

The Early Church

IN BRITAIN :

ITS FAITH AND WORKS.

BY

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"UNDER THE YOKE," ETC., ETC.

"Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made,
not for burnt-offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us
and you."

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PREFACE.

THE object of this little work is to put in a popular form information on a subject concerning which comparatively little has been written, and by our young people less has been read. Church questions are now more than ever stirring the public heart, and in this volume questions of early faith and practice are discussed, that the essential unity of all true Protestants may appear, and not that sectarian differences may be widened.

May the book also be to all who read it an additional bond between England and America, as it dwells upon the faith, the patience, the toils, and the trials of our common ancestry.

Written in England, and not only so, but prepared amid all the singular facilities for study offered by the grandest and best conducted library in the world, the BRITISH MUSEUM READING ROOM, I only regret that, with these advantages, the work has not been more perfectly completed; such as it is, it is offered to the young people of the Protestant Churches with hearty wishes for their spiritual advancement and growth of grace.

J. McN. W.

THE
EARLY CHURCH IN BRITAIN.

CHAPTER I.

“History not wanted yet,
Leaned on her elbow watching Time, whose course,
Eventful, should supply her with a theme.”

THE THEME.

THE institution of the worship of God dates from the days of Adam. This worship arises out of the needs of man's moral nature, and the position which he holds in reference to God.

Until the time of Christ the strife in spiritual matters lay between the revealed religion held by the Hebrews, and heathen idolatry. After Christ had come, Christianity heired the revelation, the faith, and the benediction, that had been the possession of the Jews;

and now against Christianity Satan must devise an opponent. The prince of the power of the air was too subtle to spend his strength in making monstrous imitations of the ancient creed; his *chef d'œuvre* was to be the opponent of God's crowning miracle of love to man. As in the first age Satan had procured the fall of innocent man, so now he invaded a pure Church, and set himself to compass the perversion of part of its membership.

As heathenism virtually perished in the dawn of the New Dispensation, a mighty schism appeared in the very Church of Christ. As God had found an heir for the old faith, Satan had found an heir for the old idolatry. That heir was—Rome.

But as anciently the idolatry had been more widely spread and more powerful than the truth, so now the schism grew apace in this world's congenial soil, and, in towering size and power, proclaimed itself the one true and only Church.

The truth struggled, grew by disaster, throve on persecution, and found its work not only in disseminating the truth, but in ceaseless protest against error.

The world has now, as in the time before Christ, two great representative Churches: one is called Protestantism, from its necessary

office; the other, Romanism, from its headquarters.

The favorite and vehement assertion of Rōmanism is, that she herself is the true Christ-planted, Apostle-watered Church, and that Protestantism is a new invention, a heresy against her own immortal truth. Where was your Church before Luther? this is her angry demand.

Rome claims for herself, in spite of an overwhelming counter-testimony of facts, all that antedated the REFORMATION. It is no very difficult task to prove the unbroken antiquity of the faith held by all the evangelical churches, and handed down by them unbroken from the days of Christ, to prove it indeed out of the very mouth of Rome; but in this little work we only undertake to give in brief the early history of the Church of God in those British Islands, where the ancestors of two great nations grew in a simple faith and sturdy virtue which could never after be effectually rooted out of their national life. God has never left himself without a true witnessing Church in these Islands, and out of this little Church have grown two great empires; as great as that world-empire, the darling dream of Alva's master; and from this Island Church

the light of truth has gone out to shine on all the world.

The young Christians of England and America should be able to answer in their own behalf the proud query of Rome, and to tell where and what their Church was in the early centuries, after the Apostles had fallen on sleep.

It is a feeling nobler than vanity, which delights in searching out the greatness and the goodness of our family ancestry; and this feeling has its highest exercise in searching out our religious ancestry, and tracing the simplicity of the gospel, the ardor of labor, the firmness unto death, of our fathers in Christ.

“And higher yet our proud pretensions rise,
Children of parents passed into the skies.”

Stillingfleet very aptly remarks that “Christianity has, like its Author, been crucified between two thieves.” Nor do we any where perceive this more forcibly, than when we study its early history. No sooner do we pass out of the region of *heathen* historians than we find ourselves in the domains of *Romanism*; when giant Pagan ceases to be our chronicler, giant Pope takes up the pen. Seated in the world’s capital, not too nice to

win favors of an infidel emperor and his court, by concessions to them; and not too honest to garble the page, which unaltered might have condemned her, Rome was for many centuries the all too dangerous conservator of history.

The business of history is to follow mankind through all their varied changes, relating causes and consequences; facts alone are the province of history. When the world woke up to investigating, reasoning, correlating facts, Rome was in one way or another in possession of most of the world's documents; many of them had been written by her own children, and she was wise enough early to fall upon history and carve and model it that it might bear out her assertion of her own antiquity and unity. But though we must go to such sources as these for information, we shall yet not fail to find the indestructible truth which was supposed to have been entirely hidden or obliterated. And thus, while we gather now from the Pagan's page, now from the archives of Rome, the vestiges of the early history of the Evangel, we must be careful to compare statement with statement; and to make allowance for the color of the medium through which the truth comes.

CHAPTER II.

“Rome for empire far renowned,
Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates.”

OUR ANCESTORS.

PERHAPS the first question asked by the thoughtful young student will be, Who were our ancestors? Of what race did they spring? We have heard of zealous genealogists, who have Adam somewhere in the middle of their family tree; families of Darwinian proclivities these, doubtless, but at the risk of seeming strangely new and modern by their side, the British race dates back its line no farther—than Noah!

At the building of Babel, not only did God confound men's language, but the breath of the Almighty blew among men, as the wind blows among the dead leaves in autumn, and they were driven asunder through all the world. But they went rather as winged seeds than as dead leaves; for where they

rested there they took root and thrrove. And yet for many centuries as a race grew numerous and strong in its new home, a mighty impulse of emigration seized upon them, and in great hordes they swept across the world to find other abodes.

Thus journeyed the family of Gomer, the eldest son of Japhet, the son of Noah. From Gomer came the Celts, one part of whom were called Gauls. Driven from their Assyrian cradle, we see the Celts entering Europe. Again and again the impulse of migration comes upon them, and unconsciously they do the will of God in moving across the earth.* About three hundred years before Christ, one of these impulses came upon them, and rushing out of their homes they poured like the waters of a swollen stream across Greece, Southern Asia, through Germany and France, and thence overflowed into Britain, Ireland, and Wales.

Of those who went into Asia we find later trace; true to their rugged natures, they swarmed into the hills, and there three centuries later Paul carried them the gospel of the grace of God, "Paul an apostle (not of men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father

*See *Fasti Romani*, p. 300. H. F. Clinton, Uni. Press, Oxford.

who raised him from the dead), and all the brethren with me, unto the churches of Galatia." Thus the young student of the Word, finds the Epistle to the Galatians written to his kinsmen according to the flesh, brethren of those who flocking into Britain were his own Celtic ancestry. Broadly across Europe lies this belt of Celts, with their divisions of Cimbri, Belgæ, Gauls. France takes their name, and every school-boy knows how a certain history begins, "All Gaul is divided into three parts." Pressed to the westward by other tribes, and crowded by the rising power of Rome, the Celts were finally shut into about the third part of Gaul.*

Concerning this question of our ancestry, as upon all other important points, there have been held differing opinions, but upon the fact of Celtic origin, such authorities as Innes, Chalmers, Gibbon, Usher and many others have agreed. We make but one quotation. Tacitus says, speaking of Britain: "It appears probable that the Gauls" (one of the tribes of the Celts) "took originally possession of the neighboring coast" (*i. e.*, Britain). "The sacred rites and superstitions of these people are discernible among the Britains, and their

*See Pinkerton's Enquiry into History of Scotland.

languages do not greatly differ." (See Innes' Critical Essay.)

In those rude ages emigration availed itself largely of the great river and ocean highways. The line of progress was doubtless from France into South Britain, thence again into Ireland and Wales, while North Britain, that is now Scotland, would be reached by way of Ireland, and from Jutland. Taking their name from their localities, or their manners, we find along the northern center of the larger island, the Picts, or painted men; and more northerly still, the Caledonians, haunting forests or coverts; the Scots dwell in what we now name Ireland, called then by historians "a ruder Britain," and "the barbarous isle." In South Britain the men of the continent occasionally come and go.

As for religion, the Gauls had, in common with all the Celts, received the traditions of the sons of Noah, which had been overlaid with a slowly growing superstructure of idolatry. They worshiped Jove, the ancient Bel, under the form of the sun in heaven, and an oak-tree on earth. But two points are to be noted concerning this religion in Britain—it possessed no images nor symbols made with hands,* and was supposed to be so pure and

*See Henry's Hist. of Brit. Vol. I. ch. 2, Druidism.

authentic a form of faith, that Cæsar tells us, "such of the Gauls as desired to be fully instructed in their religion took a journey into Britain for that purpose."

We now glance for a moment at the Roman invasion of Britain. Cæsar, the man of boundless ambition, followed in his march of conquest the line of Celtic migration. When he stopped where the moving hordes of Gaul had made a pause, where the channel waves were breaking against the white cliffs of France, he cast an envious eye toward the white cliffs of Britain.

Half a century before Christ, the adventurous Cæsar entered Britain by way of Deal, having sailed from the Boulogne coast; and thenceforth, for many years, the island was bound to the stormy fortunes of the Roman Empire. Its fall was its rising; its slavery was its grand hour of liberty; its ruin laid deep the foundations of the land's glory; hitherto Europe had known almost nothing of Britain, and the island Celts had known nothing of great Rome, but now the soldiers, the merchants, the rulers of Britain, were to come through the imperial city; the island had suddenly become part of the world. Here was the word of the prophet to be made good,

“I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope.”

Now while successive Roman emperors riveted their chains on the distant islands, the Deliverer of the world was born, finished his course, ascended up on high; his servants preached in his name throughout the world, and Paul, the Apostle, stirred the city of Rome with the doctrines of the gospel. Very few hints of any religious teaching in Britain in this age can be gathered, but the few that remain scattered through Pagan history and in the early Christian writers we carefully gather.

In the year 43, Claudius Cæsar established a Roman province in the southeast of Britain, shortly after London and Verulam had become large, rich, free cities; the trade in tin brought many merchants to the island, and intercourse with Rome was constant.

When we consider the zeal with which converts pushed the work of the gospel in the first century, we shall see that it is unlikely that men came and went from the great isle of Britain without hearing of a Savior, and each wandering Briton, whether citizen or soldier, would have become on his conversion a missionary to his race.

Tacitus tells us the story of a noble Roman

lady, Pomponia Græcina, wife of Plautius, a victor in Britain. On his return home Pomponia was accused of having, during her residence in Britain, embraced "a strange foreign superstition." She was tried for this in the presence of her family, her husband being judge. He pronounced her innocent of all immorality, and so acquitted her. "Pomponia lived many years after this, but always led a gloomy, melancholy sort of life," says Tacitus. Some have roundly asserted that "a strange foreign superstition" does not describe Christianity, and that "a gloomy, melancholy sort of life" does not describe the course of a Christian. But let us consider that we get this tale through the medium of a Pagan. He could believe that dead men had become gods, but that a God could become a man, and die as a felon, he must evidently consider "a strange foreign superstition." The purity of Pomponia's life bears the impress of that faith which serves a holy God, and not a pantheon of immortal profligates, while the modest, retired, devout life of a Christian woman, in those gaudy days, would appear gloomy enough to those whose creed was, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Moreover, would not Pomponia, if a Christian, have cause for much melancholy, when

her dearest relatives served Jove and Io ; when her Christian brethren wandered in dens and caves of the earth, "destitute, afflicted, tormented?"

Concerning this case of Pomponia nothing can be absolutely proven, but the probabilities certainly are that the "new religion," for which in Britain she left the gods of her fathers, was Christianity.

A story somewhat similar is that of Claudia, who with Pudens is saluted by Paul, in the Second Epistle to Timothy. This is thought to be the same Claudia, wife of Pudens, a British lady, celebrated by Martial in two epigrams ; her virtue seems to have overwhelmed the poet, quite as much as her beauty. If the Claudia of Martial is quite another person from the Claudia saluted by Paul, it is at least a singular coincidence that living in the same age they had each married a Pudens.

While India and Spain, Babylon, the Ægean Isles, and the Asian coast had received the gospel, it is not unlikely that some servant of the Church penetrated to Britain. There are many fables as to the person of this early teacher. While his name and his companionship can never be settled, we pass to the notices gathered from early Christian writers,

of the fact that the Christian religion had been early carried into Britain. Says Tertulian, A. D. 209 (adv. Judæ): "The lands of the Britains, inaccessible to the Romans, but subdued by Christ." Eusebius early in the fourth century states that the gospel had been preached *in apostolic times* to the Romans, Parthians, and to those which are called the British Isles. Theodoret says: "These, our fishermen, publicans, tent-makers, persuaded not only the Romans and their subjects, but Scythians, Indians, Persians, Britons, to embrace the religion of him who had been crucified." Each of these learned authors is proving the supernatural power of the gospel, by its conquests, and they are little likely to have been false as to the facts on which their arguments were founded.

Gildas, a British chronicler early in the sixth century, fixes the preaching of the gospel in Britain about the year 61, but Gildas must be admitted often to be exceedingly incorrect. However, his testimony on this point does not stand alone, and the probabilities are that he is not greatly wrong as to date.

For the first half century after their conquest the Britons were restive under the Roman yoke. Later the spirit of revolt died

out; it was convenient to have strong armies to fight their battles, when the Goths rushed upon them from the continent, and the Caledonians swept like winter storms from the northern glens. Magnificent harvests filled the land with plenty, and luxury, ease, and cowardice came in the train of abundance.

Now, when Vandals and Goths thundered at the gates of Rome, when the failing empire tottered to its fall, the distant legions were called home, and Rome virtually abandoned the island conquests. Again and again the islanders prayed the Romans to return. For a time their cries for help were heeded, but the day came when Rome had much ado to take care of herself. The legions finally departed and left the Britons to their own devices.*

*Henry's Hist. of Great Britain, Vol. I. p. 88.

CHAPTER III.

"But whence came they, who for the Savior God
Have long borne witness, as the Scriptures teach?
Ages ere Valdo raised his voice to preach,
In Gallic ears the unadulterate word."

THE FIRST DAYS OF THE EVANGEL.

ON the day of Pentecost, we read, that there were present to hear Peter preach "strangers from Rome," who "hearing in their own tongue the wonderful works of God," were "pricked in their hearts," and they "that gladly received the word were baptized." These men became the first heralds of the word to the mistress of the world. Until the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, Jerusalem was the home of the Mother Church of the Evangel.

Old Babylon, Macedon, and Corinth received the gospel at the mouth of an apostle, before the city of Cæsar. When Christ sent a message by the mouth of John to seven representative churches, Rome was not one of these seven. These hasty glances at the New

Testament show us that Rome was not in the first century the headquarter of the Christian faith. Says Milman, "Africa, not Rome, gave birth to Latin Christianity."* A Church well planted, carefully taught, watered by the blood of Paul, fostered by the hand of Tychicus; built up in holy faith by Luke, numbering many of "Cæsar's household" among its members, it was but one, and that, perhaps, as to numbers and knowledge, a weak one, of the band of early churches. Nevertheless from its position this Church must early become notable. As planted at the central seat of Paganism, it was exposed to the most cruel persecutions; at the chief abode of literature it was open to the closest criticism and investigation; beside the throne of the world-power, it was subject to the strongest temptation to arrogance, luxury, vice, and time-serving.

As our first parents fell in Eden, the garden of God, when they found Satan beside the tree of life, so the Christian Church was beguiled to its fall in Rome, where wickedness, arrayed in beauty, stood beside wisdom wearing a garb of dazzling light. While the churches further from the seat of empire were

*Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol. I. p. 85.

persecuted but little less severely, they were not one-half so sharply tempted, and we see them retaining their first faith, while even in the second century we find certain changes and new customs stealing into the Church at Rome, which were destined to prove the fruitful seeds of error.*

This is not the place to trace step by step, and year by year, the slow but sure departure of Rome from the simplicity of the faith in Christ Jesus; to show how the beleaguered Church yielded a little to Paganism on the one side; relaxed a little on the other the severity of the gospel requirement, in favor of the lust of the human heart; received the wages of this error in the dangerous friendships of the world, and gaining this friendship grew proud of it, and confident in it, and learned rather to trust the niceties of sophistry, than to a "thus saith the Lord," to the arm of flesh, rather than the Lord's arm, which is never "shortened that it can not save."

The sunshine of patronage, and the "parading in silver slippers," have never been good for the Church's growth in purity and humility; year by year the congregations in

*See *Novelties of Romanism*, British Tract Soc. London.

Rome, and in the districts lying near the imperial city, deviated more and more from the works and doctrines set forth by the apostles; and still maintained by their brethren in other parts of the world. The enemy of souls who had warred so long against the sons of God was no prentice hand in the arts of spiritual strife; he gathered all his strength to crush the Church of the ascended Jesus; he had learned, upon good authority, that a "house divided against itself can not stand," and he divided the Lord's house against itself, and yet it was only a seeming division, the *real* Church still remained; those who were dragged into schism were not the true children of the skies; "they went out from us, but they were not of us."

Four hundred years passed before a Roman bishop was, under any form, or with any qualifications, called a Pope. Another century elapsed before images, altars, purgatory, and the worship of the Virgin obtained even a foothold.* The year 607 saw the Church at Rome strike hands with Phocas and repudiate the saying, "My kingdom is not of this world."†

*The Claim of Leo I. See also Milman's *Lat. Christianity*, Vol. I. p. 139.

†Novelties of Romanism, British Tract Society.

Here let two important points be especially noted: first, that the Church had obtained entrance into Britain as early as it had established a foothold in Rome. As says Lloyd: "We find it by sure proof, that Christianity flourished in South Britain *before* it became established in Rome." (Lloyd Ch. Govt. in Great Britain, etc., 1684.) In support of this opinion, the erudite and careful Bishop of St. Asaph quotes various very early Latin authors, and cites the concurrent opinion of Usher in his *Primordia*, p. 173. If this is true, the Church of Rome can not claim the planting or fostering of the British Church as her work.

When Rome and Britain almost simultaneously received the gospel, the gospel was safer in Britain than in Rome, and instead of Rome being capable of sending out ministers, and ordaining bishops, and laying down laws, and ruling the British Church as her subject and pupil, the two were alike feeble and struggling churches, one while gathering a little strength in times of peace, anon driven asunder by blasts of persecution; the Roman Church having the advantage of more culture and knowledge, and easier communication with sister churches, and visits from their pastors; the British Church having the ad-

vantage of greater safety in its obscurity and distance; and longer intervals of quiet wherein its children might be trained "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."*

Another very important fact to be borne in mind is, that the intercourse between the Roman and British Churches in early days was carried on before the year 560, *i. e.*, in the period when the Roman Church was in its closest accord with the other churches of the Evangel, before its great errors had been fairly developed, and before, by the Phocian compact, it cut itself off from the household of faith of which it had made a part. As we shall hereafter notice, the Saxons came into England about the year 450; at that time the Romans had abandoned a country which they were no longer able to hold, and intercourse with the imperial city grew gradually more difficult, as it was also less necessary. Britain was rent from Roman rule; Rome itself passed under the dominion of the Greek emperors,† and for more than a century Europe seemed returning toward chaos, and there was almost no possibility of communication between Rome and Britain. Thus were the isl-

*Compare Milman's *Lat. Chr.* ch. 1, and Collier's *Ecc. Hist.* Book 1st.

†Gibbon, Vol. V. ch. 46.

and churches saved for a time from being tainted by the errors of Romanism.* Thus during the lapse of many decades, while Rome not only held no authority either of ruling or teaching the British Church, Rome herself, as says Lloyd, had "grown in stature, and had as it were another countenance in its communion."

But in these years, with what land did these poor, weak and semi-barbarous Britons hold intercourse, that the lamp of their faith was kept burning, even increasing in its light, that in an age before books, and schools, and learning, they were not overwhelmed by Druidism, or by the fierce idolatry brought in by the Saxons?

A very few words will suffice to show who were their teachers, who their brethren in adversity, with what sisterhood of churches they classed themselves. The first perversion of Rome entered only those churches nearest to her, and subject not only to her influences, but to those temptations and means of coercion by which she had fallen. Over the Eastern churches, Constantinople was to exercise a power as baleful as imperial Rome had over the churches of the West. But "God left

*Lloyd's Ch. Govt. in Great Britain, when Christian religion first entered, 1684. Ed. in British Museum.

himself not without a witness ;” there were churches that held undiverted to the simplicity and heart’s core of the apostolic teaching.

“Praised be the rivers, from their mountain springs,
Shouting to freedom, ‘plant thy banners here!’
To harassed piety, ‘dismiss thy fear,
And in our caverns smooth thy ruffled wings.’ ”

Along the north of Italy, among those Alps boldly surmounted by the hosts of Cæsar ; across the enchanting plains of sunny France, and in Spain, were planted a band of provincial and rural churches, maintaining the doctrines, forms and government in which they had been originally planted by the same men who had planted the Church at Rome. These congregations and their children were guiltless of desiring supremacy over each other, and happily unconscious that their sister in the purple should hereafter, one while, proclaim them schismatics, and at other times deny that they had ever existed ! They lived, they labored, they spread the truth, obedient to their Savior’s last command, and when persecution arose, as says an ancient chronicler, “the whole Church seemed to be under execution, and charging bravely through this ill-natured and inhospitable world, marched (as it were) in whole bodies into heaven.”*

*Gildas’ Epistle.

Though swept by storms of persecution, as prairies by storms of fire, first persecuted by the Pagan emperors, and afterward by their renegade sister, Rome herself, who thought it shame to see her scarlet robes showing so foully by their white garments, and to mend matters would fain have had them put on scarlet, too, the churches of the Evangel spread through northern France, into Belgium and Germany, and drifting eastward had their teachers in Poland and Hungary. In all these lands, as Rome herself explains to us in many volumes and edicts, it was a very difficult work to stamp out the Evangel.

A few hints of the life and progress of these churches only will be given; and these serve to mark their identity of doctrine and manners with the British Church, as we shall hereafter see. In A. D. 423 to 432, Celestin of Rome complains that the Bishops of Vienne and Narbonne condemn his practices, *and teach the Scriptures according to the letter!* In 400, letters are sent from Rome to the Gallican Churches complaining that usages that had been adopted at Rome had been condemned by the congregations in Gaul. In 590, the pastors of Marseilles issued letters warning their people against adopting pernicious customs which had obtained at Rome.

Here we come again to the year 607, when the Roman Church agreed to support the Emperor Phocas, in the usurped purple; and he bound himself to assert the Roman Bishop as spiritual sovereign over all other churches, and their bishops.* During the years from 450 until 607, the British Church had been cut off from Rome, but its intercourse had been with the Gallican Churches with which Rome was in perpetual strife. During this time we shall find missionaries coming and going between France, Ireland and South England, and that all new work that was done by foreign aid, was done not by Roman, but by Gallican help.

An important landmark during these ages was the Synod or Council of ARLES, which met in the capital of the province of Vienne, in Gaul, encouraged by the favor shown by the Emperor Constantine to Christianity. At this Synod were present thirty-three bishops, besides presbyters and deacons. Of these, three bishops, one presbyter, and one deacon, came from Britain. When we consider the extent of country represented at this Council, we shall see that Britain sent, for its territory,

*See Wiley's *Great Exodus, Rome and Civil Liberty*, Monastier's *History of Waldenses*, etc., etc.

a full compliment, and if we judge by the representation, the foothold of Christianity must have been as well established here as in the other provinces of the Empire. The crowning matter to notice in this connection is, that the utterances of the Synod of Arles were evangelical utterances; the opinions advanced were biblical, the deliverances were generally such as now proceed from what are called Protestant bodies in council assembled; in fact, this early Synod, in which the British Church took a part, was not a Synod in sympathy with what was soon developed as the *animus* of the Church at Rome.* Indeed, when the Roman Church had fully established itself, and the line of demarkation was clearly visible between her and the evangelical churches, she saw it to be necessary to condemn and repudiate the Synod of Arles, and all its works.

Rome was about to pronounce the long passed Synod anathema, with all those who had taken part in it, when the Emperor Charlemange stayed the curse by the following apposite train of reasoning: "The members of this Synod comprised the chief part

*Collier gives in Vol. I. book 1, of Ecc. Hist. of Great Britain, some account of this Synod.

of European clergy of their day. Anathematizing them you anathematize your fathers in Christ; if you declare them maranatha, and all their works null and void, you make null and void the line of ordination and baptism, and other sacraments which have come down through them, and which you declare it needful to keep unbroken, to sustain the validity of your own present position and ecclesiastical acts. Once curse ARLES, and where will you gather up the broken threads of your church government and sacraments?" The Church of Rome was by the logic of the Emperor convinced against its will, left Arles uncursed, but held it to be heretical!

CHAPTER IV.

“ And the sacred fire,
Rekindled thus, from dens and savage woods,
Moves, handed on with never ceasing care,
Thro' courts, thro' camps, o'er limiting floods,
Nor lacks this sea-girt isle a timely share,
Of the new flame, not suffered to expire.”

THE COMING IN OF THE TRUTH.

WE see now the Church in Britain established almost or quite in the apostolic days; its intercourse with Rome cut off, just where Rome was departing from the simplicity that is in Christ; and maintaining instead an intercourse with those evangelical churches lying in North Italy, but more especially in France and Belgium;* churches which have been maintained, as Rome herself is compelled by her edicts and bulls to bear witness, until this very day. We see also that the Synod, in which during these first ages Britain took a part, was a Synod of evangelical tone, hold-

*See Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Ch. Vol. I. ch. 1. Henry's Hist. of Great Britain, Vol. I. ch. 2.

ing forth the word of life, a Synod which in latter years became obnoxious to the bishops of Rome.

We now proceed to examine more closely the progress of the truth in the British Islands. We have seen that the Church here was very early planted, and it may not be inapposite in this place to mention an opinion held by many learned and careful writers, among them Collier, *i. e.*, that St. Paul himself, during the time when he was at liberty after the fifth year of the reign of Nero, traveled so far as "*ultimos orbis Britannos*" and made the first converts among our ancestors. Says Collier: "Now, St. Paul being at liberty in the fifth year of Nero's reign, he had time enough to preach Christianity in Britain; and as there was time, so neither was there encouragement wanting to come hither, not only from the populousness of the island, mentioned by Cæsar, but likewise from the settlements of the Romans made here."

But by whose hand soever planted, the Church was of Christ, and we trace now its work and growth during the earliest centuries of our era. Rome has made much capital out of the conversion of King Lucius about 167. Even the existence of this prince has been denied by many authors, but if he did

really live, and embrace Christianity, as from much testimony seems probable, he could have been but a petty prince under the Romans, and the letters, charters and acts, which purport to have passed between him and the Roman bishop, have been proved to be forgeries of the eleventh century.* Doubtless about the date indicated, the latter half of the second century, many of the chiefs of Britain accepted the new faith, which enabled their people to be gathered into congregations, and listen to their teachers in peace.

About the year 200, Christianity had made considerable progress in South Britain; it had also penetrated Wales, and as we shall see the hardy mountaineers of that land showed the courage, pertinacity, and exclusiveness which appear natural to them, in the careful manner in which they guarded their first received doctrines and customs from innovation.

It is a singular fact that people of the mountains have ever conserved political and religious freedom much more faithfully than the dwellers of the plain; the Alps and the Pyrenees, and the Welsh mountains, were the refuge of the Evangel; and when the gospel

*Usher, Brit. Ecc. Antiq. c. 4. Collier's Ecc. Hist. Vol. I. book 1, pp. 27-37.

had penetrated the "land of the mountain and the flood," Scotland—the sturdy dwellers there felt and showed that they had what Archimedes desired, and their hills were as a fulcrum, on which they rested this lever that moved the world!

But it was long before North Britain received the word; a deadly enmity existed between the Picts and Caledonians and the South Britons, although they were all the same Celtic stock. The first missionary field which was entered from England was South Ireland. Here it is supposed that a few scattered families held the truth, when in 253, Origen writes concerning the weaning of the Islanders from a pantheistic belief: "When did ever the country of Britain own the unity of the Godhead, before the coming of our Lord?"* In 303 the storm of the Diocletian persecution broke out first in Nicomedia, and the imperial edict was issued for pulling down churches, burning holy writings, and compelling Christians to abjure their faith. Britain shared this persecution, though the mildness of Constantine caused the edict to be enforced with as little cruelty as possible. *Lactantius* informs us that Constantine, on

*Ancient Ch. in Ireland, by W. G. Todd, ch. 1, pp. 2, 3.

receiving the edict, "was obliged to pull down some churches," and Eusebius says that in Britain the persecution lasted but two years. Gildas declares that in these days very many British Christians suffered cruel deaths, their Scriptures were burned, and they themselves fled in terror from land to land. It is a pleasure amid this gloomy picture to reflect, that scattered thus in wilds and distant places, they were the means of spreading the knowledge of that truth for which they suffered. ST. ALBAN is mentioned by tradition as the earliest martyr in Britain; the story is that he was converted by the teachings of a wandering* pastor or evangelist, who lodged at his house; who leaving Alban to teach, and, as it proved, die for the truth he had received, passed into Wales, where his preaching was wonderfully successful, and he made converts far and near. Of these men we receive account from Beda, Gildas and other old chroniclers, and their history has much to do with miracles and supernatural appearances; but this coloring of the superstitious times in which they lived can easily be put aside; and we see only God's servants "counting not their lives dear unto death," upheld by Divine

*Collier's Ecc. Hist. Vol. I. book 1.

power, in a manner which must have appeared miraculous to Pagan observers, and receiving according to promise "in that hour what they should speak," so that they seemed as men inspired.

On the accession of Constantine to the throne, almost his first act was to give the Christians free exercise of their religion, and immediately they rebuilt their churches, and re-collected their dispersed adherents. Now came the Synod of Arles, at which South Britain was represented, but not the adjacent isle, where religion had at this time probably made very little progress; while the British would as readily have thought of carrying the gospel to the wild beasts of the jungle, as to the terrible Picts.

Collier quotes a letter of St. Hilary as saluting "the bishops of Britain, in 358, and congratulating them that 'they had ever preserved themselves from heretical infection.'" At this period a Briton, born probably in Wales, made no small stir in the world, PELAGIUS, of whom Augustine says that he "had the esteem of a very pious man, and a Christian of no vulgar rank." Unfortunately for this man, instead of staying at home among his pious brethren, he must needs run about to see the world, and like many people nowa-

days went to Rome and tarried there. Says St. Augustine: "Pelagius lived long at Rome, and kept the best company there." He never returned to Britain, but adopted heretical opinions, which he diligently disseminated, and among his adherents were some Britons, who were traveling on the continent. These returning home full of the new theories led away a great many of their countrymen. The orthodox congregations alarmed at this perversion looked for help—not to Rome, but to those Gallican churches with which they were in close communion; and these, calling a Synod or Council to discuss matters, sent over to Britain several of their ministers to aid in teaching sound doctrine.* Now, as at other times, did the evangelical churches cast bread upon the waters, in regard to Britain; again and again they "aided them in their necessity," and, as the Scripture promises, "they found the bread cast forth, after many days."

Those learned and devout churches helped, as brothers beloved, the rude Islanders. Centuries passed; the arms of England were open to embrace flying Lombards; the persecuted sons of France found refuge on her shores; her strong hand aided Holland to obtain lib-

*Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Ch. Vol. I. ch. 1.

erty, the voice of Cromwell stayed the persecution of the Piedmontese, and the treasures of England supplied Waldensian wants. They ministered to England heavenly things, and England sent once and again to succor them.

Simultaneously, or nearly so, with the breaking out of the Pelagian heresy, appeared in Britain a youth named Ninian,* who had spent some years in France, under the tuition of Martin of Tours. This Ninian was full of missionary spirit; with an unconquerable zeal he went out to preach the truth in the wildest parts of his native land. He invaded the territories of the Picts, and left his impress doubtless on their hearts, for to this day it remains upon their land; places where he lived and taught being named after him, as Kil. St. Ninian, and other localities in Scotland. Ninian passed over also to the sister island, where he was called *Ringan*, and we have frequent traces of him in the geography of that land also.†

Henry tells us that the Gallican churches sent preachers a second time into Britain, hearing that the British clergy were greatly

*Burton's Hist. of Scotland, Vol. I. p. 40.

†Lloyd's Ancient Ch. Government. A Discourse. Brit. Museum. Old Catalogue.

discouraged and overcome by Pagans and heretics; and that these missionaries were the pastor of Treves and also the Bishop of Auxerre, who had been in Britain on a similar occasion.*

But feeble and unhappy as they were, these churches retained a missionary spirit, for in 432 they sent preachers into the south part of the adjacent island. Palladius, a deacon, who had traveled and studied on the continent, and also had visited Rome (we must remember that this was yet Rome's earlier and purer day), went into Ireland full of zeal against its Paganism. He was rudely received by the people, who rebuffed his efforts, and he returned to Britain quite heart-broken, dying shortly after.†

We now near the period when the Saxon Conquest paralyzed Britain for a time, and when the work, light and energy of the Church passed into that "barbarous isle," which until now had scarcely heard of God in Christ.

It is needful to pause for a few moments for a geographical *excursus*, failing to understand which, much of this early history will be puz-

*Baxter's Church History.

†Todd's Ancient Church in Ireland.

zling, and appear contradictory to the student. During these centuries, that country which is now divided into England, Scotland and Wales, was all called Britain, that part north of Tweed being distinguished as North Britain. The islands along this northern coast, and the fair valleys now smiling in the domains of Argyll, were almost uninhabited. IRELAND, be it particularly noted, was then called SCOTLAND, and the *Irish* were called *Scots*; Scotland and Scots were in those days never applied to the land which now claims these names. When we read of Scotland and Scots in these early days, we must understand Ireland and the Irish. Says Usher: "I do not believe any author lived for 1,000 years after Christ, who mentioning Scotland did not mean Ireland."

Orosius, writing in 417, says: "Ireland is inhabited by the nation of the Scots." Porphyry mentions the Scots as living apart from the Britons *in an island*. Claudian speaks of Ireland as weeping over her slain Scots, and says that "the Scots of Ireland made the sea foam with their oars."

These old authors call Ireland, Scotia. It is needless further to multiply testimony on this point; let it be borne in mind when we now proceed to speak of the Scots that they

were the people of Ireland, and not of North Britain.

About the year 400,* these Scots began to look with envious eyes toward those regions of Britain north of the Picts and Caledonians. Being an adventurous people they proposed to make a settlement there, and, according to Usher's chronology, sent over a large body of Scots, who in 439 established themselves in Argyll, and the islands along the coast. Numbers of their countrymen joined them; "the sea foamed" under the oars of their coming and going ships. Sometimes they were at peace with the Picts and Caledonians; at other times they waged furious war, their brother Scots came over to help them, and terrible slaughter was made on both sides. At this time these nations were all heathen; the little light which had penetrated South Ireland had not reached to the North, and her sons left her Pagans.

But a new element was about to enter into the lives of these Scots in Argyll; an element which should enlighten, purify, refine; give them the supremacy of mind over matter; teach them sound principles of government, make them capable of governing them-

*Lloyd. Burton's History of Scotland. Usher, *et al.*

selves, and thus their power was to be built up, until the intruding Scots, thriving better in the land than its natives, and upborne by their higher culture and loftier motives, would insensibly absorb the Caledonians, and finally the Pictish monarchy; the last rather by treaty than by war; and so these Scots, wrapping up in themselves the other races on the soil, should give their name of Scotland or Scotia to the domain they had overrun; and Ireland should thus lose her name, which had been appropriated by another country, and her children should cease to inherit a name which had been entirely claimed by their exile brethren.

Thus, just as the Saxons were about to enter and overlay South Britain, the Scots of Ireland were to overlay North Britain, and where Saxon conquest was in a manner to crowd out the true religion in its course, that religion, as moving along the arc of a circle, would fill Ireland, and spread itself thence over all the north.

CHAPTER V.

“Those had given earliest notice, as the lark,
Springs from the ground the morn to gratulate;
Or rather, rose the day to antecedate,
By striking out a solitary spark,
When all the world with midnight gloom was
dark.”

THE LIGHT OF IERNE.

“THE entrance of thy words giveth light.”
There is no agency of civilization to be compared for rapidity and thoroughness with the religion of Jesus Christ. By it “a nation is born in a day.” This of itself ought to vindicate its divine origin, for only He who made man could prepare that which was so perfectly fitted for his aid in his direst extremity. In our own day the regeneration of the Sandwich Islands is a glorious commentary on the text, “It giveth understanding to the simple.” In earlier ages the marvelous advancement of Ireland, Cæsar’s “barbarous isle,” as soon as she received the word, teaches the same rich lesson. The evangelical churches

of the western part of the continent, neither "living nor dying to themselves," established many schools, particularly for the teaching of theology, to which, among other students, repaired the youths of Britain.

It is our design to present first the progress of the truth through the British Isles, until the circle of churches was complete, and then compactly to present the doctrines, forms, government, manners, etc., of these Christians.

Though the South Britons had occasionally sent missionaries into Ireland, they were by no means in harmony with the Scots, who made frequent raids upon their shores, carrying off people, cattle and goods of every kind; indeed, being the hardier and more cruel race, the Scots kept the Britons in a state of continual apprehension, especially after the Romans began to withdraw their garrisons.

The richest booty which Ireland ever made, she seized in the person of a young lad named Patrick. There has been much dispute as to the native place of this famous "Protestant Saint." Usher, weighing carefully all the testimony extant on the subject, concludes that he was born at a town since called Kilpatrick, near the Roman wall of division between the Picts and South Britons. It is

well to note the information which we get concerning this great teacher's family, even from Romish authorities. His grandfather was Potitus, a priest; his father, Calphurnius, a deacon; his mother, a godly woman of Gallican blood, Conche, the sister of St. Martin of Tours. There is this difference in the ancient histories of St. Patrick, that some make his father the priest and his grandfather the deacon, but all coincide in stating these offices as held by his immediate ancestors, and we hope it will be remembered, as it will again be referred to as one of the proofs that a celibate clergy was not the order of the British Church in that day, but that the evangelical pastors lived as godly heads of families; even as Enoch, who walked with God, walked with him as a *family saint*. One inclined to weave romance, might indulge in a little fancy over the home of St. Patrick. The British ecclesiastic Potitus, whether priest or deacon, sends his son to France to study theology under the teachers of the evangelical churches there. Calphurnius there not only learns religion but love. Martin of Tours is one of his teachers, and Martin has a bright-eyed sister, Conche. She trusts her fortunes to the British student, and out of her own lovely land goes with him as his wife

to a chilly northern district, some say just south of the Tweed, others, in the district of Dumbarton. Here will come to her a terrible sorrow, and out of that sorrow, as often happens in God's providence, will be born a perennial joy. At this period, a favorite occupation, as has been said, of the Irish Scots was making raids into Britain. During one of these the hostile horde passed near the home of Calphurnius and Conche, and carried off their son Patrick, a lad of sixteen. Imagine the sorrow of that home; a godly youth, who had heretofore pursued his simple studies under his father's eye, is hurried away by furious Pagans for slavery or death.* There is no hope, no redress; doubtless the parents assailed heaven with prayers—answered for the benefit of the world.

For six years Patrick remained in slavery. He complains that in these years he lost much of his language for a barbarous tongue, and that while other youths were perfecting their studies and learning elegant Latin, the tongue of literature, he was condemned to ignorance.*

But God was with him in bondage; instead

*For Lives of St. Patrick see Sigebert's Chronicon, 1514; The Life of St. Patrick, by J. H. Todd; do. by W. G. Todd.

of hatred, compassion swelled his soul ; virtue grew more lovely in his eyes, for the vice by which he was surrounded ; instead of becoming tainted by Paganism, he longed passionately for the conversion of these rude idolaters to a faith which was his one solace in affliction. During six years his character was matured by privation, loneliness, and silent thought. Patrick came out of his exile to preach the gospel to his captors. He had been dragged from home a weeping, struggling lad, he returned a resolute man. Only for a short time did he rejoice in the comforts of that home. His soul was full of one hope—to preach Christ to Erin. That he might be better fitted for this employ, he went into France, to the school of Martin of Tours, his uncle, where he endeavored in some small measure to repair the losses of the past six years. But he says of himself later that he is “untaught” and bewails “his ignorance,” calling himself “a rustic,” “inexpert in languages.”*

Those accounts which affirm that “Patrick was a bishop sent by Pope Celestine,” “A Canon of the Lateran Church at Rome,” a

*Confession of St. Patrick, ed. by Sir J. Ware. The Hymn of Fiacc. Irish Archæolog. Soc. Dublin.

“learned pupil of St. Germain,” have been amply proved to be fabrications. For a full discussion of these points, one may refer to the “Life of Patrick,” by J. H. Todd, D. D., of Dublin, and another “Life of Patrick,” by W. G. Todd, of Trinity College, Dublin.

At the end of his stay with Martin of Tours, Patrick heard of the rejection of the teaching of Deacon Pallidius by the Scots, and he became more than ever eager to go to them, hoping that his knowledge of their speech and customs would particularly commend his mission to them. He was ordained by one of the Gallican ministers, and at once bade his uncle-tutor adieu. Some say that he delayed to pay a visit to Bishop Celestine, at Rome; of this Dr. J. H. Todd, of Dublin, says that he rejects the story of Patrick’s mission from Rome, or Pope Celestine, simply because he sees no satisfactory foundation for it. To admit it would not be to injure the Protestant cause, because Rome at this time* was not guilty of those abuses and innovations which soon after caused her so markedly to differ from the evangelical churches. There is much dwelling on visions and dreams in the early lives of St. Patrick;

*Todd’s Life of St. Patrick—introduction.

doubtless an earnest youth, his heart full of his expected work, and the woes of the Scots, may have had many impressive dreams of this people's need of him, dreams which influenced his waking hours, and made him yet more ardent to return to the scene of his captivity.

Tradition is that Patrick with some companions landed at Wicklow, and then proceeded to the north, preaching as they went, and making some converts; possibly finding now and then a family holding some remnant of the faith received from Britain. The first object of Patrick was to reach his old master, and the scene of his slavery, there to preach gospel freedom. On his way it is said that he converted a chief named Dichó, who gave him the site of his barn for a church, "which they carefully built standing north and south, to rebuke superstitions which were rising to assert that the churches must stand east and west." At Tara Patrick preached with much success to the king and chiefs; crowds flocked to hear him, and many were converted. Later we hear of him, preaching in the south of Ireland, and again in the north; and we find that he established churches, ordained bishops and presbyters, though as the number of the bishops are stated as 365, the presbyters as 3,000, we must imagine either

that the figures are incorrect, or that bishops were merely pastors, the presbyters lay-members of the church, for only consider the immense membership suggested by 365 bishops, 3,000 clergymen! Ireland had also to thank Patrick for a general diffusion of education, and a desire for learning aroused among the young. Aided by the brethren who had come with him from France, he established many schools, so that Ireland, lately the "barbarous," presently surpassed Britain in learning and piety, and this island so lately evangelized by France, was ready to send out missionaries to another country.

Over all Ireland sprang up the blessed fruits of righteousness; now did their "day dawn, and the day star arise in their hearts." Not only rude warriors now, but lofty bards, and zealous preachers, and ardent teachers ornament the annals of the nation.

Patrick saw the pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hand. He spent a portion of his last days in devout retirement at a place named Saul. He wrote a confession, or autobiography; also an epistle to one Carodoc, a Welsh chief, and several tracts, or short compendiums of faith and practice, which will hereafter be referred to in their place, and, dying at an advanced age, he was buried at Down.

We have now glanced at the outward history of the early church in South Britain and Wales, and have seen the light pass over into Ireland, which was more thoroughly evangelized than they, by its first teachers. Now, on the northern shore of Ireland stand certain men with the torch of truth in their hands, prepared to carry it across the narrow sea, into the marches of Argyll, and soon we shall see the light flaming along the mountains of the north.

The truth had made progress in Ireland with almost unexampled rapidity. Before Christianity, the Scots of Ierne are represented as the most loathsome Pagans, devoid of conscience and manhood, cannibals of the vilest sort; destitute of marriage customs or household ties.* But between the years 432 and 439, when St. Patrick landed at Wicklow as a missionary, and two centuries later, Ireland had so advanced in all that makes the best estate of a nation, that it is written of her: "A numerous, powerful and cultivated body of ecclesiastics flourished there apart from the world, and independent of any separate European control." "Irish ecclesiastics and Irish scholars—Scots, as they were termed

*St. Jerome. Vita.

—were found establishing themselves everywhere, as leaders and teachers. Ireland, or Scotia, was the ‘Land of Saints.’” “The Scots of the early centuries acquired considerable fame over Europe; and when their name passed into another country this fame went with it. It served to make Caledonian Scotland more remarkable among nations than she otherwise would have been, and naturally her sons were reluctant to part with so honorable a birthright.* This amazing change was wrought by that “righteousness which exalteth a nation.”

The spirit of the early church was pre-eminently a missionary spirit. Ireland, called to Christ, like Andrew, remembered a brother to be called also. The hearts of the evangelized Scots, in Erin, turned to their adventurous kinsmen who had gone out from them long before into Argyllshire, and had there become the Dalriads of Argyll. These lived only to make war. Their land was fair, but they kept it deluged in blood; every harvest which they reaped grew above dead warriors. Violence and ignorance held riot along the charming Clyde; to their north lay the Lochaber hills; east towered the heights of Lo-

*Burton's Hist. of Scotland, Vol. I. ch. 5, p. 209.

mond, south the blue bright Forth, and west the leaping beauty of the Irish Sea over which they had come into this noble domain ; and over it all went up the shout of violence, and the wail of woe.

Let us pause here to watch for a brief space a scene and a movement in the world's mighty battle between right and wrong. There is Britain, evangelized in the first century, and now in the year four hundred and forty-nine, her liberty, her property, her faith, is laid at the feet of a barbarian intruder ! The Britons absolutely invite the Saxons to come among them. It is the old story of the doves beseeching the kite to be king over them.* Under the sway of the Saxons the British Church shall enter an early eclipse, but while Satan obtains this advantage, the truth is already gaining ground in Ireland, and from thence is to pass fully armed into Caledonia, whence her blazing torch may be handed on, to rekindle the failing light of Britain.

The mountains and the hardy hearts of Caledonia, which had defied the advances of the Romans, would likewise prohibit the entrance of the Saxon ; the hot blood which

*Gildas. Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Ch. Vol. I. Henry's Hist. Vol. I.

made them first as warriors, would make them the most zealous of missionaries; they whose standards had led the fight would lead the advance of the Lord's host, against the legions of Pagans, who had come into Britain to roll back the progress of civilization, and bring over her early day disastrous night.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Isle of Columba's cell,
Where Christian charity's soul-cheering spark
(Kindled from heaven between the light and dark
Of time), shone like the morning star.”

IONA AND HER SONS.

IN 521, less than a century after the first preaching of St. Patrick, a child destined to become another great missionary of the early church was born to believing parents at Gartan, in County Donegal.*

Baptized by the name of Crimthan, his gentle and lovable disposition caused him to receive the appellation of “the dove” *Columba*, a name by which he has been known to all succeeding generations.

He was early placed in one of those schools for which Ireland was even then famous, and to which the youths of Britain and France were flocking.† This, his first school, was at

*Todd's Ancient Ch. in Ireland, p. 36.

†Ibid. p. 32.

Moville, and perhaps there he saw boats coming and going, and met strangers from Argyll and the islands, and had thus that interest in the Caledonians aroused, which was to be a ruling emotion of his good life.

From Moville, Columba went to Clonard, where was a famous school under Finian, a very learned man, a friend of Cadoc and David of Wales; a man who had spent much time in the British churches, and whose fame for piety and learning had spread among all the evangelical congregations of that day. Having at length concluded his studies, Columba went to Derry, as an evangelist, and there founded what the records call *an abbey*, though, from the notices remaining of it, we should suppose it to be a union of school-house and church.

It is a singular fact noticed concerning Columba, that he never rose to the office of a bishop, though bishops seem to have been even more numerous in those days than now! He constantly refused this office; his *forte* seemed to lie in establishing schools, religious houses, and teaching from place to place, as an evangelist. So many schools, abbeys or churches did he establish, that from them he received an additional name, "cille" Columbcille, *i. e.*, "Columba of the Churches."

Learning, when Ireland was beginning to regard learning as her choicest ornament; piety, in a nation which had received a marvellous outpouring of the Spirit, high birth, for he was of royal descent,* all conspired to make Columb-cille a man of note.

In middle life he was content to leave the advantages which surrounded him, in his native land, for the dangers and toils of a missionary life, among the islands of the north, and the heathen Dalriads of Argyll. With twelve companions, in the frail boats of that day, he departed for HY or IONA, an island long famous as a Druidic retreat. The choice of this island shows the wisdom of Columba; on the south communication was easy with those isles, and parts of mainland where lived his kindred Dalriads; to the north he could reach the Picts, whom he was no less anxious to convert.

Taking a backward glance through dark and dreary ages, we catch a mild and steadfast gleam, that comes to us as the radiance of the wicket-gate to Bunyan's gazing pilgrim. As we watch it earnestly, the mists of distance and of fable grow thinner and dis-

*Burton's Hist. of Scotland, Vol. I. p. 261. Reeves' Genealogies of the Abbots of Hy. Baxter's Ch. Hist. of Eng. p. 39.

perse, and the "Isle of Columba's cell" beams on us in apostolic simplicity, purity and beauty.

Conall, King of the Dalridian Scots,* gave by an especial grant the isle of Iona to his countryman Columba. A small gift that cold and sterile wave-lashed rock ! yet a place destined to become one of the most precious jewels of the north, a watchtower of the Church of Christ.

Columba's first care was to prepare dwellings for his company ; creel-houses probably ; then to plant grain, and prepare shelter for their cattle, for these men lived like the Apostles, by the labor of their own hands. A school, or abbey, was also at once established, and the missionary companions prepared for their tours upon the mainland and in the islands, preaching the gospel among Picts and Scots.

Some of these co-laborers of Columba settled in permanent homes among the congregations which they collected ; where they were visited by Columba and other friends, and whence they occasionally returned to be guests for a season in the parent house on

*O'Donell's *Vita S. Columb.* Todd's *Life of St. Patrick.* *Antiquities of Irish Church.*

Iona, with its godly inmates, and its treasure of manuscripts. Columba has the name of an ardent collector of manuscripts, especially given to multiplying copies of the books of the Bible. His companions and himself spent much time in transcribing parchments, and it is related that one of his students having shown him a newly completed copy, the teacher, having examined it carefully, replied, "That is well done; there is but one 'i' wrong in it." Few printed works can claim such perfection. The names of some of these missionaries of Iona have been preserved for us.

Mælrubha, whose name is retained in that of many localities in Scotland, as "Kilmory," "Loch Maree," Kil-mory, and others, settled himself at Apple-cross. He seems to have established many churches, and to have obtained a great influence over his wild neighbors, and is said to have died at the age of eighty.* Cormac appears to have been especially given to long voyages by sea, and is reported even to have reached Iceland. On the island of Eilan Moir, off South Knapdale in Argyll, is a square cell-like structure, of the earliest British form of architecture, which antiquaries

*Reeves' Proceedings, Antiq. Scot. III. 264.

are disposed to think may date back even to the days of Cormac himself.*

Donnan, another Columban teacher, suffered martyrdom on the isle of Eigg, in the Hebrides.† The history of Columba is obscured by fable; legends dress it in the fantastic garb of miracle and vision; but through it all we see the pious, simple teacher, going up and down a barren and inhospitable land, preaching the gospel; collecting congregations, leaving them teachers, taking home with him young lads to be educated in his school at Iona, and become the masters and preachers of a future day. We behold a man of hardy frame, of simple habits, of scholarly tastes, given to prayer; fond of copying books, unconscious of any prelatical authority over himself, apt to teach, given to hospitality, continuing at work until his life's last hour; and letting fall his busy pen in the thirty-third Psalm, at the verse, "But they that seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing." Finding himself here unable to proceed, he knows his life work ended, and says simply: "Baithen will write the rest,"

*Burton's Hist. Vol. I. p. 281.

†Martin's Western Islands, -277. Reeve's Adamnan, 804-9.

and in a few hours the septuagenarian missionary, after thirty years of work in Iona, sleeps peacefully in Christ.* His work lives after him.

We find Columb-cille active in the public life of the day ; eager to convert a nation, he visited and preached and interceded in its court. A great peacemaker, he maintained friendship with all parties ; was the adviser of Brude, King of Picts, and crowned Aidan, King of Scots. He was present at the Council of Drimceat, in Ireland, in 574. Beside his other labors his industry is attested by a tradition that he copied three hundred manuscripts with his own hand. Though the numbers may be apocryphal, the story witnesses to the impression of his character in those early ages, as does that other story, that when asked by a warrior to bless his sword, he did so by laying his hand on the blade, with the gentle prayer, " May it never shed the blood of man or beast ! " The Scriptures were the " man of his council," and he made it a rule with his pupils that they should clinch every teaching—" *Prolatis, Sacræ Scripturæ testimoniis.*" Zealous for the purity of the church

*Montalembert, Vol. III.. Monks of the West. Reeve's Adamnan.

his bitterest condemnation followed the ordination of Aidus-niger, a man of royal descent, but bad life; his words were that a bad man in the ministry was a mingling of clean and unclean, odious to God.* As to the rule of his house, in Iona, we speak of it in a future chapter.

We pass now to notice a famous contemporary, countryman and brother beloved in the Lord, of the great Columb-cille—Kentigern, otherwise known as St. Mungo. We have seen that Ninian before the year 397 had passed northward from England, and preached the gospel with partial success in North Britain. From some of the descendants of his converts, or perhaps of these very converts, came the family of Potitus the priest, and Celphurnius the deacon, near Dumbarton, whose son Patrick became Ireland's chief apostle

Patrick secured the civilization of Ireland, and among those that shared the advantages of his earliest schools was Kentigern, whose mother was the daughter of Lothus, King of Picts, and whose father was a Scot (of Ireland). Connected so closely with Albania, it

*For much good information on these points, see IONA published by Brit. Tract Soc.

is no wonder that the heart of a pious youth became early occupied with the religious needs of his countrymen. While Columba was going with a little band of friends to Iona, Kentigern, with two or three comrades, left Ireland, entered the mouth of the Clyde, and passing up to the noble site where Glasgow stands, the second city in the kingdom, he built his little home, where the waters of the Molindinar join the Clyde.

To-day pilgrims from every land go to the site of Mungo's cell. There are the glorious arches, the ancient carvings, the antique galleries, the solemn crypts, the beautiful chapter house, the spring called Mungo's well, the tomb called Mungo's tomb, all relics of a later day, and of a different faith than his; but there the truth early planted, long "crushed to earth," has risen again; the cathedral rings with the Scriptures which Mungo taught; the land is the possessor of his simple faith; and from the height above him looks down the monument of John Knox, the sturdy heir of Mungo's zeal and teachings.

In a corner of the chapter house of Glasgow Cathedral may be found a collection of very old, time-worn carvings, taken from the walls of the Cathedral at its restoration. One of them, a small square stone, has rudely cut

upon it the armorial bearings of Glasgow, a tree, a bird, a fish with a ring. All of these emblems refer to scenes in the traditions of the youthful life of Mungo, and are of interest as showing the connection of the preacher with the very earliest history of the city.

The bird indicates a robin restored to life by the boy saint; the tree, one in which he breathed the breath of fire, to save himself and comrades in a winter storm; the fish hints that old favorite wonder alike of Scripture and fable, the finding of money, or a gem in the mouth of a fish.

As with the life of Columba, we must strip the life of Kentigern of many fables. But in each of these cases the earliest life is the simplest and least beset with the marvelous; when we approach the middle ages' literature and read Jocelyn's Life of Mungo, and from this period the Lives of Patrick and of Columba, we find them a mass of miracle working, and other choice monkish fable, but Adamnan's Life of Columba, and Patrick's *Confessio*, and the earliest sketches of Kentigern, lie outside of the realm of hard miracle working, and show us the industrious missionary, kindred spirit to some we have among the western settlements of the United States in our own day, and to others, pioneers

of missions in Madagascar, India, and Africa; a man to endure hardships, able to forgive much, to have an eye single to God's glory.

The first king of Strathclyde, to whom Kentigern presented himself, was Morken, who is depicted as a very obstinate unbeliever. He tried upon the missionary the effect of calumny, starvation and blows, and the greater favor the new religion gained with the people, the less it had with the king. Although we are told of Mungo that he could fast for three days together, that he asked no better garb than goats' skins, and eschewed flesh and wine, he was unable to endure the continued persecutions of King Morken. Columba came more than once to visit Kentigern at Glasgow, and took much interest in the school he had organized there.

At length King Morken and his Pagan court succeeded in driving out Mungo, who fled into Wales, where for seventeen years he preached with much success, and established several churches.

At the end of that period the throne of Strathclyde was occupied by a prince favorably disposed to Christianity—Rederech, possibly a pupil of Columba, or Kentigern himself. Paganism was now rapidly yielding to the advance of Christianity. Rederech sig-

nalized his accession by sending messengers to Kentigern praying him to return to the banks of the Molindinar. Kentigern made haste to accept this invitation, and took with him, from Wales, Asaph, a pious youth, who afterward succeeded him in the charge of the schools and missions about Glasgow, and became his biographer.* As we have before suggested, the geography of North Britain is full of the traces of these early teachers. Islands, rivers, hills, take their names from them. Off the coast of Fife is a little island, Inchcolm, Columba's Isle, with the ruins of a very ancient church, where some of these early brethren had their home and school. Shakespeare notices it in Macbeth—

“Nor would we deign him burial to his men,
Till he disbursed, at St. Colm's inch,
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.”

There is much variation between chroniclers as to the date of Kentigern's death. Burton sets it about the year 600, some three years later than St. Columba. He was buried at Glasgow, on the spot where now the peerless Cathedral of the North commemorates his fame.

*Bedc. Joscelyn's *Vita Kentigerni*. Harpsfield Hist. Eccles. Collier. *Picts de Illust. Brit. et al.*

As in many other instances, Rome took, in after ages, a man who had had little knowledge of her, and no communion with her during all his life, and made him one of her saints, that she might claim his works and his sanctity! Of the doctrines of Mungo we shall speak when we consider those taught in all the early British churches. These two great teachers, Columba and Kentigern, passed away full of years, happy in leaving men of kindred spirit to carry on the work of their lives. Asaph chronicled the life, and filled the post of Mungo. Adamnanus performed the same offices for Columba.

The burial place of Columba became the favorite sepulcher of a royal race; for ages Scotland carried her dead princes to rest by the side of him, who had brought to the land news of the resurrection and the life. Thus Shakespeare says in *Macbeth*—

“ Where is Duncan's body?

Macb.—Carried to Colme-kill,

The sacred store-house of his predecessors,

And guardian of their bones ”

CHAPTER VII.

“ But Heaven’s high will
Permits a second and a darker shade
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,
The relics of the sword, flee to the mountains.”

THE SAXONS IN BRITAIN.

WE now reach a period when Britain relapsed into Paganism, and for more than a century lay in darkness. Favorite topics of early history, we have the departure of the Romans from Britain, the feebleness of the people exposed to constant raids from the Scots, the Danes, and the Saxons; and the final mad resolution of inviting these last invaders to enter into the country as co-possessors, that they might help keep out other foes. We say a mad resolution, and so it proved for the generation which formed it, and for several generations succeeding; but doubtless it was part of the plan of heaven for creating by conquests and amalgamation of various tribes, a dominant people, about to hold a master-place in the world. As greatest

strength in metal is obtained not by a solid mass, but by successive layers well riveted together, so the strong race in Britain was formed by the Saxon conquest following the first Celtic settlement, and later the Normans coming upon the Anglo-Saxons. The first entrance of the Saxons, however, was as the reign of death. While Patrick was illuminating Ireland with the truth; while Columba and Kentigern were carrying the gospel among Picts and Dalriads; while David was building up the Church in Wales, Britain, the early possessor of the faith was overwhelmed by a horde of barbarians and Pagans. The Saxons rushed upon her shores, servants of an idolatry as fierce as Druidism. Songs to Odin and Frigga and Thor filled the land, and even human sacrifices were not lacking, as says a historian: "For a long time they spared neither the lives nor the habitations of the Britons; submission seldom disarmed their fury; and the churches, towns, villages, and all the remains of Roman civilization, were devoured by the flames. But while they thus indulged their resentment, they dried up the more obvious sources of civil and religious improvement. With the race of ancient inhabitants disappeared the refinements of society and the knowledge of the gospel; to

the worship of the true God succeeded the impure rites of Woden; and the ignorance and barbarism of North Germany were transplanted into the most flourishing provinces of Britain.”*

This is an epitome of the history of South Britain from the year 450, when the Saxons arrived, to 596, when the land again received the evangel. As in the days of the persecutions under the Roman emperors, isolated families lived and died in the faith. Many fled into Ireland, and some into Caledonia. The Welsh mountaineers were in a great measure secured by the wildness and inaccessibility of their abodes. While religion in Britain lies bleeding under the feet of conquering heathenism, Ireland grows in favor with God and man; Wales holds the destroyer at bay, and Albania prepares to march to the rescue; but first an effort to aid is to come from another quarter. Rome is to be privileged to show what she can do for England. The missionary labor which Rome claims to have begun in the *first* century, she really inaugurated in the *seventh*. Rome is a singu-

*See Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Ch. Vol. I, p. 19. Tyrell's Hist. of Eng. Vol. I. A. D. 1700. Fuller's Ecc. Hist. of Britain, Vol. I.

larly careless chronologer, and is often wrong in the matter of a few centuries!

The Saxons had come into Britain in 450, as soldiers to help the weak islanders against their many enemies. They found the land good, the people at their mercy, and they remained as rulers and conquerors. The first Saxon kingdom was created in Kent, with Canterbury for its capital. Successive hordes from three of the bravest of the Teutonic tribes—the Saxons, the Angles, and the Jutes—rushed upon the land, until eight Anglo-Saxon kingdoms occupied the land south of the Roman wall, with the exception of Wales and Cornwall, where the original inhabitants of the island took refuge, defied the advance of the invaders, and preserved the remnants of their learning and religion.* Says an able author concerning that darkest period of Britain's history: "The entire body of the British Church was at this time in Wales, where Bangor, on the north, and Cær-lion, on the south, were the two eyes thereof for learning and religion."† In 596 we see a feeble little light of faith burning in the capital of Kent. Eth-

*Wright's Briton, Saxon and Norman, p. 390. Tyrell's Hist. of Eng. Vol. I.

†Fuller's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 113.

elbert, the heathen monarch, has married Bertha, daughter of the King of France, and her father has stipulated that she is to have liberty to practice her own religion; she has therefore taken with her to her new home a minister of the faith, and builds for herself and her adherents a little church in Canterbury.

“How far your little candle sheds its ray!”

Now also occurs that scene, favorite of poet, painter and church historian. Behold, the British youth, blue-eyed, fair-haired and ruddy of skin, standing in a Roman slave market, surrounded by the swarthy Italians. Gregory passes by. Gregory a greater and better man than any of his successors. As he looks on the slave children of Britain, and learns of the heathenism rampant in the land, his soul yearns to send them what he holds for truth. A little later we see the result of the Roman Bishop's desire to save Britain, for Austin, an ecclesiastic, with a band of followers, goes on a mission to the islanders. Wending his way through France, he stops at Paris and is received with warm hospitality by Queen Brunichilda. Leaving her friendly abode, he soon passed over to the Isle of Thanet, and reporting his presence, was

permitted to come to the capital, and was favorably greeted by Queen Bertha.

In this first portion of his mission, historians write to describe Austin, otherwise called Augustine, as an humble, devout, industrious and placable man, intent only on the conversion of the Saxons.

King Ethelbert seems to have been a man of discretion; he studied the new religion carefully before he accepted it and was baptized; and gave strict orders that no one was to be pressed or coerced in the matter of belief. But the religion of the sovereign must needs be the creed of the court, and the nobles and retainers were convinced with the king's conscience, and assented according to the king's choice.* Christianity was straightway fashionable in Kent, and the converts of Austin were multiplied. In a tumult of joy and pride the missionary wrote to Gregory of his amazing, his miraculous success. The wary, and astute prelate beheld from far his servant's peril and fall, and in an earnest epistle urged him not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; to give God the glory; to rejoice rather that his name was written in

*Bede's Hist. Eccl. I. 26. Usher's De Antiq. 68. Tyrell's Hist. of Eng. Vol. I.

heaven than that he did great* works on earth. Alas for Augustine, the monk, that he did not heed the monition so wisely addressed to him. Desirous of loftier honors he made a journey into France, where he received the episcopal dignity, and returning to Britain he brought a new fashion with him. His humility was in a great measure departed; he demanded honor, obedience, ease and wealth; the preacher of the gospel had been spoiled by success, and had become the arrogant court follower. It is a story that has often been repeated in this wicked world.

And what was this gospel brought by Augustine from Rome to Britain at this period? It was the slowly deteriorating Christianity of Rome. To the simplicity of the gospel had been added some pomp of ceremonies; some parade of crucifix and banner, and chant and procession; some esteeming of one day above another; some praying to and for the dead; some veneration of angels; some lofty assertion of priestly domination over conscience, inquisition of the confessor, the penances assigned to the penitent.† It was Ro-

*Bede's Hist. Eccl. I. 27. Fuller's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 143

†See *Novelties of Romanism*, a very valuable publication of Brit. Tract Soc.

manism, not so lewd and false and cruel and idolatrous as six centuries later she showed before the world; not so heaven-defying as she stands to-day with eighteen centuries of growth in evil upon her. But she was even then markedly different from the churches of the evangel.

The teaching of Augustine and his followers spread through the Saxon kingdoms, attaining in them greater or less prominence, but meanwhile, as says Fuller,* "The poor Christian Britons, living peaceably at home, there enjoyed God, the gospel and their mountains; little skillful in, and less caring for, the ceremonies *a la mode* brought over by Augustine; and indeed their poverty could not go to the cost of Augustine's silver cross; which made them worship the God of their fathers in their own homely and hearty fashion."

Let us here notice two important points, the first being an inquiry addressed by Augustine to Gregory the Great.† Says Augustine in a letter asking for counsel: "Why, since our faith is one (*i. e.*, Christian), are ecclesiastical customs so different, so that one

*Vol. I. of Eccl. Hist. p. 144.

†Beda, Lib. I. c. 27 & 60.

mode of celebrating divine service is followed by the Roman, and one by the Gallic churches?" Note here, first, that thus Augustine evidently recognizes the Gallic Church as a true church, as well as the Roman; second, that he sees a wide difference between the practices of the two; third, that being ordained a priest in the *Roman Church*, he receives episcopal dignity from the *Gallic*; fourth, that it is an open question with him which church he shall follow.

Gregory replies, and his reply justifies his name of GREAT and is accordant in spirit with his letter to Augustine, before quoted: "You are of course acquainted with the ritual of the Roman Church in which you were educated. But my desire is that you should carefully select whatever you find most pleasing to Almighty God, either in the Roman or Gallic, or any other church; and introduce into the English Church, still new in the faith, whatever excellent things you can collect from other churches. For things are not to be valued for the *places* they are found in, but places for the things which they contain. From each and all of the churches, therefore, select what is pious and right and religious, and these when collected and arranged deposit for use (*in consuetudinem*) in the English minds."

In this reply of the highest Roman authority of the age, we note, first, that Rome is not vaunted as the only true church, all out of her being heretics and reprobate. Second, he holds the equality and divine commission of the Gallic churches, or of any other which contain things "pious, religious and right." Third, he does not demand a conformity to Roman ritual as a necessary evidence of belonging to the Christian Church. Fourth, he asserts no right of prescribing a form of worship, as a hereditament of the Church of Rome. Lastly, he seemed to be of the Pauline opinion that "bodily exercise profiteth little."

The second point to be noticed is the manner of Augustine's proceeding *after* he had obtained episcopal dignity from France. He slighted the advice given by Gregory in both letters; he failed to be humble and unambitious, and he was not careful to build only things "pious, right and religious," into his new church.

Augustine, lifted up by royal favor, and great success in his work, assumed the manners of a lord and ruler over his brethren. He called in the temporal arm to aid the work of conversion; he lived luxuriously; he demanded most reverential treatment of him-

self from all ranks ; he searched out the British pastors in Cornwall and Wales, and demanded obedience and conformity from them. Again, we find that to increase more rapidly his converts, and to allay any wrath which might have ended in the persecution of his party, Augustine allowed to his proselytes many of their heathen indulgences and ceremonies;* he permitted the retaining of heathen feasts and festivals ; he dealt in signs, miracles and wonders ; thus under his planting tares and wheat filled the spiritual harvest fields of South Britain, and grew luxuriantly together, alike planted and tended by the haughty prelate's hand.

The bearing of Augustine toward the mountain pastors of the original British Church is a chapter of history which deserves more careful notice.† Boldly asserting that his prized episcopal dignity made him a master and lord over these brethren, he summoned them to meet him somewhere in Worcester County, or at Austcliff, the ferry of the Sev-

*Beda, Lib. I. c. 30 § 75. Baxter's Ch. Hist. of Eng. Vol. I. pp. 55-59.

†Baxter's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 63. Tyrell's Hist. of Eng. book 4, p. 161. Fuller's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 151. Collier's Ecc. Hist. Vol. I. p. 175.

ern—authorities differing as to the locality. The assembly being convened, Augustine began by exhorting these pastors to live with him in peace and unity, and co-operate with him in converting the heathen. To this they cordially agreed. Augustine presently explained peace and unity and co-operation to mean that they should accept him as their spiritual head and lawgiver; that they should exchange their own forms and ceremonies, wherein they chiefly agreed with the Gallic churches, for Roman method; that they should accept the computation of Easter and the church festivals from the Roman Church, and abandon their own, which were different as to date. The British clergy declined *this* fashion of peace, unity and co-operation, and withdrew to their homes.

A second conference being called, the British pastors, bishops and teachers came in full force; but before coming they held private conference. "If Augustine be of God we will follow him, but how shall we prove him?" A holy man thus spoke: "Our Lord says, 'follow me, for I am meek and lowly of heart'—if, then, this Augustine is meek and lowly in heart, you may rely upon it that he offers you that yoke of Christ which he bears himself; but if he is uncourteous and haughty, be

assured that he is not of God, and pay no regard to his recommendations." "But how," question the Britons, "shall we test this man?" "Let him," says the wise counselor, "come first to the place of meeting. If he rises at your approach, see in him Christ's lowly servant, and receive his proposals; if he slights you, God's children, a deputation out-numbering him, take heed, bear not his yoke."

Alas for Augustine! But a few years ago the most positive commands of Gregory were needed to send him to Pagan Britain.* Grown high in place, and confident in self, he sits as an arrogant superior, and turns disdainful eyes on that band of humble pastors from the hills.† He proceeded to make three demands of them: First, the observation of Easter according to Roman style; second, the adoption of the Roman rites of baptism; third, union with him in evangelizing the Saxons. The first two requirements, Bede tells us, were only two out of very many points, wherein the early British Church differed from the Roman. By the last Augustine meant to bring odium on the pastors if they disagreed

*See S. Greg. Ep. I. v. Ep. 52-58.

†Baxter's Ch. Hist. of Eng. Vol. I. p. 63.

with him, and so make it appear that they hindered and lightly esteemed the work of Christ. He was worthy of a more advanced age of his church!

The simple pastors were yet wise enough to see that their ecclesiastical independence was at stake, and that foreign dictation in affairs of faith was now by them to be forever accepted or refused for their ancient church. Boldly, with one voice, they made reply that "they rejected his terms, refused his communion, and denied him to be their archbishop." Finding them firm, Augustine bitterly bade them "prepare for war, since they had rejected peace."

A short time later several hundred of the Welsh clergy were slaughtered by *Cēdīlfrīd*, a Northumbrian chief, in the Anglo-Saxon communion. *Geoffry of Monmouth* charges Augustine with the instigation of this slaughter, but there is much testimony to the fact of his having died in 604 or 605, and so prior to this shameful deed of barbarism.

Although the authors from whom we draw the history of this time are, for the most part, in the Church of Rome, how fairly does the simple ancient church of our fathers appear. It is to be noted that neither their orthodoxy nor their truly ordained clergy are questioned.

Augustine would have been quick to take advantage of a doubt as to either. So in this period of 600-5 do we see the British Church standing as at the first century, and ever since, until then, she does "not so much as touch at Rome, nor receive any command or commission from her, which should have laid an eternal obligation of gratitude on this island to the See of Rome."* The church which came from the planting and tending of Rome was the Anglo-Saxon Church, destined to a long deterioration in grace, and increase in worldly power.

"The way is smooth
 For power that travels with the human heart;
 Confession ministers the pang to soothe
 In him who at the ghost of guilt doth start.
 Ye holy men, so earnest in your care,
 Of your own mighty instruments beware!"

*Fuller's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 23.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Come, children, to your Father's arms,
Hide in the shelter of my grace
Until these storms be overblown,
And my avenging fury cease.”

THE CHURCH IN CORNWALL.

THAT long irregular peninsula which forms the southwest extremity of England and the County of Cornwall, is in many respects the most remarkable portion of the British coast. Here are the famous tin mines, which not only dip far into the earth, but run out under the sea; so that the lonely miner, with pick and bar, may be busy gathering the precious ore, while waves are breaking, men are drowning, and ships are wrecking, a quarter of a mile above his head.

This was the first discovered portion of Albion in the days of old. The busy Phœnicians, boldly venturing beyond the pillars of Hercules, crept along the western coast of the continent to bring tin from the wonderful White Isle of the West. These Phœnician

traders told the fascinating stories of the Greek mythology to the rude sons of Gomer, who inhabited these islands, destined through moral weight and religious freedom to become the most important in the world. The Druids wove the Greek tales with that rugged faith which they held in common with their brethren of the north; and yet it is significant of the genius of the ancient Briton, that he changed the myth to suit himself, so that Hercules in his hands became not the prodigy of strength, the muscular conqueror, but the eloquent speaker, holding all men by the magic of his tongue in a bondage which they loved.

Of all the early Britons the Cornishmen and the Welsh were the most deeply religious, the most devout in their Druidism, reaching the highest mysteries in their Triad Lore. In these ancient days the County or Kingdom of Cornwall was physically very different from the Cornwall of the present. Broad fertile meadows stretched where now the sea tumbles in rude billows, and the desolate sand dunes rise. A terrible catastrophe has overtaken this region; of this ruin we shall presently speak.

There is a deep philosophy in Milton's words—

“ For from this happy day
 The old Dragon underground
 In straiter limits bound,
 Not half so far exerts his usurped sway.

“ He feels from Judah's land
 The dreaded Infant's hand,
 The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn ;
 Nor all the gods beside,
 Longer dare abide,
 Nor Typhon huge, ending in snaky twine.”

When Christ appeared in the flesh the hold of the old superstitions in all countries suddenly relaxed ; before the gospel began to be preached the false religions had exhausted themselves, and were found fainting and dying. As we study the history of religions in all lands, we find that in the first centuries of our era new theories, new gods, new forms were introduced by the Evil One, to take the place of those which, smitten by some strange palsy, loosened their grasp on the human mind.

In Italy, and the lands which had chiefly drawn their literature and traditions from her, we find Papacy taking the place of Paganism. In some favored regions the gospel of the grace of God entered on the domain of expiring heathenism. Thus it was in Britain ; as Druidism perished, Christianity spread abroad.

Cornwall heard something of the new faith and the new teachers at the first preaching ; it was, however, not until about 395 that this county received a missionary. *Corantius*, whose name in the abbreviated form of Cury yet lives in many Cornish localities, was a native of Brittany. He doubtless received the faith from its great conservators, the people of Piedmont and North Italy. Moved with compassion for the heathen of Ierne (Ireland) he departed with a few friends from his home to carry the gospel to the south of Ireland. Corantius met no encouragement in this his first mission field ; he was driven away by the savages, and, unwilling entirely to relinquish his design, entered Cornwall. Here he found a people evidently prepared of the Lord, his preaching met with abundant success, and after a few good years spent in winning souls, Corantius entered into his rest in 401.*

Meanwhile, another apostle was being prepared for Cornwall. In 352 Piranus was born in Ossory in Ireland ; his family was of repute, and his mother's name was Wingela.† In 382 Piranus was converted by the instr

*Borlase—Antiquities of Cornwall, p. 369.

†Leland's Itin. III. 195.

mentality of a Christian layman. Having heard the truth he went into France where were schools of evangelism, then famous. Some say that he extended his travels as far as the city of Rome. Wherever he went he returned having learned that way more perfectly, and full of zeal for the conversion of his kindred. Wingela, his mother, was the first-fruits of his labors. About the year 403 Piranus resolved to conduct a mission into Cornwall, and left Ireland accompanied by his widowed mother, his friends, Breaca and Ia, and one or two others, whose hearts the Lord had touched. We can imagine the frail boats of hide stretched on frames, in which these adventurous evangelists made their journey. Arrived in Cornwall the party divided, Piran's companions going north and east preaching, and Piran and his mother remaining near the coast where they landed.

Converts soon gathered around the pair; a church, a dwelling-house, and a school, were speedily erected. Piranus was a man of large attainments for his day, and he put all his knowledge at the service of his neighbors. He taught the Cornish miners better principles of labor, he instructed them how best to work and reduce metals; more advantageous ways of sinking shafts and following out

leads, and supporting the earth which they undermined. He also entered with hearty zeal into plans for rendering their toils less perilous.* Thus Piran won the enthusiastic love of the Cornish men, and came to be regarded by them as a supernatural being; and, in darker ages succeeding, lived for them as their patron saint. On every 5th of March the tanners of Cornwall hold a feast to their tutelary St. Piran, and after the feast a fair called St. Piran's Fair. Following a long established usage, on this anniversary masters give their apprentices holiday and largess, in memory of that humble preacher, who was all things to all men that he might win some to Christ, teaching the tin miner of his trade, while he also taught him of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and labored with him in the mine of Scripture fine gold.

Having buried his mother and all of those friends who had accompanied him to Cornwall, Piran lived to an advanced age among his children in Christ. Finding death approaching he ordered his grave to be dug beside his mother's, and spent his last hours in discoursing of death as the gate of the im-

*Rev. C. T. C. Trelawney, Balliol Col. Oxford, in *Lost Ch. Found*, p. 7.

mortal life. Tradition is that he died quoting "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Soon after Piran's death his people took down the earth and wood church in which he had taught, and erected over his grave a modest but substantial structure.

In this church the people were taught by men like-minded with Piran. The Cornish peasants held with remarkable tenacity to the faith once delivered to the saints, and rejected Saxon interference. In 905 a convention assembled, having for its sole object "to win the Cornish from their heresies, and their obstinate opposition to the Roman authority."*

Cornish literature furnishes testimony to the evangelical purity of the early faith. This literature is far more precious than extensive. There are but three volumes extant in the old Cornish tongue. One of these, an undoubted original, dated in the reign of Richard the Third, *positively* determines against transubstantiation as an error and a heresy.† This last is a very important fact, as showing that at least some of the educated part of the

*Rapin's Hist. Vol. I. p. 112.

†Gibson's Edition of Camden's Britannica.

Cornish Church maintained the strife against Popery longer than has generally been supposed, and reaching into the time of the Lollards. We might take it for a rise of Lollard doctrine in Cornwall did it not treat of the ancient and constant faith of the Cornish Church.

While some members and leaders thus stood firmly in the pristine faith, the majority of the church shared in the general degradation of religion during this period.

The name and tomb of Piran were craftily used as means of the corruption of his disciples. The history of the missionary was invested with fable, as, for instance, a legend arose that Piranus, his mother, and nine comrades, were carried from Ireland to Cornwall seated on a millstone! The church, seized by certain money making bishops, became a headquarters for miracle mongers. It was reported that King Alfred the Great, suffering from disease, had made a pilgrimage to Piran's Church, and offering prayers and gifts at the tomb, had been marvelously healed. The ancient fountain of evangelical teachings bade fair to become a source of revenue to the apostasy; but God ordained otherwise.

Providence suddenly drew an impenetrable veil over this church and hid it for seven hun-

dred years! When the tide of corruption was at its flood, overwhelming England, in A. D. 1100, the ancient church and tomb of St. Piran vanished out of sight. Then occurred that catastrophe which narrowed the limits and changed the whole face of the Cornish coast.

About the year 1100 a terrible wind visited the Cornish coast, prevailing without a month's intermission for nearly three years. Under pressure of this constant tornado the western sea swelled high beyond its limits, and flooded what had but now been the peaceful pasture lands of Cornwall. The wind and the sea brought clouds of sand which darkened the day and converted the narrowed shores to ranges of barren dunes.

The tyrant of the coast, the dread whirlwind, devastated his domains. As Vesuvius buried Pompeii, so Atlantic buried Eastern Cornwall; the ruin was more slowly but not less effectually accomplished.*

Finding their old church in the very midst of this disaster, the sands drifting into and over it, and covering the graveyard round about, the congregation of St. Piran's, shortly after the opening of the disastrous year 1100,

*Norden's Hist. of Cornwall, p. 60, *et seq.*

built their place of worship farther inland, removing thither nothing from the earlier building but the baptismal font, a rude and ugly circular basin, supported on a square base, and decorated with carvings of heads and foliage. Soon after the erection of the second church the first building vanished entirely out of sight, leaving no trace, except one larger tumuli among the dunes, where people said that the home of their early faith, and best loved teacher, lay hidden. This traditionary spot was called *St. Perranzabuloe*, which being translated from Cornish means—St. Piran's in zabulo, or St. Piran's in the sand.

In the year 1433, the continued advance of the sand and destruction of the coast rendered a removal from the second church needful, and a third building was erected yet farther inland, the people carrying with them the antique font from their first church.

In 1835, after many attempts to uncover the church of "St. Piran's in the sand," which was by many supposed to be the earliest specimen of church architecture in England, Wm. Mitchell, Esq., of Truro, a zealous antiquary, accomplished a task in which many had failed, and laid the venerable church of Piran open to the day. This church, built

when England was Protestant, buried during the long ages when Romanism, ignorance and vice, unhappy trio, lorded it over Albion, re-emerged to light, when England was once more Protestant, enlightened and free.

The church coming from its long burial was a marvel of preservation ; the walls were complete, the roof, which had been formed of thin slabs of stone, supported on beams, had fallen ; the door also had perished ; all else was as perfect as when last it had echoed to the psalm and prayer of the simple Cornish men. The floor and seats were of stone ; only one small window lit the building, so that either light must have been admitted through openings purposely left between the slabs of the roof, or tapers must have been used during worship. There was not a particle of ornament anywhere in the building, no sign either of paint or carving, save that around the outside of the doorway were elaborate sculptures of flowers, arrow-heads, scrolls, tigers' heads, and human heads. Of the latter there were but two, ornamenting the corbels of the arch. Inside was no roodloft ; no place for sacring-bell, no tabernacle for the host ; nor was the church built in the form of a cross ; it was a small, solid, plain, low pitched, oblong building, with the square top of Piran's tomb serv-

ing as its altar or communion table, and the remains of a stone chancel railing, which had been nearly three feet high. On removing the tomb, the skeletons of Piran, his mother Wingela, and one of his companions, were found in good preservation, and the tomb was at once replaced above them.

It has been argued* that as neither bells, crosses, censers, sacristy, relic boxes, nor any one of the usual paraphernalia of Romish services were to be found, nor indeed their slightest trace in this antique edifice, *therefore* we have positive proof that none such were ever used there, and *consequently* that this was a Protestant church.

For ourselves we are unwilling to base our conclusion that this was a Protestant church on premises so weak. We have no need so to do, for we have better arguments abundantly at hand. We are ready to admit that if crosses, banners, bells, censers, croziers, and the like, were used here before 1100, they could easily have been removed when the font was taken away. Nevertheless we think it very significant that no place for the host, no receptacle or place for any vessel for holy water, nor mark of any such adjuncts of wor-

*Perranzabuloe, by Rev. C. T. C. Trelawney.

ship exists. The shape, style, and whole appearance of this church of Piranus' conforms to that of the simplest Methodist chapel of the present day.

A man utterly ignorant of the questions in dispute, but who had seen half a dozen Roman churches, and as many Protestant churches, coming upon Piran's exhumed chapel would at once say, "Oh, here has been an old Protestant building." Piran's church is a valuable relic for the antiquary, a precious memorial to the Protestant of the days before Papism got foothold in England, but we do not need it though we value it as a testimony that "the Church of the United Kingdom neither sprang out of Popery, divided from it, nor dissented from it, but was apostolic in foundation, pure in practice, and independent of every other church centuries before Popery had any existence in this country."* "The church in England was a protesting church 927 years before reformers were called Protestants at the Diet of Spire."†

When we Protestants hear from our Popish antagonists of the *novelty* of our religion, we must remember that it is merely as *novel* as

*Trelawney in Perranzabuloe.

†Ibid.

the pages of the New Testament ; there we read the history of its foundation, and following its course through eighteen centuries we see it constantly conformed to the doctrines in which it was established, bearing the same characteristics through all these eighteen hundred years, and to-day expressing the letter and spirit of its first founders and teachers. When we hear of the antiquity of Romanism, we must understand that this antiquity dates from several hundred years after our Evangelical Church was established ; that it represents the antiquity of a schism and a heresy ; that it has continually varied in practice and in doctrine to suit itself to the perversity of an evil world ; and that neither now, nor at any period since it branched out of the early Evangelical Church, can it show conformity in word, work or spirit, to the teachings laid down in the New Testament.

As for the United Kingdom we find the church established here four hundred years before Roman interference or missionaries were heard of, and maintaining herself, amid many sore disadvantages and trials, for twelve hundred years.

William Rufus, in 1087, defined Papal menaces as usurpations and unendurable, and sold bishoprics and abbeys to the highest bidder,

though, indeed, the rude king was as evil a "lord over God's heritage" as the pope himself. In 1100 Henry I. declared that all appeal to Rome was treason, and unlawful application to a foreign power, "being a custom unheard of in this kingdom and altogether contrary to right usage."

CHAPTER IX.

“ Lord Prelate, we received the law of Christ
Many a long age ere your pirate sires
Had left their forest dens; nor are we now
To learn that law from Norman or from Dane,
Saxon, Jute, Angle, or whatever name
Suits best.”

A VOICE FROM THE NORTH.

AUGUSTINE died shortly after his second conference with the British pastors. He was succeeded in the See of Canterbury by his friend Lawrence, a man inspired with the same desire for the recognition of the primacy of the Kentish Archbishop over all the British islands. In this spirit he wrote a letter, partly preserved by Bede, and addressed to “his dear brethren, and the bishops and abbots throughout all Scotia.” This included not only the Scots in Ireland, but their kindred the Scots in the small islands, and in North Britain. Just previous to his writing this letter, says Lawrence, Dagan, a Scots’ bishop, had passed that way, and from

him he learned that the Scots were of exactly the same church as the contumacious Britons in Wales and Cornwall.* The object of Lawrence in his letter was to persuade the Scots to accept him as their metropolitan; to unite with him in the Roman forms introduced by Austin, and to make common cause with him against their delinquent brothers in the mountains of the south.

The effect of this General Epistle of Lawrence, Primate of Canterbury, was quite contrary to his desires. The flourishing church in Ireland, and the fast increasing church in Caledonia, called to mind their elder brethren in Christ from whom they, a few centuries back, had received the gospel, who had endured so great a fight of afflictions, and who were now so sorely beset. They also realized the fearful heathenism prevailing in the Saxon kingdoms; the possibility of converting these Pagans, and the rapid advances made among them by teachers who held a gospel adulterated by many false doctrines and dangerous ceremonies. A great desire to go up to the help of the Lord against the mighty filled all the church of the Scots; they called a council and began to devise means of enter-

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 67.

ing Britain with the good news, from the north.

Just at this time the Saxon Church lost much of the ground which it had gained. In 616 Ethelbert and Sebert, the Christian kings of Kent and the East Saxons, died; they were succeeded by Pagan monarchs. Bishops were expelled, idols were restored, and after thirty years from the triumphant mission of Augustine hardly thirty churches were to be found in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.*

In this period of decay Northumbria was opened to the gospel by the marriage of its king with Ethelburga, the daughter of the Christian sovereigns, Ethelbert and Bertha of Kent. As her mother had done, she stipulated for a free exercise of her religion, and took with her to her future home Paulinus, an Anglo-Saxon preacher of considerable earnestness, who made some converts in the northern kingdom, the king among the rest. Under Edwin and Paulinus, York Cathedral was founded, but the progress of the truth was checked by the death of the king, and a Pagan usurpation of the throne. Constantly

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 68. Collier's Eccl. Hist. of Brit. Vol. I. 196-203. Tyrell's Hist. of Eng. Vol. I. p. 168-70.

rebuffed in their labors, the Roman and Anglo-Saxon churches redoubled their efforts to secure the adhesion of the Scots; "the Britons they had already given up as incorrigible Protestants."* In the letters written to the Scots, at this period, we see that in this portion of the seventh century, Rome did not hold those as outcasts who lacked her ordination, for she calls them "most holy and beloved bishops and abbots;" nor did she assert that a rejection of her rights made them heretics and apostates; nor did she dare brand them as maranatha, because they denied her supremacy.

But despite her earnestness and her smoothness of speech, Rome found the Scots as firmly opposed to her innovations as were the British, and for these sturdy sons of the north, who would not hear the dulcet voice of the Latin charmer, was reserved the honor of England's re-conversion, to which Rome had been incompetent.

Oswald, son of Ethelfrid, the predecessor of Edwin on the throne of Northumbria, had been driven from his inheritance in early youth, to take refuge among the Picts. Found there by Columba, he was carried to Iona,

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. p. 72.

and trained in the Christian faith. Columba was rearing a potent sovereign, for Oswald was recalled to his country and mounted the ancestral throne.* Desirous of having his subjects share the light which he had received, Oswald sent messengers to Iona, praying for teachers. The Scots' clergy had, as we have seen, turned their eyes toward the south, earnestly desiring an entrance there to proclaim the salvation which is in Jesus. The call of Oswald opened to them a great and effectual door, and they made haste to dispatch a missionary. Perhaps at the first their haste was too great, for they sent a man unfitted for the work. The missionary had more zeal than discretion; more knowledge than patience; more works than faith. A rugged and unplausible Scot, full of fury against heathenism, and impatient of the weaknesses of his fellow-men, this son of thunder poured upon the Pagans the terrors of the law, and found their hearts, like Pharaoh's, growing harder under judgments. Abandoning his field he returned to his countrymen, and when they had called a council to hear of his deplorable failure, he narrated his ill success, declaring that the English were a

*Tyrell's Eng. Hist. p. 177. Ed. of 1700.

most impracticable people, bigoted in their idolatry, among whom no good could be done. When this speech was made, one Aidan, a pious pastor in the assembly, spoke gently and firmly, saying, that his brother seemed not to have dealt suitably with the Pagans; he had fed them with strong meat, rather than with milk; he had not cherished them as a nurse her children; these heathen needed first the plainest and simplest gospel truth, and afterward the sublime mysteries.* At these words the eyes of all the Assembly turned upon Aidan, declaring that he must take up the abandoned work, and, going into Northumberland, put in practice that which he could so well express.

Aidan, having been duly commissioned, appeared at Oswald's court, and won the hearts of king and people. As he needed a place of retirement for a school, church, and dwelling house, he asked of the king the gift of Lindisfarne, since called Holy Island, a low peninsula off the Northumbrian coast, which the rising tide converts to an island twice in the day.†

The very choice of Lindisfarne for head-

*Collier, p. 203. Soames, p. 68. Baxter's Ch. Hist. p. 73.

†Bede, Hist. Eccl. III. 3.

quarters shows that Aidan was not in accord with the See of Rome, for the Italian bishop, through Paulinus, had chosen York as the center of the church in Northumberland.

Aidan set himself to learn perfectly the language of the people; and while he was yet unable to instruct the English without an interpreter, England beheld the charming spectacle of her young and potent king, surrounded by his court, interpreting the words of life as they fell from the lips of the missionary. God blessed the seed sown conjointly by prince and pastor. "Churches were erected in various parts of the land; the people flocked to hear the word of the Lord;" now had the Son of Righteousness arisen with healing on his wings. Beautiful indeed on the Northumbrian hills were the feet of the messenger that brought "good tidings." "All," says Baxter, "was arranged on the principle of an independent national church, uninfluenced by even the remotest idea of accountability to any foreign authority."*

Aidan was one of the most noble and venerable apostles of the north. We desire no better testimony than that of Bede concerning him, because they lived only half a cen-

*Ch. Hist. p. 74.

tury apart, and because Bede, belonging to the communion of Rome, was not likely to overpraise one whom he himself acknowledges belonged to a different church than his. Says Bede:* "His doctrine was commended to all by this—that he lived as he taught. Nothing worldly occupied his thoughts or affections, and all that he had he gave to the poor. He ever traveled on foot; and whenever he met any he turned aside to invite them to embrace the gospel, or to encourage them in their faith. Far from using the supineness of our age, all who companied with him were ever reading and expounding the Scriptures, meditating on them, or learning Psalms. Never did he connive at the faults of the rich, but rebuked them without fear or favor. Many slaves did he redeem, making them first freemen, then Christians, and some of them became priests." "Truly," adds Bede, "he had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, in that he rejected the Roman Easter; holding this, his paschal error, in great abhorrence, historical veracity compels me to praise all that is praiseworthy; his truth, his peace, his charity, his zeal, his purity, his faithfulness. To comprise him all in a few words, we

*Hist. Eccl. III. 3 and 17.

never heard from all those that knew him that he ever omitted anything in his practice which he learned in the evangelical, prophetic, or apostolical Scriptures. His error as to Easter I praise not, but he preached the redemption of mankind by the sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension of the Mediator—the man Christ Jesus.’*’*

Now, this is noble testimony, and shows us not only that in word and deed Aidan was in the true succession of the apostles, but that he and his church were not then in the pale or practice of Rome, and that being out of it, they were recognized as a true Christian Church and as holy and gracious servants of God.

To Aidan, at Lindisfarne, succeeded Finan and Colman. During these lives the Anglo-Saxon and the British-Scot Church ran side by side without any great jarring or interference, until the latter years of Colman, as we shall hereafter see.

Oswald, most unhappily for his country, fell in battle at the age of thirty-eight; but only a fortnight after this bitter loss of a most pious king, the British Church in Northumberland was again bereaved in the death of

*Bede, Hist. Eccl. III. 5.

Aidan, who finished his course, and entered into the joy of his Lord, August 31, 651. Three years later, Middle Anglia, until then closed to Christianity, was opened to the gospel by the conversion of its king and the heir-apparent. At their request four teachers were sent into Mercia, mark it, *not* by the Saxon Church at York, but by the National British Church, for the men were all ordained by Finan, Aidan's successor at Lindisfarne, and when the school or abbey at Lichfield was established, its three successive presidents were consecrated at Lindisfarne. Nor did the work of Finan end here; he sent preachers to the east Saxons, who shortly after Augustine's death had, under a heathen king, apostatized to Paganism, and Seigbert, the king in the days of Finan, was persuaded to receive Cedda, a British pastor.

"Thus," says Baxter, in his Church History, "all the northern and midland counties of England, and London also, enjoy the satisfaction of tracing their Christianity to members of the ancient National Church of these realms, while in the eastern part of Britain the faith was indebted for much of its success to the same zealous instrumentality."* Says

*P. 79, Vol. I.

the same historian in an important note: "It is abundantly evident that the North British (Scots) Church, from which came Aidan and his successors, maintained unbroken communion as well with the border churches as with those west of the Severn, together occupying two-thirds of the island, and constituting strictly and properly the National Church."

By the year 670 the power of the Paganism, which had come in with the Saxons more than two centuries before, was forever broken. Alas, that in the Saxon Church were the beginnings of the modern Paganism, heir of the long ago abominations, a cruel faith, before whose altars should be poured out the same floods of blood as had flowed under the Druids' knife, had smoked to Odin and been demanded to placate Heartha in the heathen time. Paganism grows no purer, no tenderer for having been baptized!

Let us take one backward glance at the course of history. We see the early British Church sending Ninian into the north; thence comes Patrick from the families of Ninian's converts; Patrick spreads the truth in Ireland; from Ireland go Columba and Mungo to Caledonia; meanwhile the Saxons have come in and crowded the British Christians

into Wales and Cornwall; all between these and Caledonia become Pagan. Augustine converts a portion of the Saxons, beginning at Kent, but he can not make common cause with the National British Church, who will not accept the supremacy and the errors of Rome. The Scots' Church hearing of the straits of the British Church, and the darkness of the Saxon kingdoms, where Augustine's helpers have made but little way, send Aidan into Northumbria. The truth being well established here, Finan extends his work into Mercia, and again into the counties of the east. All this work has been done by a church which, since the first century, had held itself independent of any foreign authority, and whose chief continental friendships and whose closest agreement had been with the Gallican churches, confessedly differing from the Roman Church.

After this brief resume, let us quote a word or two from prominent writers on this subject.

Saith Fuller,* quaint and well beloved: "Augustine found here a plain religion, practiced by the Britons, living some of them in contempt, and many more in ignorance of

*Ch. Hist. of Brit. Vol. I. p. 169.

worldly vanity; and surely piety is most healthful where it hath least surfeit of earthly pleasure. He brought in a religion spun with a coarser thread, but guarded with a finer trimming; so that many who could not judge of the goodness were charmed with the gaudiness thereof. Indeed, the Papists brag that he was the Apostle of the English; yea, but not one in the style of Paul—*Neither from men, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ*. And, indeed, he was not our sole apostle; though he put in his sickle, others reaped a more plenteous harvest than he.” Says Collier: *
“The conversion of the East Angles was not solely carried on by a monk from Rome, as Papists say. Fursens, a man of remarkable piety, come from Ireland, had a share in this enterprise. This person coming from Ireland, we may reasonably conclude him of the same opinion of the Scots’ Church there; and yet Bede gives him most extraordinary commendation.” Further, it is probable that this Fursens was of the communion of the Scots and Picts, for Bede tells us that the Scots were his countrymen, and he traveled into East Anglia *from Wales*. Therefore we may fairly believe him of the British communion as they

*Ecll. Hist. of Brit. Vol. I. p. 208.

all were then in Wales, and which was the same as that of the Picts and Scots.

We now turn to Soames:* “More completely still was the whole center of South Britain indebted for this inestimable benefit (*gospel preaching*) to the native clergy. There no Roman preacher first took possession of the field, which laborers more happily circumstanced afterward cultivated with lasting success.” “Diurna’s three immediate successors were all members of the National Church, and under these four prelates all our midland counties were converted. Equal zeal was shown by the National Church in the kingdom of Essex. Only two counties north of the Thames—those of Suffolk and Norfolk—were even under Roman superintendence during their transition from Paganism to Christianity, and even these were largely indebted to domestic zeal for their conversion. Every other county from London to Edinburgh has the full gratification of pointing to the ancient Church of Britain as the nursing mother of its holy faith in Christ.”

“The last of the counties rescued from Paganism was Sussex. In Sussex the cases

*Soames, *The Anglo-Saxon Ch.* p. 68-69, 71.

of Essex and Northumbria were reversed. In these latter a Roman introduction paved the way for British entrance and success; in South Britain the National Church made an opening and Rome prevailed."

"In a strict sense the Church of Rome can not be the mother to that of England. Nor can the Papal See establish any claim to this distinction in the looser sense of possessing from the first a patriarchal jurisdiction over the British Isles. Learned men have repeatedly shown this, but their arguments need not be here recapitulated."*

Lingard, in his Church History, violently attacks the position of Soames. He reasons thus: The evangelization of Britain was by Roman and not national agency, because the Irish converted the Scots, and the Scots labored in Britain, and to begin this chain the Irish were converted by Patrick, and Patrick was sent from Rome! But Lingard's reasoning falls to the ground because he does not and can not prove that Patrick ever was sent from Rome, or had ever seen Romé. Dr. Todd, whose Life of Patrick, as Burnet says,

*Soames' Latin Ch. in Saxon Times, p. 57. CAVE'S Dissertation on Ancient Ch. Government.

“contains all the learning extant on the subject,” conclusively proves that Patrick had never anything to do with Rome.* And again, if it could be proven that Patrick was at Rome, and sent by the bishop of that place to Ireland, Lingard must yet show, first, why he ignores the British Church left in Cornwall and Wales, with which Augustine could not make terms; and, second, why if the Scots’ Church had a Roman origin do we find it in Augustine’s day ignoring Roman supremacy, Roman Easter, Roman baptism, and equally unable with the Welsh Church to have fellowship with Rome? And what will Lingard do with that positive remark of Bede that the British Church *even to his day* would not unite with nor recognize the orthodoxy of the Anglo-Saxon Church; while yet we have abundant proof that the British Church and the Scots’ Church were in that full friendship and unity which now over all the world unites Episcopal Church to Episcopal; Presbyterian to Presbyterian; Methodist to Methodist, and so on?

To conclude: in the year given above, 670, nearly the whole of Great Britain was now

*Dr. Todd’s Life of St. Patrick, Dublin, 1864.

nominally Christian. The National Church and the foreign rigidly adhered to their respective rituals; they had not now a large tract of Paganism between them, and collision was imminent.*

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. of Eng. p. 80.

CHAPTER X.

"Peace to their shades ! the pure Culdees
Were Albyn's earliest priests to God,
Ere yet an island of the seas,
By foot of Saxon monk was trod."

THE CULDEES.

THE twelfth century affords a haven of comfort to the perplexed and weary investigator of early history, because it opens the period of full and authentic records. For eleven centuries we have first the stray hints in classic authors; then the often garbled words of the first church fathers; then wild romantic tales of monks and stray biographies, as that of Adamnanus; we have bardic relics, as that wild song of Taliesin, and the hymn of Fiaac; letters of wrath from primitive popes, and outpourings of woe or triumph from their missionaries. Out of all these we painfully construct the story of these far off ages; and then, we come upon frequent gaps which there is nothing to fill, or only what is manifestly falsehood.

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In England proper history, even in these early periods, is not so scanty or so dark a page as in Caledonia. We read the story of the British Church in the South, a story of a slow but sure departure from the old paths; Ireland follows in her stronger sister's steps. Wales has a better record. In the North, about the year 800, the church retires behind an almost impenetrable veil, and in the eleventh century the hand and voice of a Saxon woman send a challenge into this blackness, and an answer comes in a hearty living voice. In all these weary years the ancient church has lived and grown stronger, and when evoked by Margaret and Malcolm it steps out of the shadow, it has a complete organization of its own, its orders of clergy, its teachers, its congregations, "we can see in some measure what influences have been at work; and it is almost more to the point that we can show what influences *have not* been at work in this obscure church."* "The lights of the twelfth century revealed, in the arrangements for religious services in Scotland, a special body of clergymen, whose position and function perplexed, if they did not horrify, all ecclesiastics trained in the legitimate school of

*Burton's Hist. of Scot. Vol. II. p. 4.

their order, who had first to look upon them."*

This band of clergy, who in the blackness of those middle ages stand out so fair and pure, that we by the contrast are astonished into uttering the challenge, "Who are those in white garments?" were the Culdees. But having now indicated the gloom in which we must labor, in developing the history of these Culdees, that we must seek information from the Saxon Church in England, gather notes from the Welsh and Irish National Church records, and work backward from the date when the Scottish kings began to intermeddle with their state—we proceed from all these sources to depict, as clearly as we are able, the ancient clergy of the British Church.

Great has been the discussion as to the *meaning* of this name Culdee; but where many doctors differed, a master in an ancient ecclesiastical learning and of the Celtic tongue puts a fair end to the controversy by showing that Culdee is the corruption of Cele-De, equivalent to the Latin *Servus Dei*, a servant of God.†

The origin of this name is from Ireland;

*Ibid. p. 6.

†Dr. Reeves, 76 et seq. Braun de Kuldeis, p. 25.

its date almost from the conversion of the island. We find it in the days of Columba and Kentigern; it is prominent in the period of which in the last two chapters we have been treating; it belongs to the ancient National Church in all Britain, and when that church in England is finally overwhelmed by Romanism, we find the name and work of the Culdees in the long hidden Caledonian National Church, showing still that true succession of the sons of God, that is not of men nor by men, but by the will of God, crushed at last under Roman aggression banded with the civil power to overthrow this early church, the influence and teaching of Culdeism survived, and flamed out now and again, until the night of the church's bondage brightened into dawn; the martyr-fires of Hamilton, of Wishart, of Mill, were as the beams of the sunrise, and then by mighty men like Knox was re-announced the ancient faith, the encroaching foreign superstition was expelled, and the church stood built of gold, silver, and precious stones, on the Rock Christ Jesus.

Of how great interest and value to us, therefore, do we find the history of the ancient British clergy, "the pure Culdees." The importance of the place occupied by the

Culdees in evangelical church history is not alone recognized by us, the descendants of those British Christians whose teachers and pastors they were. The German writers have warmly pursued this subject; chief among these is Dr. Ebrard.*

We have already hastily shown the progress of the truth from Northern Italy into France; we have found St. Patrick obtaining all his theological education in France; we have noticed the friendship and union between these early Gallican churches who differed from Rome, and the British churches who also differed; we find in our study of the Culdees that they like the Piedmontese Church presently were called schismatics and heretics, and Richard of Hexam says roundly: "The Scots differed from the Cisalpine (Roman) Church, and seemed to favor too much the hated memory of Peter of Lyons and his apostasy," by which amiable circumlocution our author means the Waldensians. At the first preaching of Columba, Kentigern and their followers in the north, we do not find that any especial name was applied to the body of their missionaries. They were few

*Ebrard's *Handbuch*, pp. 896-99. Also, Ebrard's *Religion and Theology of Culdees*. A. D. 1868.

in number, and each man was called merely by his own Christian appellation, as Cornac, Diune, etc. Growing more numerous they were designated from their country Scots. At just what period the Celtic name of Culdees, servants of God, was given them we can not ascertain. The name was first used in Ireland, and then passed over to the Irish Scots of Caledonia. It was a name that well expressed their words and works, and we presume Romanists will not quarrel with its tardy growth, since it took many centuries for their chief bishop to learn to call himself servant of the servants of God!

We give but a word to the work of this church upon the continent from A. D. 600, when Columbanus went into France, and thence to Switzerland, until the year 1200. During these six centuries St. Bernard bears witness that from the nest of Columba his teachers went into all quarters. Dr. Smith says that "they went abroad in such numbers that Bollandine writers thought all saints of untraced origin must be Scots." Alsace, Switzerland, Suabia,* and the Black Forest were visited by these zealous men, and when

*Alexander's Iona, pp. 130-33, Brit. Tract Soc. Neander's Ch. History.

we consider that the much persecuted Piedmontese were sending out teachers also, and that in the ninth century Claude of Turin was preaching, we can easily see how Rome has had enough to do in combating what she calls heresy. Fellowship, and co-laboring with the evangelical churches on the continent, is an heirloom which the Christians of America and England should not neglect nor surrender. Especially near is our union with that good Waldensian Church, "of whom the world was not worthy."

We turn now to the Culdees in their native home. Says Alexander: "The ecclesiastical order of the Culdees partook of a collegiate rather than a hierarchical form. They were a body of religious persons associated together for the purpose of aiding each other in the common work of teaching youth and preaching the gospel, as well as maintaining in each other the fervor of devotion by united exercises of worship." "Perhaps we shall most nearly approach a just conception of the polity they followed, if we suppose that each of their colleges resembled an academical senate of the present day, where a body of professors equal in rank and privilege are presided over by a chancellor or principal."* "As the

*Dr. W. Lindsay Alexander, Iona, pp. 102-5.

bishops over whom the abbot of Iona exercised jurisdiction were either missionaries to the heathen, or pastors of single churches, we may suppose their allegiance to the Church of Iona was such as missionaries in the present day owe to the society sending them out.”*

In the earliest period of their history the Culdees are sometimes mentioned by Saxon writers as “The Order of Iona,” and oftener as monks. The Romanized Church of that day seemed at a loss for a name and a description that would suit a body of men so little conformed to their own usages. Strictly speaking, the term *monks* applied to the Culdees is nearly as great a misnomer as it would be for any body of evangelical clergymen of the present day.† The vows of monks are threefold—poverty, celibacy and obedience. The Culdees were only held by the last—obedience; and that only in so far as was necessary for good order and the progress of their work as missionaries. They were all obliged to *maintain themselves*, says Bede; “after the example of the venerable fathers, they lived by the labor of their hands.”‡

*Dr. W. Lindsay Alexander, *Iona*, pp. 102-5.

†*Ibid.* p. 110.

‡Bede, *Hist. lib.* 4, c. 4.

They accumulated property which belonged to the individual who amassed it, and *not* to the Order;* and could be claimed by their heirs. And what is more to the point than all else, they were a *married* clergy, celibacy being the exception among them and not the rule. Nor was their marriage considered disorderly or unlawful; the gracious King Duncan was the son of Crinan, Abbot of Dunkeld, who had received in marriage the daughter of Malcolm II., and we find Crinan at the head of an army valiantly fighting for his son's succession, when a usurper would debar him from it.

Ancient documents remain wherein the Abbot of the Culdees of Brechin, his sons and his grandsons after him, are found granting away their lands.

The oldest parchments of many ancient families show them descended from abbots of the Culdees. Again, the language of the North is an imperishable witness to the wedded estate of the Culdees. Celtic scholars tell us of many names derived from this lineage in the days when surnames were making. For example, we have Mac Nab (Mac—

*See Pinkerton's En. I. p. 462 (quoted by Jamieson, p. 82).

son of), the son of the abbot; Mac Clery, the son of the clerk; Mac Pherson, the person's *i. e.*, parson's son; Mac Vicar, the son of the vicar; Mac Prior, the prior's son; Mac Intagart, the priest's son. Late in the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis complains that the Welsh Culdees of his time bestowed their ecclesiastical offices on their sons.*

The Culdees also elected† their abbot or president from among themselves; no primate, no pope, was known to them as possessing authority over them. They chose the man best suited to the office. Here we must remark that it has been proved beyond all dispute that the abbot was the *highest authority* known to the Culdees. It is also equally plain that they had men ordained as bishops, and these were not few; these men were capable of dispensing all the sacraments and rites of the church, as baptism, the Lord's Supper, ordination, etc. Again, it is to be noted that these bishops were frequently dioceseless, and went up and down acting the part of missionaries, and we can not understand that power came from the abbot singly, or from

*Keith Preface. Pink (Enquiry) Part VI. 5. Sibbald's Hist. of Fife, pp. 177-78.

†Jamieson's Culdees, p. 35.

the bishops singly or collectively, for we hear of ordination being bestowed by men of various degrees, and of numbers varying from one to many; and Colman, the successor of Finan, the successor of Aidan in Lindisfarne, vindicating himself, his church, his commission and his customs against the aspersions of the Saxon clergy, declares, "The Easter which I keep I received from my *elders*, who sent me here as *bishop*."* To increase our wonder, Bede tells us that Finan received four presbyters from Iona, and after ordained one a bishop.† Time was when hot warfare waged over these statements and the inferences to be drawn from them. To us they seem of comparatively little value as widening or lessening differences between evangelical churches. Their main importance is that they clearly prove the early and total difference between Culdees and Romanists. Further facts concerning the teachings and practices of the Culdees we hope to develop in a future chapter. Meanwhile we pass to their history during several hundred years, and our material forces us to be brief. The Culdees ever showed the individuality of thought and

*Bede, Hist. lib. 3, c. 25.

†Bede, Ibid. c. 21.

character usual in men wont to reason, and not held in terror and vassalage by a primate who laid down for them the exact and narrow bounds of their mental life. While in important points they held to the one form of sound doctrine, we find erratic spirits yielding now and again to change in matters of form, and we see also that when this erratic spirit happened even to be so lofty a man as their abbot, his deviations did not carry away the firm and sound thinking body of his fellow clergymen. Thus, the most prominent instance which we have of perversion in matters of form was Adamnan,* abbot of Iona, successor and biographer of Columba, who being beguiled by the entreaties of the Saxon clergy during a visit which he paid to Aldfrid, king of the Angles, tried hard to win over his brethren to some of the Italian customs, but utterly failed. He then went to Ireland and persuaded to his new views some Culdees there. But, as an offset to this, Dagan, an Irish ecclesiastic of the same day, utterly rejected the fellowship of the Bishop of Canterbury, and would have nothing to do with what he esteemed his errors. Gillan says "the adherents of Rome in 600-700, did

*Alexander's Iona, p. 117.

not think the Britons and Scots heretics, and would have been glad to consort with them.”* But the Britons and Scots thought the Romish party heretics and schismatics, and eschewed their ways.

Colman, abbot of Lindisfarne, was another of these resolute, uncompromising upholders of their faith. He left the court of King Oswi, and all the advantages of Lindisfarne, rather than conform to the Saxon usage, and acknowledge the supremacy of the Roman See, which had been accepted by the king at the urgent persuasion of his queen and her Saxon friends. This was in the year 664, and though Colman himself retired to Iona, he left at Lindisfarne a pupil of Aidan, and for many years the simple Culdee establishment on Holy Island presented a striking contrast to the growing magnificence of the Saxon Church.

In the year 600 we find the Culdees firmly fixed at Abernethy, one of their most ancient seats.† In the year 700 the Culdees opened a school, church, and homes for the families of their clergy on the charming isle of Lochlevin. Between these two last mentioned

*Jamieson's Culdees, p. 78.

†Boece, Hist. lib. 9. fol. 187, a.

periods, the abbey on Incheolm was founded, as says Wyntoun's hearty old chronicle :*

" Arywyd at Inchekeith,
The ile betwene Kyngorne and Leth,
Of Scolmkil, the abbot than
Saynt Adamnan the holy man," etc.

Kings Macbeth, Malcolm III., Edgar and Etheldred all endowed the Culdee College at Lochleven, and there were educated young men who preached the gospel in all Scotland, among the islands, the Orkneys and Faroe Isles being Christianized by them.

Dunkeld is the next famous foundation of the Culdees. Authors vary as to its date of establishment from 729 to 800.† Myln says that Constantine, King of Picts, endowed Dunkeld, "and placed there Culdees and their wives."

In 718,‡ after a century of untiring efforts addressed to the abbots and sovereigns, Iona was won over to the Roman customs of Easter, tonsure, etc., and to the acceptance of certain disputed points and conformity with the Anglo-Saxon Church. The defection of

*Wyntoun's *Cronykil*, B. V. ch 12, ver. 1162, etc.

†Wyntoun's *Cronykil*, b. 6, ch. 7.

‡A. L. Alexander, D. D., IONA, p. 148.

what had been headquarters of their faith was a severe blow to the Culdees of Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and those few yet maintaining their ancient church in Britain. But the faith of these was not shaken by the time-serving of their brethren. The college at Iona was now under Saxon influence, and Dunkeld became the center of pure Culdeeism.

With this perversion the glory departed from Iona; the arm of the Lord seemed withdrawn; hitherto he had hidden his children on this lonely isle, as in his pavilion, and they had abode under the shadow of his wing. But now the storms of war broke over them. In 794 the Norsemen came to them like a desolating tempest, and left the island scathed and bare.* In 806 the pirates returned; these appearances of the destroyer were frequently repeated until 986. Meanwhile we look for primitive Culdeeism, and headquarters of the British Church no more in Iona, but through all the British land, and notably at DUNKELD.† Before 900 the Culdees had possession at St. Andrews, where their rule and college became very famous, so that certain of the Cal-

*See Campbell's Reullura.

†Pinkerton's Enquiry, II. 268, 269. Jamieson's Culdees, p. 138.

edonian kings abode with them for long periods. In 900, also, we find that Culdees had reached Iceland with the gospel, and were there found by the Norwegian discoverers.*

The traces of the establishment and continuance of the houses or colleges of the Culdees form the chief part of the history that remains of them during several centuries, and for this reason it is important to follow it. Brechin is said, by the old Pictish Chronicle, to have been given to the Lord by Kenneth, whose reign began in 970;† and Goodall tells us that there the Culdees continued much longer than at Dumblane. As we follow the rise of these Culdee priories, abbeys, or colleges, over the country, beholding them at Dumblane about 980, and at Mortlach in 1010, we can not but pause to consider how their simple teachings, their scriptural knowledge, their holy example, must have influenced, and, indeed, taken possession of the Caledonian people, and what a difficult or even impossible work it would have been to root out the faith thus widely planted. Says the author of Caledonia:‡ “The abbey of Dunfermline

*Iona, p. 126.

†Innes' Essay, Append. p. 788.

‡Vol. I. p. 438.

was dedicated like the other Culdean establishments to the Holy Trinity. Here the Culdees, with their abbots, discharged their duties during several successive reigns." "Fair Melrose" shines in this goodly constellation of heavenly lights, and is one of the earliest that began its shining, as well as one of the most conspicuous for piety, zeal, learning and simplicity.

Kirkcudbright, in Galloway, also early belonged to the evangelists of Iona. During these centuries we know that the Roman Church was overpowering and absorbing most of the Gallican churches; the unconquerable Piedmontese held their faith, and are described in much the same terms as the IRISH of their day, of whom St. Bernard says, in his *Life of Malachy*,* imposed as Bishop of Connor: "He came not to men, but to beasts, who neither pay tithes, nor first-fruits, nor go to confession, nor prescribe nor perform penance."

Dagan, famous for his opposition to Rome, was head of a Culdean house at Bangor, in Ireland. In 816 the Council of Ceal-hythe ordains that none of these obstinate schismatic Scots' priests be allowed to exercise eccle-

**Vita Malach. c. 6.*

siastical functions in South Britain. This was expressly aimed at the Welshmen, who were sturdily holding to the primitive church. One Clement, in England, a Culdee, opposed Boniface of Mentz, and for refusing the authority of the church, and upholding wedlock, was condemned as a heretic, and became one of the earliest of the martyrs, being given to the flames.* John of Mailros (Melrose) also comes brilliantly forward impugning the papal dogmas.†

We reach now the days of Malcolm Canmore, when persecution brings the Culdees more clearly forward. This king of Scots married Margaret the Saxon, a woman very earnest for her church, and doubtless a sincere Christian according to her light. She had been bred in the Saxon Church, and carefully taught to consider Culdees schismatics. As soon as she shared the throne of Malcolm, she, with her confessor Turgot, undertook to prove to the king that the Scots' clergy were heretical in their practices; that fealty was owed by the church in all the world to its spiritual head the Pope at Rome; Roman torture, and Roman pasch, and Roman ordina-

*Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. II. 278.

†Nubes testium, tom. I. p. 634.

tion, and the Roman rites of confirmation, confession, penance and mass, were, in the queen's idea, of primary importance. Moved by her representations, Malcolm called a great council of the clergy of his nation to confer upon these subjects. The queen, as the more learned theologian, led the controversy on behalf of the Saxons. A difficulty here occurred which is significant; the Scots' clergy spoke Gaelic, the queen, Saxon; and they had no common tongue, as Latin; the king, therefore, acted as interpreter. Here we especially notice that at this date, 1074, the Scots' clergy were free from the Romish customs then prevailing in the South; had no *church tongue* as the Latin; and had not been used to maintain intercourse with their Saxon neighbors.

After three days' debate, carried on in a most spirited fashion, the clergy gave a dubious and partial assent to the doctrines of their learned king and queen.*

Malcolm was thoroughly convinced by his wife's eloquence, and at once undertook to *reform* the clergy and their doctrines. If, as we are told by Turgot, Margaret found in Caledonia careless observance of the Sabbath, and one of her objects was a better sanctifica-

*Turgot's *Vitæ Sanctorum*. Chalmers' Caledonia.

tion of that holy day, we will all readily admit that here was a point where she was quite right, and the Scots the better for obeying her. However, we have on this head only the testimony of one Romish writer, and Romanists are scarcely notable for keeping holy the Sabbath day. One object of the Saxons, in what they called the reformation of the Scots' clergy, was the obtaining of their allegiance to the See of York, and the acknowledging of the archbishop of that seat as their primate. To this neither the king nor the clergy were willing to assent. Wars between Scotland and England were frequent; strong national antipathies existed; recognition of a spiritual supremacy residing in the English See might be the opening wedge for the acknowledgment of a political supremacy.

King Malcolm therefore directed his reformatory efforts, so-called, to obtaining a complete observance of the Latin Easter, the Roman tonsure, and the Roman ceremonies for mass, confession and baptism. Change in the ordination tarried, because the Scots would not go to York for consecration. There is a valuable tradition that a bishop named Beyn was sent to Scotland by Pope Benedict, between 1012-24. If such a man came, he is the first instance of a bishop consecrated in

the so-called succession of St. Peter, and the Scots' saints of earlier date, who now grace the calendar, were men ordained by heretics.

In 1176 a council was called at Northampton, by Cardinal Hugo, legate of the Pope, for the discussion of the question of supremacy. Here, when the primacy of the See of York was asserted, a young Scots' clergyman, Gilbert Murray (Moray of the house of Bothwell), rose and made a spirited address. Much that he says is noteworthy: "Oh, English nation, puffed up in the might of thy armies! thou seekest to oppress nations, not more noble in power, but more noble in antiquity; thou seekest to oppress *thy mother church of Scotland*, which from the beginning hath been *catholique and free*, and brought thee when thou wert straying, into the faith, and to Jesus, the Author of eternal rest. She gave thee baptism; she did appoint, ordain, and consecrate thy bishops and priests. Now, what renderest thou to her? Bondage? Evil for good? Wouldst thou draw thy mother into bondage?" Gilbert then appealed to the legate to prohibit the aggression of the See of York, saying that if the Pope was lord of the church he should protect Scotland from her enemies.* No one replied ex-

*Jamieson's *Culdees*, pp 243-4.

cept an Englishman who vexedly repeated a proverb *in naso Scoti piper*, and Roger, Archbishop of York, who said to Gilbert in Latin, "That arrow came not from thine own quiver." The cardinal, rejoiced at the first public concession made by Scotland to Rome, was in haste to use it, although it came but in the voice of one youthful clergyman, and he at once abandoned the English cause, and gave his voice for the Scots. Gilbert afterward became Chamberlain of Scotland.*

The crown of Scotland soon after recognized the pope as a spiritual, but not a temporal lord, over the church. Popes Celestin III. and Alexander III. made especial concessions in favor of Scotland, and by these the sovereigns were bribed and persuaded to reduce their clergy to Romish observance. Romish ordination still lingered; Bishop Godric in 1097 was never consecrated. Margaret's confessor, Turgot, went to York for consecration. The first genuine bull existing confirming a Scots' bishop is of Adrian, 1154-9. In 1152 the pope sent Cardinal Papiro to Ireland with four palls for four of the most prominent of the Scots'-Irish clergy, which, being accepted, the independence of the Irish branch of the

*Crawford's Lives of Officers of State, p. 254.

National Church virtually terminated.* Nevertheless Culdeeism survived and was taught for generations in many remote parts of the island, and especially in the North.

Malcolm Canmore was succeeded, in order, by his two sons, Alexander and David. These kings partook of the religious zeal of their mother, and the *reforming* which their father had very imperfectly undertaken progressed rapidly. The first effort was to dispossess the Culdees, who would not conform to Rome, of their houses and lands.

Certain rescripts of these days will suffice to show how the work of rooting out Culdeeism and planting Romanism was performed. In 1156 we find a decree that upon "the demise of a Culdee, his place shall be filled by canons regular." Here is a sweeping law, which alone in fifty years would root out every national pastor. 1183 boasts an ordinance prohibiting the Culdees from preaching beyond their own abodes, and forbidding other houses to receive them without the permission of a regular prior. In 1240 St. Andrews, formerly the property of the Culdees, was transferred bodily to the Romanists.† It be-

*Alexander's Iona, p. 153.

†Sir Robert Sibbald's trans. of papers in Advocates' Lib.

came the fashion for the Romish, now the State Church, to summon the Culdees before their bishops to answer for their doctrines. If they came they were *suspended for heresy*; if they did not come they were *suspended for contumacy*; and it was made a crime for the suspended one to preach or minister ordinances.*

But the period of Culdee decline and tribulation began when they made concessions unworthy of themselves in the council of 1074. As with Iona, the hour of abating one iota of their primitive faith and simplicity was the beginning of their decay.

As Rome has done in other lands and days, so did she in Scotland, England and Ireland. The Culdees were forbidden to acquire lands; forbidden to set apart burial places; to rebuild churches; and where they had in some places, as at Kircaldie,† been driven to give up two-thirds of their possession, upon a solemn oath that they might keep the remainder and use it, the invading Romanists acted the part of the cuckoo in the sparrow's nest, and pushed the original owners out altogether.

*Jamieson's Culdees, pp. 284-87.

†Chalmers' Caledonia.

David, called also St. David, son of Malcolm Canmore, made the most vigorous efforts to establish the Romish Church in Scotland. He gave rich revenues and broad lands to the greedy church, until, as King James I. quaintly remarked of him: "He was an unco sair saint for the crown; he left the kirk rich and the crown pair!" Scotland yet bears the impress of her Culdees, not only in the moral and spiritual character, and the laws of the nation, but in her geography—*Kilmenie*, *Kilbirnie*, *Kilrenny*, and all other names with a similar prefix of Kil, bear the indelible stamp of the Culdee, *i. e.*, Keledei.

In Ireland not only have we abundantly this geographical testimony, but in remaining chronicles, we have their individual names and lives.* "Corruption was powerfully retarded in Ireland by the firmness of the Culdees," says a learned writer,† who adds in a commentary on Giraldus Cambrensis: "We may easily understand what Giraldus means by the *old religion*. The Culdees, its possessors, had not even at this period conformed to the reigning superstition; they devoutly served God in this dreary retreat, sacrificing

*Smith's Life of Columba, p. 162.

†Ledwich's Antiq. p. 94.

all the flattering prospects of the world for their ancient doctrine and discipline."*

"It is plain," says Sir James Dalrymple, "that the Culdees continued until the beginning of the fourteenth century. In this century the Lollards appeared in France and the Wycliffites in England. In the reigns of James the Third and Fourth, great numbers of them appeared in Scotland, in Kyle and Cunningham, and the first beginning of the Reformation was embraced in these districts."† Thus while we trace the Culdees to 1400, we find within twenty years two martyrs, Resby and Craw, put to death for maintaining doctrines equally belonging to Culdees and Lollards, and in 1494 thirty persons are convicted of heresy at one sitting of an ecclesiastical court, the heresy being of the Lollards. Says Ebrard: "It is certainly a remarkable coincidence that the first kindling of the Reformation in Wickliffe was connected with the last remains of the scattered Culdee Church."‡ Dr. Jamieson, in concluding his carefully elaborated account of the Culdees,

*Ibid. p. 117.

†Dalrymple's Collections, p. 285.

‡Ebrard Zeitschrift für die Historische Theologie, 1863, p. 326.

says: "Here we have a singular proof of the providence of God in preserving the truth in our native country, even during the time that the *Man of sin* was reigning with absolute authority over the other nations of Europe; and in transmitting some of its most important articles at least, nearly to the time of its breaking forth with renewed luster at the Reformation."*

Several learned and laborious authors have devoted years of study and research to the history of the Culdees. Old church records, the nomenclature of geography, local traditions, very ancient deeds and descriptions of property, national ballads and hymns, chronicles of continental churches, papal bulls, episcopal letters, chapters of biography, gossip of olden chroniclers, all bear the trace of this numerous, busy, and strongly marked body of teachers. Out of such material, Dr. Jamieson for Scotland, and Ebrard and Braun for the continent, have developed their admirable and interesting histories. To these we commend all those who wish more thoroughly to pursue so delightful a theme of study.

*Dr. Jamieson's *Culdees*, p. 322.

CHAPTER XI.

"Thy spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion heart and flashing eye;
Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky."

THE SAXON STRIFE.

HAVING traced the early British clergy, under the name of Culdees, from the days of Columba and Mungo to the Reformation, we return for a brief glance at the contest between the Saxon and the National British Church, from the year 664 to the days of Wickliffe. We have seen that it was often by the influence of godly princesses and queens that Christianity was preached in heathen courts. Unfortunately it was also by woman's influence that a gaudy creed of pomp, worldly conformity and Romish subserviency, was preferred before the simple, scriptural, early faith.

"The complete and final prevalence of the Saxon over the National Church, flowed from female influence and the dexterity of her

(143)

agents.”* Oswi, king of Northumberland, and Bretwald, *i. e.*, chief of the Saxon sovereigns then reigning in Britain, married Eanfleda of Kent, a warm adherent of the Saxon Church. The king belonged to the national body; the queen kept Roman Easter and Lent, and observed all the Latin forms, and educated her sons to her own manner of thinking. The king, finding his domestic affairs thus somewhat embarrassed, resolved to have the differences between the two churches discussed in his presence that he might decide between them. To this course he was especially urged by his queen and her adherents, for the Romish party have ever carried on their cause by the secular aid, and have never disdained to employ *force* in matters of conscience.

The National Church, in the person of Colman, the second abbot of Lindisfarne, from the noble and renowned Aidan, appeared at Whitby in answer to the summons of the king. In the so-called council Colman was the only real representative of the British Church. His chief opponent was Wilfrid, a talented young Englishman, chosen by Eanfleda as tutor of her sons, and especially com-

*Soames' Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 71.

mended to her by his having been educated at Rome.*

Colman supported the practices of the British Church by the Scriptures, especially the gospel and epistles of John, and also by the unquestioned antiquity and continuance of his church from the very earliest days of Christianity; and referred to Mungo, Columba, and their successors, as saintly men, fathers of many British Churches, who had never consented to Roman usages.†

Wilfrid at once fell back upon Rome's stock argument, the supremacy of the See of Peter, to whom Christ had committed the *keys* of the kingdom of heaven. Said the king: "Is the Roman Church the true and only church of Peter?"

"It is indeed," replied Wilfrid, "and only those who conform to her usages are built upon that rock the apostle, to whom Christ committed the opening and closing of the kingdom of heaven."

"And were the keys of heaven given to Peter alone?"

"Yes," said Wilfrid, quoting the Scripture,

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. pp. 80-83.

†Soames' Latin Ch. in Ang.-Sax. Times, p. 75. Collier's Ch. Hist. p. 229.

and ignoring the explication given in the Anglo-Saxon Homilies where it expressly states, "The keys of heaven were given to *all* the apostles as well as Peter, and the rock was not Peter, but Christ; while the church will be built upon the confession of Christ's divinity."*

The king turned to Colman. "Do you claim that Christ ever gave St. Columba, or your early teachers, the keys of heaven?"

"No," said Colman.

"Is your Church of Rome, and the See of Peter?"

"No, of Christ only," said Colman.

"And the keys of heaven are not in your keeping?" said the monarch. "Then verily I must agree with Wilfrid, because it will not do for me to disoblige Peter, who keepeth the gate of heaven, lest by chance he may never admit me to life."

Thus easily, to buy domestic peace, and enter a church which gave him many worldly pleasures, did Oswi abandon the church of his fathers, the church which had evangelized his kingdom.

The usages of ancient Britain were form-

*Serm. Cathol de S. Petro, p. 405. Serm. Cathol Jul. IV p. 160. Notæ Wheloc in c. 25, I. 5. Bede.

ally renounced, and Oswi entered into the plans of Rome with all the zeal of a proselyte. Colman, disgusted with the absurd, half-jesting reasoning of the facile king, retired with many of his brethren to Iona, leaving Tuda to uphold the British Church in his place. Tuda died shortly after, and King Oswi put in his room a Saxon priest. Oswi soon united with the king of Kent in sending to Rome to Pope Vitalian for a bishop for the See of Canterbury, Wighard, an Englishman, who was to have received the position, dying suddenly of pestilence.

Vitalian sent Theodore, an Asiatic, for the office, a learned man, noted for zeal and piety. As Theodore was suspected of some inclinations to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Abbot Hadrian, of Naples, accompanied him to check any independence of conduct in which he might slight the Roman pontificate.

The earliest and most vigorous efforts of Theodore were exerted to root out Scottish practices and dispossess British sympathizers of their churches. But while Theodore was heartily bent on obtaining conformity to Roman *usages*, he was not zealous for the *supremacy* of the Roman See. His idea was a world-wide establishment of churches, conforming to the Latin rites, and each distinct

and equal in their national position. Theodore was a man of lofty ambition and great genius. His means were extensive, and so also were his plans. He built and repaired churches and monasteries; enlarged colleges, and increased in divers ways the splendor of the ceremonial of worship. He brought kings and earls to unite with him in religious rites, rendering them more gorgeous by all the pomp of civil state.

The altar was now hung in purple, and blazed with gold; the gospels were not so zealously imprinted upon the hearts of the people, but they were inclosed in a case of gold set with gems, and the parchment was stained purple and lettered in gold.* Theodore died in 690, aged 88. He had done more than all his predecessors or contemporaries to establish the Saxon and destroy the National Church; he may be regarded as the father of Anglo-Saxon literature, his efforts being unwearied for the higher mental cultivation of the country. He lived before very many of the errors of Rome, as, for instance, the image worship,† were developed, but he was

*Vita S. Wilfridi. Baxter's Ch. Hist. p. 89.

†Settled at Council of Constantinople, 870. See also Soames' Lat. Ch. in Ang.-Sax. Times, ch. 8.

himself the pioneer of much error, in his famous PENITENTIAL, wherein he led the way to the Roman doctrines of confession, penance, and absolution, and was for many years considered a chief authority on such matters.* Nevertheless while men of less weight have been canonized, Theodore has never attained that honor; his oriental inclining to a parity of all the national churches being an unpardonable error in the eyes of Rome.

About the year 693 England became, under King Ina, legally a Christian commonwealth, holding the Roman communion; a legislative assembly imposed fines for the neglecting of baptism, gave sanctuary privilege to churches, and ordained other laws for the upholding of the ecclesiastical power.†

During this period lived, in a Saxon monastery, Bede, the father of English history. He died May 27, 735. That he was credulous, given to detailing wonders and miracles, is his misfortune. He belonged to a church holding many errors; the devoutness and simplicity of his spirit may be gathered from his writings, especially in his delighted dwelling on such characteristics in others. A man of

*See Soames' *Lat. Ch. in Ang.-Sax. Times*, p. 97, *et seq.*

†Soames' *Ang.-Sax. Ch.* pp. 90-95.

pure and pious life, he loved and venerated, whatever communion claimed him. He lived before difference from Rome was considered an inexcusable heresy. That he was humble, studious and industrious was his great credit, and one looks back to his last labor, and his last hour, with delight; he was translating the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue for popular use, that is, as far as in those dark days the people could use them. All day the master stayed his failing strength to dictate the last chapters of John's Gospel. Death came upon him at sunset. "The time of my dissolution is at hand. I desire to depart and be with Christ," he said.

"Father!" cried Cuthbert, his transcribing pupil, "*one* sentence remains unwritten!"

Said Bede: "Make haste and write it then," and gathered all his power to dictate the translation. It was done; Cuthbert dropped the pen. "Turn my head to the wall, where I have been wont to pray," whispered Bede. "It is finished. Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," and so saying he entered into rest. From such a scene we turn reluctantly to look on strife.

As Ireland was a separate kingdom, and generally at war with England during these years, its proselyting must needs be done by

way of Caledonia, and by winning over to Latin usage the native Culdee clergy of North Britain, who were in close communion with their kindred Scots of Ierne. Thus in 716, when Iona fell away to Saxon conformity, the church in Ireland received a severe blow, and many of her pastors and schoolmen agreed to the defection of Iona.

Wales made a stouter fight, and we will now glance for a space at the four strongholds of the native clergy in that valiant kingdom. First in importance was the church at St. David's, which had been removed there from Caerleon.* From 700 to 1203 the ancient British Church of all the south country found its true headquarters here. An even older church was at Llandaff, which was founded before the departure of the Romans from the British Isles, even according to Bede in A. D. 156. A. D. 516 saw two powerful churches, with their theological schools, established in Wales, *i. e.*, those of Bangor, under the fostering care of Prince Malgon; and that at St. Asaph, founded by Mungo, during his exile from Glasgow.

Says Rev. R. W. Morgan, concerning this

*See for notices of early Ch. in Wales Morgan's Welsh Church and its Episcopal Corruptions.

Welsh Church: "Five centuries prior to the entrance of the Saxons there existed in Wales a National British Church. This church has ever been loyal as opposed to papal, and British as opposed to foreign. This is the key to the whole religious history of the Principality. This national independence it maintained against all the aggressions of Rome and the intrigues of the Normans, until in 1203 it was finally reduced to subordination to Canterbury."

Nevertheless, long before this last period the church in Wales had become divided; a part, infected by the Saxon heresies, yielding to the supremacy of the pope as a spiritual ruler and judge; and another portion, despised, abused, rejected, impoverished, and unflinching, taking refuge deeper and deeper in the mountain fastnesses, and clinging to the simple ancient faith which had no communion with Rome. Even in the darkest days of its Romanism, Wales was restive of foreign supremacy, and given to violently ejecting bishops not according to its mind. When the Reformation first began it found a warm support in Wales, and made greater progress there than in England, Ireland or Scotland, so that a Welsh writer claims that in 1640 popery was entirely rejected in the

Principality, and that scarcely a Romish family could be found in a township. He adds that this was from the bursting up of the flames of the primitive religion which had been only smoldering, and not dead, during the term of the papal domination.

The British Church, while being in all the counties of England almost absorbed by the Saxon, was not without its reflex influence upon the latter. The strong independent national spirit occasioned a very tardy acceptance of the doctrine of the papal *supremacy*, and the *right* of the Roman bishop to make or mar in the internal affairs of the church.

Theodore's idea of an independent church, conforming to the Romish rites, clung long to the hearts of the people. But the church of Saxon days had lost the strength which had kept the primitive church pure. When concessions to worldliness became the policy of the church, and the secular arm was called in to aid the work of conversion, disorders, vices, apathy, began to creep into the church, and as early as 747 we find a convention called at Cliff's Ho, in Kent, with a view to rectifying disorders. But the early Saxon Church was an anomaly; it was a thing of iron and clay, and ready to be crushed by

the weight of those troublous days in which it lived. It had sought to weld the clay of foreign rites and traditional observances to the iron of sturdy British Church independence, and searching for and abiding by scriptural truth.

Such a church could not long exist without serious changes; either it would entirely depart into superstition, or it would revert absolutely to the primitive forms. The course of the Anglo-Saxon Church "was only evil, and that continually." For a while she had shone "with diminished luster as compared with her British predecessor, and with inferior privileges as compared with that faithful band, who, amid the Cambrian mountains, retained their primitive rites, their vernacular liturgy, and their ecclesiastical independence—yet turning many to righteousness."* But with the death of Alcuin, in 804, ends the period of comparative light and grace, and the Saxon Church passes into deeper night. Alcuin was the reputed author of the famous Caroline Books, which especially and most powerfully assailed the growing worship of images. Says Alcuin in these books: "The worship of images is that which God's church

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. p. 134.

wholly execrates." In latter years a great effort was made by the Church of Rome to collect and destroy all copies of these Caroline Books.* But some survived the attempt for their extirpation, and serve to show us the excitement and indignation aroused in that day when Rome presented to the world one of her most startling NOVELTIES. In 816 sat the Council of Celychyth. From the proceedings of this council we may "gather that the church of ancient Britain had not yet lost all her hold on the people so largely indebted to her Christian zeal." And also that ministers belonging to the Scots, or ancient British Church, were yet active in England, and awakening the jealousy of the Romish party.†

Concerning the doctrines of the Anglo-Saxon Church during this period, we only say that they were the earliest taught doctrines of the Church of Rome, modified by being grafted upon the primitive British stock. Says Baxter:‡ "He has a hopeless task who endeavors to identify the theology of a Gregory, a Theodore, a Bede, and an

*Soames' Ang.-Sax. Ch. ch. 2. Henry's Hist. of Eng. ch. 2, Vol. II.

†See Soames, *Ibid.* pp. 133-4.

‡Ch. Hist. p. 135.

Alcuin, with that of the Tridentine Canons, and the creed of Pope Pius the Fourth."

The Danes, who had been the scourge of the Northern Isles and had ravaged Iona, fell, in 787, upon the shores of England. In 793 they destroyed Lindisfarne, and in 833 came upon the borders of Dorsetshire intent on plunder, and with particular designs against all English abbeys, churches and convents, where they were assured of finding rich plunder. For a full century the Danes continued their inroads, destroying the peace, order and prosperity of the country, and religion shared in the general decline superinduced by the fury of the Norse invaders.

The Church in England, the Saxon Church, was the sufferer from these incursions; the Scots and Welsh were safe among their hills; the promise of the Lord to his faithful ones was made good—"In the time of trouble he hid them in his pavilion;" the mists and storms, the shadowy glens and the rugged peaks, were curtains and bulwarks for them. "O Lord of hosts, blessed is that man who putteth his trust in thee!" After King Alfred, the Saxon Church passed into the Romish Church, but still of a milder type than upon the continent. There were more pious and simple-minded men perhaps to be found

in England from 878 until 1066 than in any other territory under Romish sway.

But with William the Conqueror came a new era for the church. The Anglo-Saxon period had now quite passed away, and the Anglo-Romish entered, to accumulate its fearful weight of iniquities, and culminate under the reign of Bloody Mary.

If during these centuries the primitive church retained any existence in England it was only in scattered families. In Wales the separation of the primitive church from the foreign was the latest maintained; in Scotland the existence of the National Church, after the civil power had accepted the Roman communion, is the most clearly defined. In Ireland the same measures for exterminating the ancient church were taken as in Scotland. The primitive clergy were banished from their homes; forbidden the exercise of their office, and their places filled by adherents of the Romish party. Yet we are told that after the eleventh century there were two hostile churches in Ireland—the ancient Irish Church, the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman Church.* Celsus, in 1105, and Malachy, his successor, apostatized wholly to Romanism; Papiro

*J. H. Todd, D. D., *Life of St. Patrick*, p. 231.

came from the Pope to complete the perversion of the nation, and from 1151, until the days of Wickliffe, the primitive church lived in poverty and outlawry.

In 1323 John Wickliffe, the morning star of the Reformation in England, was born near Richmond, in Yorkshire. In 1356 he appeared as a zealous preacher of righteousness, enlightened by the study of the Scriptures. In 1360 he began his notable conflict with the mendicant orders. While he was assailing the errors of Rome, and measuring her practices by the biblical rule, he was supported by Balliol College which elected him to the living at Fillingham, and was afterward made warden of Canterbury Hall.* He was made private chaplain to Edward, the royal hero of Cressy, and Edward's reply to Urban V., concerning his vassalage to the Roman See, savors of the spirit of Wickliffe. Elected a Professor of Sacred Theology, Wickliffe gained a yet wider influence; his adherents increased everywhere; his voice, no longer solitary, was echoed by many voices, full and strong, proclaiming the truth. Sent on an errand to Rome he returned pronouncing the Romish priests "accursed clippers and purse-

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. p. 298.

kervers." Gaining the intensest hate of Rome by his advice to parliament not to send accumulated church moneys to the Pope, he was yet sheltered by the court and the university authorities. Three hundred of his manuscripts are yet in the British Museum; manuscripts full of the "gospel of the grace of God."

On the last day of the year 1383, after a quarter of a century of faithful preaching of the gospel, Wickliffe died in the Lord, and his works do follow him.

If Wickliffe came to England as the ruddy dawning of the day of Reformation, he rose not unheralded, and after no long black night. The church's night in Scotland was like the night of her midsummer; day dips slowly behind the sea, its last flush leaves the morning star shining full and fair, and ere the shadows have had time to deepen breaks along the horizon the glory of the dawn. So lingered long in Britain the primitive beauty and light of the apostolic day, the day of the church's planting. As in the falling of the shades of ignorance and heathenism this light faded, Culdeeism in Ireland, the country of its nativity, in Scotia, its foster land, in England, its mission field, and in Wales, the home of its kindred, lived still, and hopefully

shone, the herald of the day to come; and before Culdeeism had finished its course, before its witness bearing ended, the hand of God appeared as when first it swept aside the realm of chaos; that hand flung back the dim curtains of the night, and restored the day wherein our souls are glad.

CHAPTER XII.

“One family we dwell in Him,
One church, above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.
One army of the living God,
To his command we bow ;
Part of the host has crossed the flood,
And part is crossing now.”

THE DOCTRINES HELD BY THE EARLY CHURCH.

IN thus briefly tracing the rise and the history of the early British churches until the Reformation, we have incidentally developed something of the doctrines which they taught and the forms which they followed. It seems well, however, to give a connected sketch of their faith and practice as we gather it from the earliest records, that having shown the beginning and the continued existence of that church, we may perceive at a glance its identity with the evangelical Protestantism of to-day.

Concerning the unity of this church in

England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, we need say but two words. The first of these from that notable scholar, Bishop Usher:*

“As far as I can collect, by such records of the former ages as have come into my hands, either manuscript or printed, the religion professed by the ancient church in Ireland was for substance the very same with that which is now by public authority maintained therein against the foreign doctrine brought in hither in later times by the Bishop of Rome’s followers. And as to Scotland I will not now labor to make a distinction between the daughter and the mother, but account of them both as one people. The religion received by both was the self-same, and differed little or nothing from that which was maintained by their neighbors, the Britons.” Pinkerton says: “The Culdees were undoubtedly Irish clergy of the early time, spread into adjoining countries. These Culdees seem to have been the only national clergy from Columba’s time until the eleventh century. They married and transmitted their faith to their children. It is well known what struggles it cost the

*Bp. Usher. *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Ancient Scots and Irish*, A. D. 1631. British Museum, Old Catalogue.

Pope to conquer these Culdees, to cause them to submit to Romish practices, to prevent them and the clergy belonging to them from marrying.”*

Usher justly remarks that it is by fundamental points of doctrine held in these early days that we must judge, and not by mere nomenclature, as for instance the Romanists have no right to declare *ex cathedra* that the Culdees were monks, *ergo* Romanists; but we must decide concerning their creed by their teachings and practices, not by mere names assigned to them, perhaps by the Romish historians themselves. The name is not the criterion, neither is some casual or trifling practice; great doctrines and vital points of practice are what we must found a decision upon. †

To know primarily what the early church believed, we must go to that fount from which, by universal testimony, they drew their doctrines. Their theology was not extracted from tradition, or the writings of the fathers, but from the Word of God.

As long as the Bible forms the rule of the faith and practice of a church, that church is

*See Pinkerton's Enquiry.

†Usher, a discourse concerning the ancient religion.

safe and pure. The first sign of decay and apostasy comes in accepting and explaining away of "hard things" in the Scriptures, and receiving the traditions and doctrines of men as of equal authority with Holy Writ. Here from ancient time has been the line of demarkation between the churches of the Evangel and the Church of Rome. As early as A. D. 423, the Bishop of Rome thought it fit cause of complaint against a church that it held and taught the Scriptures according to the letter. Ever since then we remark the same characteristics in these churches. The Church of the Evangel will not, and can not, live *without* the Scriptures; the Church of Rome can not and will not live *with* the Scriptures. To-day we see Rome opposing the Bible in the schools, and forbidding its circulation among the laity. Scripture is poisonous pasture to the sheep of Rome, who must nibble at the excellent clover of a Bellarmine and a Liguori instead. Rome says she has never changed. If she withholds the Scriptures now, she must have withheld them always; we meet her, therefore, upon her own grounds; then the Gallican churches which *did not* withhold the Scriptures, and *did* preach them to the letter, were not churches in communion with Rome; and if the early British

Church held the Scriptures as her most precious possession, then she also did not belong to the Church of Rome.

But this proposition, that the British Church founded all its teachings on the very letter of the Scripture, is not one which we shall accept without testimony; and we propose especially to call Romish witnesses to the stand.

Bede tells us that the followers of Columba observed only those works of piety and charity which they could learn in the Scriptures. "Unacquainted with pontifical regulations, they acted only on the knowledge acquired from the prophetic, evangelical and apostolic writings."* Usher† quotes St. Chrysostome "that if you go through the isles of Britain from shore to shore, and from north to south, ALL men everywhere were discoursing and studying the Scriptures, with different voices but with the same faith, and with diverse tongues, but with accordant judgment."

Bede declares: "In Britain, in five languages—the English, Britons, Scots, Picts and Latins, search and confess the same knowledge of the highest truth and of the true sub-

*Bede, III. c. 4.

†Discourse of the religion, etc.

limity." Quoting from various ancient authors, among others Sedulius, whom he dates at 490, Usher says, "Thus did the famous divines deliver the doctrines of free will, grace, faith, works, the law, the gospel, justification, adoption, sanctification, no less agreeable to the faith which is at this day professed in the Reformed churches, than to that which they then received from the yet more ancient doctors whom they followed therein; nor do we Protestants to-day differ one whit from them."

Of ancient literature, the hymn of Fiac* and St. Patrick's hymn, show this careful study of Scripture and knowledge of Scripture truth and story. Though these hymns may not belong, as many have strongly insisted, to the days of Patrick himself, they are unquestionably exceedingly ancient compositions, dating from the period of the primitive church.

The ancient lives of Dubricius, David, and other lights of Britain, are full of praises of their proficiency in Scripture. We have in a previous chapter quoted Bede's panegyric on the scriptural studies and learning of Aidan and his companions.

*See Dr. Todd's Life of St. Patrick. Dublin Ed.

The earliest life extant of St. Hilda states that she so occupied her pupils with the study of Holy Writ, that they were all of them sufficiently learned to have ministered at the altar.* The Epistle of Gildas† is little else than an exhortation to study the Word of God, try teachings by it, conform practices to it, and proving "all things hold fast that which is good." St. Asaph, the pupil and successor of Mungo, writes: "Those who hinder the preaching of God's Word envy the salvation of men." In so short a work as this it is needless further to multiply proof on this point.

To proceed. The first grand doctrine which men derive from the Scriptures is that of the atonement. The church of those early days held fast the doctrine of the all-sufficient Savior of sinners. Even the Church of Rome retained for many years the truth that there is but ONE MEDIATOR between God and man. We have record of a letter sent in 639 from Rome to the Scots' clergy, discussing the chief articles of faith, and rejoicing that they ever held and taught, that no man is free

*Bede's account of Hilda of Streonescalh.

†Gildas, the wise Briton, of the Monastery of Iltutus, retired to Brittany, died about 570.

from sin, and that there is but one Mediator, even Christ. "Bardic remains afford refreshing proofs that British believers suspended their hopes exclusively upon the atonement of the Divine Redeemer, and breathe sentiments totally irreconcilable with a belief in the efficacy of saintly meditation, or post-mortuary purification."*

"The inculcation of the doctrines of grace, and the efficacy of the sacrifice and intercession of Christ, without allusion to the mass or transubstantiation, purgatory, or prayers for the dead, were all maintained in the ancient Irish Church."†

This naturally brings us to the question of the ancient church in its relation to the doctrines of purgatory, the state after death, and prayers for the dead. A very ancient manuscript, ascribed to Patrick, and if not truly his yet the production of some very early teacher, is thus quoted by Usher: "There be three habitations under the power of Almighty God—earth, heaven, hell; and both the latter are supplied by the former, for some men do pass into hell, being evil, and some are lifted

*Baxter's Ch. Hist. p. 40.

†Reid's Pres. Ch. in Ireland, p. 2 (Edinburgh, 1834).

into heaven.”* A canon of a very ancient Irish Synod reads: “The soul passing from the body is presented before the judgment seat of Christ, who rendereth it according as it hath done; neither can an archangel lead it into life until the Lord doth judge it; nor the devil drag it into hell, unless God doth damn it.”†

Says Sedulius (A. D. 490): “After life, either death or life succeeds; so death is the gate whereby we enter into our kingdom.”‡ Says Claudius: “Christ, guiltless, took our guilt, that he might loose our guilt and finish our punishment.”§ The doctrine that Christians “do immediately pass into glory” is expressed in the earliest biographies of the pious. So it is said of Aidan that “he ceased from his labors, and at the moment of dissolution his soul passed immediately into heaven.”|| The same remark is made of King Oswald. Of Hilda, at Streoneschall, it is said that while engaged in evangelistic exhortations to her pupils “she passed into glory.”¶

*Usher, religion professed by the ancient Irish, p. 18.

†Manuscript in Coltonian Collection.

‡Sedulius in Rom. 7.

§Claudius, in Gal. 3.

||Vita Cuthberti.

¶Bede, lib. 4, cap. 23.

Of Columba it was written that on the Sabbath day he entered into the Sabbath eternal. As says Gallus to Magnus, "I wot that this day my father, Columba, has left the miseries of this life for the joys of paradise." "Weep not," said this Magnus on his death-bed, "I believe in the mercy of God, my soul shall rejoice in the freedom of immortality." So writes Claudius, out of a lesson in St. Jerome, "While in this present world we may help each other by our prayers or by our counsels; but when we shall come before the judgment seat of Christ, neither Job, nor Daniel, nor Noah can entreat for one, but every man must bear his own burden."* The earliest traces which we have of prayers, in relation to the dead, show us prayers of thankfulness that the sons of God have gotten the victory and entered into life. Such prayers began to be offered in the days of the persecutions under the emperors, commemorating the triumph of martyrs, who had not counted their lives dear, and who had entered into "the rest that remaineth." Unhappily out of this innocent custom of a thankful prayer, *concerning* the dead, grew the horrible idolatry of praying *to* the dead. So in the early British

*Claudius, in Gal. 6.

Church, we read in the Life of Columba that when he saw that Brendan was dead, he called the brethren together to pray, because the soul of Brendan had been received by the angels.* So when Columbanus died, Columba says to his brethren :† “ I must this night take the holy Eucharist, because of that soul which is now carried beyond the fiery firmament, amid choirs of angels into paradise.”

Bellarmino quotes Bede, quoting Fursens, who represents the devil as saying: “ Where is the reputed justice of God? Here is a man who gets no punishment of his sins in life, nor after death,” and Bellarmine says this is the earliest *proof* of purgatory, as Fursens must have seen the man undergoing purgatory, else the devil’s aspersion of God’s character would have been justified. But here Bellarmine quite ignores the fact that we are taught that the atonement of Christ is *all sufficient*, and that God can be just and yet the justifier of sinners who believe on Jesus.

As to WORSHIP, our fathers worshiped God only—the Trinity, three in one, and one in three. Writes Sedulius:‡ “ To adore any

*Adamnan, Vita Columb. lib. 3, cap. 15.

†Ibid. cap. 16.

‡Sedulius, in Rom. 1. Ibid. in Rom. 2.

other than the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is the crime of impiety, and as the soul oweth all its homage unto God, it committeth adultery against him if it adoreth any other." "The invisible God is not to be worshiped by means of a visible image." From Claudius we have this testimony: "God is to be known neither in metal nor stone."* An ancient canon, ascribed to the times of St. Patrick, reads: "No creature is to be sworn by; or take an oath only in the name of God."† The Culdees invariably dedicated their churches to the Holy Trinity; never to any saint or apostle.‡

As for FORM OF SERVICE, Usher says: "Whatsoever form of liturgy was used here at first, one thing is sure, that in the succeeding ages no one general form of divine service was retained; but diverse rites and manners and celebrations were observed in diverse places in Britain, until so late as A. D. 1150, when a greater influx of Romanizing clergy drew all the grandees into the Romish practice." Gil-lebratus, one of these Romish missionaries, writes: "I set forth these things to the end

*Claudius, lib. 2, in Matt.

†Manuscript quoted by Usher.

‡Jamieson's History of the Culdees.

that those diverse and schismatical orders, wherewith all Ireland is deluded, may give place to one true Roman office." Says Gildas, "The Britons are contrary to the whole world, and enemies of Roman customs, even in their mass."

But Gildas must have spoken of the whole world by courtesy in a Latin view, for in his day there were very many churches on the continent who walked contrary to the Latin Church.*

The quotation from Gildas fitly introduces the question of the LORD'S SUPPER.

Usher† cites many authors of Ireland, Wales, Britain and Caledonia, to show that the Eucharist of our ancestors' days did not conform to Romish mass, but to our Lord's Supper as now celebrated in all Protestant churches. Our ancestors received the communion in both kinds. Bede tells of one Hildmer, who came for Cuthbert to send the sacraments of the Lord's *body and blood* to his dying wife. Cuthbert dying, is said to have received the bread and the wine of our Lord's blood and body; so Fursens writes to pastors, "To strengthen the souls of the faith-

*See Monastier's *Historie de l'Eglise, Vaudois*, Chs. 1 and 2.

†Usher. *A discourse on the ancient religion.*

ful with the spiritual food of doctrine, and the communion of the holy body and blood."

Of the Church of Kildare it is written that "St. Bridget frequently resorted there with her maidens that they might enjoy the banquet of the body and blood of Christ." And these expressions, the "body and blood," in these ancient writers, are used ever in a spiritual sense, as, says Scotus and Crumpe, ancient writers, "The body of Christ in the sacrament is the looking-glass of the body of Christ in heaven, and nothing more."

In close connection with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper comes that of BAPTISM. We have seen that one of the three points which Austin, the Romish missionary to Kent, made with the British clergy when they held conference with him, was that they should accept the Latin form of baptism, which was one of the propositions which they clearly rejected. Lanfranc, in 1089, declares that the Irish clergy used no chrism, only clear water, in baptizing.

CONFESSION, which the Church of Rome claims as another sacrament, was quite unknown in the early British Church. Sedulius says: "To know the hearts of men, and to discern the secrets of their minds, is the privilege of God alone. God only can know the

hidden things of man." Alcuinus, of the Latin party, in A. D. 795, declares that "no man of the laity (in Ireland) will make his confession to a priest, and none of the clergy can be found who will prescribe a penance."

It is, with regard to these ancient churches, easier to prove what they were *not*, than what they were. Of some of the present doctrines of the Romish Church they had not so much as heard, therefore we may search their records in vain for any disclaimers of them.

We look through the most ancient Bardic remains, as the Song of Taliesin, the Hymn of Fiaac, St. Patrick's Confessio; we search the canons of the oldest synods; we read the earliest biographies of their teachers, as Patrick, Mungo, Columba, Cornac; we gather from later writers quotations from letters and commentaries by these teachers, and in none of these do we find a word of the tribunal of penance, or of man's offering a satisfaction for sin. This is negative evidence that they did not hold the doctrines of confession, penance, and priestly absolution. We come upon a gloss, like that of Sedulius given above, and a wrathful charge like that of Alcuinus, and these are positive evidence to the same fact. It is thus we gather our knowledge of a church set apart from the continent, tossed by

many conflicts, overrun by many invading hosts, the records of a people oftentimes "scattered and peeled."

The tribunal of penance in the Romish Church is closely wrapped up with the celibacy of the clergy. Marry the clergy, cries Rome, and the confessional would be abolished; abolish the confessional and you have undermined the foundations of the church, and she must perish. Rome thus builds herself upon a celibate clergy. The early British Church did not so build itself. In the early church marriage was not held as a sacrament, but was esteemed honorable in all. As to consanguinity, a canon of an ancient Irish Synod orders it "to be reckoned neither less nor more than the law of God speaketh."* The companions and followers of Columba were mostly married men; they only resided in the college at Iona occasionally; and the remainder of their time was passed with their families.† As to the marriage of the Culdees we have previously spoken; they were a married order.‡ We have also in a previous chapter indicated how the Scottish surnames

*Quoted by Usher in *Religion of Ancient Irish*.

†Iona. Lindsay Alexander, D. D.

‡Jamieson's *History of the Culdees*.

bear testimony to this.* However, on so important a point we are happily able to multiply testimony. We have noticed that St. Patrick was the son and grandson of clerics. An ancient synod in Ireland, called that of Patrick, provides that "the wives of the clergy must give an example of modesty, and not walk abroad with uncovered heads." Gildas admonishes priests "to maintain holy living in their families, and to marry but one wife, because their children need of them a good example, and the chastity of a father would seem imperfect if it were not perpetuated in the chastity of his sons." We find an ancient book of Nennius dedicated "to Samuel, the son of a priest," exhorting him to follow in his father's ways. Usher tells us that Pope Innocent III. wrote to the Irish clergy, protesting against the greed which passed the ecclesiastical estate of the father as hereditament to the son or the grandson.

The *Fasti* of the ancient Irish Church may also be adduced as conclusive proof that the clergy, especially the settled clergy, were married, as we have numerous instances of the passing of a congregational charge from father to son during several successive gener-

*Burton's Hist. Scot. Vols. I. and II.

ations. It is to be borne in mind that the abbeys of those days were colleges like our present colleges and theological schools; of these the pupils were, as to-day, unmarried men, or the exceptional man who was married did not have his wife with him in his college. From these colleges or abbeys went out a large body of men who were missionaries or evangelists, traveling all over the British Isles; going to the continent to preach, and visit the brethren, and passing in open boats to the Orkney, Hebrides, Shetland Isles and Iceland. These men, spending their days in journeys by land on foot, and by sea in open boats or coracles, were of course unaccompanied by wives. Like Paul, they remained unmarried for their works' sake, though they recognized their right "to lead about a sister or a wife, like Peter and the other apostles." They were free, and had not bound their liberty to any arbitrary inexorable church law. Circumstances kept most of these traveling clergymen unmarried; the settled clergy, whatever rank they possessed, married.

And here we pass naturally to the question of the MONASTICISM of the early church. Very many of her sons have been given by their Romish historians a name—monks; and the nomenclature has been accepted. Let us con-

sider their rules, their works, their manner of life, and ascertain whether the monk, so called, of the early church belonged to any of the classes of *monachalogia* now common in the Church of Rome.

The three vows of the Romish monastic orders are poverty, celibacy, obedience. Says Usher, "Our early monks were religious not in name but in deed also. They held *begging* to be no part of religion, but understood what our Lord saith that it is more blessed to give than to receive."* One of the most ancient manuscripts extant has this rule, "They that live in monasteries should work with patience, and earn their own bread." Columbcille bound his monks to no vow of poverty; they were ordered to maintain themselves and their families by their own labors; and their property was bequeathed to their children.† Order, cleanliness, abundance of wholesome food, were the *regime* of Iona.‡ Even as late as 1360, Henry Crumpe maintained stoutly that mendicant orders were never instituted by the inspiration of God, and almost the first fight of Wickliffe was made with "begging

*Usher. Ancient Religion.

†Burton's Hist. of Scot. Vols. I. and II. Notes.

‡Iona. Lindsay Alexander.

friars." The rule of Columba, written about 600, ordains that "every day the monks of Iona were to fast, in that they should abstain from all intemperance, luxury or excess; and every day they were to eat, because every day was for the profit of mind and body, and abstinence carried to excess became a vice, and not a virtue."* "Let their food sustain and not hurt them, flying satiety and excess." So writes Claudius, "Children of wisdom do understand that neither in abstaining or eating is any virtue," and Fursens calls those hypocrites who "assaulted with vice, do omit the care of it, and afflict their body with abstinence; who abstain from meat which God created, and fall into crimes which God abhorreth."

Fasting in a measure and for a season, or for some set purpose, is indeed commended, as the Scripture commends it, and as Christians now esteem and practice it; but fasting is nowhere spoken of as a virtue, is nowhere boasted of, is nowhere hinted as a work of supererogation.

Walafridus, in his history, tells us "that some of the men at Iona wrought in the garden; others dressed the orchard; Gallus made

*Columban Regul. cap. 5.

nets wherewith he caught fish, and helped not only his own company, but strangers." So said Columbanus to Seigbert, "We, who have forsaken our own to follow Christ, ought not to embrace other men's riches, less peradventure we transgress the divine law." Bede relates of Cuthbert that when he retired to live by himself, "at first his brethren gave him corn, wine, and other presents; but he thought it more fit to live by the work of his own hands, and be able to give to others." St. Brendan, of Wales, is credited with a similar sentence, "A monk should ever be fed and clothed by the labor of his own hands." We have seen also in tracing the history of the Culdees that besides supporting themselves they preached, taught, established schools, diligently transcribed books, built churches, lived only occasionally at an abbey, and met together in council, observing only such obedience as is now used in any Protestant Church, where the clergy bind themselves to uphold the doctrines and discipline of their church, and be amenable to the judgment of its courts. When Adamnanus, the chief of the Culdees at Iona, fell into Saxon snares, and submitted to the Roman practice in regard to Easter, tonsure, etc., he could not carry his brethren with him; they obeyed

only for order, and they judged that he had departed into disorder. The conclusion which we must draw from our studies of the monarchism of the early British Church is "they were itinerant preachers, and not monks in any common sense of the term."*

This view of the priesthood, the clergy of the early church, with all its singular want of conformity to the ways and theories of Romish clergy, carries us easily to the important, often stirred inquiry of the Roman supremacy. What supremacy over them of Rome was acknowledged by a church which thus rejected her practices? The loud and repeated claim of Rome has been that she planted the British Church, that she nurtured its infancy, defended its youth; that from her came its teachers; she ordained its priests and bishops; she strengthened its faith by her letters, ordered its forms, chastised its faults, canonized its saints; was recognized by it as mother and mistress until the direful days of the Reformation.

The whole history which we have thus far in this little work would seem to be a clear denial of these Romish claims, a denial made on good and sufficient authority.

*Fosbrook. *British Monasticism.*

But the question is one of the first magnitude, and we proceed to a brief resume of the proofs that the British Church was entirely separate from the Roman Church in all its early years; that it rejected Rome's authority; and that Rome herself admitted while she deplored that rejection.

When we show that the doctrines, words and works of the early church were quite different from the doctrines, words and works of Rome, that is good evidence that the British Church did not belong to the Roman communion. When we find that the British Church openly, loudly and repeatedly denied any communion with Rome, and defied Romish authority, and supported this denial and defiance by present facts and historical proofs, we consider this further good evidence that this church was not the obedient child and pupil of Rome.

When we find Rome declaring the British Church heretic, schismatic, unconfomed to her practices, an enemy to be combated, this is good evidence that when Rome made these assertions she did not consider these British Christians as her disciples and part of herself.

When we take these three proofs together, they form conclusive evidence that Rome did not plant, train, and govern the early British

Church ; that her claim to having done so is modern, and based on no facts, and is merely another display of Romish progress in the art of bald and bold assertion.

The first point of proof, *i. e.*, the differences in doctrine and practice, between Rome and the British churches, we have already indicated sufficiently for the purpose of so small a work as this.

We pass now to the declarations of the British Church concerning this subject. Here we note that there were in early times men, as Gildas, who held with the Saxon Church, adopted the Romish Easter and opposed some of the British teachers, and yet loudly denied the spiritual or temporal supremacy of the See of Peter. Thus Gildas says: "To every true priest of God it is said as to Peter concerning the rock, and every holy priest of God, has just as much the keys, and the binding and loosing power, as ever Peter had. So all good priests in Britain do lawfully sit in an apostolic seat of St. Paul, the teacher of all Gentiles, and all bad priests are base usurpers of the seat of Peter, and by their covetousness have fallen into the pestilent chair of Judas, and men who ordain evil men for priests place a Judas in the seat of Peter." So a hymn, relic of these early ages, says that

“every holy preacher of the Word has obtained apostleship from God, and the gates of hell can not prevail against him, and he is chosen of Christ as his vicar on earth.” So Claudius, writing in A. D. 815, says, commenting on Matthew xvi. 18, whereon the Roman Church builds its enormous claims: “The *rock* is Christ, and from this rock Christ his faithful follower should be called Peter, because Christ had given to him, his loving friend, faith, zeal, wisdom.” Claudius also adds that as much primacy was given to Paul as to Peter; indeed that Peter was the leading apostle to the Jews, and Paul to the Gentiles; because they both were ordained by one, to the one ministry. Also in Matthew Peter speaks for all his brother apostles, and Christ speaks *to all* in him.* Sedulius, the most ancient Scots’ writer extant, says: “Therefore is Christ the chief corner and stone; and on him is the church both founded and finished, and we must account of the apostles as ministers of Christ, and not as foundation.”† Bishop Usher quotes a hymn of S. Schachlin, of date 448, describing the planting of the gospel in Ireland, and saying that it was by Patrick

*Claudius’ Commentaries of the Gospels.

†Sedulius in Eph. 2.

who had obtained this apostleship of God.* Cogitosus, in the Life of St. Bridget, calls the Bishop of Kildare *Pontifex Maximus* and *Summus Sacerdos*, giving him names now wholly claimed by the Bishop of Rome; and he gives him of Kildare these titles, because he founded the church and preached and taught in that place.

Bede tells us that Aidan, the apostle of Northumberland; Finan and Colman, his successors, were open opponents of Romish rites.

Fridegodus, A. D. 950, says that Colman left his establishment at Lindisfarne rather than conform to the keeping of the Romish Easter. The three questions of the Roman reckoning of Easter, Roman tonsure, and Roman forms of baptism were the test questions of that day; if the British Church accepted these on the word of Rome, they virtually recognized the superior authority or soundness of Rome, and this acceptance, therefore, they refused, and persisted in their separation, until force and fraud, two means often employed by Rome, compelled them to yield in a measure. What the frame of mind of a true Briton was toward Rome we may gather

*Usher's Religion Anciently Professed in Ireland, p. 57.

from the Song of Taliessyn, dated at 590, a hearty Welsh outpouring:*

Woe be to that priest born,
 That will not cleanly weed his corn,
 And preach his charge among.
 Woe be to that shepherd, I say,
 That will not watch his fold alway,
 As to his office doth belong.
 Woe be to him that will not keep
 From the *Romish* wolves his sheep,
 With staff and weapon strong.

In 847, the controversy growing continually more bitter concerning Easter, the Welsh Church sent certain clergymen to Constantinople for information concerning the division of the year in the days of Christ, and what was the true time for keeping Easter in memory of his resurrection. They sent thus to Constantinople because they would not take the testimony or advice of Rome, and considered an oriental church better fitted to inform them on oriental matters.

The renowned quarrel between Augustine, the missionary from Rome to Kent, and the British clergy whom he met in conference, serves also to show the British animus toward Rome. Twice the representatives of the Ro-

*Welsh Chronicle, p. 254.

mish and British churches met; and twice they parted utterly unable to come to terms on subjects of doctrine or government.

If the British churches then kept the unity of the Romish faith, why did Augustine make it a special point with them that they should embrace it, and why did they flatly reject it? Did not he say to them that they did *many things* repugnant to the unity of the Latin Church?*

“If,” says Austin, “you will in three things own obedience,” *i. e.*, to him as the representative of the Latin Church. “Wherefore,” replied the British clergy, “will we neither do these things nor own you over us.”†

Another famous dispute occurred in the court of King Oswi, when he summoned the Saxon clergy and the British clergy to discuss their respective claims. The Saxon party based their assumptions on the power and practice of the Roman Church, the great, rich church, seated in the capital of the world; the British clergy drew their arguments from the evangelists, from certain ancient writings of British teachers, from the practice of Col-

*Archbp. Stillingfleet, *Antiquities of British Church*, p. 357, A. D. 1685.

†See Spelman on the Councils, p. 110, the care of the Cyprian Bishops.

umba, Patrick, Mungo, Aidan, Cormac, David, Asaph, men whose holy lives are extolled even by Bede, who held with the Latin Church in this controversy, though ignorant of their later errors. Here we see the British and the Latin churches, disputing and opposing just as the Protestant and Romish churches do now. "Thus saith the Lord," cry the Protestants; "So the word of Rome and the traditions," reply the Papists.

Of these times quaint old Fuller writes: "Here we have the pedigree of the British Church, which the shorter, the ancients, the fewer steps it had, the farther it reached," and he quotes the Abbot of Bangor in 601: "Be it known and without doubt unto you, that we all are, and every one of us, obedient and subjects unto the Church of God, and unto the Pope of Rome, and to every godly Christian to love every one in his degree in perfect charity, and to help every one of them by word and deed to be the children of God; and other obedience than this I do not know due to him whom you name to be pope, nor to be Father of fathers, to be claimed, and to be demanded. And this obedience we are willing to give, and to pay him and every Christian continually. For the rest part we are under the government of the Bishop of Caerlion upon

Uske, who is to oversee us under God, to help us to keep the way spiritual.”* This seems a plain enough statement of the British idea of their own ecclesiastical independence, and of their parity with Rome, and all Christian churches. The Bishop of Caerlion to whom they refer was the successor of Dubricius and David, men advanced to their dignity by the vote of the clergy of the country, *and the laity* of the country, for we read that the king and many nobles took part in calling them to the chief place in the College of Caerlion, “because they were good men and learned in the Scriptures.” “To them, indeed, was the greater part of the heptarchy indebted for evangelical light; to Rome for most of the corruptions by which its luster was obscured.”† Usher‡ quotes one of the Cottonian manuscripts of Cummiānus thus: “Rome erreth; Jerusalem erreth; Antioch erreth; Alexandria erreth; the whole world erreth; the Scottish only and the Britons do hold the right.” Now, while Cummiānus here writes in the tone of Elijah, who says “I only am left,” when there are yet six thousand hidden

*Spelman's Concilia, p. 108.

†Baxter's Ch. Hist. p. 40.

‡Religion Anciently Professed by Irish, p. 69.

ones of God, and we look back and feel sure that there were on the continent churches in Cummiianus' day keeping sound faith, yet his words are valuable as showing that the British Church did not esteem herself bound to obey Rome, but capable of condemning and reproving her.

Let us now turn to take briefly the testimony of Rome as to the early communion of the British churches with herself.

In the days of King Oswi it is written that there was but one bishop in all Britain who was in communion with Rome.

Giraldus Cambrensis says that "before 1151 an archbishop was not known in Ireland, and bishops consecrated each other, until John Papiro came with four palls." The Chronicle of Melrose states that in 1151 Pope Eugenius sent by his legate a pall to Ireland where pall had never been sent before.

Bernard, in his Life of St. Malachy, says very clearly that Malachias was the first deputy sent by Rome to bear rule in Ireland. Turgot, the biographer of the Queen St. Margaret, says that the queen was zealous to reform the clergy of Caledonia, because they were not in conformity with Rome. John Fordun, a Romish historian, says: "That in ancient times the churches of Scotland were

governed and taught by presbyters elected and sent out by their brethren.”

Now, whether John of Fordun had authentic grounds for his statement, or whether or not he was a truth teller, this is certainly a curious piece of evidence to come from a Romish historian, and it seems most natural to suppose that he of all others would not have invented so ancient a form of Protestantism ; in fact that he says only what was forced upon him by facts, notorious in his time, and which he could not possibly deny.

Bede mildly remarks that though he is sure from the lives of many of these British clergy that they were holy men, yet they held many things against the belief of the Latin Church, and he abhors these their errors. He tells us, also, that Laurentius, Bishop of Canterbury, extended his cares toward the ancient Britons, *i. e.*, the Welsh, also to the Irish and Caledonians, “for all these nations lived in singular irregularities, especially as regardeth the keeping of Easter.” Baronius, a prominent Romish theologian, complains that Scots and Britons were* all dipped in the same schism in the year A. D. 604, and to soften so dangerous an admission he adds that *previous* to 604

*Baronius, Tom. 2, p. 72, fol. ed. Lucæ, A. D. 1742.

they had *deserted* the Roman Church; but he does not prove that they had ever been in it, as he should have done to make his point good. He merely declares that they were deserters from Rome, and must have been deserted because they had so many judgments of invasions of Danes, Saxons and Normans. The greatest of Romish writers can reason fluently in so small a circle that no other human mind could turn around in it! Going to Laurentius, Bishop of Canterbury, for an opinion, we have his letter to the Scots, telling them that when he came to England he had hoped to find the Britons conformed to the Latin Church, but found instead that they were opposed to that church; he had then trusted to find the Scots *more reasonable*, but lo, he had met Columbanus, an abbot, and Daganus, a bishop of Scots, and they rejected Catholic unity and Latin customs, and would have nothing to do with him; no, not so much as to eat of his table or lodge in his house. Whereby we see that Laurentius had had his share of *in naso Scoti piper!*

Pope Honorius took the trouble to write to Tomianus, Columbanus, and other Scots' bishops, urging them to adopt the Roman time of keeping Easter. Here, if ever, was an opportunity for him to assert his right over

them if he had any ; his supremacy, if it was recognized ; their duty to his See, if they owed it. But, on the contrary, he does not say one word of a right to command them, a supremacy over churches, of any duty owed to Rome. He advises the Scots to keep the Roman time of Easter, because it is a time calculated on the best date, and that all the world but themselves kept Easter at a set time, and that it was not well to have one family keeping Easter and another Palm Sunday ; they should yield their inconsiderable numbers *to the great majority.*

Wilfrid, the most learned controversialist in Britain during the year 664, says to Colman, that Saints Columba and Patrick and Mungo did not keep the Roman Easter, because they were misinformed and in error, and not aware of the usual practice of the church ; therefore they were excusable. Stating this, Wilfrid could hardly have believed these men to be in communion with Rome, if they were so ignorant of her practices.

In the mouths of two or three witnesses shall a thing be established. These three witnesses, historical fact, ancient British writers, ancient Romish writers, have spoken and they agree together upon this point that the early British Church was not part and parcel of

Romanism. This church we have seen carried down by the Culdees to the days of Wickliffe.

It was not continued to these days, flourishing strong, uplifted in the world's eye, but as says Elliot in his *Horæ Apocalyptacæ*, God kept his witnesses and enough of them, and yet they were but two, figuratively speaking, enough and no more.

Where then was our church, the parent church of us, the descendants of Britons and Scots, before Luther? History hath fair answer on her page. Our fathers held the faith which we their children keep, and they fought the same battle which we fight with Rome.

We do not pretend that it was a perfect church; such only is the church of the first-born in heaven. It was a feeble church, it had its errors, its mistakes, the petty superstitions and misconceptions of its day, but it was a scriptural, independent, missionary church, knowing but one Mediator between God and man, and following the Master where he led.

When the day came that Rome was likely to be worsted by the Reformers, she planted herself on her antiquity, and turning about seized the good Britons with whom long be-

fore she had so hotly quarreled, and set them among her saints, that they might seem her sons.

“Ireland,” says Usher, “was early called the Isle of Saints, but when did Rome undertake to canonize one of these Irishmen until Malachy, after 1100?”

But not only have these heroes of early days been wounded by Rome’s love and hate, but they have been wounded in the home of their friends. Their very children, sitting in hasty judgment upon them, say these men were ascetics, were miracle-mongers, because Romish historians point them out as such. They were Romanists because Rome says so! Oh, wisdom! Oh, justice!

“Who tells the truth of them must tell much that is evil and disgraceful.” Why? Because he that told untruth wrote such things against them! What, hath God left himself without a witness? Hath he suffered the truth to languish out of life between the apostles and the Reformation? Must necessarily men who took the Bible for their guide and Christ for the rock of their salvation have been evil and disgraceful, because Gildas wrote that goodness was dead in Britain, and Bede said that they wrought miracles? Let us, when we study their history, consider the

medium through which it comes to us, and divide the true from the false.

It has been unfortunate for our knowledge of the early church, that the great scholars, the mighty geniuses, and most learned antiquaries who have studied its history, have written of it, as polemics, regarding chiefly the form of government then existing, and while hot war has waged, while mint and cummin have been tithed over the questions of bishops and presbyters, those weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and truth, the belief, the spiritual teachings of our fathers, have but seldom come shining to the stormy surface of debate.

We cry you mercy, gentlemen, we have not dealt with bishops and presbyters ; we believe the case has been fully proven for the bishops, and fully proven for the presbyters ; we think that perhaps even in those days as now there were bishops and presbyters, convocation and general assembly, and all the shades between!! What we know, and thank God to know, is that the same glorious free gospel of the grace of God rung from the primitive pulpits in our fathers' ears which now sets forth to their children the way to heaven. We know, and are glad to know, that our fathers had irreconcilable differences with the

Church of Rome. We know, and are glad to know, that our present faith and practice are not things of yesterday, not a donation from strangers, but our own heirloom from our sires, for his mercy is upon the thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.

Hollard Days.

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“Till persecution blew the trump of fame
And chased them up to heaven.”

(2)

LOLLARD DAYS.

CHAPTER I.

“The eternal life of God is hers.”

BEFORE SUNRISING.

WE have seen in England, in Ireland, Wales and Scotland, the lighting, the shining, and, alas, the long, slow failing of the gospel light. The Culdees in Scotia, scattered families in Ierne, the stout hearts of Wales, and the Cornish miners, held with a trembling, nearly dying hand, their fading candle, foul damps pervaded the atmosphere, a storm of persecution swept it, a rain of tears drenched it, and we wonder that the beam did not quite die away. It lived because it had an imperishable spark of the divine life; truth is deathless as its immortal fountain!

The fourteenth century opened a new period in the history of the faithful early church. A

(3)

band of "Reformers before the Reformation" arose, and to them was committed for more than two hundred years the keeping of the faith in England.

That the mighty and cruel apostate church might not be able entirely to destroy the children of the Evangel, God sent his judgments abroad in the earth until all people trembled; the church abode under the shadow of the divine wing; it was a shadow, but the darkness made safety.

The first year of the fourteenth century opened with a furious quarrel between Pope Boniface and Philip the Fair, of France. The Pope sent a belligerent letter to the king on that standing grievance of the papacy—a lack of money. Rome, like the Leech's daughter, never has enough. The French monarch imprisoned the Pontiff's ambassador. Benedict retorted by laying the realm under interdict, saying to Philip, "Know that in things temporal and spiritual, thou art subject unto us. The king who hath done wickedness we will depose as if he were a boy."

Philip, not to be outdone, dispatched a letter to the Pope, beginning thus: "Philip, by the grace of God, king of the French, to Boniface who claims to be Pope, little greeting, or, rather, none at all. Let thy most consum-

mate folly know, that we are in things temporal subject to *no man*," etc.* Within two years Boniface died insane.† The quarrel with France was quieted, and when a new pope was to be elected the French king resolved to have a Frenchman on the papal throne. The Italians were equally resolute to have an Italian.

The history of the ensuing schism is well known. We give here the inimitably quaint account of Froissart, king of chroniclers, who, writing as a papist of matters passing in his own day, will certainly not be harsher to the infallible church than truth compels him. The cardinals being met in conclave in Rome were besieged by the people: "The cardynalles than seyng theselfe in the daunger of the romayns, and in great parrill of their lyves, agreed among theselfe, more for to please the people than for any deuocion—Howbeit, their pope lyved nat but thre dayes after, and I schall shew you whye. The romayns who desyred to have a pope of theyr owne nacion were so ioyful of this newe pope yt. they toke hym, who was a hunderde yere of age, and sette hym on a whyte mule and

*Neander's Ch. Hist. Period 6th, Sect. 1st.

†Villani Lib. 8, 68.

so ledde hym up and downe through ye citie of rhome, exalting him, and shewyng howe they had vaquessed the cardynalles, seying they had a pope romayne according to their owne entents, in so muche that the good holy man was so sore traneyled that he fell sycke, and so died the thyrde day.”*

We proceed with Froissart's tale, modernizing the spelling: “Then the cardinals went again into conclave, in greater danger than before, for the Romans came together again before the conclave, and made feint to break it up and to slay them all, if they did not choose a pope according to their mind, saying: ‘Sirs, advise you well; if you deliver us a Roman pope, we be well content; or else we will break your heads, and make them redder than your hats.’ Such words and manners abashed greatly the cardinals, for they had rather have died confessors than martyrs. The Cardinal of Genoa put his head out of a window of the conclave, saying: ‘Sirs, appease you, for you have a Roman pope, and that is Bartholomew des Angles,’ so he was Urban, the sixth of that name.”

*Froissart wrote about 1385. The edition of the above extract is of date 1520, being printed by order of King Henry VIII.

Froissart names this chapter, "Of the orgulous wordes whiche the roymanes sayde." He goes on with his history thus: "Now, this pope was a fumish and malicious man, not profitable to the cardinals nor to the church, for when he saw himself in the prosperity and puissance of papality, he waxed proud and *walked all on his head*. So the cardinals, while Urban VI. was at Tivoli, in time of vacation, elected Robert of Geneva, and he was called Clement. Clement sent for one Sylvester Brude, a valiant knight, and put him in the Castle of St. Angelo, and Pope Urban dared not depart out of Tivoli, and the Romans were in fear, and sent and hired soldiers, and daily they skirmished with the Bretons. The French king in amaze sent for all nobles and prelates, and for the master of the University of Paris to know which election he should hold. Divers clerks varied, but finally they told him that all France inclined unto Clement; so the king, by advice of his clerks, held Clement for a true Pope, and said every man should obey him as God on earth. The King of Spain was of this opinion, so was the Earl of Savoy, the Duke of Milan, and the Queen of Naples."

Driven out of Rome Clement accepted the invitation of the French king, and set up his

court in Avignon, and for seventy years the papal court was not held in Rome. The scandalous quarrels between rival popes, the accusations of frequent poisonings brought against the cardinals, the open simony and shameless profligacy of all orders of ecclesiastics, stirred questioning and remonstrance in all thoughtful minds. Holland, Germany, Bohemia, Alsace and England heard suddenly the voices, and were sprinkled with the writings of a new set of teachers, demanding the Scriptures among the people, as the only rule of faith and practice. The schism in the Papal Church, and the enfeeblement of its power, as well as the disgrace which covered it, permitted these great movements toward reform to rise and develop themselves.* A sect called the Lollards arose in Antwerp about the year 1300.† In 1315 Walter Lollard began to preach, expounding the Scriptures in Cologne. Some have supposed that the sect took their name from this leader, but it is more likely he took his name from the sect—Walter, the Lollard.‡ The real origin of the name is in the German word *lollen*,

*Neander's Ch. Hist. 6th Period, Sect. 1st.

†Chambers' Encyclopædia, Art. Lollards.

‡Penny Encyclopædia. Art. Lollards.

lullen, to sing softly, as we have our old Saxon word *lull*, *lullaby*. Formed into a noun by the common German terminal *hard*, it became Lullhard or Lollard, meaning a characteristic of the new sect—one who is continually praising God in devout songs.

The Lollards rejected the sacrifice of the mass, extreme unction, penances for sin; held that baptism was not indispensable to salvation; that the sufferings of Christ are a complete atonement for his people. Their enemies ascribed to them a variety of more dangerous doctrines, as that repentance was not needful, and that the power of God in providence and creation was not unlimited. These points, however, they could never prove, and as the chief accusation against them was that they continually studied and taught the Scriptures as the entire rule of faith, very probably their tenets were biblical. Walter Lollard was not long permitted to teach the doctrines of the Evangel. He was burned at Cologne, in 1322.*

The Lollards gathered so many adherents of all pious souls who were weary of the vices and quarrels of the Romish Church, that soon the term Lollard was used to cover

*Oxford Encyclopædia. Art. Lollards.

all heresies, and in it were merged the names hitherto applied to all those who maintained the unadulterated faith of the early church. Animated by a missionary spirit, the Lollards sent preachers over the greater part of Europe, and into the British Isles. They met more favor in Scotland than in England, but in both countries they were put to death, to the number of several score.

Meanwhile to the confusion occasioned by the quarrels and exile of the popes was added the terror and distress of that horrible scourge, the black plague. England was especially visited by this pestilence. "There was not a house where there was not one dead;" indeed, whole families were in thousands of instances swept off; business stopped;* grass grew in the streets of London; the land was one vast charnel house; the clergy were so decimated that none could be found to perform divine service.† Before this plague curates could be hired for five marks a year; after it men enough for the churches could not be got for twenty marks.‡

This was the hour of England's greatest

*Dr. Wylie's Hist. of Protestantism. Part 2.

†Henry's Hist. of Eng. Vol. IV. book 4, ch. 2, p. 327.

‡Henry Knyghton's Collections. 2600.

darkness. The last bishop who feared God and regarded man, and had read his Bible, was Robert Grosted, Bishop of Lincoln, whom Innocent IV. greatly desired to imprison but dared not. The last monk who lifted his voice against the errors of the day was Richard Knapwell, friar of St. Dominick, who, amid much ignorance and misconception, found one bit of truth to which he held as a pearl of great price, *i. e.*, that "man is not bound to rest on the authority of the pope, but that the Holy Scriptures and right reason are the only foundation of our assent."*

Grosted and Knapwell died without making any impression on their age; the Lollards who came from Germany were murdered. For this hour of special darkness a great teacher of the truth had been ordained of God. John de Wickliffe was born in 1324, near Richmond, in Yorkshire.

As a student in Oxford he sat at the feet of Bradwardine.† The favorite themes of this great teacher were the sovereignty of grace and the freeness of salvation.

Wickliffe survived unscathed the plagues of 1349 and 1360, but he had seen sights to

*T. Wykes, p. 114.

†D'Aubigne's Hist. Ref. Vol. V. p. 110.

appall the stoutest heart. Earth had no longer allurements for him ; the world to come filled all the horizon of his soul, and his one thought was to warn dying men to flee from the wrath to come. From his favorite instructor, Wickliffe learned to turn to the Bible for knowledge of the way of righteousness.

In the fourteenth century, as in the nineteenth, religious and political questions were inextricably intermingled. The pope loudly pressing his temporal sovereignty, and wresting great contributions from the nations at the dread peril of interdict, aroused in all lands the wrath of honest patriots, who found their revenues taken to enrich Italian ecclesiastics, and their monarchs treated with contumely by a foreign potentate.

Wickliffe entered heartily into a discussion of these paramount questions of the limit of the papal power, and the duties and rights of churchmen. He at once attracted the attention and won the friendship of "Old John of Gaunt, time-honored Lancaster." Supported by Lancaster and Lord Percy, Wickliffe waged war with the pope, whom he called plainly Antichrist ; and with the swarms of friars who devoured not only "widows' houses," but nearly all the houses

of England. Bulls against this arch-heretic were issued from the Avignon pontiff, but even before they reached England episcopal rage had cited Wickliffe to appear in Our Lady's Chapel, at St. Paul's, to answer the charge of heresy.

The reformer had attained immense popularity among the hungry and thirsting souls to whom he had given the bread and water of life; a mighty mob surrounded the Cathedral where the bishops were sitting. The church doors were closed. Wickliffe, appearing on the skirts of the crowd, a lean figure in a long robe of thin black cloth, girded at the waist, in the fashion of the doctors of the day, was greeted by the Duke of Lancaster, and Percy, Earl Marshal of England, who put themselves on either side of him, and thus nobly attended the poor "gospel doctor" entered the presence of his self-constituted judges.* Bishop Courtney, chief of the council, exclaimed in a rage, "Percy! had I known what masteries you would keep in God's Church, be sure I would not have let you in hither."

The deep gruff voice of Gaunt growled

*Lechler Johann von Wickliffe, Vol. I, p. 370.

out from behind the Marshal, "Aye, and he shall keep just such masteries, Sir bishop."

"Sit ye down, Doctor Wickliffe," said Percy, coolly. "Sit ye down; having many hard questions to answer ye do well to rest on a soft seat."

"He must and shall stand," shouted the bishop. "When was it known that a prisoner sat before his judge?"

"Sit he shall," retorted John of Gaunt, proudly; "and as for you, bishop, who are grown so proud and arrogant, I will bring down the pride not of you only, but of every bishop and prelate in England."*

"My trust is in God," said Courtney, calmly. But Gaunt was not to be appeased. "Rather than take rude words from you or any other churchman," said he, "I will drag ye all out of court by the hair of the head."

A storm of angry words followed this, and the crowd fearing for the beloved Wickliffe, who was sitting in perfect calm amid the strife, suddenly threw themselves on the outer door, burst it open, and rushing into the chapel clamored that their teacher should be put into their hands safe and sound. The bishops, who had expected a trembling cul-

*Rev. I. A. Wylie, LL.D. Hist. of Protestantism, p. 94.

prit, retracting his heresies at their threats, paled at the storm they had evoked, and made speed to their homes, leaving Wickliffe to his noble and plebeian protectors.

As we have said, Wickliffe continued his labors, and in his old age died of palsy at his home in Lutterworth. He instructed a great band of young preachers, and telling them that as Rome and the devil preached wickedness up and down the land by means of thousands of friars, they must carry the Evangel to every hamlet, he covered England with preachers of a pure gospel.

Wickliffe also wrote a multitude of tracts and sermons which his pupils copied and scattered abroad; he also translated the Scriptures into English, and scores of pens were kept busy copying books or chapters, or even stray verses, to sow as good seed wherever they found man or woman who could read the mother tongue.

Wickliffe and his followers were at once called Lollards, their doctrines being recognized as the same, and drawn from the same scriptural fountain, as those of the German and Pays-bas heretics. So did these doctrines spread that it was declared that before Wickliffe died, every second man one met in England was a Lollard. These converts were

gathered from all classes, from the students at Oxford, from the farm laborers in the villages, from mechanics and tradesmen, from gentlemen and women, from the highest nobility; and every soul which embraced Lollardism was inspired to become a missionary to his neighbor. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."

The Romish Church at first seemed stunned by the popularity of Wickliffe, the rank and number of his supporters, and the rapid spread and deep rooting of his teachings. A little time of comparative calm permitted the truth to grow.

At this period the watchman on the walls of Zion might well answer to any passing challenge, "The morning cometh, and also the night." Those constellations had arisen which proclaimed the sure approach of day, but yet the dawn lingered in a wintry sky, and clouds and storms were before the sunrising; and although the morning of the nations was truly on the point of breaking in glory, the world seemed stepping down into a deeper and deeper gloom.

Out of that painful gloom we hear a cry, the anguish of the martyr, a cry-echoed in heaven by souls under the altar, "How long, O Lord, how long!" We see blazing again

and again an hundred lights, not stars nor sun flashes, but the fires of the faithful unto death; if the skies brighten it is with no ruddy ray of morning, but with long processions of shining robed ones, who have gone up out of great tribulation. In these ages Rome had and used the keys of heaven; she found their names were Fire and Sword, and she used them to let Protestant martyrs enter into rest.

2

CHAPTER II.

“ But liveth in loving God,
And his law holdeth;
And for a getting of good,
Never his Lord grieveth.”

—*The Creed of Piers Ploughman, a Lollard.*

THE LOLLARD DOCTRINES.

IN the brighter splendors of that period, called, *par excellence*, the Reformation, the struggling light of the Lollard dawning has been often nearly forgotten. Indeed, there have been hot disputes as to what the doctrine called in England Lollardism really taught, and there have often been given to the world willful or accidental perversions of it. We might say in brief that Lollard doctrines were the doctrines of the Bible, inasmuch as all Lollard teachers devoted themselves to transcribing and disseminating the Scriptures, established all their teachings on the authority of Holy Writ, made the “ Thus saith the Lord ” the answer to all their accusers, and exhibited, in all periods and countries where

they existed, an entire unanimity. Thus the writings of Wickliffe entered into Bohemia—the more readily as a Bohemian princess was queen consort of England, and many Bohemian youth were studying in English colleges—and falling into the already prepared heart of Huss and Jerome of Prague, bore an abundant harvest; the followers of Huss in Bohemia, and of Wickliffe in England, being of one mind and of one teaching.

We are, however, happy in having a complete embodiment of Lollard doctrines of the date during Wickliffe's life, and undoubtedly from his own pen. Until the year 1842 this priceless manuscript lay uncopied and unprinted in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. It forms a part of the celebrated collection of Archbishop Usher, presented to the university by King Charles II.* In 1842 this manuscript was transcribed by J. H. Todd, D. D., of Trinity College, and printed for the Camden Society.

Some of the tracts in this manuscript had been printed in Bale's Collections, and also by Lewis. The tracts are twenty-nine in number, and the principal interest centers in the treatise in defense of the tenets of the Lol-

*Marked in Trin. Col. Lib. Class C, Tab. 5, No. 6.

lards.* It is supposed that this treatise was first delivered as an address before a court or assembly, as it begins thus: "I witness before God Almighty, and all true Christian men and women, and before you." The first doctrine stated is "That the Pope is not the Vicar of Christ, nor of Peter." It is noticeable that each of these propositions following is maintained in the most masterly manner by logical reasoning, and by quotations from the Fathers and the Scriptures. Condensing, as we must, an elaborate treatise into a short chapter, we can only suggest the line of argument. The doctrine concerning the pope was that he was merely one of many pastors over the church; if he failed to perform his pastoral duties and teach the truth, he had vacated his office by his own act. Also that any other pastor or teacher, failing in duty to the flock, had no right to tithes and endowments which were but the proper reward of work well performed. Again, that when any pastor, from the pope down, failed in morals, in zeal, in doctrine, they should be deposed. These were the doctrines attributed to Wickliffe in the Council of Constance.†

*See Wickliffe's Apology for the Lollards. Todd, p. 25.

†Oxthunii Gratii Fasciculus (Ed. Brown) Tom. I. p. 273.

The second proposition of doctrine is "That the pope may grant or sell no indulgence, neither to men in purgatory, nor to men reprobate." This he shows because the apostles nowhere granted the like; because the pope may be himself a reprobate man; that the indulgences bear internal evidence of being fictitious, and that if indulgences were lawful, the sale of them or any other spiritual benefit would be simony. These opinions of Wickliffe were formally canvassed and condemned in the Council of Constance.*

3d. Of Excommunication and Interdict (favorite weapons of Rome, and especially used in those days). That God's ministers ought not to curse and injure men, and that the church can not righteously curse a righteous man. A man for vice may be cut off until he repent, but not in the manner of Romish cursing, and as for the second part even Baalam dare not curse whom God had not cursed, and Michael dare not use railing words even to Satan.

4th. Christ was made accursed for us, for our sins' sake, though he knew no sin; and as he and his own people are one, when his true children are excommunicated, cursed and

*Rationes ac Motiva. Art. XLI.

interdicted, then all this is done to Christ; "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

*5th. That every priest may use the key to any man. This proposition was leveled at the Roman primacy that *keeps the keys*, and also at episcopal jurisdiction, for it is well known that the Lollards, cruelly abused by church dignitaries, felt that their only hope was in getting free from all episcopal jurisdiction,† not seeing that it might in some means be made useful and not detrimental to the church. "Each priest," says this treatise, "may administer lawfully all the ordinances of the church, and no man has a right to hinder him, so long as he preaches the truth of God."‡

6th. Each priest is in duty bound to preach. This was a favorite doctrine of the Lollards, levelled at those who held livings without performing any service, and against vast orders of friars, who neither preached nor taught.

7th. That a man sins who attends the sacraments or services of a priest whom he

*Treatise, p. 28.

†Todd's Edition of Wickliffe's Apology, p. 29.

‡Rationes ac Motiva, Tom. I. p. 287.

knows to be immoral or atheistical, since it is profanation for such a man to serve in the church. The dissolute character of the great portion of the clergy of that day made it very needful for the Lollards to hold some fixed opinion on this point.

8th. This is another proposition concerning the illegality of cursing, then so much used to wrest money and obedience from all men, from the king to the poorest peasant.

9th. This proposition is curiously worded: "It is a taking of damnation that a man lead his life in poverty." This refers to the mendicant orders, who were then like a vast multitude of leeches, sucking the vitality out of the English people, bringing learning and religion into contempt, and turning what should have been a home of cheerful industry into a hive of drones. This proposition of the Lollards is correctly stated at the Council of Constance to mean that "Men are bound to acquire a living by the labor of their hands, and not by mendicity."* This Wickliffe establishes by quotations, as "Provide things honest in the sight of all men," "If any will not work neither shall he eat," etc., and especially shows that it is distinguished between

*Rationes ac Motiva, Tom. I. p. 287.

the poverty voluntarily maintained by an idle mendicant and such poverty as Christ bore for our sakes, such as James speaks of in his Epistle and David in the Psalms.

10th. Of Fastings. That they are not necessary to salvation, nor a required part of holy living while a man keeps himself from sin. Here the treatise distinguishes between a right and wrong use of fasting.

11th. This concerns the Canonical hours, that a priest should not be under legal bondage to any, but walk at liberty, a freeman in Christ Jesus, and, as says William of Chantris, "A priest is more bound to preach the Word of God than to say canonical hours, according to the primitive order of the church."

12th. This reaches higher themes. The sacrament on the altar, after consecration, retaineth the substance of bread. Here the argument begins: "I remember that here have I rehearsed the words of the apostle, for Paul saith, 'The bread which we break is the partaking the body of Christ,' 'The thing that is seen is the bread and the cup, as these eyes show; but that which faith asketh in this form of bread is the body of Christ.'"*

*Wickliffe's *Dialogus*, lib. 4, ch. II. sq.

Here, as the sentence in the old English is very obscure, Doctor Todd very properly suggests the true meaning, "that which is spiritually discerned is the body of Christ."

13th. Churches should not be worshiped, nor tapers and candles multiplied therein. Here follows a strong argument against shrines, pictures, relics, traffic in church ornaments, and priestly simony, in any form. A little more Lollardism of this sort would do no harm among us, in these days of "Catholic revival," when many good Protestants are found decking their homes with saints' pictures and popish ornaments of all kinds, and crosses are the favorite personal adornment; against all such concessions to the papacy the Lollards were very clear, feeling that this was "the mind of God."

14th. This proposition is directed, like several others, against that robbing of God's flock by pretended shepherds, by reason of which all lands in that day mourned. A priest is guilty of simony when he charges his people for performing for them individually the offices of religion, as for counsel, for prayers, for baptism, for the communion, for visitation of the sick. Yet the workman is worthy of his hire, and should by his people be properly supported in the pastoral office,

“and if he teaches school he should also be compensated therefor.”

15th. This proposition concerns a similar theme. It is noticeable in this Treatise of Defense of Lollardy, that the propositions do not generally grow out of each other, nor is there any order in their sequence. But following the above warning against simony comes this clear declaration: “The pope, cardinals, bishops, and other prelates of Rome, are disciples of Antichrist, and sellers of merit.” This selling of merit, the whole doctrine of indulgences, which roused the wrath of Martin Luther, called forth the earnest condemnations of the Lollards everywhere, and especially in England. In proof of this position the treatise quotes freely from the Epistle of John, and from various holy men, notably from Robert, Bishop of Lincoln, whom we mentioned in the preceding chapter.

16th. No one can be pope, priest, nor vicar of Christ who is not a holy man. On this point the argument from Scripture is very able and conclusive, and stands in singular contrast to the practice of Rome, which then, even more than now, paid no attention to a man's morals or wisdom, but sold church offices to the highest bidder.

The next proposition is directed against judges and magistrates who were aiding the clergy to persecute the Church of God, and who were inflicting many pains and penalties upon the Lollards, now entering into deep tribulations for conscience' sake. It stands thus:

17th. A judge giving sentence against an innocent man sinneth mortally.

18th. A priest pretending to absolve a hypocritical or impenitent man is guilty of a deadly sin before God. This is another of those propositions which strike at the very roots of the system of the Romish confessional

19th. This concerns marriage, in which the Papal Church has ever claimed power to make or mar, and concerning which she has declared limitations, founded on human will, and not on the law of God. Thus, the Roman Church prohibits marriage within the third and fourth degrees of consanguinity, and creates relationships between sponsors in baptism which will bring a large circle of people within prohibited degrees. The Lollards held in their 19th article of faith, that marriages made within degrees prohibited by the church, and not prohibited by the Bible, were lawful. Thus that the Bible law was the only binding law, and that no dispensation of the church can

make a marriage legal which is in itself a transgression of Scripture law. This leads naturally to the next article.

20th. The church which solemnizes matrimony, in a degree forbidden, errs, consenting to what it calls a sin. The Roman Church has ever made great capital out of its marriage laws, granting for high prices dispensations to people for marrying within prohibited degrees. The Lollards argued that when a church taught an act to be a sin, it could not for money condone that sin, but erred greatly in permitting its members to purchase liberty to do what was laid upon conscience as a crime by the church. Here Wickliffe acutely brings out the words of Paul, "If I build again the thing which I throw down, I make myself a transgressor."

21st. Canon law of the Church of Rome is contrary to God's law. By this canon law God is blasphemed, and it were well if this science were driven out of the church. This proposition needs no comment, further than that it should be borne in mind, as in our next chapter we propose to show, some of the workings of canon law in England in these times of the Lollards, and what cause the Reformers had to pronounce it a blasphemy, contrary to divine law.

22d. This proposition touches daily Christian living. No man is Christ's disciple unless he keeps Christ's counsel. Mother church pronounced every man a good Christian who kept her traditions.

23d proposition: Each man is holden to obey the higher law, *i. e.*, Christ's, and when the priestly tradition contradicts the scriptural precept, a man "ought to obey God rather than man." Those were indeed dismal days, when so clear a point as this could be denied.

24th. Images of the saints are not to be worshiped. Here Wickliffe, speaking for the Lollards, turns not only Scripture but the writings of the Fathers, and even of early Romish popes and authors, against the practice of image worship, showing it to be an error and a novelty.

25th. The gospel written is not a fit object of worship. This refers to the then favorite practice of hanging verses of the gospel (which generally the owner could not read) about the neck as a charm.

26th. Charms and relics and words hung superstitiously about the neck are in no manner lawful.

27th. This proposition merely repeats the preceding. The Lollards lived in an age of the grossest superstition. The remains of the

old Druidism clung to English hearts with wonderful tenacity. Almost every herb and beast of the field had its part in some charm; almost every hour of day and night and every portion of the body had its witchcraft and spell. The science of medicine as then practiced was a cruel, disgusting and degrading tissue of incantations and witchery; religion did not disdain to use the popular superstition, and souls and minds and hearts were to be healed, not with the balm of Gilead, and the touch of the great Physician, but with rhymes said in certain phases of the moon, and with such strange compounds as Shakespeare describes in his witches' caldron in *Macbeth*.* The Lollards were to come out from the world and be separate, and free and wise in Christ, and this superstition was especially shunned by them, and forbidden in all their teachings.

28th. That monastic vows are against Christ's Gospel. This was well said, when all Britain was fast becoming a great monastery and nunnery, and when the rate of absorption of lands and people, by the Orders, was so rapidly increasing, that the whole

*See three curious volumes of *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland*, edited by Cockayne, and entitled, "Leechdoms, Wartcunning and Starcraft of Early England." All transcribed from old parchments.

country was likely to be engulfed in them. Wickliffe here draws a distinction between papal orders, and the free and hearty dedication of a life to any form of God's service.

29th. Religious men are bound to bodily good works. This article was intended to rebut the accusations of the papists, who declared that the Lollards taught faith without works, and all manner of license in evil.

30th. It is not lawful for a man under plea of piety to spend his life in begging. It is a sin to despise and refuse honest labor. This was another blow at the mendicant orders, the favorite enemies of the Lollards.

This is a brief summary of the only complete statement and vindication of Lollard doctrine which has ever been published. If any other treatise of the kind exist it is yet in some hidden manuscript. As we pursue the works of the Lollards, their teachings, their answers to their accusers, and their faithfulness unto death, we shall find that these were the doctrines in which they established themselves and whereby they sought to destroy the evil and oppressive Church of Rome. These were the teachings suited to their day. In our time a church would not need these reiterated statements concerning witchcraft and mendicant orders, though some

articles bearing upon these might well enter into the confession of faith of a church erected among converts from Romanism in Spain or Italy. Before various judges, councils and ecclesiastics, the Lollards were again and again called to answer for the opinions expressed in these thirty articles of their belief. The discussion of these in public and in private opened the eyes of a great mass of the people of Britain, and laid broad and firm foundations on which were afterward reared the superstructure of the Church of the Reformation.

"The saints build up the fabric,
And the Corner-stone is Christ."

N. B.—Among the few works containing the doctrines or theology of the Lollards, we have those old and quaint writings: "The Vision" and "The Creed" of Piers Ploughman, well worth a study.*

*Probably the best edition is that edited by the learned Thomas Wright. London, 1856.

CHAPTER III.

" Would I had fall'n upon those happier days
That poets celebrate ; those golden times,
And those Arcadian scenes that Maro sings,
And Sidney, warbler of poetic prose."

MERRIE ENGLAND AS IT WAS.

THE Lollard, holding and teaching the doctrines which we have enumerated, began in the days of Wickliffe to go up and down England preaching the gospel from house to house. He was the precursor and predecessor of the home missionary, of the Methodist itinerant and circuit preacher, of the Presbyterian evangelist, of the city missionary and Bible reader of the Episcopal Church. But before we follow this true successor of the apostles, and of the seventy whom Christ sent out in all the hills and valleys of Judea, let us give a little time to the contemplation of the homes of Britain in that day ; let us study the domestic manners and customs of our forefathers, that we may the more fully realize the worker and his

work; that our hearts may more readily follow him through hamlet and city, in cabin and castle; moreover, that we may better appreciate the difference between Papal and Protestant England. Neither let any one argue that it is a difference made in time, that the change is the product of the forward movement of the centuries. In answer to this assertion we have only to point to Papal Italy, in 1860, almost like the England of 1460!

As we have been just considering the doctrines which the Lollards sowed broadcast over Britain, it may be well to begin our picture of these early days by a glance at the ecclesiastical laws of the country, learning what were the immunities and privileges claimed by the papal clergy; and lest we should be thought to have overstated these, let us premise that we draw from the code of privileges compiled* especially under the supervision of one of the best of English bishops of the Roman Church, Robert Grossetete of Lincoln, hated of the Avignon pope for his piety and biblical lore.

This canon law in its assumptions struck at

*Pearson's History of England, during Early and Middle Ages, Vol. II. ch. xvi.

the very roots of civil society ; did it proceed unchecked the church must inevitably absorb the State, and use it merely as its tool. Let us look at these laws.

1. The temporal power might not apprehend a priest, unless he were caught red-handed in the act of felony.
2. Any priest or cleric might lawfully resist the ministers of justice on all other occasions.
3. If a jury finds a true bill against a priest he can not be dragged before secular courts, but must be delivered to his diocesan.
4. Any clerk who violates or remits these, his privileges, is excommunicate.
5. Any cleric may take his cattle out of pound, unpaid, and can not be charged with trespass.
6. To distrain the lands or personalty of a priest is sacrilege.
7. All damage done to a priest or his property is sacrilege.
8. No new taxes may be laid on any cleric.
9. From the churchyard gate to the altar all is sanctuary, and whoever takes from thence any fugitive, except a proved highwayman, is excommunicate.
10. Whoever labors on a fast day is excommunicate.*

Here we find the clergy a horde of licensed wolves, to prey upon the flock. The land

*Annales de Burton, pp. 425-429.

was given over to the extortions and crimes of men who were by no means to be called to account. We find that in one circuit during Edward the First's reign, ten priests accused of murder, burglary, adultery, and the like, were demanded from the courts by their bishops, declared purged, and restored to lands, benefices and society! * The number of offenders who were convicted by the secular judge, and afterward acquitted by their ecclesiastical superiors, became so enormous that a change of the law was seen to be needful.†

The clergy not only claimed jurisdiction in faith and morals, but over all matters of church dues, testamentary acts and bequests! All questions of heresies, false miracles, marriages and divorce were to be brought before the clergy. Every tenth egg from the peasant; every tenth part of a shepherd's wages; every corpse's winding sheet; the last garment worn in life, belonged to the priest. Yet a little money would in these church courts purchase liberty to break almost any law, civil, natural, or divine. "The sinner's purse was the archdeacon's hell."‡

*Prynne's Hist. of Eng. Vol. III. pp. 272, 273.

†Coke, 2, Inst. 164. Reeves' Hist. of English Law, Vol. III. p. 421. Blackstone's Com. Book 4, c. xxviii.

‡Chaucer in the Summoner.

When the "Doomsday Book" was compiled, the holy church owned three-tenths of all the land in Britain, besides a fifth of all the knights' fees. The income of the bishops was twice the income of all the barons, and twice the revenue of the monarch, in Henry the Third's time. Abbeys owned mills where the people were forced to grind all their own corn; they had factories where all cloth must be fulled; all schools were in the hands of the church; nearly all industries were equally in its benumbing grasp. So ignorant were the friars that in all his Order Roger Bacon could not find enough men who knew how to write, to copy his works.*

Such was the darkness of Britain when the first light of the Lollard morning broke painfully upon its gloom.

Let us now look at the people of these days in their homes; having seen the dangerous form of government under which they lived, the prevailing ignorance, and the immoral teachings, let us find our forefather in his family life. To begin with his house.† The

*Pearson's Hist. Vol. II. p. 513.

†Our chief authority on questions of domestic life is T. Wright, the most indefatigable and famous of English antiquarians. See his works, "Homes of Other Days" and "Domestic Manners of England during the Middle Ages."

chief part of the building was the hall, open from floor to roof, with a fire in the middle, or at one side; a door entered this by the front; at one end was the bed-chamber, at the other end the stable; a back door from the hall, stable, and chamber opened on a small garden; the whole house stood in a yard surrounded with a hedge and a ditch; the windows were few and usually mere openings with shutters. Outwardly there were some attempts at ornament in gables, arches and carved doors; also in stone or iron window gratings. This was the middle class home, distinguished from the cabin of the laborer and the castle of the knight.

Even in wealthy homes there was but one sleeping-room, belonging to the mistress and her daughters, and here the ladies and their maids usually sat apart, unless driven by cold to carry their embroidery and spinning near the fire. The hall was for eating, carousing, for guests, for the sleeping place at night of sons and retainers, for the polishing of weapons, and all the ordinary amusement or business of the family. In castles other chambers were built on a gallery above the hall, or in a separate tower. There was also in rare instances a garret with an outside staircase leading to it. The richer the householder the

greater the strength and security, not the size and elegance of his home; for if he were rich there were more enemies from his priest down to the highwayman, waiting to plunder him. The walls were massive, the windows narrow and deep with stone seats in them, and many little closets for plate, jewels and money, were built in the wall. Cellars for wine and mead, and dungeons for refractory servants, or, indeed, children, were invariably used. Walls were ornamented with "perches," *i. e.*, rods and pegs, where nearly all the family wealth of clothes and furnishings hung; benches and tables were supported, not by legs but by trestles, and it was a mark of wealth and hospitality to keep the board always spread, and provided with beer, meat, bread and cheese. Thus in the *Canterbury Tales* :

" His table dormant in his halle always,
Stood redy covered al the longe days."

The people of the Middle Ages were great feasters, and that on a large variety of dainty and carefully compounded dishes. It was not all roast beef and pudding then, any more than now, and the cook exercised his art in fine style, albeit his fire was on an open, often smoky hearth, and his pots and pans stood

over it on iron skids or triangles. One servant was always occupied with a bellows blowing the fire, just as to-day, in Italy, one maid must always stand to fan it. The order of the day, as told in the old doggerel, was, "Rise at five, dine at nine, sup at five, go to bed at nine." Families of means kept a minstrel and a chaplain; the latter having charge of holy water wherewith he liberally sprinkled the house and all things in it. The favorite house games were chess, dice, tables and draughts, in which the priest was to instruct and amuse his employer.

Ladies, and the majority of yeomen and gentlemen, seldom knew how to read or write. Sewing, weaving, spinning, and the cooking of dainties, occupied the ladies. Dancing, music, and the rearing of flowers were also part of their pleasures.

Wax candles were in use, also rush lights; torches were common, and horn lanterns. Bed furnishings were elegant and costly; so were chests for keeping goods; but cushions, carpets, and the like were unknown.

In these days people invested their surplus funds not in stock, nor in speculation, but in jewels, rich silks, and gold and silver tissues, which could be heirlooms and absolute part of the family wealth. Traveling merchants,

peddlers, and hawkers, carried these things from one castle, hall, town, and hamlet to the other, taking various sorts of goods to suit the differing rank of their buyers. We shall find the Lollards engaging in this business for a grave purpose.

Manners were very rude and coarse; gross tales excited the mirth of the domestic circle; there was little privacy or decency in family life; brawls and brutal assaults were common; parents were especially rough and severe with their children, kicking, beating and violently attacking even grown or married daughters and sons.

All the songs, tales, chronicles, and legal records of those days, show the clergy as the chief corrupters of morals.

Servants were treated with abominable cruelty, irons, scourging, starvation, maiming, and even death, being often their portion from the hands of their masters.

In an early metrical romance called "Doon of Mayence," the father thus exhorts his son: "Honor all the clergy, and speak of them fairly, but leave them to get as little of your goods as you can; the more they get from you, the more you will be laughed at, and you will never profit by enriching them." Yet in this same exhortation are precepts

concerning courtesy, truth, charity, and hospitality which would do honor to any age. In these evil days there were shining instances of bravery, of fidelity, of learning, of family love, of philanthropy, and these graces grew apace in the sunshine of God's truth which began by the Lollards to be spread abroad.

Knights, peddlers, mendicants and pilgrims made up the travelers of that time. Many, perhaps most people, seldom went twenty miles from their birthplace. Without books, journals, or traveling, we may fancy life became rather wearisome to our good grandfathers, and a guest was hailed with intense delight. Indeed, hospitality was one of the shining virtues of the Middle Ages; there may have been some selfishness in it, and the dreary lady, the roistering baron, the stolid yeoman, may have been more than paid for the bed and board of a stranger, by receiving from him the news, and being put *en rapport* with the world outside his own estate.

Every man's door was open to a stranger, unless his appearance or ways should be extremely suspicious or threatening; to deny shelter was a disgrace. The uninvited guest got the warm seat by the fire, the best place at the table, staid so long as he chose, and passed unchallenged on his way. Thus many

a stayer at home entertained some pilgrim from over the seas, some palmer who had knelt by the Holy Sepulcher, some wanderer who had seen great Rome, some merchant who could tell all the marvels of London, when London lay within the narrow limits of the city, and there was no bridge across the Thames!

In the fourteenth century education in reading, writing and Latin became more common among the sons of well-to-do families, and tutors were hired in some households to instruct the daughters; the copying and illuminating of manuscripts became a favorite employment for those of both sexes who were capable of it, and thus the way was open for a more rapid spread of the truth.

The Britons of this day were a bold, hardy, animal race, with great capacities in reserve. To the knowledge of these capacities they were beginning to awake, they were preparing to do their own thinking, to interfere concerning their own government, and in the making of their own laws. Tyrannical kings had oppressed them, but the barons wrested Magna Charta from almost or quite the worst of them; idle and greedy priests had dominated them, but a Wickliffe, and others like him, rose up to think, to read God's law, to

contrast it with man's law, and to scatter tracts on our duties to God and our neighbor, and on our God-given rights among the people, wherever they could be read.

Not only grave tracts went abroad but fables, tales, and satirical songs spread over the country, those who could not read catching them with marvelous readiness, and singing them at toil afield, beside the hearth, and after dinner at the table. Thus we find the "Vision of Piers Ploughman," written probably about 1362,* and his "Creed," which appeared earlier, so pervading the country that the clergy warn their people generally not to learn or repeat these works, and declare that no more such shall be written.

Piers Ploughman represents the condition of the peasantry of these days, ignorant, without teachers, at the mercy of the priests. He says thus :†

" After I have learned,
And *pater-ed* in my Pater Noster
Each point after the other,
And after all my Ave Maria
Almost to the end;
All my care is lost,
For I can not my creed,

*T. Wright's Ed. of Piers Ploughman, introduction, p. 10.

†We put it in readable modern English.

The priest will me punch,
And penance enjoin
As long as a Lent;
Flesh must I leave,
Even after Easter comes,
And that is hard fate,
When also every Wednesday
I am kept without meat."

This stirs the plowman to go to one who will teach him a plain creed out of the Bible, "without any jests of Rome." The creed taught is a confession of the main points of Lollard doctrine. This curious old poem is doubtless a correct picture of what occurred in many instances; errors in ritual called upon the luckless, teacherless churl the severities of his clergy; the priest both, as he says, "punched him," and ordered many Leuts in one year; the parishioner began to feel it a "hard fate" to be continually fasting, while his clergyman "ate the fat and drank the sweet."

Nor was this the only grievance; impositions and taxes accompanied every act of his life. When there was a marriage the priests demanded a gift from every wedding guest, until in some shires the people made rules that but two persons should attend a marriage as witnesses. When a child was christened, a fee to the limit of the parents' ability was

demanded, and this when among the peasants if a man were able seven years after marriage to buy a feather bed and a woven blanket, he was esteemed well off! The people paid the clergy one-tenth of every possession, and of all wages; they paid for every confession and every sacrament, and were usually taxed in pence or candles for their sins.

Extreme unction, declared to be needful to the departing soul, could only be had at cost of bequests, large in proportion to the means of the dying, and the priest and his assistants claimed as a mortuary the second best of all kinds of live stock, the best suit of clothes, the last garment, and the winding-sheet! In return for all these concessions what did they give? Sermons were nearly unknown, some underling sang the Hours, and hurried over the sacraments, and cursing the contumacious was the only rite thoroughly, freely and frequently performed.

From the time of William the Conqueror until Henry the Eighth, the clergy fully deserved all that Latimer said of them, when he stood preaching at St. Paul's Cross: "Who is the most diligent bishop and prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing his office? I can tell, for I know who it is. But now I think I see you all listening

and hearkeneth that I should name him. There is one that passeth all others, and is the most diligent preacher and prelate. Will ye know who it is? Then in good sooth I will name him, it is the devil. Among all the pack of them that have a cure, the devil shall go for my money, for he alone applieth himself to his business. Therefore, all ye never-preaching prelates, go, learn of the devil to be diligent in your office. Since ye will not learn of God, go to, learn of your master, the devil !”

Such as we have briefly described it was the “Merrie England” of the “good old times.” We are told that these good old times are gone forever. We are heartily glad of it, yet we opine they might readily return in their main features, if now, as then, the simple gospel faith of the churches of the Evangel could be well-nigh rooted out of the land, and Rome could rule according to the devices of her own heart among the nations.

We shall now look at that Lollardism which came out to meet the giant of iniquity; came out as David, a stripling and slightly armed, advancing calmly in the teeth of wrath and threatening, confident in God.

CHAPTER IV.

“As thou these ashes, little brook, wilt bear
Into the Avon, Avon to the tide
Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,
Into main ocean they, this deed accurst
An emblem yields to friends and enemies,
How the bold teacher's doctrine, sanctified
By truth, shall spread throughout the world
dispersed.”

THE ONSET OF ROME.

THE earnest monition of Wickliffe to his pupils was like that often repeated by our Lord: “Go preach.” In answer to this exhortation a band of teachers spread through the British Isles. These carried copies of the whole or part of the Gospels, Psalms, or other portions of Scripture; copies also of Wickliffe's tracts, sermons, and excerpts from his lectures. With these precious parchments hung in a bag around his neck, a staff in his hand, and zeal for souls in his heart, the early Lollard preacher went out into the highways and hedges to compel men to come into the kingdom of grace.

(48)

The abounding hospitality of the day gave these knight-errants of the Evangel an entrance into every home.

Behold the Lollard at evening knocking at some gate; the porter speedily admits him to the hall, the servants bring him a bath and brush his garments; between the master and mistress of the house he sits before the fire; the family, children, guests, servants, gathered around. He commends himself by telling the news of the country, court, king, and foreign lands; he skillfully leads the way to the colleges, the preachings, the new teachers; he offers to explain the new doctrines; as he does so the better natures around him are stirred, these teachings rouse them to a loftier manhood, and commend themselves to the national common sense. But English caution asks, "Are these things true?" "They are in the Bible, the Word of God, which Master Wickliffe translated out of Latin* into the English tongue. See, here are portions." All now feast their eyes on the fairly written parchment, and the Lollard begins to read. Conversation becomes general. Some one in the family, glad to show his little used learn-

*Wickliffe's translation was not made like Luther's from Greek and Hebrew, but from the Vulgate.

ing, takes the roll and also reads. The evening meal is spread; the stranger sits at his host's right hand, and still the talk of spiritual things goes on. The minstrel is near with his harp; the obliging traveler offers to supply him with a new strain, and carefully teaches him one or two of the Psalms; the ready singer quickly catches words and music. Now all the retainers are called in, and the Lollard preaches to them—Jesus. There is one in the family who can write; he searches out a bit of vellum, perhaps the back or margin of some deed or charter, kept in the chest in the bed-chamber, and begging the loan of the guest's roll, laboriously copies the Scripture by the flame of a torch, until his vellum is covered, or perchance the night has gone.

Early in the morning, after prayer, teaching perhaps the Lord's Prayer in English, and explaining how each one may reverently in his own words address God, the Lollard goes his way. The household have entertained an angel unawares; the seed of life has been sown in their hearts, a good work is begun among them, and God gives it an abundant increase.

Meanwhile the Lollard, passing on his journey, sees a laborer in the field; he follows by

his side as he plows or sows, tells of Jesus the surety for man, of faith in God, of prayer at all times, that it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but by the precious blood of Christ that we are reconciled to God; and he leaves the poor man with a bright hope amid the darkness of his life, and an heir of the glory that is to follow.

The beggar by the roadside, the knight going homeward, the traveling merchant, learn from the Lollard's lips the love that God commendeth to men. At evening again he is in some poor hamlet, a mere cluster of huts. Here he shares some laborer's simple fare, lights a torch, bids them call their friends and their neighbors together, and far into the night he teaches, with patient care repeating passages of Scripture, until they are fixed in the memory; and over such a gathering there is joy among the angels of God, for the piece that was lost is found, the sheep that strayed is led into the fold, the prodigal has sought his Father's arms.

So also had the Lollard tinerant admission to the castle of the baron. Taken to the bower or boudoir of the lady, he was seated on a faldstool, while mistress, maids and daughters plied needle or distaff about him; answering all their questions, arousing their

curiosity, reading to them from his parchments, and perhaps if the lady could read giving her one, or lending it to her for a few weeks for copying; telling the same wondrous news in the hall when the baron came in from sports afield, comforting the tired hearts with the thought that they could draw near to God without the secretly hated priest as an intermediary. The Lollards often won for Christ a castle at whose strong gates a king might have thundered in vain.

Nor was this the only form of mission work. Especially after persecution awoke, the Lollard frequently went forth as a peddler, taking such goods as he could afford to buy, or as his richer brethren in the faith could furnish him. With jewels, tissues, cloth of brocade, of gold and silver, Spanish gloves, French perfumes, Indian fans and muslins, gold beads, velvets, laces, the Lollard went his way, carrying a store of hidden parchments, large or small, and when his goods had obtained him entrance into a castle or manor-house, when the family were pleased with their purchases, he told of "the pearl of great price," of the "chiefest among ten thousand," of "Him who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor." Then he sold or gave a parchment where it would be used, entreating the new

possessor to multiply and distribute copies for Christ's sake, and so passed on, leaving his harvest to be reckoned at the great day of account.

By such means as these Lollardism spread through the country almost like a fire spreading over prairie or forest. "In a few years more than half the people of England became Lollards," says a papist of that time.*

During the reign of Richard the Second no one was executed for heresy, the papacy contenting themselves with censures, fines and curses,† and this especially because by reason of schism and wars it was in a weak and distressed estate.

The Lollards not only multiplied preachers, but writers, and satirical productions, such as we described in a previous chapter, stirred mightily the wrath of the priests. Copies of satires, puns and rhymes were often found nailed early in a morning to church doors. One for instance began on this wise: "I, Lucifer, king of hell, to my trusty and well beloved, the priests and canons of this church: My sons, I can not but commend you that in all things ye do our will and spread our doc-

*Henry Knyghton, Col. 2,664.

†Henry's Hist. of Gt. Britain, Vol. IV. p. 340.

trines, and defeat the kingdom of Christ," etc.

Owing to the violent animosity subsisting between England and Scotland in these days of war, the doctrines of Wickliffe did not spread in the northern kingdom during the fourteenth century.* They were carried into Wales and Ireland, but not extensively, and the light which began to arise in Scotland came from two other sources—the remnants of her own Culdeeism, and from the churches of the Evangel on the continent, with which Scotland then held more intercourse than with England.

Froissart, in his Chronicle, gives a dreary picture of Scotland in 1380, saying also, "so shall one find there no iron to shoe their horses, no leather for saddles or bridles, and all these things must go to them out of Flanders." With such merchandise as this went from the native land of Lollardy "glad tidings of great joy," which were welcomed in that rugged land, and have ever since thrived there marvelously.

In 1399 Richard the Second was deposed, and Henry of Lancaster reached the throne as Henry the Fourth. Not the nearest heir

*Henry's History, Vol. IV. ch. Religion.

to the crown, elevated to his new glory by rebels who might at any moment turn against himself, Henry looked for some power whereon to stay himself. In the Church of Rome he beheld either a most potent enemy, or an invaluable friend. The power of *interdict* claimed by that church could bend the most stubborn noble, and strike terror throughout the most resolute nation. This church the new-made and usurping sovereign resolved to bind to the interests of his throne. Arundel, now Bishop of Canterbury, was called to a conference with the king; no man then living was a more bitter foe to the Wickliffites or Lollards. Henry the Third had been Wickliffe's friend; Richard the Second had yielded to the entreaties of the bishops, and given a writ expelling the good doctor from Oxford; Henry the Fourth was to exceed this pious act, by doing all the will of the papacy.*

Arundel offered the support of the church to Henry the Fourth at the price of a decree against the Lollards. This decree authorized the bishops to imprison all persons suspected of heresy, to try them in spiritual courts, and if they proved to be obstinate or relapsed, the

*Lewis' Life of Wickliffe, ch. vi.

spiritual judge was to call the sheriff to be present when sentence was pronounced, and immediately to convey the condemned to some open elevated place, there to burn him to death in the sight of all people.*

This was the first statute for the burning of heretics passed in England; it is notable that it was given by a usurper, as the price of his usurpation, being sustained by Rome.

The clergy now made proclamation that it was a meritorious act to discover and accuse Lollards; that it was a mortal sin to hide, abet, or fellowship them, and also to extend to them any hospitality; parents were exhorted to appear against their children, wives against their husbands, "a man's foes were they of his own household."

A decree was passed for burning all the books of Wickliffe, and many were thus destroyed; but his pupils had multiplied copies of these precious works, and though it was a capital crime to possess or read them, there were many who held them dear as their lives, and, owing to their care, the chief part of the good doctor's works remain until now. At the Council of Constance, in 1415, it was de-

*Statutes, 2d. Henry IV. ch. xv. Wilkin. Concil. Tom. 3, p. 271.

creed that Wickliffe's bones should be exhumed and burned; holy church thus making what amends she might for letting so "false, heretical and erroneous a man" come to his grave in peace. This order was not executed until 1428, when the grave was opened and the moldering skeleton burned as required. The ashes were cast into a little brook called the Swift, a tributary of the Avon.

The clergy now made speed to avenge themselves on the Lollards for their opposition to papacy; every evil deed, every mischief that was perpetrated, was laid to the Wickliffites,* and no sooner was one accused than he was imprisoned, guilty or not, and often to be imprisoned was to mysteriously disappear forever.

That none should escape it was ordained that every man or woman who had private conventicles, "were *suspected* of heresy, had any writings in English, or who differed in *life and manners* from their neighbors should be imprisoned until their case could be considered."† The way this provision worked is exhibited in Chaucer's "Squire's Tale" in the prologue. A man asking a traveling par-

*Cotton's Abridgment, p. 555.

†Lewis' Life of Wickliffe, p. 108. Ed. of 1723.

son for a story adjures him by "God's bones" and by "God's dignity," favorite oaths of that profane day.

"The parson answered him, 'benedicite,
 What ails the man to swear so fearfully?'
 Our hoste answered,
 'I smell a Lollard in the wind ,
 This Lollard here will preachin us somewhat.'"^{*}

Thus if a man did not willfully and constantly break almost every commandment in the decalogue he was in danger of being put in dungeon on accusation of heresy!

Under such laws as these, terrible sufferings and crime became common. Hitherto the only Lollards who had died for the truth were some who had come as refugees or missionaries out of the Pays-bas in Henry the Second's reign, who were branded on the face, stripped, beaten, and in the midst of winter turned out bleeding and naked into the fields, all persons, on pain of excommunication, being forbidden to aid or feed them. Thus more than thirty foreigners, servants of Christ, perished miserably between London and Oxford of cold and starvation.†

But now brother was to deliver brother to

^{*}Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

†William de Newburg, *Histor. Lib. II.*

death ; English tribunals at the beck of a foreign potentate were to condemn Englishmen to death, for no transgression of the civil law, but merely for having a Bible in the English tongue, and for walking soberly, honestly, and justly in this present evil world.

Mild measures with heretics were henceforth to be accounted a sin. One Dr. Reynolds Peacock, Bishop of St. Asaph and of Chichester, who having studied the Lollard doctrine, thought it well to make some concessions to them, as "that the church might possibly err," and "that it is not needful to salvation to believe that Christ really descended into hell," who also wrote several works of argument in English and preached a series of sermons to Lollards, endeavoring by argument, by entreaty, by tenderness, to win them to return to the church, was arrested, condemned, deposed from his bishopric, and finally sent to the Abbey of Thorney, to be kept a close prisoner. "In one close room, without books—permitted to speak to no one but the abbot, and fed on the fare of the abbey servitors."* He, being of advanced age, died, as might be expected, under these "tender mercies of the wicked."

*Lewis' Life of Dr. Peacock, pp. 256, 257. Ed. of 1744.

The first outbreak of clerical wrath, armed so abundantly with fire and sword, as may be imagined appalled the Lollards; cursing they were prepared to meet; that they should be caught like murderers, denied even the trial and right of sanctuary that murderers could claim, and be condemned to be burnt, and moreover previously tortured, was a fate that had not heretofore appeared within the range of possibilities. What wonder that before such an onset of Satan the ranks of these new volunteers in the hosts of God wavered, reeled, broke for a little before they closed grandly up, and advanced in the face of the enemy firm as the apostles, the martyrs under paganism, and their brethren in Piedmont. One or two of these who bore the first brunt of the battle, and yielded in a measure, must here be noticed.

In 1389 William Swinderly, a priest in the diocese of Lincoln, became a Wickliffite, preaching evangelical doctrines in his parish church. He was accused by three friars. Just ten years before this date the mendicant friars had had an interview with Dr. Wickliffe, meeting a reception which they were resolved to revenge. The visit to Wickliffe was on this wise. The doctor lay ill, near to death. The friars entering his room exhorted him peni-

tently to recant all his sayings, writings and doings, especially that which he had said against monastic orders.

At this suggestion life returned to the apparently expiring divine.* He raised himself from his pillow and in a loud voice cried : " I shall not die, but live to declare the evil deeds of friars."

The friars fled in confusion, and Wickliffe recovered. The friars had this to avenge themselves for, and they seized on poor priest Swinderly, as they could not subdue his teacher. Swinderly was tied to a stake, and surrounded with dry fagots ; under this duress he promised to revoke his heresies and preach no more. Swinderly then removed to Hereford, deeply penitent for his fall, and unable to cease *living* Lollardism, and consorting with Lollards. Persecuted again by friars, and cited before the bishop, his answer now was full of " heretical pravity," and Swinderly disappeared from the world in the bishop's prison. How he died no man knows ; after his first failure he doubtless got grace to stand in the evil day and witness a good confession. A friend of Swinderly was Walter Brute, a layman, grad-

*Lewis' Life of Wickliffe, pp. 64, 65.

uate of Oxford. Walter Brute, ordered to answer for himself, prepared two elaborate treatises in Latin, on questions then in controversy, condemning Romish errors of auricular confession, absolution, and the like, and demanding the Scriptures as the ultimate rule of his faith. He also declared Rome to be Babylon. The pope, Boniface the Ninth, issued a bull against Lollards, and Walter Brute in particular, and the king wrote two letters against him. Thus pressed and threatened with a violent death, poor Walter showed much less courage than many an unlearned man a little later, for he promised "to obey his bishop, and hold his peace as a layman ought."*

Matilda, a nun, Margaret Caily, a nun, William Smith, Roger Dexter, and Alice, his wife, being accused as Lollards, after argument and imprisonment agreed to return to their church. Thus did Rome fairly begin war on the Lollards.

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, Book V.

CHAPTER V.

“ Not so her young ; for their unequal line
Was hero's make, half human, half divine ;
Their earthly mold, obnoxious was to fate,
The immortal part assumed immortal state ;
Their fate was fruitful and the sanguine seed,
Endued with souls, increased the sacred breed.”

— *Dryden's Hind and Panther.*

RECRUITS TO THE NOBLE ARMY.

WITH Henry the Fourth the house of Lancaster reached the British throne by the banishment of the legitimate king and the exclusion of the elder houses of Clarence and York. For a period of nearly one hundred years the kingdom was distracted by the quarrels of the Red and the White Roses. The attention of historians has been almost entirely absorbed by the political contests of this epoch.

When the Reformation shook the world in the days of Henry the Eighth, the religious question was the dominant question of the day, and all its phases, and all the circum-

stances of the time, have been duly noted by many chroniclers. But in the century and a half from Wickliffe until Henry the Eighth's rupture with Rome, public and private feuds, treasons, treacheries, open wars, secret plots, insurrections, and treaties made but to be broken, occupy so much of the world's attention that the religious story of the time is very nearly forgotten.

From 1390 to 1490 there were seven kings in England. Henry the Seventh, a Lancastrian, secured peace by marrying Elizabeth of York, heiress of the rival house; in the person of their son, Henry the Eighth, these two families of claimants for the crown were finally united. During these times of trouble, the Romish Church never abandoned her object of extirpating heresy, and each sovereign that gained the scepter bought papal help by delivering the Lollards to their enemies.

The terrible spectacle of their friends and kinsmen burning on the public ways stirred the hearts of the commons of England, and they petitioned King Henry the Fourth to relax the severities against heretics; the lords and clergy however united to present counter petitions, declaring that nothing was so dangerous to the realm as Lollardy. The commons, in 1409, also presented a petition that

the surplus estates of bishops and abbeys, which were used for the support of extravagant luxury, might be taken away, and the king was assured that with these superabundant revenues of Rome he could support fifteen earls, one thousand five hundred knights, six thousand two hundred esquires, and one hundred hospitals.* Again the peers and lords spiritual interfered, and no church properties were diverted.

At this time the Lollards were supposed to number no less than one hundred thousand,† enough to make a stand for the inalienable rights of humanity; but they were most of them scholars, country people or artisans, scattered abroad in the land; arms, soldiers, money, laws, power, being all on the side of their adversaries. The watchword of the day was “turn or burn,” and even “turning” was no sinecure; a man who was tried on suspicion, nothing worthy of the stake being found against him, had “L” for Lollard, or “H” for heretic, burned with a hot iron on his cheek or forehead; and if a prisoner made full confession and humbly recanted, he was thereafter

*Walsingham, p. 879.

†History of Dissent. Introduction, p. 30. (Bogue and Bennett.)

to wear a pattern of a fagot on his right sleeve, to show that he was a brand plucked from the burning; add these ignominies to the facts that a horde of friars were always waiting to pounce on a man as relapsed,* and that his Lollard friends daily reproved him for denying the faith, while his own conscience arraigned him hourly, and the life of a man who recanted must have been doleful enough.

But while we are considering this first dawn of the Reformation, we must not forget one of the most famous men who lived in Wickliffe's day, and undoubtedly shared his sentiments—that "Morning Star of Song, who made his music heard below"—

"Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
The mighty times of Great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still."

The works of Chaucer show that he concurred with the noted Duke of Lancaster in favoring the Lollards. This duke, by the jealousy of the clergy, lost much of his high standing and great influence, on account of his sympathy with heresy. Gaunt of Lancaster was Chaucer's patron and best friend. In 1384 Chaucer used his popularity with the

*Fuller's Ch. Hist. Vol. III. p. 8.

people in favor of electing to the mayoralty of London, John of Comberton, who was a reformer on Wickliffe's principles, and peculiarly obnoxious to the clergy.* Comberton being re-elected the priests raised a riot, Comberton was imprisoned, and Chaucer fled to Zealand, where he shared his means with countrymen, refugees there for the same opinions.

Chaucer's works are full of flings against the Romish clergy, and of sly contrasts in favor of the purity of Lollard life, and the simplicity of their teachings. They were very popular from their first writing, and copies of them were multiplied. On his deathbed the poet declared that he did not regret one word that he had said against the priests, but wished much that he could annul all that he had written of license and debauchery, which must go down through all time for evil.

We now come to the proto-martyr of Protestantism in England. William Sautre, or Sawtre, otherwise Chantris, a parish priest of St. Oswyths, London. As Abel was the first martyr, Stephen the first Christian martyr, Alban the first British martyr, so William

*Life of Chaucer, by Alexander Chalmers, in "English Poets."

Sautre was the first of that glorious host, the English martyrs of the Reformation.

The fifteenth century opened with the arrest of this confessor. On Saturday, February 12, 1400, William Sautre was brought before Thomas Arundel, the persecutor of God's people, in the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey. Eight accusations were read against him. The first four were varied forms of presenting the fact that "he would not worship the cross, but only Christ that suffered thereupon." The fifth and sixth reject the worship of saints and angels; the seventh makes the startling assertion that it is rather the priest's duty to preach than to sing the Hours; the eighth declares that after consecration of the sacrament, the substance of bread and wine remain, their *nature* is unchanged.

Bishop Arundel gave until the Thursday following to Sautre to prepare his reply to these charges. During this time the good man counted the cost of adhesion to the truth, and faced death, until, by God's grace, it had no terror remaining for him. Sautre, again brought before the court, read a brief, plain answer to the eight charges, clearly reaffirming the opinions which had been attributed to him.

Said Arundel, "William Sautre, do you abjure your heresies?"

Sautre replied that he maintained his opinions, every one, as true and scriptural. Some dispute arising as to the presence of Christ in the sacrament, Arundel adjourned the court until the next day.

The next day the bishop demanded, "Will you accept the teachings of the Holy Church?"

Sautre replied, "Yea, where she teacheth not contrary to the word and spirit of God." It was then demanded if he esteemed the "bread after consecration the very same body of Christ that was formed in the womb of the Virgin, born in Bethlehem, hung on the cross, and now sitteth in heaven."* As became a reasonable man, and a Bible reader, William Sautre replied that he believed nothing of the kind.

Sautre was now sentenced to be degraded from the priesthood and burned. On the 19th of February, Arundel, six bishops, a number of priests and lesser clergy, assembled in St. Paul's Cathedral to see Sautre deposed. The prisoner was clad in all the habiliments of the priesthood, and given also the candle, exorcist's book, censer and other emblems that

*Henry's Hist. of Eng. Book V. Chap. II. p. 321

marked his successive steps to priestly office. These were then solemnly taken from him one by one; he stood calmly before his judges, caring little that they deprived him of these emblems of earthly honor, for he had "washed his robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," he was already anointed a "king and priest unto God," and was to go presently into the New Jerusalem "to serve God day and night."

The cap and gown of a secular were now put on the victim, and thus being to his entire content thrust out of the pope's kingdom, he was handed over to the executioner, who was to pave for him with fire a very short road to the kingdom of glory.

King Henry the Fourth gave an especial decree for the burning of this faithful subject.* Sautre was then conducted to Smithfield, at that time an open country, which being a little elevated gave all true Christians full opportunity of beholding how an infallible church and a usurping king dealt with heretics. The mayor and sheriffs of London, and a great body of friars, were present at the burning to give it impressiveness and pomp.

After the execution of Sautre, the Lollards

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, pp. 262, 263.

began to try and hide themselves; the richer people providing places of concealment where they might fly from arrest. Precautions were also taken to make their Scripture readings, their preachings and other assemblages, characterized by the bishops as "conventicles," more secret.

The edict of the king had also increased the opposition to him in his realm, and conspiracies became even more numerous. The ex-king Richard was slain in prison, and his dead body carried, by order of Henry, uncovered through the streets of London, that all hope of his restoration might be taken from the people. Articles deposing Henry were written and nailed to the church doors by unknown persons. One reason given for this deposition was that he had "wickedly ratified a most evil statute, limiting the distribution of benefices in the Church of Rome." Thus showing that all his concessions, and his cruelty to his Lollard subjects, had not secured for him the hearty support of a church which is never contented except when plotting against the civil power.

In the quarrel that ensued upon these articles, Scrope, Archbishop of York, was seized as a traitor and beheaded. This highly outraged the Papal Church, and Thomas Arun-

del became the more overbearing in his demands, and vowed to hide the blood of Scrope under rivers of the blood of Lollards.

Owing, however, to the insurrections, in which the bishops were as interested and brought as many soldiers to the field, taking as active a part as any of the barons, attention was diverted from the heretics in a measure, and as they conducted themselves with great caution, several years passed before a second martyr joined William Sautre in heaven. Arundel, however, returned to the charge and set forth thirteen "constitutions," requiring the instant extirpation of heresy, and the conviction of heretics. For so humble a person as Thomas Badby, layman, tailor, was reserved the honor of the second place on the roll of these early martyrs.

Arundel had appointed in the churches additional honors to be paid to the Virgin, whom he declared to be the peculiar patroness of the English nation. These innovations aroused the indignation of William Thorpe, a clergyman, who had studied under Wickliffe; he was a man of uncommon learning for his age. His evangelical sermons, in 1407, awakened the rage of Arundel, who threw him into Saltwood Prison. As the trial of Thorpe preceded Badby's by two years, we describe

it first, though it eventuated in a different manner. Thorpe was called up for examination on Sunday. Said Arundel to him: "William, I know right well that these twenty years thou hast traveled in the north country, and about all England, sowing seeds of heresy. I will see to it now that thou poison no more of my sheep. Still, if thou wilt kneel down and abjure thy doctrines, thou shalt find me gracious."*

Thorpe here asked leave to state his belief. This being granted, he spoke eloquently on the chief points of Christian faith, and then asked what remained for him to abjure. The bishop said, "Forsake all the opinions that Lollards hold; favor none of them, man, woman, nor child; but exert thyself everywhere to withstand them, and their damnable opinions. This thou shalt do." Says Thorpe, "I thought in my heart that this was an unlawful demand, and I deemed myself accursed of God if I consented thereunto. 'Sir,' I said, 'you would make me every bishop's spy, and the work of a spy agrees not with any part of Christ's doctrine. If I yield to you I shall be cursed of God, from which evil may Christ's grace keep me and all true people.'"

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, p. 270, Book V.

This reply infuriated the bishop, who shouted, "O thou Pharaoh, repent quickly, or thou shalt follow William Sautre to Smithfield."

"At this," says Thorpe, "I stood musing pleasantly, for I thought in my heart that God did me great grace that he would in his mercy bring me to such an end; yet was I sorrowful for him, that he did not yet repent of his shedding the blood of Sautre." Thorpe then lifting his head gave some history of his early life, and of "Wickliffe, his holy teacher, whose learning and living were in accord with the living and teaching of Christ Jesus."

After a long contention, Thorpe was returned to prison. The latter part of April saw Thorpe again before the bishop. There was another great controversy. Hearers of Thorpe's sermons were called as witnesses, also a man who, in the guise of a disciple, had visited him in prison. Thorpe having said that God gave him joy in his heart, Arundel cried loudly, "By St. Thomas, I will turn thy joy into sorrow." "Thou shalt go into prison," said the bishop, "and for this pearl of price whereof thou pratest, I will put a pair of pearls on thy legs, will make thee cry me for mercy." "Make no more ado, my lord," said a clerk, "the sea is handy, let us fling him in and be done with him." Says

Thorpe, "Then was I menaced, rebuked, and so scorned on every side, yet stood I still and said not a word."

Thorpe was then conveyed to a "very strait dungeon and ironed." Shortly after his friends saw him for the last time, and got his parchments from him. Light and means of writing were then prohibited him, and he was never more heard of; he perished in prison either of disease or starvation. So died John Ashton, another pupil of Wickliffe.

We now reach the year 1409, and find John Badby, tailor, on trial for his life. The charge against him was that he denied the bread on the altar to be "very God," and said "the priest had no more power to create God than had John of Bristol, the baker!" Being kept in dungeon from March 1st to 15th, and then being brought to court, as he was unlearned, all the proceedings were read to him in English. But though John knew not Latin, he was versed in the gospel, and brought the Scripture to prove that Christ is only present to faith, and that the bread contains neither "body, blood, bones, soul, nor divinity."

Finding that John was not to be argued out of his convictions, the bishop endeavored

to terrify him, but John avowed himself ready to die if need be for the truth. A number of gentlemen and lords being present compassionated the honest poor man, and endeavored by soft words to persuade him to confess that he knew nothing, but that the Holy Church must be right in all her teachings. John had, however, a witness in his heart which he could not deny.

Arundel made now short work; he concluded the trial, it being yet forenoon, and sent to the king for a writ of execution, which came to him by midday. In the afternoon Badby was carried in the midst of a great crowd to Smithfield. A stake was planted there, the martyr was chained to it, a barrel, having the top and bottom taken out, was pulled over him, and fagots and other combustibles were piled around.

Just as the writ had been read, and the torch was about to be applied, a merry pageant from the court passed that way. The heir of the kingdom, Shakespeare's "Bluff Prince Hal," went to or from some scene of revelry. Perchance he had in his train Falstaff, Bardolph and Poins. The woeful spectacle of John Badby standing in a barrel, ready for burning, was not to the gay Prince's mind. He rode quickly up to the scene, and as he could

not deny the writ, ordered a short delay, while he tried the ready tongue, which so often beguiled his royal sire, on this poor artisan.

“Prithee, poor fool,” he said, “wilt thou not let these curious questions be, and trust, as I do, in Holy Church? It pains me much to see thee in this plight; for my sake submit thyself to the bishop, and I will be thy friend.” Badby replied that by so recanting he should lose the friendship of Jesus, the Lord of Angels. Change he could not.

After a little more parley, the Prince offered Badby a house, rent free, and an annuity from his own exchequer if he would forego burning, and yield to the church. He who was just entering into “an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away,” was not to be beguiled by these offers, and the fire was lit. Fearing, perhaps, for his own fortitude when he began to feel the flame, Badby lifted his arms, and cried to God for strength.

The Prince dashed at the fire, scattered the flames, and shouted, “Prithee, poor fool, wilt make the sign of the cross, and thou shalt go home with me as thy fast friend.” The scorched martyr, who already saw the open portal of his house not made with hands, whose crown was even now reached to him

from the skies, replied, "Torment me not. God forbid that I should make peace with the synagogue of Satan."

The Prince rode sadly off toward Snow Hill, the executioner rekindled the fire, and John Badby, who had been faithful unto death, entered rejoicing into life.

CHAPTER VI.

“With grief and gladness mixed, the mother viewed
Her martyred offspring, and their race renewed;
Their corpse to perish, but their kind to last,
So much the deathless plant, the dying fruit surpassed.”
—*Dryden's Hind and Panther.*

RESISTING UNTO DEATH.

ONE would think that his interview with the dying Badby would have so impressed Prince Hal's mind, that when he came to the throne, in 1463, he would have refused to sign any writs for executions for heresy; but Henry the Fifth was in the same case as his father; his royalty was unstable, foes were numerous, he needed the help of the Holy Church, and he bought it by filling for her that cup of saints' blood of which she delights to drink.

All Lollards were not so steadfast as John Badby. A more learned man, John Pavey, “the library of the Lollards, and the glossary upon Wickliffe,”* being with Hereford, a

*Vide Thomas Waldon, Opera.

doctor of divinity, grievously tormented, recanted at St. Paul's Cross. He probably recanted his recantation, for as late as 1421 he was again seized and imprisoned for heresy. So haughty did Arundel become, that he tried four persons for heresy, because they brought fodder for his horses in sacks under their cloaks, instead of in carts, "as became the honor of the See of Canterbury."*

We now reach a very dreary page of English history, the persecution and martyrdom of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham of Rochester, the first author and the first martyr among the nobility of England.† Lord Cobham was born John Oldcastle, in the reign of Edward the Third; he took his famous title from his father-in-law, marrying the heiress of the Cobhams of Rochester. In the reign of Richard the Second he aroused the hate of Rome by his zeal for the statute *premunire*. Acquaintance with the works of Wickliffe had enlarged the mind and enlightened the heart of this peer, and the reformation of the church was his dearest wish. Cobham, his father-in-law, had been greatly

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, Book V. p. 281.

†Moore's Ed. of Fox's Book of Martyrs, p. 223. Lond. Cassell & Petter.

opposed to Richard the Second, and John Oldcastle Cobham became one of the brightest ornaments of the Court of Henry the Fourth. While Henry the Fourth was in Ireland suppressing a rebellion, Cobham, with Sir Richard Story and Sir Thomas Latimer, openly attached himself to the Reformers, and presented to the Commons a number of articles on the abuses of the clergy. The king, summoned by the bishops from Ireland, put a stop to these reforming measures, but did not withdraw his favor from Lord Cobham.*

Cobham made no secret of his opinions, and employed nearly a hundred scribes in copying the works of Wickliffe, which he freely gave to those who could read. He also maintained a number of Lollards as itinerant preachers, and his house became a headquarters for all who were in danger of persecution. Of him Shakespeare says :†

*Wm. Gilpin's *Life of Lord Cobham*, p. 108. Ed. 1765. Lond.

†There is a very rare and curious play of Shakespeare, written for the Earl of Nottingham, Lord Admiral of England. The date is 1600, and but two or three copies exist. One is in the Library of the British Museum; its title is: "The First Part of the True and Honorable History of the Good Lord Cobham."

“There’s one, they call him Sir John Oldcastle,
He has not his name for naught, but like a castle
Doth he encompass them within his wall;
But till that castle be subverted quite
We ne’er shall be at quiet in this realm.”

This was the feeling of the Romish clergy who pressed the king on every side to abandon Cobham to them. The noble lord, however, had been a valiant soldier, his great learning gave him power over the king, and his wealth, estates, and numerous retainers made him a man of mark, dangerous to attack. The dramatist says, in the play just quoted: “My Lord Cobham is a brave lord; he keeps good beef and beer for all his house, and every day feeds one hundred poor, and has one hundred tall fellows well armed in his castle yard.”

When Henry the Fourth died, in 1413, the clergy feared that their hope was lost, and that the dissolute, good-natured “Hal,” who abhorred “heretic burning,” would betray their cause. They soon found him as good an ally as his father, and for the same reason.

A convocation was called at Oxford to discuss the spread of heresy, and it was solemnly declared that Lord Cobham was the chief abettor of the Wickliffites, and as such worthy of death. Arundel, therefore, prayed the king to hand the delinquent over to the

clergy to be burned. Henry the Fifth objected that he liked burning but little, especially burning such a worthy knight as Cobham; therefore he would reason with the delinquent and reduce him to obedience. The king having reasoned, Cobham's answer is on record: "I profess, next to God, obedience to your majesty; this will I ever hold; but as for the spiritual dominion of the pope, I never could discern foundation therefor, nor can I pay him obedience. As sure as God's word is true, to me it is fully evident that he is the great Antichrist foretold in Holy Writ."

This answer, so flatly against the church to which he was by all worldly considerations bound, angered the king, who presently gave the archbishop leave to cite Cobham before the spiritual court. The summons being served, Cobham refused to regard it, but as the storm against him increased, he drew up a confession of his faith and took it to the king. Henry refused to receive it, and ordered him to give it to Arundel. Cobham then, as a knight, demanded a court of his peers, desiring a hundred knights in the court to sustain his cause. The king refused this, and asked if he would submit to the archbishop and take what penance he imposed. Lord Cobham replied that he would not, and he

was then arrested and committed to the Tower, as a traitor.

On September 23, 1413, Cobham was brought before the bishops, sitting in the Chapter House of St. Paul's. His lordship refused to answer a word, referring his judges entirely to his carefully written paper. The next day the bishop sent him a paper containing "four articles which Holy Church hath determined."* They declared: 1st. The very body and blood in the sacrament. 2d. The absolute duty of confession to a priest. 3d. The sovereign power of the pope as true vicar of Christ, and successor of Peter. 4th. The merit of pilgrimages, and the duty of worshipping saints and angels.

On the twenty-fifth of September Cobham being again brought before court, the bishop said, "I told you on Saturday that we held you accused." "Yea," said Cobham, cheerfully, "but God said by his prophet Malachi, 'I will curse your blessing.'" After a long discussion of all the points in question, in which Cobham invariably got the better of his adversaries, the bishop declared him guilty as a heretic, and condemned him to death. He was then returned to the

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, p. 284.

Tower. Here Cobham wrote to his friends a statement of his faith, of which they multiplied copies, which were distributed throughout London. The clergy, to counteract this, wrote a form of recantation, forged Cobham's signature, but so poorly that few were deceived by it, and scattered copies freely.

The feelings of the populace were so excited, and the knights so resented the treatment of their brother in arms, that Arundel dared not carry out the sentence. The prisoner lay some months, therefore, in the Tower, and at last solved his difficulties for the present* by escaping one night, by what means could never be discovered, and flying into Wales. Here he remained four years.

Meanwhile Arundel sought to console himself for this defeat by burning Master John Brown, John Beverly, a preacher, and thirty-six unlearned men, who were Lollards. These perished in January, 1414, at St. Giles' Fields. In February, Arundel, who had been so liberal of fire to his fellow mortals, was suddenly summoned before the bar of a Judge far more potent than himself, and probably

*Gilpin's *Life of Cobham*, p. 135. *Shakespeare's Honorable Story*.

condemned to a fire that shall never be quenched. His tongue swelled so as to remain immovable, and thus he perished of slow starvation in the midst of the luxuries of his palace.

Though Arundel was dead, his spirit lived in his successor, Henry Chichesley. Chichesley and the king offered a great sum of money for the apprehension of Lord Cobham, and at the end of four years he was betrayed in Wales to his enemies, by Lord Powis, a former friend.

This occurred in December, 1417. He was at once re-condemned to death as a heretic and traitor. The order was to convey him through London, from the Tower to St. Giles' Field, without Temple Bar, and there to hang him up in chains over a slow fire, that he might be burned to death. This horrible sentence, full of the diabolical cruelty of Rome, was executed to the letter. "The good Lord Cobham," the chief glory of England in that evil time, was slowly burned to death in January, 1418. There was present at this execution, Sir Thomas Erpingham, Lord Warden of Dover Castle, who had come with Henry the Fourth from Brittany. The dying martyr entreated this nobleman to become a friend to the Lollards, and to use his influence

with Henry the Fifth in their behalf. The last breath of John Oldcastle was thus spent in intercession for his brethren, an intercession that fell unheeded on the Warden's ears, but was doubtless recorded on high.

Thus died one, of whom Shakespeare says—

“ His virtue shone above the rest,

A valiant martyr and most noble peer.”

When Henry Chichesley succeeded Arundel, Pope John XXIII., of notorious profligacy, was contending for the tiara with two antipopes, and the three filled not only Rome, but all Europe with mutual cursings and recriminations. England adhered to John, and though that primate was too busy to urge on persecutions, Chichesley prosecuted them with much spirit. We find this prelate in one of his decrees of this date describing the Sabbath as “The Lord's Day, viz: the seventh day of the week, which the Lord did bless and make holy, and whereon he rested from all his labors.”* This announcement of the Christian Sabbath gives us a fair idea of the shining abilities of this dignitary.

In August, 1415, John Clayton, a furrier, who could not read, was accused of heresy because he had a copy of a tract of a Wick-

*Wilkinson's Collections, pp. 360-365.

liffite, called the Lantern of Light, which he had read to him by his friend John Fuller, and which he greatly approved. Clayton was a very obstinate heretic, for he had not repented of his ways although he had been treated to two years' imprisonment in Conway Castle, and three in the Fleet Prison. Chichesley said that the Lantern of Light was the vilest book that he had ever read, and contained fifteen distinct heresies.* Clayton was promptly condemned to conclude his heresies by dying at Smithfield. He was accompanied to the stake by a crowd of citizens. The day was dark, but suddenly as the flames curled up, the sun burst through the clouds and shone brightly upon the dying confessor.

“Thus as he finished all his race,
A light shone on his lifted face,
God's glory from his dwelling-place.”

Chichesley now issued a decree that three of the best inhabitants of every parish should be solemnly sworn to spend their time making diligent inquiry after Lollards. This decree was published in 1416, and presently every prison was full of the suspected.

From the death of Cobham in 1418, until

*Henry's History of Great Britain, Vol. V. p. 335, chapter II.

1423, there are few burnings on record; imprisonments, many *disappearances*, confiscations and brandings fill up the story. In August, 1422, Henry the Fifth died, being then with his army at Blois. His only child was less than a year old, and the Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester were appointed guardians of the infant and his kingdom.

At the date of Henry's death, Chichesley had in prison a priest named William Tailor. This man seems to be one of the most timorous and the least instructed in the Wickliffite doctrines of any who suffered death. He twice submitted or recanted, and in many points his opinions seemed to differ little from his persecutors. A constant malice, however, pursued him, and after all his hesitation he seems to have been enlightened of God during his imprisonment, for he appeared in 1422 with more confidence before his judges, and was enabled to die bravely for the truth. Three priests, Abraham, White and Waddon, who had presumed "to preach the gospel," were also burned during this year. White had married, and Fox says that "his wife, following her husband's footsteps according to her power, teaching and sowing abroad the same doctrine, confirmed many in the truth.

She also suffered much trouble and punishment at the hands of the bishop."

A woman named Margery Backster was accused of heresy, the first count in her indictment being that she had bade her neighbor not to swear lest it destroy her soul; and, second, that she held that God alone should receive divine worship!

Apropos of these accusations against Dame Backster, we have a writing of a popish priest named Reinher, who set forth a tract against heretics, and gives "the marks whereby they may be discerned,"* in all simplicity, in this wise: "The followers of Wickliffe are men of serious, modest deportment, avoiding all ostentation in dress, mixing little with the busy world, and complaining of the debauchery of mankind. They maintain themselves wholly by their own labor, and utterly despise wealth, being fully content with bare necessaries. They are chaste and temperate; are never seen in taverns, nor are they amused with the gayeties of life. Yet you will always find them employed, either learning or teaching. They are concise and devout in their prayers, blaming an unanimated prolixity. They never swear, and

*Quoted in Gilpin's Life of Lord Cobham, p. 109.

speak little, and in their public preaching lay the chief stress upon charity." One would suppose this to be a panygeric, but no, it is a description like that in a passport, or a police gazette, given in sober earnest, for the more ready arrest of these culprits! Those who have read the frequent descriptions given of Waldenses, Albigenses, and other continental evangelicals, from 900 to 1600, will see that the terms are almost identical; truly these martyr churches had indeed "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." We might add one foe, one death, one reward in glory.

In one of the trials, in 1430, William Wright, an accuser of the brethren, deposed that he had been to Lollard meetings as a spy, and that they there taught that by reason of sore persecution the Lollards themselves might expect to be destroyed, but that nevertheless their doctrines should live, and in course of time be triumphant in the land, so that Lollardism should get the advantage over all its enemies.*

This indeed has been fully accomplished. The plant which these saints nurtured with their blood has grown into a goodly tree and covers the earth with its branches. The once

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, p. 344, Book VI.

despised nickname of Lollard has become a glorious title of renown, significant of white robes, crowns, palm bearing, and eternal honors at the right hand of God.

The church history of Scotland is during this age very obscure; wars abounded as in England, and learning yet more greatly languished. A number of Wickliffites persecuted in England fled into Scotland, and one of these, John Risby, having given himself to teaching, and attracting the notice of the clergy by making converts, was burned for heresy in 1407. The Church of Scotland held to Pope Benedict XIII. longer than did any other. The Council of Constance deposed Benedict and also John XXIII., and elected Martin V. The Abbe of Pontiniae was sent to Scotland to make friends for the new pontiff. After a stormy debate, at Perth, Martin was acknowledged as pope.* The Council of Basil deposed the successor of Martin, Eugenius IV., but the Scots held to him. In 1444, Kenedy of Dunkeld attended the Council of Florence, and was made Bishop of St. Andrews. He was related by blood to the king, and being a man of learning he had studied the history of the Wickliffites, the

*Fordun's *Scotichson*, Vol. IV. p. 1186.

followers of Huss, and the controversies with the Waldensian churches. By this means his mind was enlightened and he set himself, both by example, precept and authority, to reform the church under his charge. The manners of the clergy, and the absurd rites and superstitions of Rome engaged his attention, and he lived to combat them. Unhappily in that evil age he was able to accomplish very little of the good he so earnestly desired.

Meanwhile the baby king of England was in the midst of confusion. In 1425 a hot quarrel began between the Lord Protector, Gloucester, and Henry, the haughty Bishop of Winchester. The Duke of Bedford reconciled these foes once and again, but when he died, in 1436, the strife broke out with new fury. Meanwhile, in 1430, the little king, then nine years old, was crowned at Westminster, and two years after at Paris, the cardinal, lord bishop of Winchester, being present on both occasions.

The quarrels of the prelate and Gloucester occasioned the loss of all the advantages gained on the continent during several preceding reigns. The Church of Rome seemed doomed to spoil England abroad by degrading her before her foes; to weaken her at home by destroying for heresy so many of

her best and wisest citizens, and by exhausting the wealth of the kingdom, sending it in immense sums to the pope and foreign cardinals, and also by training up the young monarch in those vices which later occasioned the misery of civil war and the loss of his crown. If David of Scotland was, as said James, "a sair saint for the crown," Rome was a sair church for England.

In every county of England "men were now standing sentinels against the great army of God's enemies, waiting until Luther should be sent to relieve them."*

Of all the counties of England, it is said that Buckinghamshire, one of the least, had the honor of producing the most martyrs. Here branding was carried to great lengths, but, as says Fuller, "It was seen that God's children though burnt did not dread the fire," for they continued to hold and teach the gospel, and read their precious fragments of the English Bible, so that many who had been branded came afterward to the stake.

*Fuller's Ch. Hist. Vol. III. ch. I. p. 7, book 5.

CHAPTER VII.

"A man that xuld of trewthe telle,
Withe grete lordys he may not dwelle,
In trew story as klerkes telle,
Trewthe is put in low degrà.
In holy cherche he shall not sytte,
Fro man to man thy xuln him flytte,
It rewit me sore in mine wytte,
Of trewthe I have gret petà."

—From a minstrel's song book of the fifteenth century, in the
British Museum.

STEADFAST IN THE FAITH.

RUNNING nearly parallel with the history of the Lollards in England is the story of the Hussites of Bohemia. Huss was an ardent student of Wickliffe's books, which were so scattered in copies through Bohemia that an especial burning was ordained for them in Prague.* Two Lollards from Oxford were missionaries to Bohemia, and as they were prohibited from preaching they devoted themselves to frescoing walls

*Wiley's History of Protestantism, Part III.

with contrasts between popery and the gospel, and taught by this means. The Bohemians were well prepared for the sowing of the truth, for no century had passed without their having one or two teachers who had somehow caught glimmerings of light from the churches of the valleys, and who held the little candle high that all might see. Huss, a teacher like Wickliffe, met a harder fate than the English proto-reformer. Jerome of Prague shared such a death as Cobham. While men learned and simple were being executed for the faith in England, Bohemia's martyrs were also passing through the fires. The Council of Basil offered to allow Bohemians the sacrament in both kinds if they would in other matters conform to Holy Church.* The truth was finally stamped out in Bohemia in the ashes of its confessors.

But we must continue the story of the English Lollards. The poverty and ignorance of a man availed nothing to shield him from persecution; his poor neighbors were often not unwilling to purchase the favor of the dreaded priests by delivering up a heretic, and the priests themselves could satisfy their

*Fox' Acts and Monuments on Council of Basil and Bohemians.

hatred with less danger of popular tumult when the victim was humble and unknown. Among the lowly who suffered in these days was Richard Hoveden, a wool-winder of London. Archbishop Chichesley, who was a learned man as the times went, and given to reasoning on affairs, felt and said that the burning of martyrs usually excited the horror and compassion of the beholders, was apt to turn their hearts against the priests and toward that Lollardism that had so faithful witnesses, and indeed tended rather to increase than to destroy heresy. Therefore, the archbishop preferred brandings, dungeons, confiscations, scourgings and starvations, which might be privately performed, to public burnings, and though he was a bitter persecutor of Lollards, nothing pleased him so much as a recantation. When Hoveden was apprehended and brought before the clerical court, Chichesley exhausted all his arts and arguments to cause him to "turn." Richard could reason little, but he believed heartily, and all threats, instructions and entreaties failing, he, like one Faithful, in *Vanity Fair*, was by my Lord Hate-Good condemned to be burned to ashes at the stake; but in these days they who died of unnatural deaths were "better off than their fellows, because not only they soonest

arrived at the celestial city, but because they escaped the many miseries the others met on their journey.”* So behind the gaping crowd surrounding Richard Hoveden, as he burned on Tower Hill,† “there waited a chariot and a couple of horses for this Richard, who, as soon as his enemies had dispatched him, was taken up into it, and straight-way was carried through the clouds with sound of trumpet the nearest way to the celestial gate.”‡

The life of the persecuting Chichesley was not all smooth and pleasant. Martin V., the pope, and Henry Beaufort, Cardinal of Winchester, and uncle of the king, treated the Archbishop frequently with much harshness.§ A bull from the pope also imposed upon him the thankless and hopeless task of trying to force the Commons to annul the famous statute *Premunire*. Chichesley, appearing in Parliament, pleaded for this concession even with wringing his hands and tears,|| but the Commons were as little moved by his churchly

*Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, p. 9. "Vanity Fair and Faithful."

†Fabian.

‡*Pilgrim's Progress*, p. 102.

§Henry's *Hist.* Vol. V. p. 341.

||*Ibid.* p. 337.

woe, as was he by a martyr's pains, and *Premunire* and *Mortmain* remained on the statute books, earnest of good things to come.

But one martyrdom is recorded for 1431. Thomas Bagley, a priest, vicar of Monenden, near Malden, was arrested for being a stanch Wickliffite. He was brought to London and tried by the bishops. He was found to be a fearless and well instructed Lollard; he knew what he believed and could uphold the various articles of his faith from the Scripture; he knew also the heresies of Rome, and could disprove them from the Scripture; as for recanting, no idea of such wickedness entered his mind.

About the middle of Lent, Bagley was degraded at St. Paul's from the priestly office, and immediately after conveyed to Smithfield for burning. When he was chained to the stake he began in a loud, melodious voice to sing the *Te Deum*: "We praise thee, O God," and as the flames mounted higher, the martyr with uplifted face sang on, "Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory." Now his clothes were wrapped in fire and still he sang, "The glorious company of the apostles, praise thee." His *Te Deum* begun on earth in flames was to end in the

glory of God's presence, or rather was to go on ceaselessly through all the good æons of eternity.

That unfaltering voice rang on, "The noble army of martyrs, praise thee," and then the fires stopped his breath and the latest volunteer had joined that noble army. But he was not long to remain the last; a bright succession followed him, as a bright line had gone before. There is scarcely a street about old London that has not been trodden by martyrs; every ancient prison has had them within its walls; Smithfield, St. Giles, the Tower yard, and every hill have witnessed their burnings.

Already the prophecy or monition of the Lollard preachers was being fulfilled; the Lollards themselves were rapidly decreasing. The death of their teachers, the apprehension of their itinerants, the burning of their books, the continued prevention of their gatherings or conventicles, and the dangers and terrible death prepared for them, prevented their gaining adherents.

Meanwhile the papists were going from bad to worse. Archbishop Bouchier granted a commission for the reformation of his clergy, in which he says that* "many of the clergy,

*Wilkin. Concil. pp. 554, 573, 588.

both secular and regular, were ignorant, illiterate blockheads, or rather idiots, and as profligate as ignorant; spending their time in company of evil women; neglecting their cures; using their revenues in feasting and drunkenness; unwilling to pay the pope sixpence in the pound."

About this time several remarkable canons were made. By one every priest was compelled to preach at least four times a year; also to "explain to his people in English without any fantastical subtillies the articles of faith, the ten commandments, the two gospel precepts, the seven virtues, the seven sacraments," etc.* And here we shall notice two of the novelties of Romanism in England. Until 1466 the decalogue had been received in the Roman Church in Britain exactly as it stands in the Protestant editions of the Bible. This Convocation of York, in 1466, deliberately, in giving a form of the decalogue and explanations of the same to the clergy, for use as above commanded, omitted the second commandment, and cut the tenth in two to keep the number even; and this was the first time that this was done in England. Up to this date also the cup had been

*Ibid. 599-605.

given to the laity. It was now decreed to withdraw it. The doctrine of transubstantiation was now clearly set forth for the assent of every member approaching the sacrament, and the clergy were commanded on this wise: They were to teach the people "that the entire living and true Christ, body and blood, are given at once, under the form of bread, and, therefore, the cup is not needful to a full partaking; that the wine which had previously been given them was not a sacrament, but only mere wine to help them more easily swallow the bread." The clergy were also directed "to begin to withhold the wine in *small, obscure parishes at first*, that the custom might easily spread; and to exhort the people to swallow the bread without touching it with their teeth."* We see now when the united, unchangeable, infallible church introduced into England points which she now holds as essential and inalienable parts of her doctrines.

At this time the rage of the bishops against heresy, the zeal of the people to clear themselves of suspicion, and the entire withdrawal from the masses of writings in the English tongue, added to the sedulous prevention of

*Wilkin. Concil. pp. 662, 663.

all oral teachings, dragged the nation into a deeper spiritual darkness than had yet existed. Pictures and images were multiplied; new saints were made; new fasts and festivals adopted; pilgrimages were increased, and the sole pardoning power of many sins* was declared to remain in the pope. George Neville, Archbishop of York, enumerates no less than thirty-seven most horrible sins which the pope only can pardon.

Although the Romish Church was thus allowed by the king to make and unmake laws, to alter articles of faith, to bind and loose not only spiritually but physically, the friendship which she sold to the sovereign in consideration of these privileges was not potent to secure him on his throne.

The priest-reared Henry the Sixth gained the hatred of the nation. Rich provinces had been lost in France, the queen was odious to her subjects, her favorites were notorious, the Duke of Gloucester, Humphrey, a popular noble, was murdered. The hearts of the English turned from the house of Lancaster to that elder branch, the House of York, now represented by valiant men. Richard, Duke of York, was, by popular pressure upon the

*Ibid. p. 613.

council, made protector of the kingdom during an illness of Henry the Sixth. The recovery of the king occasioned the loss of this office, and a long war broke out, with varying successes. Victory one while remaining with Lancaster, and anon declaring for York, the Red and White Roses were almost drowned in rivers of blood.

Richard, Duke of York, fell at the battle of Wakefield, in 1460, but he left behind a son, Edward, Prince of York, claimant of the crown. In 1461 the city of London declared for Edward of York. Essex and Kent joined in the design of transferring the scepter to the ancient house. A council having listened to Edward's explanation of his rights, and to his charges against Henry the Sixth, unanimously declared that Henry of Lancaster had forfeited all title to the throne, and that the royalty devolved on Henry of York. The new king having come into the kingdom at the head of a nearly invincible faction, himself a daring spirit, a warrior of renown, and personally and mentally a great contrast to Henry the Sixth, the church lightly transferred her allegiance and support — being given always to side with the strongest, crowned Edward of York as she had crowned Henry of Lancaster, gave him her valuable

blessing, and asked in return only the life of the Lollards, who were now after almost a century of persecution nearly done to death. The young monarch, who cared only for his own safety and renown in his realm, and preferred leaving all spiritual questions to the church, readily agreed to all that the clergy demanded, and the reign of Edward the Fourth is famous in English history as that wherein all the claims of the church were most vigorously supported by the secular arm.*

In order to have a connected view of the civil government of this period, we have glanced over the wars and changes of a number of years of the reign of Henry the Sixth, to the accession of Edward the Fourth. We now return to the fortunes of the Lollards during these times. Between the death of Bagley, in 1431, and the year 1439, there seem to have been no burnings; the martyrdoms of these eight years were accomplished by famine and strangling in secret dungeons.

In 1439 Richard Wiche, priest, was con-

*Henry's History of Great Britain, Vol. V. ch. "Religion."

victed of preaching Lollardism.* Wiche was with all pomp deprived of his priestly office, and then conducted to Tower Hill to be burned. At the stake he professed his faith and exhorted the people. Expressing his unalterable conviction that the Lollards held the truth of God, and that God would justify them by the increase of their belief and its final victory over popery, Wiche said that the postern of the Tower might fall and sink, but Lollardy, founded on God's truth, should stand firm against every assault of the devil.

Some short time after Wiche's death, curiously enough, the ground under the postern of the Tower gave way, and the mighty mass sank. The people were filled with astonishment, and at once accounted Richard Wiche a prophet. They called the place where he was burnt holy, named him a saint, scraped up the earth where his ashes had fallen, to carry in bags as relics; made a great heap of stones over the stake, and offered their oblations and prayers. Secretly a cross was set up over this heap by night, and Wiche was named a saint, the common people thus canonizing him without help of Holy Church. This esteem of the martyr caused a loud

*Fabian. Perminger.

clamor against the churchmen, who, in dismay, fled to the king for protection. A writ was issued in 1440 forbidding all pilgrimages to the death-place of Wiche, also prohibiting praise of him as prophet or saint, or any honors being paid to his name. So great was the uproar about Wiche that copies of this writ were sent throughout the realm, and many people were arrested for disobedience to the new law. By this means the worship of the martyr was soon forsaken.

The fifteenth century is forever memorable for the invention of printing. We find much disagreement among authorities concerning the exact date of the discovery of this wonderful art, and quite as much discrepancy in the accounts of its introduction to England. The years 1440, 1446 and 1450 are all advocated as made glorious by the introduction of this invention; and so 1443, 1447, 1457, 1459 and 1464 are all assigned for the advent of English printing, while 1460 has numerous advocates. Of the first masters of this art in England, and the first use made of it, we shall write in the next chapter. This magnificent invention was sent by God for the rescue of the fainting and almost perishing church. Before this manner of multiplying books was found, a New Testament cost four

marks, forty pence. Now, three and four marks were esteemed ample salary for a curate for a whole year, so we may see how little likely the poor were to obtain such precious commodities as books. For want of books and authors the universities were decaying and preachers knew nothing of the Word of God in which to instruct the people.

To return to our history. Edward the Fourth having been crowned in 1461, when he was but nineteen years of age, in 1463 married, almost secretly, Elizabeth Grey, a knight's widow. This unfortunate step embroiled the weary country in new vexations and seditions, and was a little later the occasion of protracted wars.

It is owing to the very unusual distractions of this period—the ex-King Henry, his wife and son all raising and leading armies, Edward doing the same, and the lords who were estranged by his marriage causing revolt on their own account—that the history of the Lollard Church for a few years almost fades out of sight.

In 1473 a very godly man, John Goose, was tried for heresy. He was a man of like spirit with his brother John Huss in Bohemia, for Huss means Goose. John Goose was delivered one morning to John Belisdon to be

burnt at Tower Hill. The sheriff, loathing his duty, made bold to try a little proselyting on his own account, so he took Goose to his house and sat down earnestly to plead with him to abjure his errors. After long controversy: "Be content, kind sheriff," said Goose, "I am satisfied in my own mind and ready to die."

"I must then even burn thee, poor soul," said Belisdon, mournfully.

"There is one thing you can do," said John. "I am faint, give me my dinner, lest overcome bodily I play not the true man for my God."

Pleased to do some kindness for this victim, the sheriff laid before him a most excellent meal. Said Goose, as he ate, "Now do I take a most competent dinner, and in truth I shall pass through a sharp shower before I go to my supper." Having eaten, he heartily gave thanks in the hearing of all who stood by, and requested that he might be speedily led to the place of execution.*

This was the only public execution for heresy during the twenty-two years' reign of Edward the Fourth. Not that the Popish Church hated heretics less, for she was mur-

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, p. 756.

dering them by hundreds in Europe, but in England they had become fewer, and attention was distracted from them in those troubled times.

Edward left five daughters and two sons. Of Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, we shall speak hereafter. The eldest son was proclaimed king. He was then in his thirteenth year, and Gloucester was appointed regent or protector. The nominal reign of the unhappy boy lasted but two months. He was murdered in the Tower with his little brother, the Duke of York. This child, who died by the hand of an assassin, had been born while his mother was a fugitive in time of civil war, hiding in the sanctuary of a convent. The ending of this sad little life was worthy of its beginning.

The Holy Church, in the person of the Bishop of Lincoln, and other lords spiritual, had done her part to aid the new usurper, and blessed and crowned the Duke of Gloucester, Richard the Third, as readily as any preceding king.

The ungodly man was not destined to prosper. The Archbishop of Rotherham crowned him in 1483, but Warwick, "the king maker," whose strong hand set him on the throne, found it easy to stir seditions against

him. These continued after Warwick's death, until Henry, Earl of Richmond, reached the throne. In the dismal night after the battle of Bosworth, we catch a glimpse of the mutilated and naked body of Richard the Third tied across a horse, and dragged by hirelings to ignominious burial.

CHAPTER VIII.

“Then we serve God in alle wise,
He shall quitten us our service,
And give us gifts the most of pryse,
And heaven to be our heritage.”

—*Carol from manuscript of the fifteenth century.*

THE LOLLARDS AND THE PRINTERS.

THE Earl of Richmond, of the house of Lancaster, was on the bloody field of Bosworth crowned Henry the Seventh, with a crown of ornament that had fallen from the head of his defeated rival, Richard the Third. Henry had scarcely a shadow of a claim to the scepter, beyond his own ambition and determination, being not even a legitimate heir of the family of Lancaster, and several descendants of York yet remaining. Henry had, however, valor, ability, friends, the hearts of both nobility and commons, and secured himself on the throne by marrying Elizabeth of York, eldest sister of the princes murdered in the Tower. Thus the rival Roses were united, and Henry the Eighth

could claim the alliance and allegiance of both York and Lancaster.

In 1485, when Henry the Seventh entered London in triumph, all the country drew a breath of relief, trusting now to be free from the scourge of civil war.

At this moment the Romish Church stood proud and secure with its foes under its feet, not yet realizing the potency of that mighty invention which God had sent as an angel before the face of the Reformation. Pollock, in his "Course of Time," partially develops this idea, that Satan, having spent many centuries in perfecting his *chef d'œuvre*, the papacy, congratulates himself that he has now an invincible instrument for destroying the Church of God. Suddenly rings through the infernal abode the news of the discovery of printing. The arch-demon, realizing the might and future victory of the church thus reinforced, stands in horror and despair, while all his train of friends mock the discomfiture of their chief.

Caxton, the first English printer, was born in Kent, about 1420, and taught by his mother to read and write. Early in life being apprenticed to Robert Large, a merchant, afterward Mayor of London, he became remarkably proficient in knowledge of all that con-

cerned trade. Large, dying in 1441, left Caxton thirty-four marks, a large sum for that time, which the young man used in going to the continent to study affairs of commerce. Here he became agent for the London Mercers' Company, and also for King Edward the Fourth, and when the king's sister Margaret married the Duke of Burgundy, Caxton was attached to her household. Caxton being in Germany became very curious about the new art of printing. The Duchess Margaret, seeing a French collection of the "Stories of Troy," published in 1464, desired Caxton to translate it into English. Caxton, probably urged by the Duchess, though he was now elderly, went to Cologne and learned to print, setting in type his book on Troy, and also another which he had translated. Caxton, both author and publisher, translated his books from French and Latin, and then printed them. All his early works were poems, fables, romances and epigrams.*

We find him at Westminster, in 1477, very busy with his press, and multiplying books to the amazement of all England. The first religious book printed in England was translated from the French by a courtier. It had

*Lewis' Life of Caxton.

four parts : the first, "Death," the second, the "Last Judgment," the third, the "Pains of Hell," the fourth, the "Joys of Heaven."

In 1483 a press was set up by a foreigner, at Oxford, to print in Latin certain Romish books and treatises by friars. The century from 1400 to 1500 was probably the most illiterate age of the world,* and this was especially owing to the persecutions made by the papists both in England and on the continent, where nearly all books, except monkish legends, were confiscated and burned wherever found, and to own a book or be able to read one, or even to be willing to hear one read, was enough to doom a man to death. Indeed, so great danger was in reading, that the clergy, as a general thing, allowed themselves to be ignorant of their letters! In 1483 Caxton printed four sermons on the Creed, the Pater Noster, the Ave, and the Ten Commandments. We give a specimen of the sermon on the Creed, to show the pabulum which Mother Church offered instead of the pure bread and water of life, which the Lollards had gathered from the gospel, for saving the world from its starvation. The preacher, on the clause "suffered under Pon-

*Lewis' Life of Caxton, p. 63.

tius Pilate," mistakes Pontius for the name of a country, and delivers this explanation: "The emperor sent Pylate into a contree that was called Pounce, where the people were so cursed that they slewe and ate all their rulers. Soo when this Pylate was come thyder, he applied hymself to her manners, soo that with wyles and subtilty he quite overcame them, and hadde the maystere, and gate his name, and was called Pylate of Pounce." From this time Pilate was called in the Creed Pilate of Pounce, until 1532, when in the "Primer of Salisbury" it was restored to Pontius Pilate, and so followed by Cramner, in 1538.* Caxton printed also the works of Chaucer, sire of English singers, and various offices of the church, which found good sale among the clergy.

Caxton lived always in amity with the church, although he printed many books, as those of Chaucer, which reflected severely on the clerics. His preference was always to translate and print religious books, his life was devout and simple, and his acquaintance with a large part of the written works of France, Germany and England, had made him conversant with the teaching of the Lol-

*Ibid. pp. 71, 72.

lards, which went far to mold his life, even while he retained many of the errors of Rome. The strong hand of the church, held *in terrorem* over Caxton's press, did not permit the printing of any part of Wickliffe's Bible, which was yet closely hidden in obscure corners. Caxton translated, printed, corrected, illuminated and bound his books in his modest little office.* They were printed on paper made of fine linen rags, almost as solid and smooth as the vellum used by the scribes.

Lewis fixes Caxton's death in 1492, but a manuscript in the British Museum dates it 1491, and gives this curious inscription as written by himself for his tomb—

“ Moder of mercy shyld hym from t'horrybul Fynd,
And bryng hym to Lyff yternall that never hath ynd.”

Caxton left the art of printing firmly established in England, and the bitter law of the clergy against all who wrote, read, or heard in English, had become a dead letter

Though the introduction of this happy art was brightening the world's horizon, and a time of peace was calming the troubled soul of the English nation, there were many pining in dungeons for Christ's cause, prison-

*Bagford.

ers to whom no ray of the advancing morning came. The Bishop of London had built a square tower beside his palace at Lambeth, a cold, narrow, dark place of successive stories, where he kept the prisoners for conscience' sake. The tower stands yet, a mournful memorial of the past. Here one finds the walls inscribed with the initials, names, and pious aspirations of the martyrs of Lollard days. Here are yet in the walls the staples to which these helpless ones were chained, and bars, where it is said some were tied to meet their death, by being strangled with a napkin.

The first nine years of Henry the Seventh's reign were marked by no public martyrdoms that are on record. In 1494 the rage of Rome broke forth with renewed fury, and Joan Boughton, aged over eighty, mother of Lady Young, was arrested for heresy. She admitted holding eight of the forbidden tenets of Wickliffe. "So set was she in her heresy that all the doctors of London could not turn her from one of her errors." She was told that she must abjure or die. She replied that she had lived long enough, and was quite ready to depart and be with Christ; that the least she could do for her Lord was to die for him; whereof he had set her example by dy-

ing for her. She declared the love of God was able to sustain her in the fire, and presently showed this to be true by crying joyfully to God to receive her spirit, while the flames were curling about her. The next night secret friends stole to Smithfield, and gathering up the revered martyr's ashes buried them.

In January, 1496, certain persons who could not follow this aged mother in her fiery path to heaven did penance, and had their books burned at St. Paul's Cross. In 1498, early in May, a priest was arrested for heresy, the king then being in the city. So steadfast was this man in faith, and so apt in argument, that the king ordered him to be brought before him, and by his royal authority reduced him to silence. He was then carried out of the sovereign's presence and burned without loss of time.

In 1499, while the king and queen were visiting Calais, a very godly man of Norfolk, named Babram, was accused of being too pious, his purity throwing a vicious priesthood into evil contrast. As he would not promise to do worse, Rome exercised her powers of binding in binding him to the stake; her power of loosing by freeing him of this mortal body; her power of keys by

opening to him the martyr's gate of heaven, wherein he entered rejoicing. He was not without a fellow confessor, for on the twentieth of July, of the same year, an aged man was burned at Smithfield.

The Tower of London, like the Lambeth Tower, was often honored by being the last abode of many of God's dear children. In 1500 an aged father was imprisoned in the Lollards' Tower, and condemned to be burned. On the tenth of July he thought he had an opportunity to escape, but being stiff from old age and long imprisonment, he fell as he endeavored to get out of a window. Being thus rearrested he lay imprisoned for ten days longer, and then, being unable to walk, on account of his injuries, he was carried in a cart to be burned.

Lollardy at this period appears to have made more progress in Kent and in Buckinghamshire than elsewhere. From these days also the numbers of martyrs increased. In 1506 William Tylsworth, of Amersham, an old man, was condemned to death. He had a married daughter, Joan, a heretic. The burning of women being peculiarly unpopular, the church devised a worse doom for Joan. Her husband was only suspected, but he, with twenty men and three women, also suspected,

was compelled to stand at the burning, with fagots tied to their necks. Then Joan was dragged up, a burning fagot fastened in her hand, and by main force was thrust forward and so made to light the pile that consumed her father.* After this a number of the suspected were burned in the cheek with an "L." One of these, Richard Bartlet, being rich, had all his property confiscated to the church, and was imprisoned for seven years. Within two years six others were burned at Amersham.

Thomas Chase, of the same town, was captured and put in his bishop's prison, a place having the appropriate name of "Little Ease." Here he suffered all that irons, cold, hunger and taunts could do. As Chase was popular, he was strangled in prison to prevent a tumult. The bishop spread a report that he had hanged himself, but the wife of his keeper boldly testified that he was murdered, and died echoing the words of Stephen: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." To complete their crime the bishop buried him on the highway, with a stake through his body, as a suicide!

Lawrence Ghest, having a wife and seven children, a popular and handsome man, with

*Fox' Acts and Monuments, Vol. IV. p. 123.

some property, was kept in prison two years. As he still held to Lollardism he was conducted to the stake, his wife and children being there placed in his view. But nothing could separate him from the love of Christ; he said he had now but a step more to run, to finish a good race, and get a crown of glory. At this one of the bishop's men threw a firebrand in his face. A brother of the martyr then ran at the monster with a knife, whereon a great tumult ensued, during which Lawrence Ghest entered into the presence of his Lord.

In 1508 a pious woman of Chipping-Sudbury was condemned, by Chancellor Whittingdon, to the stake. This doctor, being much enraged at her constancy, attended at her burning, accompanied by a great crowd of people. At the same hour the town butcher was slaughtering a beef for the tyrant's dinner. The brute got away from his executioner, and rushing madly through the town, met that greater brute, Chancellor Whittingdon, returning from the scene of the martyr's death. The bull sought no mean prey; he despised the terrified rabble, put down his head, and flinging himself on Whittingdon gored him through and through. Thus had the martyred matron hardly ap-

peared at the bar of God, to plead her cause against her persecutor, than death entered the court celestial, leading the criminal, who doubtless was not long in entering those fires from which his victim had in a few moments escaped.

During the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, the word of God, which had seemed perishing, mightily grew and prevailed, the Lollards once more became a host, and their teachings mysteriously penetrated every quarter and rank of the land.

Meanwhile, the Romish Church, if we may trust their own authors, grew more and more depraved. Pope Innocent VIII., in a bull dated March, 1490, declares that the English clergy "giving themselves up to a reprobate sense, led lewd and dissolute lives." Archbishop Morton writes to the abbots and monks of England, "You are infamous for simony, usury, luxury, and more enormous crimes." He declares that finding several nuns to be modest women they had turned them into the streets and substituted persons of notorious profligacy; moreover a number of monks had stolen the plate and jewels from many churches, and picked all the gems out of the*

* Wilkin's Concilia, Tom. III. p. 632.

shrine of St. Aban. The church in the advancing security of the reign of Henry the Seventh had to adopt a new method of obtaining vengeance on the Lollards. They bought the king's assent to the death of his subjects, by making him presents of money, the monarch being very avaricious.*

In 1509 there was a very diligent hunting of heretics throughout the kingdom. In Coventry, nine Lollards were after long examination and imprisonment driven to recant, though it is noteworthy that some of these abjurers got greater grace, and were enabled in the beginning of the next reign to witness a good confession, and count not their lives dear unto death.

The common people began to say that after the burning of martyrs disasters fell upon the town where they died, and instanced the almost entire destruction of Norwich by fire immediately after the death of Thomas Norris, and a great sickness that took off hundreds near Smithfield after the burning of an old man. These troubles they attributed to the wrath of the Lord pursuing rulers who put people to death for questions of conscience, whose lives had nothing in them blameworthy.

*Ibid. pp. 634, 635.

In 1509 Henry the Seventh died, leaving three children living. The son received the kingdom as Henry the Eighth; the elder daughter was married to James the Fourth, King of Scots, and through her the abominable family of the Stuarts reached the English throne, in James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England. The second daughter married Charles, King of Castile. Henry the Eighth was a pupil of priests, and no sovereign of England was a more ardent papist than he when he received the crown.

Meanwhile the opinions of Wickliffe had spread into Scotland, and became deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. A nation slow to change and tenacious of those principles which they cautiously adopt, the Scots developed a form of Lollardism especially obnoxious to the papacy. In 1494 a Synod was held at Glasgow at which the king was present, and twenty-four gentlemen of good degree, with Helen Chambers, Lady Pokelly, and Lady Stairs were arraigned for heresy.* The clergy clamored for their death, but the king had one or two particular friends among the accused, and only allowed them to be reprimanded for their errors. It is to the honor

*Henry's History, Vol. VI. ch. II. p. 471.

of James the Fourth that he allowed no subject to suffer for his religious views during his reign. Andrew Forman, Bishop of Moray for seven years in this reign, was also a warm opponent of religious persecution; indeed, the persecuting spirit seems rather indigenous in England than in Scotland, and the persecutions which have deluged Scotland in blood came to her chiefly through southern rulers. Scotia had her martyrs, condemned by their own countrymen, but they were few in number compared with the long roll of the English confessors.

In 1527, in the reign of James the Fifth, Patrick Hamilton, the first victim of the papacy in the north, a most noble and learned youth, was burned with especial cruelty. The constancy of Hamilton aroused great interest in his views, and followers of his faith sprang up over all the land. The wicked Beaton was now in high ecclesiastical office, and full of zeal against heresy. Dean Thomas was burned because he preached every Sunday, used texts from all the Scripture, and did not take the best cow and the winding-sheet when a parishioner died! With him were burned, on Edinburgh Castle Hill, two friars, a priest, and a knight. When James the Fifth died, there was found in his pocket a list of three

hundred and sixty persons who were to be tried for heresy. Of these one hundred were noblemen, and at their head was the Earl of Arran, presumptive heir to the crown.* The troubles which involved the kingdom after the king's death prevented these persons being brought to bar. In this brief sketch we have, however, anticipated the course of events, and must return to the accession of Henry the Eighth.

*Saddler's Letters.

CHAPTER IX.

Slumbered each weary soldier at his post,
But through their ranks the Lord's great captain trod;
Then, on a sudden thundered through the host,
The solemn, marv'lous battle-cry of God.

TYNDALE AND THE REFORMATION.

THE Bible of Wickliffe had never been printed, and yet hundreds of devout hearts, guiding ready hands, had made numerous copies of it, which were secretly multiplied, so that the word of God was no longer a sealed book. The translation of Wickliffe was completed in 1382, a century and a quarter before Tyndale's translation was made. Geoffrey Chaucer, the Father of English Poetry, was, with Wickliffe, the pioneer of mediæval English literature.

But the language is more indebted to the divine than to the poet, for forming and perfecting and enlarging its capacities. Wickliffe brought into the mongrel speech of his day sublimity, terseness, purity. No man of that day wrote so much as Wickliffe, no one so

studied simplicity and clearness.* His old version† reads like some ancient stately drama; thus for “Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ,” we have in sturdy Saxon, “Paul, the knave of Jesus Christ;” and for “There cometh one after me mightier than I,” we have “there cometh one after me a stalworthier than I.”‡ This bulwark not only of the faith, but of the English language, was hiding in corners when Henry the Eighth came to his kingdom, and the clergy expressed their joy at the accession of so great a prince by renewed burnings of heretics.

Lady Young, the daughter of Joan Boughton, whose martyrdom has been described, followed the fashion of her mother's death. Two martyrs died together at Smithfield, in 1511, and in 1518 perished John Brown, with whom so short work was made that his wife knew nothing of his arrest until she heard that he would be burned next day, and was then lying for the night in the stocks outside of Ashford. She went and sat by him throughout that dreary night. The

*Wylie's History of Protestantism, Part III.

†Wickliffe's version was printed in *fac-simile* at Oxford, in 1850.

‡McCries' Annals of English Presbytery, p. 41.

bishops had held his feet in the fire to make him recant, but he remained steadfast in the faith. He was burned next day, his wife and children being compelled to stand by the fire. One Chilten strongly urged to throw the children into the fire, as they were sure to grow up like their father. This indeed happened, for Brown's whole family were very strong Protestants in the days of the Reformation.

Over all the world the hard pressed soldiers of the cross slumbered on the field of battle, worn with the long, sore conflict. Here and there a lonely sentinel was picked from his post by some sharp shot or crawling scout of the enemy, but generally stupor and darkness reigned on the field of blood. The trumpet tongue of Luther suddenly broke upon these drowsy ears, sounding the world's *reveille*, and to their feet, moved by one impulse, sprang the thousands of God's true church, and marched in mighty phalanx on the legions of the foe. Such glorious souls as Calvin and Knox, Zuinglius and Farel, and Tyndale, led the advance. Consternation filled the armies of Antichrist; they broke in dismay. Again and again they rallied; on this flank and on that; now by fierce onset, now by subtle ambush, now

madly flinging themselves upon the front, now hanging on the rear, now fighting, delivering their sharpest arrows as they fled, the battalions of the papacy strove hard to win the day. They called to their aid new regiments with new arms—Jesuits—better in the fight than even Krupp cannon and needle guns. Many a true heart grew still, many a bold spirit fell in an evil cause, the earth has been covered with the slain hundreds of God's soldiers, yet has their advance been constant and unflinching. In vain the unchristian church has raged and striven; never has she, never can she, break the world's grand morning march to victory, led by the banners of the grace of God.

In 1521, when Luther was but beginning his work in Germany, six martyrs were burned in England; the little children of one of these, John Scrivener, being dragged with brands in their hands and made to set fire to their father.

At this date Henry the Eighth first showed his innate spirit in church matters by interfering for the protection of Doctor Colet, accused of being too evangelical. "Let every man have his doctor, as him liketh," said Henry, "this shall be my doctor," and Colet's foes shrunk back.

It is a pity that his majesty had not interfered for seven godly people who were burned in one fire at Coventry, in 1519, on the one charge of having taught their children the Lord's Prayer and the ten commandments in English. The children were all sent to a monastery, and six of the parents were condemned; the seventh, Widow Smith, escaped sentence and was bidden "go home." She turned to leave the court, but it being dark, one of the persecutors took her by the arm to aid her steps—he felt a parchment in her sleeve—drew it out—and lo! a bit of Wickliffe's Bible. "Ah, Sirrah!" says he, "as good now as again." So he pulled her back into court where she was sentenced to die with the others.

At this time, James Beaton, of St. Andrews, and John Longland, Bishop of Lincoln, seemed to vie with each other who should burn the most heretics. Several hundred names are on record of Lollards imprisoned, starved, burned, tortured, compelled to abjure, in the first days of Henry the Eighth, when that royal heart's chief desire was to be accounted the greatest bulwark of the papacy, and when he did not scruple to add to the burning of heretics at home, the writing of a grand controversial book against heretics

abroad, represented by Martin Luther. No martyrdom in Henry's time has made so much stir as that of Richard Hun, a merchant tailor, of London, a very good man. Hun had a child that died while out at nurse, and he took the winding-sheet as a memorial for the child's mother. The priest demanded this in order to secure an enormous ransom of the token. Hun sued the priest under a writ of *Premunire*. The clergy hating this statute, and Hun's bravery in contention, prosecuted him for heresy. He was committed to the Lollard's Tower, the chief accusation being that "said Richard hath in his possession divers English books, damned by law, as the Apocalypse, several epistles and gospels, and Wickliffe's damnable works containing infinite errors." Consider this language applied to God's word! Fearing the people, who had applauded Hun's lawsuit, the bishop had Hun strangled with a napkin in Lollard's Tower, and then hung to the wall that he might seem to have hanged himself. This being done at night, it was left to be *discovered* by a boy who went with food to the cell next morning. The citizens refused to believe Hun a suicide; such act was opposed to the whole tenor of his fearless, blameless life, and so vehement was the pub-

lic feeling that a coroner's inquest was demanded and granted. The bishop at once issued new articles against Hun, to prejudice the minds of the jury, arguing that he *was* a heretic, *ergo*, must have been a suicide! This logic did not convince the twelve citizens solemnly assembled. They found by good proof that Chancellor Horsey and two of his servants "had willfully and deliberately murdered Richard Hun," and indicted them all as murderers. The world was waking up. The three murderers were, however, in a short time set at liberty unharmed.

In 1521 the king published his book against Luther, for which he received the glorious title of "Defender of the Faith." The defender, however, soon began to have differences with *il Papa*. The story of the Arragon Divorce is too well known to repeat. The moment the yoke of Rome rested so as to be felt on that royal neck it was broken. Cardinal Wolsey was averse to persecution; Sir Thomas More and Bishop Stokely were very violent against Lollardy. Thomas Bilney, Thomas Hitten and others were martyred in 1530-31. In 1532 the last will of Mr. Trocee, a man of property in Gloucestershire, being found to express heresy, his body was, by order of Holy Church, *taken out of its grave*

and burned. This greatly enraged the king, being done without his writ. Three hundred pounds were paid to the king as a fine for this deed.

In March, 1531, the king, lately Defender of the Faith, proclaimed himself, instead of the pope, supreme head of the English Church! And this was no empty boast. The king turned evil eyes on the friars; transferred the *anats* from the papal to the royal exchequer, and confiscated monkish property for public uses. At the same time his majesty fell with double violence on the Lollards, and issued fierce writs against them, under which many suffered death. Bayfield, Tewkesbury, Randall, Freese and his wife, who burned at one stake, all fell victims to the zeal of Sir Thomas More; also six others, among whom was Thomas Bainham, whose accuser afterward hung himself out of remorse.

Meanwhile, William Tyndale determined to give his countrymen a printed English Bible. As he could not accomplish this in England, he, with two friends, went to Germany, a London merchant giving him a stipend of ten pounds a year, in those days enough to cover his humble wants.* Aided by his two friends

*Life of William Tyndale, p. 6.

he completed the New Testament in two years. He then printed the Pentateuch, and several religious books of his own were prepared at the same time. The merchants of London furnished money for these, and they were brought from the continent hidden in the cargoes of merchandise, and at once were distributed over the land. A flood of light poured upon all England, the darkness had fled, the true day was gloriously shining. *Anne Boleyn, the unhappy wife of Henry, favored Tyndale and his works, and persuaded the king to read some of them. Many persons suffered martyrdom for reading Tyndale's Bible and his tracts. His book, "The Practice of Prelates" was very displeasing to Henry, who pursued him with fury from one refuge on the continent to another, until being finally captured, after eighteen months' imprisonment, Tyndale was burned. Frith, his coadjutor, was burned by order of Cranmer,† and yet the works of Frith were the means of Cranmer's conversion, and twenty years after the prelate died for the faith he had once despised.

We have with William Tyndale reached

*Fox' Acts and Monuments.

†Ellis, First Series, Vol. II. p. 40.

the limit of the Lollard days. The work, the faith, the teaching, went on under another name—gospelers, readers of those blessed printed Bibles, which would not and could not be hidden in corners like their predecessor the Wickliffe version. After a few decades this name, gospelers, passed into another as radiant with light as those which had gone before it signifying the same thing—Protestants. The one name, evangelicals, covers them all from the day of Pentecost until the present day.

Froude, in his chapter on Protestants,* has given a singularly uneven, insufficient, and inexact account of the days and work and continuance of the Lollards.

The early prejudices and habits of Henry the Eighth were very slow in yielding. His pride led him to break the long alliance of England with the papacy; but, since in his opinion the church needed a visible head, who was so fit for that lofty office as the king? It was but putting one honor more upon him who was insatiate for honor. Yet the church which Henry chose to establish was merely a Romish Church planted in England, a Papal Church with the king for pope. The deepest

*Vol. II. ch. I. pp. 1-118.

errors of the anti-Christian Church were articles of full belief with Henry, and he had no hesitation in coercing belief, or burning those who rejected his opinions. Like Nebuchadnezzar, he exercised his royal right to modify his own opinions, or entirely change them, and the only right of the subject was to believe with the king. Like Nebuchadnezzar again, he did not hesitate to say that whosoever failed to change his creed when the king's changed, "his house should be made a dunghill." In the first years of his reign, Henry issued writs for burning those who denied the supremacy of the pope as the vicar of Christ. Ten years later he burned people for *not* denying this same supremacy; others died for denying the king's supremacy. The Anabaptists, who took refuge in England from Germany, were promptly put to death for being Anabaptists.* Denial of transubstantiation occasioned many fires to blaze at Smithfield. Where once only common people and converted priests had gone to the stake, bishops and knights went now. One while the Lord Chancellor was torturing and burning heretics, and presently by some new development of the royal mind, the Lord Chan-

*Henry's Hist. Vol. VI. p. 431.

cellor, without any change in his own opinions, became a heretic, and went bravely to the block. Heresy was still the great crime, and now there were many and complicated kinds of heresy. And yet the day had truly dawned, and the light was advancing; the Bible was the property of the people. The king favored the translation though he pursued the translator, and with the Bible loosed from the fetters of wormy parchments and a foreign tongue, the light should grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

In these early hours the true sun was shining, but obscured by priestly opposition, by Romish errors, by popular ignorance, by the mighty assumptions of the king.

“As when the sun new ris'n
Peers through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams; or, from behind the morn,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds.”

The line of the English Lollards begins with Wickliffe in 1360, and ends with Tyndale in 1536. Between these two mighty men shone a bright array of confessors of both sexes, of all ages, stations and degrees of learning. Wickliffe and Tyndale were men of like holiness, zeal, fearlessness and genius; intellectual giants, among the grandest of their race. Tyndale stands so clearly

in the light, and within the limits of printed history, that only by papists has he be entranced or misapprehended. Wickliffe, half hidden in the darkness of his age, his writings left to the mercy of those who did not scruple to alter or misrepresent them; his character, words and motives chronicled for the most part by his foes, has been grievously wounded in the house of his friends. The continental reformers, ignorant almost entirely of the mediæval English in which the Father of Reformers wrote, and reading but few of his works, greatly underestimated them. Philip Melancthon, a man of but ordinary stature compared with the giant of Oxford, declares that Wickliffe "was ignorant of the righteousness that is by faith."* But Wickliffe's words in his own hand are—"A right looking by full belief on Christ, saveth his people. Christ died, not for his own sins, as do thieves, but as our Brother, who himself might not sin, he died for the sins that others had done." Wickliffe gathered the clear doctrines of the Scripture from the sacred page, and at once distributed them to his countrymen; † he formulated no system, he built up no body of

*Vaughan's Life of John de Wickliffe, Vol. II. p. 356.

†Wylie's History of Protestantism, Part III. p. 128.

divinity, he left that for those who should come after him in days when the church was more at rest; for him there was no time to be diverted from snatching souls out of the fire, who were perishing for lack of the simplest knowledge. That Wickliffe was misunderstood by early foreign reformers seems inexplicable, but now that three hundred of his sermons or "postils" have been given to the world, enabling us to clearly estimate his accurate, scriptural, devout, comprehensive views, we quite wonder that Doctor Dorner can hold that "the deeper religious spirit is wanting in his ideas of reform."* Nevertheless, "Wisdom is justified of all her children."

Wickliffe, as Lechler says,† concentrated within himself all the advance and movement toward reform, from the time of the heresy of the papacy until 1360. In him seemed to be gathered into one focus all the struggling and scattered beams that had been striving to penetrate papal darkness, and it was this concentration of brightness, truth, vitality in him, which set him head and shoulders above all men of his day, made him an indubitable

*Dorner's Hist. of Prot. Theology, Vol. I. p. 63.

†Vol. II. pp. 471, 472. Johann von Wiclif.

leader of the people, fired them with his own holy zeal, enlightened them with that wisdom which he had received of God, and so fashioned the teachings and reforms which he inaugurated, that they were equal to all the advance of the coming ages, and England now boasts of statute acts for which she must mainly thank his wisdom and foresight.

Had Wickliffe been born two hundred years later, he might have been to the world the champion that Luther was; but if there had been no "Forerunner of Reformers, and Father of Reformations"* in 1360, would there have been a Reformation in 1530? It is an old pithy saying—

"Si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset."

Wickliffe strengthened the hearts of Militz, Stiekna and Janovius, in Bohemia, in his own day, and was in a manner the teacher of Huss, their successor; and so the bright ranks of the continental leaders pass on, keeping indeed steady step with their brethren in the British Isles, but in grander numbers and in statelier array.

Here, then, are two divisions of the church militant, soon to be united in the church

*Wylie's Hist. of Prot. Part III. p. 129.

triumphant, two which have been God's witnesses, cast down but not destroyed, dying and behold they live — the Continental Church, with its headquarters in the Waldensian fastnesses, its sons teaching and dying in every kingdom from Russia to the Atlantic, from the Mediterranean to Lapland—the Island Church, in the now United Kingdom. This, then, is the Church of the Evangel, which was from “before Luther,” even from the days of Jesus of Nazareth, and shall remain as long as that Jesus sits throned on high.