

ness. The piety with which he received the last sacraments drew tears from all that were present. Repeating inflamed acts of divine love, he expired on the 15th of May, 1170, being near sixty years of age. His death was glorified by miracles. After forty years, his body was removed out of the church-yard into the church of St. Andrew. It has been since placed in the bishop's chapel, and during these five hundred years remains entire and fresh, being honoured by a succession of frequent miracles down to this time.

The following, among others, is very well attested. Philip III. in his return from Lisbon, was taken so ill at Casarubios del Monte, that his life was despaired of by his physicians. Whereupon the shrine of St. Isidore was ordered to be carried in a solemn procession of the clergy, court, and people from Madrid to the chamber of the sick king. The joint prayers of many prevailed. At the same time the shrine was taken out of the church, the fever left the king; and upon its being brought into his chamber, he was perfectly cured. The year following the body of the saint was put into a new rich shrine, which cost one thousand six hundred ducats of gold. St. Isidore had been beatified a little before by Paul V. in 1619, at the solicitation of the same king. His solemn canonization was performed at the request of king Philip IV. on the 12th of March, 1622; though the bull was only made public by Benedict XIII. See the life of St. Isidore, written by John of Madrid, one hundred and forty years after his death; and Card. Lambertini, de Canoniz. SS. t. 3.

ST. COMGALL, ABBOT.

ONE of the most illustrious founders of monastic Orders in Ireland. He was born of noble parents in the north of Ulster, in 516, and was brought up under St. Fintan, in his monastery of Cluain-Aidhnech, at the foot of the Bladmahills, from whence arise two rivers, the Barrow and None in the Queen's county. He came out of that school of piety and monastic discipline an accomplished master, and founded, about the year 550, the great abbey of Benchor or Bangor¹ in the county of Down, which was the most numerous and most celebrated of all monasteries of Ireland, as that of Bangor in North Wales,

¹ See Note, page 196

was the most considerable among the Britons, which was in a flourishing condition soon after the death of St. Dubritius, about the middle of the sixth century. Camden is mistaken when he writes that St. Comgall first instituted monks in Ireland; it being certain that St. Patrick himself had founded monasteries there, having perhaps learned the monastic rule of St. Martin in France. But St. Comgall exceedingly propagated that state in Ireland. He is said to have governed in Benchor and other houses three thousand monks; all which religious men were employed in tillage or other manual labour. Colomban, who was his disciple at Benchor, settled his rule in Britain, France, and Italy; and many other abbots, bishops, and saints, came out of his nursery. All the holy men of that age sought his friendship and acquaintance, and the ancient writers highly extol his sanctity and prudence. Notker says, he was, in an extraordinary manner, the heir of the virtues and merits of St. Columba, or Columbkil.

Jonas in the life of St. Columban, and St. Bernard in that of St. Malachi, are very profuse in his commendations. The latter says, that the monastery of Benchor having been long before destroyed by pirates, St. Malachi restored it, because the bodies of many saints reposed there. Usher thinks St. Comgall to have been the same with St. Congellus. Seven years after he had founded Benchor, he went to Wales, and there built a monastery, in a place then called the Land of Heth. On his return to Ireland he founded another monastery, called Cell-Comgail, now Saynkill, at present annexed to the archbishopric of Dublin. He died on the 10th of May, in 601.¹ See Usher, *Ant. Brit. Eccl.* p. 236, 237. 452. 472, 473. 475, 476. 494. Also the *Chronicles of Inisfallen and Kilkenny*, quoted by Colgan in MSS.

¹ The Irish annals of the Four Masters place the death of St. Comgall in 600; having (they say) died in the ninetieth year of his age, and governed the abbacy of Benchor fifty years, three months, and ten days.

Note.—The learned antiquary, Sir Roger Twisden, tells us, in his *Rise of the Monastic State*, p. 36. that the monks of Bangor were not unlike the Order of St. Basil, if not of it. And bishop Tanner takes notice, that the first British and Irish monks imitated very much the rules of the oriental monks. St. Comgall founded Bangor in Ireland, as is made evident by Usher, not Bangor in Wales, as Camden mistakes. This latter, whensoever instituted, was a famous abbey in the time of Gildas, who speaks of *Monachorum decreta, et monachi votum*. Bishop Usher informs us, *l. de Antiq. Brit. c. xviii.* that four monastic rules are still extant in the old Irish tongue. 1. That of St. Columbkil,

which was followed in Scotland, and in the churches' planted by the Scottish monks among the northern English Saxons, till Saint Wilfrid changed it among them. 2. That of St. Comgall; but the language in which this rule is writ is no longer intelligible. 3. Of St. Mochuda or Carthag, a disciple of St. Comgall, and founder of the great monastery of Raithin, in West Meath, and also of another at Lismore, of which city he was the first bishop. He died in 637, and is honoured on the 10th of May. 4. Of St. Ailbee, who preaching in Ireland at the same time with St. Patrick, was made the first archbishop of Emelye in Munster, of which province he was a native. That see was afterward fixed at Cashel. St. Ailbee founded a most famous monastery in the isle of Arran, over which he appointed St. Enna or Endeus the first abbot. St. Ailbee is honoured September the 12th. The most renowned among the disciples of St. Comgall that flourished in Ireland, was St. Lugil or Molua, eminent for his obedience and other virtues. St. Bernard, who calls him Luanus, writes, that he is said to have founded a hundred monasteries. The principal was situate in Leinster, on the borders of Munster, between Ossory and Lesia, now Queen's County. It was called Cluain-Fearta, or Solitude of Wonders; for Cluain signifies a retired place, and Fearta wonders. St. Molua wrote a monastic rule, which was very famous, and is said to have been highly approved by St. Gregory the great. He died in 622.

Among the other ancient Irish saints, some of the principal are, two SS. Breudans, both disciples of St. Finian at Clonard. One founded the abbey of Birra, in the middle of Ireland, and died in 564, or according to others, in 572. The other, surnamed the elder, much more famous, the son of Findloga, founded the great monastery of Cluain-Fearta, in Connaught, now called Clonfert, an episcopal see under the archbishop of Tuam. This house was different from that of St. Molua in Leinster, called Cluain-Fearta-Molua. Saint Brendan the elder was the author of a monastic rule, and built for his sister Briga a monastery near Tuam, called Inachduin, where he died in 578. See his life, the 16th of May. St. Fintan, abbot of Cluain-Aidhnech, in Leinster, was also eminent for his sanctity: by his instructions Comgall was initiated in the practice of Christian perfection. The rule of St. Fintan was very austere. The monks lived only on vegetables, and tilled the ground with their own hands. He died in the sixth century. See his life on the 17th of February, also Bollandus. At the same time flourished St. Kenny, in Latin Cainicus, who founded the abbey Achadlibho, or Field of Oxen, the first seat of the bishops of Ossory; which see is now fixed at Kilkenny, or Cell of Kenny, so called from this saint. See his life on October 11th. Also Usher, Ant. c. xvii. p. 495. St. Finian Lobhar, or the Leper, a disciple of St. Brendan, founder of the monasteries of Inis-Fallen in Desmond, and of Ard-finan in the county of Tipperary, died about the year 615. See his life on the 16th of March. St. Coëngen, alias Keivin, founder of the famous abbey of Glandaloch, which became an episcopal see, now united to Dublin: see his life the 3rd of June. St. Colman-Elo, founder of the monastery of Land-Elo, now Lin-alli, in the King's County, died in 610. See his life the 26th of September. St. Kiaran, or Querannus, called in Cornwall Piran, was a native of Ossory in Ireland, travelled to Rome, and after his return converted his mother and many other infidels to the faith, thirty years before the arrival of St. Patrick, according to bishop Usher, who places his birth in 352; and his return from Rome into Ireland in 402. See his life on the 5th of March.

Usher reckons certain other saints in Ireland who are said to have lived a little before the preaching of St. Patrick. One St. Mel, nephew to St. Patrick, and first bishop of Ardachadh, in the county of Longford, and many other saints in Ireland, about the time of

their conversion to the faith. See Usher, *Antiqu. Brit.* c. xvi. xvii. and Colgan.

The fervour with which the Irish first embraced the faith, seems not to have abated for several ages. In 674, Marianus Scotus makes this remark in his Chronicle, "that Ireland was filled with saints or holy men." Nor was the reputation of its schools less renowned. Two Irishmen coming into France in 791, were there admired for their incomparable learning, and gave birth to the two first universities in the world, namely, those of Paris and Pavia: and our great king Alfred in 891, listened to three learned Irishmen in his projects for the advancement of literature. (See Usher, p. 544, 545.) Camden observes, (*Brit. de Hibern.* p. 730.) that the English Saxons anciently flocked to Ireland as to the mart of sacred learning, and that this is frequently mentioned in the lives of eminent men among them. Thus in the life of Sulgenus, in the eighth age, we read:

*Exemplo Patrum, commotus amore legendi,
Ivit ad Hibernos, sophia mirabile claros.*

With love of learning and examples fir'd,
To Ireland, fam'd for wisdom, he retired.

Camden conjectures that the English Saxons borrowed their letters from the Irish, because they used the same which the Irish at this day still make use of in writing their own language.

The monks who applied themselves to prayer, preaching, and teaching in Ireland and Scotland, in the middle ages, were called Culdees, i. e. servants of God, from the Latin words, *Cultores Dei*. No mention is made of them by Nennius in the seventh, nor by Bede in the eighth age. They seem not to have been known before the ninth century, in which we find them at St. Andrew's: though Hector Boetius, and other Scottish writers pretend the Culdees to have been as ancient as Christianity in that country. They seem to have never had any settlement in England except at St. Peter's in York. Their rule was borrowed from that of St. Basil. See Usher's *Antiqu. Eccl. Brit.* fol. 333, 334, 346, 638, 659. Collier, *Eccl. Hist.* vol. 1. p. 180, and Tanner's preface to *Notitia Monast.*

In the latter ages the Benedictin and other religious Orders had many houses and provinces in Ireland; but the regular canons of St. Austin were far the most flourishing, as the Benedictins were in England. The bishops and parsons of Ireland were mostly taken out of their body. In Dublin, though the church of Saint Patrick was the richest and the principal cathedral, that of the Holy Trinity, belonging to a great abbey of regular canons, enjoyed also the pre-eminence of a cathedral. Its abbot sat in the house of lords; as did also the prior of All-Saints in the same city, and certain other abbots and priors in other parts of the island. See Alemand's *French Monastic History of Ireland*: or that in English, though both very imperfect, and often inaccurate. The principal among the ancient monasteries of Ireland are mentioned by Sir James Ware.

SAINT CATALDUS, BISHOP OF TARENTUM, IN ITALY.

HE was a learned Irish monk, who was for some time regent of the great school of Lismore