THE EARLY CHRONICLES RELATING TO SCOTLAND

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THE EARLY CHRONICLES RELATING TO SCOTLAND

BEING THE RHIND LECTURES IN ARCHAEOLOGY FOR 1912 IN CONNECTION WITH THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND

BY THE RIGHT HON.
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To

Joseph Anderson, Esq., LL.D.

to whose erudition and patience with the unlearned the author owes more than he can ever repay, this volume is dedicated with affectionate regard

PREFACE

The following lectures were undertaken with the intention and hope of furnishing a clue to the most trustworthy sources of contemporary, or nearly contemporary, information about the early condition and history of Scotland, and of indicating the most probable line of truth among conflicting statements. Some such guidance may be found acceptable by those who, while desiring to acquire a clear general knowledge of the origin of the Scottish people and their relations with England, have not enough leisure at command for prolonged search through the printed volumes of annals and to weigh the authority which may rightly be assigned to each.

It is hardly necessary that I should explain how greatly I have relied upon the labours of previous students in this field; they are too numerous and too well known to require

specific mention. But among the more recent of them there are three from whose works I have derived so much immediate assistance that it will not be thought invidious if I make direct acknowledgment of the same. In chronological order of publication these works stand as follows:

1899. *Scottish Kings*: a revised chronology of Scottish History, A.D. 1005-1625, by Sir Archibald H. Dunbar, Bart.

1908. *Scottish Annals from English Chronicles*: A.D. 500-1286, by Alan O. Anderson.

1910. *Annals of the Reigns of Malcolm and William, Kings of Scotland*, A.D. 1153-1214.

Between them, these three volumes provide a *corpus* of reference which I have found to save an infinity of trouble.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

MONREITH, *March*, 1912.

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When one reflects upon the space of time covered by modern archaeology—the science of recovering evidence of human occupation and society from the most distant period of man's existence—the thought must weigh heavily how relatively petty is the portion of that space covered by the written annals of the British Isles. Historical record, either graven on stone, baked in clay or inscribed on papyri, throws direct, if intermittent, light upon the polity of Ancient Egypt as far back as the close of the Third Dynasty, a date variously estimated by Egyptologists at from 4000 to 3000 years before Christ; whereas we have no first-hand notice of Britannia until Julius Caesar landed there in 55 B.C.

Of North Britain there is no mention whatever until 125 years later, when in the year

A.D. 80, Julius Agricola, the famous general and governor of the Britannic province under the Emperors Vespasian, Titus and Domitian, having subdued the Welsh Ordovices and Northumbrian Brigantes, *novas gentes aperuit*, carried his arms against the tribes further north. This brings us to the earliest authentic chronicle relating to Scotland in the shape of the biography of Agricola written by his son-in-law, Cornelius Tacitus. It is invaluable, for Tacitus was a most accomplished writer, compiling his narrative from his father-in-law's own description; the only complaint that can be made against him is that he is too laconic to satisfy our curiosity upon every point of interest.

The exact direction taken by Agricola in invading what we now call Scotland and the sequence of his conquests in that country have been the subject of a good deal of controversy, nor need they greatly concern us at the present day. We read that in the third year of his governorship, that is A.D. 80, he "discovered new nations" and subdued the country as far as the Firth of Tay, "the Barbarians, smitten with fear, never daring to give him battle."[1]

[1] *Vita Agricolae*, c. xxii.

The chief subject of anxiety to the commander of an expeditionary force must ever be his lines of communication, and to these Tacitus tells us Agricola paid special attention, securing them by erecting forts as he advanced, and providing the garrisons thereof against a siege by leaving a year's supplies in each. There can be little doubt, I think, that the great Roman station of Newstead, near Melrose, which has recently yielded such rich results to exploration, was originally one of Agricola's forts.

The year 81 was spent in securing the country as far as the Firths of Forth and Clyde; and here, says Tacitus, "had it been possible to set a limit to the spirit of the troops and to the renown of Rome, might have been drawn a permanent frontier within the bounds of Britain. For Clota and Bodotria, running far inland from opposite seas, are separated by only a narrow strip of land, which [Agricola caused to be] strengthened by a line of forts and the whole country to the south to be occupied, the enemy being driven back as it were into another island."[1]

[1] *Vita Agricolae*, c. xxiii.

In A.D. 82 Agricola embarked on the Firth of Clyde and occupied part of the west coast, whence he could see Ireland, which he considered would be well worth annexing to the empire, the harbours and approaches of that island being well known to merchantmen. "Ireland," says Tacitus, "is less than Britain, but larger than all the islands of the Mediterranean. . . . I have often heard Agricola declare that a single legion, with a moderate force of auxiliaries, would suffice to complete the conquest of Ireland."[1]

But Agricola had to postpone an expedition against Ireland because of the threatening attitude of the natives to the north of the Forth. They had composed their private feuds, and, making common cause against the invader, were massing upon the new Roman frontier. In the summer of A.D. 83 Agricola undertook a campaign for their dispersal. Although Tacitus continues to refer to the enemy collectively as Britons, he specifies the race inhabiting Caledonia (that is, the land north of the Forth) as being red-haired and powerfully built, whence he argues their

[1] *Vita Agricolae*, c. xxiv.

affinity with the Germans. They were easily distinguished, he says, from the Silures, inhabiting the west of England, who had swarthy skins and black, curly hair, and from the inhabitants of the rest of Britain, in whom Tacitus recognised, as Caesar had formerly done, a strong similarity to the people of Gaul.

Time may be spent more profitably than in discussing the racial affinities of the Caledonians; but I cannot help expressing surprise at the conclusion arrived at by Sir John Rhys that they were a branch of the Brythonic or Cymric division of the Celts. The Gauls certainly belonged to that division, and Sir John Rhys assumes, as I think we may safely do, that Tacitus was correct in his inference that "a colony from Gaul had taken possession of a country so inviting from its proximity," driving before them the Goidelic Celts who had already occupied it.[1] It would be in perfect accord with this hypothesis if these northern tribes—these Caledonians—were descended from the original Goidelic colonists and had retreated before the Brythonic invaders into the strong country referred to by

[1] Rhys's *Celtic Britain*, pp. 158, 203.

Tacitus as Caledonia. Two hundred years later the people of that same district became known as Picts, and when we find the Roman historian Eumenius about the year A.D. 296 not only using the phrase "the Caledonians and other Picts,"[1] but also noting the very same characteristic in them that had attracted the attention of Tacitus, namely, the redness of their long hair,[2] and when we remember that the Romans never succeeded in their attempt to dispossess or conquer the people they termed Caledonians, the inference can scarcely be avoided that the people known as Picts from the third century onwards were the same as, or included, or were closely akin to, the people known as Caledonians in the first century, just as the district first called Caledonia afterwards was referred to as Pictavia.

This confusion and the overlapping of names occur whenever civilisation encounters barbarism. Between the years 1811 and 1853 Great Britain waged several wars in South Africa with native tribes collectively termed Kaffres,

[1] "Non dico Caledonum aliorumque Pictorum silvas et paludes." Eumenius, c. vii.

[2] "Prolixo crine rutilantia."

and all that vast territory lying between the Orange River and the Limpopo was officially termed Kaffraria. But there is now no district known as Kaffraria, and the term Kaffre had and has no ethnological significance. It is applied by Mahommedans to all people who reject the faith of Islam, just as Christians call all people Heathens who reject the faith of Christ. The early Portuguese settlers of the seventeenth century used the term Kaffre to denote the Negroid tribes whom they found in possession of the country, these Negroids being intellectually and physically superior to the Hottentots and Bosjesmans whom they had dispossessed. British colonists, following the Portuguese, adopted the name Kaffre and applied it indiscriminately to the native tribes with whom they came in conflict. But in 1879 the enemy was termed Zulu, and in 1893 Matabele, both being branches of the Negroid population formerly termed Kaffres.

So it was in North Britain; the people whom Tacitus termed Caledonians became known later under the name of Picts. Nevertheless, to this day *stat nominis umbra*; the name of this indomitable red-haired race is

preserved in Dunkeld—the *dún* or fortress of the Caledons, just as Dún Bretan, now Dunbarton, was the fortress of the Britons or Cymri, and Dún Fris, now Dumfries, was the fortress of the Frisian Saxons. Note, by the way, that such names were not invented and conferred by the tribe or race occupying these fortresses: their origin was external, devised by neighbouring, and normally hostile, tribes to denote the occupation of certain places by people of a race alien to their own. We do not know what was the original name of Dumfries, or whether it had one before the Frisian settlement; but the Britons who garrisoned Dunbarton named it descriptively Alcluith, that is, the cliff on the Clyde.

It is strange to see the dim and misty dawn of our nation still reflected in the titles of such prosaic concerns as the Caledonian Railway and the Caledonian Bank, Ltd.

Agricola, then, marched back to the east coast, where he met the Roman fleet of galleys, and crossed over into Fife. The Caledonians seem to have shown such activity and prowess in successful attacks upon his forts that he was strongly urged by some of his officers to fall

back upon the original frontier between the firths, but to this he turned a deaf ear. Dividing his army into three columns, and supported by the fleet, he advanced into lower Strathtay, encamping probably at the place known as Grassy Walls, near Perth. Then, crossing the Tay, it is supposed that he made his head-quarters at Coupar-Angus, where there are remains of a large camp. A smaller camp at Lintrose, a couple of miles to the south-east, was probably formed by the Ninth or Spanish Legion, which Tacitus mentions as being the weakest in numbers of the whole army, and which there is some reason to believe was annihilated by the natives before the advent of Hadrian in A.D. 122 as completely as Hicks Pasha's army of 10,000 was destroyed in 1883 by the Sudanese.

The Caledonians, then, made a night attack upon this Ninth Legion in their camp at Lintrose, and gained an entrance, but the Spaniards made good their defence till Agricola came to their relief at daybreak, when the enemy, attacked in front and rear, was routed with much slaughter.

After that the troops on both sides went

into winter quarters, and the next we learn is about a vigorous summer campaign which Tacitus states took place in the eighth year of Agricola's administration, namely, A.D. 86.[1]

Sending the fleet to create a diversion on the coast, he advanced against the Caledonians, who were posted in great force under a chief named Galgach, atinised Galgacus, on an upland indicated as Mons Granpius. The wish has sometimes been expressed that Tacitus had more clearly indicated the site of the decisive engagement which followed, instead of putting prodigious and necessarily imaginary speeches into the mouths respectively of Galgach and Agricola. Yet from the speech attributed to Galgach may be obtained some interesting inference as to the relation in which the Caledonians stood to the other races in North Britain. He is made to speak of his people as the noblest sons of Britain, occupying the last recesses of the land in the very sanctuary of liberty, "without agriculture or mineral wealth to tempt the conqueror"; to refer with contempt to those Britons who hire themselves out as mercenaries to the foreigner, and to

[1] *Vita Agricolae*, c. xxix.

predict that they, as well as the Gaulish and German mercenaries, will desert the Roman standard if the Caledonians bear themselves like men.

The most probable theory is that Galgach took up a position among the foothills of the Grampian range north of Meikleour, and that Agricola advanced against him across the plain, with his flanks protected by the rivers Tay and Isla.[1]

The curious statement is made that, in order to avoid shedding Roman blood, Agricola put 8000 auxiliaries in the post of honour to lead the attack, supported by 3000 cavalry, the legions being held in reserve. The strength of the enemy was estimated at 30,000; if Galgach had held his ground, it might have cost the Romans dear before they dislodged him; but he committed the same mistake as Archibald Douglas afterwards did at Halidon Hill and James IV. repeated at Flodden, he

[1] In 1852 Carolus Wex published an edition of the *Vita Agricolae* from two MSS. in the Vatican, in which he read the *n* in "Mons Granpius" as *u*, maintaining that the name should be "Graupius." But seeing that *n* and *u* are scarcely to be distinguished from each other in early, and indeed in many modern, manuscripts, the point is not worth consideration.

must e'en come down to meet Agricola's attack in the plain. This his wild troops did with splendid spirit, the armed chariots being handled so skilfully that the Roman cavalry was thrown into confusion and fell back. Agricola then strengthened the fighting line with three Dutch (Batavian) and two Tungrian cohorts—say 3000 men—which sufficed to force the Caledonians back to the hills, still fighting fiercely; but their long swords with blunt points and their small round targes were no match for the short cut-and-thrust weapons and long shields of the Batavians. The chariots, also, after delivering the first onslaught, became useless when the Caledonian line was driven back into rougher ground. Galgach now moved up his reserve, and detached columns to turn both flanks of the Romans, whereupon Agricola brought up his cavalry reserve consisting of four *alae* or squadrons, and dispersed them with much slaughter. At nightfall the Romans held possession of the field, and next morning there was no trace of the enemy in sight. Tacitus puts the Caledonian loss at 10,000 killed, but does not mention any prisoners. Of the Romans, he admits that 340 were

killed, among them being Aulus Atticus, prefect of a cohort—equivalent to the modern colonel of a battalion. This pitched battle on the Grampians is the only general action fought by the Romans in North Britain of which a detailed contemporary account has been preserved. It was barren of result to the victors. The season was far advanced; the enemy had disappeared into a region which scouts reported as desolate and inhospitable; wherefore Agricola withdrew into the country of the Horestians, whom we may guess to be a weak tribe inhabiting the district between the Tay and the Forth.[1] They submitted to him, giving hostages for their good behaviour; after which the Roman army went into winter quarters south of the Forth.

During that autumn Agricola sent the fleet to ascertain whether, as had been asserted by merchantmen, Britain was really an island. The galleys passed up the east coast and circumnavigated the western and southern coasts,

[1] Sir John Rhys has adopted Carolus Wex's emendation by reading *Boresti* for *Horesti*; but the inscription on an altar from the Roman station of Nieder Biebr on the Rhine bears that Hor. N. Brittonvm—that is, "Horestorum Numeri Brittonum"—had been enrolled in the army of Serverus in the third century.

wintering at a place called by Tacitus Portus Trutulensis, which is usually interpreted as a misreading of Portus Rutupensis, that is Richborough in Kent; whence in the spring of A.D. 87 the fleet sailed to resume its former station in the Firth of Forth.

Whatever designs Agricola may have formed of prosecuting operations against the Caledonians or attempting the conquest of Ireland, his military and administrative career were brought to a sudden close by his resignation, which Tacitus gives us to understand was forced upon him by the Emperor Domitian, who, he alleges, was intensely jealous of Agricola's fame and popularity. He even records a report that Domitian procured his death by poison, a rumour which Dio Cassius, writing a hundred years later, does not hesitate to confirm. There is, however, another view of the case which acquits the Emperor of personal animosity against Agricola, namely, that the Senate may have become perturbed by the expense of the campaign, the indifferent success of their general against the Caledonians, and the prospect of indefinite annexation; just as the East India Directors in 1806 caused

Marquess Wellesley to resign the Governor-Generalship owing to similar apprehension.

With the close of Agricola's campaign and of the narrative of Tacitus, we part with the most valuable and trustworthy account of affairs in North Britain during the Roman occupation. I have dwelt longer upon this chronicle than it will be profitable to do upon the works of other Roman annalists, because I believe that Tacitus faithfully carried out the promise made at the beginning of his biography.

"In treating of the land and inhabitants of Britain," he said, "I shall not compete either in diligence or ability with the many writers who have described them . . . but whereas those who have preceded me have eloquently adorned their description with imaginary features, mine will be confined to facts."[1]

Henceforward those annals which have survived are so seldom contemporary, and, when they are so, often treat more fully of current scandal and personal gossip than of serious

[1] A loose translation, but that appears to be the sense. "Britanniae situm populosque, multis scriptoribus memoratos, non in comparationem curae ingeniive referam . . . itaque quae priores nondum comperta eloquentia percoluere, rerum fide tradentur." *Vita Agricolae*, c. x.

politics, that an attempt to construct from them a consecutive narrative reminds one of one of those zigzaw puzzles which had a fleeting vogue two or three years ago. One may succeed in piecing together a few fragments here and there, upon which are represented intelligible incidents and recognisable figures; but so much of the original has been lost as to leave great empty spaces where conjecture itself is baffled to supply what is missing.

For more than thirty years after the end of Agricola's governorship we have no information whatever about the course of events in North Britain, except what may be inferred from a passing mention by Tacitus, writing in the reign of Trajan (A.D. 98-117), that Britain had been conquered only to be lost immediately.[1] From this it may be assumed that the Caledonians and other northern tribes recovered all the territory that Agricola had annexed north of Tweed and Solway; and when the Emperor Hadrian visited Britain, A.D. 120 or 122, he built the great wall extending seventy-three miles from Wallsend on Tyne to Bowness on Solway to prevent them overrunning the

[1] *Perdomita Britannia et statim missa.* Tac. *Hist.* i. 2.

southern province. Of this momentous work no contemporary record has been preserved; but it is mentioned in the *Historia Augusta*, a compilation of biographies by several hands covering the period from A.D. 117 to A.D. 284, but certainly not written earlier than the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine (A.D. 284-337), or, as seems not improbable, considerably later. The memoir of Hadrian is from the hand of Aelius Spartianus, who tells us that the Emperor set affairs in order in Britain, being the first builder of a wall about eighty miles long dividing the Roman province from the Barbarians.

The knowledge gained by Agricola of the inhabitants of North Britain, the itineraries of his marches and the observations made by the officers of the Roman fleet in circumnavigating the island, were turned to account in the second century A.D. by the geographer Ptolemy. His great work, the *Geographia* in eight books, is of incomparable value as a guide to early British topography, but as it cannot be reckoned a chronicle of events, it hardly falls within the scope of our present inquiry. Nor need we greatly concern ourselves about the dis-

positions assigned to the various tribes—the Selgovae on the Solway, the Novantae on the Novios or Nith, the Damnonii in Clydesdale and Strathearn, the Vernicomes and Taexali on the east coast, the Vacomagi, represented as occupying the Highland border, probably the same people that appear as Meatae in the later writings. Next to the Vacomagi on the north lay the Caledonians, extending from Loch Long to the Beauly. The impression is conveyed of a number of tribes and groups of tribes owning no central authority, alternately waxing and waning, raiding and being raided, much as the Highland clans continued to do throughout the middle ages.

So might they have continued to do, without coming into collision with Roman arms, had they been content with the limits assigned to them by the Wall of Hadrian. But they were not so content. They took to raiding across the wall, which at that time was probably only built of sods, with a wide and deep ditch; wherefore Antoninus Pius, who succeeded to the purple on the death of Hadrian in A.D. 138, sent Lollius Urbicus to protect the Britons of the Province. We have here to

rely on two brief passages, one in the history of Pausanias, a contemporary writer (viii. 43), the other in that of Julius Capitolinus, a writer in the *Historia Augusta*, who concur in stating that the frontier of the province was advanced further to the north, that is, to the line of forts erected by Agricola between Forth and Clyde, and the great earthwork known as the Wall of Antonine was constructed to connect the forts and form a defensive frontier.

Both writers explain that this delimitation involved the disturbance of certain native communities. Julius Capitolinus merely says that the Barbarians were expelled: but Pausanias is more explicit, stating that land was taken from the Brigantes, who, as Tacitus observed, were the most powerful people in the whole island, occupying in the second century the north-eastern district from the Humber to the Forth. The Romans treated the Brigantes in this manner, says Pausanias, because they had attacked some friendly natives which he calls ἡ Γενουνία μοῖρα—the Genunian brigade or cohort, which Sir John Rhys identifies tentatively with the Selgovae or people of Galloway, to be heard of later as Atecotts and Picts. From

the use of the military term μοῖρα it would seem that these Selgovae had been enrolled as auxiliaries, and no doubt all the tribes who were content to remain within the new limits of the province would become tributary to Rome and furnish auxiliaries to the legions. Those who would not do so, the marauding Caledonians and insubordinate Brigantes, were expelled from the province.

This earthern rampart, strengthened with stations and stone-built *castella*, and extending twenty-seven miles from Carriden on the Firth of Forth to West Kilpatrick on the Clyde, remained the frontier of the Roman Province until the final withdrawal of the legions at the close of the fourth century. It is satisfactory that the statements of Julius Capitolinus and Pausanias have been confirmed by the discovery on the line of this wall of inscriptions bearing the names both of Antonine and his general, Lollius Urbicus.

Thus far, the materials available for obtaining an insight into the affairs of North Britain in the first two centuries of our era, though meagre and fragmentary, may be accepted as genuine history. Tacitus naturally wrote with

a strong prepossession for his father-in-law Agricola, but he does full justice to the courage and patriotism of the natives of North Britain, notably in the speech which he puts into the mouth of Galgach. But we have now to take note of a piece of deliberate fraud, so ingenious and unscrupulous that it has imposed upon many students of the history of Roman Britain, and gravely perverted the written conclusions of such well-known authorities as Pinkerton, Chalmers, General Roy, Dr. Lingard, and the late Sir William Fraser. The author of this forgery was one Charles Julius Bertram, English teacher in the naval school at Copenhagen. He professed to have found in the Royal Library there the MS. of a chronicle by Richard of Cirencester, a Benedictine monk of the fourteenth century, entitled *De Situ Britanniae*, containing an itinerary and description of the Roman stations in Britain. Richard certainly wrote a chronicle, *Speculum Historiae*, covering the period from A.D. 447 to 1066, which is little more than a poor compilation from earlier writers; but the tract *De Situ Britanniae* is an impudent and most skilful forgery, which deceived the very elect during more than a

hundred years. Nay, it continues to this day a pitfall for the unwary, seeing that several editions of it have been published, and it appears in Bohn's Antiquarian Library as one of *Six Old English Chronicles*, without any warning as to its real character.

Julius Capitolinus, one of the authors of the *Historia Augusta*, records that in A.D. 162 Calphurnius Agricola (not to be confounded with Julius Agricola, who had been dead for nearly seventy years) was sent from Rome by the new Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, to repel an attack upon the Province by the northern Barbarians.[1] Again in the year A.D. 182, when Commodus succeeded Marcus Aurelius, the Caledonians broke through the wall, killing the general commanding with many of his men, and this time the stern martinet Marcellus Ulpius was charged with the task of expelling them, which it took him two years' campaign to accomplish. We may assume, then, that all the country south of Antonine's Wall—that is, the line of Forth and Clyde—was once more under Roman government, those natives who accepted it settling down as citizens

[1] Capitolinus, *Marcus Aurelius*, viii.

of the Empire, or at least as tributaries, and those who rejected it being expelled as Barbarians.

For events in the reigns of the Emperors from Commodus to Alexander Severus, we have the contemporary testimony of Dio Cassius. He was praetor under Septimius Severus, and, being the trusted minister and intimate friend of that minister, he turned to good account the access which he thereby obtained to the state records in composing a history of Rome in eighty books, of which, to our irreparable loss, all but nineteen have perished. However, in the eleventh century, Xiphilinus, a monk of Constantinople, prepared an epitome of the last twenty books, which dealt with matters whereof Dio had cognisance as a contemporary, and from him we learn something more about the tribes in Caledonia beyond the wall.

"The two most important tribes," he says, "are the Caledonians and the Meatae; the names of the other tribes having been included in these. The Meatae dwell close by the wall that divides the island into two parts, the Caledonians beyond them." These people, he continues, had no walled towns, but lived in

tents or booths, subsisting entirely by hunting and pillage. They did not cultivate the ground, but ate wild fruits,[1] rejecting fish, although there was plenty to be had for the catching. Mention is made of a special kind of compressed food that they carried on expeditions, a very small piece of which was enough to satisfy both hunger and thirst.[2] They had wives in common, it is alleged, though that is a statement to be accepted under reserve, and so great was their hardihood that they used to conceal themselves in swamps, submerged all but their heads, and could remain so for many days, living upon roots. This also sounds like a mere traveller's tale ; but the description of their mode of fighting is probably trustworthy.

They had chariots drawn by small but active horses ; they carried dirks and short spears with a bronze knob on the haft, which they

[1] Hazel nuts were certainly an important article of diet, as shown by the immense deposits of nutshells found around the crannogs or lake dwellings. These crannogs have been proved to have been inhabited during the Roman occupation by the discovery in them of many articles of Roman manufacture.

[2] The traditional *biadh-nan-treum*, the food of heroes, was said to be prepared by the Picts of pounded flesh mixed with certain restorative herbs, a small quantity of which sufficed to maintain a man's strength during prolonged exertion.

rattled against their shields when charging an enemy. They were very fleet of foot and very brave in war, wearing hardly any clothes in order that the beasts depicted on their bodies by tattooing might be seen.

When the Emperor Commodus died in A.D. 192 Clodius Albinus was Propraetor and Governor of Britain, and claimed election as emperor. The other three claimants were Didianus Julianus at Rome, Pescennius Niger, Governor of Syria, and Lucius Septimius Severus, Governor of Pannonia. Albinus defeated and slew his rival Pescennius in A.D. 194; Severus defeated and slew Albinus near Lyons in A.D. 197 and became sole emperor.

Herodianus, a contemporary Greek historian, states that one of the first acts of Severus was to separate Britain into two provinces, Upper and Lower Britain. He does not define the boundaries, but it is supposed, the reckoning being from Rome, that Upper Britain was the settled and civilised part south of the Humber, and that Lower Britain included the remainder as far as Antonine's Wall. Virius Lupus, the governor, was hard pressed by the Caledonians and Meatae, and Severus, being engaged in a

five years' war with the Parthians, was unable to reinforce the garrison of Britain, wherefore Virius had to purchase peace from these Meatae at a high price.

Relying now upon Xiphiline's abridgment of Dio Cassius, we may assume that the Meatae broke their bargain with Governor Virius, for in A.D. 208 he wrote to the emperor announcing that he could no longer protect the province unless he were reinforced. Severus was old and gouty, but his soldier spirit was still unquenched. Taking with him his sons Caracalla and Geta, he travelled in a litter through Gaul, landed in Britain, collected a strong army, set Geta to govern Upper Britain, and went on with Caracalla[1] to Lower or Northern Britain. He passed the wall and invaded Caledonia itself, opening up the country by felling the forest, making roads and bridges in preparation for a permanent occupation. He succeeded, but at a terrible cost of life; his slow advance may be traced by the numerous camps and remains of roads through Strathearn to Forfar, where is the great camp now called Battledykes, and so forward through

[1] Whose true name was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

the counties of Kincardine and Aberdeen till, still in his invalid's litter, he reached the Moray Firth, and, believing that he had come to the Caledonian Land's End, "he took observation of the parallax and the length of day and night."

Severus had now reached the northernmost limit ever touched by Roman arms, if we except the nominal annexation of the Orkneys by Agricola's fleet in the circumnavigation of A.D. 86. He had fought no pitched battles in his advance,[1] but he had lost very many lives by ambuscades, disease and accident. Xiphiline puts the death casualties at the incredible number of 50,000, and declares that when men fell out on the march their comrades put them to death to save them from falling alive into the hands of the Barbarians. Nevertheless, Severus had so thoroughly overawed the Caledonians by his drastic measures of forest clearance and road-making that he was able to exact a treaty from them, under which they

[1] Orosius, indeed, states that Severus fought many severe actions in this campaign; but he was writing 200 years after these events, and gives the length of the wall as 132 Roman miles (equal to about 122 English miles), which is equally inconsistent with the dimensions of either wall.

ceded some territory, probably the district between the Tay and the Forth. We have the statement of five Roman chroniclers—Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Orosius, Eusebius and Spartianus—that he built a wall across Britain. Spartianus says that this was done after he had returned (from the north) to the nearest station (*quum ad proximam mansionem rediret*), not only victorious, but having established perpetual peace.

The late Dr. Skene entertained little doubt that the extent of the province continued as I have indicated, namely, all south of Antonine's Wall, and he cites in confirmation the discovery at Cramond, the *proxima mansio*—the station nearest to that wall—of a coin of Severus inscribed FVNDATOR PACIS: but Dr. George MacDonald has pointed out that there is not a word in any of the Roman writers to indicate which wall it was that Severus repaired or reconstructed, and that it is possible that the Meatae, described as living next the Caledonians on the south, occupied the region, not between the Forth and Tay, as Skene believed, but Clydesdale, Ettrick Forest and the Lammermuirs. Moreover, the title Fundator Pacis

probably had nothing to do with the settlement arrived at with Caledonians and Meatae, but referred to the overthrow of the two rival emperors, Pescennius and Albinus. I am afraid we must leave it at that, for there is no information to support anything more solid than conjecture in this matter.

The "perpetual peace" described by Spartian, writing at least seventy years later, did not last more than a few months; for no sooner had Severus returned to York, leaving his undutiful son Caracalla in command on the wall, than the Caledonians took to raiding the territory they had been forced to cede. The emperor at once prepared for a fresh campaign against them, but while he was mustering his army at York, this fine old soldier died on 4th February, A.D. 211, aged 65.

For nearly a century after the death of Severus there is a complete absence of mention of the affairs of North Britain. Severus's son, the brutal Caracalla, who had attempted his father's life in Caledonia, and who succeeded afterwards in murdering his brother Geta, became emperor, patched up a peace with the Caledonians, and departed for the Continent,

never to return. This break in the chronicle may be accounted for by the severance of the British provinces under the usurping rebels Carausius and Allectus, both of whom assumed the purple, from the rest of the empire under Maximian, legitimate colleague of Diocletian. The Roman Empire had become unwieldy, its central authority uncertain and intermittent. Carausius, and his murderer Allectus, being both probably of British blood, maintained their authority by enlisting the natives of Britain in their armies, and appear to have managed to keep the Caledonians in good humour; but after the Emperor Constantius Chlorus had invaded Britain and put an end to the independent rule of these usurpers by defeating and killing Allectus in A.D. 296, the old trouble broke out again, and in A.D. 306 Constantius had to invade Caledonia in order to drive back the northern tribes whom Eumenius describes as "Caledonians and other Picts."[1]

This, then, is the first mention of any inhabitants of North Britain under the name of Picts, and we shall hear plenty about their

[1] *Eumenius*, c. vii.

legendary origin when we come to examine the Irish, Welsh and Scottish chronicles. For our present purpose, which is to collect what information can be had from Roman writers about events in North Britain, it is enough to note that, after the name of Pict first occurs in the chronicle of Eumenius in A.D. 296, there is no further mention of these northern tribes for more than fifty years, until the narrative is reopened by Ammianus Marcellinus.

This distinguished man was a Greek by birth and saw much active service in the east under the Emperors Constantius II. and Julian the Apostate. Returning to Rome he undertook to write a history of the empire, which he accomplished in thirty-one books, whereof the first thirteen are lost. Fortunately the remaining eighteen cover the period from A.D. 354 to 378, when the author was alive. His chronicle is of special value as having been written by an experienced soldier. It may be remembered that when Constantine the Great died in A.D. 337 the empire was divided between his three sons—Constantinus II., Constans and Constantius II.

Britain fell to the share of Constantine II.: when he was killed in A.D. 340, Constans, as Emperor of the West, became ruler of Britain, and we know from an allusion in one of the surviving books of Ammianus that Constans had to go over to Britain in order to repel the incursions of the Barbarians. He says that he had recorded that campaign in one of the books which have perished.[1] Constans was murdered A.D. 350, when the whole empire became once more united under Constantius II. It is apparent that Constans brought the Picts to terms, because Ammianus tells us that in A.D. 360 the fierce nations of the Scots and Picts had broken the peace he had concluded with them, had plundered the districts near the wall, and that the people of the province were greatly alarmed, being worn out by these incessant raids. He says that Constantius, who was wintering in Paris, had too many cares upon his shoulders to allow him to go to Britain in person, but he sent a general named Lupicinus.

This is the first appearance of the Scots upon the scene of history, but they only con-

[1] Ammianus Marcellinus, xx. 1.

cern us here because they were acting, if not in concert, at all events simultaneously with the Picts. They came from Ireland, and it is believed that in these years their attack was directed upon the Welsh coast, while the independent tribes of the north, now collectively known as Picts, overran the province as far, at least, as the Wall of Hadrian.

Lupicinus was powerless to dislodge them. For four years they held their ground until, in A.D. 364, Ammianus Marcellinus records that two fresh bands of invaders appeared on the scene, attracted by the waning imperial power, to ravage what had become one of the richest provinces of Rome.[1] These were the Saxons, who effected landings on the southern and eastern shores of Britain, and a people called Atecotts, whom Sir John Rhys concludes to have been the inhabitants of Galloway, formerly tributary to Rome.[2] The whole of Britain, north and south, now seeming to be at the

[1] Ammianus Marcellinus, xxvi. 4.

[2] The prefix "A" in the name "Atecotti" suggests the Gaelic prefix *ua*, signifying a family or sept. This prefix in Irish names is rendered O by English writers, as in O'Gorman, O'Neill, etc.; but in Galloway surnames it appears as A, as in Adair, Achanna (now Hannay), etc.

mercy of these four bodies of invaders, Valentinian, Emperor of the West, resolved upon vigorous measures, and in A.D. 369 commissioned his most illustrious general, Theodosius the Elder, to restore order. Landing at Richborough in Kent, he found London was in the hands of the Barbarians, marched upon it, and drove them out in a campaign whereof his panegyrist Claudian gives a vivid but very brief summary. He records how the Picts, whom Ammianus states to have consisted of two main bodies, Dicaledones and Vecturiones, were subdued and Thule was imbrued with their blood; the Scots were driven back to Ireland at the point of the sword, while the Orkneys were drenched with Saxon gore.[1] The Atecotts were enrolled in the Roman army, four cohorts of them being named in the official *Notitia*, compiled shortly after, as being stationed in Gaul.[2] The province, thus restored, was renamed Valentia in honour of the Emperor Valentinian and his brother Valens, Emperor of the East.

[1] *De tertio consul.* lines 54-56. *De quarto consul. Hon. Aug.* lines 30-34.

[2] In a well-known passage S. Jerome mentions that, as a young man, he saw these Atecotts in Gaul, and that they were reported to be cannibals in their own country.

In this campaign of Theodosius we have probably the last successful attempt to re-establish the imperial authority in the district between the walls. Claudian not only alludes to fighting and slaughter in Thule, that is, the extreme north of the island,[1] but he describes Theodosius as establishing forts amid the frosts of Caledonia.[2] These forts were probably those on Antonine's Wall. It may be that a laudatory poem is not the surest kind of historic evidence; but Claudian's statement is indirectly confirmed by Ammianus, who says that Theodosius, "after recovering the province which he had surrendered into the keeping of the enemy, restored it to its former condition."[3]

These vigorous measures proved of very transient effect. Theodosius cleared the province of Pictish and Scottish hordes; but the work was no sooner accomplished than the legions had to be withdrawn to protect Rome

[1] Thule is probably the latinised form of *tuathail*, meaning "north" in Gaelic.

[2] "Ille Caledoniis posuit qui castra pruinis." *De quarto consul.* l. 26.

[3] Ammianus Marcellinus, xxviii. c. 3.

against the gathering Goths and Vandals. Those troops that were left to garrison Britain revolted and elected their general, Clemens Maximus, as emperor in A.D. 383. Prosperus Aquitanus states that the first task of Clemens was to repel a fresh invasion of Picts and Scots in A.D. 384.

Probably if Clemens had been content with insular dominion the Roman government would have been powerless to disturb him, so urgent were the calls upon its energy and resources upon the Danubian frontier of the empire. Then might the whole history of these islands have run in a far different channel to that which it has taken, had not Clemens Maximus aspired to continental dominion and invaded Gaul. Here he encountered and killed the Emperor Gratian, and, four years later, invaded Italy, ending his days at the battle of Aquileia in A.D. 388, where he was defeated and slain by the Emperor Theodosius.

The British province having been drained of fighting men to support the continental enterprise of Clemens, the Picts and Scots resumed their old game of marauding and piracy, until at length the Britons of the province induced

Stilicho, the guardian and powerful minister of the puppet emperor Honorius, to send a legion to their relief in A.D. 396. But with this and subsequent spasmodic attempts to maintain the imperial power in Britain, our only concern consists in the part that our native Picts and Atecotts bore with the Irish, Scots and Saxons in putting an end to Roman rule in what is now England, as they had already done in what is now Scotland.

It is true that Dr. Skene assumes that on this occasion, and again in A.D. 406, when Stilicho a second time sent a strong army to relieve the Roman Britons, that "the Province was protected in its full extent to the frontier of the firths of Forth and Clyde";[1] but I venture to think he does so upon little or no evidence. Anyhow, there is no extant description of the condition of the country between the walls at this time. The Atecotts whom Stilicho enrolled under the eagles in 396, as Theodosius had done in 369, are described by Orosius as "Barbarians previously admitted to alliance" or treaty.

There is, however, one event coincident, or

[1] *Celtic Scotland*, i. 107.

nearly so, with the expedition sent by Stilicho in 396 which suggests an endeavour on the part of that great minister to reclaim the northern province to civilisation by other means than force of arms. There is no direct evidence to support the conjecture that the mission of Ninian to the Picts of Galloway was undertaken at the instance of the Roman government. But there are certain circumstances tending to give rise to such conjecture. Assuming the Atecotts to be the same as the Picts of Galloway, they were, according to Orosius, intermittently in alliance with or subject to Rome. Julian the Apostate had been dead for thirty-three years: Christianity had been restored as the recognised religion of Rome; it is not improbable, therefore, that in sending Ninian as bishop missionary to the Picts of Galloway in or about the year 396 Pope Siricius may have been acting at the request, or at all events with the approval, of the Minister Stilicho, who would recognise in Christianity a possible means of weaning these truculent Atecotts from their objectionable practices.

However, having thrown out this sugges-

tion, I had better not say any more, for if a man once embarks upon the ocean of speculation, there is no saying to what shores of error he may drift on the uncharted currents of conjecture. We part here with the dim and intermittent light thrown by Roman annalists upon the early history of our country. In my next lecture I shall endeavour to deal with more sympathetic writers of our own race.

II.

A.D. 400–730.

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Vague and unsatisfying as are the references to events in northern Britain by all classical writers except Tacitus, the final withdrawal of the Roman legions from the province in 410 deprives us even of that uncertain light. For a century and a half to come the darkness is profound: there is no contemporary witness north of the wall to explain to us what went on when Pict and Scot and Briton were left free to fight it out among themselves, or to combine against the common danger from Angle and Saxon encroachment, as it may be supposed they must have done; for by the end of the sixth century these Teutonic rovers had possessed themselves in ever-increasing force of the best lands between the Firth of Forth and the Straits of Dover. How completely Britain, and especially northern Britain,

was shut out from the general political movement of Europe, appears from a singular passage in the *Histories* of Procopius, an Eastern writer of the sixth century :

"In this isle of Britain men of old time built a long wall, dividing off a great part of it; for the land, the men and all other things are not the same on both sides. On the eastern (southern) side of the wall the air is wholesome, according to the seasons, moderately warm in summer and cool in winter. Many men live there, much in the manner of other people. The trees with their special fruits flourish in season, their cornlands are as productive as others and the land seems to be sufficiently fertilised by streams. But on the western (northern) side all is different, so much so that it would not be possible for a man to live there for half-an-hour.[1] Vipers and serpents innumerable, with all other kinds of wild beasts, infest that region, and, what is most strange, the natives declare that if any one cross the wall to the other side, he would die immediately, overpowered by the poisonous air. Death, also, causes such cattle as go there to perish. Now as I have come to this part of my history, I am obliged to record a tradition very much of the nature of fable, which has never seemed to me to be authentic,

[1] Procopius was misled by the dislocation of Ptolemy's chart, which shows Scotland turned eastward at a right angle to England, so that the Mull of Galloway forms the northern and Cape Wrath the eastern extremity of the island of Britain.

though constantly circulated by innumerable men, who declare that they have themselves taken part in these doings, as well as having heard the story. I must not, however, omit to notice it, lest when thus writing about the island of Britain, I should incur an imputation of ignorance of certain circumstances continually taking place there. They say, then, that the souls of men departed are always conducted to this place."[1]

It is true that Ninian, evangelist to the Picts of Galloway, began his mission before the Roman occupation ceased and continued his labours in North Britain until his death about A.D. 432. We know that his life was written in the Anglo-Saxon vernacular and we may imagine that it contained a good deal of information upon the course of events and upon social life in the fifth century. Unhappily it has perished. Gildas, beginning his ecclesiastical chronicle about the middle of the sixth century, never saw it. "I shall not follow," he says, "the writings and records of my own country, which, *if ever there were any of them*, have been consumed in the fires of the enemy or have been carried by my exiled countrymen into distant lands." Nevertheless, though

[1] *Bellum Gothicum*, iv. 20.

unknown to Gildas, Ninian's life survived at all events until the twelfth century, when it came into the hands of Ailred, Abbot of Rievaulx, who undertook to translate it at the instance of Bishop Christian of Whithorn. Would that he had been content with the duties of translator: he must needs act as an ambitious editor also, and it is difficult to read without impatience the pious abbot's explanation to Bishop Christian of the manner he treated the original manuscript, which may have been five or six hundred years old when he got hold of it.[1]

"Those who, because of the barbarism of their native land, lacked the faculty of speaking gracefully and elegantly, did not defraud posterity of an account of persons worthy of imitation, albeit they did so in homely terms. Hence it came to pass that the life of the most holy Ninian was obscured by a barbarous language, neither agreeable nor edifying to the reader. Accordingly it pleased thy holy affection to impose upon mine insignificance the task of rescuing from a rustic style, as from darkness, and of bringing forth into the clear light of Latin diction the life of this most illustrious man, a life which had been told by

[1] The MS. of Ailred's work in the British Museum is entitled: *Incipit vita Sancti Niniani ep̃i et confessoris ab Aelredo Rieuallense Abbate de Anglico in Latinũ tr̃slata.*

my predecessors, faithfully indeed, but in too barbarous a style. I embrace thy devotion, I approve thy design, I praise thy zeal, but I am conscious of my own want of skill, and I fear to strip it of the coarse garments which have hidden it hitherto, lest I fail to array it in more comely attire.... In undertaking the burden thou hast laid upon me, I will endeavour, by the help of Him who maketh infants eloquent, so to temper my style that neither offensive rusticity shall obscure so high a matter nor a mischievous elaboration of phrase deprive those of the result of my labour who are uninstructed in ornate rhetoric."

What price would we not now willingly pay for the privilege of perusing the original before Abbot Ailred had purged it of its precious local colour and turned it into a mere farrago of myth and miracle, whence but one single grain of historical fact can be extracted, namely, the date of Ninian's mission to the Galloway Picts. It is herein recorded that, having landed at Whithorn with masons brought from the Continent, he built the first church of stone that had been seen in Britain, and, hearing of the death of his beloved patron, Bishop Martin of Tours, he dedicated the building to his memory. Now Martin's death has been fixed between A.D. 397 and 400,

which accordingly marks the first advent of the gospel to northern Britain.

With the gospel came the monastic system, which was probably first established in these islands by S. Patrick in his beehive huts at Ardmacha, now Armagh, about simultaneously with Ninian's mission to Galloway. Even in this daybreak of letters, the head of every monastery seems to have recognised and accepted the duty of keeping some sort of annals of the country in which it was founded, or, at all events, of writing the lives of brethren who attained special sanctity. The number of religious houses founded between the sixth and thirteenth centuries was enormous. In 1207 Gervase of Canterbury enumerates 22 in Lothian and the earldom of Fife alone. Each of these monasteries appointed a historiographer; the later monasteries borrowed and copied from the annals of the older ones; and, as every annalist conceived it to be his duty to start his chronicle with the Creation there was, of course, an immense amount of repetition. Such, at least, we may conceive to have been the origin of the monkish chronicles, which are all that we have to rely on for

knowledge of the early history of our country. They are fragmentary, they are often tedious, and they are never impartial; most of these monkish writers had their own "axes to grind" —theological or political; it is rare, indeed, to meet among them the convincing simplicity of Adamnan or the broad-minded impartiality of Bede. It is hard to sift out fragments of genuine history from the matrix of myth and miracle wherein they lie imbedded. Yet we should be grateful for the industry of the compilers, without which we should be destitute of any contemporary testimony whatever.

Of events in the sixth century we receive information almost at first hand from a Scottish writer dwelling in what is now called Scotland. Scotia and Scots were names still, and for long after this period, applicable only to Ireland and its people, including those Irish emigrants, the Scots of Ulster, who effected a settlement in Argyll, being already Christians, and who were destined to engraft the name of Scotland upon the country of their adoption. Before going further, I must pause to notice a serious discrepancy between what are reputed the oldest authorities for this settlement, a

discrepancy which, so far as I know, has escaped the attention of historians and critics. All accounts agree that Fergus Mor, the son of Erc, led the first band of Scots to settle in Alba. The *Synchronisms* of Flann Mainistrach, compiled early in the eleventh century, fix the date as twenty years after the battle of Ocha, which, it is well known, was fought in Ireland in 478. According to this authority, Fergus landed in Alba in 498, and his death is recorded by Tighernach in 501. Compare with this a passage in the *Tripartite Life of S. Patrick* compiled by Colgan, probably in the tenth century, from three Irish MSS. which have since perished. This passage was quoted by the late Dr. Skene in his *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots* [p. xxx] as probably the earliest authentic notice of the Dalriadic colony. It runs as follows :

"Patrick received welcome in that territory from the twelve sons of Erc ; and Fergus mór, son of Erc, said to Patrick : 'If thy reverence would influence my brother in dividing the land, I would give it to thee.' And Patrick granted this division to Bishop Olcan in Airthermuighe. Patrick said to Fergus : 'Though thy land is not great at this day among thy brothers, it is thou who shalt be king. From thee shall descend the kings of this

territory for ever, and in Fortrenn.' And this was fulfilled in Aedan the son of Gabran who took Alba by force."

Now S. Patrick died in 463 at the age of ninety, thirty-five years before the annalists state that Fergus emigrated from Ulster. It appears, therefore, that the passage in the *Tripartite Life* is worthless, or at least worthy of no more attention than the statement in the *Breviary of Aberdeen* that S. Patrick restored forty persons from death to life and ascended himself to heaven at the age of 120.

In the sixth century Scotia (or, as we may by anticipation call it, Ireland, to avoid confusion) was the source and scene of extraordinary missionary activity, and among the many evangelists who went forth from that island to convert the Picts, the British and the Saxon peoples of Northern Britain, was the priest Columba, whose fiery spirit had brought him into conflict with the clergy of Meath, resulting in his excommunication and exile. He took refuge among his compatriots in Argyll, and, having gained the favour of King Conall, received from him the island of Hy in the year 563, where he founded the

famous abbey.[1] His biography has come down to our times just as it left the hands of his kinsman Adamnan, likewise a Scot of Ulster. The narrative is not exactly contemporary, for Columba died in 597, about thirty years before Adamnan was born; but Adamnan states that he received oral information from persons who had known Columba: he had before him the contemporary memoir written by Comyn the Fair, who succeeded as seventh Abbot of Iona; above all, Adamnan spent all his life in the scene which Columba had so recently quitted, becoming himself ninth abbot in succession to Columba. So well did he apply these advantages that his work received from Pinkerton the high encomium of being "the most complete piece of such biography that all Europe can boast of, not only at so early a period, but throughout the whole of the middle ages." If Columba was fortunate in his biographer, Adamnan has been not less so in his editor, the late Dr. Reeves, who prepared the life for publication by the Irish Archaeological Society and the Bannatyne Club in 1856, and a fresh arrangement of the same

[1] *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 573; *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, A.D. 569.

edition was published in the series of the *Historians of Scotland* in 1874. Enriched by the copious notes of Dr. Reeves, this volume is a perfect mine of information upon the monastic life of the period—the dress, the offices, the manual industries of the monks.

At the time of Columba's arrival in the Western Isles the dominion of King Conall had extended far beyond the bounds of the original Scottish settlement; but the pagan Picts still occupied the greater part of the Highlands. It was to their conversion that Columba applied himself from the first, and his fame is derived chiefly from the signal success which he achieved. His interview with the Pictish King Brude in the stronghold now called Craig Phadraig, a couple of miles south of Inverness, and the competition in which he proved himself to be a stronger magician than King Brude's chief Druid Broichean, reminds one of Elijah's triumph over the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. Diplomatically, this mission had lasting results. King Brude the Pict had been a dangerous neighbour and rival of King Conall the Scot. After Brude and his people had accepted

baptism, Brude confirmed Columba in the possession of Iona, and the ultimate union of the Scottish and Pictish realms was brought somewhat nearer.

The reader's patience is tried in perusing this life by the writer's inveterate hankering after the marvellous. A supernatural gloss is applied to the most ordinary incidents in order to establish the prophetic and miraculous powers of Columba and the singular efficacy of his prayers. Of this habit, universal in monkish chronicles, of attributing the most ordinary phenomena to Divine interposition, the following may serve as an example :

"It came to pass on one occasion that a certain brother speaking with simplicity in the presence of the venerable and holy man, said to him—'After thy death all the people of these provinces will row across to the island of Hy to celebrate thine obsequies, and will entirely fill it.'—'Nay, my son,' replied the saint, 'what thou sayest will not come to pass, for a promiscuous throng of people will by no means be able to come to my funeral. None but the monks of my monastery shall attend my obsequies and perform the last sacred rites.' Which prophetic utterance was fulfilled immediately after his death by God's omnipotence ; for there arose a storm of wind without rain, which blew so violently during those three days and

nights of his obsequies as to make it utterly impossible for any one to cross the sound in a small boat. And immediately after the burial was finished the storm was quelled, the wind fell and the whole sea became calm."[1]

Notwithstanding this wearisome insistence upon and iteration of miraculous incident, many glimpses are permitted of genuine adventure, of social habits and of the peaceful industry of a monastic community at a period before the Church had become ambitious, or at least before it became worldly—before it became "rich, and increased with goods, and had need of nothing."

In connection with Adamnan's narrative, it may be noted that it has been the cause of conferring a new name upon the scene of the saint's life and death. The native name of the island being I or Hy, Adamnan, writing in Latin, gave it an adjectival form, and referred to the island as *Ioua insula*—the Iouan island. In transcription the vowel *u* was rendered as the consonant *n*, which gave birth to what philologists term a "ghost name"—that is, Iona.

While Columba was labouring as a mission-

[1] *Vita Columbæ*, iii. 24.

ary among the Picts of the North, his contemporary Kentigern was converting the Britons or Welsh of Strathclyde. Contemporary lives of Kentigern have been submitted to the same drastic and destructive ordeal as has been mentioned as being applied to the life of Ninian. Towards the end of the twelfth century, Jocelyn, a monk of Furness, undertook to compile a new biography from two manuscripts before him. In a prologue dedicating his work to another Jocelyn, Bishop of Glasgow, he refers to the life which "thy church useth" as being

"marred by a rude language and obscured by an inelegant style, and what beyond all these things any prudent person would abhor still more, at the very outset of the narrative there appears very plainly something contrary to sound doctrine and the Catholic faith. But," he continues, "I have found another little volume written in the Scotic dialect" [that is, in Gaelic] "teeming from end to end with solecisms, but containing at greater length the life and acts of the holy bishop. I confess that I was grieved and indignant that the life of so priceless a prelate . . . should be tainted with heretical passages or made exceedingly obscure by barbarous language; wherefore I determined to recast the matter collected out of each book and, at thy com-

mand to season the barbarous composition with Roman salt. I deem it unseemly that so precious a treasure should be wrapped in vile rags, wherefore I have endeavoured to clothe it, if not in gold tissue and silk, at least in clean linen."

The deadly heresy herein referred to with such abhorrence was of course the matter which, though it appears trivial enough to modern churchmen, threatened in the sixth century to cause a permanent schism in the Church, namely, the date for celebrating Easter and the frontal tonsure of priests as enjoined by the Church of Ireland, opposed to the date of Easter and the coronal tonsure prescribed by the Church of Rome.

Despite the emendation of the originals attempted by the pious monk of Furness, the narrative does not appear to have suffered as much under his hands as Ninian's life did under Ailred's. The Abbot of Rievaulx had a literary reputation to maintain : Jocelyn of Furness laboured under no such disability, and we owe to him and the author of the original, information not to be found elsewhere about certain events in the separate kingdom of Strathclyde, which may be taken as authentic,

seeing that statements relating to contemporary events in Wales proper correspond with what is known to have taken place there.

At the time of Kentigern's coming the region of Strathclyde, extending from the Clyde and Forth southwards to the river Derwent, but not including the Lothians or Galloway, appears to have comprised a number of provinces, each ruled by a so-called king. It was inhabited by people of the Brythonic, Cymric or Welsh branch of the Celtic race, but the term Cumbria or Cumbraland was never applied to it until the tenth century. It was always referred to as Strathclyde, and its people were known as Britons. Of this district Ninian probably had touched no more than the fringe; and even so, the faith which he planted had withered away before Kentigern came to revive it about the year 540. Some of the kinglets and their people still professed Christianity, or, at least, were ready to resume it: others were still pagans. Arriving at Cathures, now called Glasgow, Kentigern discovered a cemetery which had been consecrated by Ninian more than one hundred years before. Here he built

his cell on the banks of the Molendinar Burn, and soon made himself such a reputation for sanctity that the king of that district brought over a bishop from Ireland to consecrate Kentigern bishop over the whole of his kingdom. It is specially mentioned that the Christians at that time were few in number; but it may be assumed that Kentigern succeeded in bringing many into the fold during the lifetime of the friendly king. But when that king died, *quidam tyrannus vocabulo Morken* succeeded, and so persecuted Kentigern that he was obliged to take refuge in Wales, where he founded the monastery of St. Asaph's.[1] There he remained for many years, returning in 573 on the summons of Rydderch Hael, the Christian champion, who had just overthrown the pagan Gwenddolew at the battle of Arthuret, near Carlisle, and established himself at Dunbarton as king of the united realm of Strathclyde.

One of the most interesting episodes recorded in this work is the visit paid by Columba to

[1] *Vita Kentigerni*, cap. xxi., xxii., xxiii. Morken is named Morcant Bulg in the Welsh MSS. Cf. Skene's *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i. pp. 168, 175.

Kentigern in Glasgow. He came, we are told, with a great company of his disciples, whom he divided into three bands. The meeting of these two great lights of the early Church took place on the banks of the Molendinar Burn, where Kentigern had his residence, and after "having first satiated themselves with a spiritual banquet of divine words, they then refreshed themselves with bodily food." While these holy men were thus occupied, we are given a fine glimpse of Celtic human nature. Some of Columba's numerous "disciples," beholding Kentigern's flocks on the rich pasture-land, yielded to their inborn instinct of sheep-stealing, for, as the chronicler observes, "as the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, so the man that is bred to theft and rapine findeth it hard to alter his evil ways." An affray took place between these lawless islesmen and the shepherds, followed, of course, by a miracle, which, observes the writer, "seemeth to me in the main not inferior to that which the book of Genesis records to have been wrought upon Lot's wife." Observe the fine spirit of emulation in the scribe, who is determined not to be outdone by the Pentateuch in record-

ing the marvellous. One of the rascals had killed a ram and cut off its head. The ram, however, galloped off to join the flock, leaving its head, turned to stone, firmly fixed in the hands of the sheep-lifter. Do as he would, the wretch could not rid himself of it. Terror-stricken, he and his accomplices betook themselves to Kentigern's cell, fell on their knees and confessed their misdeeds. He lectured them soundly before pronouncing absolution: no sooner was that done than the stone head fell to the ground; and there, declares the chronicler, "it remaineth to this day as a witness to the miracle, and, being mute, yet preacheth the merit of holy Kentigern."[1]

By means of these three biographies—Ailred's *Life of Ninian*, Adamnan's *Life of Columba* and Jocelyn's *Life of Kentigern*—we arrive at a tolerably clear understanding of the process by which the Christian religion became predominant in North Britain. Ninian came direct from Rome, but the success which crowned his mission was transient, the Picts of Galloway having relapsed into paganism after his personal influence ceased with his

[1] *Vita Kentigerni*, cap. xl.

death about 430. Seventy years later, Fergus Mor and his Scottish colonists, settling in Argyll, brought with them the Christian religion from Ireland, and it was from Ireland that the clergy of Alba or Scotland continued to be recruited long after Columba effected the conversion of King Brude and the Northern Picts. But it required stimulus from another source to establish the religion of the Cross among the Britons of Strathclyde. It was from their kindred in Wales that Kentigern received the support that enabled him to retrieve his discomfiture at the hands of the tyrant Morken or Morcant. Christianity had been brought to Wales by Scots invaders or colonists from Ireland, and there it took root and flourished as vigorously as in Ireland itself. It was Wales that sent forth the Christian champion Rydderch Hael, who overthrew the forces of Paganism at Arthuret and consolidated the petty principalities of Strathclyde into one powerful little kingdom. We are not behind other countries in honouring the memory of our national heroes, yet how few of us have ever paid a tribute of respectful interest to that great stone which

reclines mute, yet eloquent, on the green hillside to the north of Lochwinnoch. Tradition has been faithful in preserving its significance, for it is still called Cloriddreck—the tomb of Rydderch Hael, whose victories completed the conversion of our country to Christianity.

Yet not of quite the whole of our country, only the Celtic districts. Besides the Scottish kingdom of Dalriada in the west, the Pictish kingdom of Alba or Caledonia in the north and the British kingdom of Strathclyde in the south, a fourth power had established itself in the east, namely, the Saxon king of Northumbria. For the manner in which the Teutonic race first obtained a footing in Britain we rely chiefly on the authority of three writers: namely, 1st, Gildas, a Welsh monk, who was born about A.D. 520 and died about 570; 2nd, Baeda, commonly known as the Venerable Bede, priest and Benedictine monk of Jarrow, who was born in 673 and died in 735; and, 3rd, Welsh Nennius, reputed author of the *Historia Britonum*, probably compiled during the closing years of the eighth century.

It will be seen from these dates that Gildas was the only one of the three writers capable

of giving evidence at first hand about events in the sixth century—the century of Columba and Kentigern, so momentous in the history of northern Britain.

And a gloomy chronicle it is.

"Alas!" says he at the outset, "the subject of my complaint is the general destruction of everything that is good, and the general growth of evil throughout the land.... It is my purpose to relate the deeds of an indolent and slothful race [namely, his own countrymen, the Britons] rather than the exploits of those who have been valiant in the field."

His narrative, which Bede refers to as *sermo flebilis*—a tearful treatise—deals with the dark period following the departure of the Romans. He has no good word for any nation or party; he denounces the cowardice of the Britons, his countrymen, quite as harshly as the cruelty and rapacity of the marauding Picts and Scots.

"No sooner were the Romans gone," says he, "than the Picts and Scots, like snakes which in the heat of mid-day come forth from their holes, hastily land again from their canoes... differing from one another in manners, but inspired with the same avidity for blood, and all more eager to shroud their villanous faces in bushy hair than to cover with decent

clothing those parts of their body which required it. Moreover, having heard of the departure of our friends [the Romans] and their resolution never to return, they seized with greater boldness than before on all the country far to the north as far as the wall. To oppose them there was placed on the heights a garrison equally slow to fight and ill-fitted to flee—a useless and panic-stricken body of men, who slumbered away days and nights on their unprofitable watch. The hooked weapons of the enemy were not idle, dragging our wretched countrymen from the wall and dashing them to the ground."[1]

Then, after roundly abusing his countrymen for not defending themselves more manfully against the Picts and Scots, he launches into fresh invective against the "haughty tyrant" (he will not sully his page by the name Vortigern, although in two copies of his manuscript the omission is supplied) for his folly in craving help from the Saxons, "a race hateful to both God and man." Gildas can only be reckoned an important historian in the absence of any more capable contemporary writer. It is from his dismal pages that we learn how the Saxons first became a power in our land.

Of far higher quality are the works of Bede,

[1] Gildas, cap. xix.

the monk of Jarrow. He commands confidence at once by singular impartiality, a quality most rare in the writings of clerics of the early Church. As an example of the same I will take leave to quote his eulogy upon Bishop Aidan, in which he does not disguise the abhorrence he feels professionally for Aidan's adherence to the Celtic observance of Easter and the coronal tonsure.

"I have written thus much concerning the person and works of the aforesaid Aidan, in no way commending or approving what he imperfectly understood about the observance of Easter: nay, very heartily detesting the same . . . but, as an impartial chronicler, stating what he did, commending what was praiseworthy in his conduct and preserving the memory thereof for the benefit of my readers—to wit—his love of peace and charity; his continence and humility; his character too lofty for anger or avarice; his contempt for pride and vainglory; his diligence in keeping and teaching the divine commandments; his industry in reading and in vigils; his authority in reproving the haughty and powerful (as beseemed a priest) and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted and in relieving or defending the poor . . . These things I much love and admire in the aforesaid bishop, . . . but I do not praise or approve his not observing Easter at the

proper time . . . Yet this I approve of in him, that, in celebrating Easter, his sole object in all he said, did or preached was the same as ours, to wit,—the redemption of mankind through the passion, resurrection and ascension of the man Jesus Christ, the Mediator."[1]

It is not every ecclesiastic who is able to write so charitably of one who has differed with him upon doctrine held to be essential, and the temper which enabled Bede to do so is good warrant for his fidelity as a guide through the labyrinth of these dark centuries.

Both Bede and Nennius largely availed themselves of the narrative of Gildas, supplemented, no doubt, by other writings which have not come down to our time, for such part of their chronicles as were not contemporary with themselves. From such writings they must have derived much information not contained in Gildas's chronicle, such as the description of how the Saxons first arrived in three long ships, were granted some territory by King Vortigern, and then, perceiving the fertility of the country and the cowardice of the Britons, they sent for reinforcements,

[1] *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 17.

until they became strong enough to take as much as they wanted.

Bede specifies three Teutonic nations composing these invaders, namely, Saxons, Angles and Jutes, and that all the men who occupied land north of the Humber were Angles.

There is one notable discrepancy between the chronicles of Gildas and Bede and that of Nennius, namely, that neither of the first two so much as mentions the name of King Arthur, whereas Nennius is loud in his praise, describing how he led the Britons to victory in twelve battles. Very different from this uninterrupted success was the state of the case according to Gildas.

"Sometimes," says he, "our countrymen, sometimes the enemy, won the field, to the end that Our Lord might in this land try after his accustomed manner these his Israelites whether they loved him or not, until the year of the siege of Mons Badonicus, when there took place almost the last, but not the least, slaughter of our cruel foes, which was, I am certain, forty-four years after the landing of the Saxons, and also the time of my own birth."[1]

Now, as Gildas asserts that the Saxons first landed in A.D. 449 (though there is abundant

[1] Gildas, cap. xxvi.

evidence to prove that they had obtained a footing in some parts of the island long before this, especially in Eastern Scotland), his reckoning would date the decisive battle of Mons Badonicus, or Badon Mount, in 493; but there are grounds for believing that it took place fifteen or twenty years later. It is the only one of the twelve battles assigned to Arthur by Nennius, whence it may be doubted whether the two writers were recording the same campaign. The doubt is strengthened by the fact that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, although it duly records the coming of the Saxons in 449, and their subsequent successes over the Britons, makes no mention either of Arthur or his twelve victories. Any endeavour to distinguish between what is mythical and what is historical in the personality of Arthur would lead us far from our subject; but that there was a British and Christian champion of that name cannot reasonably be doubted, despite the silence of Gildas and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, nor that he obtained signal success over the Saxon invaders. It is to be noted, however, that, loosely as the title of "king" was applied to the chiefs of Celtic septs,

Arthur is not so designated by Nennius. On the contrary, he draws a clear distinction between Arthur and those whom he names as kings. After recording the death of the Saxon Hengist, he says that his son Octa came from "the sinistral part of the island" (whatever that may mean) to assume the kingship of Kent. "Then it was," says Nennius, "that the great-hearted Arthur, with all the kings and fighting men of Britain fought against the Saxons. And although there were many more noble than he, yet he was twelve times chosen their commander, and was as often victorious."[1] '*Ipse dux erat bellorum*'—he was what we should term generalissimo or commander-in-chief of the Britons.

The late Dr. Skene and Mr. Stuart Glennie drew the reasonable inference, in which I fully concur, that, while Gildas and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* described only the struggle between Briton and Saxon south of the Humber, an equally fierce combat was waged in North Britain between the Britons of Strathclyde, led by Arthur, and the Saxons under Ebissa, the nephew of the departed Hengist,

[1] *Historia Britonum*, cap. 50.

and that the twelve victories took place after Octa had gone south to assume the kingship of Kent. Geoffrey of Monmouth, Bishop of S. Asaph, in the twelfth century wrote a history of the Kings of Britain, which he professed to have compiled from "a very ancient book in the British tongue" (that is, the Welsh), lent to him by Archdeacon Walter of Oxford. He appears to have merged the events of the northern and southern campaigns into one consecutive war, laying the scene of both in the south; and many succeeding writers assumed that he had authority for doing so. But Dr. Skene was of opinion that the war described by Nennius took place in the north; for Nennius distinctly states that Hengist made a deceitful treaty with Vortigern, King of the southern Britons, offering to send for his son Octa and his nephew Ebissa, "who," he assured him, "were good fighters. They will make war on the Scots, and we can give them (that is, Octa and Ebissa) the country in the north near the rampart called Gual," that is, Antonine's Wall. Vortigern agreeing, Octa and Ebissa came in forty ships, "sailed round the country of the Picts, laid waste the

Orkneys, and took possession of much land, even to the Pictish boundary, beyond the Frisian Sea, which is between us and the Scots."[1] This clearly points to invasion and conquest in what is now Scotland. Nennius can hardly have invented it, and although, writing in the eighth century, he cannot be reckoned an original authority for what happened in the fifth century, there is no reason to doubt the assurance that he gives in his "Apology," namely, that he had collected his facts "from the annals of the Scots and Saxons, and from our ancient traditions."

If it be remembered that the Britons or Welsh were the principal population of the ancient Roman province, extending from the Severn to the Clyde, it is not difficult to imagine how the incidents of the northern war against the Saxons became confounded with those of the southern campaign against Hengist. I will not follow Dr. Skene in his ingenious identification of the twelve battlefields named by Nennius with as many places in Scotland. Place-names are useful guides, provided too

[1] Nennius' *Historia Britonum*, cap. 38. The words "beyond the Frisian Sea" do not occur in all the MSS.

much reliance be not laid upon them, and all I will venture to say is that Dr. Skene makes out a strong case for the Christian leader, Arthur, having waged his twelve battles in the north, and not in the south, of this island, and that the battle of Camlan, in which both Arthur and his enemy Modred [Medraut] are said to have perished in 573, is more likely to have taken place at Camelon, on the Carron, than on the river Cambula in Cornwall, where Geoffrey of Monmouth lays the scene.[1] Sir Thomas Malory, writing his famous version of the Arthurian romance in the fifteenth century, specifies the place as "upon a down beside Salisbury, not far from the seaside," which it is impossible to reconcile with the actual topography of Wiltshire, but which has confirmed Tennyson, and almost all other writers, in the belief that Arthur's campaigns were waged in the south of England. It may be no more than a coincidence, but, if so, it is a singular one, that the building, presumably Roman, which stood near Camelon in Stirlingshire, was known so long ago as 1293 as *Furnus Arthuri*, and popularly as Arthur's O'on,

[1] Geoffrey's *Historia Britonum*, xi. 2.

till it was barbarously demolished in 1743 to make a dam for the Carron Ironworks.

The collation of chronicles which I have attempted brings us down to the beginning of the seventh century, when the races inhabiting northern Britain may be considered as having crystallised into four kingdoms.

1. Brude, King of the Picts, converted to Christianity by Columba, died, according to the Irish annalist Tighernach (d. 1088), in 584, and in the year 600 Nectan was on the Pictish throne.

2. Aidan, whom Columba had crowned King of the Scots of Dalriada in preference to his brother Eaganan, was still alive in 600, and in 575 had announced to a great council at Drumceat the independence of his kingdom from the parent kingdom of Irish Dalriada.

3. After his victory at Arthuret in 573 Rydderch Hael established his court at Dunbarton, and his northern kingdom of Strathclyde or Y Gogled became independent of Wales or Cymru proper, which fell to the share of Maelgwn Gwynedd. Rydderch is said to have died in 603.

4. Lastly, there was the newly-formed Saxon

kingdom of Northumbria, already exceedingly formidable under its warlike king, Aedilfrith, who, says Bede, "conquered more territories from the Britons than any other king, either making them tributary or expelling the inhabitants and replacing them with Saxons." Aedilfrith, whom Nennius calls Flesaurs, succeeded his father Aethelric in 593 as King of Berneich, which is usually latinised Bernicia, a district extending from the Tyne to the Forth, and including the counties of Roxburgh, Selkirk, Berwick and part, at least, of the Lothians. But Aethelric had also annexed the land of Deira, which included modern Yorkshire, and was inhabited by the southern Northumbrians, so that Aedilfrith ruled the whole eastern country from the Humber to the Forth. Aedilfrith and his people were still pagans, and, being constantly recruited from the Continent, became such an aggressive power, menacing the territory of the other three kings of North Britain, as well as the stability of the Christian religion therein, that Aidan, Christian King of Dalriada, led what Bede describes as an immense and mighty army against King Aedilfrith in the year 603, the year when

Rydderch Hael is said to have died. It is not improbable that Aidan was allied with the Britons of Strathclyde in this expedition against the pagans; anyhow he was thoroughly defeated by Aedilfrith at Degsastan, identified by Dr. Skene with Dawstane, one of the head waters of Liddesdale, where are a great cairn and some standing stones on Nine Stane Rig, probably marking the battlefield.[1] The cairn possibly is the sepulchre of Aedilfrith's brother, Theobald, who fell in the battle with nearly all his band. After this, says Bede, "no King of Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the Angles to this day."[2] After this it appears that Aedilfrith had his first opportunity of attending to his province of Deira, or Yorkshire. He carried his arms to the west, and by a great victory over the Welsh at Chester in 613 extended his dominion over what are now the northern English counties from sea to sea. The special bearing of this event upon Scottish history is that it severed the ancient Roman province, completely separating the Britons of Wales from the Britons of Strathclyde.

[1] *Celtic Scotland*, i. 162. [2] *Eccl. Hist.* i. 34.

In possessing himself of Deira, Aedilfrith had ousted Edwin, the rightful heir to that kingdom; but Edwin took refuge with Redwald, King of the East Angles, who espoused his cause, sent him with a powerful force against Aedilfrith, whom he defeated and killed on the banks of the Idle. Edwin then not only repossessed himself of his hereditary dominion of Deira, but seized the whole land of Berneich up to the Forth. Bede says of him that "with great power he commanded all the nations, as well of the Angles as of the British who inhabit Britain, except only the people of Kent, and he reduced also to dominion of the English the Mevanian Islands of the Britons, lying between Ireland and Britain," that is to say, Anglesea and Man. Whether or not Edwin, in extending his dominion in Lothian, became the eponymus of Edinburgh, is a problem which has been hotly disputed, and must be left to bolder philologists than I to decide.

Early in the seventh century the Christian religion seemed to be on the point of extinction in all parts of Britain where the Saxons had established their rule. Ethelbert, King of Kent,

and Sabert, King of East Anglia, had indeed accepted baptism at the hands of Augustine, but Bede states that when Ethelbert died in 616 and Sabert shortly after, their successors with their whole people reverted to the worship of Thor and Wodin.[1]

He specially mentions the succession of Ethelbert's son, Eadbald, to the throne of Kent as being very unfavourable to Christianity, for Eadbald refused to be baptised, and led a highly immoral life. However, in the nick of time, Bishop Laurentius managed to convert Eadbald, a weak sort of creature, by the miraculous apparition of S. Peter;[2] "wherefore, when Edwin, King of Northumbria, asked for the hand of Eadbald's sister Ethelberga in marriage, Eadbald exacted from Edwin, as a condition of the marriage, that he would allow her, and all that went with her, men and women, priests or ministers, to worship after the manner of the Christians."[3]

This treaty had momentous results. *Dux foemina facti.* Ethelberga took with her to the north Bishop Paulinus in the year 625. Two years later, on Easter Day, 627, Edwin was

[1] *Eccl. Hist.* ii. 5. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 6. [3] *Ibid.* ii. 9.

baptised at York, not, it would appear, by Paulinus, as Bede leaves us to infer. Nennius says that 12,000 of the king's subjects were baptised at the same time, and adds—"If any one wishes to know who baptised them, it was Rum Map Urbgen," who spent forty days in the operation.[1]

The defection of this powerful kingdom from the Saxon faith seems to have aroused the ire of Penda, pagan king of the newly-formed realm of Mercia, who made alliance with the Christian King of Wales, Cadwalla, King of North Wales. Cadwalla in 629 had endeavoured to avenge the battle of Chester in 613 by invading Northumbria in 629, but had been beaten badly by King Edwin at Morpeth. He therefore gladly accepted Penda's invitation to renew the invasion, and between them they managed to defeat and kill Edwin on Hatfield Chace in the West Riding in 633. Nennius calls this battle "bellum Meicen"; a Welsh chronicle of the tenth century refers to it as Gueith Meiceren. The *Annals of Tighernach* date the battle in 631, but the difference is unimportant.

[1] Nennius' *Historia Britonum*, 63; *Eccl. Hist.* ii. 14.

Penda's ascendancy might have proved fatal to Christianity in Northumbria, but a fresh turn of the wheel brought other actors upon the stage.

When the redoubtable Edwin killed Aedilfrith at the battle on the Idle in 617 and thereby regained not only his rightful kingdom of Deira, but the whole of Northumbria, including Lothian, Aedilfrith's sons took refuge among the Scots of Dalriada, where they were converted to Christianity.[1] Edwin the usurper being off the scene, back came two of these sons, Eanfrid and Oswald. Eanfrid was accepted as king by the people of Berneich or Bernicia, and his cousin Osric became King of Deira. Bede tells us that they both reverted to paganism, and traces Divine vengeance in their fate, both of them being killed by the British king Cadwalla. Cadwalla, though a Christian, was far from being an exemplary character.

"After this," says Bede, "he ruled both provinces of Northumbria, not like a victorious king, but as a bloody and rapacious tyrant. That year is still remembered as unhappy and hateful to all good men, as well on account of the apostacy of the

[1] *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 1.

English kings, who had renounced the faith as of the outrageous tyranny of the English king. Hence it has been agreed by all who have written about the reigns of the kings, to abolish the memory of those perfidious monarchs, and to assign that year to the following king, Oswald, a man beloved by God."[1]

Oswald with a small force marched to avenge the death of his brother Eanfrid, and did so to some purpose, defeating a much superior force under Cadwalla, who was killed, at a place called Denises or Denises Burn by Bede.

"The place," says he, "is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Oswald, when about to give battle, erected the sign of the Holy Cross and prayed to God to assist his worshippers in their great distress. It is further reported that, the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be fixed, the king himself, full of faith, laid hold of it and held it with both hands, till it was set firm by throwing in the earth."[2]

A passage such as this brings the distant scene very near us, and is worth all the miracles and apparitions that Bede thought it necessary to record. Bede says that the place where this battle was fought was called

[1] *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 1. [2] *Ibid.* iii. 2.

Hefenfelth (*i.e.* Heavenfield), now Hallington, eight or nine miles north of Hexham, close to the Roman Wall, which accounts for Nennius calling it Catscaul, that is in Welsh *Cad-ys-gual*, the battle at the wall.

Now, all this having happened in what is now English soil, it may be asked, what is its bearing upon Scottish history? Well, in the first place, Oswald's kingdom reached to the Forth, including a wide tract of what are now the Scottish Lowlands, and probably the men with whom he defeated Cadwalla were mainly drawn from benorth the Tweed; and in the next place Bede tells us that, so soon as Oswald had established himself on the throne of Northumbria, he sent to the community of Iona for a bishop in order that his nation might be fully converted to Christianity. They sent him Aidan, of whose piety and diligence Bede writes so warmly. He draws a pretty picture of King Oswald, who had learnt to speak Gaelic during his exile, translating Bishop Aidan's sermons to his ealdormen and thegns. Aidan was only the first of a long succession of missionaries, monks and priests who came from Iona to

preach to King Oswald's Saxon subjects. It is sad to read that this excellent monarch was killed in battle with his old enemy Penda, the pagan King of Mercia. Bede names the place where Oswald fell Maserfelth, but the hand that finished the history attributed to Nennius calls it Cocboy.[1] It is believed to have been at Oswestry, formerly Oswaldstree, in Shropshire. Oswald died in the ninth year of his reign and the thirty-eighth of his age. He was succeeded by his younger brother Oswy, who began badly by causing his brother Oswin to be murdered in 651, in order that he might get possession of Deira. Oswy, says Bede, reigned for eight-and-twenty troubled years, being incessantly harassed by the pagan King of Mercia, Penda. At last, after Oswy had vainly tried to purchase peace from Penda, and had been driven into Lothian, he vowed that, if the Lord would give him victory over his enemy, he would not only dedicate his daughter to perpetual virginity, but would also give twelve farms to the Church for monasteries. He was as good as his word, for,

[1] *Historia Britonum*, c. 69.

having turned upon Penda in the neighbourhood of the city Juden, somewhere on the Firth of Forth, he routed his army and cut off his head. He then bestowed six farms in Bernicia and six in Deira upon the Church, shutting up his unfortunate daughter in a monastery at Hartlepool. In narrating Oswy's reign, Bede gives us insight into the growing power of the Church, the increasing eagerness of the clergy for temporal benefits, and the dread of offending them on the part of kings and their ministers.

Bede carries his *Ecclesiastical History* down to the year 731, four years before his death.

"The Picts," he says, in conclusion, "are at peace with the Angles at this time, and rejoice in being united in peace with the whole Catholic Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain [as distinguished from the Scots of Ireland], satisfied with their own territory, meditate no hostilities against the Angles. The Britons [that is, the Welsh] though they, for the most part, through inborn hatred are unfriendly to the Angles, and wrongfully and from wicked custom oppose the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, as both divine and human forces are against them, they cannot prevail as they would wish; for though in part they are independent, elsewhere they

have been made subject to the Angles. Such being the peaceable and calm character of the age, many Northumbrians, both nobles and private persons, are laying aside their weapons and incline rather to dedicate themselves and their children to the tonsure and monastic vows than to study the arts of war. What will be the end hereof, the next age will show."[1]

I am afraid I have been tempted aside from the purpose of these lectures, which is rather to review the character and examine the authenticity of the early chronicles referring to Scotland than to follow the events recorded in them. It is difficult to avoid this fault, so vividly does the Monk of Jarrow bring the scenes which he describes before one, and so fascinating are his sketches of character. In the remaining lectures endeavour will be made to stick closer to the text.

[1] *Eccl. Hist.* v. 23.

III.

A.D. 685–1093.

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If Bede's review of the state of Britain about the year 731, as quoted in the last lecture, is not to appear too optimistic, it must be read in relation to much that had gone on before that particular period. The tributary condition to which King Oswy had reduced the Picts did not endure long after his death in 670. Pict and Scot having made alliance in an effort to throw off the Saxon yoke, King Ecgfrith led an expedition to quell them, in 685, of which numerous accounts have been preserved, all agreeing in the main.[1] Bede says that Ecgfrith went forward against the advice of his friends, especially of Cuthbert, newly ordained Bishop of Lindisfarne, invaded Pictland, the enemy falling back before him till they got him

[1] Bede, iv. 26, *Annals of Tighernach*, *Annals of Ulster*, Simeon of Durham, *De Dunelm. Eccl.* i. 9.

among the hills, when they turned, surrounded and routed his army. Ecgfrith and most of his people fell, the site of the battle being at Dunnichen in Forfarshire. This was one of the battles most decisively affecting the future history of Scotland; for not only was the Pictish kingdom firmly re-established in the north, but the Scots of Dalriada and the Britons of Strathclyde, whose territory Ecgfrith seems to have annexed to his dominions, regained their independence. Further, just as Bede had said after the defeat of King Aidan and the Scots at Dawstane in 603 that thenceforward no King of Scots dared to attack the Saxons, so now the continuator of Nennius declares that the Saxons were never again able to exact tribute from the Picts.[1]

Moreover, this Pictish triumph took permanent effect upon the northern church as regards its future independence of the see of York. Under King Oswy, Northumbria had been administered as a single diocese; when his son Ecgfrith expelled Bishop Wilfred from Lindisfarne in 678, he appointed separate bishops for Deira and Bernicia. Two more

[1] *Chron. Picts and Scots*, p. 11.

dioceses were established in 681, when Trumuin was made Bishop of the Picts, the see being fixed at Abercorn. As this was the earliest bishopric founded in Scotland, so it was of briefest duration. The expulsion of the Saxons from Pictland forced Bishop Trumuin to evacuate the monastery of Abercorn, which, says Bede, "was in the country of the Angles but close by the arm of the sea that parts the land of the Angles from the Scots"[1]; thus leaving us in no doubt that all north of the Forth was Pictland, which was henceforth generally referred to as the kingdom of Fortrenn.

It is to be noted, however, that the kings of Northumbria still claimed dominion over the Picts of Galloway. Bede notes the appointment of Pechthelm as first Bishop of Whithorn in 731, *locus ad provinciam Berniciorum pertinens*,[2] concerning which episcopate William of Malmesbury, writing before 1125, observes that Pechthelm's "successors were Frithwald, Pechtwin, Ethelbert, Baldulf" [all Saxon names, be it noted] "and beyond these I find no more anywhere, for the bishopric soon failed, since it was, as I have said, the furthest shore of the

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 26. [2] *Ibid.* v. 23.

Angles, and open to the inroads of Scots and Picts."[1] That the Saxon kings of Northumbria were able so long to retain the outlying province of Galloway, notwithstanding the independence of the Strathclyde Britons, was owing to their possession of the ancient British territory of Cumberland and Westmorland, including Carlisle and the south shore of Solway.

Important as was the victory of Dunnichen as the result of alliance between the Picts and Scots and as putting an end to Saxon ascendency in the north and west, the fusion which ultimately took place between the two northern races was delayed by the secession of Nectan, King of the Picts, with his whole clergy and laity, from the Columban church, and their adoption of the Roman Easter and other observances. This event is fully described by Bede as taking place in 710,[2] and he says that the Columban monks of Iona were converted to the same rule in 716,[3] which hardly accords with Tighernach's statement that in 717 Nectan expelled the Columban clergy from his

[1] *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, p. 257 (Rolls Series).

[2] *Hist. Eccl.* v. 21. [3] *Ibid.* v. 22.

dominions. Adopting Tighernach's statement, it is easy to understand how Nectan's action disturbed the amity which had prevailed, almost without interruption, between Picts and Scots ever since the conversion of the Picts by Columba 150 years before. Henceforward the Picts waged incessant war upon the Scots until 735–6, in which year the *Annals of Tighernach* and of *Ulster* concur in recording the complete conquest of Dalriada by Angus MacFergus, King of the Picts; and for the next hundred years any glimpses afforded by the Irish Annals of affairs in North Britain show Dalriada as a province subject to the Picts but incessantly and violently striving to regain independence. This was conquest, not fusion; but in another direction the Picts, now the dominant race in North Britain, had formed a connection which was to lead to important results. Hereditary succession among the Picts went in the female line; hence on the death of a king without any brother, the crown would pass to the son of a sister if he had one, or to the nearest male relation on the female side. It was in accordance with this law that King Brude, who

defeated Northumbrian Ecgfrith at Dunnichen, had become king of the Picts, for we learn from the Irish *Life of Adamnan* that he was the son of Bile King of Alclyde (Strathclyde). He must, therefore, have been the brother of Taudar who succeeded his father Bile as King of Strathclyde in 722, and, had Taudar died childless, the succession would have fallen to Brude or his children. This may have been an agency in the network of hostilities that prevailed in North Britain from 744 onwards, the Picts warring now against the Britons of Strathclyde, now against the Scots of Dalriada, sometimes in alliance with the Saxons of Northumbria, at other times employing their leisure in a private civil war of their own. Such were the throes preceding the birth of Scotland as a single nation.

From the continuator of Bede's chronicle we learn that Angus, King of the Picts, assisted Eadbert, King of Northumbria, in wresting Kyle and other western districts from the Britons of Strathclyde in 750. Simeon of Durham, an industrious compiler in the twelfth century, now takes the place of the inestimable Bede as the surest guide to events from the

middle of the eighth century onwards. He was not, indeed, contemporary ; but he seems to have applied the materials at his disposition to honest purpose. He probably had access to the *Annals of Tighernach*, in which we have to deplore the loss of the years 765 to 973. He tells how Eadbert of Northumbria and the Pictish Angus marched as allies to complete the conquest of Strathclyde in 756, receiving the submission of the Britons at Dunbarton on 1st August.[1]

Notwithstanding this alliance, the continuator of Bede, presumably a Northumbrian, in recording Angus's death in 761 observes that "from the beginning to the end of his reign he continued a bloody and tyrannical butcher." Yet it is to him that S. Andrews, or Kilrimont as it was then called, owes its foundation. The authority for this is a legend, of which the oldest extant version dates from the twelfth century, which represents Angus, after cruelly wasting the country of the Britons, encamping in the Merse, where he hears the voice of S. Andrew, bidding him, if he would conquer his enemies, dedicate one tenth of his

[1] *Hist. Dunelm. Eccl.* vol. i. p. 48 (Rolls Series).

possessions to God and S. Andrew. The legend is chronologically consistent with the first mention of an abbot of Kilrymont, which occurs in the *Annals of Tighernach* in the year 747, that is, within the reign of Angus: and further, there is appended to one copy of Wintoun's chronicle, dated about 1530, a note to the effect that the relics of S. Andrew were brought to Scotland in 761, the year in which Angus died.[1]

Everything now pointed to the permanency of the Pictish kingdom north of the firths, and of the Saxon kingdom south of that natural frontier. But in the latter half of the century a new and most formidable factor had to be reckoned with, namely, the roving fleets of Northmen—the Finngall or Norwegians and the Dubhgall or Danes.

The earliest detailed notice of this danger is given by Simeon of Durham, who describes the sack of Lindisfarne in 793 and the frightful barbarities inflicted upon the people of Northumbria. The *Ulster Annals* record in the following year the plunder of the Western Isles by the Gentiles, a name commonly applied

[1] *Chron. Picts and Scots*, 387.

to the pagan Northmen, and the annalist of Inisfallen adds that the monastery of Iona was sacked by them. Fresh descents on the west took place in 798, 802 and 806, Iona being utterly burnt on the last occasion and, according to the Inisfallen annals, forty-eight monks were butchered.

So long as the Pictish nation remained united they were able to protect their eastern seaboard from such attacks; but the Picts had fallen to fighting among themselves over a disputed succession, with a result that is best described in the chronicle of S. Mary's Priory of Huntingdon. This document, still preserved in a mutilated condition in the Public Record Office, is valuable in connection with early Scottish history, through David's having acquired the Honor of Huntingdon by his marriage with Matilda in 1114. The chronicler would therefore derive information about Scottish affairs from persons connected with the Scottish Court. He starts with the year 834, by which time, though the annals are silent on the subject, the Scots of Dalriada must have so taken advantage of the civil strife among the Picts as to reclaim their indepen-

dence and restore the monarchy in the person of one Alpin, not to be confounded with Alpin Mac Eochaidh, who was the last king of the Dalriad Scots before the Pictish conquest, and who was killed in Galloway in 741. This Alpin, says the Huntingdon chronicler, defeated the Picts with great slaughter on Easter Day, 834. Unduly elated by this success, he attacked them again in August of the same year, when he was badly beaten, captured and beheaded. He was succeeded by his son Kenneth, who in 841, when the Picts were defending their shores against Danish invaders, attacked them in rear, inflicted upon them a severe defeat, "and so," runs the narrative, "the King of Scots obtained the monarchy of the whole of Alba, which is now called Scotland."[1] Five years later, in 846, he vanquished the Picts finally, established his kingdom and reigned for twenty-eight years.

There is ample confirmation of these events in the Irish annals. For instance, they amplify the account of the Danish invasion of Fortrenn or Pictland, with the death of Euganan Mac Angus, King of Fortrenn, Bran his brother,

[1] *Chron. of Picts and Scots*, p. 209.

and Aed Mac Boanta, Pictish King of Dalriada. The poem known as the Prophecy of S. Berchan, composed by an Irish monk of the eleventh century, belongs to a peculiar class of historical literature fashionable in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, in which the writer casts his narrative of past or contemporary events into the form of a prophecy purporting to have been uttered by some individual who had died long before. S. Berchan's prophecy contains a good deal of Scottish history. His elegy on Kenneth Mac Alpin may bear repetition.

A son of the clan of his son will possess
The kingdom of Alba by reason of his strength;
A man who shall feed ravens, turning battles to confusion.
His name was the Slayer.
He was the first of the men of Erin in Alba
To possess [land] in the east;
It was by the might of spears and swords,
By sudden deaths and violent fates.
By him the fierce men in the east are deceived;
On the floor of Scone of the high shields
By mighty craft he shall dig in the earth
Deadly blades—death and plunder![1]

[1] Referring to the treacherous slaughter of Pictish nobles, when the seats which they occupied at a conference with the Scots were undermined, and they, falling into the trench, were butchered.

Seventeen years of vigilant valour
In the sovereignty of Alba,
After slaughtering Picts, after chastising foreigners,
He dies on the banks of the Earn.
It went ill with Alba then;
Long ere another like him shall appear.

This, again, is confirmed by the *Pictish Chronicle*, believed to have been compiled by the monks of Brechin before the end of the tenth century, wherein is recorded the death of Kenneth Mac Alpin, *tumore ani*, at Forteviot, on the Earn, in February, 860.

We now come to the period of incessant raids and settlements by Danes and Norsemen, the Fingall and Dubhgall, who appeared likely to bring the whole of North Britain into subjection. Simeon of Durham is our chief guide through these terrible years. His *Historia Regum*, which bears collation with the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the Irish annals, is founded partly on a lost Northumbrian chronicle written in the ninth century in continuation of Bede's history. Further information may be found in the *Chronica Majora* of Matthew Paris, who entered as a monk of S. Albans in 1217. As illustrating

the dread inspired by the doings of these merciless marauders I may quote his description of what took place in the Priory of Coldingham, and, although it is not to be found in any other independent authority (the *Flores Historiarum* being merely another version of the S. Albans chronicle), there is no reason to doubt Paris's good faith in accepting it.

"In the year of the Lord 870 an innumerable host of Danes landed in Scotland. Their leaders were Inguar and Hubba, men of dreadful iniquity and unparalleled daring. Striving to depopulate all the districts of England, they butchered all the boys and old men whom they found, and commanded that the matrons, nuns and maidens should be surrendered to their pleasure. And when this brutal plundering had been going on in all parts of the kingdom, Ebba, holy abbess of the cloister of Coldingham, feared that she too . . . might be given up to the lust of the heathen and lose her maiden purity, along with the virgins under her rule. Calling together all the sisters into the chapter house she spoke to them as follows : 'Of late there have come into our parts the foulest pagans, devoid of any kind of mercy ; going through all this district they spare neither the sex of women nor the age of children ; they destroy churches and clergy, violate nuns, and break up and burn everything they come upon. Therefore if you will follow my counsel, I

confidently hope that by divine mercy we may be able both to escape the fury of these barbarians and preserve our perpetual virginity.'

"When the whole assembly of virgins had firmly promised to obey in all things their mother's commands, that abbess of admirable heroism displayed before all these sisters an instance of chastity not only exemplary for themselves but also eternally to be followed by all succeeding virgins. She took a sharp knife and cut off her own nose and upper lip to the teeth, offering a dreadful spectacle of herself to all beholders. And all these present, beholding and approving this wondrous deed, each one inflicted upon herself a similar act, following the example of her mother.

"After this, the detestable bandits came upon them next morning at dawn; to expose to violence these holy women, dedicated to God.... But when they saw the abbess and each of the sisters so horribly mutilated, soaked with blood from head to foot, they hastened away from the place.... But in departing, the aforesaid leaders ordered their wicked followers to set fire to the monastery and burn it down with all its offices and the nuns themselves. And this was done by these servants of iniquity, whereby the holy abbess and all the virgins with her attained to the glory of martyrdom."[1]

To trace the tangled story of the Northmen's aggression through the various monastic

[1] *Chronica Majora*, vol. i. pp. 391-392 (Rolls Series).

annals would be tedious, even if it could be made intelligible. It can be studied at leisure in the pages of Mr. Robertson, Dr. Skene, Mr. Andrew Lang, Professor Hume Brown, and others who have done their best to unravel it.

Constantin I., son of Kenneth MacAlpin, succeeding as King of Alba in 863, bore the full brunt of invasion. According to the *Ulster Annals*, Olaf the White, Norse King of Dublin, destroyed Dunbarton after a four months' siege in 870. The Icelandic *Landnamobok* records that Olaf's son, Thorstein the Red, conquered "Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and more than half of Alba," while Haldane laid waste Northumbria and subjugated the Picts of Galloway. King Constantin fell in battle with the Danes in 877. Before the end of that century the Norsemen had made themselves also masters of Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles, or, as they called them, the Sudrey or Southern Isles, to distinguish them from the Orkneys. The name Sudrey still survives but little altered in the title of the English bishopric of Sodor and Man.[1]

[1] *Episcopus Sodoriensis et Manniae.*

About 915, as we learn from Simeon of Durham, the Danish Ronald seized a great part of Northumbria, driving King Elfrith to take refuge with Constantin II. (900–942), King of Alba, who furnished them with troops to dispossess the invader withal. But in this battle, says Simeon, "by what sinful influence I know not, the heathen Ronald was victorious, putting Constantin to flight, routing the Scots and killing Elfrith with all the best of the Angles."[1] The Saxon kingdom of Northumbria having thus been destroyed, or at least greatly diminished, there was indeed little prospect except that the whole of Britain from the Humber to the Pentland Firth should pass permanently under Scandinavian domination; wherefore Constantin sought to make terms with the enemy, giving his daughter in marriage to Olaf Cuaran, son of Sitriuc, Ronald's brother and successor, as Danish King of Northumbria.

How far this proved an immediately satisfactory settlement there is no means of ascertaining owing to the confusion of records;

[1] *Hist. de S. Cuthberto*, Sim. of Durham, vol. i. pp. 208, 209 (Rolls Series).

but a new power was arising in the south which was to range Scot and Northman shoulder-to-shoulder against a common foe. Alfred the Great, King of the West Saxons, died in 901, but his good work remained. Waging almost incessant war against the Danes for thirty years, he had finally expelled them from the whole of England south of the Humber in 897, thereby establishing the West Saxon supremacy in South Britain.

From the beginning of the tenth century, therefore, the *Winchester Chronicle*, more commonly known as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, becomes a valuable source of information as to affairs in North Britain, albeit some statements therein have to be accepted under reserve. One such statement occurs in five out of the six extant copies of the chronicle under the year 924, to the effect that Edward the Elder, King of England, caused Bakewell, a town in Peakland (Derbyshire), to be built and fortified, no doubt for the defence of his northern frontier. "And then," the chronicle continues, "the King of Scots [Constantin II.] and the whole nation of Scots, and Ronald, and the son of Eadulf and all those who dwell

in Northumbria, as well English and Danes and Northmen and others, and also the King of the Strathclyde Welsh and all the Strathclyde Welsh, chose King Edward for father and lord."

Now this is the earliest assertion of the supremacy of the English monarch over Scotland—the solitary record whereon rests what has been known as the "Great Commendation of Scotland," and whereon in after years another King Edward, First after the Conquest, founded his claim to overlordship. It is, to quote the words of that keen controversialist, the late Dr. Freeman, "the primary fact from which the English controversialist starts"; he takes "the honest English of the Winchester chronicle" as his gospel—that is, those copies of the chronicle which contain the statement of the Scottish submission, and leaving aside that copy which does not mention it at all.

Now, I do not understand Mr. Andrew Lang when he says [*History of Scotland*, i. 496] that "the whole question of the English supremacy is now of purely antiquarian interest." If he means that it has no historical

interest, I must venture to disagree with him, for it was round this question, and this alone, that the whole history of Scotland revolved for 300 years. Therefore, the authenticity of the passage above quoted from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* invites close scrutiny. Such scrutiny it will not bear. It represents the Danish Regnwald, who had conquered Northumbria and established himself as its king in 918, as making submission to English Edward in 924, whereas the death of Regnwald is recorded in the *Ulster Annals* in 921. Dr. Freeman thinks this must have been another Regnwald; or, if it was the same, then he thinks the Irish annalist as likely to have been mistaken as the English. But Florence of Worcester was not so easily satisfied. Compiling his valuable *Chronicon Chronicorum* early in the twelfth century, and relying chiefly upon the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for events in the first half of the tenth century, he appears to have considered it awkward that a discrepancy in dates should appear in the only written authority for the submission of the Scottish king, *wherefore he altered the date of the alleged commendation from* 924 *to*

921, *so as to bring it within the lifetime of Regnwald.*

It is believed that this part of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was written, perhaps copied from an earlier MS. about fifty years later than the reign of Edward the Elder ; and a mistake in the name of a king, or even a king more or less, at a time when so-called kings were so thick upon the ground, may not seem of much importance ; but beyond and apart from what may have been a clerical error in the chronicle, there is the significant absence of any evidence, save this single passage, that Edward the Elder made any attempt at all to reduce Northumbria and Scotland to submission. He had plenty to do in putting down the rebellion of his cousin Aethelwald and reconquering the Mercian Danelaw, without making war beyond his northern frontier. That some form of treaty or convention may have been entered into by the Scottish and Danish rulers with their powerful southern neighbour is probable enough ; but, as I have said, there is no evidence to that effect save the single entry in five out of the six extant copies of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which even the late

Dr. Freeman admitted was probably not contemporary.[1]

Matters took a different turn when Athelstan succeeded to the English throne in 925. He could not feel secure so long as the Northmen possessed any base in Britain south of the Forth, and he determined to continue the work of his father and grandfather. Sitriuc, indeed, the Danish King of Deira or South Northumbria, married Athelstan's sister in 925; but when Sitriuc died suddenly in the following year, Athelstan seized his kingdom of Deira, which the Danes made great preparations to recover. Constantin II., King of Scots, having, as aforesaid, made friends with the Danes by marrying his daughter to Sitriuc's son, Olaf Cuaran, prepared to support Olaf in an expedition into Deira. Athelstan was beforehand with him. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Simeon of Durham record how he invaded Scotland by sea and land, laying it waste as far as Forfar.

In A.D. 934 a counter-invasion was organised. The Danes of Dublin came in force to support their fellow-countrymen, allying themselves

[1] *Conquest of England*, p. 217.

with Constantin's Scots. King Constantin himself and his son-in-law, Olaf Cuaran, appeared in the Humber with a great Danish fleet (Simeon says as many as 615 ships), while another Olaf, son of Godfrey, King of Dublin, led his Danes and the Welsh of Strathclyde by land. According to the *Egills Saga* they harried all the country, defeating Athelstan's two earls; but in 937 Athelstan himself advanced against them and utterly defeated them in the battle of Brunanburg, which must take its place beside that of Dawstane in 603 and Dunnichen in 685 as among the most decisive in early British history.[1] The *Annals of Ulster* and those of Clonmacnoise describe the frightful slaughter. Constantin and his son-in-law Olaf escaped to the ships; so did the other Olaf from Dublin. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* bursts into poetry in celebration of the victory —a long paean of victory, whereof a few lines may suffice to indicate the character.

"The king departed
On the fallow flood,
His life preserved,
Constantin, hoary warrior.

[1] Florence of Worcester, vol. i. p. 132; *Hist. Dunelm. Eccl.* vol. i. p. 76; William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, vol. i. p. 142.

He had no cause to exult
In the communion of swords.
Here were his kindred bands
Of friends o'erthrown ;
And his son he left
On the place of slaughter,
Mangled with wounds,
Young in battle.
He had no cause to boast,
That grey-haired hero,
That old deceiver.
They left behind them
Corpses for the sallowy kite to devour,
And the swarthy raven with horny neb,
And the white-tailed eagle,
The greedy war-hawk,
And the gray beast
The wolf of the wood.
Never has there been greater carnage
In this island, since from the East hither
Came Angles and Saxons to land."[1]

There has been much uncertainty as to the site of this great battle, which, despite of frequent subsequent revolts, fixed the destiny of Northumberland as an English county. *Egills Saga* calls the place Vinheidi, which appears as Wendun in Simeon of Durham's chronicle. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* names

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, s.a. (in four out of the six MSS.).

it Brunanburh, which is rendered Duinbrunde in the *Pictish Chronicle*. By an exhaustive analysis of evidence and topography, the late Dr. Skene decided in favour of Boroughbridge on the Ouse, about sixteen miles from York, but I incline rather to Barnbrough, about six miles west of Doncaster.

It is recorded in the *Pictish Chronicle* that Constantine, having reigned forty years, resigned his kingdom to Malcolm and retired to a monastery.

Down to this time Strathclyde had not been incorporated in the kingdom of Alba or Scotland. Its Welsh population of Strathclyde had a dynasty of their own, but their kingdom was tributary to the Kings of Alba, and on that account exempt from taxation by Rome. But in 945 it is stated in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that King Eadmund, who succeeded Athelstan in 940, "ravaged all Cumbraland, and granted it wholly to Malcolm, King of Scots, on condition that he should be his *midwyrhta* (fellow worker) as well by sea as by land."

By Cumbraland is signified the kingdom of the Britons, who now appear in Latin chroni-

cles as Cumbri = Welsh Cymri, extending from the Derwent to the Clyde. It can hardly be doubted that this concession of territory was a measure of defence against the common enemy of both Eadmund and Malcolm, the Norse and Danes, who from their base in the Isle of Man had overrun the southern part of Strathclyde, representing the modern counties of Cumberland and Westmorland. English historians have interpreted the transaction as one implying homage and fealty by the King of Scots to the King of England, and some Scottish historians, notably the continuator of Fordun and the late Dr. Skene, have expressed that conclusion also. Dr. Freeman pronounced it to be "probably the earliest instance in Britain of a fief in the strictest sense, as opposed to a case of commendation." I submit that the terms "fief," "commendation," "homage," "vassalage," belong to Norman jurisprudence, and that their sense has been imported into the transaction between Eadmund and Malcolm by later writers. The process is not difficult to trace. First comes Florence of Worcester (who died in 1118). He put a feudal gloss on the term *midwyrhta* by rendering it *fidelis*, a

vassal.[1] Next comes Henry of Huntingdon (died in 1155), who states frankly that Eadmund, because he was unable—*nequibat*—"thoroughly to subdue the perfidious and lawless people of that province, made it over—*commendavit*—to Malcolm upon this understanding—*pacto*—that he should be his ally by land and sea."[2]

Lastly comes Roger of Wendover (died in 1236), who gives details not to be found elsewhere, such as that Eadmund caused the two sons of Donald, King of Strathclyde, to have their eyes destroyed, and granted the kingdom to Malcolm—*de se tenendum*—to be held from himself, that Malcolm might protect the northern parts of England by land and sea from the invasion of foreign enemies. Here we have the purpose of the grant clearly stated, and its nature interpreted as a Norman fief, which was the only kind of tenure wherewith Roger of Wendover was acquainted.[3]

This transaction, you may be sure, was worked for all it was worth by the Plantagenets; but the nearest contemporary records may be searched in vain for any evidence that

[1] *Chronicon*, vol. i. p. 134. [2] *Hist. Anglorum*, p. 162.

[3] *Flores Historiarum*, i. 398 (ed. English History Society).

the cession of Strathclyde was more than a personal bargain for alliance, offensive and defensive, between Eadmund and Malcolm against a common foe : just as the cession of Nice and Savoy to France in 1860 did not involve Napoleon III. in vassalage to the King of Sardinia, but was a free grant of territory in exchange for aid against the Austrians.

During the reign of Malcolm's successor, Indulph, 954–962, an exceedingly important event is noted in the *Pictish Chronicle*, namely, the evacuation of Edinburgh (*oppidum Eden*) and its occupation by the Scots, who, adds the writer, possess it to this day. There is nothing to show whether this was an act of conquest or of friendly cession, but the bearing of this brief passage is very significant in relation to other accounts of the manner in which Saxon Lothian became part of the Scottish realm.

In a tract entitled *Libellus de Primo Adventu Saxorum*, formerly attributed to Simeon of Durham, but now regarded as of unknown authorship, it is stated that when the Northumbrian kingdom was brought to an end in 954, King Edgar of England appointed two earls to govern it—Oslac ruling the territory

of Deira from York, and Edulf Yvelchild that of Bernicia from the Tees to the Forth; wherein his chief seat would be Bamborough. These two earls, says the anonymous chronicler, and the Bishop of Lindisfarne, brought Kenneth II., King of Scots, to King Edgar; "and when Kenneth had done him homage, Edgar gave him Lothian, and with great honour sent him back to his own."[1] Not a word about this in the contemporary *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, nor do any of the older annalists mention it. We hear no more about it till we come to the thirteenth century, more than 200 years after the death of Kenneth II., when we find the story repeated, with many highly-coloured details, by Matthew Paris, his colleague Roger of Wendover, and John of Wallingford. The last-named writer, who lived 300 years later and is of no reputation as an original authority, says that Kenneth came to London to interview Edgar (a circumstance which could hardly have escaped notice of the Anglo-Saxon chronicler), and that Kenneth represented to Edgar that Lothian ought to belong to him as a hereditary

[1] This tract is printed in the Rolls Series, *Simeon of Durham*, vol. ii.

part of the Scottish realm, which could only refer to Kenneth having inherited Edinburgh from his kinsman King Indulph, the Kings of Alba never having had possession of Lothian before the above-mentioned surrender of Edinburgh. Edgar referred the question to his councillors. Wallingford's account of the result is imperfect owing to damage to the MS.

"These men, being well instructed in the wisdom of their ancestors . . . unless the King of Scotland should consent to do homage for it to the King of England . . . and chiefly because the means of access to that district for defending it are very difficult, and its possession not very profitable. . . . Howbeit Kenneth agreed in their decision, and sought and obtained Lothian on the understanding that he was to do homage for it, and he did homage accordingly to King Edgar, and further was compelled to promise formally under pledges that he would not deprive the people of that region of their ancient customs, and that they would be allowed to use the name and language of the Angles. These conditions have been faithfully observed to the present day (*c.* 1230), and thus was settled the old dispute about Lothian, though new cause of difference often arises even now."[1]

[1] John of Wallingford *apud* Gale, p. 545.

Matthew Paris indulges in picturesque particulars, but without any hint at homage. He represents King Edgar as giving King Kenneth many gifts—

"a hundred ounces of purest gold, many silken robes, ornaments and rings with precious stones; and he gave besides to the said king the whole land which in the mother-tongue is called Lothian, on this condition that every year on the chief festivals, when the king and his successors wore the crown, they should come to court and celebrate the feast with rejoicing in company of the other princes of the realm. Moreover, the king gave him very many dwelling-places on the route, so that he and his successors, coming to the feast and returning, might be able to lodge there. And these continued in the possession of the Kings of Scotland until the time of King Henry II."[1]

It is passing strange that William of Malmesbury, writing 100 years before Matthew Paris, says nothing about the cession of Lothian, although he dwells at length upon the acts and character of Edgar, and relates some anecdotes of his dealings with Kenneth.

I have now recounted all the authorities for the alleged transaction. Against them are to

[1] *Chron. Maj.* ad ann. 975.

be set two which, in my opinion, are of sufficient weight to outweigh the others. First, there is the *Pictish Chronicle*, which is believed to have been compiled in Gaelic by a monk of Brechin during the reign of Kenneth II., and is therefore contemporary authority, though it has only come down to us in the form of a Latin translation, transcribed by a monk of York as late as the fourteenth century.[1] The compiler of the original was probably the same monk who recorded the occupation of Edinburgh by the Scots fifteen years or so previously, in which case, if a formal cession of Lothian took place in 975, it is strange that he should pass it in silence. The last entry in the contemporary *Pictish Chronicle* states that, just about the time when Kenneth is alleged to have been visiting King Edgar in London, he was devastating Saxonia, that is Edgar's territory of Northumberland as far as Stanmore, Cleveland and the Pools of Deira; repeating the invasion in the following year, when he carried off the Saxon king's son. The Saxon king can have been none other than Earl Eadulf,

[1] Skene's *Chron. Picts and Scots*, pp. xviii, xix.

Edgar's governor of Bernicia from the Tees to the Forth.

Second, there is the statement by Simeon of Durham that when Aedulf Cudel succeeded his brother Uthred as Earl of Northumberland in 1016,

"being a man very cowardly and timorous, and fearing that the Scots would avenge on him the death of their men whom Uthred his brother had killed" [at the siege of Durham in 1006], "he granted to them the whole of Lothian for amends and steadfast peace. In this way was Lothian added to the kingdom of the Scots."[1]

The truth, however, seems to be that Malcolm II. obtained Lothian by conquest as the fruits of his great victory over the English at Carham in 1018, when, as Simeon records in another work,

"the entire people from the Tees to the Tweed, with their nobility, almost wholly perished in fighting against an endless host of Scots at Carham."[2]

When it is thus shown that the story of the later chroniclers is utterly inconsistent with that of those most nearly contemporary, the

[1] Simeon, *De obsessione Dunelmi* (Rolls Series), i. 218.

[2] Simeon's *Hist. Dunelm. Eccl.* i. 84.

grant of Lothian by King Edgar to King Kenneth, with the alleged vassalage, may be dismissed as apocryphal, invented first, probably, to cover the disgrace of defeat at Carham, and next to strengthen the claim to English superiority.

I have dwelt at some length on these two transactions—the undoubted cession of Strathclyde by King Eadmund to King Malcolm in 945, and the alleged cession of Lothian to Kenneth in 975, because it was upon these that feudal lawyers chiefly founded the English claim to suzerainty. The incorporation of Saxon Lothian with the Scottish realm was an event of permanent importance; for, just as the Scottish colonists of Fergus Mor ultimately gave their name to the whole country of Scotland, so did the Saxon speech of the Northumbrians of Lothian become the vernacular of the whole kingdom.

We have now reached a period about which there is abundant, but hopelessly contradictory, record, the attempt to unravel which would be tedious and inconclusive. It is difficult, but necessary, to distinguish so far as possible between the Norwegians and the

Danes, who were politically and ethnologically distinct, the Norwegians being known to the Gaels as Fingall, or fair-haired foreigners, and the Danes as Dubhgall, or black-haired foreigners. Both of these nations were incessantly striving for the conquest of the British Isles, generally independently, sometimes in alliance and occasionally fighting each other. The Danes (Daci or Danari) conquered Dublin, Waterford and Northumbria; the Norwegians ruled in Orkney, Caithness and the Western Isles. But they were far from scrupulous in respecting each other's territory. For instance, the *Ulster Annals*, which are perhaps the surest guide through this confused period, record that in 986 the Danes invaded Argyll, but were defeated, 140 of them being hanged and the rest speared to death. On Christmas Eve following, another party of Danes attacked Iona, killing the abbot and fifteen monks.

The events of the war that followed between the Danes and Norwegians are most picturesquely told in the *Nial Saga*, some of the narrative dovetailing neatly with the records of the *Ulster Annals*.

Early in the eleventh century the name Scotia or Scotland became transferred from Ireland to Alba. Heretofore, though the Kings of Alba were sometimes termed Kings of Scots, the name Scotia has occurred in the chronicles only as indicating Ireland. It is curious that its first application to Alba should have been by the monk Marianus Scotus, so called because he was Irish by birth. Born in 1028, he became a recluse, spent most of his life on the Continent and composed a chronicle which contains only a few references to events in North Britain. Among these, however, is the death of Malcolm II. in 1034, whom he terms King of Scotia—*Rex Scotiae*, which is the earliest instance in literature of the application of this name to Alba.[1]

According to the *Ulster Annals*, this Malcolm had killed the nearest male heir to the Scottish throne in 1033, in order to clear the succession for Duncan, the son of his daughter. Duncan succeeded accordingly, and the *Orkneyinga Saga* tells of the great war he waged with his cousin, the Norse Jarl Thorfinn, for the possession of Caithness and Sutherland. But

[1] *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, vol. v.

the Saga says nothing about Duncan's murder by his own general, Macbeth, which the contemporary Marianus Scotus records in 1040, a date confirmed by the Irish Tighernach, who specifies that Duncan was not the aged king described in Shakespeare's imperishable drama, but a stripling *immaturae aetatis*. Shakespeare found in Holinshead the materials which Holinshead had transferred from Boece.

Macbeth, also, seems not to have been as black as he has been painted. He has had to bear the odium incident to a usurper, and as for a murder or two more or less, that was a recognised expedient in party politics of the day. But he ruled his kingdom to its advantage, if we may trust the allusion to him in S. Berchan's poem :

"After slaughter of Gaels, after slaughter of foreigners,
The liberal king will possess Fortrenn.
This red man was fair, yellow and tall;
Pleasant was the young man to me.
There was abundance in Alba east and west
Under the reign of the fierce Red One."

Nevertheless, by his treasonable compact with

Thorfinn, the newly knit realm of Scotland was dismembered—Macbeth ruling for seventeen years south of Strathspey and the Ness, and Thorfinn retaining the northern counties and islands.

There is great obscurity over the expedition led by Siward, Earl of Northumberland against Macbeth in 1054. The contemporary *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that

> "he went with a great army into Scotland with both a fleet and a land force, and fought against the Scots and put to flight King Macbeth, and slew all that were best there in the land, and brought thence much war spoil, such as no man obtained before."[1]

The Irish annals amply confirm this, the *Ulster Annals* putting the loss of the Scots at 3000 killed and that of the Northumbrians at 1500; but the battle was not decisive, and if Siward's object was to dethrone Macbeth in the interest of Malcolm Ceannmor, the son of Duncan, he failed therein; for Macbeth remained on the throne till Malcolm himself defeated and killed him at Lumphanan in 1057. The statement by Florence of Worcester (who died in 1118) that Siward was

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Chron.* ad ann. 1054.

acting *jussu regis*, by command of King Edward the Confessor, in order to restore Malcolm, is destitute of any confirmation from other sources; but it was made much of in later years as supporting the English claims over Scotland.

Malcolm Ceannmor's long reign of thirty-five years carries us far in the consolidation of Scotland: indeed, I think you may regard 15th August, 1057—the date of Malcolm's victory at Lumphanan—as the real birthday of the kingdom of Scotland. It is true that the Norse Jarl Thorfinn still ruled in Caithness and the Western Isles; but when Thorfinn died in that or the following year, Malcolm had the political foresight to marry his widow Ingibjorg, thereby ingratiating himself with the Norse element in the population. She bore him a son, Duncan, afterwards to be King of Scots; but she died a few years later, leaving Malcolm free to fall honourably in love with Margaret, the beautiful and saintly sister of Child Eadgar, son of the deceased Eadward Atheling and heir to the Saxon dynasty of England. This fresh alliance enlisted for Malcolm the goodwill and

support of the Saxon people of Lothian and Northumberland. In one copy of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* this important event is recorded in a single sentence—"King Malcolm took Margaret, the Child's sister, to wife"; but in another edition, not only is the courtship described in considerable detail under the year 1067, but Queen Margaret's subsequent career is passed under review:

"In the summer of the year 1067 Eadgar Child went out [from Northumberland] with his mother Agatha and his two sisters Margaret and Christina, and with them Marlesweyne and many good men, and came to Scotland under the protection of King Malcolm, and he received them all. Then it was that King Malcolm began to yearn after Margaret to wife, but Eadgar Child and all his men long refused, and she herself was unwilling, saying that she would have neither him nor any man if the heavenly clemency would grant that she might serve the Lord with her natural heart in perfect continence. But the king straitly pressed her brother till he answered yea, and in sooth he durst not otherwise, because they had come into his power. So that the marriage was now fulfilled, as God had fore-ordained, and it could not be otherwise, as he says in the Gospel that not a sparrow falls to the ground without his foreshowing. The prescient Creator knew long before

what he would do with her, namely that she should increase the glory of God in this land, lead the king out of wrong into the right path, bring him and his people to a better way, and put down all the evil customs which the nation formerly followed. These things she afterwards accomplished. The king therefore married her, though against her will, and was pleased with her behaviour, thanking God who had given him such an excellent spouse. And being a prudent man, he turned himself to God and forsook all impurity of conduct, as S. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles saith—*Salvabitur vir* etc., which meaneth in our speech—'Full oft the unbelieving husband is sanctified and healed through the believing wife, and so belike the wife through the believing husband.' The Queen above named afterwards did many things in this land to promote the glory of God, and conducted herself well in her noble station, as always was her custom."

Now the purpose of this long extract is to illustrate how such chronicles as these were compiled. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, in its original form, was no doubt a contemporary record of current events, and was copied as the basis of the chronicles written in various monasteries throughout the land, with such interpolations as the historiographer chose to insert. In the edition from which I have quoted, the copyist was writing long after the

date of Malcolm's marriage with Margaret, and added to the bare statement of the other editions facts that could not be known to the original annalist. In this instance the interpolations are in accord with known facts ; but this should not throw the student of history off his guard so as to accept without careful scrutiny similar interpolations in connection with disputed events. As I have said already, one edition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* contains no reference to the Great Commendation of 924, though it appears in the other editions which Mr. Green considers were written about the year 975, fifty years after, when the English king had formulated his claim to the empire of Britain.

Upon Malcolm's internal government of Scotland the chronicles throw little light, though the writings attributed to Simeon of Durham contain many bitter complaints of his five invasions of Northumbria in support of his brother-in-law, Eadgar Atheling's, claim to the throne of England. King Sweyn of Denmark also espoused Eadgar's cause, and the Winchester chronicle describes how in the year 1069 a Danish fleet of 240 ships entered

the Humber in support of Child Eadgar, sacked York and killed many hundreds of Frenchmen, *i.e.* Normans. This brought William the Conqueror to the north in person to lay waste the whole country with fire and sword. Thus the whole of what are now Northumberland, Cumberland, Durham and York were alternately harried by Malcolm the friend and King William the enemy of Eadgar, until William, as the Winchester chronicler records, resolved to put an end to this state of affairs, invaded Scotland by sea and land in 1072, and brought Malcolm to terms, according to Florence of Worcester at Abernethy.[1] There is hopeless confusion—endless controversy—about the nature of these terms. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* merely says that "King Malcolm came and treated with King William, and delivered hostages and became his man, and King William returned home with his army." Florence of Worcester names Duncan, Malcolm's son by Ingibjorg, as the principal hostage, and Duncan is stated in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to have been still detained at the court of William Rufus in 1093—twenty-

[1] *Chronicon ex Chronicis*, ii. 9 (English History Society).

one years later. Assuming, as we certainly may, that Malcolm did homage to William the Conqueror in the full Norman sense of the term, what was that homage for? Ordericus Vitalis (1075–1143), a monk of Saint-Evroult in Normandy, declares it was for Lothian, but his evidence may be dismissed, because he makes Malcolm acknowledge Lothian to have been granted to him on his marriage with Margaret by Edward the Confessor. Now Edward the Confessor died in 1066, and Malcolm did not marry Margaret till 1068. Mr. Freeman relies on the bald statement in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and holds that the homage was for the whole kingdom of Scotland. Others suggest that it was a renewal of the alleged homage exacted by Eadmund of England from Malcolm I. for Strathclyde. Mr. Robertson, again, argues that the homage was no more than feudal recognition for the twelve *villae* in England and the annual subsidy of twelve marks in gold, which we know, on the authority of Florence of Worcester, William the Conqueror granted to King Malcolm (probably under the treaty of Abernethy)—a grant which William Rufus renewed in 1091.

When Rufus in the following year failed to fulfil his part of the bargain, as the Winchester chronicler admits that he did, Malcolm renounced his homage, invaded Northumberland, fell into ambush near Alnwick, and got killed on 13th November, 1093. The place where he fell is still marked by a monument called Malcolm's Cross.

I cannot pass from the personality of Malcolm Ceannmor without quoting the reference to him in the Prophecy of S. Berchan.

"A king—the best that possessed Alba;
A king of kings most fortunate.
He was a vigilant crusher of enemies.
No woman hath borne or will bear in the East
A king whose sway over Alba shall be mightier.
Nor shall there be borne for ever
One possessed of higher fortune and greatness."

IV.

A.D. 1093–1174.

IV.

1093–1174.

By the death of Malcolm Ceannmor, followed four days later by that of his Queen Margaret, the work of consolidating the realm of Scotland, which Malcolm had so successfully carried on, was arrested, and the nation was exposed to the evils of a disputed succession. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records the election of Malcolm's brother, Donald Ban, to the throne by the Scots. He would be reckoned the next heir according to the Gaelic law of Tanistry. Malcolm's son, Duncan, whom the Saxon part of the nation esteemed the rightful heir, was still in quasi-captivity in England, and the Scottish chronicler, John of Fordun, states that Donald Ban besieged Edinburgh Castle, where Queen Margaret's body still lay unburied.

"But," says Fordun, "forasmuch as that spot is in itself strongly fortified by nature, Donald deemed that the gates only need be guarded, because it was

not easy to see any other entrance or outlet. When those who were within understood this, being taught of God through the merits, as we believe, of the holy queen, they brought down her holy body by a postern on the western side. Some, indeed, declare that during the whole of that journey a thick mist surrounded all this family and miraculously screened them from the view of their foes, so that nothing hindered them as they travelled by land or sea; but they succeeded in bringing her away to the place desired as she herself had before commanded, namely, to the Church of Dunfermline, where she now rests in Christ. It was thus that Donald came by the kingdom, having driven away the rightful heirs."[1]

Experience has taught us to accept a fog as a normal incident in the meteorology of Edinburgh. Not so Fordun, who, like most monkish chroniclers, is always on the outlook for supernatural portents. It may be remembered that even John Knox interpreted the easterly haar which greeted Mary Queen of Scots on her arrival at Leith as a sign of divine displeasure.

Fordun devotes a chapter [iv. 1] to explaining that the old law of Tanistry, under which Donald would have been the rightful heir, had been abrogated by Malcolm II. [1005–1034], and "that thenceforth each king after his death

[1] *Chronicon*, v. 21.

should be succeeded in the government of the realm by whoever was at the time nearest in descent—that is, a son or daughter, a nephew or niece—the nearest then living."

The position, then, in 1093–4 was this, that Donald Ban was recognised as king by the Gaelic population of the Highlands and probably of Galloway, while the Welsh of Strathclyde and the Saxons of Lothian looked for the return of Duncan from captivity in England to take up his father's realm. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is again the chief authority for what followed. It is stated there that in the year 1093

"Duncan came to King William [Rufus] *and did such homage as the king required*; and so, having obtained his consent, he went off to Scotland with such aid as he could muster, both English and Norman; and he deprived his kinsman Donald of the throne and was received as king. But then some of the Scots again gathered together and killed nearly all his men, and he himself escaped with a few others. Afterwards they became reconciled on this condition that Duncan should never more bring English or Normans into the country."

Here again the nature and extent of the homage or troth required by King William is left quite vague. It is likely enough that

Duncan, steeped as he had become in Norman practice and unable to claim his kingdom except on such terms as King William chose to grant, would become William's vassal for that kingdom. But those terms were rejected by the Gaelic part of the nation, who only submitted to Duncan on condition that he should renounce his Norman and Saxon associates.

However, it is not of much moment to what extent Duncan compromised the independence of Scotland, for he only reigned six months. He lost his life in an insurrection of his Gaelic subjects in support of Donald Ban, who was restored to the throne.

William of Malmesbury, writing thirty or forty years after the event, states that Duncan's half-brother Eadmund, the only degenerate son of the sainted Margaret, conspired with Donald Ban for the assassination of Duncan, and received as his reward the kingship of Lothian. The partnership did not long endure. In describing what took place three years later the Winchester chronicler, a contemporary authority, is more explicit than hitherto about the nature of King William's overlordship.

"This year [that is 1097] at Michaelmas Edgar Atheling, with King William's aid, led an army into Scotland and won that country by hard fighting, driving out King Donald and establishing his kinsman Eadgar as king in fealty to William."

Eadmund was imprisoned and died a monk. Donald Ban was captured later, and, according to both Irish and Scottish chronicles, was blinded by his half-brother Eadgar and died at Rescobie. William of Malmesbury states that David, assisted by King William, was the agent in Donald's doom.[1]

Now, the statement in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Eadgar's vassalage to King William is plain enough ; the only doubt as to its truth arises from the spurious character of three out of eight documents preserved in the Treasury of Durham. Seven of these are grants by Eadgar, King of Scots, to the monks of Durham and Coldingham, five of which are undoubtedly genuine. *These five contain no allusion whatever to King William Rufus or his superiority.* The other two will not bear scrutiny. One of them is a conveyance of lands to the monks of Coldingham, and purports

[1] *Gesta Regum*, vol. ii. p. 476 (Rolls Series).

to be granted by King Eadgar acting "under the license of William, King of England, Lord Superior of the Kingdom of Scotland." Upon this charter[1] Dr. Raine, who was a firm believer in the rightful claim of England to suzerainty, pronounced as follows :

"It is a most palpable forgery, fabricated apparently for the express purpose of establishing the superiority of England. Never, perhaps, was there so miserable an attempt at imitation. The parchment, unlike that of the 11th century, is thin and imperfectly prepared . . . every characteristic of the document belongs to a period later *by centuries* than the reign of Edgar. But the seal gives the finishing stroke to the whole. It is, in fact, a bad imitation, upon a very reduced scale, of the great seal of Robert I. or Robert II. The name indicating the king is broken away . . . The charter is probably one of the alleged forgeries of Hardyng, the poetic chronicler, who lived in the reign of Henry VI., and received an annuity from the Crown for his services."

The other charter referred to [No. xv. in Lawrie] was passed as genuine by Dr. Raine, but contains so many discrepancies that later students have declined to accept it. It purports to be a grant by King Eadgar, "possessing the land of Lothian and the kingdom of

[1] Sir A. Lawrie's *Early Scottish Charters*, No. xvii.

Scotland as a gift from my lord William King of the English, and acting by the advice of my aforesaid lord King William," conveying certain lands in Scotland to Bishop William of Durham. It is stated in the charter that the deed was executed in the year when William II. built a new castle at Bamborough ; that was 1095. Eadgar did not become King of Scots till 1097, and Bishop William of Durham died in 1096. Such discrepancies certainly tend to impugn the authenticity of the document in which they occur, and to bring it under suspicion of belonging to that category of forgeries which were so easily perpetrated, and are known to have been perpetrated in many instances, when very few except the clergy could write. The eighth and last document, the confirmation by King William of Eadgar's grant, thereby implying William's superiority, exists in duplicate in the Durham Treasury. To both is appended King William's great seal, of which only three other examples have been preserved, and there is no reason to suspect that the confirmation is a forgery, except that the grant confirmed is in favour of a bishop who died the year before it was

made, and two years before Eadgar became king.

King Eadgar died unmarried in 1109. In his singular testamentary disposition of the kingdom may be traced the difficulty he had experienced in governing in a single realm the Gaelic people of the Highlands, who fiercely repudiated the English claim of superiority, and the Saxons of Lothian and Welsh of Strathclyde, where that claim seems to have been acknowledged. This difficulty he attempted to solve by bequeathing to his brother Alexander Scotland proper—that is, all north of Forth and Clyde, together with Stirlingshire and the country south of the Forth as far as, and including, Edinburgh.

To his brother David he bequeathed Lothian and Cumbria, with the title of Earl.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that Alexander succeeded to the kingdom "as King Henry granted him," implying that King Henry's consent was necessary; but there is no other evidence that this was either sought or obtained; nor is there any further notice of Scottish affairs in this chronicle for the following seventeen years, when, in 1124, it records

the death of King Alexander, adding that "his brother, then Earl of Northamptonshire, succeeded him, and held at the same time both the kingdom of Scotland and the English earldom." Not a word here about homage for the kingdom of Scotland, but as David undoubtedly owed homage for the earldom of Northampton and the honour of Huntingdon, the dispute was henceforth to become more complicated than ever.

There are but few other notices of Scottish affairs in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which ends with year 1154. The most important refers to the rising of Angus Mormaer, Earl of Moray, in 1130, when he attempted to dispossess David of the kingdom, whereof he claimed to be rightful heir under the Gaelic law of Tanistry, through his mother, a daughter of Lulach, who succeeded Macbeth as King of Scots and reigned for three months. The fullest account of this rising is given by the contemporary Ordericus Vitalis, who describes how Angus was attacked by King David's cousin, Edward, Constable of Scotland, defeated and slain, King David himself being absent at the time in England,

a fact which is confirmed by the Exchequer Rolls.

"Vigorously pursuing the fugitives with his troops elated with victory and entering Moray, now deprived of its lord and protector, by God's help he obtained possession of all that great territory. Thus David's dominion was enlarged, and his power increased beyond any who went before him."[1]

The place of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, invaluable as it must be deemed as a succinct contemporary record of events in the eleventh century, is now filled by a number of contemporary English records, among which the most trustworthy are those of Ailred, Abbot of Rievaulx [1109?–1166], Henry of Huntingdon [1084?–1155], William of Malmesbury [1095?–1143], William of Newburgh [1136–1201], Roger Hoveden, or, as it should be written, Howden, in the county of Durham (d. 1201?), and Richard Prior of Hexham (fl. 1141–1160?). Abbot Ailred was the most gifted writer of the period, but William of Newburgh is specially worthy of attention. His *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* has been pronounced to be the finest historical

[1] Ordericus Vitalis, viii. 21.

work left to us by any Englishman of the twelfth century. Living all his days at Newburgh in the North Riding of Yorkshire, he was peculiarly well placed for observation on Scottish affairs, and he displayed greater breadth of view and tolerance for Scotsmen than his contemporaries—Ailred excepted.

David, having become thoroughly anglicised during his long residence at the English court, found high favour with these south-country annalists. The following passage from William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum*, which was finished in 1125, is a fair sample of the literature of the period and is a piece of discerning history.

"When Alexander went to rest with his fathers, David, the youngest of Malcolm's sons, ascended the throne of Scotland, whom the king [Henry I.] had made a knight and honoured by marriage with a lady of quality. This youth was more courtly than the others and, having been polished from boyhood by intercourse and familiarity with us, had rubbed off all the rust of Scottish barbarism. When at last he obtained the kingdom, he remitted for three years the taxation of all those of his people who were willing to improve their dwellings, dress more carefully and feed more nicely. No history has ever

recorded three kings being brothers who were of equal sanctity or exhibited so much of their mother's piety [as Eadgar, Alexander and David]; for, besides their temperate habits, their liberal charity and their prayerfulness, they so completely overcame the domestic vice of kings that there was not even a report of their being unfaithful to their wives, or that any one of them had ever been guilty of unlawful intercourse. Edmund was the only degenerate son of Margaret, an accomplice in his uncle Donald's crime and bargaining for half his kingdom, he had been accessory in his brother [Duncan's] death. But when he was taken and condemned to perpetual imprisonment, he sincerely repented, and when he drew near to death, commanded that he should be buried in chains, confessing that he had suffered deservedly for the crime of fratricide."[1]

It is curious that William of Malmesbury has nothing to say about King David's invasion of England in support of Empress Maud against King Stephen, nor of the battle of the Standard, where David was so badly defeated. His only reference to Scottish affairs in these troubled years is the statement that

"a little before Lent 1135 King Stephen went into Northumberland that he might have a conference with David king of Scotland, who was said to be

[1] *Gesta Regum*, vol. ii. 476-77 (Rolls Series).

his enemy. From David he easily obtained all he would have, because, being naturally of gentle disposition and feeling the approach of age, he willingly accepted the tranquillity of peace, real or pretended." [1]

What really happened was that David, having sworn to his brother-in-law and excellent ally, Henry I., to maintain the succession of Henry's daughter and David's niece, the Empress Maud, immediately upon King Henry's death marched an army into Northumberland, where he took possession of all the principal fortresses, except Bamborough, without much opposition, Northumberland being favourable to the Empress's cause. Henry of Huntingdon, however, declares that this was effected by guile. Stephen marched a large army to oppose David, and the two kings came to an agreement upon terms defined by Richard of Hexham. First, King David did homage to Stephen at York, presumably only for the territory which Stephen was about to cede to him, namely, Carlisle and Doncaster and all that pertained to them. Upon David's son and heir Stephen bestowed the Honour of Huntingdon, and promised to consider David's

[1] *Historia Novella*, vol. ii. 539 (Rolls Series).

right to the earldom of Northumberland, which he claimed through his wife Matilda, daughter of Waltheof, Saxon Earl of Northumbria. On the other hand, David restored to King Stephen four castles which he had seized in Northumberland.

This good understanding endured but a few months. Next Easter, Richard of Hexham tells us, Prince Henry of Scotland was at King Stephen's court in London, where he was received with so much honour, being given precedence over the Archbishop of Canterbury, that certain nobles openly insulted him. King David recalled his son at once, and refused to let him obey King Stephen's summons afterwards, although as Earl of Huntingdon Henry was under obligation to do so.

King David had made no bad bargain, for although he could not get Stephen to recognise his claim to Northumberland, he had been given undisputed possession of Cumberland. Nevertheless, the question of Northumberland rankled with him; it is only fair to believe besides that this pious king's conscience pricked him by reason of the breach of his oath to King Henry in recognising King Stephen.

Anyhow he invaded Northumberland again at Easter, 1137, during King Stephen's absence in Normandy. An army was quickly mustered at Newcastle to oppose him, and a truce was arranged till the following Advent. Upon Stephen's return from Normandy, David delivered his ultimatum: "Give me the earldom of Northumberland, or I must come and take it."[1] Thus far Richard of Hexham. Next, William of Newburgh informs us that while Stephen was striving to put down rebellion in the south of England, "the fury of the Scots reviving broke out again and they took possession of Northumberland, which was exhausted by the cruellest plundering."[2]

We now come to an anonymous chronicler in the *Gesta Stephani*, from whom I must make a short quotation, because of the local colour it reveals.

"Now Scotland, which is also called Albany, is a district closed in by marshes and abounding in rich forests, in milk and cattle, and begirt with safe harbours and wealthy islands. But its inhabitants

[1] *De gestis Regis Stephani*, in *Chronicles of Stephen* (Rolls Series), vol. iii. p. 151.

[2] *Chronicles of Stephen*, vol. i. p. 33.

are barbarous and unclean, neither overcome by bitter cold nor stunted by extreme hunger."[1]

Another writer of this period, Ralph de Diceto, Dean of S. Paul's, gives a few personal details about my immediate fellow-countrymen in Galloway. He says they were "agile, unclothed, remarkable for much baldness; arming their left side with knives formidable to any armed men, most skilful in throwing javelins to a long distance."[2]

David was supported in his invasion of England by many English barons and by the Archbishop of York, who, Henry of Huntingdon states, declared a holy war through the mouth of the Bishop of Orkney. Richard of Hexham says that David's infamous army (infamous, of course, because it invaded England) was composed of "Normans, Germans [that is Saxons], Cumbrians, men from Teviotdale and Lothian, Picts, commonly called Galwegians, and Scots."[3]

Excellent reading is Ailred's description of the campaign and of the general action

[1] *Gesta Stephani* (same series), vol. iii. p. 34.

[2] *Imagines Historiarum*, vol. i. p. 376.

[3] *De gestis Regis Stephani*, in *Chronicles of Stephen*, vol. iii. 151.

in which it culminated—to be known as the Battle of the Standard, because the great banner of England was displayed from the mast of a ship mounted on wheels, and surmounted by a silver pyx containing the body of Christ. Ailred wrote as an eye-witness, and although he adopts the manner of Livy and Tacitus in giving professedly verbatim reports of long speeches given by the principal actors, these reports are of historical value as showing the dilemma in which many Norman barons were placed owing to their double allegiance—to the King of England for lands in England, to the King of Scots for lands in Scotland—a dilemma which was constantly to recur during the next two centuries. Moreover, Ailred brings vividly before us the various personalities—the cast of their countenances, the colour of their hair, the very tone of their voices. Among the speakers was Robert de Brus, ancestor of King Robert I., the intimate friend from boyhood of King David, who had granted him the wide lands of Annandale, but was also one of the leading barons of England, in virtue of his enormous estates in Yorkshire. "An aged and most wealthy man," Ailred

describes him, "of grave demeanour, sparing of speech, but, when he did speak, it was with a certain dignity and weight; one of much experience in war and well versed in business of that kind."[1]

Speaking on behalf of many of his brother barons, de Brus endeavoured to dissuade David from fighting with his surest friends. He reminded him that it was through Norman-English aid that his brother Eadgar had regained the kingdom of Scotland from Donald Ban; and that David himself, on Eadgar's death, had only been allowed to succeed peacefully to the portion of the realm bequeathed to him through Alexander's dread of English arms.

"When, I ask thee, hast thou ever found such fidelity in the Scots that thou canst so boldly renounce the counsel of the English and the aid of the Normans, as if Scots sufficed thee even against Scots? Thy confidence in the men of Galloway is somewhat of a novelty. Thou art turning thine arms against the very men to whose support thou owest thy kingship, and who have caused thee to be beloved by the Scots and held in awe by the Galwegians."

Ailred say that de Brus ended his speech in

[1] *De Standardo*, in *Chronicles of Stephen*, vol. iii. pp. 192-5.

tears, and that King David, weeping also, was on the point of yielding, when the king's nephew, William Fitzduncan, whom David is said to have created Earl of Moray, interfered, fiercely accusing de Brus of treason. This brought David back to his original purpose of battle, and he bade his trumpets sound the advance. Ailred gives interesting details about the formation of the Scottish columns, stating that the Galloway Picts insisted upon their privilege (how and when established we are not informed) of leading the attack, and how that attack of half-naked barbarians was repulsed by the mail-clad Norman knights and men-at-arms, whereby the rest of David's army was thrown into confusion and decimated by the English archers.

More than a thousand years had passed since Tacitus penned his description of the conflict on Mons Granpius between Agricola's legionaries and the forefathers of these very Picts, yet in all those centuries the annals of North Britain present no passage so stirring, so vivid and so convincing, until the Abbot of Rievaulx sat down in his cloister to record the Battle of the Standard.

Henry, heir-apparent to the Scottish throne, cut his way through the Norman ranks and rejoined his father three days later at Carlisle. This prince is one of the romantic figures in history, *preux chevalier*, a very Flower of Chivalry. When he died in 1152, Ailred wrote of him: "We grew up from boyhood together; in our youth we were friends, and I left him only that I might serve Christ, but I never lost him in loving memory."

After Henry's death, David foresaw trouble about the succession among his Gaelic and Pictish subjects, so he got the Earl of Fife, head of the ancient Celtic constitutional body, the Seven Earls, to conduct Henry's son, Malcolm, through the kingdom for his recognition as heir to the throne. This Malcolm, fourth of the name, better known as Malcolm the Maiden, duly succeeded as king on the death of David in 1153, and was the first king recorded to have been crowned at Scone, a fact which we learn from the contemporary English annalist John of Hexham,[1] who under-

[1] *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of Stephen*, vol. i. pp. 70-72 (Rolls Series).

took a continuation of the valuable chronicle attributed to Simeon of Durham.

Now we have traversed a great deal of ground that is covered by our Scottish chroniclers John of Fordun and Andrew of Wyntoun. You may be disposed to ask why their authority has not yet been cited, and why reference has been made only to Irish annalists and English chroniclers. Assuredly it is from no want of a sense of their importance as historians; but they both lived in the fourteenth century, long after the events for which I have been endeavouring to elucidate and indicate contemporary authority. The reign of David I. witnessed the complete establishment of feudalism in Scotland, implying radical changes in the social habits, land tenure and jurisprudence of the country. It has seemed to me of greater importance to collate the fragmentary notices of Scottish history by writers of the period, English and often prejudiced though they were, than to accept without reserve the statements of clerics viewing these events through feudal spectacles at a distance of two or three centuries and living under a new dynasty of kings. There will

be plenty of occasion later for reference to Fordun and Wyntoun; meanwhile we have arrived at a period when, for the first time, we have access to chronicles compiled by Scottish writers.

There is not the slightest reason to suppose that Scottish clerics and monks were less industrious than those of English monasteries in recording the events of their time, nor to imagine that the many religious houses founded by Queen Margaret and her sons were not each provided with a historiographer and scriptorium. Unfortunately, except Adamnan's *Life of Columba*, written in the seventh century, not a single example of annals compiled in Scotland has been preserved until we come to the latter half of the twelfth century, when the *Chronicon de Mailros*, and a meagre chronicle usually believed to have been compiled by a monk of Holyrood, begin to record contemporary events.

To Scottish history the disappearance of all the chronicles compiled in the other monasteries is an irreparable loss. True it is that it would be vain to expect monkish writers to present an impartial and dispassionate view of

the questions constantly arising between the governments of England and Scotland; the eagerness with which they were accustomed to attribute a miraculous significance to any unusual occurrence, and even to every-day phenomena, betrays a total absence of the critical faculty so essential in a historian. But that applies to English monks just as much as to Scottish, and it would greatly assist us at this day in coming to right conclusions if the statements of the English annalists upon those international disputes which they discussed with so much bitterness could be collated with those of advocates in the Scottish interest.

The disappearance of the early Scottish chronicles may be traced, I think, to two main causes. First, when the death of Alexander III. in 1286, followed by that of his grand-daughter the Maid of Norway in 1290, landed the kingdom in a disputed succession, it is known that in the Scottish Treasury was stored a great mass of State papers and records. These were handed over by Edward I. of England, in his capacity of Overlord and Arbiter, to John Balliol when he was crowned at Scone in 1292. All of them are believed to have

perished in the confusion of the succeeding century.

Second, the temporalities and movables of the Scottish religious houses suffered almost as much in the lawless years preceding the Protestant Reformation as they afterwards did at the hands of the Reformers themselves.

After the Reformation it is hard to decide whether ecclesiastical manuscripts, which were specially obnoxious to the Lords of the Congregation and the zeal of the General Assembly, suffered more from the illiterate haste of the lay commendators appointed to administer the Church revenues, or from the indiscriminate fury of the Protestant mob. The havoc and sack of the religious houses at Perth in 1559, which John Knox, being present in the town, vainly attempted to stop, was but the first act in widespread devastation. Books and manuscripts went into the flames with popish vestments and works of art. It gives one heartache to think of the priceless treasures, artistic, literary and historical, whereof our country was plundered in the name of religion.[1]

[1] In that curious anonymous tract of the sixteenth century, *The Historie of the Kennedyis*, almost certainly written by Mure of

THE CHRONICLE OF HOLYROOD

The *Chronicle of Holyrood* is a mere fragment, for although it starts with the invasion of Britain by Julius Caesar, it does not appear to have become a contemporary record until about 1150, and even then it is provokingly laconic and far from accurate. For instance, in recording the death of King David and the accession of Malcolm the Maiden in 1153, the chronicler says that the young king was forty-two years of age. The Melrose chronicler correctly states that he was in his twelfth year.

Auchendrane, an accomplished assassin, we read how Gilbert, Earl of Cassillis, Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, acquired the temporalities of Glenluce Abbey in a manner that boded ill to the contents of the library.

"This Gilbert was ane particuler manne, and ane werry greidy manne, and cairitt nocht how he gatt land, sa that he culd cum be the samin; and for that caus he enterit in bloking with ane Abbot of Glenluse concerning the Abacie, to tak the samin in few; bot, or he gatt the samin performitt, the Abott deitt. And then he deltt with ane Monk off the samin Abacie, quha culd counterfitt the Abottis handwritt, and all the haill Conventtis; and gartt him counterfitt thair subscriptiones. And quhen he had gottine the samen done, feiring that the Monk wald reweill itt, he causit ane cairll, quhilk thay callit Carnachaine, to stik [him to the deid]; and thane, for feir that cairll had reweillit, he garit his fader-broder, Hew of Bargany, accuse this cairll for thift, and hang him in Corsragall. And sa the landis of Glenluse wes conqueist."

This was the same Earl Gilbert who roasted the Abbot of Crosraguel till the wretched man consented to give up the lands of that abbey to him.

Somerled's formidable invasion of 1154 in support of the rebellion raised by the sons of Malcolm MacEth is dismissed in three lines by the scribe of Holyrood, and receives no notice at all in the *Melrose Chronicle*; but both writers record the capture of Donald MacEth at Whithorn in 1156 and his being sent to join his father in prison at Roxburgh. The *Holyrood Chronicle* contains the further important statement that King Malcolm received Malcolm MacEth to his peace in 1157. I will not follow Dr. Skene into the confused issue whether, as he believed, this rebel MacEth was the same individual who, under the name of Bishop Wimund, raised rebellion, and met the fate described by William of Newburgh, who states that King Malcolm conciliated MacEth by giving him a province. Dr. Skene believed this province to have been Ross, a district in which the royal writs hardly could be said to run as yet. Brief was MacEth's authority there, for, as William of Newburgh tells, the people of the country laid ambush for him, seized him and put out his eyes, which, in the twelfth century, seems to have been recog-

nised as the surest way of disposing of a political opponent.

It is to William of Newburgh that we chiefly owe our knowledge of Malcolm IV.'s character, and especially of the circumstances which, as he alleges, earned him the sobriquet of the Maiden.

"As he grew towards manhood there were not wanting some who, sent by Satan, and careless of their own loss of chastity, urged him with evil daring and poisonous advice to make trial of carnal pleasure. But he, desiring to follow the Lamb wherever he should go, had imbibed with all his heart the zeal of holy purity, and knew that this treasure was to be kept in the frail flesh as in an earthen vessel, no man revealing this to him but God only. At first he despised these unseemly promptings of youths of his own age, and even of those to whom he owed respect as his instructors; but when they would not be silent, he rebuked them by word and countenance, so that none of them thenceforward dared to try such things with him again.

"But the enemy thus repulsed and prompted by hatred set craftier snares for this child of God. He used the mother to prepare for him the secret poison, as though by the solicitude of maternal love; and not only to coax him with persuasion, but even to direct him by authority, telling him to be a king, not a monk, and explaining how a girl's caresses

were the best thing for his age and health. Yielding to his mother's importunity, rather than convinced by it, he feigned consent rather than vex her. She with delight stood by her son's bed and placed beside him a lovely and noble virgin; nor did he offer any opposition. When he was left alone with the girl, fired by the flame of chastity rather than of lust, he rose at once and during the whole night left the maiden in the royal bed, sleeping himself under a cloak on the pavement."

In concluding the narrative William rises above the vulgar appetite for miracles which was almost universal among monkish writers of that period.

"Let those who observe signs and judge of merit by miracles, awarding the title of saint only as indicated by signs—let those say what they will: I assuredly hold that a young king whose integrity was assailed in this manner and proved invincible is a miracle to be preferred not only to the restoring of sight to the blind, but even to the raising of the dead."[1]

Profane critics may incline to discount the miraculous in Malcolm the Maiden's singular continence by recalling that he was only in his

[1] *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of Stephen*, vol. i. pp. 76-78 (Rolls Series).

teens when it was put to the test, and that it is evident by a charter granted by him to the Abbey of Kelso, that he left at least one illegitimate son.

Perhaps the most remarkable passage referring to Scotland in William of Newburgh's chronicle is that relating to the cession of Northumberland (including Lothian and Edinburgh Castle), Cumberland and Westmorland in 1157, and the admission by this English historian that these counties belonged by right to Scotland. King Malcolm was only sixteen. The passage runs as follows :

"To the King of Scots, *who possessed as his proper right* the northern districts of England, namely Northumbria, Cumberland and Westmorland, formerly acquired by David, King of Scots, in the name of Matilda, called the Empress, and her heir, King Henry II. took care to announce that the King of England ought not to be defrauded of so great a part of his kingdom, nor could he brook to be deprived of it. It was just that what had been acquired in his name should be restored.

"Malcolm prudently considered that in this matter the King of England's superior might outweighed the merits of the case, although he might have appealed to the oath which King Henry was

said to have given to David, his grandfather, when Henry received from him the belt of knighthood. So he [Malcolm] restored the aforesaid territories in their entirety when Henry demanded them, and received from him in return the earldom of Huntingdon, which belonged to him by ancient right."[1]

In truth Malcolm the Maiden had enough to do in ruling his own kingdom, shorn though it was of the northern counties of England. His Celtic subjects, both in the Highlands and in Galloway, still refused to acknowledge him as their legitimate king, hankering after the royal succession according to the ancient law of Tanistry. Accordingly, it is recorded in the contemporary chronicles of Melrose and of Hoveden that in 1160 King Malcolm returned from France, where he had been serving in the siege of Toulouse as King Henry's vassal for the earldom of Huntingdon, in order to put down rebellion in his own kingdom. He was besieged in Perth by six out of the Seven Earls, representing the ancient Celtic constitution of Scotland proper, but he managed to beat them off. Wyntoun finishes his metrical account of this rising by the lines

[1] *Ibid.* pp. 105-6.

"Bot the kyng rycht manlyly
Swne skalyd all that cumpany,
And tuk and slwe."[1]

Turning to the *Holyrood Chronicle*, we read that in the same year, 1160, Malcolm made three expeditions into Galloway, reducing it to subjection, and that Fergus, the Celtic prince of Galloway, became a monk in Holyrood, and gave to the convent *villam quae dicitur Dunroden*—that is, Dunrod, a parish now incorporated into Kirkcudbright.

The *Chronicle of Melrose* and the *Chronicle of Man* record in similar terms the last war of Malcolm the Maiden. In the year before his death, at the age of twenty-five—that is, in 1164—Somerled of Argyll, Lord of the Isles, uncle of the blind claimant, William MacEth, landed on the coast of Renfrew with a large force of Irish and Islesmen in 160 galleys, but he was defeated and killed, with his son Gillecolm. There is a curious rhyming Latin poem, composed by one named William, who claims to have been an eye-witness of the conflict, which he describes minutely, attribu-

[1] *Cronykil*, book v. ch. 7, lines 1395-7.

ting the victory of the loyal Scots to the intervention of S. Kentigern.

"Sic detrusis et delusis hostium agminibus,
Kentegernum omne regnum laudat altis vocibus.
Caput ducis infelicis Sumerledi clericus
Amputavit, et donavit pontificis manibus."

The poem, a long one, is printed in the appendix to the first volume of Fordun, in the *Historians of Scotland* series, and is especially interesting on account of the rarity of any native literature of Scotland in the twelfth century. The original is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Reginald of Durham, who was really a monk of Coldingham in Berwickshire, lived and wrote about this time, might almost be reckoned in the scanty list of our Scottish historians of the twelfth century did he not betray the strongest animosity against the Scots.

On the whole, Malcolm the Maiden maintained very amicable relations with his kinsman Henry II. When Malcolm died in 1165 his praise was in the mouth of men of both nations, the Englishman, William of Newburgh, describing him as "a man of

angelic sincerity among men, and as it were an earthly angel";[1] while from Ireland the *Annals of Ulster* testify to him as "the best Christian that ever was to the Gael on the east side of the sea"—that is, to his Highland subjects.

But William of Newburgh had occasion to alter his friendly tone after William the Lyon succeeded his brother Malcolm as King of Scots. When Henry II. in 1170 made the startling innovation of having his rebellious son and heir, Prince Henry, crowned at Westminster as *rex filius*—prospective king—he caused King William and his brother David to do homage to Prince Henry. The peculiar character of this dual allegiance is set by the Frenchman Jordan Fantosme, Chancellor of Winchester, who was present on the occasion, in his valuable metrical *Chronique de la guerre entre les Anglois et les Ecossois.*

"Gentle King of England, of right gallant bearing,
Dost thou not remember that at the coronation of thy son
Thou causedst the homage of the King of Albany
To be presented to him without breach of loyalty to thyself.

[1] *Chronicles of Stephen*, etc. vol. i. pp. 147-8.

Then thou saidst to both—'May God curse those
Who would disturb your love and friendship
Against all the people of the world. Be with my son
In power and aid, saving my over-lordship.'"

Hence, when Prince Henry rebelled against his father in 1172–3, William the Lyon was under obligation to both parties; but we know from a letter written in 1168 by John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres, that King William had already opened negotiations with Louis VII. of France, offering him aid in his war against England. This, indeed, may be taken as the first step in the enduring league between Scotland and France, although attempts were made afterwards to date it back to the days of Charlemagne. But William had a still more cogent reason for siding with Prince Henry. Hoveden and the *Peterborough Chronicle* (commonly, but erroneously, attributed to Abbot Benedict as author) record that Prince Henry, who ruled in England during his father's absence in Normandy, had granted to King William what Henry II. had refused, namely, the whole of Northumberland north of the Tyne. King Henry, on his return, refused to acknowledge the grant, wherefore

King William invaded England in 1173 in order to seize by force what he claimed as his right. Diceto, Dean of S. Paul's, expressly recognises that right, a remarkable admission by an English chronicler. He says that William claimed and Henry refused

"that part of Northumberland which had been granted, given over and confirmed by charters to his grandfather King David, and which also had long been possessed by him."[1]

He goes on to describe horrible and Herodian barbarities perpetrated upon women and unborn babes by the invading army—chiefly by the men of Galloway. But, as Mr. Andrew Lang has shrewdly pointed out, the allegation of these atrocities forms a stereotyped paragraph in the account of every Scottish invasion, no doubt to stimulate the indignation of the English levies. It is a *cliché* used in describing the raids of Malcolm Ceannmor; Henry of Huntingdon transplants it into his record of David I.'s invasion of 1138; it reappears in almost identical words in 1173 under the hands of the Dean of S. Paul's and William of Newburgh. Dr. Stubbs has remarked that

[1] *Imagines Historiarum*, vol. i. p. 376.

"in the very important account of the Scottish invasion of 1174, Benedictus Abbas [that is, the Peterborough chronicler], instead of writing from personal observation, actually copied verbatim the details given by Henry of Huntingdon in his account of the invasion of 1138." We meet the familiar phrase once more as late as 1297, applied to the army of Wallace and Andrew Moray in their march upon Hexham and Corbridge. It is worthy of exactly as much belief, and not a whit more, than the preposterous miracles and portents with which these cloistered writers so freely interlard their narrative.

It is notable that the Scottish Fordun, or his continuator Bower, compiling the *Scotichronicon* in the fifteenth century from the only extant contemporary chronicles, all of which were English except that of Melrose, admitted the charge, but laid the whole blame for the atrocities upon "those Scottish hillmen who are called brutes and Galwegians, who knew not how to spare property or person, but in bestial fury destroyed everything."

About the events of the invasion there is considerable discrepancy among English writers.

By far the most readable account, and, I think, the most trustworthy, is the French metrical chronicle of Jordan Fantosme.

He describes how King William, having failed in his attempt to take Newcastle for want of siege engines, marched off to lay siege to Carlisle, but on the approach of an English army from the south under Humphrey de Bohun and Sir Richard Lucy, he raised the siege and retreated into Lothian. The English burnt Berwick and the surrounding country. So far, all chroniclers agree in the main; but now comes a matter upon which some of them, if they have not been misled themselves, deliberately mislead their readers. Reginald of Durham and Roger Wendover, compiler of *Flores Historiarum*, represent the King of Scots as being reduced to sue for a truce till St. Hilary's Day (13th January). Jordan Fantosme and William of Newburgh tell another story. It was the English commanders who sued for truce. Messengers had arrived in the English camp announcing that the rebel Earl of Leicester had just landed at Walton in Suffolk, and the army was urgently summoned south to repel his attack.

"Wherefore," says Newburgh, "the ferocity of King Henry's enemy [William the Lyon, to wit] was checked through caution for a time by necessary truce, since by cunning dissimulation of our men the news was kept hid from him."[1]

From this it appears that the truce was "necessary," not for the Scots, but for the English. Had King William but known of Leicester's landing, he need never have consented to a truce, and the frontier of Scotland at this day might have been drawn along the Tyne instead of the Tweed.

Further evidence is not wanting that King William had the ball at his foot by the statement in the *Peterborough Chronicle* that, when the truce was drawing to a close, Bishop Hugh of Durham sought conference with King William at a place he calls Revedale, but which is written Revedene by Hoveden, and purchased a truce from him until after Easter for 300 marks in silver, to be raised from the lands of the barons of Northumberland.[2] If Revedene may be identified with Raughton, five or six miles

[1] *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of Stephen*, etc. vol. i. p. 177.

[2] *Gesta Henrici II.* vol. i. p. 64 (Rolls Series).

south-west of Carlisle, it shows that William was still master of Cumberland.

King William, having duly received payment of his 300 marks, renewed the war immediately on the expiry of the truce. In his spirited poem Jordan Fantosme narrates the events of the campaign, culminating in the capture of William the Lyon at Alnwick. Fantosme was present at the time, witness of the combat from the battlements of Alnwick Castle.

"The king of Scots was brave, haughty and bold,
Before Alnwick he stood unarmed;
I do not tell the story merely on hearsay,
I myself was there and saw what happened.

. . . . . .

The king armed himself soon and hastily,
And mounted a horse which was not slow.
He went forward to the conflict with very great courage,
The first whom he struck he felled to the earth.
Everything would have gone well with him, well I know it,
Had not a sergeant rushed up to him
And ripped open his horse with the lance in his hand.
The king falls to the ground . . . . . .
Great was the battle and stubborn on both sides.

You might see plenty of darts thrown and arrows shot.
There was brave fighting and craven flight.
Of the luckless Flemings there was great slaughter.
You might see their entrails dragged out of their carcases through the fields.
Never again in their country will they cry Arras!
The king and his horse are both upon the ground;
He could not rise for his horse lay upon him.
He was soon taken; with my two eyes I saw it
By Ranulf de Glanvile, to whom he surrendered."

William of Newburgh's account agrees very closely with Fantosme's. There is a passage therein which reflects credit on the devotion of the king's knights.

"The king," he says, "charged first upon the enemy, and was immediately surrounded by our men. His horse was killed; he was thrown to the ground and taken, with almost all his troop. For even those who might have escaped, refused to fly after he was taken, yielding themselves voluntarily into the hands of the enemy. Certain nobles, also, who chanced to be absent" [they were out foraging], "but were not far away, when they heard what had happened, galloped in; and throwing themselves, rather than falling, into the hands of the enemy, thought it honourable to share in the peril of their lord."[1]

[1] *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, vol. i. pp. 183-5.

To estimate this devotion aright, one should remember that capture involved payment of ransom proportionate to the rank of the prisoner.

The only contemporary Scottish chronicle which has escaped destruction, that of Melrose, devotes a single short paragraph to this national calamity. The *Holyrood Chronicle* ends in the middle of a sentence in the year previous to King William's capture.

V.

A.D. 1174–1286.

V.

A.D. 1174–1286.

In the last lecture the narrative was brought down to the capture of William the Lyon at Alnwick in 1174.

We Scotsmen can afford now to forgive, if we cannot share, the jubilation of the English chroniclers over that event, involving, as it did, the abject surrender of the independence of his country in order to regain his liberty from the prison of Falaise. But it is hard to reconcile with chivalrous usage the indignity with which the captive king was treated. Jordan Fantosme, describing how Bernard de Baliol was unhorsed and taken by William de Mortimer at Alnwick, says that he was put on parole, "as is done with a knight." Now, King William had probably received knighthood at the hands of Henry II., as his brother David had received it in 1170. Yet, if Roger Hoveden is to be credited, King William was

brought before King Henry at Northampton on the thirteenth day after his capture, namely, on 26th July, with his feet bound under the belly of a horse. Moreover, two English chroniclers, Ralph Diceto[1] and Roger Wendover,[2] affirm that he was kept in chains at Falaise until 1st December. But he was allowed to confer with Scottish ecclesiastics and nobles who, says Diceto, advised him to submit to the terms imposed by King Henry for his release. No need to discuss those terms now, for there is neither uncertainty nor dispute about their nature. William and all his people became vassals and liegemen of the English crown ; the Scottish Church was made subject to York and Canterbury ; English garrisons were to hold the five chief fortresses of Scotland ; the king's brother David and twenty-one Scottish nobles were handed over as hostages. It was a tremendous triumph for English army and diplomacy. For fifteen years Scotland remained an English province.

Before examining the records of the recovery of Scottish independence I will ask you to

[1] *Imagines Historiarum*, vol. i. p. 396.

[2] *Flores Historiarum*, vol. i. p. 103.

glance at the deplorable effect of the king's imprisonment upon the internal affairs of Scotland in general and of Galloway in particular. It is described in most detail by the Peterborough chronicler. Uthred and Gilbert, sons of the defunct Fergus, Lord of Galloway, commanded those Galwegian levies who formed such an important part of King William's army. They appear to have been scattered about the country after plunder when King William was taken; when the disaster became known to them, they marched back to Galloway, expelled all the king's officials and killed all the English and Normans whom they could catch. Then Uthred and Gilbert, having fallen out as to which of them should be Lord of Galloway, Gilbert's son, Malcolm, besieged his uncle Uthred in the island castle of Loch Fergus, near Kirkcudbright; captured him, put out his eyes, cut out his tongue and emasculated him, leaving him to perish miserably.[1] Meanwhile King Henry, who was Gilbert's first cousin by marriage, had sent a priest, none other than Roger Hoveden the chronicler, with Robert de Vaux to negotiate a transfer of the

[1] *Gesta Henrici II.* vol. i. pp. 79-80 (Rolls Series).

the allegiance of Galloway from Scotland to England. Gilbert was nothing loth; but when the envoys found out the atrocious fate of Uthred and reported it to King Henry, he would make no terms with the assassins of his cousin.

The *Peterborough Chronicle* states that so soon as King William got back to his country, King Henry gave him license for a punitive expedition against Gilbert.[1] But the Scottish bishops and nobles appear to have viewed Gilbert's crime with strange leniency, for they interceded for him, and persuaded William to be satisfied with exacting a fine and taking hostages. The fact is that Gilbert was a chief too powerful to be made amenable to justice except at the cost of civil war. King Henry, as overlord of Scotland, recognised this, and overcame his disgust for the murderer of his cousin; for in 1176 King William brought Gilbert to him at Feckenham in Worcestershire to make his peace and render homage.[2] He was mulcted in 1000 marks of silver, for the payment of which Roger Hoveden adds that he gave his son Duncan as hostage; but when Gilbert died

[1] *Gesta Henrici II.* vol. i. p. 99. [2] *Ibid.* p. 126.

nine years later he had only paid 162 marks and Duncan was still in custody.

King William might barter the independence of his country under duresse without doing extreme violence to the feelings of his subjects. Scotland was too recent an entity, its population was too composite and too loosely knit to admit of a common bond of patriotism inspiring the mass of the people. The chiefs of Galloway, for instance, had proved themselves quite ready to cancel their allegiance to William the Lyon and transfer it to Henry II., and Moray had long been, and was still, chronically disaffected. But when King William in the treaty of Falaise signed the submission of the Church of Scotland to that of England, he undertook more than was in his power to do. The Scottish Church was powerfully and perfectly organised. The *Peterborough Chronicle* describes the proceedings at the Council held at Northampton on 26th January, 1176, to which King Henry summoned King William and the Bishops of S. Andrews, Glasgow, Dunkeld, Whithorn, Caithness and Moray, and called upon them to make subjection to the Church of England. These bishops had

all sworn and subscribed at York in the previous year to that condition in the treaty of Falaise which bound them to make "the same subjection to the Church of England as their predecessors had been wont to make and which they ought to make"; but now they told King Henry that there never had been any such subjection, and that none was owing. Matters were brought to a deadlock by a hot dispute arising between the two archbishops as to which English see, York or Canterbury, had the right to receive the subjection. The council broke up without obtaining that subjection, and to the Peterborough narrative, Roger Hoveden, the king's chaplain, adds in explanation that, as the subjection was not to be made through Canterbury, Archbishop Richard (1174-1184) contrived, in opposition to King Henry, that the Scottish bishops should be allowed to return home without making any subjection at all.[1]

The quarrel became famous. Pope Alexander III. sent Cardinal Vivian as legate to Scotland carrying letters assuring the bishops

[1] *Gesta Henrici II.* vol. i. p. 111; Roger Hoveden's *Chronica*, vol. ii. p. 92.

of his displeasure with King Henry, whose conduct in this matter he declared to be "an injury towards God and contempt for us, to the debasement of ecclesiastical liberty which it is not for any king or prince to control."

On 1st August, 1177, the legate held an ecclesiastical council in Edinburgh. Bishop Christian of Whithorn had been squared, or had otherwise come to the conclusion that he was a suffragan of York, and declined to attend, so Cardinal Vivian suspended him ; but Roger Hoveden says that Christian paid no heed to the suspension, being protected by Archbishop Roger of York. Immediately after the council, Cardinal Vivian was recalled to Rome *propter nimiam cupiditatem suam*—because of his excessive avarice—for, says the Peterborough chronicler, he plundered and oppressed almost all the ecclesiastics in his legation.[1] The *Chronicle of Melrose* puts the case against Vivian still more strongly, no doubt, as Sir Archibald Lawrie has noted, because he had exacted tithe from the Cistercians. The Pope afterwards directed the Scottish bishops to cancel the legate's order.

[1] *Gesta Henrici II.* vol. i. pp. 166-7 ; Hoveden's *Chronica*, ii. 135.

No sooner had the Supreme Pontiff declared in favour of the freedom of the Scottish Church from subjection to England, than a dispute arose between the court of Rome and the King of Scots as to the appointment of bishops, involving the question of the supremacy of State or Church. Bishop Richard of S. Andrews died, according to the *Melrose Chronicle* in 1178, according to the *Peterborough Chronicle* in 1180.

"And on his death," says Roger Hoveden, "there was immediately a schism; for the canons of the church of S. Andrews chose for themselves as bishop Master John, surnamed Scott; and William King of Scots chose Hugh his chaplain, and caused him to be consecrated by the bishops of his realm."[1]

John appealed to Rome: the Pope called upon King William on pain of excommunication to receive him, and appointed Roger, Archbishop of York, his legate in Scotland, to carry out the sentence if necessary. We now turn to the *Peterborough Chronicle*, where we read this:

"When William King of Scotland had heard that Hugh, his chaplain, had been deposed, he refused to receive John, declaring that never, so long as he lived,

[1] Hoveden's *Chronica*, vol. ii. p. 208.

should he and John dwell in the kingdom of Scotland at the same time. And he vehemently persecuted John to such an extent that he seized in his own hand the episcopate of S. Andrews and all the revenues of the diocese; and he drove John out of the kingdom, and Matthew, bishop of Aberdeen, uncle of John, and all others whom he had heard to be akin to him: and the houses of the Bishop of Aberdeen he caused to be burnt." [1]

To this Roger Hoveden adds that the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Durham and Alexius, the Papal legate, pronounced sentence of excommunication upon King William and interdict upon his kingdom.

Allowing for some discrepancy in dates, this was the state of matters in 1180, and it is not easy to see how they could have been settled, had not an authority paramount alike over popes and kings intervened. Pope Alexander III. and the Archbishop of York both died in 1181. The new Pope, Lucius III., absolved King William from excommunication and sent him the Order of the Golden Rose, with his paternal benediction.

It may appear strange that we have to rely on English chroniclers of the period for

[1] *Gesta Henrici II.* vol. i. p. 266.

full details of Scottish ecclesiastical affairs, instead of on the *Melrose Chronicle*, which is chiefly concerned with ecclesiastical matter, to the exclusion of current politics. It is easy to suppose that the sympathy of the Cistercian community of Melrose went with the Augustine canons of S. Andrews in their conflict with the Crown; but there was good cause at the moment for not offending William the Lyon. The monks of Melrose had been in dispute with Richard de Morville, the King's constable, about rights of pasturage between Gala and Leader, and in March, 1180, the king held a court at Haddington to arbitrate between them. Award was given in favour of Melrose; hence, while we find a great deal about this local dispute, the Melrose historiographer is discreetly brief and guarded in his notice of the S. Andrews affair. He mentions that there arose therefrom "grave contention and dangerous schism"; that King William was very angry, and would scarcely allow the papal legate, Alexius, to enter Scotland; and that certain of the clergy were excommunicated; but he says not a word about the king's excommunication. The bestowal of the Golden

Rose, however, by the new pope receives honourable mention.

In fact, the *Melrose Chronicle*, precious though it be as practically the only contemporary Scottish record, and as illustrating unconsciously the grasping policy of the Church, compares very unfavourably as a national record with the fine chronicles of Peterborough and Roger Hoveden.

Pope Lucius III. died in 1185; Urban III. and Gregory VIII. both in 1187; and Clement III. succeeding, found matters *in statu quo* at S. Andrews, Bishop Hugh, the excommunicate, still holding the episcopal hood, staff and ring, although he had been deposed by the former pope. Peterborough and Hoveden give a clear account of how Clement III. solved the deadlock. He insisted on King William receiving John, who had been appointed Bishop of Dunkeld, reminding him "that in the case of Hugh aforesaid the Roman Court has hitherto deferred to thy royal Serenity, not without giving offence to many."[1] King William complied; Hugh went off to Rome to be absolved from excommunication; received

[1] *Gesta Henrici II.* vol. ii. pp. 41-43.

it, and died a few days later, with nearly all his household. Finally, in March, 1188, King William sent envoys to Rome, and received from Pope Clement a charter of independence for the Scottish Church from all subjection, save to the Apostolic See.[1]

It illustrates the provoking narrowness of the Melrose chronicler that he has not a word to bestow upon this memorable act, although he is careful to record in this year a grant of land to the monastery by Richard de Morville as worthy to be held *in eterna memoria*. We, however, ought never to forget that the Church of Scotland owes her independence at the present day to the patriotic courage of William the Lyon, whose resolution all the thunder of excommunication could not shake.

But William the Lyon did more than that. If in 1175 he did, under duresse, surrender the political independence of his country, he lived to regain the same in 1189.

We do not need to be reminded how this was done; nor is there any occasion for critical collation of chronicles. The original deed remains—all men may peruse it as given in

[1] *Ibid.* pp. 234-5.

facsimile—No. 46 in the National MSS. King Richard absolutely released King William, his heirs and successors for all time from the homage and submission which King Henry had extorted from him (*extorsit* is the term in the original Latin); restored to him the castles of Roxburgh and Berwick, and absolved all Scottish subjects from the allegiance to the crown of England that had been exacted from them.

It is somewhat remarkable that there is no mention in this important document of the price, 10,000 marks in gold and silver, which King William paid, as is well known from the concurrent testimony of all contemporary chronicles. It may have been King Richard's chivalrous wish that the payment should pass *sub silentio* as a knightly ransom.

Reverting for a moment to the restoration of the Scottish castles to King William under the treaty of Canterbury, it is well to remember that three years previously, when King William married Ermengarde de Beaumont, Henry II. gave him back Edinburgh Castle, on condition that he should bestow it in dowry upon his bride. An event, one should have

thought, of sufficient national moment to be recorded by a Scottish annalist; but the *Melrose Chronicle*, although it mentions the marriage as taking place at Woodstock, makes no allusion to the restoration of Edinburgh Castle. For knowledge of that transaction we are indebted to the *Peterborough Chronicle*, Roger Hoveden, and William of Newburgh.

There is a sentence in this treaty of Canterbury which it was afterwards sought to construe as a reservation of the English king's right to homage from the King of Scots. The sentence runs as follows:

"We have freed him [William] from all compacts which our good father Henry King of England extorted from him by new charters; so to wit that he do to us fully and entirely all that his brother Malcolm King of Scots did of right to our predecessors and ought of right to have done: and that we do to him all that our predecessors did of right to Malcolm aforesaid and ought to have done."

This certainly has the appearance of retaining the old disputed claim to homage for the kingdom of Scotland; but the Peterborough chronicler and Hoveden make it quite clear that homage was only claimed for the Scottish

king's English estates. On the day after the treaty of Canterbury was settled, namely, 6th December, 1189, these chroniclers say:

"The King of Scots did the King of England homage for the holding of his dignities in England, as the Kings of Scots his predecessors were accustomed to hold them in the times of the Kings of England."[1]

This clear statement by two English contemporary writers ought to nullify the claim of superiority so persistently urged in later years. William remained Richard's liege for his English estates, and for no more.

But, it may be asked, what was meant by the passage binding King Richard to do to King William "all that his predecessors did of right to Malcolm aforesaid and ought to have done." King Richard had now no property in Scottish soil; there was therefore no question of allegiance from him to King William. The King of England's obligation to the King of Scots is specified in the same clause of the treaty as consisting of "conduct in the King of Scots coming to court, returning from court and in his provisionings, liberties, dignities and honours."

[1] *Gesta Ricardi*, vol. ii. p. 98.

It is rather interesting to learn the nature and extent of the ceremony prescribed for the reception of the King of Scots when he should be summoned to the English court as vassal for his English lands. Roger Hoveden describes it in minute detail.

The king was to be met at the Tweed by the Bishop of Durham and the sheriff of Northumberland, who should conduct him to the river Tees and there hand him over to the conduct of the Archbishop of York, and so on, the bishops and sheriffs of each county receiving him and passing him on to the next. From the moment he entered England, the King of Scots was entitled to 100 shillings daily from the King of England's purse, and thirty shillings daily during residence at the English court. In addition, he was to be supplied with twelve royal wastel cakes and twelve royal simnel loaves ; four pints of the king's royal wine and eight pints of expensive wine ; two pounds of pepper, four pounds of cummin, two stones of wax or four wax candles ; forty thick and long pieces of the king's royal candle, and eighty pieces of other expensive candle. For the return journey to

Scotland the provision was the same as in coming south.[1]

International relations between England and Scotland were now on a most amicable footing. King Richard and King William were kindred spirits—warlike, chivalrous and free-handed. John of Fordun, compiling his chronicle 150 years later, had good warrant, no doubt, for writing as follows:

"The whole time of King Richard there was so hearty a union between the two countries, and so great a friendship of genuine affection knit the kings together like David and Jonathan, that the one in all things faithfully carried out what the other wished: and even the two peoples were reckoned as one and the same. The English could travel through Scotland as they pleased with perfect safety, afoot or on horseback, this side of the mountains and beyond them; and the Scots could do the like through England, although laden with gold or any kind of merchandise."[2]

This *entente cordiale* was riveted by frequent intermarriage. King William's brother married the Earl of Chester's sister, and, as the *Melrose Chronicle* records, William gave three of

[1] Roger Hoveden's *Chronica*, vol. iii. p. 245.

[2] Fordun's *Annalia*, xxi.

his four illegitimate daughters in marriage to as many powerful English barons, and the fourth, Ada, to Patrick, Earl of Dunbar.

In 1193 the same authority informs us that King William sent 2000 marks as a contribution for the ransom of King Richard from his fourteen months' imprisonment in Germany. The English chroniclers do not mention this act of grace; but in the English Pipe Roll for 1193 there is the entry "Hugh Bardulf for the carriage of moneys which were sent by the King of Scots 100s."

There was a slight ruffle of the calm when the monarchs met at Malton on 5th April, between King Richard's landing at Sandwich on 13th March and his coronation at Winchester on 17th April. King William, says Hoveden, demanded the earldoms of Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancaster "to be restored to him according to the right of his predecessors." Richard, after taking counsel with his barons, replied that the King of Scots ought by no means to have made his demand, especially at a time when war with France was threatened.

William then offered King Richard 15,000

marks of silver for Northumberland alone, and Richard, after holding a council, agreed to let him have that county, but without the castles. King William would not accept it on those terms, and on 22nd April returned home, says Hoveden, "ill-pleased at the refusal he had received."[1]

We get no information about these transactions from the *Melrose Chronicle*, nor about the still more important turn taken by affairs in the following year, 1195, whereby the whole destiny of the Scottish realm seemed about to be profoundly affected. Roger Hoveden is the only contemporary authority for it. He states that in 1195 King William was very ill at Clackmannan, and, having no son, determined that his daughter Margaret should marry Otto, son of Henry, Duke of Saxony, and nephew of King Richard, in order that Otto should succeed to him on the Scottish throne.

"But," continues Roger, "although the king had the consent of many to his will in this matter, Earl Patrick and many others opposed it, saying that they would not receive his daughter as queen, because it

[1] Hoveden's *Chronica*, vol. iii. pp. 249, 250.

was not the custom of the kingdom that a woman should have the throne so long as there was a brother or nephew in his family who could have the kingdom by right."

King Richard deputed the Archbishop of York to arrange the contract of marriage at Christmas following, on the basis that Northumberland and Cumberland, with the castles thereof, should pass to the King of Scots, and the King of England should possess Lothian and the castles thereof. But Queen Ermengarde was expecting her confinement, and King William, hoping for a son, resiled from the contract. Having recovered his health, he led an expedition against Harald, Norse Earl of Orkney and Scottish Earl of Caithness, who had defied his authority.

There is considerable discrepancy between the *Melrose Chronicle* and Roger Hoveden's as to the course of this campaign, but it would hardly repay one to spend time in attempting to reconcile them. Harald having surrendered to the king's superior force, the earldom of Caithness was taken from him and given to Reginald, King of Man, but Harald made a

[1] *Ibid.* vol. iii. pp. 298, 299 and 308.

descent from Orkney in 1201, expelled Reginald's people, and wreaked vengeance upon the unfortunate Bishop of Caithness, whom he accused of having made mischief between the king and himself. He commanded that the bishop's eyes should be put out and his tongue torn out; but, as Fordun quaintly puts it, "it turned out otherwise, for the use of his tongue and of one eye was in some measure left to him."[1]

King William immediately despatched a punitive expedition; but Bishop Roger of S. Andrews "and other good men" interceded for the ferocious earl, whom, strange to say, the king restored to his earldom on payment of every fourth penny to be found in Caithness, amounting to 2000 marks of silver.

Now this bloody episode is of value to us in estimating the reliance to be placed on the Scottish historian, John of Fordun, compiling his annals in the fourteenth century. The only authority he can have had, other than oral tradition, was the *Orkneyinga Saga*, where the treatment of the bishop is thus recorded:

[1] Fordun's *Annalia*, xxiv.

"Harald prepared himself to leave the Orkneys, and when he was quite ready he went first to Thurso and there disembarked. A bishop was in the borg at Skara Volstad (Scrabster), and when the men of Caithness saw the army of Earl Harald they perceived that they could not stand against him. They were told that the earl was in such an ill temper that no man could say what he might do. Then said the bishop, if we can treat with him successfully, he will give you peace.... Harald rushed up from the ships to the borg. The bishop went to meet the earl and received him with kind words; but their interview ended in the earl having the bishop seized, and his tongue cut out, and then ordered a knife to be stuck into his eyes and had him blinded. During this torment the bishop invoked the virgin Saint Trodlheima. Then he went up on a hill and they set him at liberty. There was a woman on the hill and the bishop desired her to help him. She saw that blood was falling from his face and said —'Rest quiet, my lord, for I will willingly help you.'

"The bishop was brought to the place where S. Trodlheima rests, and there he got recovery of his speech and sight."

It will be seen from this that John of Fordun, instead of exaggerating the narrative, brings it into sober prose, eliminates the miraculous element and suggests what was probably the case, that Earl Harald's men

were of milder mood than their master, who was probably drunk, and, by wounding the bishop in the face and mouth, deceived the earl into the belief that his orders had been carried out.

Meanwhile, Queen Ermengarde had borne the wished-for heir, afterwards to become Alexander II., and the marriage with Prince Otto was off. It is matter for speculation how, if it had taken place, it would have affected Scotland, for Otto became a very great personage, being elected King of the Romans in 1198 and Emperor in 1209.

The death of Richard Cœur-de-lion in 1199 and the accession of King John put an end to the harmony between the two kingdoms. We have to rely entirely on English chronicles for a knowledge of what took place. According to Roger Hoveden, King William sent envoys immediately to demand of John the restoration of his patrimony in Northumberland and Cumberland. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Marshal of England would not allow these envoys to cross to Normandy, but caused Earl David to inform William that he must wait patiently until

King John came to England. Meanwhile King John pacified King William by sending word by Eustace de Vesci, William's son-in-law, that all his petitions should be satisfied, if he would keep the peace. This was in April, 1199: in May, after John had come to England, William renewed his demand, threatening to seize Northumberland by force. John replied, "When the King of Scots, my dearest cousin, comes to me, I shall do for him what is just, in this and the rest of his petitions."[1] John went to Northampton at Pentecost, expecting to meet the King of Scots there; but William refused to come, collected an army and sent fresh envoys to John announcing his intention of invading Northumberland if he did not get a favourable answer within forty days. John sent no further reply; appointed William de Estuteville Sheriff of Northumberland and Cumberland, and returned to Normandy.

The fat now seemed to be in the fire, or very near it: but Hoveden declares that, on the eve of the threatened invasion, King William was warned in a dream to desist,

[1] Hoveden's *Chronica*, vol. iv. pp. 89-92.

and he did so, dismissing the army he had assembled. Next year, the two kings met at Lincoln on 21st November, and there, "on a high hill outside the city, in sight of all the people, William King of Scots became the man of John King of England for his right and swore fealty to him on the cross of Hubert Archbishop of Canterbury . . . saving his own right."[1]

On all similar occasions of homage done by Kings of Scots to Kings of England this most ambiguous phrase occurs—*salvo jure suo*—saving his own right. Manifestly we hold that it meant the King of Scots' independent right to his own kingdom, and that homage was done by him only for his estates in England; and there is nothing in Roger Hoveden's account of the meeting to indicate any more; but the contemporary Roger Wendover goes a step further, asserting that William did homage for all his right.[2] Naturally this statement by an irresponsible chronicler was made the most of by English statesmen and writers in after years, and, unhappily, the loss

[1] Hoveden's *Chronica*, vol. iv. p. 141.

[2] *Flores Historiarum*, i. 308.

of the Scottish chronicles leaves us without any contemporary statement of the Scottish side of the dispute. John of Fordun expressly limits King William's homage as being "for all his lands and honours which he had a right to in England, and which his predecessors had formerly held, without prejudice to all his dignities."[1]

After the ceremony at Lincoln, King William once more demanded Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland as his rightful heritage: John asked that his decision on the claim should be deferred till Whitsunday following; when Whitsunday came he asked for a postponement till Michaelmas 1201, in which year the priceless chronicle of Roger Hoveden comes to an end, and for eight years thereafter there is a total absence of all reference to international affairs by the other English chroniclers.

We know, indeed, from the public records that the two kings corresponded on generally amicable terms and met occasionally at York for the discussion of matters of moment. In 1209, however, the current of events is

[1] Fordun's *Annalia*, xxiii.

restored. John had caused a great castle to be begun at Tweedmouth, intended to overawe and command the Scottish fortress of Berwick. John of Fordun states that William could not allow this, attacked the workmen, put them all to the sword and, twice over, levelled the building with the ground.[1]

King John was under threat of excommunication: his kingdom was already under papal interdict; nevertheless he marched in force to the Border, and from Gervase of Canterbury, a monk who at that time was writing the chronicle called *Gesta Regum*, we receive a good impression of the disaffection existing among the royal troops.

"When the King of England," says he, "advanced with a numerous army to Scotland, the knights who were in the army murmured, saying—'Where are we going? what are we doing? We are as Pagans, unchristian, without the law of God. What chance have we, then, against that holy man, the King of Scotland? Assuredly God will fight for him against us, for he has done several miracles on his behalf.' So when these and other murmurs of his soldiers had been reported to the English king, he directed Geoffrey Fitz Peter prefect of England and certain other earls to apply their whole minds to peace."[2]

[1] *Annalia*, xxv. [2] *Gesta Regum*, vol. ii. 102-3 (Rolls Series).

Nor was the old lion William as eager for battle as of yore. The two kings concluded peace at Norham: the obnoxious castle at Tweedmouth was abandoned, William agreeing to pay 15,000 marks indemnity, to give hostages and to entrust his two daughters to John, who undertook to find them suitable husbands. The *Melrose Chronicle* states that the Scots were greatly displeased with this treaty.

The same authority dismisses very briefly the insurrection raised in the north by Guthred, son of the Celtic pretender, Donald Ban MacWilliam. There is more about it in the English chronicles. The *Annals of S. Edmund's*, a contemporary authority, states that King John sent a contingent of Brabantines under an English noble to assist King William in putting down the rebellion, and Walter of Coventry, also contemporary, declares that John went there in person, which cannot be true.[1] It is a confusion with John's journey to meet the King of Scots at Norham. But Walter gives a shrewd suggestion as to the source of this rebellion.

[1] *Memorials of S. Edmund's Abbey*, vol. ii. p. 20 (Rolls Series).

"Guthred," says he, "was of the ancient line of Scottish kings, and, supported by Scots and Irish, had long practised hostility against the modern kings, as had also his father Donald. For the later Kings of Scots boast of being French [Norman] in race and manners, in language and culture; and after reducing the Scots [Celts] to utter servitude, they admit only Normans to their friendship and service."[1]

Henceforward, until King William's death in 1214, within five days of completing his jubilee, he and John remained on excellent terms; but matters took an unfavourable turn when his son, a lad of sixteen, succeeded as Alexander II. There was the usual Celtic insurrection in the north in favour of Donald Ban MacWilliam, but it was put down, as the *Melrose Chronicle* records, with more than usual promptitude by Macintagart, Earl of Ross, who was able to send a sackful of rebel heads as a coronation gift to the young king. In 1215 Alexander, taking advantage of King John's controversy with his barons after Runnymede, endeavoured to make good his claim to Northumberland by force of arms. The *Melrose Chronicle* states that he besieged Norham Castle for forty days from 19th October, but

[1] *Memoriale*, vol. ii. p. 206 (Rolls Series).

failed to take it; yet that on 22nd of that month he received the homage of the Northumbrian barons at Feltoun. This brought King John to the north, sending word to Alexander, says Matthew of Paris, that "he would hunt that red fox from his lair." He burnt Berwick, the chief seaport of Scotland, and, adds Matthew, "would have wrought much slaughter and destruction, had not great need recalled him, brooking no delay."[1] The Melrose chronicler describes the devastation wrought by the English as fearful and unprecedented—*mira et inaudita*. He declares that the Scottish barons burnt their own villages and crops lest they should be to the profit of the enemy. He says that John burnt Mitford and Morpeth on the 7th January, Alnwick on the 9th, Wark on the 11th, and Roxburgh on the 16th after sacking Berwick on the 15th, where many of the inhabitants were put to shameful torture. From Berwick he marched to Haddington and Dunbar, which were burnt on 19th January, and in returning Coldingham Priory was plundered. All this is greatly in excess of anything indicated by Matthew Paris: the

[1] *Chronica Majora*, vol. ii. pp. 641-2.

Melrose chronicler, however, must have seen the glare of the fires he describes.

Matthew Paris becomes at this period a most valuable source of information. He was a monk of S. Albans, where Roger Wendover was historiographer; he succeeded to that office when Roger died in 1236, and his *Chronica Majora* contains matter not to be found elsewhere.

The great need, referred to by Matthew as recalling King John from the invasion of Scotland, indeed brooked no delay. John's disaffected barons had repudiated their allegiance, and elected the French Dauphin, afterwards Louis VIII., King of England. Next, in August, 1216, Roger Wendover informs us that King Alexander "came with a large army, through fear of King John, and did homage to Louis at Dover *for the possessions which he must hold of the King of England.*" [1] The limitation is important. The homage was for Alexander's English estates, and not, as in later years it was attempted to prove, for his realm of Scotland.

The *Melrose Chronicle* confirms in every respect this remarkable march of a Scottish

[1] *Flores Historiarum*, vol. ii. pp. 193-4.

army as far south as Dover, but there is interpolated in a hand of the fifteenth century a note to the effect that the King of Scots did homage to Louis in London, not Dover.

King John died suddenly on 19th October, much to the relief of both nations.

Henry III. was only twelve years old when he succeeded, and the Regent, William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, was far too wise to continue hostilities with Scotland, which was therefore included in the treaty of peace which was purchased from the Dauphin for £10,000. Thereafter there is no mention of Scottish affairs in the English chronicles until the year 1220, when the two kings met at York to arrange King Alexander's marriage with King Henry's sister, the Princess Joanna. The marriage took place next year, according to the *Melrose Chronicle* on 19th June, according to Matthew Paris on 25th June, and according to Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall on 30th May. But ten years later, when King Henry wished further to cement the alliance by marrying Margaret, the younger sister of the King of Scots, Matthew of Paris says that the English barons indignantly objected, holding it to be

unfitting that the younger sister should be crowned Queen of England when her elder sister was only the wife of Hubert de Burgh, the king's justiciar.

Much uncertainty hangs over the part which John, Earl of Orkney, had in the horrible outrage perpetrated in 1222 on Adam, Bishop of Caithness, formerly Abbot of Moray. It seems that he had allowed the tithes to fall heavily in arrear, and when he tried to collect them, a gang of 300 ruffians beset his palace at Halkirk, beat him cruelly, bound him and burnt him to death in his own kitchen. The contemporary *Annals of Dunstable* state that the earl was present, killed the bishop's chaplain with his own hand, and, when the bishop escaped out of the fire, caused him to be thrown back into it and consumed.[1] The *Melrose Chronicle* does not mention the earl; Fordun and Wyntoun say that he was at hand, and insinuate that the crime was not done without his approval. Anyhow, King Alexander punished him severely for not keeping better order in his earldom. He fined him heavily, and forfeited half his lands. Wyntoun declares that

[1] *Annales Monastici*, vol. iii. pp. 77-78.

the earl was "nere by," but not actually present; and that the king was compelled by the indignation of the Scottish clergy to do this justice upon him.[1]

In April, 1236, King Alexander had to put down an insurrection in Galloway, consequent upon the death of Alan, lord of that province. Rebellion among the Galloway Picts would scarcely be worth special notice, so frequently did it occur, but for a curious passage in Matthew Paris's chronicle describing a pagan ceremony observed by the conspirators, which he says was the custom of their forefathers.

"All these barbarians, and their chiefs and magistrates, were bled from the precordial vein into a large vessel, stirring and mixing it after it was drawn; and afterwards they offered it, mixed, to one another in turn, and drank it as a sign that they were thenceforth bound in indissoluble brotherhood, united through good and ill fortune even to laying down their lives."[2]

In the same year King Alexander renewed his demand for Northumberland and Cumberland, but on 25th September, 1237, he agreed at York to commute his claim for a grant of land worth £200 a year, and thus was closed

[1] Wyntoun's *Cronykil*, book vii. ch. 9, lines 2735-2774.

[2] *Chronica Majora*, vol. iii. p. 365.

this ancient dispute, arising out of David I.'s marriage 100 years before with the heiress of Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland.

Notwithstanding this settlement, the subsequent treaty of Newcastle in 1244 and the contract of marriage therein arranged between the heir-apparent of Scotland (afterwards Alexander III., but at that time a child of three years) and Margaret, Princess Royal of England, Henry III. never trusted his brother-in-law, Alexander II., whose second wife was a Frenchwoman, and war was more than once imminent between the two countries. But when Alexander II. died in 1249, leaving the crown to his son, Alexander III., a boy of eight years, Henry III. acted an honourable and friendly part, earning thereby warm eulogium from the Scottish chronicler, John of Fordun.

"Never," says he, "did any of the English or British kings in any time past, keep his pledges towards the Scots more faithfully and steadfastly than this Henry. For nearly the whole of his reign he was looked upon by the Kings of Scotland, father and son, as their most faithful neighbour and counsellor: a thing which never or seldom had happened, save in the days—alas, so few!—of Richard Cœur de Lion." [1]

[1] *Annalia*, xlix.

King Alexander's marriage to Princess Margaret at York on the day after Christmas, 1251, is described in lively detail by Matthew Paris. He tells how the numerous retinue of the King of Scots were all lodged together in one street as a precautionary measure; which notwithstanding they came to blows with the retainers of the English lords, "first with their fists, then with their nails and afterwards with cudgels.... There were so many numerous hosts of nobles of English, French and Scots, so many large troops of knights, adorned with wanton robes, vain in their silks and changes of raiment, that their profane and wanton vanity, if it were fully described, would fill the hearers with wonder and disgust. For a thousand knights and more appeared at the wedding on behalf of the English king clothed in silk ... and on the morrow they threw all those aside and presented themselves at court in new robes." Little King Alexander, we are told, did homage to King Henry "for the possessions which he holds of the King of England—to wit, in the Kingdom of England—to wit, for Lothian and the other lands."[1]

[1] *Chronica Majora*, vol. v. pp. 266-270.

I make no comment upon this, except that Matthew Paris must have been misinformed about Lothian, which we must believe was ceded to Malcolm II. by Eadulf Cudel after the Scottish victory at Carham in 1018. Even if homage had been claimed and paid subsequently to that event, it was utterly renounced by Richard for himself and his successors under the treaty of Canterbury, 5th December, 1189.

Paris adds that when King Henry went on to demand that Alexander should do homage for his kingdom, the royal lad replied that he had come to England to be married, and not to argue about such a difficult question. Which question King Henry did not press further, but, says Paris, "dissembled everything, passing over it for the time in silence." This avoidance of a thorny subject may perhaps be traced to the anxiety of Queen Eleanor for the future tranquillity of her daughter; because, as all men know, and as the chronicles abundantly testify, Queen Eleanor was the real ruler of England in those days. She might well feel uneasy about her daughter's welfare in Scotland. The outset of Alexander III.'s reign

of thirty-six years presented little augury of its subsequent auspicious course. Party faction and court intrigue took the place of dynastic rebellion. Robert de Ross and John de Balliol were sent with the child couple to Edinburgh as their guardians. Matthew Paris gives a dismal account of their sojourn, which was practically imprisonment "in that castle, a dreary and solitary place," he says, "wholly without wholesome air or verdure, as being near the sea." Queen Eleanor, concerned at rumours about her daughter's health, sent a physician, Reginald of Bath, to ascertain the truth. He spoke his mind freely about the disgraceful state in which he found the young king and queen—too freely, it seems, for he presently fell sick and died, as was roundly asserted, by poison. This brought King Henry to the Border in person: Ross and Balliol were dismissed in disgrace; Ross's estates being forfeited, but, says Paris, "Balliol prudently made peace for himself by satisfying the king's needs with money, which he had in abundance."[1]

The Scottish Council was dismissed, says

[1] *Ibid.* pp. 501-502.

Fordun, and a fresh one appointed, one of whom was Robert de Ross, King Alexander's cousin, which is diametrically opposed to Paris's statement.[1]

"But," continues Fordun, "these councillors were so many kings. For in those days one who saw the poor crushed down, nobles ousted from their inheritance, citizens forced into drudgery, churches violated, might with good reason exclaim—'Woe unto the kingdom where the king is a boy.'" Yet this boy was to prove the best king that had reigned or was to reign over Scotland as a separate realm; a ruler whose subjects enjoyed such peace and prosperity as their posterity were not to know again for full four hundred years: a monarch for whom the chronicler Wyntoun lamented in the well-known stanza:

"Quhen Alysaunder oure Kyng was dede
That Scotland led in luẅe and lé,
Away wes sons off ale and brede,
Off wyne and wax, off gamyn and gle.
Oure gold wes changyd into lede;
Christ, born into Vyrgynitie,
Succoure Scotland and remede,
That stad is in perplexité."[2]

[1] *Annalia*, i. [2] *Cronykil*, book vii. chap. 10, at the end.

VI.

A.D. 1265–1406.

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A.D. 1265–1406.

In this, the last lecture of the present series, we reach a period when the unification of Scotland was completed by the defeat of King Hako at Largs in 1263, and the annexation of the Isle of Man and the Western Isles in 1266. The *Melrose Chronicle* continues to be the only contemporary Scottish authority, whence we learn that it was a monk of Melrose, Reginald by name, who was sent to Norway in 1265 to negotiate with Magnus VI., successor of Hako, for the cession of the islands, whereby the realm of Scotland became what it is now, plus the Isle of Man and minus Orkney and Shetland.

Now, although the reign of Alexander III. was most momentous and beneficent to the Scottish nation, I only propose to call your

attention to one matter connected with it—the question of homage to England. The *Chronicle of Melrose* ends abruptly in the middle of a sentence in 1270, consequently we have to rely entirely on English authorities for King Alexander's doings when he attended the Parliament of Edward I. in 1278. In the *Annals of Waverley* (contemporary) it is stated simply that *in the middle of October* he did homage,[1] as he would naturally do to the feudal superior of his lands in England. Another contemporary authority, Thomas Wykes, canon-regular of Osney Abbey, says that King Alexander came, "whether willingly or unwillingly I wit not," in response to King Edward's summons, "to renew in his presence the homage which he had done to King Henry for lands which he owes to hold of him, neighbouring upon the kingdom of Scotland."

Now note the different gloss put upon the transaction in the *Annals of Worcester*, which were not compiled until early in the fourteenth century, after King Edward had assumed the overlordship of Scotland. This writer states

[1] *Annales Monastici*, vol. ii. p. 390.

that Alexander "did homage to my lord the King of England for the lands which he holds in Tynedale and Westmorland, saving, however, to the King of England his right which he says he has in the land of Scotland and Lothian."

Among the Close Rolls of 6 Edward I. is a memorandum of fealty sworn by Robert de Brus, Earl of Carrick, on behalf of King Alexander, "for the services due on account of lands and tenements which I hold of the King of England." King Edward's acceptance is recorded, "saving the claim of homage for the kingdom of Scotland, whenever they should choose to discuss that." This minute bears the date of Michaelmas, *i.e.* 29th September, but it cannot be accepted as genuine, seeing that among the Patent Rolls is another memorandum or minute, dated 17th October, stating that the King of England declares that King Alexander came before him at Tewkesbury on the previous day, offering to do him homage, but as King Edward had not his council with him, he deferred the ceremony to another occasion. There is no record of any such subsequent occasion, whence the assumption

is not unfair that the memorandum purporting to be of 29th September is not genuine, but was concocted to meet the demand made by King Edward in 1291 for documentary evidence in support of his claim to overlordship.

Finally, there is the Scottish version of this transaction, preserved as No. 321 in the *Register of Dunfermline*, which gives the date as 28th October, quite consistent with the postponement at Tewkesbury on 17th October. According to the Dunfermline document, King Alexander tendered his homage through Bruce, Earl of Carrick, for the lands he held in England, *saving my own kingdom.* The Bishop of Norwich, it is stated, interrupted by exclaiming, "and saving the right of my lord King Edward to homage for your kingdom"; upon which King Alexander answered in a loud voice, "That is due to God only, for it is from him alone that I hold my crown."

For my own part, I cannot entertain any doubt whatever that, although ambitious prelates like the Bishop of Norwich hankered after the old claim of superiority, which implied the subjection of the Scottish Church—

to the Church of England, King Edward was far too friendly with his brother-in-law, King Alexander, to allow that claim to be revived during Alexander's life ; nor did he make any attempt to establish it until it was forced upon his notice by the appeal of Bishop Fraser and the Legitimist party in Scotland, who besought him to save their country from civil war after the death of the Maid of Norway. Then, when it was evident that intervention was the only way, Edward acceded to the appeal, and did his best to make good the ancient, though as I believe groundless, claim to overlordship. And we may assume that some of those whom he employed to collect documentary evidence in support of his claim were not very scrupulous about authenticity of the material.

I must now pass in silence over what must be regarded as the most crucial period in the history of Scotland, embracing the interregnum caused by the death of the Maid of Norway, the wars of Wallace and Bruce, and the ultimate surrender of the claim to overlordship by Edward III. in 1327. And if you think it strange why I have nothing to say about so momentous a period, I may explain that, with

the close of the Melrose chronicle in 1270, we are left without light from any contemporary Scots writer. English chronicles remain in plenty, but they give only one side of the question, and that at a time when international animosity ran higher than at any previous period.

One exception must be made by referring to the *Scalacronica* of Sir Thomas Gray. It is true that Gray did not begin to compile his narrative till after 1355, when he lay for two years a prisoner in Edinburgh Castle and beguiled his tedium by studying in the library there, which seems to have been better furnished than one might have expected. It is true that much of the said narrative, which is written in Norman French (the language of the court and the law at the time), is of no original value, being, as Gray frankly says in his prologue, a mere transcript of passages from Gildas, Bede, Higden and other chroniclers; but it possesses a peculiar, indeed a unique, value in being the work of a soldier who knew what he was writing about in describing military matters. Moreover, Gray's father, also named Sir Thomas, saw forty-six years' almost continuous

active service in the Scottish war beginning with the rising of Wallace in 1297. For the greater part of that period he was Constable of Norham Castle, a much disputed fortress in the very cockpit of Britain; he marched with Edward II. to Bannockburn, and, being taken prisoner on the day before the battle, witnessed the action from within the Scottish camp. As he lived until 1343, his son, the chronicler, must have framed his narrative of the wars of Wallace and Bruce largely upon what his father told him. And whereas his description of the battle of Bannockburn differs in many important particulars from the accounts given by monkish writers of the period, I do not think anyone can have a clear impression of the disposition of the forces in that engagement, or of the various passages in the conflict, without studying Gray's narrative on the battlefield itself.

A further exception must be made in favour of the compilation known as the *Chronicle of Lanercost*, which, whether it was executed at Lanercost Priory or, as Father Stevenson believed, was the work of a Franciscan friar of Carlisle, is a fine compendium of ecclesiastical

myth, historical fact and partisan invective from the hand of a person or persons in a good position to watch the course of events on the Border in the reigns of the first three Edwards of England. So far as it deals with that period, it appears to have been compiled from contemporary narratives.

But the time left at my disposal must be given to consideration of the Scottish chroniclers of the fourteenth century. First and foremost of these stands John of Fordun, a chantrey priest of Aberdeen, about whose life nothing is known save what can be gathered from prologues and colophons in the various copies of his *Scotichronicon*. These copies are twenty-one in number, all but six being abbreviations of the original. It is in the prologue to one of these abridged editions, now in the Advocates' Library, that we get the fullest account of the author. It is stated therein how "that truculent tormentor Edward the first after the Conquest, King of England named Langschankis and a tyrant," caused all the libraries in the kingdom to be searched for authentic chronicles, and, having got them into his hands, "took some of them away to England

and committed the others to the flames. Thereafter," continues the transcriber, "a certain reverend Scottish priest, Sir John Fordun, set his hand to the task of recovering the lost chronicles, travelling afoot through England and Ireland, visiting towns, universities, colleges, churches and monasteries, collating chronicles and collecting information from learned persons, and taking copious notes in a book carried in his bosom." The late Dr. Skene has given ground for his belief that this peregrination took place between the years 1363 and 1385, and that the material collected had been worked up into five books called *Cronica Gentis Scotorum* before the author's death in or about 1385.

Fordun's intention, as shown in one of the extant copies, was to imitate Higden by dividing his work into seven books. Among the English authorities consulted, he seems to have relied chiefly on the chronicle of S. Mary of Huntingdon, which has been already referred to as a useful source of information as to Scottish affairs in the twelfth century, owing to the earldom of Huntingdon being an appanage of the Scottish royal family.

Fordun also quotes William of Malmesbury. In Ireland he would find great activity prevailing in historic literature, for it was at this time that the *Leabhar gabhala*, or *Book of Conquests*, was being composed, and John O'Dugan, who died in 1372, is the reputed author of the tract, the *Men of Alba*—Alba being the ancient name of Scotland. Except Adamnan's *Life of S. Columba* and the chronicles of Melrose and Holyrood, such historical literature as Fordun may have found in Scotland itself cannot now be consulted, for it has disappeared. The only books which can be identified from his reference to them is a *Life of S. Brandan*, corresponding to neither of the two lives of that saint in the Brussels MS., and the *Great Register of the Priory of S. Andrews*, which has not been seen since the year 1660.

After all, if we had nothing but the five books and part of the sixth which Fordun had written before his death, his chronicle would carry no more weight than any of the many other retrospective medieval compilations; especially as, besides recording the usual proportion of miracles, he expects his readers to

accept a complete genealogy of David I. which he carries back as far as Japhet, the son of Noah, without a single link missing! Fortunately, besides the five completed books, which end with the death of David I. in 1153, he left a great mass of material classed as *Gesta Annalia*, with which he had intended to continue his chronicle, and it is from these *Gesta* that we learn Scottish history in the fourteenth century from a Scottish point of view.

Sixty years after Fordun's death his work was made public under the name of *Scotichronicon* in sixteen books. Unfortunately, it was not left as he wrote it. It had come into the hands of Walter Bower, Abbot of Inchcolm, who made extensive interpolations upon Fordun's five completed books, and extended the *Gesta Annalia* down to the death of James I. in 1437. It has often been asserted that Fordun bequeathed his MSS. to Bower, and committed to him the task of finishing what he had begun; but that is impossible, because Bower tells us that he was not born till 1385, which was just about the time of Fordun's death. Bower finished his *Scotichronicon* in 1447 and died in 1449. Many historians have fallen

into the error of quoting the *Scotichronicon* as synonymous with Fordun; but it is very important to keep Fordun's text distinct from the manipulated versions and additions by Bower and other continuators, for Bower has not only made large additions to Fordun's work, but has altered the narrative itself in several passages. "This," observed Dr. Skene, "can only be viewed as intentional falsification of history to suit a purpose."

The purpose of such falsification may be inferred from the ethnology of the Scottish people. Writing 200 years before Bower, in the reign of Alexander III., Matthew Paris testifies to the intense jealousy of the Celtic nobles and people of the foreigners—Normans and Flemings—who had supplanted them in all the richest lands and highest offices of state. He assigns this racial animosity as the cause of the insurrection of Comyn, Earl of Menteith, in 1257, and the kidnapping of the young king.[1] Fordun does not attempt to explain the motives of this rebellion, which, if he knew them, he prudently suppressed out of deference, no doubt, to the royal dynasty under which he

[1] *Chronica Majora*, vol. v. p. 656.

lived, which was of Norman descent. But Bower goes a step further. Not content with *suppressio veri*, he has no scruples about *suggestio falsi*. James III. was then on the throne, the son of a Flemish lady and the husband of a Danish princess: Celtic tradition had become unfashionable and Celtic customs obsolete in court circles, and Bower takes upon himself to garble Fordun's account of the succession of the kings from Malcolm IV. in 1153 to David II. in 1329. Fordun expressly states that David II. was anointed and crowned by the Bishop of S. Andrews, "specially appointed thereunto by a Bull of the most holy Father John XXII.," adding, "it is not recorded that any of the Kings of Scotland, before this David, were anointed or with so much solemnity crowned."[1] Pope John's bull is in the Advocates' Library to confirm Fordun's accuracy; but such accuracy did not suit Bower's purpose, which was to exalt the dignity of the reigning house, and to make the enthronement of the Scottish kings conform to that of continental monarchs. The Celts were wont to elect their kings without any formal coronation, but the Seven

[1] *Annalia*, cxlv.

Earls set him on the Lia Fail—the Stone of Destiny at Scone. Bower lays stress on the ceremony of coronation; in the case of Alexander II. he names only five earls, whereas Fordun names the constitutional seven. In the case of Alexander III., Bower has the hardihood to declare that he was anointed by the Bishop of S. Andrews, which is manifestly false.

Although Fordun's chronicle is largely compiled from English MSS., as are also the *Annalia*, from which he intended to complete the chronicle (so far as they relate to events before his own time), still John of Fordun must be honoured as the Father of Scottish history. Our gratitude is also due in no small measure to the late Dr. Skene, who first prepared an edition of Fordun's work free from Bower's interpolations and the additions by him and later writers. That edition forms Volumes I. and IV. of the *Historians of Scotland* series, published by Edmonstone and Douglas in 1871–72.

Next in date to Fordun's chronicle comes John Barbour's metrical story of *The Brus*, a work quite invaluable to our knowledge of the

War of Independence, and possessing the rare merit of being the first example by a Scottish writer in Northern English or Lowland Scots, instead of the usual monkish Latin. He was the contemporary of Chaucer, and although he cannot be accounted a rival of the author of *Canterbury Tales*, there are passages of deep feeling here and there in his poem which reveal that he was capable of more than the ordinary task of chronicler. His theme was the winning of the independence of his country; accordingly he set freedom above every other earthly boon.

"A! fredom is ane nobile thing;
Fredom mais man to have liking;
Fredom all solas to man gifis,
He lifis at es that frely lifis.
Ane nobile hart may haf nane es,
Na ellis nocht that may him ples,
Gif fredom falyhe, for fre liking
Is yharnit our all othir thing."[1]

Although Barbour was probably twenty years older than Chaucer, it is a curious coincidence that the first notice we have of either of them occurs in the year 1357. Chaucer appears in that year as a page in the household

[1] *The Brus*, iv. lines 47-54.

of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, third son of Edward III.; and Barbour, already Archdeacon of Aberdeen, acted in the same year as proxy for the Bishop of Aberdeen at the council held in Edinburgh to devise means for raising the ransom of David II. Later in the year he went to study at Oxford with three scholars under safe-conduct from King Edward. Assuming, then, that as an archdeacon he could not have been much less than forty, his boyhood would fall within the reign of his hero, King Robert; he may have seen him, and he certainly became acquainted with many of those who had shared his adventures. The good Sir James of Douglas was not one of those, however; nevertheless Barbour obtained and has transmitted a life-like description of one of the noblest characters in Scottish history. This is how he portrays the Black Douglas.

"Bot he was nocht sa fair that we
Suld spek gretly of his beaute.
In visage was he sumdele gray,
And had blak har, as I herd say;
Bot of limmis he was wele mad,
With banis gret and schuldris brad;
His body was wele mad and lenyhe,
As tha that saw him said to me.

Quhen he was blyth he was lufly,
And mek and suet in cumpany;
Bot quha in battale micht him se
All othir contenans had he;
And in spek ulispit he sumdele,
Bot that sat him richt wondir wele."

If James Douglas was Robert de Brus's right hand, gallant Randolph, Earl of Moray, was so effective a left hand, that the king might be considered ambidexter. Of Moray, who lived till 1332, Barbour has drawn the portrait from life.

" He was sa curageous ane knicht,
Sa wise, sa worthy and sa wicht,
And of sa soverane great bounte,
That mekill of him may spokin be.
And, for I think of him to red
And to schaw part of his gud ded,
I will descrif yhou his fassoun
And part of his condicioun.
He was of mesurabill statur,
And portrait wele at all mesur,
With brad visage plesand and far,
Curtas at poynt and debonair,
And of richt seker contening.
Lawte he lufit atour all thing.
. . . . . .
In company solacious . . .
He was, and tharwith amorous;

And gud knichtis he lufit ay,
And gif that I the suth sall say
He was fulfillet of all bounte
And of all vertues mad was he."

Barbour set about his work with a high purpose, which he thus explains in his prologue :

"Storyis to red ar delitabill,
Suppos that tha be nocht bot fabill.
Than suld storyis that suthfast wer
(And tha wer said on gud maner),
Haf doubill plesans in hering.
The first plesans is the carping,
And the tothir the suthfastnes
That schawis the thing richt as it wes :
. . . . . .
Tharfor I wald fane set my will
Gif my wit micht suffis thartill
To put in writ ane suthfast story,
Thet it lest ay furth in memory ;
Sa that na lenth of tym it let,
Na gar it haly be foryet."

It is unfortunate that, after such a lofty exordium, the archdeacon should have devoted the first ten stanzas of his poem to a glaring falsification of fact, rolling three personages into one ideal hero. That is what he did with father, son and grandson, all of whom bore the name of Robert de Brus, gravely

presenting them to his readers as one and the same individual. He represented Robert de Brus "the Competitor" as being that Robert de Brus, Earl of Carrick, who became King of Scots in 1306, and thrust into the same personality the intermediate Robert de Brus "le Viel," Lord of Annandale, who was King Edward's governor of Carlisle during John Balliol's brief war. Now it is impossible to conceive that one so diligent and well-informed as Barbour should have fallen into this blunder by inadvertence. He was composing his poem, he tells us, in 1375, forty-six years after King Robert's death. Probably Cosmo Innes did Barbour no injustice when, as editor of this national epic for the Spalding Club in 1859 he wrote :

"It suited Barbour's purpose to place Bruce altogether right, Edward outrageously wrong, in the first discussion of the disputed succession. It suited his views of poetical justice that Bruce, who had been so unjustly dealt with, should be the Bruce who took vengeance for that injustice at Bannockburn ; though the former was the grandfather, the other the grandson. His hero is not to be degraded by announcing that he had once sworn fealty to Edward, and once done homage to Balliol, or ever joined any party but that of his country and freedom."

Such a deliberate fabrication placed in the forefront of a historical work might well render all that follows of no historical importance. Barbour's spirited narrative has been denounced as being of no more value to history than the romances of Walter Scott or Alexandre Dumas. But once we get past the initial figment—once the real Bruce has thrown down the gauntlet by openly repudiating allegiance to the English king, Barbour's statements will stand the test of examination in the light of such State papers and other documents as have been preserved, to which, of course, the Archdeacon of Aberdeen had no access.

Take, for example, the early months of 1307 when Brus was closely beset on all sides of his hiding place in Glentrool. No other writer has given such a minute account of the incidents of that critical time. He estimates the number of the king's followers at 150 or 200, which is certainly nearer the truth than the guess of the contemporary English chronicler, Walter of Hemingburgh, who puts them at 10,000. Walter never saw our Galloway hills, else he would have been puzzled to

account for King Robert's success in feeding such a host in the heart of them.

It is well known that Sir Aymer de Valence, King Edward's lieutenant-governor of Scotland, concentrated his forces, placing strong detachments under Percy, Macdowall, de Botetourte, de Clifford and de Wigtown to guard all the passes. Barbour thus describes the matter :

> " And of Vallanch Sir Amer
> Assemblit ane gret cumpany
> Of nobill men and of worthy
> Of Ingland and of Lowdiane ;
> And he has alsua with him tane
> Johne of Lorne and all his micht
> That had of worthy men and wicht
> With him aucht hundreth men and ma."[1]

Barbour here gives the exact strength of Lorn's Highland contingent. De Valence's warrant is still preserved among the Exchequer Rolls, written at Dalmellington and authorising pay and victuals for twenty-two men-at-arms and 800 foot with John of Argyll. Barbour's version of the events which led up to the fatal meeting of Bruce and Comyn in the church of Greyfriars at Dumfries is practically identical with Fordun's. Bruce and

[1] *The Brus*, lii. lines 26-33.

Comyn are represented as having entered into a compact, confirmed by sealed endentures, binding one of them to support the other in seizing the throne of Scotland, in consideration whereof he should receive all the private estates of the other in Scotland. Fordun makes the proposal come from Bruce, Barbour from Comyn; both agree that Comyn preferred to take the lands, leaving the throne to Bruce, and went off to denounce Bruce to King Edward as a traitor. Upon this King Edward resolves to put Bruce to death; but, says Fordun, "he delayed doing so until he could get the rest of this Robert's brothers together, and sentence them all to death in one day." Still following Fordun, we learn that the Earl of Gloucester, a warm friend of Bruce, warned him of what was impending, so that Bruce left London secretly by night, and rode to his own castle of Lochmaben, which, says Barbour, he reached on the fifteenth day. This is leisurely speed for a man flying for his life, being at the rate of no more than twenty-one miles a day. The whole story of King Edward's anger and contemplated revenge is discredited by the fact that on 8th February,

that is, two days before the murder of Comyn, he remitted the scutage due to him by Bruce on succeeding to his father's estates in England. Bower has added a preposterous detail to Fordun's narrative, to the effect that as there was a heavy fall of snow before Bruce left London, he caused his horse's shoes to be reversed, in order to elude pursuit. Modern historians, from Lord Hailes downwards, have done Fordun the injustice of attributing this childish bit of embroidery to him, instead of his continuator Bower. It is remarkable, also, that neither Fordun nor Barbour mentions Kirkpatrick as giving Comyn the *coup-de-grâce*. Fordun says the friars laid the wounded man behind the altar and asked him whether he could live. He answered—"I can," whereupon Bruce's friends (no names mentioned) stabbed him to death.

The English chroniclers — Hemingford, Trivet and Matthew of Westminster—being contemporary, as neither Fordun nor Barbour were—might have been able to give an exact account of this central tragedy and the circumstances which brought it about: but it is hopeless to expect impartiality from the

historians of either nation at this time. Scottish writers exalt the patriotism of Bruce: English authorities denounce him as a traitor to Edward. Both aspects of his character are justifiable; but history is terribly garbled by partisan writers unable to take a comprehensive view. Accordingly, Hemingford and the others represent Bruce as deliberately plotting with his brothers, Nigel and Thomas, to get Comyn into his power that he might kill him. The truth can never be ascertained until the secrets of all hearts are known, and we must leave it at that. But it is interesting to note a difference between Fordun's and Barbour's view of Bruce's act. Fordun has no word of disapproval: on the contrary, he attributes Bruce's escape from London and from Edward's wrath to the miraculous grace of God, and he has no better word to apply to Comyn than *maledicens*—evil speaker. *Maledicenti in ecclesia fratrum laetale vulnus infligitur.* Barbour, on the other hand, admits that his hero was to blame, not indeed for the murder, which he seems to have considered justifiable homicide, as for the sacrilege involved in violating the sanctuary of the altar.

He also admits that there was considerable doubt about the real cause of dispute. After repeating the version which best suited his purpose and would be most acceptable to his king and countrymen, he adds conscientiously :

> " Nocht forthi yhet sum men sais
> That that debat fell othir wais ;
> Bot quhatsaevir mad the debat,
> Thare throuch he deit wele I wat."[1]

From this time forward we may safely entrust ourselves to the guidance of John Barbour, and with him follow King Robert through the most adventurous and perilous period of his life. Plenty of miraculous and fanciful incidents wove themselves into the story under the hands of later writers, but none of these, not even that of Bruce and the Spider, can be traced to Barbour's authority. It is in the hardships of the winter of 1306–7, when King Robert and his followers were sorely bestèd for sustenance in the Highland hills, that James of Douglas first comes on the scene, hereafter to be ranked by Barbour as Jonathan to Bruce's David. It is impossible to doubt the fidelity of the following sketch :

[1] *The Brus*, xi. lines 39-42.

"Than to the hill tha rad thar way,
Quhar gret defalt of met had tha:
Bot worthy James of Douglas
Ay travaland and besy was
For to purchas the ladyis met,
And it on mony wis wald get:
For quhile he venesoun tham brocht,
And with his handis quhile he wrocht
Gynnis to tak geddis and salmounis,
Troutis, elis and als menounis.
And quhile he went to the foray;
And sa thar purchasing mad tha.
Ilk man travalit for to get
And purchas tham that tha micht et:
Bot of all that evir tha war
Thar was nocht ane among them thar
That to the ladyis profit was
Mar than James of Douglas:
And the king oft comfort wes
Throu his wit and besynes."[1]

The English historian Fabyan, writing more than 150 years after these events, asserts that King Robert escaped to Norway and there spent the winter of 1306–7; but I prefer to accept Barbour's statement that he took refuge in Rathlin Island, and lay in hiding there till his descent upon Carrick in the spring of 1307. Barbour could have no reason to

[1] *Ibid.* xvii. lines 63-80.

suppress such a romantic episode as a voyage to Norway; and there is documentary evidence that the English government believed him to be somewhere among the islands, for there is extant King Edward's orders, dated January, 1307, to Hugh Bysset, of the Glens of Antrim, to join Menteith and Montacute with a fleet "to put down Robert de Brus and destroy his retreat in the isles between Scotland and Ireland." Fabyan's story was probably invented to screen the failure of King Edward's officers to apprehend the fugitive.

Fordun's narrative of King Robert's movements during this period of adversity is brief and dry compared with Barbour's glowing story; but Fordun has preserved the name of one who befriended him whom the poet does not mention, namely, "a certain noble lady Christiana of the Isles."

Barbour, we may feel sure, lovingly collected and treasured all the reminiscences he could obtain from those who knew the king; but there is one that he missed, which Sir Thomas Gray in his *Scalachronica* says that he found among the records of King Robert's adventures. It is so lively that I venture to repeat

a translation of it from Sir Thomas's Norman French :

"Robert de Brus came to a passage between two islands all alone, and when he was in a boat with two seamen they asked him for news—whether he had heard anything about what had become of Robert de Brus. 'Nothing whatever,' quoth he. 'Sure,' said they, 'we would like to have hold of him at this moment, so that he might die by our hands.'—'And why so?' asked de Brus.—'Because,' said they, 'he murdered our lord John Comyn.' They put him ashore where they had agreed to do, when he said to them—'Good sirs, ye were wishing that ye had hold of Robert de Brus—behold him! if that pleases you; and were it not that ye had done me the courtesy to set me across this passage, ye should have had your wish.' So he went on his way." [1]

The importance of Barbour's poem as the earliest still extant in the Scottish vernacular deserves more than passing notice. It is true that the only two existing MSS., one in the library of St. John's College, Cambridge, dated 1487, another in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, dated 1489, are both transcripts made about 100 years after the poem was composed. Doubt has been expressed whether these transcripts represent the exact language used by

[1] *Scalacronica*, folio 203[B].

the poet, seeing how rapidly the vernacular changes in that state of society where few individuals can read or write. We are able, however, to check that by comparing with the extant text of the *Brus* those 260 lines which Andro of Wyntoun copied into his *Cronykil* out of Barbour's original about fifty years before the existing transcripts were made. It has been pointed out by Sir James Murray, editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and by Professor Skeat, who has edited Barbour's *Brus* for the Early English Text Society and for the Scottish Text Society, that, in the fourteenth century, the whole eastern country, from the Humber to the Aberdeenshire Dee, spoke one uniform vernacular called "Inglisch," as distinguished from "Scottis," which was the Gaelic of the Highlanders, Islanders and Galloway Picts. Further, that this vernacular was what philologers term Middle Northern English, and may now be heard in its least altered form on the lips of our Lowland Scots.

So great was the difference between Northern English and the speech of the southern counties of England that John of Trevisa, a Cornish-

man, writing in 1387, and therefore contemporary with Barbour, stated as follows:

"All the language of the Northumbrians, especially at York, is so sharp, slitting, grating and unshapen that we Southerners can scarcely understand that speech."

Now the language of the Northumbrians was the language of all Teutonic Scotland. Richard the Hermit lived near Doncaster, contemporary with Barbour, where the northern dialect prevailed. Take his description of heaven, written about 1340, and you will find his language indistinguishable from Barbour's as it has been translated to us:

"Alle maner of joyes are in that stede,
Thare es ay lyfe withouten dede;
Thare es yhowthe ay withouten elde,
Thare es alkyn welth ay to welde.
Thare es rest ay withouten trauayle,
Thare es alle gudes that never sal fail;
Thare es pese ay, withouten stryf,
Thare es alle manere of lykyng of lyfe;
Thare es, withouten myrknes, lyght,
Thare es ay day and never nyght;
Thare es ay somer ful bryght to se,
And never mare wynter in that contre."

It is surprising how very few people seem

to understand that the frontier dividing Scotland from England was never racial or linguistic, but merely political. Yet it is more than forty years since Sir James Murray wrote as follows in his *Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland*:

"I have repeatedly been amused on reading passages from *Cursor Mundi* (a poem written at or near Durham in the fourteenth century) and Hampole, to men of education, both English and Scots, to hear them all pronounce the dialect 'Old Scotch.' Great has been the surprise, of the Scotsmen especially, on being told that Richard of Hampole wrote in the extreme south of Yorkshire, within a few miles of a locality so thoroughly English as Sherwood Forest, with its memories of Robin Hood. Such is the difficulty which people have in separating the natural and ethnological relations in which national names originate from the accidental values which they acquire through political complications and the fortunes of crowns and dynasties, that oftener than once the protest has been made—'Then Richard must have been a Scotchman settled in Yorkshire.'"

It was therefore no shadowy or illusory claim that our early Scottish kings maintained to Northumbria as an integral part of the northern realm. The natural frontier dividing Northern from Southern Britain—the natural

and racial as distinct from the political frontier —was and is the Humber. Barbour's epic, therefore, possesses the incalculable merit, and to its author is due the unrivalled credit, not only of having preserved a record, not to be found elsewhere, of the deeds of Robert the Bruce and his companions in arms, but the very speech of countrymen and townsfolk at a time when Latin was the language of the Church, and French that of the court, the law and the great barons.

Ay, but Barbour might have done still more for us than he did. There is a tantalising passage in 123rd canto where he rehearses three points of war, each achieved with fifty men. The first two he describes in detail; but when he comes to the third, in which Sir John de Soulis with fifty men waylays and routs Sir Andrew de Harcla's squadron of

> " Thre hundreth horsit jolely,"

he breaks off, saying :

> " I will nocht rehers the maner,
> For quhasa likis, tha may her
> Yhoung wemen, quhen tha will pla,
> Sing it amang them ilke day."

"Quhasa likis!" You and I would like well enough to hear it, but that ballad has been allowed to pass out of Scottish literature for ever and a day.

Coming to the next Scottish chronicler, Andrew of Wyntoun (and he shall be the last on my list), we realise what a loss would have been ours had Barbour's poem by any mischance been allowed to perish; because Wyntoun, besides incorporating in his *Cronykil* 260 lines taken from Barbour (and frankly acknowledged) when he comes to the reign of Robert the Bruce, passes over it altogether with this excuse.

"Quhat that folwyd efftyrwert,
How Robert oure Kyng recowëred his land
That occupyid with his fays he fand,
And it restoryd in all fredwme,
Qwhit til hys ayris off all threldwme,
Quha that lykis that for to wyt
To that Buke I tham remyt,
Quhare Maystere Jhon Barbere off Abbyrdene
Archeden, as mony has sene,
Hys dedis dytyd mare wërtusly
Than I can thynk in all study,
Haldand in all lele suthfastness
Set all he wrat noucht half his prowes."

Again, he breaks off in Chap. XIX. of the Eighth Book to warn his readers that what

follows is not his own composition, but the work of an author whose name he does not know. This includes the whole reigns of David II. and Robert II.—1329–90. He makes handsome acknowledgment.

"And For he wald usurp na fame
Langare, na wald bare na blame
Than he deserẅyd, this poyntment
Here he made in that entent
. . . . . .
Tyll hys purpos accordand
Before hym wryttyn he redy fand,
That in Kyng Daẅys days ware dwne
The Brws, and Robertis, his systyr swne.
Quha that dyde, he wyst rycht noucht,
Bot that till hym on case wes browcht."

And again, after he resumes his own narrative, he says:

"This part last tretyd beforne
. . . . . .
Wyt yhe welle, wes noucht my dyte;
Tharoff I dare me welle acqwte.
Quha that it dyted, nevyrtheles,
He schawyd him of mare cunnandnes
Than me commendis this tretis
. . . . . .
And I that thoucht for to mak end
Off that purpos I tuk on hand,

Saw it was welle accordand
To my matere. I was rycht glade,
For I wes in my trawale sade;
I ekèd 't here to this dyte,
For to mak me sum respyte."

The portion thus frankly appropriated includes all between Chap. xx. of Book VIII. to Chap. x. of Book IX., covering about 180 pages of print in David Laing's edition of 1879.

Almost all that is known of Andrew de Wyntoun is gathered from asides, as it were, in the course of his metrical chronicle. He tells us that he was a Canon-regular of S. Andrews, and that he was appointed Prior of the monastery of S. Serf on the island in Lochleven. This appointment was made not later than 1395, and Innes states that his name appears in various documents as publicly acting in that capacity till 1413. From this it may be inferred that he was born not later, and probably earlier, than 1350, especially as he complains pathetically of age in the prologue to his Ninth Book.

" For, as I stabil myne intent,
Offt I fynd impediment
Wyth sudane and fers maladis,
That me cumbris mony wis;

And elde me mastreis wyth hir brevis,
Ilke day me sare aggrevis."

However, it is well to remember that in those days men were without the palliatives of old age that we now enjoy. Few, except those naturally myopic, can read without spectacles after the age of forty-five; and although we know that Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century enabled himself to read MS. by laying a glass prism on the page, and that spectacles were invented about the beginning of the fourteenth century, it is scarcely probable that they had come into general use during Wyntoun's life.

Another drawback to Wyntoun's studies in the cloistered solitude of S. Serf's Island was the lack of works of reference:

"For few wrytys I redy fande
That I couth drawe to my warande;
Part off the Bybill, with that that Perys
Comestor ekyde in his yheris.
Orosius and Frere Martyne,
Wyth Ynglis and Scottis stories syne."

Piers Comestor was a vigorous commentator of the Scriptures called *Comestor*, because he devoured them. He died in 1178. The Scots stories Wyntoun refers to must have

been in Gaelic, for he himself claims to write English.

Eleven transcripts of Wyntoun's *Orygynal Cronykil of Scotland* are known to exist, the best of which, known as the Royal Manuscript, was presented to the British Museum by George II. in 1757. It appears to be a transcript made about 1460 or 1470. There is an older copy, probably dating from 1440, among the Cottonian MSS., but it is imperfect, wanting a few leaves at both ends. The title of the work, *Orygynale Cronykil*, does not imply any claim to originality on the author's part, but is explained by him as follows:

> "The tytill of this tretis hale
> I wyll be caulde Orygynale;
> For that begynnyng sall mak clere
> Be playne proces owre matere,
> As of Angelis and of Man
> Fyrst to rys the kinde began."

Hence we have to wade, or as some will prefer *not* to wade, through the reputed history of the world from the creation, not omitting the mythical Gathelus, who wedded Scota the daughter of Pharaoh, and so became the founder of the Scottish race.

The chief merit of this author lies in his delightful discursiveness—the introduction into his narrative of all sorts of matter which he has heard, seen or imagined. He throws a good deal of light upon the origin of some of the principal families of Scotland. He tells us, for instance, that there was in his day much dispute about the alleged descent of the Murray and the Douglas from a common Flemish ancestor, Beroald, who received a grant from King Malcolm in 1160 of the lands of Innes in Strathspey. Writing at a time when heraldry was a living science, he makes a strong point by citing the silver stars on an azure field, which were and are the bearings of both families :

"Of Murrawe and the Douglas,
How that thare begynnyng was,
Syn syndry men spekis syndryly
I can put that in na story.
But in thare armeyis bath thai bere
The sternis set in lyk manere ;
Til mony men it is yhit sene
Apperand lyk that thai had bene
Of kyn be descens lyneale,
Or be branchys collaterele."

But we should beware of taking Wyntoun

as a guide to the origin of surnames. He assigns a very comical one to the name of Comyn, although he is probably right in his account of the origin of the family :

"Thar cam thre bredyr off Normandy,
Fayre yhong persownis and joly,
With the Kyng Rychard off Ingland.
The eldast dwelt tharfurth byeland ;
In till Ireland past the tothire ;
In Scotland cam the yhongast brodyr ;
Willame wes his propyre name.
Thare duelt he wyth Kyng Willame.
The quhilk saw hym a fayr persowne :
Tharfore in gret affectyowne
The Kyng than had this ilk man.
For wërtu that wes in hym than
He made hym, syn he was stark and sture,
Kepare off his chaumbyre dure.
Na langage cowth he spek clerly,
Bot his awyn langage off Normandy.
Nevyrtheles yhit quhen he
Oppynyd the dure till mak entré,
'Cwm in, cwm in,' he wald ay,
As he herd othir abowt him, say ;
Be that oys than othir men
Willame Cwmin cald hym then."

I have quoted this passage at length in order that you might see that Wyntoun's

verse was not of a high order. Intended, as his poem no doubt was, for oral recitation as well as for perusal, the absence of punctuation must have been a serious difficulty. And so David Macpherson must have found it, when he edited the first printed edition in 1795. There is not, he tells us, a single mark of punctuation in the whole of the Royal Manuscript from which he worked. When David Laing undertook a fresh edition for the Historians of Scotland Series in 1879, he had nothing but praise for conscientious diligence and acumen of Macpherson, who was the son of a tailor in Edinburgh.

I have mentioned more than once in the course of these lectures, that I confine myself chiefly to contemporary chroniclers, or as nearly contemporary as possible. But these ancient writers appear to have been as sensible as any one of us moderns who has tried his hand at history can be, of the ticklishness of dealing with the acts of living men. Wyntoun was not exempt from this feeling, and acted accordingly, for although he probably lived till 1420, he cannot be held responsible for anything later than 1406, the two last

chapters of Book IX. appearing to have been added by another hand.

And now we have arrived at a period when what are termed chronicles merge into history proper. In bidding you farewell, and offering you humble thanks for the amazing patience with which you have listened to me, I desire not to be inferior in frankness to Prior Andrew of Wyntoun. Little, very little indeed, of what I have put before you is my own, or entitled by any strain upon language to be termed original. It has been no more than a survey and recension, such as any patient student might undertake, of the laborious researches of such pioneers as Thomas Innes, David Macpherson, David Laing, William Skene, Cosmo Innes and Joseph Stevenson among the departed, and our own Joseph Anderson among those happily still with us. Without the fruit of the labours of these men, and men like them, knowledge of the early history of our country would be a sorely ravelled yarn.

FINIS

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