

the juxtaposed alternations with which the document abounds, they violate the laws of grammar—is in the Postcommunion (84 : 9) of the same Mass:—‘qui nos et temporalibus subsidiis refoues et pacis aeternis,’ with a superscribed ‘aeternae’. This I resolve into an original ‘qui nos et temporalibus subsidiis refoues et aeternis’ in 86 letters (3 lines of θ , α , β), and, should occasion be found to require it, a suggestion in the margin of some such phrase as ‘qui nos et temporalibus subsidiis refoues et pacis aeternae promissione sustentas’ or the like, in 111 letters (4 β lines).

Thus the *aduersaria*, to which I believe the editor of the third redaction meant to call the attention of his amanuensis by the memorandum ‘MEMOR ES’, would, if duly developed, have raised the contents of the last seven pages of the Section from 170 to 175 lines.

MARTIN RULE.

(To be continued.)

SOME LITURGICAL AND ASCETIC TRADITIONS OF THE CELTIC CHURCH.

I. GENUFLEXION.

WALAHFRID STRABO († 849) in his *De Ecclesiasticarum rerum exordiis et incrementis* writes:—

‘Quamvis autem geniculationis morem tota servet Ecclesia, tamen praecipue huic operi Scotorum insistit natio: quorum multi pluribus, multi paucioribus, sed tamen certis vicibus et dinumeratis per diem vel noctem genu flectentes, non solum pro peccatis deplorandis, sed etiam pro quotidianae devotionis expletione studium istud frequentare videntur.’¹

A manuscript in Irish character, belonging to the Berne Library, *Codex Bongarsianus*, n. 363 (ninth century), contains, among other things, the commentary of the grammarian Servius Maurus on Virgil. Naturalists, it is said there, maintain that each part of the body is dedicated to a special virtue: ‘... frontem genio, unde venerantes deum tangimus frontem; dexteram fidei; genua misericordiae, unde haec tangunt rogantes.’ And the Irish scribe adds in the margin, by way of gloss: ‘de flexu genuum ut Scotti faciunt.’²

¹ Walafr. Strabo *De eccles. rer.* 25 (Migne *P. L.* cxiv 952–953).

² L. C. Stern *Bemerkungen zu den Berner Glossen in Zeitsch. f. celtische Philologie* iv p. 180.

The author of the *Miracula Columbani*, a monk of Bobbio in the tenth century, remarks, after mentioning a pious practice ascribed to St Columbanus: 'Consuetudo est enim hominibus huius gentis unumquemque per diem centies et eo plus genuflectere.'¹

Here, then, are three instances which agree in inducing us to believe that genuflexion was a practice in favour among the Scots, i.e. the Irish. Still, it is probable that the last two texts quoted here are but echoes of Walahfrid Strabo. In this case, the three instances are reduced to a single one; but this one, as we shall see, is the mere expression of the reality.

Walahfrid was a monk, and afterwards abbot, of Reichenau, the library of which was one of the richest on the Continent in manuscripts of Irish origin,² and the biographer of St Gall and of the Irish martyr St Blaithmac († c. 827).³ He alludes in his works⁴ to Irish contemporaries, and he must have had the opportunity of coming into contact with Irish pilgrims or monks travelling in Germany. The words or the example of these pilgrims will have acquainted him with the particularities of their ascetic discipline.

Like stations for prayer in cold water⁵ and vigils passed with arms extended crosswise (*crossfigill*), genuflexion was one of the most striking features of Irish asceticism.

Walahfrid notices the repetition of this action an exact number of times day and night, and this is further attested for us by a number of hagiographical and disciplinary records.

Tírechán, in his notes for the Life of St Patrick, written before A.D. 656, in mentioning a fast of three days and three nights performed by the saint, says that it was accompanied with a hundred prayers and frequent genuflexions ('cum centenis oraculis flectenisque⁶ assiduis').⁷ His subsequent biographers and panegyrists speak of these austerities as

¹ Mabillon *Acta Sanctorum O.S.B.*, Paris, 1669, 2^o saec., p. 42.

² Cf. Alfred Holder *Die Reichenauer Handschriften*, Leipzig, 1906, vol. i: *Die Pergamenthandschriften*. There were, in A.D. 822, three copies of the *Regula Coenobialis* of St Columbanus, under the title of *Regula Hybernensium fratrum*, in the library of Reichenau (G. Becker *Catalogi Bibliothecarum antiqui*, Bonnæ, 1885, n. 382, 383, 384, pp. 11-12).

³ On the composition of the latter biography see H. Zimmer in *Neues Archiv* xvii p. 210.

⁴ Walafr. Strabo *Miracula S. Galli* ii 47 (*P. L.* cxiv 1029-1030); *Visio Wettini* (*ibid.* 1067).

⁵ Cf. *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, art. 'Bains' § v: *Immersiones celtiques*.

⁶ In the Irish texts genuflexion is expressed by *slechtain*, from Lat. *flecto* (cf. Whitley Stokes *Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore*, Oxford, 1890, *The language of the Lives* p. lxxxix).

⁷ *Tírechán's Collections*, in Wh. Stokes's *Tripartite Life*, London, 1887, p. 312.

habitual. According to *The Book of Lismore* he made a hundred genuflexions in the morning and as many again at night.¹ According to the Homily in the *Leabar Breac*, it was the angel Victor, his faithful counsellor, who taught him this practice.² The homilist becomes enthusiastic when he is describing Patrick's rules. He was accustomed, among other devotions, to make the sign of the cross a hundred times on his face, from one canonical hour to the next; to recite a hundred Psalms during the first watch of the night, genuflecting meanwhile two hundred times; and to spend the second watch immersed in cold water. The third watch was devoted to meditation; and it was only during the fourth watch that he took a short rest on the bare ground.³ These details are apparently only amplifications of the records of his practice which the saint himself has left in his barbarous Latin: 'frequens in die orabam . . . , et fides augebatur et spiritus agebatur, ut in die una usque ad centum orationes et in nocte prope similiter . . . ante lucem excitabar ad orationem per nivem, per gelu per pluuiam.'⁴ Genuflexions are not mentioned.

The Cuimín's Poem on the Saints of Ireland states that St Jarlath († c. 540) was wont to make three hundred genuflexions in the night, and three hundred more in the day.⁵ Oengus the Culdee, every night, made as many.⁶ This kind of mathematical mortification and adoration was not, however, peculiar to the Celtic saints. The Oriental monks practised it before them. To quote but one instance, the *Historia Lausiaca* speaks of an abbot Apollo, an inhabitant of the Thebaid, who prayed all day long, and again a hundred times in the night, bending his knee as many times.⁷ It is nevertheless certain that in this, as in their macerations generally, the insular ascetics shewed an exceptional enthusiasm. Thus the Irish rule for solitaries, under the name of St Columba, has the direction, 'on the measure of thy work of labour, or of thy genuflexions, until thy sweat often comes, if thy tears are not free.'⁸

¹ *Betha Patraic* (Life of Patrick) l. 145 in *The Book of Lismore* pp. 5 and 153.

² In Wh. Stokes's *Tripart. Life* p. 441.

³ *Loc. cit.* p. 485.

⁴ *Patricius Confessio*, ed. Wh. Stokes, p. 361; ed. Newport J. D. White, Dublin, 1905, p. 239.

⁵ Ed. Wh. Stokes, in *Zeitsch. f. celt. Philol.* i p. 67, v p. 117 sq.

⁶ *The Martyrology of Oengus*, ed. Wh. Stokes, London, 1906, p. xlvi.

⁷ Migne *P. L.* lxxiii c. 1155.

⁸ Haddan and Stubbs *Councils and Eccl. docum.*, London, 1869-1878, ii part 1 p. 120 '... until the perspiration often comes' (E. O'Curry's translation in W. Reeves's *Primate Colton's Visitation* p. 112). The gloss of the *Amra Colum* all upon the following text relating to St Columba himself, 'He kept vigil as long as he lived' is remarkable: '12,000 genuflexions by him every day except tantum on festival days, so that his ribs were visible through his dress' (cf. *Irish Liber Hymnorum*, ed. Bernard and Atkinson, London, 1898, i p. 170, ii p. 63).

Walahfrid Strabo speaks of the genuflexion performed as a work of penitence ('pro peccatis deplorandis'). Penitentials and hagiographical works are full of details on this point. *The Book of Lismore* mentions a sinner who, having retired to a solitary island, recited seven times during the day the *Beatus*¹ and the Psalms, while he prostrated himself a hundred times.² Genuflexion appears chiefly in the Penitentials as a commutative (*arreum*) or subsidiary punishment. It accompanies the recitation of the Psalms: the penitent is condemned to recite the Psalms standing upright and to bend the knee twelve times in an hour ('duodecim quoque flectiones genuum flectantur in omni hora').³ Elsewhere, he is ordered to kneel forty times during the same space of time.⁴ The Irish treatise *de Arreis* decrees the following practices, equivalent to and in place of a penance normally lasting a week: 'seven hundred honest genuflexions and seven honest blows, and crossvigil at the end of every hundred until the arms are tired.'⁵

In times of public calamities genuflexion was likewise employed as a penitential exercise. To obtain preservation from a threatened plague the people are urged to apply themselves to a series of prayers and bodily mortifications, as follows: 'a hundred genuflexions with *Biait*, and *Magnificat*, and *Benedictus*, and *Miserere mei Deus*, and cross-vigil, and Patrick's Hymn, and the Hymn of the Apostles, and a smiting of hands, and a *Hymnum dicat*,⁶ and Michael's Hymn, and a genuflexion thrice at the end of each hymn; and they strike their breasts and say: "May mercy come to us, O God, and may we have the kingdom of heaven, and may God put away from us every plague and every mortality."'⁷

So far we have only considered the private and individual practice of genuflexion. But, though Walahfrid Strabo does not mention it, this action had its place also in the conventual psalmody of the monks of Ireland. But, here again, we must not suppose that this ceremony was peculiar to them; it is to the East we must again look to discover its origin.

Cassian has left in the second book of his *Institutes* a description of the arrangement of the Psalmody in the monasteries of Egypt.

¹ The Psalm cxviii, *Beati immaculati*.

² Fo. 42 b, 2; cf. Wh. Stokes *op. cit.* preface p. x.

³ Wasserschleben *Die Bussordnungen der abendländischen Kirche*, Halle, 1851, p. 139.

⁴ Wasserschleben *ibid.*; Wh. Stokes and J. Strachan *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, Cambridge, 1903, ii p. 38.

⁵ Kuno Meyer *The Old Irish Treatise de Arreis* in *Revue Celtique* xv 1894, p. 494.

⁶ Hymn attributed to S. Hilary of Poitiers.

⁷ *Adamnan's Second Vision* in *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*, ed. Bernard and Atkinson, i p. xxiv sq.

Twelve Psalms were recited both in the evening office and in that of the nocturnal vigils. After each Psalm, which one of the brethren chanted, while the others listened seated in silence, all rose and meditated upon what they had heard, and prayed mentally. Afterwards they knelt and prostrated themselves one moment to implore the Divine mercy; then they rose up again, and, standing upright with their arms extended, listened to the collect or prayer the priest recited ('... antequam flectant genua paulisper orant, et stantes in supplicatione maiorem temporis partem expendunt. Itaque post haec puncto brevissimo procidentes humi, velut adorantes tantum divinam clementiam, summa velocitate consurgunt, ac rursus erecti expansis manibus eodem modo quo prius stantes oraverant, suis precibus intentius immorantur'¹). Cassian further remarks that in his time the monks of Southern Gaul made it a rule to prostrate themselves at the end of each Psalm.²

The rules of St Isidore of Seville († 636)³ and of St Fructuosus of Braga (c. 650)⁴ mention the same custom. Let us note, however, that in these texts it is a question of prostration and not of mere genuflexion. In the writings of Cassian genuflexion appears as the first stage, so to speak, of prostration. On the contrary, in the treatise *de Virginitate*, formerly attributed to St Athanasius, the reference is really to genuflexion proper: 'After each Psalm offer prayer and bend the knees' (κατὰ ψαλμὸν εὐχὴ καὶ γονυκλισία ἐπιτελείσθω⁵). The *Regula Magistri*, which was followed in the seventh and eighth centuries in Gaul and in Italy, orders twenty or twenty-four genuflexions, according to the season, during the night offices, and twenty-four more during the *Lucernarium*. Genuflexions were not made on Sundays, at the Epiphany, nor at the Paschal season.⁶

According to the Irish tradition, which has found expression in a curious document entitled *Cursus Scottorum*,⁷ Cassian played an important part in the introduction of Oriental monastic usages into the West—as was in fact the case; and Ireland herself was indebted to this influence in a remarkable degree. Indeed, the liturgical *cursus* of the rule of St Columbanus is somewhat similar, in certain points, to the *disciplina psallendi* described in the *Institutes*. At the end of each Psalm we find a collect and a genuflexion; but the number of Psalms at Matins (*ad Matutinam*) varied from twenty-four to thirty-six on week-

¹ Cassianus *Instit.* ii 7 (Migne *P. L.* xlix 91 sq.).

² *Ibid.*

³ *Regula* c. vi; *P. L.* lxxxiii 876.

⁴ *Regula* c. iii; *P. L.* lxxxvii 1101.

⁵ Migne *P. G.* xxviii 275.

⁶ *Regula Magistri* c. xxxiii, xxxvi, xxxix, xli, xlv (*P. L.* lxxxviii 1003, 1005, 1006, 1007).

⁷ F. E. Warren gives this text in *The Antiphony of Bangor*, London, 1895, ii pp. xxv-xxvi.

days.¹ All, except the sick, were to make the genuflexion. It was to be made in silence, and Columbanus, more precise than other legislators or writers, marks its duration—the time occupied in reciting three times the versicle: *Deus in adiutorium meum intende*, &c. On Sundays, and during the *quingagesima* of Easter, this practice was suspended.²

If it is objected that the *Regula Columbani*, having been composed on the Continent and for continental monks, is imperfect evidence for insular customs—and this is by no means certain—, attention may be drawn to a rule written in Gaelic verse and ascribed to St Ailbe of Emly († c. 540) which prescribes yet more liturgical genuflexions. It says: 'A hundred genuflexions every Matin are due in the Church of a believer from the feast of John (doubtless the 29th August) whom they adore unto the solemn pasch of abstinence.'³

The *Ordo Monasticus de Kil-Ros*, a kind of a retrospective consuetudinary, of an uncertain date but of a genuine Celtic stamp, notes that the Scottish Culdees also knelt during the vigils at the end of each Psalm and even prostrated themselves on the ground, after the custom of the Egyptians.⁴

The same document adds that when the three nocturns were ended, all, except the abbot of the monastery, who remained in prayer in the oratory, were to withdraw and to occupy themselves in meditation, with genuflexions and pious works.⁵ In the evening, vespers having been chanted, each was to spend the time in private prayer with genuflexions, in winter until the first stars appeared, and in summer until sunset: 'quisque privatis precibus et genuflexionibus inserviebat, quoadusque sidera caelo visa finitum clauderent diem, in aestate autem, ob noctis brevitate, usque ad occasum solis.'⁶

LOUIS GOUGAUD, O. S. B.

¹ Warren *op. cit.* p. xvi.

² Columbanus *Reg. coenobialis* 10 (*P. L.* cxxx 220–221): '... die dominico ieiunium nefas ducimus vel de geniculis adorare. Eadem immunitate a die Paschae in Pentecosten usque gaudemus' (cf. Tertul. *De Corona* 3).

³ *Metrical Rule of St Ailbe of Emly* st. xviii, in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* viii 1871–1872, p. 182; Joseph O'Neill's edition in *Ériu: the Journal of the School of Irish Learning*, Dublin, iii part 1, 1907, p. 99.

⁴ 'Quae vigiliae per integras tres horas durabant, quia singulis viginti psalmos deputabant, et ad finem cuiusque psalmi profunde genu flectebant, sese in terram prosternentes' (*Ordo Monasticus in veteri Scotiae monasterio de Kil-Ros olim observatus*; *P. L.* lix 564). See on this *Ordo* the *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, art. 'Bains'.

⁵ *Ordo* loc. cit.

⁶ *Ordo* col. 565.