

**THE LEGENDS AND
COMMEMORATIVE
CELEBRATIONS
OF ST. KENTIGERN, HIS
FRIENDS, AND DISCIPLES**

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The Legends and Commemorative Celebrations of St. Kentigern, His Friends, and Disciples by
Anonymous

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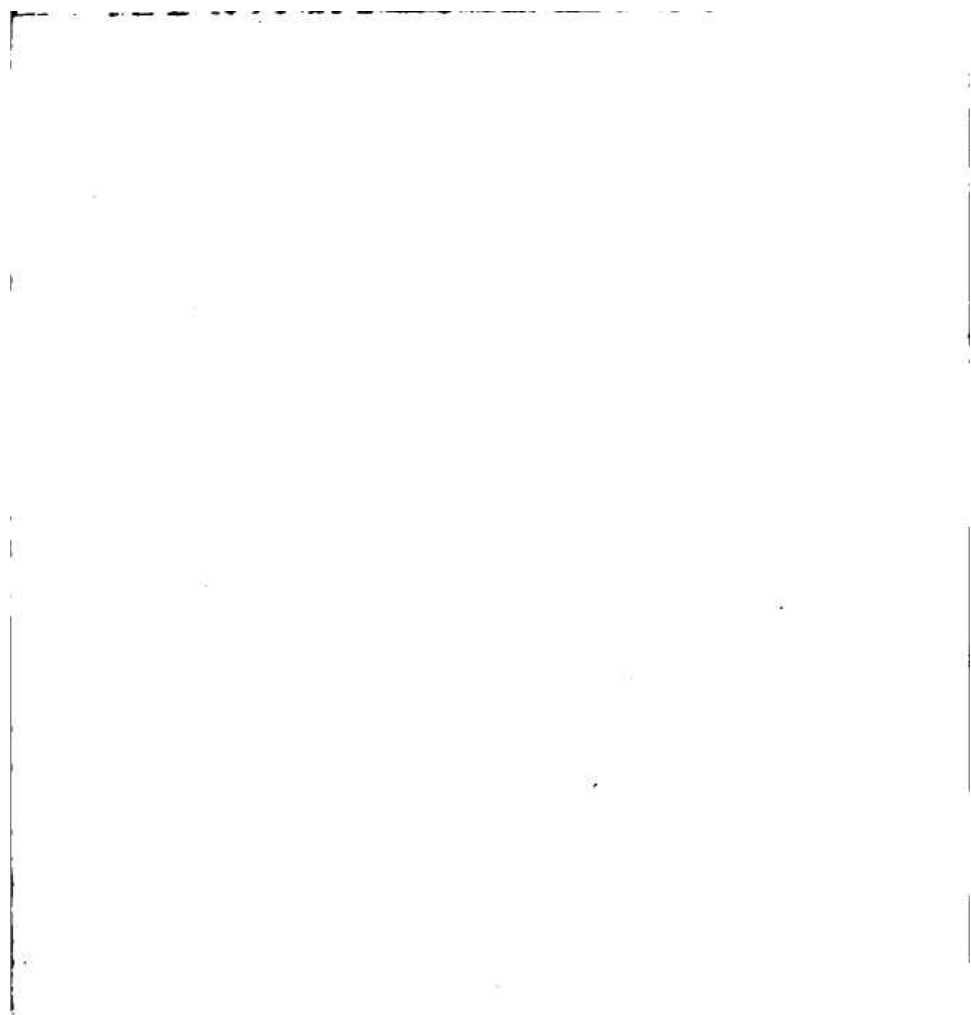
TRANSLATED FROM THE
ABERDEEN BREVIARY
AND THE
ARBUTHNOTT MISSAL.
WITH AN ILLUSTRATIVE APPENDIX.



EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

M.DCCCLXXII.

Arch. Boet. B.
III. 34.



PREFACE.

THE editor, translator, or compiler of the following pages,—for he may not aspire to the style of author,—was at one time ambitious enough to entertain the thought of preparing a complete calendar of the Scottish Saints. Taking the national legends of the Aberdeen Breviary for a basis, he proposed to intercalate, or to add, all that he might be able to ascertain regarding those *dii minores* of our country's earlier faith, who, although not enrolled in that dignified service-book, are mentioned in other literary monuments now less recondite than they were then, or have left some dim memorial of themselves in the names of the towns, villages, fairs, and wells of our country,—sometimes in remote and lonely districts or spots where there had once been chapels, cells, or hermitages.

The exigencies of a heavy charge prevented much progress from being made towards the execution of this adventurous plan; yet though compelled to suspend it then, and now finally to abandon it, the subject never ceased to retain the peculiar charm which, for some

minds at least, it has been long known to possess. About thirteen years ago however, the great undertaking which had been rashly contemplated, was reduced to a plan of very humble dimensions. Then the editor, or whatever else as aforesaid, from a bundle of translations lying by him, selected the legends forming a group in which St. Kentigern is the central figure, and had a limited number of them privately printed for circulation among his friends. These legends were all translated from the ritual celebrations contained in the Aberdeen Breviary, with the single exception of the Sacramental Commemoration of St. Kentigern from the Arbuthnott Missal.* But even this modest attempt was doomed to be suspended. A new sphere of incessant and engrossing labour refused even the restricted time requisite for completing it; and it is only through the enforced leisure of infirm health that the long neglected sheets have been again brought to light.

With respect to all that is known concerning the literary history of the Aberdeen Breviary,—the only surviving representative, in that comprehensive kind, of the ritual services conducted by our pre-reformation church,—the curious reader may be referred to a preface drawn up, for the members of the Bannatyne Club, by David Laing, Esq., LL.D., the best of possible authorities on every such subject. Here it is necessary to say no more than that this great work was printed by Walter Chepman in the years 1509 and 1510, being the second production of the first press ever set up in our country. It was executed under the personal superintendence of

* The Missal itself had not then been printed. The translation was made from a copy of the special celebration given by the late Joseph Robertson in his introduction to a volume of the Maitland Miscellany.

Bishop William Elphinstone, who then presided with reputation and dignity over the diocese of Aberdeen, from a MS. copy which he had previously arranged, chiefly after the celebrated book of Sarum, but with additions of his own, original or selected, where Scottish saints were concerned. It is abundantly obvious that when compiling the *Propria Sanctorum*, in the cases of Kentigern and Theneu at least, he made a free use of the *Vitae* by Jocelin and the anonymous author in Capgrave's collection,—documents of which some notices may be found in the first article of the subjoined appendix.

For the translations themselves which form what, slender though it is, may be called the body of the volume, the editor has nothing whatever to say; and even concerning them he deems it unnecessary to say much. The contractions with which the text of the Breviary abounds, present some trifling difficulty at first, and may occasionally betray a careless reader into a mistake; nor dare the translator venture to assure himself that he has fallen into no such blunder. If he have, the fault, however unimportant, is not very excusable, for the snare vanishes before a little perseverance. His object was to lay before a few friends who, for whatever reason, had no means of direct access to the Breviary, some specimens of the commemorative services which were ritually celebrated in our Scottish churches, anterior to the Reformation. With this view, besides retaining the peculiar form of the compositions, he has endeavoured to translate the lections, the responses, and all other prose portions down to the rubrics, as literally as he could, so that the English into which they were rendered should be intelligible, and should preserve moreover, some of that ecclesiastical aroma,

without which they would be like salt which has lost its savour. The metrical portions, that is the hymns &c., at least invited a different style of treatment. No doubt, they might have been turned into plain prose ; and this again might have been broken up into lines of unequal length, so as to tell the reader that it had once enjoyed the honour of being verse. The temptations of a clearly superior method, led to a rash defiance of both difficulty and failure. An attempt was made to preserve the metre, the rhyme, and even the structure of the verse, without sacrificing the sense of the original. Beyond all question the result is mere doggrel ; but then, had it been otherwise, it must have been unfaithful ; because,—the Latin hymns &c., are themselves, the whole of them, mere doggrel too.

The appendix, which has run to a laborious and weary, probably also a tedious length, must be left to speak for itself.

EDINBURGH, *1st August 1872.*

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