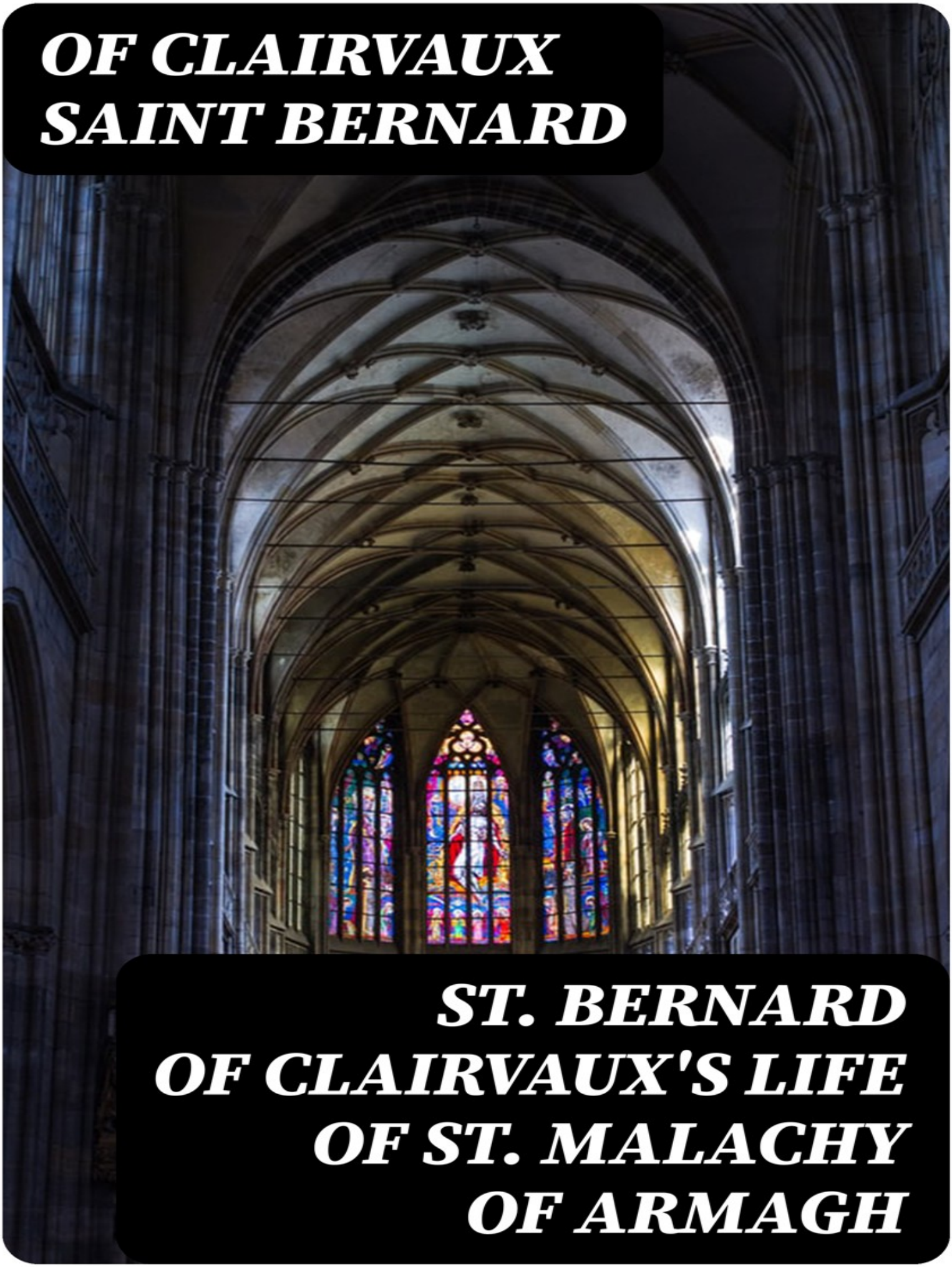
OF CLAIRVAUX
SAINT BERNARD
ST. BERNARD
OF CLAIRVAUX'S LIFE
OF ST. MALACHY
OF ARMAGH

Of Clairvaux Saint Bernard

St. Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of St. Malachy of Armagh

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Form used in this volume.	Form used by St. Bernard.	Irish Form.
Antrim	Oenthreb	Oentreb
Armagh	Ardmacha	Ard Macha
Bangor	Benchor	Bennchor
Cashel	Caselensis	Caisel
Catholicus	Catholicus	Catlac
Cellach	Celsus	Cellach
Christian	Christianus	Gilla Crist
Coleraine	Culratim	Cúl Rathin
Columbanus	Columbanus	Columbán
Comgall	Congellus	Comgall
Connor	Connereth	Coindire
Conor		Conchobar

Cork	Corcagia	Corcach
Dermot	Diarmicius	Diarmait
Derry		Daire
Desmond	Mumonia australis	Desmuma
Donnell		Domnall
Donough		{Donnchad {Donngus
Down	Dunum	Dún dá Lethglas
Edan	Edanus	Aedh
Faughart	Fochart	Fochart
Gelasius	Gelasius	Gilla meic Liag
Gilbert	Gillebertus	Gilla espuig
Imar	Imaru	Imar
Inispatrick		Inis Pátraic
Iveragh	Ibracensis	Ui Ráthach
Leinster	Laginia	Laigin
Limerick		Luimneach
Lismore	Lesmore	Lis Mór

Lugadh	Luanus	{Lugaid {Molua
MacCarthy		Mac (meic) Carthaig
Maelisa } Malchus }	Malchus	Mael Ísa
Malachy	Malachias	Máel Máedóc
Moriarty		Ua Muirchertaig
Munster	Mumonia	Muma
Murrough		Murchadh
Murtough	Mauricius	Muirchertach
Nehemiah	Nehemias	Gilla na Naem
Niall	Nigellus	Niall
O'Boyle		Ua Baigill
O'Brien		Ua Briain
O'Carroll		Ua Cerbaill
O'Conor		Ua Conchobair
O'Hagan		Ua hAedacain
O'Hanratty		Ua hIndrechtaig
O'Hanley		Ua hAingli
O'Kelly		Ua Cellaig

O'Loughlin		Ua Lochlainn
Oriel		Oirgialla
O'Rorke		Ua Ruarc
Patrick	Patricius	Pátraic
Rory		Ruaidhri
Saul	{Saballum } {Saballinum}	Sabal Phátraic
Shalvey		Ua Selbaig
Teague		Tadhg
Thomond		Tuathmuma
Turlough		Toirdelbach
Ulaid	Ulydia	Ulaid
Usnagh		Uisnech
Waterford		Port Láirge

INTRODUCTION

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The main purpose of this Introduction is to give an account of a movement which changed the whole face of the Irish Church, and to the advancement of which St. Malachy devoted his life. In default of a better word we may call the movement a Reformation, though it might perhaps

be more accurately described as an ecclesiastical revolution. Without some knowledge of its aims and progress it is impossible to assign to Malachy his true place in the history of his native country.

That such a movement actually took place in the twelfth century is beyond doubt. From about the year 1200 on it is certain that the organization of the Church of Ireland was similar to that of the other Churches of western Christendom. The country was divided into dioceses; and each diocese had a bishop as its ruler, and a Cathedral Church in which the bishop's stool was placed. The Cathedral Church, moreover, had a chapter of clergy, regular or secular, who performed important functions in the diocese. But up to the end of the eleventh century all these things were unknown among the Irish. The constitution of the Church was then of an entirely different type, one that had no exact parallel elsewhere. The passage from the older to the newer organization must have taken place in the twelfth century. During that century, therefore, there was a Reformation in the Irish Church, however little we may know of its causes or its process. But this Reformation was no mere re-modelling of the hierarchy. It can be shown that it imposed on the members of the Church a new standard of sexual morality; if we believe contemporary writers, it restored to their proper place such rites as Confession, Confirmation and Matrimony; it substituted for the offices of divine service previously in use those of the Roman Church; it introduced the custom of paying tithes; it established in Ireland the monastic orders of Latin Christendom[1]; and it may have produced changes in other directions.[2] But I

propose to confine myself to the change in the constitution of the Church, which was its most striking feature. The subject, even thus narrowed, will give us more than can be satisfactorily treated in a few pages.

First, I must emphasize the assertion made a moment ago that the constitution of the Irish Church in the eleventh century was *sui generis*. Let us begin by reminding ourselves what it was from the sixth to the eighth century. It was then essentially monastic in character. The rulers of the Church were the abbots of the monasteries, commonly known as the coarbs or successors of their founders. These abbots were sometimes bishops; but whether they were bishops or of lower rank in the ministry, their authority was inherent in their office of coarb. At this period bishops were numerous—more numerous than in later medieval or modern times; and certain functions were reserved for bishops, for example, ordination. No ecclesiastic, of whatever status, could perform such functions, unless he was of the episcopal order. But no bishop, as such, had jurisdiction. The bishops were often subordinate officers in monasteries, reverenced because of their office, but executing their special functions at the command of the abbots. Sometimes a bishop was attached to a single tribe. Sometimes a group of bishops—often seven in number—dwelt together in one place. But in no case, I repeat, had they jurisdiction. Thus ecclesiastical authority was vested in the abbots. The episcopate was bestowed on certain individuals as a personal distinction. Thus the bishops, if they were not also abbots, had only such influence on the

affairs of the Church as their sanctity, or their learning, might give them.

It may surprise some that so anomalous a system of government should have persisted as late as the eleventh century, in other words for a period of over 500 years. But we must take account of the Danish—or as we should rather call it, the Norse—invasion of Ireland. Danish ships first appeared off the Irish coasts about the year 800. From that time for two centuries Ireland was to a large extent cut off from intercourse with the rest of Europe. The aim of the northern hordes, as it seems, was not mere pillage, but the extinction of Christianity. Ecclesiastical institutions were everywhere attacked, and often destroyed. And these institutions were centres of scholarship. Heretofore Ireland had been the special home of learning, and had attracted to itself large numbers of foreign students. But in those disastrous centuries its culture was reduced to the lowest point. In such circumstances it was not possible that the organization of the Church should be developed or strengthened. The Danish domination of the country must have tended to stereotype the old hierarchical system. It might, indeed, suffer from deterioration: it probably did. But it could not be assimilated to the system which then prevailed on the Continent. We should expect that the constitution of the Church in the eleventh century, whatever abuses may have crept into its administration, would in principle be identical with that of the pre-Danish period.

There can in fact be no doubt that it was. We have in our hands writings of Lanfranc, Anselm, St. Bernard and Giraldus Cambrensis which picture the state of the Irish

Church at that time. They speak of it in terms which are by no means complimentary. But when they come to details we discover that the irregularities in its hierarchical arrangement which shocked them most went back to the days of St. Columba. Quotations cannot be given here. But the reader will probably find in the Life printed below, and the authorities referred to in the notes, sufficient proof that the constitution of the Irish Church in 1100 was in the main a following, though perhaps a corrupt following, of that of the sixth century.[3]

There was indeed one abuse in the Irish Church of the tenth and eleventh centuries of which few traces are found before the Danish invasion. We learn from St. Bernard that the abbots of Armagh were the representatives of a single family, and held office, as of right, by hereditary succession.[4] There is reason to believe that this evil custom was not peculiar to Armagh.[5] According to St. Bernard, it was the gravest departure from Catholic tradition of which the Irish Church was guilty, and the parent of many evils. We shall hear more of it in the sequel. For the moment it is sufficient to note that it existed.

I.—The Beginnings of the Movement

But before the eleventh century ended forces were at work in Ireland which prepared the way for the introduction of a new order. They were set free by the conversion of the Norsemen to Christianity, and by their final defeat at the battle of Clontarf. The date of the conversion cannot be fixed: it was probably a gradual process. And we do not know from what source the Danes derived their Christianity. The victory of Clontarf was won on Good Friday, 1014.

Now a study of the Annals reveals the fact that in the seventh and eighth centuries there was a goodly, and on the whole an increasing, body of scholars in Ireland. Under the Norse domination, as we might expect, the number was greatly diminished. But already in the tenth century there was a notable increase: in the eleventh century the number was doubled. In the tenth century, moreover, and still more in the eleventh, scholars began to congregate at special centres, which became permanent homes of learning, the most prominent of these schools being at Armagh and Clonmacnoise. And during the same period we find frequent mention of an official, unknown before the arrival of the Norsemen, who is styled *fer légind* or professor. Between 925 and 1000 the obits of twenty-three professors are recorded; in the eleventh century of more than fifty. In the greater number of cases the *fer légind* is associated with one of those seats of learning which is known to have been most prolific of scholars.

Thus it appears that gradually, as the onslaughts of the Danes became less frequent, Irish men of learning tended more and more to become teachers rather than mere students, and to gravitate towards a few great centres of study. The climax of this movement towards organization and the eminence of special places was reached about the middle of the eleventh century (1030-1063), when mention is made of thirty-three persons who held the office of *fer légind*, and when the principal schools seem to have been those of Clonmacnoise, Armagh, Kildare and Kells.6

The Reformation of the twelfth century, like that of the sixteenth, was prepared for by a revival of learning.

But further, the defeat of the Danes removed the barrier which had hindered communication between Ireland and the rest of Europe. Students once more came to Ireland from other lands to pursue their studies. The most remarkable of these was perhaps Sulien, the future bishop of St. David's. Sulien the Wise was born shortly before the date of the battle of Clontarf in the district of Cardigan. In early youth he displayed much aptitude for learning, and in middle life, about 1058, "stirred by the example of the fathers," he paid a visit to the Irish schools in order to perfect his studies. He spent thirteen years in that country, and then established a famous school at Llanbadarn Fawr in Wales. In the library of Trinity College, Dublin, there is a precious relic of the work of this school. It is a beautiful manuscript of St. Jerome's Latin version of the Psalter according to the Hebrew, once the property of Bishop Bedell.7 The manuscript was written by a member of the school, a Welshman named Ithael. It is adorned with excellent illuminations by John, one of Sulien's sons, and was presented to Ricemarch, another son of Sulien. A valuable copy of the Hieronymian Martyrology prefixed to it gives sundry indications that it was transcribed from an Irish exemplar. At the end of the volume are some verses composed by Ricemarch, and perhaps written there by his own hand. They display considerable Biblical and patristic learning. Another relic of the school is a copy of St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.8 It was written and illuminated by John, and contains excellent Latin verses from his pen. In the British Museum there is also a poem of Ricemarch describing the horrors of the Norman invasion of Wales.9 And finally we

have a *Life of St. David*, by the same author. It relates many incidents culled from the lives of Irish saints who had in one way or another been brought into contact with David; all of them reminiscent of Sulien's studies in the Irish Schools.10

I have dwelt on these things because they illustrate in a striking way the revival of Irish learning in the eleventh century. But just at the time when Sulien, and doubtless many other foreigners, were coming to Ireland to study, Irish scholars were beginning to renew their ancient habit of travelling to other countries. By way of example I may mention two, both of whom were known by the same name, Marianus Scotus. One of these, a native of the north of Ireland, whose real name was Muiredach Mac Robartaich, founded the monastery of St. Peter at Ratisbon about 1070; and he was succeeded there by six abbots of north Irish birth. He wrote a commentary on the Pauline Epistles, which is still preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna. The other, Mael Brigte by name, left Ireland in 1056, and after some wanderings established himself at Mainz in 1069. He compiled a chronicle, which is of considerable value.11 Hereafter I shall have to mention other Irish men of travel; and it will be seen that from some of them, who returned home, came the main impulse to the reform of the Irish Church.

The battle of Clontarf broke the power of the Danes in Ireland; but it did not secure their departure from the country. Those that remained were mainly settled in the four cities of Dublin, Wexford, Waterford and Limerick. In due time these four Danish colonies adopted the Christian Faith, and before long they became organized churches, each

presided over by a bishop. In Dublin this took place a quarter of a century after the battle of Clontarf, the first bishop being Dunan, in whose episcopate the Danish king, Sitric, founded the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity about 1040. Of the early ecclesiastical history of Wexford practically nothing is known; but the first bishop of Waterford was consecrated in 1096,12 and the first bishop of Limerick eight or ten years later.13 These were the first churches in Ireland ruled by bishops who were not abbots; and it seems that each of the bishops had a defined diocese. The dioceses of Dublin, Waterford, and perhaps Wexford, were very small, extending only a little way, if at all, beyond the walls of the Cathedral city. The diocese of Limerick, on the other hand, was extensive; rather larger than the present diocese of the same name. But whether large or small each of these dioceses presented to the eyes of the Irish a model of Church government similar to that in vogue on the Continent, and utterly different from that to which they were accustomed.

This might prove a potent factor in the Reformation, once a tendency developed among the Irish to bring their ecclesiastical machinery into conformity with that of the rest of the world. But it is manifest that by itself it would not induce them to re-model their hierarchy. It was not to be expected that they would cast aside the tradition of centuries, moved merely by a desire to imitate their late enemies. If, as is commonly held, the Danish dioceses, without exception, held themselves aloof from, or were hostile to, Irish Christianity, such a result could hardly have been attained, at any rate until the coming of the Anglo-

Normans. These later invaders would doubtless have forced diocesan episcopacy on the Irish Church. But that it was established in Ireland before the country came, even in part, under English rule, is certain. So we must ask the question: What was the connecting link which bound the Church of the Danish colonists to that of Celtic Ireland? By way of answer I point to the remarkable fact, often overlooked, that all the earliest bishops of the Danish dioceses were of Irish birth. Why Danish Christians should have elected Irishmen as their bishops I do not attempt to explain. But the evidence for the fact is clear.

The first two bishops of Dublin, Dunan and Patrick (Gilla Pátraic), had unmistakably Irish names. So too had their immediate successors Donough O'Hanley and his nephew Samuel O'Hanley; and of these two the latter is stated by the English chronicler Eadmer[14] to have been "natione Hibernensis." The next bishop, Gregory—the first archbishop of Dublin—was likewise "natione Hibernensis" according to the continuator of Florence of Worcester.[15] He was followed by St. Laurence O'Toole, of whose nationality it is unnecessary to give proof.

Malchus, the earliest bishop of Waterford, was an Irishman;[16] so also was Gilbert, the first bishop of Limerick. And when Gilbert resigned his see, after an episcopate of thirty-five years, he was succeeded by Patrick, whose name tells its own tale.[17]

Most of the Irish rulers of Danish dioceses whom I have mentioned were men of travel. Patrick of Dublin, to whose learning Lanfranc bears testimony, "was nourished in monastic institutions from his boyhood,"[18] and certainly

not, in an Irish religious house. Donough O'Hanley, before his consecration, was a monk of Canterbury; Samuel O'Hanley was a monk of St. Albans;19 Malchus was called to Waterford from Walkelin's monastery at Winchester;20 Gilbert of Limerick had visited Normandy,21 and at a later date we find him assisting at the consecration of a bishop in Westminster Abbey.22 Such men had had training which familiarized them with Roman methods of Church Government. They were well fitted to organize and rule their dioceses. And if they desired to imbue the Celtic Church with the principles which they had learnt, and on which they acted, their nationality gave them a ground of appeal which no Dane could have had. It is of course not to be assumed that all of them were so disposed. The Danish Christians of Dublin not only stood aside from the Celtic Church; for reasons which will appear later they were inimical to it, and it to them. Their bishops, with the possible exception of the first, made profession of canonical obedience to the English Primates. Not only so: they gloried in their subjection to Canterbury. "We have always been willing subjects of your predecessors," wrote the burgesses and clergy of Dublin to Ralph, archbishop of Canterbury, when the see was vacant in 1121. And then, after a reference to the great jealousy of Cellach of Armagh against them, they proceed to declare, "We will not obey his command, but desire to be always under your rule. Therefore we beseech you to promote Gregory to the episcopate if you wish to retain any longer the parish which we have kept for you so long."23 It was clearly impossible that this diocese could directly influence the Irish in the direction of reform. But no such obstacle

barred the path of the first bishops of Limerick and Waterford. Gilbert owed no allegiance to Canterbury; Malchus was consecrated at Canterbury, but he soon escaped his profession of obedience to Anselm.24 Both became leaders of the romanizing movement in Ireland.

But the influence of the Danish dioceses on the Irish Church was not limited to the personal action of their bishops. Indirectly all of them, including Dublin, had a share in promoting the Reformation. Archbishop Lanfranc, as early as 1072, claimed that his primacy included Ireland as well as England.25 The claim, curiously enough, was based on Bede's *History*, in which there is not a single word which supports it. But the arrival two years later of Patrick, elect of Dublin, seeking consecration at his hands, gave him his opportunity to enforce it. When Patrick returned to take possession of his see he carried with him two letters from Lanfranc. One was addressed to Gothric, the Manx prince who for the moment was king of Dublin. Lanfranc, with tactful exaggeration, dubs him "glorious king of Ireland," and tells him that in consecrating Patrick he had followed the custom of his predecessors in the chair of St. Augustine. The other letter was more important. It was directed to Turlough O'Brien, grandson of Brian Boroimhe, who is also styled, inconsistently, and not altogether truly, "magnificent king of Ireland": he was doubtless king of Ireland in hope, but in fact he never extended his sway beyond the southern half of the island. Turlough's attention is called to the irregularities of the Irish Church. He is urged to call a council of bishops and religious men for the extirpation of those evil customs, and to be present at it in person. This letter

evidently produced an impression, and not only on Turlough O'Brien. For a few years later Lanfranc wrote another letter, this time to a bishop named Donnell and others, who had sought his advice on a difficult question concerning the sacrament of baptism.26

Anselm followed in the footsteps of Lanfranc. Not long after his consecration (1093) he wrote to Donnell, Donough O'Hanley and the rest of the bishops of Ireland, begging the aid of their prayers, and urging them to consult him in all cases of difficulty. Almost immediately afterwards came the election of Malchus, bishop of Waterford, in 1096. Among those who signed the petition for his consecration were Bishop Donnell, Samuel O'Hanley, whom Anselm had consecrated for Dublin earlier in the same year, and O'Dunan, bishop of Meath (*Idunan episcopus Midiae*), whose name we shall do well to remember. But most notable of all were Murtough O'Brien, son of Turlough, then the strongest of Irish kings, soon to be *ardrí*, and his brother Dermot O'Brien.27 It is clear that Lanfranc had won the O'Briens to the Romanizing side; and Anselm was determined to hold them fast. Within the next few years there was a fairly regular correspondence between him and Murtough, of which some letters have been preserved.28 The relation between the two men was evidently most friendly. And the archbishop fully exploited his opportunity. Again and again he reminded the king of his duty to repress abuses, the most important of which in his eyes were lax sexual morality, and the consecration of bishops by single bishops, without fixed sees or defined dioceses.

So Lanfranc and Anselm schooled the O'Briens in the principles of Rome. And from one point of view their efforts were completely successful. The O'Briens became staunch friends of the Reform movement in Ireland. But from another point of view they failed. We must remember that their aim was not only to purify the Irish Church, but to bring it into subjection to Canterbury. That they did not succeed in doing. The Reformation, which they taught the O'Briens to support, meant, in the end, a repudiation of the pretensions of the English primates.

I have mentioned among those who were concerned in the election of Malchus of Waterford, O'Dunan, bishop of Meath. He is unquestionably Máel Muire Ua Dunáin, whom the annalists describe as "learned bishop of the Goidhil, and head of the clergy of Ireland, and steward of the almsdeeds of the world," and who died on Christmas Eve, 1117, at the age of seventy-six. He is mentioned in a charter in the Book of Kells, the date of which is apparently about 1100, as Senior of Leath Chuinn (*i.e.* the north of Ireland).29 He was fifty-five when Malchus was elected, and had probably already attained the eminence throughout Ireland which is attested by the high-flown phrases of the Annals. That he was then bishop of Meath in the modern sense is impossible; the title at that period would mean no more than that he was a bishop who lived within the borders of the Kingdom of Meath. But the *Annals of Tigernach* tell us that he died at Clonard, from which it may perhaps be inferred that his see was at that place. His importance for us just now is that he is the only adherent of the Reform

movement whom we have yet discovered in the north of Ireland.

II.—The First Stage

Before proceeding further in our investigation of the origin and course of the Reformation, it may be well to recall how far we have already advanced. We started from the fact that a Reformation of the Irish Church was actually accomplished in the twelfth century, and we proceeded to look for the causes which may have brought it about. We have found that the first of these was the revival of learning consequent on the cessation of the ravages of the Norsemen. We have noted also the restoration at the same period of communication between Ireland and the rest of Europe—the coming of students to the Irish schools, and the wanderings of Irish scholars in other lands. We have seen that the establishment of the Danish dioceses gave to the Irish a model of diocesan episcopacy, and that among the Irish-born bishops of those dioceses there were men capable of leading a Reform movement. And we have learned that Lanfranc and Anselm, through their relation with the Danish dioceses, found means to induce the more conspicuous civil and religious leaders of the Celtic population to undertake the work of reconstituting the Church. Finally, we have been able to name some persons who might be expected to take a prominent place in the early stages of the Reformation. They are Gilbert of Limerick, Malchus of Waterford, O'Dunan of Meath, and the princes of the O'Brien family. The best proof that we have rightly conceived the origin of the movement will come before us when we study the share which these persons severally had in promoting it.

We must now trace, as far as it can be done, the first steps in the process by which, under the influences which I have indicated, the Church of Ireland passed from its older to its later hierarchical system.

The earliest attempt to give concrete form to the principles of the Reformers seems to have been made in the Kingdom of Meath, about the year 1100. But the primary evidence for the fact is of much later date. There are extant some constitutions of Simon Rochfort, bishop of Meath, put forth at a synod of his diocese held at the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul at Newtown, near Trim, in 1216. The first of them recites an ordinance of the papal legate, Cardinal John Paparo, at the Council of Kells in 1152, which is of great importance.

Paparo ordered that as the bishops of the weaker sees died off, arch-priests, or, as we call them, rural deans, should succeed to their place, and take charge of the clergy and people within their borders.30

The inference which this enactment suggests is that the weaker sees to which it refers were the centres of small dioceses, which Paparo desired to be converted into rural deaneries. In accordance with the ordinance of Paparo, Rochfort's synod enjoined that rural deans should be placed in the five sees of Trim, Kells, Slane, Skreen and Dunshaughlin, each of whom should supervise the churches in his own deanery. These, with Clonard, which had long been the see of Rochfort's diocese, are six of the twelve rural deaneries into which the present diocese of Meath is divided.31 I conclude that they, and probably the remaining

six, coincided more or less closely with dioceses ruled by bishops in the first half of the twelfth century.[32]

Let us now call to our aid a much earlier witness. The annalists inform us that in the year 1111 there was an assembly at Usnagh in Meath. It decreed that "the parishes[33] of Meath" should be equally divided between the bishops of Clonmacnoise and Clonard. We may infer that Clonmacnoise and Clonard, two of the present rural deaneries, were then dioceses. It is not likely that the dioceses of Meath would have been formed into two groups, each to constitute the diocese of a bishop who had already no diocese of his own. But however that may be, we have here proof that before 1111 Meath had been parted into a number of small dioceses ruled by bishops.

If the question be asked, By whose authority or influence this division of Meath into dioceses was made? I can suggest no one more likely than Máel Muire Ua Dunáin, the "bishop of Meath" to whom reference has already been made.[34] He was a Meath man, and probably bishop of Clonard: he was an ecclesiastic of great repute, especially in the north; and he was a devoted adherent of the Reform movement. His action, if indeed it was his, was premature and ill-advised. As we shall see, his work had to be slowly undone. But it is remarkable, as the first attempt known to us to establish diocesan episcopacy among the Irish. I shall have more to say about it hereafter; but now I must follow the main stream of events.

Gilbert,[35] the first bishop of Limerick, as has already been noted, was an Irishman. Indeed, we may venture to describe him as one of the most remarkable Irishmen of his

time, in spite of the fact that the Annals pass him by in almost complete silence. He was at any rate a staunch supporter, or, as we should rather say, the leader of the Reformation movement in its earliest course. In a letter written in 1107 Anselm exhorted him, in virtue of their mutual friendship, to make good use of his episcopal office by correcting that which was amiss, and planting and sowing good customs, calling to aid him in the work his king (Murtough O'Brien), the other Irish bishops, and all whom he could persuade.36 That, assuredly, Gilbert was forward to do.

No sooner had he taken possession of his see than he began to organize a diocese. Its boundaries seem to have been fixed with care. It was exactly co-extensive with the modern diocese of Limerick, except on the north, where it stretched across the Shannon and included part of the present diocese of Killaloe.37 Moreover he made the Church of St. Mary his Cathedral Church; indeed it is not unlikely that he built it to serve that purpose.

A few years later he was appointed Legate of the Holy See. It is manifest that his new office gave him a unique opportunity of moulding the fortunes of the Irish Church. In Ireland Gilbert was now virtually the chief prelate and head of the Church. He was the representative and embodiment of the authority of the Holy See. The whole Romanizing party would naturally circle round him as their leader, and many waverers would be attracted to the new movement in the Irish Church, by the claim which he could make to speak in the name of the head of the Church Catholic.

It was after he became legate, and no doubt in virtue of his legatine commission, that he issued a treatise which may be regarded as the programme of the Reformation. It is entitled *De Statu Ecclesiae*. Of this a fragment, including its earlier chapters, is still in our hands.38

Before giving a slight summary of its contents I must mention that it is addressed "to the bishops and presbyters of the whole of Ireland," and that Gilbert declares that he wrote it at the urgent request of many of them. In this statement there may lurk an element of exaggeration. But behind it there lies at least so much truth as this. A considerable body of the clergy had approached the newly made legate, and requested his instruction regarding the proper constitution of the Church—for such is the subject of his tract; and that implies that the Romanizing movement was no longer in its infancy. There were many bishops and presbyters who had become dissatisfied with the old Irish method of Church government. They desired to bring it into conformity with that of the Roman Church. But they were in some uncertainty as to the nature of the changes that should be made, and so they asked Gilbert to give them authoritative counsel.

In reply to their petition, with the aid of an elaborate diagram, he sketched as follows the organization of a properly ordered Church.

The bishops, he tells us, and others of higher rank in the ministry belong to the general Church, as distinct from particular churches. The priest is the highest officer in a particular church. It is the primary duty of every priest to serve and obey his bishop with all humility. For by the

bishops particular churches are ruled. To each bishop are subject all the churches within his jurisdiction. And this applies as well to monastic establishments as to parishes. The head of each parish is a priest, the head of each monastery is an abbot, who is himself a priest. The bishop has a pontifical church, in which is his see (*sedes*), and of which he is the head. From it he governs the inferior churches. A bishop can perform all the offices of a priest, but he has seven functions peculiar to himself: to confirm, to bless, to absolve, to hold synods, to dedicate churches and altars, to consecrate the ornaments of churches, to ordain abbots and abbesses and the secular clergy. Gilbert's diagram represented the bishop as ruling two churches; but he explains that this is to be interpreted figuratively. A bishop may have as many as a thousand churches within his jurisdiction: he must have at least ten.

A bishop is himself subject to authority. His immediate superior is the archbishop. An archbishop has a sphere of immediate jurisdiction, like any other bishop, but he also rules a number of subject bishops. Of these there must be at least three; but an archbishop is not permitted to have more than twenty subject bishops—an important point, as we shall see. Above the archbishop is the primate. It is the special privilege of the primate to ordain and crown the king. He too has his sphere of immediate jurisdiction, and he must have at least one subject archbishop, but not more than six.

Primates and archbishops must be consecrated at Rome by the Pope, or at least must receive the pall[39] from him.