, had decreed that the Pasch should be celebrated “in Dominica post decimam quartam lunam, non in ipsa luna decima quarta:” but the Monks of Iona adhered long to their old regulations, and their crime was “quod sanctum Pascha luna decima quarta celebrarent, si forte hæc in Dominica caderet; cum, eo casu, lunam vigesimam primam expectare debuissent!”—In regard to the Tonfure, the Romanists affected the form of a crown, and reproached those who differed with them, with having got their form from Simon Magus. Every age has its folly, and every age sees the folly of the past without adverting to its own.

⁷ Ad. iii. 3.—Adomnan does not mention the cause, but calls it trivial; and Odonellus gives the following account of it, which is perhaps more curious than satisfactory. Columba being on a visit to St. Finnen at Drimfionn, got a

ever, was soon compensated by the veneration paid him by all ranks of people, in that as well as in other kingdoms.

It is a curious fact in history, though not so generally known as it deserves, that a large body of pastors and people in the isles and mountains of Scotland, like the Waldenses among the Alps, maintained the worship of God in its simplicity, and the gospel in its

book from him to read, with which he was so much pleased, that he sat up for some nights to take a copy of it; which, when he had done, Finnen would not allow him to take with him, but insisted on having the copy returned along with the original. To avoid any dispute, both agreed to refer the matter to Dermot king of Ireland; who decided in favour of Finnen, in the following words, which have since become proverbial, *Le gach boin a boininn, le gach leabhar a leabhran*, "To every cow belongs its calf, to every book belongs its copy."

Soon after, a war having broke out between Dermot and the king or prince of Connaught, the former was worsted, and a great many of his people slain, in the battle of Culdremin (A. D. 561.). As the leaders of the Connaught party were the near relations of Columba, the victory was ascribed to his supposed prayers in their behalf; which excited against him the general indignation of the king and clergy on the other side: to avoid which, it is said, he immediately resolved, with the advice of St. Maol-Ios, to leave the kingdom. *Odonell. et Vit. SS. ii. 196.* As we do not find Columba's influence was lessened in Ireland, the true cause of his leaving it must have been his zeal to extend his usefulness.

purity for many generations, when it was greatly corrupted in other places⁸. A change, much for the worse, began to take place among them about the beginning of the 9th century, when almost all the monks of Iona were destroyed or dispersed by Danish free-booters, and when those misfortunes commenced, which afterwards endured for ages. Society was unhinged by war, anarchy, and desolation; and a seminary of learning, in such a state, could not be expected to stand⁹. Yet some of the good seed seems to have been still preserved and propagated in the country, by the Culdees, sprung from the school of Columba¹.

⁸ “In the early ages of the Christian church, the Highlands and Islands of Scotland were the seat of learning and religion: of religion that was not derived from the church of Rome, as appears from their differing from it about the time of keeping Easter, and several other things. Icolmkill was then a seminary of all kinds of learning, and a nursery of divines for planting churches.—In England, with great zeal, many of them taught and propagated religion out of the prophetic and apostolic writings.” *Dr. Cumming’s Serm. et aut. cit. Ranulphi Polichronicon, Gale, et Warner Eccles. Hist. of England.*

⁹ See *Chron.* in Appendix.

¹ “In some of our islands which we are now apt to consider as the seats of ignorance and barbarism, lived a people remarkable for simplicity of manners, purity of behaviour, and unaffected piety; and these were the little leaven which

But we return to Columba, and observe, that although he did not at any time depart from the purity of scripture, he seems to have been at great pains to dress its doctrines in such a form as was most likely to engage the attention of a people who, like all uncivilized nations, were much more accustomed to indulge their imagination than to exercise their judgment. Several instances of his thus dexterously accommodating his representations of Divine truths to the circumstances and capacities of his hearers, may be observed in the account of his life by Adomnan. The monks, for instance, in the first period of their institution, had uncommon trials to encounter, and were to exhibit to the world a higher degree of sanctity and mortification than other men. They, therefore, were to be cheered with higher rewards and brighter prospects. *The saints shall rise first*, was a text which naturally suggested a prior resurrection to the monks, to whom the appellation of saints

afterwards leavened the whole lump. Of their number was Columba, &c.—Even in the 10th age, when the darkness of corruption and error had greatly increased, we are told there were some godly men in Scotland, who taught the true doctrine of Christ's atonement, and continued to exercise their functions apart, without acknowledging the authority of those who assumed a spiritual power over God's heritage." *Bonar's Sermon.*

was more peculiarly, though not exclusively, appropriated: and to have a share in their resurrection was the first object of ambition, and the promise of it a source of special consolation².

Besides this, as many were in those barbarous times called forth to suffer and to die for the cause of God, and needed every help to make them encounter any form of death with cheerfulness, the innocent expedient was devised of assigning to the martyrs a separate burying-place, where their sacred dust was never to be contaminated with that of ordinary men. To sleep in this holy of holies, still known by the name of the *Martyr's Cemetery*³, was to saints themselves an object of desire.

We know that angels conduct the spirits of the just to heaven; and Satan being prince of the power of the air, their way must be through his dominions; so that a conflict between two such opposite powers may naturally be supposed⁴. By an obvious and lively figure

² Ad. ii. 40.—Cum meis monachis in resurrectionem vitæ de somno mortis evigilabis.—Qua a sancto accepta—non mediocri consolatione valde lætatus, &c.

³ *Clagh nam Martireach.*

⁴ See on this subject, *Scot's Christian Life*.—In the sculpture on the pillars of the cathedral of Iona, is still to be seen the representation of Michael and the Devil weighing souls in a balance.

of speech an animated preacher might, on the death of an acquaintance, represent this conflict as if he saw it, and describe its probable issue, suitably to the character of the departed; especially if it was decidedly marked as very good or very bad. Columba, whose fancy was lively, sometimes sat thus in judgment on the dead, in order to excite the living to virtue¹.

When saints, after so many intervening dangers, were thus brought safe to heaven, it was natural for the church on earth to celebrate the triumph, and to rejoice at the happy transit and deliverance of a departed member of their body. Accordingly, on such occasions, Columba convened his monks, sung hymns, administered the Eucharist, and praised God for his mercy to the soul of a brother². And

¹ Ad. ii. 6, 11, 13.—Quorumdam justorum animas crebro ab angelis ad summa cœlorum vehi, sancto revelante spiritu videbat: sed et reproborum alias ad inferna a dæmonibus rapi sæpenumero aspiciebat. Ad. i. 1.

Hac enim nocte præterita, vidi subito apertum cœlum, angelorumque choros S. Brandani animæ obvious descendere, quorum luminosa et incomparabili claritudine totus eadem hora illustratus est mundi orbis.

Christo gratias ago, quia victores sancti angeli, contra, &c. animam hujus peregrini cœlo receperunt. *Cumin.* 4.

² Ad. iii. 11, 12.—“On a certain day as the brethren were making ready in the morning to go out to the different works in which they were to be employed, Columba told them

if his life was remarkable for sanctity and usefulness, this, as it were his birth-day, was for the future observed as a holiday as oft as the year returned. This custom, which in those times was pretty general, had the strongest tendency to promote holiness of life, and to make the virtuous look forward with joy to the day on which they were to have the happiness of dying.

Farther, as angels are ministering spirits, and the saints said to be after death *as angels*, so Columba represented the departed saints as being tenderly concerned for their surviving friends, and employed to perform the office of angels to their souls, at the time of their departure from the body.—“Happy, happy woman, said Columba (on occasion of the death of a pious woman), this moment the angels convey thy soul to paradise!”—Next year her husband, who was equally pious, died also.—“What joy must it give him now at his departure,” said Columba, “to be met by the soul of his wife, together with holy angels, to bring him to the

they were to keep that day as a holiday; that they should prepare for celebrating the Eucharist, and make some addition to their little dinner, as on the Lord’s day, out of respect for the soul of St. Columban, bishop of Leinster, whose soul was last night carried by choirs of angels to the paradise of God beyond the starry heavens.”

mansions of the blessed³!"—Death, attended with the lively belief of such pleasing circumstances, had in it little to be feared⁴.

From these instances we may easily perceive that Columba was at great pains to prepare and suit his manner of teaching to the exigencies and capacity of his hearers, by giving spiritual doctrines, as it were, "a body and a local habitation⁵." And it deserves our no-

³ Id. iii. 10.

⁴ The example, as well as the doctrine, of those holy men, helped to strip death of its terrors, and to make it more than welcome to the beholders. A country man who had come to see St. Aed on his death-bed, was so struck with what he saw and heard, that he immediately threw himself into the same bed, where he lay with the saint, till both died together. *Vit. Aedi.*

As Columba himself rejoiced at the prospect of death, so also did his disciples. St. Odhran, one of the twelve who first accompanied him from Ireland, finding himself unwell soon after he landed, expressed his desire that his soul might be soon with Christ, and his body the first pledge that should consecrate Iona to his companions. "My dear Odhran," said Columba, "shall have both his wishes; and they who shall hereafter ask for my tomb, shall next inquire, Where is Oran's?" *Odonell*.—Accordingly *Relic Orain* is still shown to strangers.

⁵ Sometimes we find Columba teaching by actions instead of words. As he and Baithen had been walking on the shore, they saw a boat sinking, by which several persons perished. After lamenting their fate, and observing that one of them was very wicked, Baithen asked how God allowed the in-

tice, that after all his pains and preparation, he was so sensible that his sufficiency was not of himself, that he seems to dread the discharge of the most ordinary part of his public functions, without previous prayer for the Divine assistance. Before he administers the ordinance of baptism, we find him retiring first to a private place to pray ⁶.

Having this high sense of the importance of his public ministrations, it is no wonder if he performed them with animation and sensibility. From this, his warm and affecting manner, and from the extraordinary alacrity and joy with which he discharged every part of his duty, may have proceeded, in part at least, those wonderful accounts already mentioned, of the irradiation of his countenance, as if it shone,

nocent to be sometimes involved in the punishment of the wicked? Of this Columba seemed to take no notice till they came to a bee-hive; in examining which, one of the bees stung Baithen, upon which, with a sweep of his hand, he killed it with several more. Why, said his master, did you kill the innocent with the guilty? I suppose it is because they were in bad company.—Columba embraced every opportunity of turning every incident to the purpose of edification. “There is a poor woman gathering wild herbs for food. Are we not ashamed to see some take more pains to preserve a perishing life, than we do to obtain that which is eternal?” *Odonell*.

⁶ Ad. ii. 9.

on some occasions, with a glorious and heavenly lustre, when he was engaged in the celebration of the holy ordinances of religion. This account of the matter may perhaps be allowed by those who are unwilling to ascribe it (with Cumin and Adomnan) to the presence and manifestations of angels.

After having discharged the ordinary functions of his office, he had then also the same earnestness of soul, and the same solicitous concern for the success of his ministry. Thus, we have remarked that prayers to God for prospering his labours occupied the thoughts of his heart when asleep as well as when awake; so entirely was his soul engaged in accomplishing the salvation of immortal spirits.

Having given this account of the life and doctrine of Columba, we now turn our eye to the close of his long and useful life, as we have it in the relation of Adomnan ⁷.

He had some time ago told that the prayers of the churches had added four years to the appointed number of his days. During the last of these years he also dropped several hints to his monks of his being to die in the course of it, that he might thence take occasion to furnish them with proper consolation, and for-

⁷ Ad. iii. 23.

tify and prepare them against that mournful event. One day particularly, (in the month of May), being unable to walk as far as the west end of the island, where the monks were at work, he went thither in a little car, or carriage, as he told, for the last time; expressed his satisfaction that his death, which was now near, had not interfered with the Paschal solemnity, and damped their festivity; and seeing them greatly affected with this hint of his near departure, he gave them all the consolation in his power before he left them. After this, having all the island before him to the east, he solemnly implored the blessing of God upon the ground, and upon all its inhabitants; adding, that it would go well with them while they feared God⁸.

On the ensuing Sabbath, while, according to his custom on the Lord's day, he was celebrating the solemnity of mass, his countenance on a sudden was observed to glow and colour, and to give symptoms of some unusual and

⁸ It was on this occasion that Columba prayed (as St. Patrick is said to have done in regard to Ireland) that, while the people of Iona feared God, there should not be from that day forward any serpent or venomous creature in the island to hurt man or beast. Ad. ii. 28. "Ex qua die, viperarum venena trifulcarum linguarum, usque in hodiernum diem, nullo modo aut homini aut pecori nocere potuerunt." Id. iii. 23.

ecstatic joy which he then felt: concerning which he afterwards told some of those present, when they asked the cause, that he had seen the Angel of the Lord come to bring to God some deposit precious in his sight; but did not mention particularly what it was.

In eight days after this, in the course of the Sabbath, he went out along with his servant Dermot, and entering the barn, where he saw two heaps of corn, he expressed great satisfaction, and thanked God, whose bounty had thus provided a sufficiency of bread for his dear monks on this year on which he was to leave them. During this year, said Dermot, wiping his eyes, you have often made us all sad by the mention of your death.—Yes, Dermot, replied the saint, but I will now be more explicit with you, on condition that you promise to keep what I tell you a secret till I die; that there may be no bustle on that occasion about me. Dermot promised to do so, and thus the saint went on: “This day, in the sacred volume, is called the Sabbath, that is, *rest*, and will be indeed a Sabbath to me; for it is to me the last day of this toilsome life; the day on which I am to rest from all my labour and trouble: for, on this sacred night of the Lord, at the midnight hour, I go the way of my fathers. So my gracious Lord hath vouchsafed

to intimate ; and all my desire and joy is to be with him."

Dermot wept bitterly, and the saint administered to him all the consolation in his power.

After a little time, Dermot being somewhat composed, they left the barn ; and, the saint resting a little on the way, that tender incident occurred which has been already mentioned ⁹. He afterwards ascended a little eminence above his monastery, where he stood, and lifting both his hands to heaven, prayed God to bless it and to make it prosper. From thence he returned to his closet, and having spent part of his time there in transcribing the Psalter, came to that passage in the 34th Psalm where it is said, *They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing*, he said, Here I have come to the end of a page, and to a very proper part for me to stop at ; for the following words (*Come, ye children, hearken unto me ; I will teach you the fear of the Lord*) will better suit my successor than me. I will therefore leave it to Baithen to transcribe them.—He then rose, and went to evening service in the church, and after coming home, sat down on his bed, and gave it in charge to Dermot to deliver the following

words to his disciples, as his last.—“ My dying charge to you, my dear children, is, that you live in peace, and sincerely love one another. And if you do this, as becometh saints, the God who comforts and upholds the good will help you: and I, now that I am going to dwell with him, will request that you may have both a sufficient supply of the necessities of the present transitory life, and a share in that everlasting bliss which he has prepared for those who observe his holy laws.”

After this he rested or remained silent, till the bell was rung for vigils at midnight¹; when, hastily rising, and going to church, he arrived there before any other, and kneeled down at the altar to pray. When Dermot, who did not walk or rather run so hard, approached the church, he perceived it (as did also those who followed him) all illumined, and, as it were, filled with a heavenly glory, or angelic light², which, on his entering the door,

¹ To pray at midnight was the general practice of Christians in the early ages of the church.

² Adomnan gives a beautiful and classical description of two other extraordinary visions, which, he says, had been seen on the night on which Columba died (or perhaps of this same vision, seen by different persons and in different places); one of them by a holy man in Ireland (*Lugud Mac-Talcain*), who had told next morning that Columba was dead;

immediately vanished. Upon which Dermot cried, with a lamentable voice, O my father, where art thou ! My father, where art thou !

and the other by a number of fishermen who had been that night fishing in Glen *Fende*, from some of whom Adomnan had the relation when a boy. The purport of both is, that on the night and hour on which Columba, "the pillar of so many churches," had departed, a pillar of fire, which illumined the sky, with a light brighter than that of the mid-day sun, was seen to arise from Iona, while loud and sweet-sounding anthems of innumerable choirs of angels ascending with his soul were distinctly heard : and that when this column reached the heavens, the darkness again returned, as if the sun had suddenly set at noon.—Such lively pictures of the opinions of former times will not displease the antiquary, nor appear insignificant to the good and pious man. The cold sceptic may perhaps smile at the credulity of former ages : but credulity is more favourable to the happiness of man, and to the interests of society, than scepticism. In the history of all ages and nations, we read of some such extraordinary appearances in certain stages of society. Shall we then refuse all credit to human testimony ; or shall we allow that a kind Providence may have adapted itself to the dark state of society, and given such visible and striking proofs of the connection and communication between this world and a world of spirits, as may be properly withheld from more enlightened times ; which may less need them, and perhaps less deserve them ?

Adomnan says, that even in his time, a heavenly light and manifestation of angels was frequently seen at Columba's tomb. "Locum in quo ipsius Sancti pausant ossa, usque hodie eadem cœlestis claritas frequentare non cessat ; et sanctorum frequens visitatio angelorum."

and groping, without waiting for the lamps, found the faint lying before the altar, in a praying posture. Dermot, attempting to raise him up a little, sat beside him, supporting the faint's head upon his bosom till the lights came in, when the brethren, seeing their father dying, raised all at once a most doleful cry. Upon this the faint, whose soul had not yet departed, lifted up his eyes, and (as I was told, says Adomnan, by those who were present) looked around him with inexpressible cheerfulness and joy of countenance; seeing, no doubt, the holy angels who were come to meet his spirit. He then attempted, with Dermot's assistance, to raise his right hand to bless the monks who were about him; and his voice having failed, he made, with his hand alone, the motion which he used in giving his benediction: after which he immediately breathed out his spirit; but still retained the tranquil smile, the brightness, and the fresh look of his countenance, so that he had the appearance not of one who was dead, but only sleeping³.

³ "After the spirit had departed, continues Adomnan, when the morning hymns were ended, the sacred body was carried from the church to the house by the brethren, amidst the loud singing of psalms, and kept for three days and three nights, which were spent in the sweet praises of God. The

Thus, on the 9th day of June 597, and in the 77th year of his age, died Columba; a man, whose extraordinary piety, parts, and usefulness, accompanied with a perpetual serenity of mind, cheerfulness of countenance, simplicity of manners, benevolence of heart, and sweetness of disposition, have deservedly raised to the first rank of saints or holy men. The contemplation of his life and character may teach all, in every situation, and especially those in the sacred office, this useful and important lesson, That we have in us a capacity, if exerted, of attaining, by the grace of God, to such measures both of holiness and usefulness, as we are little aware of, unless we make a fair trial. And without such a trial, it is to

venerable body of our holy and blessed patron, wrapped in fair linen sheets, and put in a coffin prepared for it, was then buried with all due respect, to rise in luminous and eternal glory on the day of the resurrection."

"Such was the close of our venerable patron's life, who is now, according to the Scriptures, associated to Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, and to those thousands of saints who are clothed in white robes, washed in the blood of the LAMB, and who follow him whithersoever he goeth.—Such was the grace vouchsafed to his pure and spotless soul by Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be honour and power, and praise, and glory, and eternal dominion, for ever and ever. Amen!"

no purpose that we see in the lives of holy men how good we may *be* ourselves, and what good we may *do* to others. These two points are the sum of all that has been advanced in the account which we have given of the life of Columba.

ERRATA.

P. 9, note, for "Traide" read Triade."

P. 23, l. 4. for "Scottish throne" read "Dalriadic province" (in Ulster).—*Note*, The decision on this point (alluded to in p. 64) was, that this province belonged to the king of the Scots, by right of inheritance, but that he should pay tribute for it to the king of Ireland. A remission of the tribute paid by the Scottish king was obtained by Columba. *Sever. Ketin. ap. Colgan. p. 115.*

P. 83, note, for "throne" read "Dalriada."

no pain to him; we live in the life of holy
men now good we may be ourselves, and what
good we may do to others. The life of the saints
are the fruit of all that has been advanced in
the account which we have given of the life of
Columba.

It is not only the life of the saints, but the life of the
people, that is the fruit of the life of the saints.
The life of the saints is the life of the people.
The life of the people is the life of the saints.
The life of the saints is the life of the people.
The life of the people is the life of the saints.

ERRATA.

1. The name for "The life of the saints" should be "The life of the saints" and "The life of the saints" should be "The life of the saints".
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APPENDIX.

AFTER Columba's death, an account of his life was written by many of his friends and disciples. Nine of these are enumerated by Dempster, and the list is increased to fifteen by Colgan. None of their writings are now extant, except those of Cumin and Adomnan. But five or six more of them are frequently quoted by Magnus Odonellus (a prince or nobleman of Tirconnel), who, in the year 1520, compiled a long account of the life of St. Columba, from such monuments as were then extant. This account, which was written in the Irish language, was afterwards abridged, and translated into Latin, by J. Colgan, an Irish friar, who published it in 1647 in his *Trias Thaumaturga*, where it ranks as the *Vita 5ta S. Columbae*.

Of Columba's own writings, of which Odonellus says there were "a great many, full of piety and devotion, some in "prose, but mostly in Latin or Irish verse," there are now but very few remaining. St. Evin, who wrote a life of St. Patrick in the sixth century, mentions Columba as having wrote a life of that saint (*Vita Tripart. S. Pat. i. 69*). Wilfred (*Ap. Bed. iii. 25.*), the author of the life of St. Ciaran (of Clon. c. 26.), and Alcuin, mention his having composed a monastic *Rule*, which Ware (*de Script. Hib. i. 2.*) says was extant in his time. He also composed a *Rule* for hermits (or *disairt.*), of which Colgan says he had a copy in his possession. He also wrote a number of hymns and poems, both in Irish and Latin, as already mentioned. Ten of the Irish

poems were in the possession of Colgan, who (in his *Trias* p. 472.) gives the title and first line of each of them. Of these, which are probably still extant in Ireland, I have seen none but his Farewell to the Monastery of Durrough.

Of Columba's Latin hymns or poems, Colgan has published three. One of them was composed during a thunder storm in Durrough, or Daire-chalguich; another of them on the creation, fall of angels, and final judgment, &c.; and the third, addressed to the Redeemer, was composed, it is said, in consequence of an observation made to him that the Redeemer ought to have been more celebrated in the preceding hymn.

As Columba intended that his disciples should commit these hymns to memory, they are composed in a sort of rhyme, agreeably to the form and measure of Irish poetry, to which they were so much accustomed. From this circumstance, the specimens of them, given in the notes, may appear somewhat singular to the Latin reader, who is unacquainted with the rules of Irish poetry. To the English reader the following translations will show the nature of the originals.

HYMN I.

Composed during a Thunder Storm about the year 550.

GRACIOUS FATHER! bow thine ear*,

And our request in mercy hear:

* Noli Pater indulgere

Tonitrua cum fulgure,

Ne frangamur formidine

Hujus atque uredine.

Te timemus terribilem,

Nullum credentes similem:

Te cuncta canunt carmina

Angelorum per agmina:

Teque exaltant culmina

Cœli vagi per flamina, &c.

O bid the thunder cease to roar,
And let the lightning flash no more ;
Left long in terror we remain,
Or by its stroke we should be slain.

The pow'r supreme to thee belongs,
Archangels laud thee in their songs ;
The wide expanse of heav'n above
Resounds thy glory and thy love.

O Saviour of the human race !
Whose pow'r is equal to thy grace ;
For ever be thy name ador'd,
As King supreme, and only Lord !
To all thy people thou art nigh,
And oft thy grace prevents their cry ;
While in the womb the Baptist lay,
(The harbinger to pave thy way),
His soul with grace was amply stor'd,
To fit him to proclaim his Lord.
—May love and zeal to thee, my God !
Have in my heart a firm abode :
O that the casket may be such
As fits a gem so very rich !

HYMN II.

On the Creation, Fall of Angels, Final Judgment, &c.

THE God omnipotent, who made the world *,
Is subject to no change. He was, he is,
And he shall be : th' ETERNAL is his name.

* Altus profator, vetustus
Dierum, et ingenitus,
Erat absque origine,
Primordio et crepidine,

Equal in godhead and eternal pow'r
 Is Christ the Son. So is the Holy Ghost.
 These sacred glorious three are but the same;
 In persons diff'rent, but one God and Lord.

This God created all the heav'nly hosts;
 Archangels, angels, potentates and pow'rs;
 That so the emanations of his love
 Might flow to myriads, diffusing good.

But from this eminence of glory fell
 Th' apostate Lucifer, elate with pride
 Of his high station and his glorious form.
 Fill'd with like pride, and envy'ng God himself
 His glory, other angels shar'd his fate,
 While the remainder kept their happy state.

Thus fell a third of the bright heav'nly stars,
 Involv'd in the old serpent's guilt and fate,
 And with him suffer in th' infernal gulf
 The loss of heav'n, in chains of darkness bound.

God then to being call'd this lower world,
 According to the plan form'd in his mind.
 He made the firmament, the earth, and sea,
 The sun, the moon and stars; a glorious host!
 The earth he clad with herbs for food, and trees,
 And then to ev'ry living thing gave birth,
 And last to man, whom he made lord of all.

Est, et erit in secula
 Seculorum infinita:
 Cui est unigenitus
 Christus, et Sanctus Spiritus
 Coæternus in gloria
 Deitatis perpetua, &c.

When angels (the first morning stars) beheld
The wondrous fabric, with glad songs they hymn'd
The praise of the Almighty architect,
For such displays of wisdom, pow'r, and love.

But our first parents, from their happy state
Seduc'd by Satan, were with terror fill'd,
With dreadful sights appall'd, till God with grace
Consol'd their hearts, and Satan's pow'r restrain'd.
His providential care he also show'd,
And bade the humid clouds distil their rains,
And times and seasons in their order run.
Rivers and seas (like giants bound in chains)
He forc'd to keep within the limits fix'd,
And flow for ever for the use of man.

Lo! earth's vast globe, suspended by his pow'r,
On nothing hangs, as on a solid base.
Hell, too, his word obeys; where monsters dire,
And flames, and fire, and smoke, and gnawing worms,
Torment his foes, who gnash their teeth with pain.
Though once they slighted, now they feel his pow'r,
And must reluctantly his will obey.

O happy they who love his holy law,
And in the blessings of the saints partake!
Who in the paradise of God above
Drink of the living stream, and eat the fruit
Of that life-giving tree, ordain'd by God
To heal the nations, and to feed the soul.

Thrice happy is the soul that shall ascend
To this abode of God, when the last trump
Shall sound, and shake the earth more than of old,
When Sinai shook, and Moses was afraid.

This awful day of God the Lord draws nigh,
When earthly objects shall have lost their charm,
And joy or terror fill each human soul.
Then shall we stand before the judgment seat,
To render an account of all our deeds :
Then shall our sins before our face be set,
The books be open'd, and the conscience heard.
None shall be missing ; for the dead shall hear
The voice of God, and from their graves come forth
To join their souls, and stand before the bar.

Time runs his course no more : the wand'ring orbs
Through heaven lose their course : the sun grows dark,
Eclipsed by the glory of the Judge.
The stars drop down, as, in a tempest, fruit
Is shaken from the tree : and all the earth,
Like one vast furnace, is involv'd in flames.
See ! the angelic hosts attend the Judge,
And on ten thousand harps his praises hymn.
Their crowns they cast before his feet, and sing,
“ Worthy the Lamb that died to be the Judge !
“ To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be praise !”

The sentence past, consuming fire shall seize
The unbelieving, disobedient crowd :
But we who have believ'd, and kept his word,
Shall enter into glory with the Lord ;
And there, in diff'rent ranks, we shall receive,
Through grace, rewards proportion'd to our deeds,
And dwell in endless glory with our Lord.

Almighty Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Thou ONE Eternal, ever-blessed God !
To me, the least of saints, vouchsafe thy grace !
O may I join the thousands round thy throne !

HYMN III.

To the REDEEMER.

1. JESUS ! may all who trust in thee *
Experience thy love :
That thou art God for evermore
By their salvation prove.
2. In time of trouble and distress
Be thou their faithful friend ;
In all their sorrows comfort them,
And ready succour send.
3. Thou art the Father of the just,
Their souls have life in thee ;
Thou art their God omnipotent,
And evermore shalt be.
4. The world, with all that it contains,
From thee its being had ;
O'er all the nations thou wilt rule,
And judge the quick and dead.

* In te Christe credentium
Miserearis omnium :
Tu es Deus in secula
Seculorum in gloria.

Deus in adjutorium
Intende laborantium :
Ad dolorum remedium
Festina in auxilium, &c.

5. Thy glory shines above the skies,
Where thou art God and King ;
And to the New Jerufalem
Thy people thou wilt bring.
6. Eternal God ! who can conceive
Thy power or thy grace ?
Through endless ages they endure,
And fill the bounds of space.
7. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
While I have life I'll praise ;
And after death, in other worlds,
The song again I'll raise.
8. Gracious Saviour of the world !
The pure are thy delight :
O give me wisdom from above
To guide me in the right.
9. Defend me by thy mighty pow'r,
Until my warfare's o'er,
And with the martyrs afterwards
May I thy name adore.
10. As thou didst suffer on the cross
To save a guilty race,
Show me thy power, with thy love,
And glory grant, with grace.
11. Eternal praise to the Most High,
The Father and the Son,
And to the Spirit of all grace,
Th' eternal Holy ONE.

12. Protect us, O thou God most high,
 Until we reach the place
 Where endless anthems we shall sing
 Around thy throne of grace.

Another poem or epistle, against avarice, in appropriate Latin verse, is preserved by *Canisius*, who is disposed to ascribe it to the other St. Columba or Columbanus, the countryman and contemporary of this. It is not unworthy of either, and may be read as one of the monuments of the learning of the times, without determining to which of the two it belongs. The following version will give an idea of it to the English reader, and the original is given in a note.

*EPISTLE to HUNALD. Against Avarice *.*

HUNALD! the counsel of Columba hear,
 And to thy friend give now a willing ear;

* *S. COLUMBANI ABBATIS EPISTOLA, in qua detestatur avaritiam, HUNALDO discipulo.*

Suscipe Hunalde libens, et perlege mente serena
 Dicta Columbani, fida te voce monentis:
 Quæ licet ornatu careant sermonis honesti,
 Vota tamen mentisque piæ testantur amorem.

Vive Deo fidens, Christi præcepta sequendo,
 Dum modo vita manet, dum tempora certa salutis;
 Tempus et illa volat, monentis labitur ætas.
 Despice, quæ pereunt, fugitivæ gaudia vitæ.
 Non fragiles secteris opes et inania lucra,
 Nec te sollicitet circumflua copia rerum.
 Sint tibi divitiæ divinæ dogmata legis,

No studied ornament shall gild my speech,
 What love shall dictate, I will plainly preach.

Sanctorumque patrum castæ moderamina vitæ,
 Omnia quæ dociles scripserunt ante magistri,
 Vel quæ doctiloqui cecinerunt carmina vates:
 Has cape divitias: semper contemne caducas:
 In mentemque tibi veniat tremebunda senectus,
 Quam gelidæ tandem sequitur violentia mortis.
 Ultima jam sapiens meditatur tempora vitæ,
 Torpentes senio vires morbosque frequentes,
 Incertumque diem lethi certosque dolores.
 Multa senem fragilis vexant incommoda carnis:
 Nam macie turpi tabescunt languida membra,
 Tunc genuum junctura riget, venasque per omnes
 Illius in toto frigescit corpore sanguis.
 Sic baculo nitens artus sustentat inertes.
 Quid tristes memorem gemitus, quid tædia mentis?
 Somnus abest oculis, illum sonus excitat omnis.
 Quid tunc argenti, fulvi quid proderit auri
 Improbæ congeries, multos collecta per annos?
 Munera quid procerum? ditis quid prandia mensæ?
 Quid meminisse juvat transactæ gaudia vitæ,
 Venerit extremi tandem cum terminus ævi?
 Hæc, dum vita volat, vigili qui mente retractat,
 Spernit avaritiam, vanosque refutat honores.
 Quid modo terrenis mentis intendere curis
 Mortales cupiunt? quid turpia lucra sequuntur?
 Semper avarus eget, nec habet quod habere videtur.
 Ille domi solus nummos abscondit in arca,
 Divitias cumulans, dum sese nescit amare,
 Plus amat hæredem, servat cui cuncta fidelis.

O nimium felix, parcus cui sufficit usus,
 Corporis ut curam moderamine temperet æquo,
 Non misera capitur cæcæque cupidine rerum,
 Nec majora cupit, quam quæ natura reposcit;
 Non lucri cupidus nummis marsupia replet,
 Nec molles cumulat tinearum ad pabula vestes.

Have faith in God, and his commands obey,
 While fleeting life allows you here to stay ;
 And know, the end for which this life is giv'n,
 Is to prepare the soul for God and heav'n.
 Despise the pleasures which will not remain,
 Nor set thy heart on momentary gain :
 But seek for treasures in the sacred page,
 And in the precepts of each saint and sage.
 These noble treasures will remain behind
 When earthly treasures fly on wings of wind.

*Pascere non pingui procurat fruge caballos,
 Nec trepido tales doluit sub pectore curas,
 Ne subitis pereat collecta pecunia flammis ;
 Aut fracta nummos rapiat fur improbus arca.*

*Vivitur argento sine, jam sine vivitur auro ;
 Nudi nascuntur, nudos quos terra receptat.
 Divitis nigri referantur limina ditis,
 Pauperibusque piis cœlestia regna pateſcunt.
 Temnere divitias monuit Salvator avaros ;
 Quisquis amat Christum, sequitur vestigia Christi :
 Nam brevis et fragilis morituræ gloria carnis
 Quicquid habet, rapidi velox fuga temporis aufert.
 Pulchre veridici cecinit vox talia vatis,
 Tempora dinumerans ævi vitæque caducæ.
 Omnia tempus agit, cum tempore cuncta trahuntur ;
 Alternant alimenta vices et tempora mutant.
 Accipiunt alimenta dies noctesque vicissim ;
 Tempora sunt florum, retinet sua tempora messis,
 Sic iterum spisso vestitur graminæ campus.
 Tempora gaudendi ; sunt tempora certa dolendi :
 Tempora sunt vitæ ; sunt tristia tempora mortis.
 Omnia dat, tollit, minuitque volatile tempus.
 Ver, æstas, autumnus, hiems, redit annus in animum.
 Omnia cum redeant, homini sua non redit ætas :
 Hanc sapiens omni semper reminiscitur hora,
 Atque domum luctus epulis præponit opimis.*

Think of the time when trembling age shall come;
And the last messenger to call thee home.
'Tis wise to meditate betimes on death,
And that dread moment which will stop the breath,
On all the ills which age brings in its train,
Disease and weakness, languor, grief and pain.
The joints grow stiff, the blood itself runs cold,
Nor can the staff its trembling load uphold.
And need I speak of groans and pangs of mind,
And sleep disturb'd by every breath of wind?
What then avails the heap of yellow gold,
For years collected, and each day re-told?
Or what avails the table richly stor'd
To the sick palate of its dying lord?
The sinful pleasures which have long since past,
Are now like arrows in his heart stuck fast.

He who reflects that Time, on eagle-wing,
Flies past, and preys on every earthly thing,
Will scorn vain honours, avarice despise,
On nobler pursuits bent, beyond the skies.

Alas! vain mortals, how misplac'd your care,
When in this world you seek what is not there?
True lasting happiness is found above,
And heav'n, not earth, you therefore ought to love.
The rich enjoy not what they seem to have,
But something more their souls incessant crave.
The use of riches seldom do they know;
For heirs they heap them, or they waste in show.

O! happy he, to whose contented mind
Riches seem useless, but to help mankind;
Who neither squanders what should feed the poor,
Nor suffers Avarice to lock his store.

No moths upon his heaps of garments feed,
Nor serves his corn to feed the pamper'd steed.
No cank'ring care shall take his peace away ;
No thief, nor flame, shall on his substance prey.
His treasure is secure beyond the skies,
And there he finds it on the day he dies.

This world we enter'd naked at our birth,
Naked we leave it, and return to earth :
Silver and gold we need not much, nor long,
Since to this world alone such things belong.
Life's little space requires no ample store :
Soon heaven opens to the pious poor ;
While Pluto's realms their dreary gates unfold,
Those to admit who set their souls on gold.

Our Saviour bids us Avarice avoid,
Nor love those things which can't be long enjoy'd.
Short, says the Psalmist, are the days of man,
The measure of his life a narrow span.
Time flies away ; and on its rapid wing
We fly along, with ev'ry earthly thing.
Yet Time returns, and crowns the Spring with flow'rs,
Renews the seasons, and repeats the hours.
But life returns not with revolving years,
And man, once gone, on earth no more appears.
Wise then is he who makes it his great care,
In this short space, for heaven to prepare.

From its connection with the subject, it may not be improper to add the following translation of a hymn used in the Office for the Festival of St. Columba, and published in Paris, in the year 1620, from an ancient MS. It was probably composed by Baithen, or some other of Columba's disciples, soon after his death.

*TRANSLATION of a HYMN used in the Office for the FESTIVAL
of St. COLUMBA, on the 9th of June.*

WITH snowy pinions soaring high,
The Dove * ascends beyond the sky;
He scorns the earth, he leaves its clay,
And perches in the realms of day.

There his refulgent colours shine,
Reflecting back the light divine.
But here his tender-brood he left,
Of their dear parent now bereft.

Yet, ere he mounted to the skies,
With many prayers, tears and cries,
Their charge he gave to Christ his Lord,
To guide them by his gracious word,
And bring them to the same abode
In which their father lives with God.

O God! who didst our father hear,
Be to his children ever near;
And grace vouchsafe to lead us on,
Until we meet him at thy throne †.

* Alluding to his name, which means " a Dove."

† Columba penna nivea, collo resplendens roseo,
Loca petit fidera, claustro mundi luteo.

Hic nidum sibi posuit, in petra pœnitentiæ,
Devotos Christo genuit pullos per verbum gratiæ.

Pro dulci cantu, querulis intendebat gemitibus
Crebros adjungens sedulis fletus orationibus.

Sit Deo soli gloria, qui nos post cursus stadia,
Columbæ per suffragia, ducat ad cœli gaudia.

Amen!

Of the MONASTERIES and CHURCHES founded by St. COLUMBA.

Jocelin (*vit. S. Pat. c. 89.*) says, that Columkille founded 100 monasteries. Hanmer (*in Chron. p. 43. &c.*) Usher, and others, say the same. Odonellus (*iii. 42.*) says, that of monasteries and churches together he founded 300, partly in Ireland, and partly in Scotland. The following is

A List of some of the principal Monasteries and Churches founded by St. Columba in Ireland (of which the names of the first Abbots, and some other particulars, may be found in Colgan, and in the Authors which he cites.)

- Mon. of Doire-Chalguich, or Durrrough, now Derry.
- of Darmagh (*Roboreti campus. Ad.*)
- Church of Rath-Reghenden, in the diocese of Derry.
- Mon. of Kill-Aibhne, or Kill-Aibhind.
- 5 ——— of Snamh-Luthuir, in Connaught.
- of Drim-Tuam, in Tirconnel.
- of Tir-da-chraobh, *al.* mon. of the two rivers.
- of Drim-finchoil.
- of Sean-glean, in Tirconnel.
- 10 ——— of Gartan, in do.
- of Tulach-Dubhglais, in do.
- of Kill-mac-nenain, in do.
- of Cluain, or Cluain-enaich, in the diocese of Derry,
- of Rath-bò ; long a bishop's fee in Tirconnel.
- 15 ——— of Drim-cliabh, in the north of Connaught,
- of Kenannais, *in Media, olim nobile.*
- of Cluain-mor-Fernard.
- of Rechrain, *in orient. parte Bregarum.*
- of Rechlain. island.
- 20 ——— of Surd, *olim nobile.*
- of Torrachan, an island, north of Tirconnel.
- of Rath, in Tirconnel.
- of Termonn Cethmanaich, *in Tironia.*
- of S. Columba's Coffe, *olim ditissimum, in Ardia.*

- 25 Mon. of Innis-loch-gamhna, in Connaught.
 — of Eas-mac-neirc, in do.
 — of Imleach-foda, *olim nobile*.
 — of Druim-Choluim-cille, in Tir-oileail.
 — of Kill-mor-Dithreibh, in Connaught.
- 30 — of Maoim-Cholum-chille, in Leinster.
 — of S. Columba's Coffe, in Media Orientali. (Often pillaged).
 — of Cnoc-na Maoile, in Connaught.
 — of Kill-chuanna, in do.
 — of All-Farannain, in do.
- 35 — of S. Columba's Coffe (Scrinium S. Col.) in *Tironia*.
 — of Kill-lukin, in Connaught.
 — of Cluain-ogcormacain, in *regione Siol-mhuir'ich*.
 — of Kill-tuama, in Tir-maine, Connaught.
 — of Difert-Egnich, in Innis-owen.
- 40 — of Cluain-maine, in do.
 Church of Kill-matoige, *dioces. Med.*
 Mon. of Fathen-mura, in Innis-owen.
 — of Uifge-chaoim, diocese of Derry.
 — of Baile-mag-rabhartaich, in do.
- 45 — of Teach-Bhaithen, in Tirconnel.
 — of Cluain-laoidh, in do.
 — of Both-medha, in Ulster.
 — of Tamlacht-Fionlugain, diocese of Derry.
 — of Difert-Hi Thuachuill, in do.
- 50 — of Dun-bò, in do.
 — of Aregal, in do.
 — of Gleann-Choluim-chille, in Tuam.
 — of Kill-Cholgain, in Clonfert.
 — of Baile-megrabhartaich, in Tir-Aodh, (in which was kept Columba's book, called *Cathach*, from its being carried before the army to the field of battle).
- 55 — of Kill-bhairrind, in Tir-Aodh.
 — of Regles Choluim-chille, in Ardmagh.

To these, says Colgan, may be added almost all the other churches in Tirconnel, many of those of Lower Connaught; and all the churches, of which we find his disciples had the charge, as Innis-cail, Innis Mhuiredhich, Port-Lomain, Teach-Earnain, &c.

Of the monasteries and churches founded by St. Columba in Scotland, no particular account can be given, as the records of them have not been preserved. We can only say in general, that he planted churches in all the Western Isles, and in all the territory of the ancient Scots and northern Picts, and some even beyond them. Colgan, and authors cited by him, say he founded the church of Dunkeld, the monastery of Inch-colm in the Forth, and the monastery of Govan on the Clyde. Adomnan, besides the chief monastery of Iona, mentions several more in the Western Isles; such as that of Achaluing, in Ethica; Himba, or Hinba, and Elen-naomh; also Kill-Diun, or Dimha, at Lochava (or Lochow). Most of our parishes still bear the names of his disciples, and tell their founder; and the vast number of places, whose names begin with *Kill*, shows how thick our churches were anciently planted; so that there is much reason to believe that the largest number ascribed to Columba is not above the mark. Providence smiled in a remarkable manner on his labours, and his success was astonishing. It is no wonder that so extraordinary a man should have been so much revered while alive, and his memory so much respected after his death. Accordingly, he is styled by foreign, as well as by domestic writers, the Apostle of the Scots and Picts, the patron Saint of both, and the joint patron of Ireland, "*Pictorum et Scotorum Albienfium apostolus, et utriusque Scotiæ patronus;*" *S. Evin. Vit. S. Pat.* "*Doctor Scotorum et Pictorum;*" *Mat. West. ad ann. 566. and Sigibert. in Chron.* "*S. Columba, abbas Hienfis, Scotorum et Pictorum Doctor et Apostolus;*" *Colgan, 664.*; and though only an abbot, he had the singular privilege of exercising (as did his successors) a jurisdiction over all their bi-

shops, being primate of all their churches, “*Pictorum et Scotorum Primas* ;” *Colgan*. p. 498. Notkerus Balbulus, who ranks Columba *almost* with the first apostles, calls him also “Primate of all the Irish bishops” (*Omnium Hiberniensium-episcoporum Primas* ; *Martyrol.* 9. *Jun.*), which the author of the life of St. Farran (*Colgan. Trias.* p. 463.) says he was made at the great council of Drimkeat. His successors, the abbots of Iona, seem for a considerable time to have had the same pre-eminence in Ireland as well as in Scotland. The acts of a synod of the clergy of Ireland, at which Adomnan presided in 695, are called “The Canons of Adomnan.” *Colgan*. p. 665. ; and in 925 Maolbride seems to have had equal authority, as may be inferred from the annals of the *Quat. Magistr.* *ad ann.* 925. (See Chron. annexed).

In after times, St. Columba was considered as the patron saint of the ancient Scots and Picts ; and the patron saint of Ireland, in conjunction with St. Patrick and St. Bridget. “*Sunt enim hi tres SS. Patricius, Columba, et Brigida tres præcipui et generales universæ Hiberniæ patroni* ;” *Martyrol. Dungallense.* “*Constat hos tres Sanctos coli olim tanquam universæ Hiberniæ communes patronos* ;” *Colgan*. p. 453. To this honour, his merit in Ireland, as well as in Scotland, gave him the amplest title. “*Columba Apostolus Albanæ præcipuus post. S. Patricium præco, et seminator religionis in universa fere Hibernia et Albania* ;” *Annal. Quat. Mag. ad ann.* 596.

Both nations held him in such reverence, that they thought their security depended upon their having his remains in their possession. The Pictish Chronicle says, that Kenneth Mac-Alpin, after his conquest of the Picts, carried the relics of Columba to a church which he had built in his new territory, (A. D. 489.) ; and the Irish writers relate, that they were carried to Ireland, and placed in Down, in the same tomb with St. Patrick and St. Bridget, (*Martyrol. Dungallense*). Giraldus Cambrensis says, they were carried thither in 1185,

by order of John de Curci, and repeats the well known lines,

Hi tres in Duño, tumulto tumultantur in uno,
Brigida, Patricius, atque Columba pius.

These opinions and stories may serve to show the veneration which the people of both nations had for the memory and remains of Columba.

But the fame of Columba, and the veneration for his name, extended much farther than Britain and Ireland. Adomnan (iii. 23.) observes, that “ though Columba lived
“ in a small remote island of the British ocean, yet God had
“ done him the honour to make his name renowned, not
“ only through all Britain and Ireland, but through Spain,
“ France, and Italy, and particularly in Rome, the greatest
“ city in the world. Thus, adds he, God honoureth those
“ who honour him ; for which his holy name be praised.”

Odonellus, who cites this passage from Adomnan, says, in still stronger terms, that whilst the saint was yet alive almost all the countries of Europe sounded with his fame. Several testimonies of foreign writers have been occasionally produced already to this purpose ; to which I shall here add that of Anthony Yopez, who (*in Chron. General. Ordin. S. Bened.*) says, *ad ann. 565. Sub idem tempus, &c.* “ About this
“ time flourished the two Irish saints, of the name of Co-
“ lumbanus, or Columba ; both of whom were so illustrious,
“ that either of them would be alone sufficient to give cele-
“ brity to the whole nation to which they belonged. As
“ they had the same name, so they had also the same gene-
“ rous zeal, and made the same noble exertions to spread the
“ gospel among heathen nations in foreign lands.”

Of the DISCIPLES of St. COLUMBA.

To the great success of Columba, the instruments employed under him must have contributed not a little. His disciples were men of learning, as well as of zeal and piety. He chose men of this stamp for his first associates; and his own seminaries furnished him afterwards with a sufficient supply of the same kind. Learning, when he set out in life, was in a very flourishing state in Ireland. In many of the lives of the Irish saints, written in that age, we read of numerous schools, well attended, and taught by learned and aged masters; which could not have been the case, if, as some maintain, letters had been introduced into the country no sooner than the time of St. Patrick. So general a diffusion of learning, and such acquaintance with the learned languages as Columba's masters and his contemporaries possessed, could not possibly have taken place in so short a period. But without entering further into this subject at present, it is enough to say, that Columba found and chose men of learning, as well as of zeal and piety, to superintend his seminaries, and to conduct his missions; while he himself, with unwearied diligence, went through occasionally from province to province, through the whole of his immense diocese *.

We had occasion to observe before, that he was at great pains to select the most promising youths, and the children of pious parents, for his disciples, and that the course of

* Delata cœnobii administratione cuidam e sua familia probo Seniori, omnes ipse regni provincias continuo peragrans, urbes, oppida, pagos circuiens, colendis populorum moribus totus incumbibat: passim templa, passim monasteria extruere, ac dignis sacrorum ministris providere.

education and probation prescribed by him was very long ; so that the learning, as well as the piety and prudence of every candidate, was well proved before he was intrusted with the cure of souls. We have seen a man, who thought himself already qualified for entering into orders, obliged by Columba to spend no less than seven years more in education and preparation before he could be ordained to the sacred office. Sanctity and zeal, when thus accompanied with learning, could not fail to make the disciples of Columba both respected and useful.

The instituting of schools and seminaries of learning, in which men were thus prepared for the ministry, and trained up from their infancy in the acts and habits of their office, and kept till their character was fully formed, and their qualifications well known and proved, had a powerful tendency to make their future labours successful. From his first monasteries in Ireland, Columba drew the necessary supplies, till that over which he himself presided in Iona was in condition to furnish as many as he needed. The excellency of his plan was sufficiently proved by the effect which it produced.

Another circumstance which greatly contributed to the success of Columba, especially in Ireland, was the high rank of many of his disciples. A great number of them were, like himself, of the family of Conal Gulbann, son of Niall Naoighealbach (or "Neil of the Nine Hostages"), monarch of Ireland. That country, long harassed by civil wars, listened gladly to a system which proposed *peace on earth* ; and which its effect, upon those who first professed it, showed to be fully adequate to all that it proposed. Hence, many of the nobility not only embraced but preached the gospel, and ranked themselves among the followers and disciples of Columba. It was then the fashion among great men to be great saints ; a fashion which is long of coming round again, although one should think that self-preservation might now give the alarm, and help to bring it about.

Among the circumstances which conduced to Columba's success, may be mentioned the unusual length to which the lives of many holy men, who then preached the gospel, were preserved. Their extreme temperance, constant exercise, and inward joy and serenity of mind, would no doubt contribute to health and long life. But that the duration of it, accompanied with health and usefulness, should have been so long as we find from a variety of concurring testimonies it often was, can be ascribed only to the kind and particular providence of God being peculiarly concerned about their preservation. The age of St. Patrick, and some more, may probably be exaggerated. But it is pleasing to find the oldest of them (what is more credible than his age) represented as active and cheerful to the last, after all the toil of his daily duty.

Tri fiched bliadhan fo thri
 Soeghal an chredhuil Chrumani,
 Gan tamh, gan ghalar, sòsdach
 Iar naifreann iar ceolabhradh. *Colgan, 175.*

Of Columba's own scholars or disciples above one hundred had the honour of being sainted, and their festivals observed by the gratitude of those places which they benefited by their labours, as we find from the accounts given of them by various authors. The following is

*A List of some of the most eminent of COLUMBA's immediate
 DISCIPLES and CONTEMPORARIES.*

(The Twelve who came with Columba at first to Iona are marked thus *).

St. Aidan, or Aodhan, son of Libher; afterwards bp. of Lindisfarn. *Bed. l. iii.*

St. Aidan, son of Kein, abbot of Cuil-uisc. (There are twenty-seven saints of this name).

- St. Ailbhe, son of Ronan.
 St. Aonghus, of Dermagh.
 5 St. Baithan, of Doire-chalguich.
 St. Baithen, son of Brendan, ab. of Hi.
 St. Barrind, ab. of Kill-barrind.
 St. Becan, son of Ernan, brother of Cumin Fionn.
 St. Bec, or Beg-bhile, son of Tighearnach.
 10 St. Berach, a monk of Hi; abbot of Cluain-choirpe.
 St. Berchan, or Barchan. *Ad. iii. 21.*
 St. Bran, or Branni', in Doire-chalguich, nephew of Columba.
 St. Cailten, of Kill-Diun or Dimha, at Loch-ava.
 *St. Carnan, son of Brandubh.
 15 *St. Ceata, or Catan; supposed by some to be the bp. Ceadan of *Bede*; by others the Cetheus, surnamed Peregrinus, said by *Herman. Greven.* to have suffered martyrdom in Italy.
 St. Ceallach, bp. of the Mercians, in England.
 St. Cobhran, son of Enan, nephew of Columba.
 *St. Cobhthach, son of Brendan, and brother of St. Baithen.
 St. Colgu, or Colgan, of Kill-cholgan, in Connaught.
 20 St. Colgan, son of Aodh Draighneach, a monk of Hi.
 St. Collan, of Dermagh.
 St. Colman, or Columan, founder of the mon. of Snamh-luthir.
 St. Colman, ab. of Hi, and afterwards of Lindisfarn,
 St. Colman, son of Comhgell; who died in 620.
 25 St. Colman, abbot of Rechrain.
 St. Colman, son of Enan.
 St. Colman, son of Tighearnach, brother to Beg-bhile Connan and Cuan.
 St. Colman, son of Ronan.
 St. Colum Crag, of Enach in Ulster.
 30 St. Coman, or Comhan, brother to St. Cumin.

- St. Comgan (or Caomhghan), son of Deghille, and
fister's son of Columba.
- St. Conall, ab. of Innis-caoil, in Tirconnel.
- St. Conna, or Connan, furnamed Dil, son of Tighear-
nach.
- St. Conacht, son of Maoldraighneach.
- 35 St. Conrach, Mac-Kein, of Dermagh mon.
- St. Constantin, or Cufandin, king of Cornubia, said by
Fordun to have presided over the monastery of Govan,
upon Clyde, and to have converted the people of Kin-
tyre, where he says he suffered martyrdom.
- St. Cormac Hua Liethain, ab. of Darmagh.
- St. Corman, said to have been the first missionary to the
Northumbrians: Flour. A. D. 630.
- St. Cuannan, ab. of Kill-chuannain, in Connaught.
- 40 St. Cuan, or Coan, son of Tighearnach.
- St. Cuchumin Mac-kein, ab. of Hi.
- St. Cumin, furnamed Fionn, or Fair, ab. of Hi, who
wrote Columba's life.
- St. Dachonna, ab. of Eas-mac-neirc.
- St. Dallan Forguill, formerly a bard or poet.
- 45 St. Dermot, of the descendants of K. Leogaire.
- St. Dima, afterwards a bp. of the Mercians, in England.
- *St. Eochadh, or Eochadh Torannan.
- St. Enna, son of Nuadhan, ab. of Imleachfoda, in Con-
naught.
- *St. Ernan, uncle to Columba, and ab. of Himba.
- 50 St. Ernan, ab. of Drim-tuam, in Tirconnel.
- St. Ernan, ab. of Torrachan; of the race of K. Niall.
- St. Ernan, of Teach-Ernain.
- B. Eoghan, or Eoghanan, a Pictish presbyter.
- St. Failbhe, ab. of Hi.
- 55 St. Farannan, ab. of All-Farrannain, in Connaught.
- St. Fiachna, of Acha-luing, Ethica.
- St. Fechno, son of Rodan: flour. 580. *Martyr. Anglic.*

- St. Fergna (Virgnous), ab. of Hii.
- 60 St. Finan, surnamed Lobhar ; ab. of Sourd, near Dublin.
 St. Finan, or Finthan, ab. of Rath, in Tirconnel.
 St. Finan, or Fennin, ab. of Magh-chofgain.
 St. Finan, an anchorite ; supposed by some to be the
 same with the preceding.
 St. Finan, who succeeded Aidan as bp. of Lindisfarn.
- 65 St. Finbarr, ab. of Drim-choluim, in Connaught.
 St. Finnchan, ab. of Ardchaoim.
 St. Finnlugan, a monk of Hi.
 St. Finten, son of Aodh, founder of the mon. of Caille-
 Abhind.
- B. Genere, or Gueren, a Saxon, or Anglo-Saxon.
- 70* St. Grellan, son of Rodan, or Grellan Aoibhleach.
 St. Hilary, or Elaire, son of Fintan, and brother of St.
 Aidan.
 St. Lafran, son of Feradach ; ab. of Darmagh.
 St. Lafran, called Hortulanus, or Gardener.
 St. Lafran, son of Deghille, and brother of St. Bran.
- 75 St. Lafran, or Lasar, son of Ronan.
 St. Libhran, from Connaught.
 St. Loman, of Lochuair.
 St. Luga Ceanaladh, a monk of Hi.
- * St. Lugaide, of Cluain-laogh.
- 80 St. Lugaid, ab. of Cluain-finchoil.
 St. Lugaid, surnamed Laidir, of Tir-da-chraobh.
 St. Lugbe Mac-cumin, a monk of Hi, ab. of Elen-nao'.
 St. Lugbe Mac-Blai', a monk of Hi.
 St. Lughne Mac-cumin, brother of St. Lugbe.
- 85 St. Lughne Mac-Blai', brother of Lugbe Mac-Blai'.
 St. Mernoc, or Marnoc, of Cluain-reilgeach.
 St. Miril, sister's son of Columba.
 St. Maolchus, brother to St. Mernoc.
 St. Maoldubh, of Cluin-chonair.
- 90 St. Maoldubh, son of Enan.
 St. Moab, or Abban, his brother.

- B. Maolcomha, son of Aodh Mac-Aimirich, from a king became a monk.
- S. Maol-Odhraín, a monk of Hi.
- B. Maol-umha, son of Beothan, king of Ireland, a monk of Hi.
- 95 St. Mochonna, son of Fiachna, king of Ulster, afterwards a Pictish bishop.
- *St. Mac-cuthen, said by Usher to have wrote a life of St. Patrick.
- St. Moluan, a monk of Hi.
- St. Moluoc, of the race of Conal Gulbann, bp. of Lismore, died in 588.
- St. Mothorian, ab. of Drim-cliaibh.
- 100 St. Munna, son of Tulchan, ab. of Teach-mhunna.
- St. Pilo, an Anglo-Saxon, a monk of Hi.
- *St. Odhran, who died soon after he came to Hi, 27th October.
- St. Oflin, or Oflían, ab. of Cluain-mor. There were several saints of this name. A poetical dialogue between one of this name and St. Patrick is still repeated, which Colgan (p. 215.) observes could not have been composed by the son of Fingal, who lived long before.
- *St. Rus, or Ruffen, styled by Maguir “de insulis Pictorum.”
- 105 *St. Scandal, son of Bresal, ab. of Kill-chobhrain.
- St. Segin, son of Fiachri, ab. of Hi.
- St. Segen, son of Ronan, ab. of Bangor in 664.
- St. Senach, half-brother of Columba, ab. of Doire-brosgaidh.
- St. Senan, a monk of Darmagh.
- 110 St. Sillean, son of Neman, a monk of Hi.
- St. Suibhne, son of Curtre, ab. of Hi.
- St. Ternoc, of Ari-molt, near Loch-Ern, in Ulster.
- *St. Torannan, afterwards ab. of Bangor, as Colgan thinks.

St. Trenan Mac-Rintir, a monk of Hi.

115. B. Tulchan, father of St. Munna, &c. who followed his sons to Hi.

Such as wish to know more of these saints, and others, may consult Colgan, Cathald, Maguir, Gorman, the Martyrologies of Dungallan, Tamlaçt, &c. &c. with the authors cited by them.

A brief Account of IONA, and of COLUMBA's Successors.

Before Columba died, he had got his chief seminary in Icolmkill or Iona put in such a state, that he was able to speak with confidence of its future glory and fame. His disciples accordingly supported its credit for many ages, and supplied not only their own, but other nations, with learned and pious teachers. "From this nest of Columba, says Odonellus, these sacred doves took their flight to all quarters." The other Columbanus, who, after spending some time in the monastery of Bangor, passed from thence to France, afterwards to Germany, and at last to Italy, and "filled all those regions with monasteries," (*Ant. Ypez in Chron. General. ad. ann. 565.*) ; paved the way for them into all these countries, into which they poured in such numbers, that both Ypez and St. Bernard (*Vit. Malachie*) compare them to hives of bees, or to a spreading flood. Wherever they went they diffused learning and true religion, of both which they seem to have possessed the greatest share of any society then in Europe, and seem to have done more than any other towards the revival of both, when they were at the lowest ebb.

Foreign and Romish writers, accustomed to distinguish monks by their different orders, speak of the disciples of Columba in the same manner, and call them by different names, such as, "Ordo Apostolicus," (*Gesner*) ; "Ordo Divi Columbæ," "Congregatio Columbina," (*Colgan*) ; and "Or-

do pulchræ focietatis," (*Ware*); but they themselves seem to have assumed no other name than that of *Famuli Dei*, or servants of God;" or in their own language *Gille-De*, which was Latinized into Keledeus, (as Comganus Kele-De, or Keledeus; Ængusinus Keledeus, &c. *ap. Colgan.*), whence the English name of *Culdees*. These were generally formed into societies, consisting each of twelve and an abbot, after the example of their master, or of Christ and his apostles; and their foreign missions were commonly conducted on a similar plan.

Iona continued to be the *Archicænobium*, or chief monastery, and its abbots the heads of all monasteries and congregations of the followers of Columba in Scotland and Ireland, for several ages, to which all its bishops were subject. The first check to its celebrity was the invasion of the Norwegians and Danes in the beginning of the ninth century. By them it was repeatedly pillaged and burnt, and its monks and abbots massacred. Soon after, it came to be under their settled dominion, together with the rest of the Western Isles. As those barbarians held learning in no estimation, the college of Iona, though it continued to exist, began to decline, and had its connection with Britain and Ireland in a great measure cut off. Dunkeld affected then, for some time, to be the Primate's seat in Scotland, but did not long maintain its claim; for about the end of the 9th, or beginning of the 10th century, the legend of St. Regulus, and the apparition of St. Andrew, were invented; in consequence of which, with the aid of king Grig, St. Andrew's came to be considered as the principal see of Scotland, and St. Andrew to be considered as the tutelar saint instead of St. Columba.

Still, however, the Culdees, or clergy of the order of Columba, retained their influence and respect, and often elected the bishops of their bounds. At length, in the 12th and 13th centuries, the Romish monks poured into the kingdom, supplanted the Culdees, and by degrees got possession of all

their monasteries. The followers of Columba, after their great and first concern of establishing Christianity in the kingdom was over, and religion fully settled, did not think it unlawful to marry (*Keith, Sir J. Dalrymple, &c.*), and to take the charge of families as well as of parishes. The new monks, on the other hand, lived in celibacy, affected greater purity, and had more ceremony and show; so that the popular tide soon turned in their favour. The Culdees existed no longer in colleges, but for a long time after they continued to teach true Christianity apart; so that the reign of error in these lands was very short, and the darkness of its night was intermixed with the light of many stars.

From these notices of Columba, and of his disciples, we may well apply to him the beginning of his own ode to Ciaran.

*Quantum, Christe! apostolum
Mundo misisti hominem?
Lucerna hujus insule, &c.*

A great apostle sent by God
Hath blest'd this isle with light;
His beams, diffus'd through all the land,
Dispell'd the gloom of night.

*A CHRONICLE of some events connected with the MONASTERY of
Hi, or IONA. From the Annals of Quatuor Mag. Ulster, Col-
gan, Ir. Martyrologies, &c. &c.*

A. D.

563. St. Columba arrived in Hi, on Pentecost eve.

563. St. Odhran dies, 27th of October.

572. Conall king of the Scots, who gave Hi to Columba, died.

574. The great Council of Drimkeat was held.

583. Brude, son of Maolchan, king of the Picts, died.
597. St. Columba, the apostle of Albin, died; *etat.* 77.
600. St. Baithen, son of Brendan, abbot of Hi, died.
601. St. Laifran, son of Feradach, ab. of Hi, died.
622. St. Fergna, furnamed the Briton, ab. of Hi, died.
635. St. Aidan (Mac Libher) and others, set out for England from Iona, at the desire of king Oswald, to convert his people to Christianity.
651. St. Segin, son of Fiachri, ab. of Hi, died.
651. St. Aidan, bishop or abbot of Lindisfarn in England, died. (A number of his successors, as Cellach, Fintan, Dima, Colman, &c. were also from Hi.)
654. St. Suibhne, son of Curtre, ab. of Hi, died.
660. St. Colman became ab. of Hi, but soon after went to be abbot of Lindisfarn, which he resigned in 664, and returned to Hi; after which he went to Ireland, and built the monasteries of Innse-bosionn and Magheo.
668. St. Cumin (Fionn) ab. of Hi, the biographer of Columba, died.
677. St. Failbhe, ab. of Hi, died.
684. St. Adomnan (or *Adhambnan*), ab. of Hi, goes to reclaim from the Anglo-Saxons some captives and plunder; was honourably received, and obtained all he wanted.
686. St. Adomnan, on a second embassy, got 60 captives restored from the Saxons to Ireland.
695. St. Adomnan holds a Synod in Ireland; the acts of which are called "The Canons of Adomnan."
703. St. Adoman, ab. of Hi, and biographer of Columba, died, *etat.* 78.
708. St. Conamhal, or Conain, son of Failbhe, ab. of Hi, died.
710. St. Caide, or Caidan, ab. of Hi, died.
713. St. Dorbhen Fada, ab. of Hi, died.

714. St. Faolchuo, son of Dorbhen Mac Teinne, made ab. of Hi, *æt.* 74.
714. The family of Hi (the monks) expelled beyond Drim-albin, by Nechtan king of the Picts.
716. St. Duncha (or Duncan), son of Cinnfaola, ab. of Hi, died; and Faolchuo, who had resigned his office to him, again resumes it.
720. St. Faolchuo, son of Dorben, ab. of Hi, died; *Quat. Mag.* The Annals of Ulster place his death in 723, and call him Faolan; which is the name retained by some of our old parishes.
725. St. Killeen, or Cillian, surnamed Fada, ab. of Hi, died.
729. St. Egbert, who had remained 13 years in Hi, died.
744. Many of the people of Hi perished in a great storm.
747. St. Killeen, surnamed Droicheach, ab. of Hi, died. (An. Ult. 751.)
754. St. Failbhe II. ab. of Hi, died, *æt.* 87.
762. St. Slebhen, son of Conghal, ab. of Hi, died.
765. B. (*Beatus*) Nial, surnamed Frafach, king of Ireland (who had abdicated his kingdom, and had been for eight years in Hi), died.
767. St. Suibhne II. ab. of Hi, died. (An. Ult. say in 771.)
777. St. Muredhach (or Murdoch), son of Huagal, prior of Hi (ab.), died.
786. B. Artgal Mac Catheld, king of Connaught, who had abdicated, died in pilgrimage in Hi, in the eighth year of his pilgrimage.
793. Devastation of all the isles by foreigners.
797. St. Bresal, son of Seigen, ab. of Hi (for 30 years), died.
- St. Conmhal, ab. of Hi (*scriba selectissimus*), died.
797. Hi burnt by foreign pirates.
801. Hi again burnt by pirates, and many of the family destroyed in the flames.
805. Of the family of Hi, 68 killed by foreigners.

810. St. Kellach, son of Conghal, ab. of Hi, died.
815. Constantin (or Cufandin), king of the Picts, builds the church of Dunkeld.
816. S. Dermot, ab. of Hi, goes to Albin with Columba's coffer or box, (*scrinium*).
823. St. Blamhac, son of Flanni, ab. of Hi, crowned with martyrdom, being slain by the Nortmans (Norwegians) and Danes.
827. Ungust II. king of the Picts, founded Kilrimont, (St. Andrew's).
843. Kenneth Mac Alpin, after his conquest of the Picts, removes from the W. to the E. coast.
848. Juraftach, ab. of Hi, goes to Ireland with Columkille's sacred things.
849. Kenneth (III.) transported the relics of Columba to his new church. *Pict. Chron.*
852. Aulay (*Amblaidh*), king of Lochlin, came to Ireland, and laid it under tribute.
853. The Coarb * (successor or representative) of Columkille, a wise and excellent man, martyred among the Saxons.
863. St. Cellach, son of Ailid, ab. of Hi, died in the land of the Cruithens (Picts.)
864. Tuahal, Mac Artgusa, Abp. of Fortren, and abbot of Dun-Caillen (Dunkeld), died.
875. St. Columba's box is carried to Ireland, lest it should fall into the hands of the Danes.
877. B. Ferach Mac Cormaic, ab. of Hi, died. (Ann. Ult. say in 879.)
890. St. Andrew's, about this time, made independent on Iona, by King Grig, *Reg. S. And.*

* Coarb, or comhshorb, "a comb, i. e. con, and *forb*, ager, patrimonium. Usurpatur pro successione in dignitate Ecclesiastica;" *Colgan*. Coarb, or cöirb, is still used in Gaelic to denote one's equal.

890. St. Flan, or Flanna, son of Maolduine, ab. of Hi, died : *in pace dormivit.*
925. St. Maolbride, son of Dornan, Coarb (successor) of SS. Pat. Col. and Adomnan, died : “ Caput religionis universæ Hiberniæ, et majoris partis Europæ “ in venerabili senectute obiit, 22 Feb.” *Quat. Mag.*
935. St. Aonghus, son of Murchartach, co-adjutor of the ab. of Hi, died.
937. Dubharb, Coarb of Colum-kille and Adomnan, rested in peace.
945. St. Caoinchomrach, ab. of Hi, died.
958. Dubhdhuin, Coarb of Columkill, died.
964. St. Fingin, bp. of Hi, died.
978. St. Mugron, a bp. ; scribe, and notable teacher, surnamed *Nan-tri-rann*, Coarb of Columkill in Ireland and Scotland, died : *felicem vitam finivit.*
979. Amhlua (or Aulay), son of Sitric, prince of the Normans (or Danes), after his defeat in the battle of Temora, took refuge in Hi, where he died.
985. The island of Hi pillaged on Christmas eve by the Normans, who killed the abbot and 15 of the learned of the church.
997. Patrick, Coarb of Columkill, died, *æt.* 83.
988. Duncha, Coarb of Columkill, died.
1004. B. Maolbrighde Hua Remed, ab. of Hi, died.
1009. Martan Mac Cineadh, Coarb of Columkill, died.
1010. Muredach, Coarb of SS. Columba and Adomnan, an eminent professor of theology at Ardmagh, died.
1015. B. Flannai Abhra, ab. of Hi, died.
1057. Robhertach Mac Donell, Coarb of Columkill, died.
1070. B. Macbaithen, ab. of Hi, died.
1093. Magnus, king of Norway, subjugates the W. isles.
1099. B. Duncha, son of Moenach, ab. of Hi, died.

1126. The first legate (John of Crema) comes to Scotland ;
(which is the first trace of Papal power there).
1152. Card. Jo Papiro arrives in Ireland with four stoles or
robes, sent by the Pope to four archbishops of Ire-
land.
1185. The relics o S. Columba brought to Down by order of
Jo. de Curci, (according to *Gir. Cambrensis*.)
1178. St. Patrician Huabranain, a venerable and holy bp. died
in Hi.
1188. B. Amblua Hua Doighr , a pilgrim in Hi, died in a
venerable old age.
1199. St. Muireach Hua Baodain died in Hi.
1203. Ceallach built a monastery in Hi, in opposition to the
learned of the place ; upon which the clergy of the
north of Ireland held a meeting ; after which they
came to Hi, and demolished the monastery of Ceal-
lach.

KINGS contemporary with St. COLUMBA.

<i>Of the Scots.</i>		<i>Picts.</i>	<i>Strathclyde.</i>	<i>Ireland.</i>
Conal I. be- gan to reign	} A.D. 560.	Brude II. 557.	Morken.	Dermot I. 544.
Aidan - -		Garnat IV. 587.	Roderk.	Fergus } Donald I. } 565.
	575.			Amirach 566.
				Beothan } Eoghan } 569.
				Ed (or } Aodh) I, } 572.

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