

## II.

### ON AN OLD STONE-ROOFED CELL OR ORATORY IN THE ISLAND OF INCHCOLM. BY PROFESSOR J. Y. SIMPSON, M.D., V.P.S.A. SCOT.

Among the islands scattered along the Firth of Forth, one of the most interesting is the ancient Aemonia, Emona, St Columba's Isle, or St Colme's Inch,—the modern Inchcolm. The island is not large, being little more than half a mile in length, and about a hundred and fifty yards across at its broadest part. At either extremity it is elevated and rocky; while in its intermediate portion it is more level, though still very rough and irregular, and at one point,—a little to the east of the old monastic buildings,—it becomes so flat and narrow that at high tides the waters of the Forth meet over it. Inchcolm lies nearly six miles north-west from the harbour of Granton, or is about eight or nine miles distant from Edinburgh; and of the many beautiful spots in the vicinity of the Scottish metropolis, there is perhaps none which surpasses this little island in the charming and picturesque character of the views that are obtained in various directions from it.

Though small in its geographical dimensions, Inchcolm is rich in historical and archæological associations. In proof of this remark, I might adduce various facts to show that it has been at one time a favoured seat of learning, as when, upwards of four hundred years ago, the Scottish historian, Walter Bower, the Abbot of its Monastery, wrote there his contributions to the ancient history of Scotland;<sup>1</sup> and at other times the seat of war, as when it was pillaged at dif-

<sup>1</sup> These contributions by the "Abbas Aemoniæ Insulæ" are alluded to by Boece, who wrote nearly a century afterwards, as one of the works upon which he founded his own "Scotorum Historiæ." (See his "Praefatio," p. 2; and Innes' "Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of Scotland," vol. i., pp. 218 and 223.) Bower, in a versified colophon, claims the merit of having completed eleven out of the sixteen books composing the Scotichronicon, (lib. xvi., cap. 39)—

"Quinque libros Fordun, undenos auctor arabat,  
Sic tibi clarescit sunt sedecim numero.  
Ergo pro precibus, petimus te, lector eorum," &c.

ferent periods by the English, during the course of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> For ages it was the site of an extensive religious institution and the habitation of numerous monks;<sup>2</sup> and at the beginning of the present century it was temporarily degraded to the site of a military fort, and the habitation of a corps of artillery.<sup>3</sup> During the plagues and epidemics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it formed sometimes a lazaretto for the suspected and diseased;<sup>4</sup> and during the reign of James I. it was used as a state-prison for the daughter of the Earl of Ross and the mother of the Lord of the Isles<sup>5</sup>—"a mannish, implacable woman," as Drummond of Hawthornden ungallantly terms her;<sup>6</sup> while fifty years later, when Patrick Graham, Archbishop of St Andrews, was "decernit ane heretique, seismatike, symoniak, and declarit cursit, and condamnit to perpetuall presoun," he was, for this last

<sup>1</sup> See *Scotichronicon*, lib. xiii., cap. 34 and 37; lib. xiv., cap. 38, &c. In 1547, the Duke of Somerset, after the battle of Pinkie, seized upon Incheolm as a post commanding "vtterly ye whole vse of the Fryth it self, with all the hauens uppon it," and sent as "elect Abbot, by God's sufferance, of the monastery of Sainet Coomes Ins," Sir Jhon Luttrell, knight, "with C. hakbutters and L. pioners, to kepe his house and land thear, and II. rowe barkes, well furnished with municion, and LXX. mariners to kepe his waters, whereby (naively remarks Patten) it is thought he shall soon becum a prelate of great power. The perfytnes of his religion is not alwaies to tarry at home, but sumetime to rowe out abrode a visitation; and when he goithe I haue hard say he taketh alweyes his summers in barke with hym, which ar very open mouthed, and neuer talk but they are harde a mile of, so that either for loove of his blesynges, or feare of his cursinges, he is lyke to be souueraigne ouer most of his neighbours." (See Patten's account of "The late Expedicion in Scotlande," dating "out of the parsonage of S. Mary Hill, London," in Sir John Dalryell's "Fragments of Scottish History," pp. 79 and 81.) In Abbot Bower's time, the island seems to have been provided with some means of defence against these English attacks; for in the *Scotichronicon*, in incidentally speaking of the return of the Abbot and his canons in October 1421 from the mainland to the island, it is stated that they dared not, in the summer and autumn, live on the island for fear of the English, for, it is added, the monastery at that time was not fortified as it is now, "non enim erant tunc, quales ut nunc, in monasterio munitiones" (lib. xv., cap. 38).

<sup>2</sup> "Iona itself has not an air of stiller solitude. Here, within view of the gay capital, and with half the riches of the Scotland of earlier days spread around them, the brethren might look forth from their secure retreat on that busy ambitious world, from which, though close at hand, they were effectually severed." (Billings' *Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland*, vol. iii. Note on Incheolm.)

<sup>3</sup> Alex. Campbell, in his "Journey through North Britain" (1802), after speaking of a fort in the east part of Incheolm having a corps of artillery stationed on it, adds, "so that in lieu of the pious orisons of holy monks, the orgies of lesser deities are celebrated here by the sons of Mars," &c., vol. ii., p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> See MS. Records of the Privy Council of Scotland, 23d September 1564, &c.

<sup>5</sup> Bellenden's translation of Boeete's *History of Scotland*, vol. ii., p. 500.

Works of William Drummond, Edinburgh, 1711, p. 7.

purpose, "first transportit to St Colmes Insche."<sup>1</sup> Punishments more dark and dire than mere transportation to, and imprisonment upon Inchcolm, have perhaps taken place within the bounds of the island, if we do not altogether misinterpret the history of "a human skeleton standing upright," found several years ago immured and built up within the old ecclesiastic walls.<sup>2</sup> Nor is this eastern Iona, as patronised and protected by Saint Columba,—and, at one period of his mission to the Picts and Scots, his own alleged dwelling-place,<sup>3</sup>—devoid in its history of the usual amount of old monkish miracles and legends. The *Scotichronicon* contains long and elaborate details of several of them. When, in 1412, the Earl of Douglas thrice essayed to sail out to sea, and was thrice driven back by adverse gales, he at last made a pilgrimage to the holy isle of Aemonia, presented an offering to Columba, and forthwith the Saint sped him with fair winds to Flanders and home again.<sup>4</sup> When, towards the winter of 1421, a boat was sent on a Sunday (*die Dominica*) to bring off to the monastery from the mainland some house provisions and barrels of beer brewed at Bernhill (*in barellis cerevisiam apud Bernhill brasiatam*), and the crew, exhilarated with liquor (*alacres et potosi*), hoisted, on their return, a sail, and upset the barge, Sir Peter the Canon,—who, with five others, was thrown into the water,—fervently and unceasingly invoked the aid of Columba, and the Saint appeared in person to him, and kept Sir Peter afloat for an hour and a half by the help of a truss of tow (*admiculo eujusdam stupæ*), till the boat of Portevin picked up him and two others.<sup>5</sup> When, in 1385, the crew of an English vessel (*quidam filii Belial*) sacrilegiously robbed the island, and tried to burn the church, St Columba, in answer to the earnest prayers of those who, on the neighbouring shore, saw the danger of the sacred edifice, suddenly shifted round the wind and quenched the flames, while the chief of the incendiaries was, within a few hours afterwards, struck with madness, and forty of his comrades drowned.<sup>6</sup> When, in 1335, an English fleet ravaged the shores of the Forth, and one of their largest ships was carrying off from Inchcolm an image of Columba and a store of ecclesiastical plunder, there sprung up such a furious tempest around the vessel immediately after she set sail, that she drifted helplessly and hopelessly towards the neighbouring island of Inchkeith, and was threatened with destruction on the rocks there till the crew implored pardon of Columba, vowed to him restitution

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lesley's *History of Scotland*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> See General Hutton's MSS. in the Advocates' Library, as quoted in Billings' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> See his *Life* in Colgan's *Trias Thaumaturga*, vol. ii., p. 466.

<sup>4</sup> *Scotichronicon*, lib. xv., cap. 23.    <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, lib. xv., c. 38.    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, lib. xv., cap. 48.

of their spoils, and a suitable offering of gold and silver, and then they instantly and unexpectedly were lodged safe in port (et statim in tranquillo portu inseperate ducebantur).<sup>1</sup> When, in 1336, some English pirates robbed the church at Dollar—which had been some time previously repaired and richly decorated by an Abbot of Aemonia—and while they were, with their sacrilegious booty, sailing triumphantly, and with music on board, down the Forth, under a favouring and gentle west wind, in the twinkling of an eye (non solum subito sed in ictu oculi), and exactly opposite the abbey of Inchcolm, the ship sank to the bottom like a stone. Hence, adds the writer of this miracle in the *Scotichronicon*,—and no doubt that writer was the Abbot Walter Bower,—in consequence of these marked retaliating propensities of St Columba, his vengeance against all who trespassed against him became proverbial in England; and instead of calling him, as his name seems to have been usually pronounced at the time, St Cällum or St Colām, he was commonly known among them as *St Quhalme* (“et ideo, ut non reticeam quid de eo dicatur, apud eos vulgariter *Sanct Quhalme* nuncupatur.”<sup>2</sup>)

But without dwelling on these and other well-known facts and fictions in the history of Inchcolm, let me state,—for the statement has, as we shall afterwards see, some bearing upon the more immediate object of this notice,—that this island is one of the few spots in the vicinity of Edinburgh that has been rendered classical by the pen of Shakspeare. In the second scene of the opening act of the tragedy of *Macbeth*, the Thane of Ross comes as a hurried messenger from the field of battle to King Duncan, and reports that Duncan’s own rebellious subjects and the invading Scandinavians had both been so completely defeated by his generals, *Macbeth* and *Banquo*, that the Norwegians craved for peace:—

“Sueno, the Norways King, craves composition;  
Nor would we deign him burial of his men  
Till he disbursed, at Saint Colmes Inch,  
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.”

Inchcolm is the only island of the east coast of Scotland which derives its distinctive designation from the great Scottish saint. But more than one island on our western shores bears the name of St Columba; as, for example, St Colme’s Isle, in Loch Erisort, and St Colm’s Isle in the Minch, in the Lewis; the island

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, lib. xiii., cap. 34. When, in 1355, the navy of King Edward came up the Forth, and “spulyeit” *Whitekirk*, in East Lothian, still more summary vengeance was taken upon such sacrilege. For “trueth is (says Bellenden) ane Inglisman spulyeit all the ornamentis that was on the image of our Lady in the Quhite Kirk; and incontinent the crucifix fel down on his head, and dang out his harnis.” (Bellenden’s Translation of Hector Boece’s *Croniklis*, lib. xv., c. 14; vol. ii., p. 446.)

<sup>2</sup> *Scotichronicon*, lib. xiii., cap. 37.

of Kolmbkill, at the head of Loch Arkeg, in Inverness-shire; Eilean Colm, in the parish of Tongue;<sup>1</sup> and, above all, Icolmkill, or Iona itself, the original seat and subsequent great centre of the ecclesiastic power of St Columba and his successors. An esteemed antiquarian friend, to whom I lately mentioned the preceding reference to Inchcolm by Shakspeare, at once maintained that the St Colme's Isle in Macbeth was Iona. Indeed, some of the modern editors<sup>2</sup> of Shakspeare, carried away by the same view, have printed the line which I have quoted thus:—

“Till he disbursed, at Saint Colmes'-kill Isle,”

instead of “Saint Colmes ynch,” as the old folio edition prints it. But there is no doubt whatever about the reading, nor that the island mentioned in Macbeth is Inchcolm in the Firth of Forth. For the site of the defeat of the Norwegian host was in the adjoining mainland of Fife, as the Thane of Ross tells the Scotch king that, to report his victory, he had come from the seat of war—

“from Fife,

Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky.”

The reference to Inchcolm by Shakspeare becomes more interesting when we follow the poet to the original historical foundations upon which he built his wondrous tragedy. It is well known that Shakspeare derived the incidents for his story of Macbeth from that translation of Hector Boece's *Chronicles of Scotland* which was published in England by Rapheal Holinshed in 1577. In these *Chronicles*, Holinshed, or rather Hector Boece, after describing the reputed poisoning, with the juice of belladonna, of Sueno and his army, and their subsequent almost complete destruction, adds, that shortly afterwards, and indeed while the Scots were still celebrating this equivocal conquest, another Danish host landed at Kinghorn. The fate of this second army is described by Holinshed in the following words:—

“The Scots hauing woone so notable a victorie, after they had gathered and diuided the spoile of the field, caused solemne processions to be made in all places of the realme, and thanks to be giuen to almightie God, that had sent them so faire a day ouer their enimies. But whilest the people were thus at their processions, woord was brought that a new fleet of Danes was arriued at Kingorne, sent thither by Canute, King of England, in reuenge of his brother Suenos ouerthrow. To resist these enimies, which were alreadie landed, and busie in spoiling the countrie, Makbeth and Banquho were sent with the Kings authoritie, who hauing with them a conuenient power, incountred the enimies,

<sup>1</sup> See George Chalmers's *Caledonia*, vol. i., p. 320.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the notes on this passage in the editions of Steevens and Malone.

slue part of them, and chased the other to their ships. They that escaped and got once to their ships, obtained of Makbeth for a great summe of gold, that such of their friends as were slaine at this last bickering, might be buried in Saint Colmes Inch. In memorie whereof, manie old sepultures are yet in the said Inch, there to be seene grauen with the armes of the Danes, as the maner of burieng noble men still is, and hieretofore hath beene vsed. A peace was also concluded at the same time betwixt the Danes and Scottishmen, ratified (as some haue written) in this wise: that from thencefoorth the Danes should neuer come into Scotland to make anie warres against the Scots by anie maner of meanes. And these were the warres that Duncane had with forren enimies, in the seuenth yiere of his reigne."<sup>1</sup>

To this account of Holinshed, as bearing upon the question of the St Colme's Isle alluded to by Shakspeare, it is only necessary to add one remark:—Certainly the western Iona, with its nine separate cemeteries, could readily afford fit burial-space for the slain Danes; but it is impossible to believe that the defeated and dejected Danish army would or could carry the dead and decomposing bodies of their chiefs to that remote place of sepulture. And, supposing that the dead bodies had been embalmed, then it would have been easier to carry them back to the Danish territories in England, or even across the German Ocean to Denmark itself, than round by the Pentland Firth to the distant western island of Icolmkill. On the other hand, that St Colme's Inch, in the Firth of Forth, is the island alluded to, is, as I have already said, perfectly certain, from its propinquity to the seat of war, and the point of landing of the new Scandinavian host, namely, Kinghorn; the old town of Wester Kinghorn lying only about three or four miles below Inchcolm, and the present town of the same name, or Eastern Kinghorn, being placed about a couple of miles further down the coast.

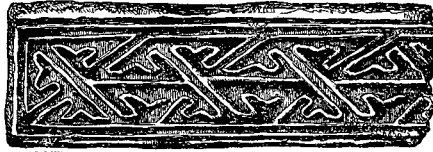
We might here have adduced another incontrovertible argument in favour of this view by appealing to the statement, given in the above quotation, of the existence on Inchcolm, in Boece's time, of Danish sepulchral monuments, provided we felt assured that this statement was in itself perfectly correct. But before adopting it as such, it is necessary to remember that Boece describes the sculptured crosses and stones at Camustane, and Aberlemno,<sup>2</sup> in Forfarshire, as monuments of a Danish character also; and whatever may have been the origin and objects of these mysteries in Scottish archaeology,—our old and numerous Sculptured Stones, with their strange enigmatical symbols,—we are at least certain that they are not Danish either in their source or design, as no sculptured stones with these peculiar symbols exist in Denmark itself.

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed's Chronicles, vol. v., p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> Scotorum Historiæ, lib. xi., f. 251, 225.

That Inchcolm contained one or more of those sculptured stones, is proved by a small fragment that still remains, and which was detected a few years ago about the garden-wall. A drawing of it has been already published by Mr Stuart.<sup>1</sup> (See woodcut, fig. 1). In the quotation which I have given from Holinshed's Chronicles, the "old sepultures there (on Inchcolm) to be seene grauen with the armes of the Danes," are spoken of as "manie" in number. Bellenden uses similar language: "Thir Danes (he writes) that fled to thair schippis, gaif gret sowmes of gold to Makbeth to suffer thair freindis that war slane at his jeoperd to be buryit in Sanct Colmes Inche. In memory heirof, *mony* auld sepulturis ar yit in the said Inche, gravin with armis of Danis."<sup>2</sup> In translating this passage from Boece, both Holinshed and Bellenden overstate, in some degree, the words of their original author. Boece speaks of the Danish monuments still existing on Inchcolm in his day, or about the year 1525, as plural in number, but without speaking of them as many. After stating that the Danes purchased the right of sepulture for their slain chiefs (nobiles) "in Emonia insula, loco sacro," he adds, "extant et hac ætate notissima Danorum monumenta, lapidibusque insculpta eorum insignia."<sup>3</sup> For a long period past only one so-called Danish monument has existed on Inchcolm, and is still to be seen there. It is a single recumbent block of stone above five feet long, about a foot broad, and one foot nine inches in depth, having a rude sculptured figure on its upper surface. In his History of Fife, published in 1710, Sir Robert Sibbald has both drawn and described it. "It is (says he) made like a coffin, and very fierce and grim faces are done on both the ends of it. Upon the middle stone which supports it, there is the figure of a man holding a spear in his hand."<sup>4</sup> He might have added that on the corresponding middle part of the opposite side there is sculptured a rude cross; but both the cross and "man holding a spear" are cut on the single block of stone forming the monument, and not, as he represents, on a separate supporting stone. Pennant, in his Tour through Scotland in 1772, tells us that this "Danish monument" "lies in the south-east [south-west] side of the building (or monastery), on a rising ground.

Fig. 1.



Sculptured Stone, Inchcolm.

<sup>1</sup> See his great work on the Sculptured Stones of Scotland, plate cxxv., p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Bellenden's Translation of Boece's Croniklis of Scotland, lib. xii., 2, vol. ii., p. 258.

<sup>3</sup> Scotorum Historiæ (1526), lib. xii., p. 257.

<sup>4</sup> History of Fife and Kinross, p. 35.

It is (he adds) of a rigid form, and the surface ornamented with scale-like figures. At each end is the representation of a human head."<sup>1</sup> In its existing defaced

Fig. 2.



Danish Monument.

form,<sup>2</sup> the sculpture has certainly much more the appearance of a recumbent

<sup>1</sup> A Tour in Scotland, part ii., p. 210. See also Grose's Antiquities of Scotland (1797), vol. ii., p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> In the "Buik of the Cronicles of Scotland," or metrical version of the History of Hector Boece, by William Stewart, lately published under the authority of the Master of the Rolls, and edited by Mr Turnbull, there is a description of the Danish monument on Inchcolm from the personal observation of the translator; and we know that this metrical translation was finished by the year 1535. The description is interesting, not only from being in this way a personal observation, but also as showing that, at the above date, the recumbent sculptured "greit stane," mentioned in the text, was regarded as a monument of the Danish leader, and that there stood beside it a Stone Cross, which has since unfortunately disappeared. After speaking of the burial of the Danes—

Into an yle callit Emonia,  
Sanct Colmis hecht now callit is this da,

and the great quantity of human bones still existing there, he adds in proof—

As *I myself quhilk has bene thair and sene,*  
*Ane croce of stane thair standis on ane grene,*  
*Middis the feild quhair that they la ilk one,*  
*Besyde the croce thair lyis ane greit stane;*  
*Under the stane, in middis of the plane,*  
*Their chiftane lyis quhilk in the feild was slane.*

(See vol. ii., p. 635). Within the last few months there has been discovered by Mr Crichton another sculptured stone on Inchcolm. But the character of the sculptures on it is still uncertain, as the stone is in a dark corner, the exposed portion of it forming the ceiling of the staircase of the Tower, and the remainder of the stone being built into, and buried in the wall. The sculptures are greatly weather-worn, and the stone itself had been used in the original building of the Tower. The Tower of St Mary's Church, or of the so-called Cathedral at Iona, is known to have been erected early in the thirteenth century. Mr Husband Smith, who believes the Tower of the Cathedral in Iona, and perhaps the larger portion of the nave and aisles, to be "probably the erection of the twelfth and next succeeding century," found, in 1844, on the abacus of one of the supporting columns, the in-



human figure, with a head at one end and the feet at the other, than with a human head at either extremity. The present condition of the monument is faithfully given in the accompanying woodcut, which, like most of the other woodcuts in this little essay, have been copied from sketches made by the masterly pencil of my esteemed friend, Mr James Drummond, R.S.A.

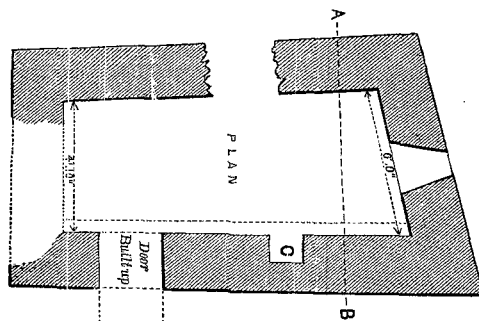
It is well known that, about a century after the occurrence of these Danish wars, and of the alleged burial of the Danish chiefs on Inchcolm,—or in the first half of the thirteenth century,—there was founded on this Island, by Alexander I., a monastery, which from time to time was greatly enlarged, and well endowed. The monastic buildings remaining on Inchcolm at the present day are of very various dates, and still very extensive; and their oblong light-grey mass, surmounted by a tall, square central Tower, forms a striking object in the distance, as seen in the summer morning light from the higher streets and houses of Edinburgh, and from the neighbouring shores of the Firth of Forth. These monastic buildings have been fortunately protected and preserved by their insular situation,—not from the silent and wasting touch of time, but from the more ruthless and destructive hand of man. The stone-roofed octagonal chapter-house is one of the most beautiful and perfect in Scotland; and the abbot's house, the cloisters, refectory, &c., are still comparatively entire. But the object of the present communication is not to describe the well-known conventual ruins on the island, but to direct the attention of the Society to a small building, isolated, and standing at a little distance from the remains of the monastery, and which, I am inclined to believe, is of an older date, and of an earlier age, than any part of the monastery itself.

The small building, cell, oratory, or chapel, to which I allude, forms now, with its south side, a portion of the line of the north wall of the present garden, and is in a very ruinous state; but its more characteristic and original features can still be accurately made out.

scription "DONALDUS OBROCHLAN FECIT HOC OPUS;" and already this inscription has been broken and mutilated. (See *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. i., p. 86.) The obit of a person of this name, and probably of this builder, occurs, as Dr Reeves has shown, in the *Annals of Ulster* in 1203, and in the *Annals of the Four Masters* in 1202; and Dr Reeves considers the Church or Cathedral at Iona as "an edifice of the early part of the thirteenth century." (*Life of Columba*, pp. 411 and 416.) But the Tower of the Church of Inchcolm is so similar in its architectural forms and details to that of Icolmkill, that it is evidently a structure nearly, if not entirely, of the same age; and the new choir (*novum chorum*) built to the church in 1265 (see *Scotichronicon*, lib. x., c. 20) is apparently, as seen by its remaining masonic connections, posterior in age to the Tower upon which it abuts. Hence we are, perhaps, fairly entitled to infer that this sculptured stone thus incidentally used in the construction of the Tower on Inchcolm, existed on the island long, at least, before the thirteenth century, as by that time it was already very weather-worn, and consequently old.

The building is of the quadrangular figure of the oldest and smallest Irish churches and oratories. But its form is very irregular, partly in consequence of the extremely sloping nature of the ground on which it is built, and partly perhaps to accommodate it in position to three large and immovable masses of trap that lie on either side of it, and one of which masses is incorporated into its south-west angle. It is thus deeper on its north than on its south side; and much deeper at its eastern than at its western end. Further, its remaining eastern gable is set at an oblique angle to the side walls, while both the side walls themselves seem slightly curved or bent. Hence it happens, that whilst externally the total length of the north side of the building is nineteen feet and a half, the total length of its south side is twenty-one feet and a half, or two feet more. Internally, also, it gradually becomes narrower towards its western extremity; so that, whilst the breadth of the interior of the building is about six feet three inches at its eastern end, it is only four feet and nine inches at its western end. Some of these peculiarities are shown in the accompanying ground-plan drawn by Mr Brash (see woodcut, fig. 3), in which the line A B

Fig. 3.



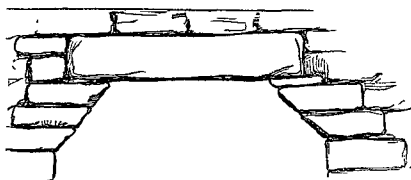
Ground-plan of Oratory.

represents the whole breadth of the building; A the north, and B the south wall of it. Unfortunately, as far as can be gathered amid the accumulated debris at the western part of the building, the gable at that end is almost destroyed, with the exception of the stones at its base; but, judging from the height of the vaulted roof, this gable probably did not measure externally above eight feet, while the depth of the eastern gable, which is comparatively entire, is between fourteen and fifteen feet. The interior of the building has been originally along its central line about sixteen feet in length; it is nearly eight feet in height

from the middle of the vaulted roof to the present floor; and the interior has an average breadth of about five feet. Internally the side walls are five feet in height from the ground to the spring of the arch or vault.

Three feet from the ground there is interiorly, in the south wall, a small four-sided recess, one foot in breadth, and fifteen inches in height and depth. (See C in ground plan, fig. 3; and also fig. 7.) In the same south-side wall, near the western gable, is an opening extending from the floor to the spring of the roof. It has apparently been the original door of the building; but as it is now built up by a layer of thin stone externally, and the soil of the garden has been heaped up against it and the whole south wall to the depth of several feet, it is difficult to make out its full relations and character. There is a peculiarity, however, about the head of this entrance which deserves special notice. The top of the doorway, as seen both from within and from without the building, is arched, but in two very different ways. When examined from within, the head of the doorway is found to be composed of stones laid in the form of a hori-

Fig. 4.



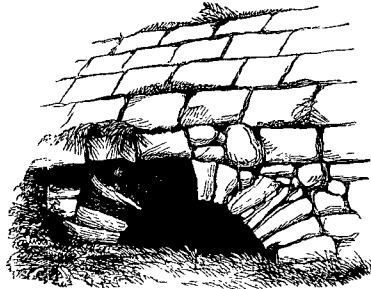
Horizontal arch of the door, as seen from within the cell.

zontal arch, the superincumbent stones on each side projecting more and more over each other to constitute its sides, and then a large, flat, horizontal stone closing the apex. (See woodcut, fig. 4.) On the contrary, when examined from without, the top of the doorway is formed by stones laid in the usual form of the radiating arch, and roughly broken off, as if that arch at a former period had extended beyond the line of the wall. (See woodcut, fig. 5.) This doorway, let me add, is five feet high, and, on an average, about four feet wide, but it is two or three inches narrower at the top, or at the spring of the arch, than it is at the bottom.<sup>1</sup> The north side wall of the building is less per-

<sup>1</sup> When I first visited Inchcolm, the ancient cell described in the present paper was the abode of one or two pigs; and on another occasion I found it inhabited by a cow. In consequence of the attention of the Earl of Moray (the proprietor of the island), and his active factor, Mr Philipps, having been directed to the subject, all such desecration has been put an end to, and the whole building has been repaired in such a way as to retard its dilapida-

fect, as, in modern times, a large rude opening has been broken through as an

Fig. 5.



Semi-circular arch of the door as seen from without, the garden earth filling the doorway.

tion. The plans required for its proper repair were kindly drawn out by my friend Mr Brash of Cork, a most able architect and archæologist, who had performed on various occasions previously a similar duty in reference to the restoration of old ecclesiastical buildings in the south and west of Ireland. All these restorations preserve, as far as possible, in every respect the original characteristics of the building. In making these restorations, several points mentioned in the text as visible in the former dilapidated state of the building are now of course covered up, such as the section of the arch of the roof, represented in wood-cut, fig. 8, &c. Other new points not alluded to in the text were cleared up and brought to light as the necessary repairs were proceeded with. The opening in the western part of the south wall of the building was found to be the undoubted original door of the cell; and when the earth accumulated up against it externally was cleared away, there was discovered, leading from this door to the south, and in the direction of the well of the island, a built way or passage, gently sloping upwards out of the cell, four feet in width, like the door itself, but becoming slightly wider when it reached the limit to which it has been as yet traced,—viz., about thirteen or fourteen feet from the building. The built sides of this passage still stand about three or four feet in height; the lime used as cement in constructing these sides is apparently the same as that used in the construction of the walls of the cell itself; and, further, the passage has been coated over with the same dense plaster as that still seen adhering at different points to the interior of the oratory. It is impossible to fix the original height of the walls of this passage, but probably these walls were so high at one time, near the entrance at least into the oratory, as to be there arched over; for, as stated in the text, the stones composing the outer or external arch of the doorway offer that appearance of irregular fracturing which they would necessarily show if the archway had been originally continued forward, and subsequently broken across parallel with the line or face of the south-side wall. It is perhaps not uninteresting here to add that, in Icolmkill, a similar walled walk or entrance led into the small house or building of unknown antiquity, named the "Culdee's Cell." In the old Statistical Account (1795), this cell is described as "the foundation of a small circular house, upon a reclining plain. From the door of the house, a walk ascends to a small hillock, with the remains of a wall upon each side of the

entrance or door, (see woodcut, fig. 6, and ground-plan, fig. 3), after the original door on the other side had become blocked up.

Fig. 6.



Eastern gable and north side of the building.

The eastern gable is still very entire, and contains a small window, which, as measured outside, is one foot eleven inches in height, and ten inches in breadth. But the jambs of this window incline or splay internally, so as to form on the internal plane of the gable an opening two feet three inches in breadth.

The squared sill stone of the window is one of the largest in the eastern gable. Its flat lintel stone projects externally in an angled or sharpened form beyond the plane of the gable, like a rude attempt at a moulding or architrave, but probably with the more utilitarian object of preventing entrance of the common eastern showers into the interior of the cell. The thin single flat sandstones composing the jambs are each large enough to extend backwards the whole length of the interior splay of the window, and, from the marks upon them, have evidently been hammer-dressed. Internally in this eastern gable walk, which grows wider to the hillock." (Statistical Account of Scotland, vol. xiv., p. 200.) At the old heremetical establishment of St Fechin, on High Island, Connemara, there is "a covered passage, about fifteen feet long and three wide," leading from the oratory to the Abbot's nearly circular, dome-roofed cell. (Dr Petrie's Ecclesiastical Architecture, p. 425.)

there is placed below the window, and in continuation of its interior splay, a recess about eighteen inches in depth, and of nearly the same breadth as the divergence of the jambs of the window. The broken base or floor of this recess is in the position of the altar-stone in some small early Irish chapels.

The accompanying sketch (see woodcut, fig. 6) of the exterior of the eastern gable shows that the stones of which it is built have been prepared and dressed with sufficient care—especially those forming the angles—to entitle us to speak of it as presenting the type of rude ashlar-work. The stones composing it, particularly above the line of the window, are laid in pretty regular horizontal courses; lower down they are not by any means so equable in size. The masonry of the side-walls is much less regular, and more of a rubble character. The walls are on average about three feet in thickness. The stones of which the building is composed are, with a few exceptions, almost all squared sandstone. The exceptions consist of some larger stones of trap or basalt placed principally along the base of the walls. Both secondary trap and sandstone are found *in situ* among the rocks of the island. A roundish basalt stone, two feet long, forms a portion of the floor of the building at its southern corner. At other points there is evidence of a well-laid earth floor. The whole interior of the building has been carefully plastered at one time. The surface of this plaster-covering of the walls, wherever it is left, is so dense and hard as to be scratched with difficulty. The lime used for building and cementing the walls, as shown in a part at the west end which has been lately exposed, contains oyster and other smaller sea-shells, and is as firm and hard as some forms of concrete.

I have reserved till the last a notice of one of the most remarkable architectural features in this little building, namely, its arched or vaulted stone roof,—the circumstance, no doubt, to which the whole structure owes its past durability and present existence.

Stone roofs are found in some old Irish buildings, formed on the principle of the horizontal arch, or by each layer of stone overlapping and projecting within the layer placed below it till a single stone closes the top. A remarkable example of this type of stone roof is presented by the ancient oratory of Gallerus in the county of Kerry; and stone roofs of the same construction covered most of the old beehive houses and variously shaped cloghans that formerly existed in considerable numbers in the western and southern districts of Ireland, and more sparsely on the western shores of Scotland. In the Inchcolm oratory the stone roof is constructed on another principle—on that, namely, of the radiating arch—a form of roof still seen in some early Irish oratories and churches, whose reputed date of building ranges from the sixth or seventh onward to the tenth or eleventh centuries.

The mode of construction of the stone roof of the Incheolm cell is well displayed in the accidental section of it that has been made by the falling in of the western

Fig. 7.

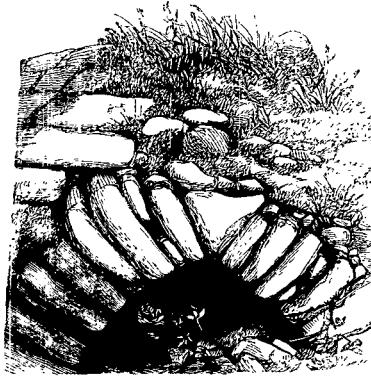


Interior of the building, showing splayed window in eastern gable, recess in interior of south wall, vaulted-roof, &c.

gable. One of Mr Drummond's sketches (see woodcut, fig. 8) represents the section as seen across the collection of flower-tipped rubbish and stones made by the debris of the gable and some accumulated earth. The roof is constructed, first, of stones placed in the shape of a radiating arch; secondly, of a thin layer of lime and small stones placed over the outer surface of this arch; and thirdly, the roof is finished by being covered externally with a layer of oblong, rhomboid stones, laid in regular courses from the top of the side walls onwards and upwards to the ridge of the building. This outer coating of squared stones is seen in the external surface of the roof to the left in one sketch (see woodcut, fig. 8); but a more perfect and better preserved specimen of it exists imme-

diately above the entrance-door, as shown in another of Mr Drummond's drawings (see woodcut, fig. 5).

Fig. 8.



Exposed section of the arch of the vault.

The arch or vault of the roof has one peculiarity, perhaps worthy of notice (and seen in the preceding woodcut, fig. 8). The central keystone of the arch has the form of a triangular wedge, or of the letter **V**, a type seen in other rude and primitive arches. Interiorly, a similar keystone line appears to run along the length of the vault, but not always perfectly straight; and the whole figure of the arch distinctly affects the pointed form.

Several years ago I first saw the building which I have described when visiting Inchcolm with Captain Thomas, Dr Daniel Wilson, and some other friends, and its peculiar antique character and strong rude masonry struck all of us, for it seemed different in type from any of the other buildings around it. Last year I had an opportunity of visiting several of the oldest remaining Irish churches and oratories at Glendalough, Killaloe, Clanmacnoise, and elsewhere, and the features of some of them strongly recalled to my recollection the peculiarities of the old building in Inchcolm, and left on my mind a strong desire to re-inspect it. Later in the year Mr Fraser and I visited Inchcolm in company with our greatest Scottish authority on such an ecclesiological question—Mr Joseph Robertson. That visit confirmed us in the idea, first, that the small building in question was of a much more ancient type than any portion of the neighbouring monastery; and secondly, that in form and construc-



tion it presented the principal architectural characters of the earliest and oldest Irish churches and oratories. More lately I had an opportunity of showing the various original sketches which Mr Drummond had made for me of the building to the highest living authority on every question connected with early Irish and Scoto-Irish ecclesiastical architecture—namely, Dr Petrie of Dublin; and before asking anything as to its site, &c., he at once pronounced the building to be “a Columbian cell.”

The tradition, as told to our party by the cicerone on the island, on my first visit, was, that this neglected outbuilding was the place in which “King Alexander lived for three days with the hermit of Incheolm.” There was nothing in the rude architecture and general character of the building to gainsay such a tradition, but the reverse; and, on the contrary, when we turn to the notice of a visit of Alexander I. to the island in 1123, as given by our earliest Scotch historians, their account of the little chapel or oratory which he found there perfectly applies to the building which I have been describing. In order to prove this, let me quote the history of Alexander’s visit from the “Scotichronicon” of Fordun and Bower, the “Extracta e Croniciis Scocie,” and the “Scotorum Historia” of Hector Boece.<sup>1</sup>

The Scotichronicon contains the following account of King Alexander’s adventure and temporary sojourn in Incheolm:—

“About the year of our Lord 1123, under circumstances not less wonderful than miraculous, a Monastery was founded on the Island Aemonia, near Inverkeithing. For when the noble and most Christian Sovereign Alexander, first of this name, was, in pursuit of some state business, making a passage across the Queensferry, suddenly a tremendous storm arose, and the fierce south-west wind forced the vessel and sailors to make, for safety’s sake, for the island of Aemonia, where at that time lived an islander hermit (*eremita insulanus*), who, belonging to the service of Saint Columba, devoted himself sedulously to his duties at a certain little chapel there (*ad quandam inibi capellulam*), content with such poor food as the milk of one cow and the shell and small sea-fishes which he could collect. On the hermit’s slender stores, the king and his suite of companions, detained by the storm, gratefully lived for three consecutive days. But on the day before landing, when in very great danger from the sea, and tossed by the fury of the tempest, the king despaired of life, he vowed to the Saint, that if he should bring him and his companions safe to the island, he would leave on it such a memorial to his honour as would render it a future asylum and refuge to sailors and those that were shipwrecked.

<sup>1</sup> See other similar notices of the visit of Alexander I. to Incheolm in Buchanan’s *Rerum Scoticarum Historia*, lib. vii., cap. 27; Leslæus de *Rebus Gestis, Scotorum*, lib. vi., p. 219, &c

Therefore, it was decided, on this occasion, that he should found there a Monastery of prebendaries, such as now exists; and this the more so, as he had always venerated St Columba with special honour from his youth; and chiefly because his own parents were for several years childless and destitute of the solace of offspring, until, beseeching St Columba with suppliant devotion, they gloriously obtained what they sought for so long a time with anxious desire. Hence the origin of the verse—

‘M.C, ter, I. bis, et X literis a tempore Christi,  
Aemon, tunc ab Alexandro fundata fuisti  
Sectorum primo. Structorem Canonicorum  
Transferat ex imo Deus hunc ad alta polorum.’”<sup>1</sup>

The preceding account of King Alexander's visit to Inchcolm, and his founding of the Monastery there, occurs in the course of the fifth book (lib. v., cap. 37) of the *Scotichronicon*, without its being marked whether the passage itself exists in the original five books of Fordun, or in one of the additions made to them by the Abbot Walter Bower.<sup>2</sup> The first of these writers, John of Fordun, lived, it will be recollected, in the reigns of Robert II. and III., and wrote about 1380; while Walter Bower, the principal continuator of Fordun's history, was Abbot of Inchcolm from 1418 to the date of his death in 1449.

In the work known under the title of “*Extracta e Variis Cronicis Scocie*,”<sup>3</sup> there is an account of Alexander's fortuitous visit to Inchcolm, exactly similar to the above, but in an abridged form. Mr Tytler, in his “*History of Scotland*,”<sup>4</sup> supposes the “*Extracta*” to have been written posterior to the time of Fordun, and prior to the date of Bower's *Continuation of the Scotichronicon*,—a conjecture which one or more passages in the work entirely disprove.<sup>5</sup> If the opinion of Mr Tytler had been correct, it would have been important as a proof that the story of the royal adventure of Alexander upon Inchcolm was written by Fordun, and not by Bower, inasmuch as the two accounts in the *Scotichronicon* and in the *Extracta* are on this, as on most other points, very similar, the Ex-

<sup>1</sup> Joannis de Fordun *Scotichronicon*, cum Supplementis et Continuatione Walteri Boweri *Insulæ St Columbæ Abbatis*; cura Walteri Goodall (1759), vol. i., p. 286.

<sup>2</sup> My friend Mr David Laing, with his usual kindness, has examined, with a view to this point, several manuscripts of the “*Scotichronicon*,” and has found that the account in that work of King Alexander's visit to Inchcolm is from the pen of Bower, and, as Mr Laing adds in his note to me, “not the less curious and interesting on that account.” In his original portion of the *History*, Fordun himself merely refers to the foundation of the Monastery of Inchcolm by Alexander.

<sup>3</sup> *Extracta e Cronicis Scocie*, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> *History of Scotland*, vol. iii., p. 336.

<sup>5</sup> See Mr Turnbull's Introductory Notice to the Abbotsford Club edition of the *Extracta*, p. xiv.

tracta being merely somewhat curtailed. As evidence of this remark, let me here cite the original words of the "Extracta :"—

" Emonia insula seu monasterium, nunc Sancti Columbe de Emmonia, per dictum regem fundatur circa annum Domini millesimum vigesimum quartum miraculose. Nam cum idem nobilis rex transitum faciens per Passagium Regine, exorta tempestas valida, flante Africo, ratem cum naucleris, vix vita comite, compulit applicare ad insulam Emoniam, ubi tunc degebat quidam heremita insulanus, qui seruitio Sancti Columbe deditus, ad quamdam inibi capellulam tenui victu, utpote lacte vnus vacce et conchis ac pisciculis marinis contentatus, sedule se dedit, de quibus cibariis rex cum suis, tribus diebus, vento compellente, reficitur. Et quia Sanctum Columbam a iuventute dilexit, in periculo maris, ut predicatur, positus, vouit se, si ad prefatam insulam veheretur incolumis, aliquid memoria dignum ibidem facere, et sic monasterium ibidem construxit canonicorum, et dotauit."<sup>1</sup>

I shall content myself with citing from our older Scottish historians one more account of Alexander's adventure upon Inchcolm—namely that given by Hector Boece, Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, in his "Scotorum Historia," a work written during the reign of James V., and first published in 1526. In this work, after alluding to the foundation of the Abbey of Scone, Boece proceeds to state that—(to quote the translation of the passage as given by Bellenden),—"Nocht long after King Alexander came in Sanct Colmes Inche; quhair he was constraint, be violent tempest, to remane thre dayes, sustenand his life with skars fude, be ane heremit that dwelt in the said inche: in quhilk, he had ane little chapell, dedicat in the honour of Sanct Colme. Finaly, King Alexander, because his life was saiffit be this heremit, biggit ane Abbay of Chanons regular, in the honour of Sanct Colme; and dotat it with sundry landes and rentis, to sustene the abbot and convent thairof."<sup>2</sup>

As Bellenden's translation of Boece's work does not in this and other parts adhere by any means strictly to the author's original context, I will add the account given by Boece in that historian's own words :<sup>3</sup>—

"Nec ita multo post Forthæ rex æstuarium trajiciens, coorta tempestate in Emonian insulam appulsus descendit, repertoque Divi Columbæ sacello, viroque Eremita, triduo tempestatis vi permanere illie coactus est, exiguo sustentatus cibo, quem apud Eremitam quendam sacelli custodem reperiebat, nec tamen comitantium multitudini ulla ex parte sufficiente. Itaque eo periculo defunctus Divo Columbæ ædem vouit. Nec diu voto damnatus fuit, Cœnobio paulo post

<sup>1</sup> Extracta e Croniceis Scocie, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Boece's History and Chronicles of Scotland, translated by John Bellenden, book xii., chap. 15, vol. ii., p. 294.

<sup>3</sup> Scotorum Historia, lib. v., fol. cclxxii. First Paris Edition of 1526.

Regularium, ordinis Divi Augustini extracto, agrisque atque redditibus ad sumptus eorum collatis.”

That the very small and antique-looking edifice which I have described as still standing on Inchcolm is identically the little chapel or cell spoken of by Fordun and Boece as existing on the island at the time of Alexander's visit to it, upwards of seven centuries ago, is a matter admitting of great probability, but not of perfect legal proof. One or two irrecoverable links are wanting in the chain of evidence to make that proof complete; and more particularly do we lack for this purpose any distinct allusions or notices among our mediæval annalists, of the existence or character of the building during these intervening seven centuries, except, indeed, we consider the notice of it which I have cited from the Scotichronicon, “*ad quandam inibi capellulam*,” to be written by the hand of Walter Bower, and to have a reference to the little chapel as it existed and stood about the year 1430, when Bower wrote his additions to Fordun, while living and ruling on Inchcolm as Abbot of its Monastery.

But various circumstances render it highly probable that the old stone-roofed cell still standing on the island is the ancient chapel or oratory in which the island hermit (*eremita insulanus*) lived and worshipped at the time of Alexander's royal but compulsory visit in 1123. I have already adduced in favour of this belief the very doubtful and imperfect evidence of tradition, and the fact that this little building itself is, in its whole architectural style and character, evidently far more rude, primitive, and ancient, than any of the extensive monastic structures existing on the island, and that have been erected from the time of Alexander downwards. In support of the same view there are other and still more valuable pieces of corroborative proof, which perhaps I may be here excused from now dwelling upon with a little more fulness and detail.

The existing half-ruinous cell answers, I would first venture to remark,—and answers most fitly and perfectly,—to the two characteristic appellations used respectively in the Scotichronicon and in the *Historiæ Scotorum*, to designate the cell or oratory of the Inchcolm anchorite at the time of King Alexander's three days' sojourn on the island. These two appellations we have already found in the preceding quotations to be *capellula* and *sacellum*. As applied to the small, rude, vaulted edifice to which I have endeavoured to draw the attention of the Society, both terms are strikingly significant. The word used by Fordun or Bower in the Scotichronicon to designate the oratory of the Inchcolm anchorite, namely, “*capellula*,” or little chapel, is very descriptive of a diminutive church or oratory, but at the same time very rare. Du Cange, in his learned glossary, only adduces one example of its employment. It occurs in the testament of Guido, Bishop of Auxerrè, in the thirteenth century

(1270), who directs that "oratorium seu *capellulam* super sepulchrum dicti Robini construent." This passage further proves the similar signification of the two names of oratorium and capellula. The other appellation "sacellum," applied by Boece to the hermit's chapel, is a better known and more classical word than the capellula of the Scotichronicon. It is, as is well known, a diminutive from sacer, as tenellus is from tener, macellus from macer, &c.; and Cicero himself has left us a complete definition of the word, for he has described "sacellum" as "locus parvus deo sacratus cum ara."<sup>1</sup>

Again, in favour of the view that the existing building on Inchcolm is the actual chapel or oratory in which the insular anchorite lived and worshipped there in the twelfth century, it may be further argued, that, where they were not constructed of perishable materials, it was in consonance with the practice of these early times, to preserve carefully houses and buildings of religious note, as hallowed relics. Most of the old oratories and houses raised by the early Irish and Scottish saints were undoubtedly built of wattles, wood, or clay, and other perishable materials, and of necessity were soon lost.<sup>2</sup> But when of a

<sup>1</sup> De Divinitate, cap. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Though Roman houses, temples, and other buildings of stone and lime abounded in this country in the earlier centuries of the Christian era, yet the first Christian churches erected at Glastonbury in England, and at St David's in Wales, were—according to the authority, at least, of William of Malmesbury and Giraldus Cambrensis—made of wattles. The first Christian church which is recorded as having been erected in Scotland—namely, the *Candida Casa*, reared, at Whitehern, towards the beginning of the fifth century, by St Ninian—was constructed, as mentioned in a well-known passage of Bede's, of stone, forming "ecclesiam insignem . . . de lapide insolito Britonibus more." (*Historia Ecclesiast.*, lib. iii., c. 4.) According to the Irish Annals, the three churches first erected by Palladius, in Ireland, about the year 420, were of wood, one of them being termed House of the Romans, "Teach-na-Romhan," but not apparently from its Roman mode of building. (See Dr O'Donovan's *Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. i., p. 129.) The church of Duleek, one of the earliest, if not the earliest, which St Patrick erected in Ireland, and the first bishop of which, St Cieran, died in the year 490, was built of stone, as its original name of Damleagh (stone house) *si guifies*; and the same word, *damhliag* or *stone house*, came subsequently to be applied as a generic term to the larger Irish churches. (See Dr Petrie's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, p. 142, with a quotation from an old Irish poem of the names of the three masons in the household of St Patrick, who "made damhliags first in Erin.") When, in the year 652, Finan succeeded to the Bishopric of Lindisfarne, he built there a suitable episcopal church, constructed of oak planks, and covered with reeds, "more Scotorum non de lapide, sed de robore seto totam composuit, atque arundine textit." (*Bede's Hist. Eccl.*, lib. iii., c. 25.) When St Cuthbert erected his anchorite retreat on the Island of Farne, he made it of two chambers, one an oratory, and the other for domestic purposes; and he finished the walls of these buildings by digging round, and cutting away the natural soil within and without, forming the roof out of rough wood and straw, "de lignis informibus et feno." (*Vita S. Cuthberti*, cap. 17.) Planks or "tabulæ," also, were employed in building or reconstructing the walls of this oratory on Farne Island, as St Ethelwald, Cuthbert's suc-

more solid and permanent construction, they were sometimes sedulously preserved, and piously and punctually visited for long centuries as holy shrines. There still exist in Ireland various stone oratories of early Irish saints to which this remark applies—as, for example, that of St Kevin at Glendalough, of St Columba at Kells, those of St Molua and St Flannan at Killaloe, of St Benan on Aranmore, St Ceannanach on Inish Maan, &c., &c. Let us take the two first examples which I have named, to illustrate more fully my remark. St Kevin died at an extreme old age in the year 618; and St Columba died a few years earlier, namely in the year 597. When speaking of the two houses at Glendalough and Kells, respectively bearing the names of these two early Irish saints, Dr Petrie—and I certainly could not quote either a higher or a more cautious antiquarian authority—observes, “I think we have every reason to believe that the buildings called St Columba’s House at Kells, and St Kevin’s House at Glendalough, buildings so closely resembling each other in every respect, were erected by the persons whose names they bear.”<sup>1</sup> If Dr Petrie’s idea be correct, and he repeats it elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> then these houses were con-

cessor, finding hay and clay insufficient to fill up the openings that age made between its boards, obtained a calf’s skin, and nailed it as a protection against the storms in that corner of the oratory where, like his predecessor, he used to kneel or stand when praying. (*Ibid.*, cap. 46.) St Godric’s first rude hermitage at Finchale, on the Wear, was made of turf (*vili cespite*), and afterwards of rough wood and twigs (*de lignis informibus et virgulis*). (See chap. 21 and 29 of his *Life* by Reginald.) On the construction, by wattles and wood, of some early Irish and Secto-Irish monastic and saints’ houses and oratories, as those of St Wolloc, St Columba, and St Kevin, see Dr Reeves’ notes in his edition of the *Life* of St Columba, pp. 106, 114, and 177. In some districts where wood was scarce, and stone abundant and easily worked, as in the west coast of Ireland, all ecclesiastical buildings were—like the far more ancient duns and forts in these parts—made principally or entirely of stone. But even in parts where wood was easily procured, oratories seem to have been sometimes, from an early period, built of stone. Thus, in the *Tripartite Life* of St Patrick, the devout virgin Crumtherim is described as living in a stone-built oratory, “in cella sive *lapideo* inclusorio,” in the vicinity of Armagh, as early as the fifth century. (Colgan’s *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 163.) And, at the city of Armagh again, we have an incidental notice of a stone oratory in the eighth century; for in the *Ulster Annals*, under the year 788, there is reported “Contentio in Ardmacæ in qua jugulatur vir in hostio [*ostio*] Oratorii *lapidei*.” (Dr O’Conor’s *Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores*, tom. iv., p. 113.) Dr Petrie believes that all the churches at Armagh erected by St Patrick and his immediate successors were built of stone, as well indeed as all the early abbey and cathedral churches throughout Ireland. (*Ecclesiastical Architecture*, p. 159.)

<sup>1</sup> The *Ecclesiastical Architecture* of Ireland, anterior to the Anglo-Saxon Invasion, comprising an *Essay on the Round Towers of Ireland*, pp. 437, 435, and 430.

<sup>2</sup> “That these buildings (St Columba’s House at Kells and St Kevin’s at Glendalough), which are so similar, in most respects, to each other, are of a very early antiquity, can scarcely admit of doubt,—indeed I see no reason to question their being of the times of the

structed about the end of the sixth century, and their preservation for so long an intervening period was no doubt in a great measure the result of their being looked upon, protected, and visited, as spots hallowed by having been the earthly dwellings of such esteemed saints.

celebrated ecclesiastics whose names they bear.”—Dr Petrie’s *Ecclesiastical Architecture*, p. 430. In his late edition of *Adannan’s Life of St Columba*, Dr Reeves, when describing the Columbite monasteries and churches founded in Ireland, speaks (p. 278) of Kells as “having become the chief seat of the Columbian monks” shortly after the commencement of the ninth century. Among the indications of the ancient importance of the place which still remain, he enumerates the fine old Round Tower of Kells, its three ancient large sculptured crosses, the “curious oratory called St Columbkille’s House,” and its great literary monument now preserved in Trinity College, Dublin—namely, the “Book of Kells.” He quotes the old Irish *Life of St Columba*, followed by O’Donnell, to show that it is there stated that the saint himself “marked out the city of Kells in extent as it now is, and blessed it;” but he doubts if any considerable church here was founded by Columba himself, or indeed before 804. He grounds his doubts chiefly on the negative circumstance that there is “no mention of the place in the Annals as a religious seat” till the year 804. But the Annals of the Four Masters record two years previously, or in 802, that “the Church of Columcille at Céanannus (or Kells) was destroyed” (vol. i., p. 413), referring of course to an *old* or former church of St Columba’s there; whilst the Annals of Clonmacnoise mention that two years afterwards, or in 804, “there was a *new* church founded in Kells in honour of St Columc.” (See *Ibid.*, foot-note.) The learned editor of the Annals of the Four Masters, Professor O’Donovan, has translated and published, in the first volume of the *Miscellany of the Irish Archæological Society*, an ancient poem attributed to St Columba, and which, at all events, was certainly composed at a period when some remains of Paganism existed in Ireland. In this production the poet makes St Columba say, “My order is at Cennanus (Kells),” &c.; and in his note to this allusion Dr O’Donovan states that, at Kells, “St Columbkille erected a monastery in the sixth century.” (*Miscellany of Archæological Society*, vol. i., p. 13.) Some minds would trust such a question regarding the antiquity of a place more to the evidence of parchment than to the evidence of stone and lime. The beautiful *Evangelium* known as the *Book of Kells* is mentioned by the Four Masters under the year 1006 as being then the “principal relic of the western world,” on account of its golden case or cover, and as having been temporarily stolen in that year from the *erdomb* or sacristy of the great Church of Kells. In the same ancient entry this book is spoken of as “the Great Gospel of Columcille,” and whether originally belonging to Kells or not, is certainly older than the ninth century, if not indeed as old as Columba. The corresponding *Evangelium* of Durrow, placed now also in Trinity College, Dublin,—“a manuscript (says Dr Reeves, p. 276) approaching, if not reaching to the Columbian age,”—is known from the inscription on the silver-mounted case which formerly belonged to it to have been “venerable in age and a reliquary in 916” (p. 327). In the remarkable colophon which closes this manuscript copy of the Evangelists, St Columba himself is professed to be the copyist or writer of it, the reader being adjured to cherish the memory “*Columbæ scriptoris qui hoc scripsit.*” In the *Ulster Annals*, under the year 904, there is the following entry regarding Kells: “*Violatio Ecclesiæ Kellensis per Flannum mac Maelsechnalli contra Donchad filium suum, et alii decollati sunt circa Oratorium.*” (Dr O’Conor’s *Rerum Hibern. Scriptores*, tom. iv., p. 243.) Is the scene of slaughter thus specialized the Oratory or “House of St Columb” which is still standing at Kells?

In the great work on "The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland" which I have just quoted,—a work, let me add, overflowing with the richest and ripest antiquarian lore, and yet written with all the fascination of a romance,—Dr Petrie, after describing the two houses I speak of, St Kevin's and St Columba's, farther states his belief that both of these buildings "served the double purpose of a habitation and an oratory."<sup>1</sup> They were, in this view, the residences, as well as the chapels, of their original inhabitants; and subsequently the house of St Kevin at Glendalough, of St Flannan at Killaloe, &c., were publicly used as chapels or churches.<sup>2</sup> In all probability the *capellula* of the hermit on Inchcolm was, in the same way, at once both the habitation and the oratory of this solitary anchorite, and apparently the only building on the island when Alexander was tossed upon its shores. The sacred character of the humble cell, as the dwelling and oratory of a holy Columbite hermit, and possibly also the interest attached to it as an edifice which had afforded for three days such welcome and grateful shelter to King Alexander and his suite, would in all probability—judging from the numerous analogies which we might trace elsewhere—lead to its preservation, and perhaps its repair and restoration, when, a few years afterwards, the Monastery rose in its immediate neighbourhood, in pious fulfilment of the royal vow.

Indeed, that the holy cell or chapel of the Inchcolm anchorite would, under the circumstances in question, be carefully saved and preserved by King Alexander I., is a step which we would specially expect from all that we know of the religious character of that prince, and his peculiar love for sacred buildings and the relics of saints. For, according to Fordun, Alexander "vir literatus et pius" "erat in construendis ecclesiis, et reliquis Sanctorum prequirendis, in vestibus sacerdotalibus librisque sacris conficiendis et ordinandis, studiosissimus."

For the antiquity of the Inchcolm cell there yet remains an additional argument, and perhaps the strongest of all. I have already stated that, in its whole architectural type and features, the cell or oratory is manifestly older, and more rude and primitive, than any of the diverse monastic buildings erected on the island from the twelfth century downwards. But more, the Inchcolm cell or ora-

<sup>1</sup> In treating of the subsequent fate of the old Irish oratories, Dr Petrie remarks, "Such structures came in subsequent times to be used by devotees as penitentiaries, and to be generally regarded as such exclusively. Nor is it easy to conceive localities as such better fitted, in a religious age, to excite feelings of contrition for past sins, and of expectations of forgiveness, than those which had been rendered sacred by the sanctity of those to whom they had owed their origin. Most certain, at all events, it is, that they came to be regarded as sanctuaries the most inviolable, to which, as our annals show, the people were accustomed to fly in the hope of safety,—a hope, however, which was not always realized." (P. 358).

<sup>2</sup> Scotchchronicon, lib. v. c. 36. Goodall's edition, vol. i. p. 286.



tory corresponds in all its leading architectural features and specialities with the cells, oratories, or small chapels, raised from the sixth and eighth, down to the tenth and twelfth centuries in different parts of Ireland, and in some districts in Scotland, by the early Irish ecclesiastics and their Irish or Scoto-Irish disciples and followers.

It is now acknowledged on all sides, that, though not the first preachers of Christianity in Scotland,<sup>1</sup> the Irish were at least the most active and the most influential of our early missionaries; and truly a new epoch began in Scottish history when, in the year 563, St Columba, "pro Christo peregrinari volens," embarked, with his twelve companions, and sailed across from Ireland to the west coast of Scotland. It is certainly to St Columba and his numerous disciples and followers that the spread of Christianity in this country, during the succeeding

<sup>1</sup> In reference to this observation, it is scarcely necessary to refer to the teachings in Scotland of St Kentigern in the first half of the sixth century, of St Serf in the latter, and of St Palladius and St Ninian in the earlier parts of the fifth century, with the more immediate converts and followers of these ancient missionaries. In his "Demonstratio quod Christus sit Deus contra Judæos atque Gentiles," written about the year 387, St Chrysostom avers that "the British Islands (*Βρετανικαὶ νῆσοι*), situated beyond the Mediterranean Sea, and in the very ocean itself, had felt the power of the Divine Word, churches having been founded there, and altars erected." (*Opera omnia*, vol. i., p. 575, Paris edition of Montfaucon, 1718.) Perhaps St Chrysostom founded his statement upon a notice in reference to the extension of Christianity to the northern parts of Britain given a hundred and fifty years previously by Tertullian, when discussing a similar argument. In his dissertation "Adversus Judæos," supposed to be written about 210, Tertullian, when treating of the propagation of Christianity, states (chap. vii.), that at that time already places among the Britons, inaccessible to the Romans, were yet subject to Christ—"Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero subdita." (Oehler's edition of Tertullian, vol. iii., p. 713.) Among the numerous inscriptions and sculptures left here by the Romans while they held this country during the first four centuries of the Christian era, not one has, I believe, been yet found containing a single Christian notice or emblem, or affording by itself any direct evidence of the existence of Christianity among the Roman colonists and soldiers in Britain. But there is indirect lapidary or monumental evidence of its propagation in another manner. In England, as in Germany, France, &c., there exist among the old Roman remains, altars and temples dedicated to Mithras, originally the god of the Sun among the Persians, with sculptures and inscriptions referring to Mithraic worship. They have been found in the cities along the Roman wall in Northumberland; at York, &c. Various references among the old Fathers seem to show that when a knowledge of the Christian religion began to spread to the Western Colonies of Rome, the worship of Mithras was set up in opposition to Christianity, and Christian rites were imitated by the Mithraic priests and followers. Thus, for example, the author whom I have just cited, Tertullian, tells us, in his tract "De Præscriptione Hæreticorum," chap. 40, that the worshippers of Mithras practised the remission of sins by water (as in baptism), made a sign upon their foreheads (as if simulating the sign of the cross), celebrated the offering of bread (as if in imitation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper), &c. (See his Works, vol. iii., p. 38, of Oehler's Leipsic edition of 1854.)

two or three centuries, is principally due. At the same time, we must not forget that various other Irish saints in these early times engaged in missionary visits to Scotland, and founded churches there, which still bear their names, as (to quote part of the enumeration of Dr Reeves) St Finbar, St Comgall, St Blaán, St Brendan, the two St Fillans, St Ronan, St Flannan, St Beran, St Catan, St Merinus, St Mernoc, St Molaise, St Munna, St Vigean, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Along with their Christian doctrines and teachings, these Irish ecclesiastics brought over to Scotland their peculiar religious habits and customs, and, amongst other things, imported into this country their architectural knowledge and practices with regard to sacred and monastic buildings. In the western parts of Scotland more particularly, numerous ecclesiastical structures were raised similar to those which were peculiar to Ireland; and various material vestiges of these still exist. In the eastern parts of Scotland, to which the personal teaching of the Irish missionaries speedily spread, we have still remaining two undoubted examples of the repetition in this country of Irish ecclesiastical architecture in the well-known Round Towers of Abernethy and Brechin, and perhaps we have a third example in the stone-roofed Oratory of Inchcolm.

Various ancient stone Oratories still exist in a more or less perfect condition in different parts of Ireland, sometimes standing by themselves, sometimes with the remains of a round beehive-shaped cell or dwelling near them, and sometimes forming one of a group of churches, or of a series of monastic buildings. Such, for example, are the small chapels or oratories of St Gobnet, St Benen, and St MacDuach, in the Isles of Arran, of St Senan on Bishop's Island, and probably the so-called dormitory of St Declan at Ardmore. Among the old sacred buildings of Ireland we find, in fact, two kinds or classes of churches, the "ecclesiæ majores" and "minores," if we may call them so, and principally distinguished from each other by their comparative length or size. It appears both from the remains of the first class which still exist, and from the incidental notices which occur of their erection, measurements, &c., in the ancient annals and hagiology of Ireland, that the larger abbey or cathedral churches of that country, whose date of foundation is anterior to the 12th century, were oblong quadrangular buildings, which rarely, if ever, exceeded the length of 60 feet, and were sometimes less. In the Tripartite Life of St Patrick, he is described as prescribing 60 feet as the length of the church of Donagh Patrick.<sup>2</sup> This "was also," says Dr Petrie, "the measure of the other celebrated chapels erected by him throughout Ireland, and imitated as a model by his successors."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Dr Reeves' admirable edition of Adarnan's Life of St Columba, pp. lxxiv. and lxxv, — a book which is a perfect model of learned annotation and careful editing.

<sup>2</sup> Colgan's Trias Thaumaturga, p. 129.    <sup>3</sup> Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, p. 195.

“Indeed,” he further observes, “that the Irish, who have been ever remarkable for a tenacious adherence to their ancient customs, should preserve with religious veneration that form and size of the primitive church introduced by the first teachers of Christianity, is only what might be naturally expected, and what we find to have been the fact. We see,” Dr Petrie adds, “the result of this feeling exhibited very remarkably in the conservation, down to a late period, of the humblest and rudest *Oratories* of the first ecclesiastics in all those localities where Irish manners and customs remained, and where such edifices, too small for the services of religion, would not have been deemed worthy of conservation, but from such feeling.”<sup>1</sup>

The second or lesser type of the early Irish churches, or, in other words, of the humble and rude *Oratories* to which Dr Petrie refers in the last sentence of the preceding paragraph, were of a similar form, but of a much smaller size than the larger or abbey churches. We have ample and accurate evidence of this, both in the oratories which still remain, and in a fragment of the Brehon laws, referring to the different payments which ecclesiastical artificers received according as the building was—(1.) a *duirtheach* or small chapel or oratory; (2.) a large abbey church or *damhliag*, &c.<sup>2</sup>

Generally, according to Dr Petrie, the average of the smaller type of churches or oratories may be stated to be about 15 feet in length, and 10 feet in breadth, though they show no fixed similarity in regard to size.<sup>3</sup> “In the general plan,” he observes, “of this class of buildings there was an equal uniformity. They had a single doorway, always placed in the centre of the west wall, and were lighted by a single window placed in the centre of the east wall, and a stone altar usually, perhaps always, placed beneath this window.”<sup>4</sup> In these leading architectural features (with an exception to which I shall immediately advert), the *Inchcolm* cell or oratory corresponds to the ancient cells or oratories existing in Ireland, and presents the same ancient style of masonry—the same splaying internally of the window which is so common in the ancient Irish churches, both large and small—and the same configuration of doorway which is seen in many of them, the opening forming it being narrower at the top than at the bottom.

In the *Inchcolm* oratory there is one exception, as I have just stated, to the general type and features of the ancient Irish oratory. I allude to the position of the door, which is placed in the south side of the *Inchcolm* cell, instead of being placed, as usual, in the western gable of the building. But this position of the door in the south wall is not without example in ancient Irish oratories

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 365, 351.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 351.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 352.

that still exist. The door occupies in this respect the same position in the Incheolm oratory as in an oratory on Bishop's Island upon the coast of Clare, the erection of which is traditionally ascribed to St Senan, who lived in the sixth century. This oratory of St Senan (says Mr Wakeman) "measures 18

Fig. 9.



St Senan's Oratory on Bishop's Island.

feet by 12; the walls are in thickness 2 feet 7 inches. The doorway, which occupies an unusual position in the south side, immediately adjoining the west end wall, is 6 feet in height, 1 foot 10 inches wide at the top, and 2 feet 4 inches at the bottom. The east window splays externally, and in this respect is probably unique in Ireland."<sup>1</sup> These peculiarities are shown in the accompanying woodcut, fig. 9, taken from Mr Wakeman's Handbook of Irish Antiquities.

The Irish ecclesiastics did not scruple to deviate from the established plans of their sacred buildings, when the necessities of individual cases required it. In the Firth of Forth west winds are the most prevalent of all; and sometimes the western blast is still as fierce and long continued as when of old it drove King Alexander on the shores of Incheolm. The hermit's cell or oratory is placed on perhaps the most protected spot on the island; and yet it would have been scarcely habitable with an open window exposing its interior to the east, and with a door placed directly opposite it in the western gable. It has been rendered, however, much more fit for a human abode by the door being situated in the south wall; and the more so, because the ledge of rock against which the south-west corner of the building abuts, protects in a great degree this south door from the direct effects of the western storm. The building itself is narrower than the generality of the Irish oratories, but this was perhaps necessitated by another circumstance, for its breadth was probably determined by the immovable basaltic blocks lying on either side of it.

The head of the doorway in the Incheolm oratory is, as pointed out in a preceding page, peculiar in this respect, that externally it is constructed on the prin-

<sup>1</sup> Wakeman's *Archæologia Hibernica*, pp. 59, 60.

ciple of the radiating arch, whilst internally it is built on the principle of the horizontal arch. But in other early Irish ecclesiastical buildings in Scotland, as well as in Ireland, the external and internal aspect of the doorway is sometimes thus constructed on opposite principles. In the Round Tower, for example, of Abernethy, the head of the doorway externally is formed of a large single stone laid horizontally, and having a semicircular opening cut out of the lower side of the horizontal block; while the head of the doorway internally is constructed of separate stones on the plan of the radiating arch.

One striking circumstance in the Incheolm oratory, viz., its vaulted or arched roof, has been already sufficiently described; and, in describing it, I have stated that the arch is of a pointed form. In many of the ancient Irish oratories the roof was of wood, and covered with rushes or shingles; and most of them had their walls even constructed of wood or oak, as the term *duir-theach* originally signifies. But apparently, though the generic name *duir-theach* still continued to be applied to them, some of them were constructed, from a very early period, entirely of stone; and of these the roofs were occasionally formed of the same material as the walls, and arched or vaulted, as in the Incheolm oratory. In speaking of the construction of the primitive larger churches of Ireland, Dr Petrie states, that their "roof appears to have been constructed generally of wood, even where their walls were of stone;" while in the oratories or primitive smaller stone churches, "the roofs (says he) generally appear to have been constructed of stone, their sides forming at the ridge a very acute angle."<sup>1</sup> The selection of the special materials of which both walls and roof were composed, was no doubt, in many cases, regulated and determined by the comparative facility or difficulty with which these materials were obtained. At no time, perhaps, did timber exist on Incheolm that could have been used in constructing such a building; whilst plenty of stones fit for the purpose abounded on the island, and there was abundance of lime on the neighbouring shore. Stone-roofed oratories of a more complex and elaborate architectural character than that of Incheolm still exist in Ireland, and of a supposed very early date. We have already found, for instance, Dr Petrie stating that "we have every reason to believe" that the stone-roofed oratories known as St Kevin's House at Glendalough, and St Columba's House at Kells, "were erected by the persons whose names they bear,"<sup>2</sup> and consequently that they are as old as the sixth century. These two oratories are, as it were, two-storied buildings; for each consists of a lower and larger stone-arched or vaulted chamber below, and of another higher and smaller stone-arched or vaulted chamber or over-croft above. The old small stone-roofed church still standing at Killaloe, and the erection of which Dr Petrie is inclined to ascribe to St Flannan in the seventh century, pre-

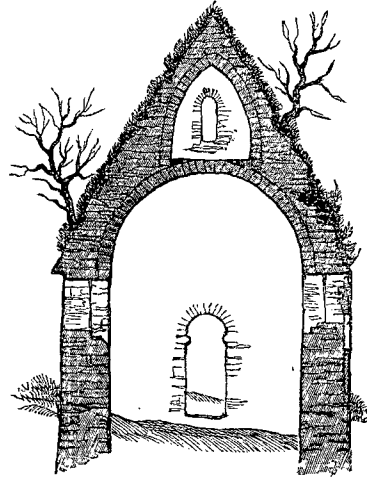
<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 437.

sents also in its structure this type of double stone-vault or arch, as shown in the following section of it by Mr Fergusson.<sup>1</sup> When treating of the early Irish oratories, Mr Fergusson observes, "One of the peculiarities of these churches is, that they were nearly all designed to have stone roofs, no wood being used in their construction. The annexed section of the old church at Killaloe, belonging probably to the tenth century, will explain how this was generally managed. The nave was roofed with a tunnel-vault with a pointed one over it, on which the roofing slabs were laid." Mr Fergusson adduces Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel, St Kevin's House or Kitchen at Glendalough, which he thinks "may belong to the seventh century;" and St Columba's House at Kells, "and several others in various parts of Ireland, as all displaying the same peculiarity" in the stone roofing.

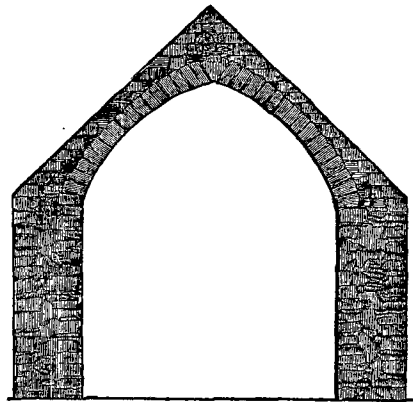
Like some oratories and churches in Ireland, more simple and primitive than those just alluded to, the building on Inchecolm is an edifice consisting of a single vaulted chamber, analogous in form to the overcroft of the larger oratories or minor churches. The accompanying section of the old and small stone-roofed church of Killaghy, at the village of Clogheen near Killarney, is the result of an accurate examination of that building by Mr Brash of Cork. Its stones look better dressed and more equal in size, but otherwise it is so exactly a section of the Inche-

Fig. 10.



Section of St Flannan's Church at Killaloe.

Fig. 11.



Section of the Church of Killaghy.

<sup>1</sup> See his Illustrated Hand-book of Architecture, vol. ii., p. 918.

colm oratory, that it might well be regarded as a plan of it, intended to display the figure and mode of construction of its walls and stone roof, formed as that roof is of three layers—viz., 1. The layer consisting of the proper stones of the arch of the cell interiorly; 2. The layer of outer roofing stones placed exteriorly; and, 3. The intermediate layer of lime, and grit or small stones, cementing and binding together these other two courses.

It was once suggested to me, as an argument against the Irish architectural character and antiquity of the Inchcolm oratory, that its vault or arch was slightly but distinctly pointed, and that pointed arches did not become an architectural feature in ecclesiastical buildings before the latter half of the twelfth century. But if there existed any truth in this objection, it would equally disprove the early character and antiquity of those ecclesiastical buildings at Killybegs, Glendalough, and Kells, in which the arch of the over-croft is of the same pointed form. The over-croft in King Cormac's Chapel at Cashel shows also a similar pointed vault or arch; and no one now ventures to challenge it as an established fact in ecclesiastical history, that this edifice was consecrated in 1134, or at a date anterior to the introduction<sup>1</sup> of Gothic church architecture or pointed arches in sacred buildings in England.<sup>2</sup> In truth, the pointed form of arched vault was sometimes used by Irish ecclesiastics structurally, and for the sake of more simply and easily sustaining the stone roof, long before that arch became the distinctive mark of any architectural style. Indeed, in the very oldest existing Irish oratory—viz., that of Gallerus, which is generally reckoned<sup>3</sup> as early as, if not earlier than, the time of St Patrick, or about the fifth century—the stone roof, though constructed on the principle of the horizontal arch, is of the pointed form. The whole section of the oratory of Gallerus is that of a pointed arch commencing directly at the ground line.<sup>4</sup> “I have,” Mr Brash writes me,

<sup>1</sup> See Dr Petrie's work (p. 291) for full quotations in confirmation of this date, from the Annals of Clonmacnoise and Kiltonan, the Annals of Munster, the Annals of the Four Masters, the Chronicon Scotorum, &c.

<sup>2</sup> When discussing the history of the pointed arch, Mr Parker observes: “The choir of Canterbury Cathedral, commenced in 1175, is usually referred to as the earliest example in England, and none of earlier date has been authenticated.”—Glossary of Terms in Architecture (1845), p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Petrie's Ecclesiastical Architecture, p. 133.

<sup>4</sup> Pointed arches, constructed both on the radiating and horizontal principles, are found still standing in the antiquated mason-work of Assyria, Nubia, Greece, and Etruria. (See drawings and descriptions of different specimens from these countries in Mr Fergusson's Handbook of Architecture, vol. i., pp. 253, 254, 257, 259, 294, 381, &c.) The pointed arch was used in the East in sacred architecture as early as the time of Constantine, as is still witnessed in the oldest existing Christian church, namely, the church built by that emperor, in the earlier part of the fourth century, over the alleged tomb of our Saviour at Jerusalem. For

and I could not well quote a better judge or more learned ecclesiastic antiquary, "carefully examined the oratory at Incheolm, and it is my conviction that the pointed arch supporting the stone roof does not in any wise whatever militate against its antiquity, particularly when taking it in connection with the extreme rudeness and simplicity of the rest of the structure, and the total absence of any pointed form on either door or window."

Let me add one word more as to the probable or possible age of the capellula on Incheolm. Granting, for a moment, that the building on Incheolm is the small chapel existing on the island when visited by King Alexander in 1123, have we any reason to suppose the structure to be one of a still earlier date? Incheolm was apparently a favourite place of sepulture up indeed to comparatively late times; and may possibly have been so in old Pagan times, and previously to the introduction of Christianity into Scotland. The soil of the fields to the west of the monastery is, when turned over, found still full of fragments of human bones. Allan de Mortimer, Lord of Aberdour, gave to the Abbey of Incheolm a moiety of the lands of his town of Aberdour for leave of burial in the church of the monastery.<sup>1</sup> In Scottish history various allusions occur with regard to persons of note, and especially the ecclesiastics of Dunkeld, being carried for sepulture to Incheolm.<sup>2</sup> The Danish chiefs, who after the invasion of

notices of the prevalence of the pointed arch in early Eastern and in Saracenic architecture, see Fergusson's *Hand-book*, p. 380, 598, &c.

<sup>1</sup> "Alanus de Mortuo Mari, Miles, Dominus de Abirdaur, dedit omnes et totas dimidietates terrarum Villæ suæ de Abirdaur, Deo et Monachis de Insula Sancti Columbi, pro sepultura sibi et posteris suis in Ecclesia dicti Monasterii." (Quoted from the MS. Register or Chartulary of the Abbey by Sir Robert Sibbald in his *History of Fife*, p. 41.) The same author adds, that, in consequence of this grant to the Monastery of Incheolm for leave of sepulture, the Earl of Murray (who represents "Stewart Abbott of Incheolm," that sat as a lay Commendator in the Parliament of 1560, when the Confession of Faith was approved of) now possesses "the wester half of Aberdour." Sir Robert Sibbald further mentions the story that "Alain, the founder, being dead, the Monks, carrying his corpse in a coffin of lead, by barge, in the night-time, to be interred within their church, some wicked Monks did throw the samen in a great deep betwixt the land and the Monastery, which to this day, by the neighbouring fishermen and salters, is called *Mortimer's deep*." He does not give the year of the preceding grant by Alain de Mortimer, but states that "the Mortimers had this Lordship by the marriage of Anicea, only daughter and sole heiress of Dominus Joannes de Vetere Ponte or Vypont, in anno 1126." It appears to have been her husband who made the above grant. (See Nisbet's *Heraldry*, vol. i., p. 294.)

<sup>2</sup> Thus, in 1272, Richard of Inverkeithing, Chamberlain of Scotland, died, and his body was buried at Dunkeld, but his heart was deposited in the choir of the Abbey of Incheolm. (*Scotichronicon*, lib. x., c. 30.) In Hay's *Sacra Scotia* is a description of the sculptures on this monument in Incheolm Church, p. 471. In 1173, Richard, chaplain to King William, died at Cramond, and was buried in Incheolm (*Mylne's Vitæ*, p. 6). In 1210, Richard, Bishop of Dunkeld, died at Cramond, and was buried in Incheolm. (*Scotichronicon*, lib. viii.,



Fife were buried in the cemetery of Incheolm, were, as we have already found, interred there in the seventh or last year of King Duncan's reign, or in 1039, nearly a century before the date of Alexander's visit to the island. But if there was, a century before Alexander's visit, a place of burial on the island, there was almost certainly also this or some other chapel attached to the place, as a Christian cemetery had in these early times always a Christian chapel or church of some form attached to it. The style and architecture of the building is apparently, as I have already stated, as old or even older than this; or, at all events, it corresponds in its features to Irish houses and oratories that are regarded as having been built two or three centuries before the date even of the sepulture of the Danes in the island.

The manuscript copy of the *Scotichronicon*, which belonged to the Abbey of Cupar, and which, like the other old manuscripts of the *Scotichronicon*, was written before the end of the fifteenth century,<sup>1</sup> describes Incheolm as the temporary abode of St Columba himself, when he was engaged as a missionary among the Scots and Piets. In enumerating the islands of the Firth of Forth, Incheolm is mentioned in the Cupar manuscript as "*alia insuper insula ad occidentis distans ab Inchecketh, quæ vocatur Æmonia, inter Edinburch et Inverkethyn; quam quondam incoluit, dum Pictis et Scotis fidem prædicavit, Sanctus Columba Abbas.*"<sup>2</sup> We do not know upon what foundation, if any, this statement is based; but it is very evidently an allegation upon which no great assurance can be placed. Nor, in alluding to this statement here, have I any intention of arguing that this cell might even have served St Columba both as a house

c. 27); and four years afterwards, Bishop Lyecester died also at Cramond, and was buried at Incheolm (*Ibid.*, lib. ix., c. 27). In 1265, Richard, Bishop of Dunkeld, built a new choir in the church of St Columba on Incheolm; and in the following year the bones of three former bishops of Dunkeld were transferred, and buried, two on the north, and the third on the south side of the altar in this new choir. (*Scotichronicon*, lib. x., c. 20, 21.) See also the *Extracta e Cronico Scocie* for other similar notices, pp. 90, 95, &c.; and *Mylne's Vitæ Dunkeldensis Ecclesiæ Episcoporum*, pp. 6, 9, 11, &c.

<sup>1</sup> "There are" (observes Father Innes) "still remaining many copies of Fordun, with continuations of his history done by different hands. The chief authors were Walter Bower or Bowmaker, Abbot of Incheolm, Patrick Russell, a Carthusian monk of Perth, the *Chronicle of Cupar*, the Continuation of Fordun, attributed to Bishop Elphinstone, in the Bodleian Library, and many others. All these were written in the fifteenth age, or in the time betwixt Fordun and Boece, by the best historians that Scotland then afforded, and unquestionably well qualified for searching into, and finding out, what remained of ancient MSS. histories anywhere hidden within the kingdom, and especially in abbeys and monasteries, they being all either abbots or the most learned churchmen or monks in their respective churches or monasteries." (Innes's *Critical Inquiry*, vol. i., p. 228.)

<sup>2</sup> See extract in Goodall's edition of the *Scotichronicon*, vol. i., p. 6 (foot-note), and in Colgan's *Trias Thaumaturga*, vol. ii., p. 466.

and oratory, such as the house of the Saint still standing at Kells is believed by Dr Petrie to have possibly been.

The nameless religious recluse whom Alexander found residing on Inchcolm is described by Fordun and Boece as leading there the life of a hermit (*Eremita*), though a follower of the order or rule of Saint Columba. The ecclesiastical writers of these early times not unfrequently refer to such self-denying and secluded anchorites. The Irish Annals are full of their obits. Thus, for example, under the single year 898, the Four Masters<sup>1</sup> record the death of, at least, four who had passed longer or shorter periods of their lives as hermits, namely, "Suairleach, anchorite and Bishop of Treoit;" "Cosgrach, who was called Truaghan [*the meagre*], anchorite of Inis-Cealtra;" "Tuathal, anchorite;" "Ceallach, anchorite and Bishop of Ard-Macha;"—and probably we have the obit of a fifth entered in this same year under the designation of "Caenchombrac of the Caves of Inis-bo-fine," as these early ascetics sometimes betook themselves to caves, natural or artificial, using them for their houses and oratories.<sup>2</sup> Various early English authors also allude to the habitations and lives of different anchorites belonging to our own country. Thus the venerable Bede—living himself as a monk in the Northumbrian monastery of Jar-

<sup>1</sup> Dr O'Donovan's Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland, vol. i., p. 557.

<sup>2</sup> In Scotland we have various alleged instances of caves being thus employed as anchorite or devotional cells, and some of them still show rudely-cut altars, crosses, &c.,—as the so-called Cave of St Columba on the shores of Loch Killesfort in North Knapdale, with an altar, a font or piscina, and a cross cut in the rock (*Origines Parochiales*, vol. ii., p. 40); the Cave of St Kieran on Loch Kilkerran in Kintyre (*Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 12); the Cave of St Ninian on the coast of Wigtonshire (*Old Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol. xvii., p. 594) the Cave of St Moloe in Holy Island in the Clyde, with Runic inscriptions on its walls (see an account of them in Dr Daniel Wilson's admirable Prehistoric Annals of Scotland, pp. 531 to 533, &c.) The island of Inchcolm pertains to Fifeshire, and in this single county there are at least four caves that are averred to have been the retreats which early Christian devotees and ascetics occupied as temporary abodes and oratories, or in which they occasionally kept their holy vigils;—namely, the cave at Dunfermline, which bears the name of Malcolm Canmore's devout Saxon queen St Margaret, and which is said to have contained formerly a stone table or altar, with "something like a crucifix" upon it (*Dr Chalmers' Historical Account of Dunfermline*, vol. i., pp. 88, 89); the Cave of St Serf at Dysart (the name itself—Dysart—an instance, in all probability, of the "*desertum*" of the text, p. 485), in which that saint contested successfully in debate, according to the Aberdeen Breviary, with the devil, and expelled him from the spot (see *Breviarium Aberdonense*, Mens. Julii, fol. xv., and Mr Muir's *Notices of Dysart for the Maitland Club*, p. 3); the caves of Caplawchy, on the east Fifeshire coast, marked interiorly with rude crosses, &c., and which, according to Wynton, were inhabited for a time by "St Adrian wyth hys cumpany" of disciples (*Orygynale Chronykel of Scotland*, book iii., c. viii.); and the Cave of St Rule at St Andrews, containing a stone table or altar on its east side, and on its west side the supposed sleeping cell of the hermit excavated out of the rock (*Old Statistical Account*, vol. xiii.,

row, in the early part of the eighth century—refers by name to several, as to Hemgils, who, as a religious solitary (*solitarius*), passed the latter portion of his life, sustained by coarse bread and cold water; and to Wicbert,<sup>1</sup> who, “multos annos in Hibernia peregrinus anchoriticam in magna perfectione vitam egerat.” Reginald of Durham has left a work on the life, penances, medical and other miracles, of the celebrated St Godric, who, during the twelfth century, lived for about forty years as an anchorite in the hermitage of Finchale, on the river Were, near Durham.<sup>3</sup> The same author speaks of, as cotemporary holy hermits, St Elric of Wolsingham, and an anchorite at Yarehall, on the Derwent.<sup>4</sup> A succession of hermits occupied a cell near Norham.<sup>5</sup> Small islands appear to have been specially selected by the early anchorets for their heremital retreats. Herbert, the friend of St Cuthbert, lived, according to Bede, an anchoret life upon one of the islands in the lake of Derwentwater; and St Cuthbert himself, Ethelwald, and Felgeld, when they aspired to the rank of anchoretish perfection (*gradum anchoreticæ sublimitatis*), successively betook themselves for this purpose to Farne, on the coast of Northumberland, a small isle about eight or nine miles south of Lindisfarne.<sup>6</sup> Among other anchorets who subsequently lived on Farne, Reginald incidentally mentions Aelric, Bartholomew, and Aelwin.<sup>7</sup> On Coquet Island, lying also off the Northumbrian coast, St Henry the Dane led the life of a religious hermit, and died about the year 1120.<sup>8</sup> Incheolm is not the only island in the Firth of Forth which is hallowed by the reputation of having been the residence of anchorets, seeking for scenes in which they might practise uninterrupted devotion. Thus, St

p. 202). In Marmion (Canto i. 29) Sir Walter Scott describes the “Palmer” as, with solemn vows to pay,

“To fair St Andrews bound,  
Within the *ocean-cave* to pray,  
Where good St Rule his holy lay,  
From midnight to the dawn of day,  
Sung to the billows’ sound.”

<sup>1</sup> *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, lib. v., cap. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, lib. v., c. 9. Bede further states that this anchoret subsequently went to Frisland to preach as a missionary there, but he reaped no fruit from his labours among his barbarous auditors. “Returning then (adds Bede) to the beloved place of his peregrination, he gave himself up to our Lord in his wonted repose; for since he could not be profitable to strangers by teaching them the faith, he took care to be the more useful to his own people by the example of his virtue.”

<sup>3</sup> Published in 1845 by the Surtees Society, “*Libellus de Vita, &c., S. Godrici*,” p. 65, &c.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45 and 192.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, foot-note, p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> *Bede’s Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, cap. 16, 28, 46, &c.

<sup>7</sup> *De Beati Cuthberti Virtutibus*, pp. 63 and 66.

<sup>8</sup> See “The Flowers of the Lives of the most Renowned Saints of the Three Kingdoms,” by Hierome Porter, p. 321.

Baldred or Balthar lived for some time, during the course of the seventh century, as a religious recluse, upon the rugged and precipitous island of the Bass, as stated by Boece, Lesslie, Dempster,<sup>1</sup> &c., and, as we know with more certainty from a poem written—upwards now of one thousand years ago—by a native of this country, the celebrated Aleuin.<sup>2</sup> The followers of

<sup>1</sup> Boece's History and Chronicles of Scotland, book ix., c. 17, or vol. ii., p. 98; Lesslie's De Rebus Gestis Scotorum, lib. iv., p. 152; Dempster's Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Scotorum, lib. ii., p. 122, or vol. i., p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> The poem alluded to is designated "De Pontificibus et Sanctis Ecclesiæ Eboracensis." A copy of it is printed in Gale's *Historiæ Britannicæ*, &c., *Scriptores*, vol. iii., p. 703, *seq.* The famous author of this poem, Aleuin, who was brought up at York, and probably born there about the year 735, became afterwards, as is well known, the councillor and confidant of Charlemagne. The application to the Bass of the lines in which he describes the anchorit residence of St Balthar is evident:

Est locus undoso circumdatus undique ponto,  
Rupibus horrendis prærupto et margine septus,  
In quo belli potens terreno in corpore miles  
Sæpius ærias vincebat, Balthere, turmas; &c.

The Bass was not the only hermit's island on our eastern coasts which was imagined, in these credulous times, to be the occasional abode of evil spirits. According to Bede, no one had dared to dwell alone on the island of Farne before St Cuthbert selected it as his anchorit habitation, because demons resided there (*propter demorantium ibi phantasias demonum*). *Vita Cuthberti*, cap. 16. See also the undivelling of the cave of Dysart by St Serf in the second foot-note of page 482; and some alleged feats of St Patrick and St Columba in this direction in Dr O'Donovan's *Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. i., p. 156. Two other islands in the Firth of Forth are noted in ancient ecclesiastical history—viz., Inch May and Inch Keith. "The ile of May, decorit (to use the words of Bellenden) with the blude and martirdome of Sanct Adriane and his fallowis," was the residence of that Hungarian missionary and his disciples when they were attacked and murdered about the year 874 by the Danes (Bellenden's Translation of Boece's History, vol. i., p. 37; see also vol. ii., p. 206; Dempster's *Historia Eccl. Gentis Scotorum*, lib. i., 17, and vol. i., p. 20; and Fordun, in the *Scotichronicon*, lib. i., c. vi., where he describes "Maya, prioratus cujus est cella canonicorum Sanct Andreæ de Raymouth; ubi requiescit Sanctus Adrianus, cum centum sociis suis sanctis martyribus." Inch Keith is enumerated by Dr Reeves (*Preface to Life of Columba*, p. 66) as one of the Scotch churches of St Adamnan, Abbot of Iona from A.D. 679 to 704, and the biographer of St Columba—Fordun having long ago described it as a place "in qua præfuit Sanctus Adamnanus abbas, qui honorifice suscepit Sanctum Servanum, cum sociis suis, in ipsa insula, ad primum suum adventum in Scotiam." Andrew Wynton, himself the Prior of St Serf's Isle in Lochleven, describes also, in his old metrical "*Orygynale Chronykel of Scotland*," vol. i., p. 128, this apocryphal meeting of the two saints—

" at Inchkeith,  
The ile betweene Kingorne and Leth."

The Breviary of Aberdeen, in alluding to this meeting, points out that the St Serf received by Adamnan was not the St Serf of the Dysart Cave, and hence also not the baptizer of St Ken-

the order of St Columba who desired to follow a more ascetic life than that which the society of his religious houses and monasteries afforded to its ordinary members, sometimes withdrew (observes Dr Reeves<sup>1</sup>) to a solitary place in the neighbourhood of the monastery, where they enjoyed undisturbed meditation, without breaking the fraternal bond. Such, in 634, was Beccan, the "solitarius," as he is designated in Cumman's cotemporary Paschal letter to Segene, the Abbot of Iona; and such was Finan, the hermit of Durrow, who, in the words of Adamnan, "vitam multis anchoriticam annis irreprehensibiliter ducebat." According to the evidence of the Four Masters, an anchorite held the Abbacy of Iona in 747; another anchorite was Abbot-elect in 935; and a third was made Bishop in 964. "The abode of such anchorites was (adds Dr Reeves) called in Irish a 'desert' (Dysart), from the Latin *desertum*; and as the heremital life was held in such honour among the Scotie Churches, we frequently find this word 'desert' an element in religious nomenclature. There was a 'desert' beside the monastery of Derry; and that belonging to Iona was situate near the shore, in the low ground north of the Cathedral, as may be

tigern at Culross, as told in the legend of his mother, St Thenew, or St Thenuh—a female saint whose very existence the good Presbyterians of Glasgow had so entirely lost sight of that centuries ago they unsexed the very name of the church dedicated to her in that city, and came to speak of it under the uncanonical appellation of St Enoch's. This first St Serf and Adamnan lived two centuries, at least, apart. In these early days Inch Keith was a place of no small importance, if it be—as some (see Macpherson's Geographical Illustrations of Scottish History) have supposed—the "urbs Guidi" of Bede, which he speaks of as standing in the midst of the eastern firth, and contrasts with Alcluith or Dumbarton, standing on the side of the western firth. The Scots and Piets were, he says, divided from the Britons "by two inlets of the sea (duobus sinibus maris) lying betwixt them, both of which run far and broad into the land of Britain, one from the Eastern, and the other from the Western Ocean, though they do not reach so as to touch one another. The eastern has in the midst of it the city of Guidi (Orientalis habit in medio sui urbem Guidi). The western has on it, that is, on the right hand thereof (ad dextram sui), the city of Alcluith, which in their language means the 'Rock of Cluith,' for it is close by the river of that name (Clyde)" (Bede's Hist. Ecclesiast., book i., c. xii). In reference to the supposed identification of Inch Keith and this "urbs Guidi," let me add (1.) that Bede's description (in medio sui) as strongly applies to the Island of Garvie, or Inch Garvie, lying midway between the two Queensferries; (2.) it is perhaps worthy of note, that the term "Guidi" is in all probability a Pictish proper name, one of the kings of the Piets being surnamed "Guidi," or rather "Guidid" (see Pinkerton's Inquiry into the History of Scotland, vol. i., p. 287, and an extract from the Book of Ballymote, p. 504); and (3.) that the word "urbs," in the language of Bede, signifies a place important, not so much for its size as from its military or ecclesiastic rank, for thus he describes the rock (petra) of Dumbarton as the "urbs Alcluith," and Coldingham as the "urbs Coludi" (Hist. Eccl., lib. iv., c. 19, &c.)—the Saxon noun "*ham*," house or village, having, in this last instance, been in former times considered a sufficient appellation for a place to which Bede applies the Latin designation of "urbs."

<sup>1</sup> See his edition of Adamnan's Life of Saint Columba, p. 366.

inferred from Port-au-diseart, the name of a little bay in this situation." The charters of the Columbian House at Kells show that a 'desert' existed in connection with that institution. Could the old building or capellula on Inchcolm have served as a 'desert' to the Monastery there?

The preceding remarks have spun out to a most unexpected extent; and I have to apologize both for their extravagant length and rambling character. At the same time, however, I believe that it would be considered an object of no small interest if it could be shown to be at all probable that we had still near us a specimen, however rude and ruinous, of early Scoto-Irish architecture. All authorities now acknowledge the great influence which, from the sixth to the eleventh or twelfth century, the Irish Church and Irish clergy exercised over the conversion and civilization of Scotland. But on the eastern side of the kingdom we have no known remains of Scoto-Irish ecclesiastical architecture except the beautiful and perfect Round Tower of Brechin,<sup>1</sup> and the

<sup>1</sup> This is no fit place to discuss the ages of the two Round Towers of Brechin and Abernethy. But it may perhaps prove interesting to some future antiquary if it is here mentioned, that when Dr Petrie, in his "Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland" (p. 410), gives "about the year 1020" as the probable date of the erection of the Round Tower of Brechin, he chiefly relied—as he has mentioned to me, when conversing upon the subject,—for this approach to the era of its building, upon that entry in the ancient Chronicon de Regibus Scotorum, &c., published by Innes, in which it is stated that King Kenneth MacMalcolm, who reigned from A.D. 971 to A.D. 994, "tribuit magnam civitatem Brechne domino." (See the Chronicon in Innes's Critical Inquiry, vol. ii., p. 788.) The peculiarities of architecture in the Round Tower of Brechin assimilate it much with the Irish Round Towers of Donoughmore and Monasterboice, both of which Dr Petrie believes to have been built in or about the tenth century. If we could, in such a question, rely upon the authority of Hector Boece, the Round Tower of Brechin is at least a few years older than the probable date assigned to it by Dr Petrie. For in describing the inroads of the Danes into Forfarshire about A.D. 1012 he tells us, that these invaders destroyed and burned down the town of Brechin, and all its great church, except "*turrim quandam rotundam mira arte constructam.*" (Scotorum Historiæ, lib. xi., p. 251 of Paris Edit. of 1526). This reference to the Round Tower of Brechin has escaped detection, perhaps because it has been omitted by Bolland and Holinshed in their translations. No historical notices, I believe, exist, tending to fix in any probable way the exact age of the Round Tower of Abernethy; but one or two circumstances bearing upon the inquiry are worthy of note. We are informed, both by the "Chronicon Pictorum" and by Bede, that in the eighth or ninth year of his reign, or about A.D. 563, Brude, King of the Picts, embraced Christianity under the personal teaching of St. Columba. At Brude's death, in 586, Garnard succeeded, and reigned till 597; and he was followed by Nectan II., who reigned till 617. Fordun (Scotichronicon, lib. iv., cap. 12), and Wynton (book v., ch. 12), both state that King Garnard founded the collegiate Church of Abernethy; and Fordun further adds that he had found this information in a chronicle of the Church of Abernethy itself, which is now lost: "in quadam Chronica ecclesiæ de Abirnethy reperimus." But the register of the Priory of St Andrews mentions Garnard's successor on the Pictish throne, Nectan II., as the builder of Abernethy, "hic ædificavit

runder and probably older Round Tower of Abernethy. If, to these two instances, we dare to conjoin a specimen of a house or oratory of the same Scoto-Abernethyn" (Innes' Critical Inquiry, p. 800). The probability is, that Garnard, towards the end of his reign, founded and commenced the building of the Church establishment of Abernethy, and that it was concluded and consecrated in the early part of the reign of Nectan. The church was dedicated to St Brigid; and the *Chronicon Pictorum* (Innes' Inquiry, p. 778), in ascribing its foundation to Nectan I. (about A.D. 455) instead of Nectan II., commits a palpable anachronism and very evident error, as St Brigid did not die till a quarter of the next century had elapsed. (Annals of the Four Masters under the year 525; Colgan's *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 619.) Again, according to the more certain evidence of Bede, another Pictish king, still of the name of Nectan (*Naitanus Rex Pictorum*), despatched messengers, about the year 715, to Ceolfrid, Abbot of Bede's own Northumbrian monastery of Jarrow, requesting, among other matters, that architects should be sent to him to build in his country a church of stone, according to the manner of the Romans (*et architectos sibi mitti petiit, qui juxta morem Romanorum ecclesiam in lapide in gente ipsius facerent.* (*Hist. Eccles.*, lib. v., c. xxi.) Forty years previously, St Benedict or Bescop, the first Abbot of Jarrow, had brought there from Gaul, masons (*cæmentarios*) to build for him "*ecclesiam lapideam juxta Romanorum morem.*" (See Bede's *Vita Beatorum Abbatum.*) Now it is probable that the Round Tower of Abernethy was not built in connection with the church established there by the Pictish kings at the beginning of the seventh century, for no such structures seem to have been erected in connection with Pictish churches in any other part of the Pictish kingdom; and if at Abernethy, the capital of the Picts, a Round Tower had been built in the seventh century of stone and lime, the Abbot of Jarrow would scarcely have been asked in the eighth century, by a subsequent Pictish king, to send architects to show the mode of erecting a church of stone in his kingdom. Nor is it in the least degree more likely that these ecclesiastic builders, invited by King Nectan in the early years of the eighth century, erected themselves the Round Tower of Abernethy; for the building of such towers was, if not totally unknown, at least totally unpractised by the ecclesiastic architects of England and France within their own countries. The Scotch or Scoto-Irish race became united with the Picts into one kingdom in the year 843, under King Kenneth MacAlpine, a lineal descendant and representative of the royal chiefs who led the Dalriadic colony from Antrim to Argyleshire, about A.D. 506. (See the elaborate genealogical table of the Scottish Dalriadic kings in Dr Reeves' edition of Adamnan's *Life of Columba*, p. 438.) The purely 'Scotic period' of our history, as it has been termed, dates from this union of the Picts and Scots under Kenneth MacAlpine in 843, till Malcolm Canmore ascended the throne in 1057; and there is every probability that the Round Towers of Abernethy and Brechin were built during the period between these two dates, or during the regime of the intervening Scotic or Scoto-Irish kings,—in imitation of the numerous similar structures belonging to their original mother-church in Ireland. We may feel very certain, also, that they were not erected later than the commencement of the twelfth century, for by that date the Norman or Romanesque style,—which presents no such structures as the Irish Round Towers,—was apparently in general use in ecclesiastic architecture in Scotland, under the pious patronage of Queen Margaret Atheling and her three crowned sons. Abernethy—now a miserable village—was for centuries a royal and pontifical city, and the capital of a kingdom, "*fuit locus ille sedes principalis, regalis, et pontificalis, totius regni Pictorum*" (*Goodall's Scoto-chronicon*, vol. i., p. 189); but all its old regal and ecclesiastical buildings have utterly vanished, with the exception only of its solitary and venerable Round Tower. And perhaps the

Irish style, and of the same ancient period, such as the Oratory on Inchcolm seems to me probably to be, we would have in such a specimen an addition of some moment to this limited and meagre list. Besides, it would surely not be uninteresting could we feel certain that we have still standing, within eight or ten miles of Edinburgh, a building whose roof had covered the head of King Alexander I., though it covered it for three days only; for that very circumstance would, at the same time, go far to establish another fact, namely, that any such building might claim to be now the oldest roofed stone habitation in Scotland.

preservation of the Round Tower in this and in numerous instances in Ireland, amidst the general ruin and devastation which usually surround them, is owing to the simple circumstance, that these Towers—whatever were their uses and objects—were structures which, in consequence of their remarkable combination of extreme tallness and slenderness, required to be constructed from the first of the very best and strongest, and consequently of the most durable building materials which could be procured; while the one-storied or two-storied wood-roofed churches, and other low and lighter ecclesiastical edifices with which they were associated, demanded far less strength in the original construction of their walls, and consequently have, under the dilapidating effects of centuries, much more speedily crumbled down and perished.