SAINT COLUMBA: APOSTLE OF CALEDONIA

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649697342

Saint Columba: Apostle of Caledonia by Charles Forbes Montalembert

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CHARLES FORBES MONTALEMBERT

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"In gentes ego mitto te, aperire oculus corum, ut convertantur a tenebris ad lucem, et de potestate Satanæ ad Deum, ut accipiant remissionem peccatorum, et sortem inter sanctos."—Acv. xxvi.

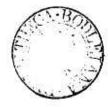
SAINT COLUMBA

APOSTLE OF CALEDONIA

BY THE

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT

OF THE PRENCH ACADEMY



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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
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PREFACE.

THE Narrative now given to the public is taken from the Third Volume of the 'Monks of the West,' the first of the three volumes of that work which are dedicated to the conversion of the British Isles by the Celtic and Romish Missionaries. It has appeared to some that the life of St Columba-one of the most heroic and the least remembered of the combatants in that great conflict-might, without inconvenience, be detached from the rest of the work, and would not on that account be found less wanting in serious and original interest. In accordance with their desire the following pages are published. It is of importance to bear in mind that everything in this narrative is borne out by the best known

records of Irish hagiography. The Author has not written one word which cannot be justified or explained by documents the value of which is proved or discussed in the notes to his larger work. These notes it has been necessary for the most part to exclude from the present reprint, to avoid unnecessarily extending its bulk. But any curious or sceptical reader will do well to consult them in the text of 'The Monks of the West,' before forming his judgment of the men and transactions of the sixth century in Ireland and Scotland.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER L

THE YOUTH OF COLUMBA, AND HIS MONASTIC LIFE IN IRELAND.

The biographers of Columba.—His different names.— His royal origin.—The supreme kings of Ireland: the O'Neills and O'Donnells; Red Hugh.-Birth of Columba; vision of his mother.—His monastic education; jealousy of his comrades; Kieran; the two Finnians; the school of Clonard.-Vision of the guardian angel and the three brides. - The assassin of a virgin struck by death at the prayer of Columba. -His youthful influence in Ireland; his monastic foundations, especially at Durrow and at Derry; his song in honour of Derry .- His love for poetry; his connection with the travelling bards.-He was himself a poet, a great traveller, and of a quarrelsome disposition.-His passion for manuscripts.-Longarad of the hairy legs and his bag of books. - Dispute about the Psalter of Finnian; judgment of King Diarmid, founder of Clonmacnoise. - Protest of Columba; he takes to flight, chanting the Hymn of Confidence, and raises a civil war.-Battle of Cul-