

VIII.

Life of St. Illtyd.¹

HERE BEGINS THE LIFE OF ST. ILLTYD.

1. OF THE MARRIAGE OF HIS PARENTS AND THE NATIVITY OF THE CHILD.²

Petabia, a rich and victorious province, powerful in arms, than which no one was more eminent in warlike reputation, derived its origin from its British mother. Being instructed by the mother, the daughter was always victorious; the British princes were full of vigour, and their leaders were noble, but the most noble inheritors of the land were formerly disinherited, and they lost their property, as if they were foreigners. Of these, Bicanus, a very celebrated soldier, and illustrious in race, and military

¹ From the Cott. MSS. in the British Museum, VESPASIAN, A. XIV.

² Saint Illtyd was by birth an Armorican, being the son of Bicanys, by a sister of Emyr Llydaw, whom John of Teignmouth called Riengulida, and was therefore the great nephew of Saint Germanus. The statement that Saint Illtyd was a soldier in the train of king Arthur, and was persuaded by Saint Cadoc to renounce the world, and devote himself to religion, would bring down the appointment to the college at Llanilltyd Fawr, or Llantwit Major, to the year A.D. 520. The name of Saint Illtyd is connected with several churches besides that of Llanilltyd Fawr or Llantwit; he may be considered the founder of Pembre, in Carmarthenshire, Illston and Newcastle in Glamorganshire, and also of Llantrisant, in the latter county, in conjunction with Saint Tyfodog, and Saint Gwyno. Ecton records Illtyd as the patron saint of Llanhary and Llantryddid, in Glamorganshire; and Llanhilih, Monmouthshire; and Llantwood or Llantwyd in Pembrokeshire. The following chapels are dedicated to him,—Llanilltyd Faerdre under Llantrisant, and Llantwit subject to Neath, Glamorganshire; Capel Illtyd subject to Dyfnog, Brecknockshire; and Llanilltyd under Llanfachraith, Merionethshire. According to Cressy the commemoration of Saint Illtyd was held February 7, but the year in which he died is uncertain.—Rees's Essay on the Welsh Saints, page 178, 181.

affairs, was eminent. All his kindred proceeded from the chief princes, no one of his predecessors was inferior to him, such as were the first, so was the last. Therefore being eminently descended and exalted from such persons, he ought to rejoice who proceeded from such very noble parents. He distinguished himself, and commanded in regal warfare, and was beloved by the king and queen, for universal fame spoke handsomely of him. A man of such eminent nobility, was desirous to get married, and to be inherited by sons, and he was anxious to fulfil his wishes by marrying Rieinguled, daughter of Anblaud, king of Britain; who was so called by a British word, which in English signifies a Modest Queen. This dignified name was given to her who deserved it, for as yet she was not bound in any respect by legal nuptials. Despising play, she was steady in her mother's chamber, and obeyed her commands. Whatever she said was fit for conversation, because she acted altogether by advice. Being a very good maiden, without reproach, when old enough for marriage, she deserved a husband. The inhabitants did not know any one more worthy of marriage, therefore messengers passed over the Gallic sea, and brought back the maiden; as a precious pearl excelling in beauty, and most gentle, they recommended her to the aforesaid prince to obtain nuptial honour. The ceremony having been lawfully performed, the lawful wife conceived, and after conception, happily brought forth a son. So a fruitful tree produced a most excellent flower. In the catechism of the boy, and after his baptism, the infant was named Illtyd, that is, one safe from every crime; he was blameless in the five stages of life, and was laudable and beloved by all persons. His parents were desirous that he should become learned, and agreeable to their wishes they sent him to be instructed in the seven sciences. After receiving instruction, and obtaining a knowledge of elementary science, he postponed his proceeding in literature and went to war, but without forgetting by any negligence anything that he knew. He had so good a memory

that on once hearing a saying of his master, he perfectly retained it ever after. To him were fully given the five keys, whereby he might wisely communicate knowledge with respect to things unknown. No one was more eloquent throughout Gaul than Illtyd the soldier, in reciting philosophical eloquence.

2. OF HIS VISIT AT THE COURT OF KING ARTHUR AND PAULINUS.

The soldier in the mean time hearing of the magnificence of his cousin, king Arthur, and being desirous to visit the court of so great a conqueror, left what we call the Farther Britain, and by sailing, came to where he saw a very large collection of soldiers. Being honourably and munificently received according to his military wishes, and his desire for receiving rewards being satisfied, he departed, much pleased from the royal court, and undertaking his journey, his very honourable wife Trynihid accompanying he him, came to Paulinus king of Glamorgan. The king seeing him a courtly soldier, and an honourable man, retained him with great delight, loving him more than any of his attendants, and munificently treating him. Therefore he remained there very reverently until he was chosen to preside over the royal household; which he governed without any quarrels, being a pacific governor, and next to his master; the precepts of the gospel were in the breast of the soldier, and he endeavoured to recite them to those who would retain them; and they who heard them recited, were directed to the perfect performance of their actions, and they discharged their duties, perfectly performing them to receive a heavenly reward. Outwardly he was a soldier who wore a military dress, but inwardly he was one of the most intelligent of the natives of Britain. Therefore he was appointed by king Paulinus to be chief over the soldiers, on account of his exquisite eloquence, and incomparable intelligence; no contemporary could be compared with him for mental ability, which was proved, and confirmed by the testimony of learned men.

3. OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF KING PAULINUS, WHOM THE EARTH SWALLOWED, AND OF THE PROMISE CONFIRMED OF TAKING THE CLERICAL HABIT AFTER WARFARE BY THE ADVICE OF SAINT CADOC.¹

It happened on a certain day, when he took his royal household to hunt over the territory of Saint Cadoc, that it rested, and sent a message to the celebrated abbot, with harsh words, requiring that he should send dinner to them, or they would take it by force. The holy Cadoc, although the message appeared to him improper, on account of the harshness of the language, and as if of right to require tribute, yet sent by the household what was sufficient for their dinner, This having been transmitted, the household sat down to dine, but ability for eating was wanting; for on account of their unlawful petition and sacrilegious offence, the earth swallowed up the unjust multitude, which altogether vanished away on account of such great wickedness. But the soldier Illtyd, the military chief, escaped because he would neither consent to the unjust petition, nor was he in the place, where the household were present waiting for the food, but was afar off with a hawk, which he sometimes loosed, and directed after birds. Illtyd beholding this miracle, feared, and after the sight was affected with compunction for his past faults, and he hastened his steps to holy Cadoc, enquiring, and on his knees asking advice of him for correcting his misdeeds. But he, a salutary counsellor, first of all advised him to set aside his secular dress, and afterwards to procure what he proposed, the clerical habit, and to serve the supreme Creator during the whole space of his life, for obtaining eternal retribution. He humbly obeyed the advice that had been given, and promised that he would firmly attend to it in future; then returning to king Paulinus, and having permission, he withdrew himself from secular service: and the king and queen, and all his acquaint-

¹ See Life of Saint Cadoc, page 337.

ance grieving on account of his secession, he at length came to the brink of the river Nadawan,¹ accompanied by his wife and attendants; and being summer time, he constructed a covering of reeds, that it might not rain upon their beds; and while the horses depastured in the meadow, they at night slept, their eyes being heavy.

4. OF THE FIRST COMING OF AN ANGEL TO ADMONISH SAINT ILLTYD.

Before the intelligent man suddenly stood an angel, who advised him with the following admonitions. "Thou wast formerly a celebrated soldier, munificently treated by many kings; but now I command thee that thou serve the King of kings, and that thou dost not any more love transitory things; remember that thy parents recommended clerical study to thee, and that thou didst study, being devoted to divine intercourse, afterwards that thou didst despise what was not despicable and became engaged with the spear and the sword. These arms were not given to thee from an armoury, but the five keys were granted thee under a master; therefore seek again what thou hast left, that thou mightest not be taken, or caught in the snares of the unseen enemy. For the plotter is present, who endeavours to deceive thee, and desires with all his might to condemn thee; he sees thee although thou dost not see him with thy bodily eye. Thou dost not take care to be protected lest he destroy thee; therefore unwary and deceived by the enemy of God and man, thou art in a state of ignorance, for he envies the inhabitants of both heaven and earth, because he has lost his heavenly seat. He more fierce than a lion, and more swift than a bird, the invisible wizard, steals, and takes away what is stolen, and also has regard to what he restores; he punishes the punishable. Drive then away the poison after medicine, after the manner of a physician, that no scar may appear after the healing. Effeminate love also

¹ The river Daw or Dawon, Glamorganshire.

seizes thee, that thou mayest not turn to the Lord. What is carnal love but horror, and the origin of sins; one who loves much gets heated as with the heat of fire; it is a hurtful thing, an odious thing, which draws one to punishment. Let it not burn thee, nor the fierce desire of poison urge thee; thy wife is comely, but chastity is better; who would choose to postpone eternal things for such a thing; for if thou shouldst now see it naked, thou wouldst not love it as heretofore; look at it, and on the sight thereof, esteem it afterwards of less value. What benefit, and what profitable happiness doth arise from such intercourse, he who abstains and forbears from marriage shall be exalted, and placed in the eternal seat. When thou risest on the morrow, quickly betake thyself to a certain woody valley, towards the western side, where thou wilt have a mansion, for such is the will of God; the place is convenient, very fertile, and habitable; for this cause am I come from the supreme Creator on this business, and to mention such things with benevolence; I have related them that this may be performed, and with respect to the performance there should be no delay."

5. OF HIS UNDERTAKING TO PASS A HERMITICAL LIFE IN THE VALLEY OF HODNANT, AND HIS MODE OF LIVING ON THE ANGELIC EXHORTATION.

These words having been said, the angel disappeared; after a short space of time, Illtyd awaking, recalled to his remembrance the discourse of the angel, and also revolved in his mind that precept of our Lord, "He who loves father and mother, brothers and sisters, wife and children, more than me is not worthy of me," &c. Meditating on such things, he ordered his wife to rise, and when rising commanded her to look after the horses, the sun then shining bright, that he might know how they were kept by the guards that night. She departed naked with dishevelled hair, that she might look after them, and fulfil what the angel had ordered to be done; she returned after having seen them, and in her return, the blessed Illtyd saw her

naked body, with her hair spread about her by the blowing of the wind. He grieved when he beheld the female form; he estimated it as of little value, and greatly repented that he had loved such a person; he vowed that he would desert her, and promised that he would fulfil his vow in words as follow. "A woman now of little value, who was formerly beloved, a daughter of sweet luxury, the origin of deadly ruin, she nourishes punishment, therefore should any one love her, the fair form of a woman will now become loathsome."

6. OF HIS FIRST HABITATION IN THE VALE OF HODNANT.

These things having been done, as has been related, the aforesaid woman was desirous to go to bed; Iltyd drove her away so wishing, saying that he would forsake her as the poison of a serpent, and would not live with her again. He reached to her, her clothes, and being given to her, she put them on, and sat down; and although clothed, she said, with a trembling heart, that she was ready to starve, hoping that by that means she might again lie by his side in bed. But he knew that what she said was false; he strengthened his mind with the firmness of virtue; a solitary traveller, whom God accompanied, gained the victory; having relinquished all secular things, he kept on his way until he came to the aforesaid valley, which is called Hodnant, and not without reason, for in English it signifies a Fruitful Valley. About it there were no mountains or steep inequalities, but an open fertile plain; there was a wood, very thick with various trees growing in it, where many wild beasts inhabited; a very pleasing river with its banks flowed therein, and fountains intermixed with a rivulet, were in delightful courses. After he had rested, and looked on all things, the delightful place pleased him, as the angel mentioned above to him in a dream. Here was a grove full of trees, for those who there remained, which was open to the sun; here

was great fertility about the plains; again a course of rivers ran through the middle. I know it to be said that it was the most beautiful of places.

7. OF PENANCE ENJOINED TO HIM, AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE CLERICAL HABIT, AND OF HIS MODE OF WATCHING AND FASTING, AND OF THE FIRST BUILDING OF HIS CHURCH.

These things having been seen, and being well-pleasing to him, the servant of God, the most blessed Illtyd, went to Dubricius, the bishop of Llandaff, who had enjoined penance to him for his past misdeeds; he shaved his beard, he cut his hair, he consecrated his crown, and lastly he took the clerical habit, according to the angelic commandment revealed in a dream, and being crowned, he returned to the same place. First of all, he built there an habitation, then the prelate Dubricius fixed the bounds of the burial place, and in the middle thereof, he laid the foundation of an oratory, in honour of the supreme, and undivided Trinity. These things being designed, he erected a church of stone materials and surrounded it with a quadrangular ditch. After these things were done, and accomplished, he watched fasting, he diligently prayed without intermission, and largely bestowed his property among the poor; a most religious hermit, he laboured with his own hands, and trusted not to the labours of others. In the middle of the night, before morning prayers, he washed himself with cold water, thus sustaining, as long as he could, the Lord's command thrice a day. Then he visited the church, and kneeling he sought the omnipotence of the supreme Creator. So great was his religion that he was never seen to be engaged in any business, but in divine service; all his thoughts were in the holy Scriptures, which he fulfilled in his daily works; many scholars and learned persons in the seven arts flocked to him for instruction.

8. OF THE STAG TAMED BY SAINT ILLTYD, AND OF THE MARVELLOUS DINNER OF THE KING ON FISH AND WATER.

When king Meirchion, whose prenomens were Vesanus, on a certain day excited his dogs after a stag, the animal being harassed, fled and ran forwards, and entered the chamber of the holy Illtyd, as if seeking refuge from him, after the manner of men. After entering, it lay tamed at the feet of his admirer, being fatigued and frightened by the dogs. And the barking dogs waited its coming out, but then ceased from barking. The king hearing the last barking, followed, much wondering at the sudden silence of the barking; and when he turned to the wilderness, he saw the tamed dogs and the stag, and that the wild animal had become a tame domestic one; therefore he was very angry with the inhabitant, because he dwelt without his leave in the wilderness, which in his own opinion was fitter for hunting. He began to ask for the stag, but holy Illtyd would not give it up; but granted leave to him to come in if he would accept of it. He was affected with fear, and when he saw the very great piety of the most blessed man, and such great miracles performed for him in his presence, he would not destroy him, with whom he was angry, but rather bestowed upon him his first gift, given from God, which he gratefully accepted. The said stag being tamed by holy Illtyd drew carriages, and timber for building in a carriage. After these things, the aforesaid king whom holy Illtyd had invited to dinner, being hungry, was desirous to dine; being invited, he descended humbly, and instead of being mad as he used to be, he sat down pacified. He sent a servant to a neighbouring pond for the purpose of fishing, who immediately caught with his net, a fat and excellent fish of great weight; which being taken, and cooked, they placed before the king, but he would not taste it, because it appeared to him to be indecently placed before him without bread and salt. But Illtyd not having bread and salt at the time, said, "The

maker of all creatures, and the giver of gifts can effect that if thou tastest what is set before thee, thou wilt have in the untasted fish from me what thou dost wish to have." Those things being asked for, and heard, the king dare not refuse perversely, but eat and had the tastes of divers kinds of meat in that of one sort. Being satisfied, and thirsty, he asked in a jeering manner for wine or mead to be given to him; but Illyd wanting them, ordered to be given to him for his drink some water from the fountain; and offered again those prayers which he had before uttered, that from the watery drink the desire of the person asking might be satisfied. He drank what was brought to him, and was pleased with it, and found in water alone the tastes of the divers liquors of wine and mead.

9. OF THE COMING OF AN ANGEL FOR THE ADMONISHING OF KING MEIRCHION, AND FOR HIS CORRECTION.

After this marvellous drinking, the aforesaid king had a dream, and a heavenly angel came to him when sleeping and admonished him, and rebuking he reproved him saying, "Thou hast been hitherto a mad, and a very wicked, king, and now remainest such; amend, for so I advise thee, and that thou dost not delay thy amendment; thou hadst rather that useless wild beasts should dwell here, than worshippers of God who ought to inhabit it. Thou shouldst not forbid, but permit the designed person to remain, and cultivate the place granted to him; thou shalt be destroyed, and not have a long life, and be without progeny. Grant him therefore leave to remain, for that valley shall be inhabited to the end of time. Who will dare to offend, and expel from his desirable situation the man who is very religious, and lives in a catholic manner? God has chosen him, and has sent him hither that he may serve him in a hermitical habit; the Abbot is moreover venerable, magnificent, and exalted, whoever injures him, unless he amends, he will perish for ever. Take care therefore lest thou dost perish, let thy harshness henceforward do no injuries.

Goliath was formerly very strong, yet humble childhood overcame the most valiant, he made use of a spear, and a sword, but David a sling of the smallest value ; the young boy trusting to the highest conqueror, became victorious by confiding to the cast of a sling with his hands. So Iltyd, a most humble servant of God, trusted, that he might convince by humility while he remained here, and that he might have a firm situation ; he did not fight with visible arms, he contended better with invincible virtues. Being a virtuous man, he was not timid in the contest ; armed with justice he drove away his enemies, ; no one in all Britain was more holy than the most blessed present person, because he lived regularly according to the monkish rule. Many persons were called together through his conversation ; it was both a refuge and a support ; as a pillar supporting a standing house. His protection was inviolable with kings, and princes in this kingdom ; kings and princes obeyed his document ; popular subjects adhered to his advice ; peaceful and more gentle than a tame pigeon, he gave light as a most bright candlestick, and as a lamp."

10. OF THE EXCITING OF THE KING, AND GRANT GIVEN FOR INHABITATION.

These things having been said, and the king corrected by the angel from his wickedness, when he awaked, mentioned such words as the following to those who heard them, "Servant of God, the most blessed Iltyd, I grant to thee that solitude freely, as a high and heavenly retribution ; I have seen a vision useful to us both, an angel's voice commanding that thou oughtest not by any means to leave this valley. As long as I reign, I shall not offend thee ; thou mayest most freely hold this parish, appoint farmers over all the land, for the soil to be cultivated, and none is more fertile throughout the country ; abundance of corn lands for harvests, and places flowing with honey, and what were fragrant were seen among the flowers ; Italy is fertile, abounding in corn, this is more abundant, and more mode-

rate without its great heat ; too much cold does not destroy the corn, and superfluous heat does not parch the fruits by hastening to ripen them at an unsuitable time, the reapers rejoice being better off than the reapers of Italy. Rejoice ye who live in such land, ye ought to rejoice, so I foretel, for innumerable persons will rejoice in thy conversation ; a conversation so profitable was not in those parts ; thou wilt preach and direct the wanderers to heavenly doctrines ; magistral care has been granted to thee by the Pontiff ; this I will also grant and confirm to thee by royal concession. This school shall be venerable ; tributaries and all natives shall serve thee ; many will flow from divers places and be instructed in the liberal sciences ; although thou art now unknown, thou wilt become known, and I will make thee known, and thou wilt rejoice." Then the modest holy Illtyd did not more rejoice, but holding himself moderately, he gave thanks to the Almighty God ; and willingly accepting what the king had offered, he besought the divine clemency that it would deign to have mercy to indulgence with respect to the crimes of those who had loved him. After the angel had said those things, and the king was appeased from anger by the angelic correction ; he returned to his court, magnifying and praising the almighty power of the supreme Creator through the miracles which he had seen.

11. OF HIS MODE OF HUSBANDRY, AND THE NUMEROUSNESS
OF HIS FAMILY.

Therefore the venerable abbot Illtyd being disturbed by no one, remained peaceably ; he cultivated, and sowed, he reaped, and lived by his own labour ; he appointed farming workmen for the fields of agriculture ; he multiplied the seeds, they repaid his labours with great profit. He fed the poor ; he clothed the naked, he visited the sick, and those who were in prison. He had a hundred persons in his family, and as many workmen and clergy, and a hun-

dred poor persons daily, his hospitality was most ready, it never being denied to those who needed it. He gave largely whatsoever was put in his hands, not recommending it to be kept by any persons. There was no injurious elevation in his full flowing breast, but rather humility, kindness, and spotless religion. Many scholars flowed to him, of the number of which were these four, namely Samson, Paulinus, Gildas, and David; being learned they studied deeply, and many others like them.

12. OF HIS RECEIVING ECCLESIASTICAL ORDERS, AND ELEVATION TO THE ABBACY.

His property having increased to a suitable competency, and having received the ecclesiastical orders, and also had the monkish order through holiness and favour, the venerable abbot constituted fifty canons, who at suitable times, and on appointed hours should visit the church, having each of them his prebend, namely, his estate, with advantages, which were given by the people for keeping their souls in remembrance. Annual tribute was given to the abbot, and what was granted, he divided by common custom; annual feasts were also prepared for him, and he invited a multitude of the poor to partake of what was provided, amongst whom he constantly ordered it to be distributed, until what had been given was disposed of.

13. OF THE BREAKING OF AN ENBANKMENT, THE RUSHING IN, AND RECEDING OF THE SEA, AND THE RISING OF A FOUNTAIN BY SAINT ILLTYD.

The aforesaid place, consisting of a field surrounded on all sides by plains, with an intermediate grove, pleased the inhabitant, yet the frequent overflowing of the sea, and the approach of the river to his cemetery afflicted him. Therefore being moved by grief and fear, he built, in order to prevent its proceeding farther, and covering the whole valley, a very large embankment of mud mixed with stones, which would keep back the rushing of the waves that used to overflow beyond measure, the river only having room to flow

to the sea. After the work was completed, the force of the waves broke the embankment; he built it a second time, and the waves again broke it; he rebuilt it a third time, but repeating the work did not prevail, and it became ruinous; Saint Illtyd therefore grieved, and said as follows, "I will not live here any longer; I much wished it, but troubled with this marine molestation, it is not in my power; it destroys my buildings, it flows to the oratory, which we built with great labour," He invoked the heavenly protector, and prayed for his assistance, that he might not leave the convenient place which he had chosen.

When he intended to depart on the morrow, on the preceding night, as he slept soundly, an angelic voice spoke to him as follows. "I command thee, and I forbid thee to leave the place which thou art desirous to forsake, for God is not willing that thou shouldst depart from this valley, because thy prayers have been heard by the supreme Auditor, who delivers all who trust in him, and pray to him, and he will deliver thee from this injurious, and troublesome calamity. To-morrow, when thou goest from the oratory, take with thee thy staff, and go quickly to the raging sea, which thou shalt drive back by the divine virtue of thy menacing staff, for it will fly from thee continually, without flowing back to its accustomed places, as a runaway flies from a pursuing enemy." Therefore he went early in the morning to the fluctuating sea, as the angel had commanded him in his sleep; he began to proceed, the sea began to recede, as if it were a sensible animal, and the waves became quiet, and there was a station on the shore. When therefore the shore was dry, he struck it with his staff, and thereupon immediately flowed a very clear fountain, which is also beneficial for curing diseases, and which continues to flow without a falling off; and what is more wonderful, although it is near the sea, the water emitted is pure. These things being done, the very blessed Illtyd, kneeling, prayed to the heavenly Lord, saying, "I request of thee, supreme Creator, and the giver of all good, who dost confirm what

thou givest with increase, that this bank may be the boundary of the sea, and that it may not return to where I have fixed my settled habitation, nor injure, nor disturb; here may it rest, and here may it remain a harbour for ships." It therefore took place, as he had requested, that the marsh became dry land, and was useful for agriculture; and what was not arable, the clergy had plenty of meadow land, and pasture for cattle. Then the chosen servant of God returned and gave thanks to Almighty God; and lived quietly and prosperously, free from disturbance, which through the virtue of God, and the prayer of the most holy Illtyd, was found faultless, and did not any more plague or injure him; and he said the following words respecting the miraculous operation. "Now I can dwell here, I will not go away; I will not, for the sea will not disturb me; the neighbourhood being overcome, it has departed; therefore I was too fearful, at present there is no cause for fear, I will build, as it is a business not to be dreaded."

14. OF THE COMPLAINT OF BIRDS PLUCKING THE CORN WHICH WAS IN THE CARE OF KEEPERS.

In the autumnal season, and the harvest approaching, the birds began to pluck the corn of Saint Illtyd, and to leave the ears almost empty; which being discovered, the Saint grieved for his loss, and ordered his scholars that they should every day, in their turn, watch the corn, by constantly throwing stones with a sling throughout the day. But the disciple Samson, when his turn came, was desirous from good will to observe his master's command, and he kept it as well as he could, but he was not able to keep the corn safe and untouched; he therefore sought divine advice and assistance, whereby he might shut up the multitude of birds, for otherwise he could not defend the corn from those which came from a distance to injure it. He consulted with himself, and inspired with divine counsel, found out what ought to be done, and divine power was given him

to drive the birds from the corn, so as to be without them. They attempted to fly, but with all their endeavours they were not able; the benevolent Samson seeing such things, compelled them to go before him, as tamed animals, of their own accord. Being driven, they came to the door, and the door being opened, they entered the barn, as horses or sheep, those preceding going before those that followed; as sheep or horses they gently proceeded; the birds were well confined, without a net keeping them; and divine power, which holds the stars, tamed them. They sang in lamenting, they fasted by being hungry, they sang mournful songs in the prison which they deserved; there was lamentation in this company for the liberty which was requested; they repented that they had done injury to the corn; Illtyd liberated the flocks that were hurt by being shut up; and they did not injure him any more after the performance of this miracle.¹

15. OF THE ELECTION OF SAMSON TO A BISHOP, AND RISING OF A FOUNTAIN FROM HIS TEARS, AND THE CONVEYANCE OF HIS BODY BY DIVINE DIRECTION.

After this miracle became every where known, messengers came from Brittany to elect Samson, a most noble young man and immaculate in all his life, and when elected to be appointed bishop of Dól, and also to ask leave from his master Illtyd for him to depart, on account of the confidential clemency which he had towards his countrymen, for the aforesaid church was at that time in want of a bishop. He being asked, and invited would not refuse; and resolved to go with the messengers, but with lamentation and shedding of tears, as he preferred to live subject to the authority of a master, than to enjoy episcopal honour in the height of an ecclesiastical see. Whilst he re-

¹ See Life of Samson. Liber Landavensis, page 291.—Several particulars are here stated which are there omitted.

mained a little while in the upper part of the valley, talking with his instructor about many past things before the separation from his society; and uttering his last words, and having separated, his tears began to flow, until they fell in a stream to the earth; whence a fountain immediately arose, and running, flowed like a river, and was called by the name of the said wonderful Samson. Also on account of the eminent love which he had for his most dear Teacher, he ordered his body to be brought after his death to the monastery of Saint Illtyd, and buried in his common and delightful cemetery. These things being so done, they went to Dubricius, bishop of the church of Llandaff, that he might receive from him the first ecclesiastical orders, and deaconship. And whilst he was ordained, there appeared to Dubricius and the abbot Illtyd, a pigeon whiter than snow, sitting on the head of the young man at his ordination.

Having been ordained, he sailed to Brittany, and was elevated to the episcopal see, according to the catholic mode of appointment. And after the end of his life, his body was placed in a coffin, which moved, and a strong wind raised it, and by divine power carried it in the softest manner to the sea. Then it passed over the waves, as a duck, and arrived like a sailing ship safe and prosperously in the harbour of Illtyd. The Lord performed that which he wished to have done, for he had promised respecting his body, that it should be carried, and buried in that cemetery. Some persons seeing those things, and observing the odorous coffin, informed Saint Illtyd of the wonderful thing they had seen; and he remembering the last words of his beloved Samson respecting his body, wept and prayed, and with sorrow hastened to the harbour of the sea; then the body being received, and honourably conveyed by the clergy, was placed in the middle of quadrangular stones, which were standing upright in the cemetery, a stone cross was fixed thereon, and painted under the episcopal vestment; whose soul rests free from future suffering.

16. OF THE VISIT OF THE WIFE OF SAINT ILLTYD, AND HER LOSS OF SIGHT, AND RECOVERY BY THE SAME SAINT.

Formerly the wife of the blessed Illtyd, named Trinihid, a most chaste woman, passed her life with the chastity of a divorce from her husband, and desired no conjugal intercourse, such was the intention that was endeavoured to be observed, such was the occupation of her mind. She was constant in prayer, moderate in her discourse, and intent on every good work. Christ was her consolation, Christ was her food every day; every day she satisfied her hunger with barley bread and water, she refused dainties, she tasted no delicious food, love of the Holy Trinity was her delight, which she intimately loved. She liked mountain solitude, and chose to dwell there; there she built an habitation, and founded an oratory, where she prayed most faithfully to the Lord her redeemer; she prayed constantly, she was found blameless, and irreprehensible in her conversation, and continued to live devoutly, comforting innumerable widows and poor nuns in their proceedings.

However she wished to visit Saint Illtyd, and undertook a journey for the purpose; and she saw him a laborious digger whose face was dirty from constant working, and which had also become narrow from leanness. She requested to have agreeable discourse from him, but her request was displeasing for him to hear; being asked he returned no answer, he would not see her, nor be seen, nor hear her discourse, nor be heard. She saw his mean dress, saw him clothed with hair cloth and skins, and not as she had seen him before, an elegant soldier; through an improper visit she lost her sight; she grieved much because she lost it deservedly. Saint Illtyd being asked, he implored comfort from the Lord, whereby she might recover her former sight; and his prayers were heard, and she saw clearly; and she afterwards returned, as she had done before, affected with paleness as if she had suffered from a

fever. Therefore she remained in the aforesaid place, and never again visited Saint Illtyd, because she would not displease God, and the most beloved by God.

17. OF THE GOVERNOR CYFLYM, WHO MELTED LIKE WAX BEFORE THE FIRE,
BECAUSE HE HAD OFFENDED ILLTYD.

Meirchion, king of Glamorgan, had a malicious superintendent, named Cyflym, which in English signifies Very Acute, who by his conduct really fulfilled the name by which he was called, for he most sharply accused his subjects to king Meirchion that they destroyed his property, and he protected none who ought to be protected; his superintendence was hateful to all, his whole life was abominable. He frequently offended the Abbot Illtyd, and also displeased his clergy; many things which he unjustly took away he stated to have been required by his master, when he was ignorant thereof, and had not given any orders, whereby he incurred the anger of every body; and all persons spoke ill of him, and he was most rigid against those who found fault with his evil deeds. He exalted himself, by governing for another; he even restrained himself to be mischievous, for he loved wickedness; he therefore who is exalted by evil doing is restrained, and kept back; being retained in danger, it would profit him to govern rightly; he did not direct, whilst he himself injured him who in the first place ought to govern and direct. Therefore he deserved to suffer whilst he caused the saint to be afflicted, who although he was injured by the malicious man, behaved peaceably; but God the supreme avenger, caused him to melt like wax softened and rendered liquid by the heat of fire: and so, for not appearing to leave off all further malice, for he wished to render tributary the holy and most free Illtyd, and for him to send his tribute to the royal castle. And the man of the greatest liberty would not of his own accord suffer these things, nor allow so great an injury, nor be angry; but he uttered diligent prayers tha

God would grant indulgence to the malicious person ; for he endeavoured to fulfil the evangelical precept which thus says, " Pray for those who persecute, and speak evil of you," and again, " Blessed are they who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake."

17. OF THE FLIGHT OF THE MAN OF GOD TO A CAVE, ON ACCOUNT OF THE PERSECUTION OF KING MEIRCHION.

The sacrilegious superintendent having melted away, king Meirchion was moved with great fury, and was desirous to slay the innocent Illtyd, and destroy the place and the clergy, as he greatly repented his having given the desert to be a dwelling place, for he would rather that the beasts should dwell there than the elect servants of God serving in honour of the holy and undivided Trinity. He quickly took arms, and ordered his soldiers to be armed, and they proceeded together to the holy place to take revenge on the chief, and the inhabitants of the place. These things being heard, the very blessed Illtyd avoided both the malicious company, and the clamouring people who were an impediment to his prayers. He wished to go to some distance on the earth, but he dreaded to be enquired after and found ; and being found to be brought back unwillingly to the abbacy. He sought every where for some dry secret place, where he might hide his face ; by enquiring he came at last to the margin of the river Ewenny, where he saw a very secret cave. And having seen it, he entered and dwelt in it for the space of a year, and also three days, and three nights ; he lay every night on a cold stone as he desired, and so fulfilling in himself the enjoined penance ; as if he should say, " This stone is placed for a bed under my breast ; this is my delight, I will lie with the protection of the supreme Deity, the blessed reward that will come to me blessed, will be delightful ; what remains in heaven will be given to me when I will return."

19. OF THE HEAVENLY FOOD IN THE CAVE, AND THE COMMON LAMENTATION AFTER ILLTYD, AND OF A BELL SENT TO HIM BY SAINT DAVID, SOUNDING BY DIVINE DIRECTION, AND OF HIS RETURN FROM THE CAVE TO THE MONASTERY.

Therefore the blessed Illtyd prayed constantly, and fasted daily; and on every ninth hour, a loaf of barley bread was sent him from heaven, and also a portion of a fish, wherewith he was refreshed. After a moderate meal he visited a neighbouring fountain, procuring the water for himself with the hollow of his hands: So Paul and Antonius the first hermits obtained their draughts; then he returned to the cave, taking care that no one should see him going into it. He was sought for with diligent enquiries in the groves, and in the woods, and in the hiding places in the vallies, and was not found; as long as he thus lay hid, the chief persons grieved, not knowing what was become of him, and the poor and the widows miserably lamented, saying, "Who will be our protection? Who will drive away our need with a liberal breast?" He gave liberally, and denied no one, he affectionately administered assistance to those who asked for it, and was the support of all the needy; he condoled with those who grieved, and rejoiced with those who were joyful; he incessantly made known the apostolical documents by multiplying the seed a hundred times; he afforded great relief to those who were about to be punished, and had been punished, by redeeming them by prayer and fasting, and liberal gifts; if he is alive in this world, he is kept in some subterraneous prison; if he is dead, we wish that he may live in eternal rest." Whilst they said these and many other things, a certain person passed by who was a messenger of Gildas the historian, carrying a brazen bell, which was made by the said Gildas, to be brought to Saint David a bishop, as a present in memory of former acquaintance and friendship; and as he passed by the cave, which was near the public road, the bell sounded without being moved by any human being.

And Illtyd hearing the sweet sound, came to the person who carried the bell, and proved the sweetness of its sound by moving it three times, and enquired of him where he was going, and from whom he carried the beautiful bell, which was more valuable than gold. Who, answering, said, "I am going, and do carry this bell to Saint David, by the order of the celebrated Gildas." Having mentioned this, he departed, and came to the valley of Menevia, and presented the bishop with the gift. When given, he moved the bell, but from the motion given, it returned no sound; and the bishop being surprized at the wonderful circumstance, enquired of the messenger whether it had been moved and proved by any one on the way as he came. He being asked, mentioned what had happened, as above related, and the bishop believing it to be truly told, said, "I know that our master Illtyd wished to possess it, on account of the sweetness of its sound, but he would not ask for it, having heard that it was sent to me as a gift from Gildas; but the Lord is not willing that I should have it, return therefore to the cave without delay, and give to Saint Illtyd the aforesaid article, which he wished to have." The messenger then returned to Illtyd, and executed the bishop's orders, and left there its solitary inhabitant who received the frequent visits of angels.

Afterwards the messenger mentioned in the monastery what he had seen, and what had happened to him. Those things being heard, the inhabitants of the monastery gladly went to the aforesaid place, and there found their most dear abbot; the brethren rejoiced on finding their most religious abbot; and he rejoiced with the knowledge that they could not find him, nor he return, but by divine direction. All the neighbouring inhabitants gave thanks for the return of their master, saying as follows, "We were sorrowful, and not cheerful; being free from all adversity and danger, we fear nothing on account of our master who is to be feared, with this refuge no one will dare to injure us under such a master: kings and princes will obey

the virtuous prince ; that place shall be the principal, and above other places of this township : our joys lay hid in an obscure cave ; they do not pass through the bounds without past sorrow ; that cave is not dark, but full of light : for while Illtyd dwelt therein, it did not fail to shine with angelic splendour."

20. OF THE VERY WICKED CEFYGD, SUPERINTENDENT OF KING MEIRCHION, WHOM MARSHY LAND SWALLOWED.

In the mean time he peaceably governed the abbacy, admonishing the brethren, and all persons in general with respect to true religion, praying and fasting in times appropriate for the purpose. But a certain superintendent, named Cefygid, began to oppose and offend the saint and clergy, very frequently driving their cattle from the pastures, and confining them within doors. He confined cattle for three days, perversely refusing to take bail from their possessors; and when released, leanness appeared on their sides, nor was it to be wondered at that they had become thin, after being without food for three days. Therefore Illtyd was very often offended by this very injurious superintendent ; yet he would not curse him, but was accustomed rather to bless him for his frequent persecutions and injuries, praying that he might amend, and be converted from this iniquity, lest when very wicked he might end his life in the path of malice. But the supreme heavenly Judge seeing that he would not amend what he was doing wrong, caused that the marshy land should swallow him, and that his wicked spirit should undergo the torments his works deserved. That marsh hitherto remains visible to human sight, as a sign of the punishment of a malefactor for his evil deeds.

21. OF THE EXCITING OF THE ANGER OF THE MAD KING MEIRCHION, WHOM THE EARTH SWALLOWED.

King Meirchion full of madness, hearing that such a misfortune had, to his loss, happened to his confidential

superintendent, grieved, and, being angry, was desirous to proceed against Illtyd, and either kill him, or expel him altogether from his dominions. He put on his arms as a warlike soldier for the purpose of fighting; he quickly rode from the castle to the gate of the city; and whilst he there remained, ready to commit murder as he had often done before, the earth swallowed up the wicked man, not any more to be seen by his acquaintance; and his spirit in order to be punished, went where the souls of unjust men are tormented without remedy. After some space of time, Saint Illtyd being troubled by the multitude of persons coming to him, and disturbed in his prayers, went on that account to the cave of Lingarch; where he remained for the space of three years, watching and praying, and every ninth hour he received heavenly food brought to him by an angel and placed on a rock in the inside, where he saw the venerable miracle.

22. OF THE MIRACLE SEEN IN THE CAVE OF GARTH.

On a certain day as he sat at the mouth of the cave, he saw a small ship proceeding, and approaching the shore, that it might come to the sea side, and he beheld two very respectable persons rowing in the ship, and an altar divinely supported on the front of the ship. And Saint Illtyd went to meet it, and with gladness uttered words of salutation; and they after a short conversation gave to Illtyd the perfumed body of a certain very holy man, mentioning his name, and after mentioning it, forbad him ever to publish it; and having consigned the body to the blessed Illtyd, they returned. These things having taken place, he brought the body, with the altar which was on the face of the very holy man, and honourably buried it in the cave, with the altar placed over the body, as it had been before supported by divine power; through which, many miracles were performed on account of its holiness.

23. OF TWO ROBBERS CHANGED INTO TWO STONES.

On a certain night, two robbers stole several pigs which belonged to Saint Illtyd, and driving them from their pig-sty, went to the woods; and thinking that they took the right path, deviated from it in the night, and wandered until they returned with the pigs to the place where they had left, about break of day. The drove of pigs being weary, rested until the third hour, and the swine-herd wondered at the long sleep of the pigs. After having taken their rest, they went as usual for their food; and on the approach of night they went to their pig-sty; when the same wicked persons, of whom we have spoken, again came, and driving away the pigs from the place, went off with them; then they wandered as before to a distant mountain, losing their way as ignorant persons, and as if they had never been acquainted with the right road for travelling. At length, being wrong, they ignorantly returned to the aforesaid place, for it then happened to them the same as before; but the heavenly King and supreme Corrector seeing that those wicked persons would not refrain from their wickedness, changed their bodies into stones, and permitted their spirits as they deserved, to go to infernal punishment. This memorable miracle is believed by posterity; for hitherto the place of the pig-sty is seen, and has the name of Illtyd; and there are also to be seen two immoveable stones under the name of two robbers, and it is believed that the robbers were changed into those hard stones; they deserved to have witnesses of their wickedness, and so called, they remain; for the drove of pigs the bodies of both were changed, and they are in snow, rain, and hail, without life.

24. OF THE THREE GRANARIES, THE ABUNDANCE OF WHOSE CORN WAS CARRIED FROM BRITAIN TO LETAVIA, OR BRITTANY, WHICH WAS FORMERLY CALLED ARMORICA.

The most blessed Illtyd being desirous to visit the church of Saint Michael, in Monte Tumba, had in his possession

three barns full of corn before his departure, and ordered his superintendants that all the corn should be thrashed, and being thrashed without his knowing it, should be reserved and kept until his return from Brittany. The order of the master was complied with, and his desire for visiting was completed; after visiting, he set out on his return, and in returning, he saw men almost dead with hunger, and unless they were assisted would soon die. Being afflicted on seeing such want, he grieved and prayed to the heavenly Assistant that they might be succoured. His prayers were heard in the heavenly hall, and the aforesaid corn was divinely carried, as in his prayers he wished it to be carried, and was afterwards found on the shore in the harbour of Brittany. He fed all Brittany, and also supplied the agriculturists with seed corn; they magnified him, they gave thanks to their succourer, by whose prayers they were protected from dreadful famine. Then he returned by sailing over the Gallic sea, all persons standing on the shore, and unanimously wishing him a prosperous passage; there was not a happier arrival in Brittany, the citizens wished him not to return, but to remain in that country; yet he would not stay although so much desired, and he chose to dwell in Britain, although an exile from his paternal ancestors.

When the time approached, in which the Lord had decreed to remunerate the labours of his beloved, the blessed Illtyd, with the hundred fold recompence promised to his elect, he again returned, by the divine direction we think, to his native country, namely Letavia, which we call Lesser Britain. And there at the city of Dôl, having completed the days fixed for him by his own Creditor, who has appointed to mortals the bounds which they themselves cannot determine, and well performed the virtues, and eminent for his miracles, and celebrated for his signs and wonders, he commended his body to the earth, and his spirit to the Lord on the eighth of the Ides of November;¹ and

¹ There is an inscribed monument commemorative of Saint Illtyd, at Lantwit Major, Glamorganshire, called Illtyd's Cross, and is situated on the north side of the churchyard.

completing his mournful existence, and born to perpetual and heavenly life, and rejoicing that he should live for ever, he passed over to the Lord, to whom is honour and power, and government throughout all ages. AMEN.

25. OF THE PLUNDER BEING RETURNED, AND THE QUALITY OF THE HORSES.

Edgar, king of the English, being excited with raging fury, marched his army on account of the disobedient men of Glamorgan, and bringing it to the country, violated the territories of the saints, and their very temples, and left no village inviolate throughout the country. Therefore in this invasion, the bell of Saint Illtyd was taken from his church, and carried by a plunderer to England; as the army was returning, it was placed and tied about the neck of one of the horses, which in the Golden Mount, excelled in the regal and knightly herd. It was called The Golden Mount on account of an army being there assembled and stationed, which glittered with golden clothing and armour. At the hour of noon when the king rested in the tent fixed on the plain ground, and the very great plunder was divided, it was seen by the king that some cruel soldier had pierced his breast with a lance, and after the piercing he was seen by no one; with great grief he revealed what he saw, and whilst all denied that they saw anything, he confirmed what was seen by him. Therefore he knew that he was culpable and a plunderer; and being repentant, he commanded the sacrilegious army to restore to God and the most holy Illtyd all the plunder, and he promised future amendment; he also built a church in honour of the same saint, and granted to those who served therein the territory in which he stood.

It consists of a flat stone elaborately carved, and was once the pedestal of a cross. Its height above the ground is six feet three inches, and its breadth two feet six inches at the bottom, and one foot ten inches at the top. On the western side it has inscribed in the several compartments, CRUX ILLUTI SAMSON REDIS. SAMUEL EGISAR, for EXCISOR. Samuel being the name of the sculptor; and on the eastern side is SAMSON POSUIT HANC CRUCEM PRO ANMIA (instead of ANIMA) EJUS.—Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Wales.

And this amendment was beneficial to his spirit, for he departed from this life on the ninth day, punished for his wickedness. In the mean time, the aforesaid horse carrying the bell, went before all who there remained, and no one driving him he proceeded to the western side, all the equestrian herd following the sweet sound of the bell; it being strange and wonderful to hear and see so great a miracle. And more wonderful than this, that he was able to pass the Severn; and come to this bank without suffering any loss; the great collection of horses followed the sound and liked to hear it, being full of sweetness. Then hastening along the shore, and over the mountains, and through the woods, he came to the road which went towards Glamorgan, all the horses hearing, and following the sweet sound.

Whilst therefore the horses came to the banks of the river Taf, the sound of the bell was heard by a clergyman, whereupon he rejoiced, and came to meet the horse which went before him, and carried the little bell to the gate of the church of Saint Illtyd. And when he brought it, he there punctually placed it, loosed from his neck, and it fell on a stone, from which fall, a part of it was broken, which is to be seen until the present day, in memory of the eminent miracle. Then glorious psalmody was sung in the choir, and there was much exultation for this miracle. Each of the numerous canons had a horse, but there was an unsettled dispute respecting that which was the best, one of them said, "It is mine;" another mentioned, "I will not allow such a choice to be made;" a third affirmed, "saying, "Ye shall not thus fulfil your own wish, of your own accord." This contention continued without being settled until the morrow, and nearly caused the murder of many. On the second day of the arrival of the equestrian herd, a clergyman came forward to distribute the horses equally and peaceably; and when he distributed them, he observed that they were all equal, and that no one was more excellent than the other; then a distribution was made with concord, and the clergy were pleased with the pacific termination of the business. In this

manner, for the love of Illtyd, God restored the stolen bell, and all the plunder to his most holy church.

26. OF THE VICTORY OF THE CLERGY OF SAINT ILLTYD OVER THE OUT-LAWS, AND IN THE CASTLE OF MEIRCHION.

When William, king of England, reigned over Britain, and prince Robert Fitzhammon reigned over Glamorgan, the Northern Britons began fiercely to resist the king, and the Southern afterwards, by common and firm confederacy laid waste and burnt towns and castles. The enemy came from the woods to injure the English and Norman citizens; they laid waste, and returned to their distant mountains and woods with immense plunder. In the mean time an army was raised amongst the Welsh, of about three thousand armed horsemen and foot soldiers, to lay waste and burn Glamorgan. This being heard to be a hostile incursion, the clergymen of Saint Illtyd and his parishioners fortified themselves with a hedge and ditch firmly built on the sea-side; and thus protected, he endeavoured to secure his money by such defence; this being done, the enemy came incautiously before the gate by night, for if they had come by day, they would have gained the victory. A nocturnal fight therefore took place between the armies on both sides, until several fell dead from the casting of stones and the piercing of lances, and many others being wounded, condoled with each other, wailing in the contest.

Whilst these things were taking place, thick sparks frequently appeared in the air between the church of Saint Illtyd, and the castle of king Meirchion, near where was the war, and they shone bright like lightning, and angelic signs appeared to protect the catholic people. As much the more as the armies opposed each other, so much the more ardently did the fiery signs shine in the sky: The refuge of God and of Saint Illtyd was violated, therefore three thousand men were overcome before the castle by a smaller number; unarmed women administered arms to those who

fought, weak boys were busily engaged inside, the shields were broken by stones cast against them; terrific outcries were uttered by the enemy, and but few escaped having bloody faces; for divine virtue was there present when few persons on the inside put to flight, and overcame three thousand. The ascent to triumph might have been easy, but brave Illtyd would not grant such an ascent; had they fought by day-light they would have easily prevailed; but the supreme Light, the true light would not grant this; there is neither virtue nor vigour where malice remains; this was clearly proved when the multitude from the North were put to flight.—THE END.