Life of St. Stephen Harding

John Dobree Dalgairns, John Henry Newman, ...

ANNEX

Saint Stephen Harding

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LIFE OF

ST. STEPHEN HARDING

ABBOT OF CITEAUX

AND FOUNDER OF THE CISTERCIAN ORDER

BY

J. B. DALGAIRNS

EDITED BY

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

NEW EDITION.

WITH NOTES BY HERBERT THURSTON, S.J.

LONDON AND LEAMINGTON

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Die 19 Maji, 1898.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE following pages were printed with the view of forming one of a series of Lives of English Saints, according to a prospectus which appeared in the course of last autumn, but which has since, for private reasons, been superseded. As it is not the only work undertaken in pursuance of the plan then in contemplation, it is probable, that, should it meet with success, other Lives, now partly written will be published in a similar form by their respective authors on their own responsibility.

Since the Life of St. Stephen has been in type, the Author has discovered that he has partly gone over the same ground as the learned Mr. Maitland in his Papers on the Dark Ages. In consequence, as might have been expected, the same facts in many instances occur in both.

J. H. N.

LITTLEMORE, *January, 1844.*

PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THERE are many reasons both intrinsic and extrinsic which give an exceptional interest to the series of Lives of English Saints published in 1844 and 1845 under the editorship of John Henry Newman. They appeared at the very crisis of the Tractarian movement, when Newman had already left Oxford and had taken up his residence at Littlemore. Their authors were among the most prominent members of the party to which they belonged, and nearly all achieved some sort of distinction in their respective careers in after life. Again the experiment was a novel one. Hagiography in the English Church was practically unknown and the acceptance of mediæval miracles by many of the writers seemed almost to constitute a denial of one of the fundamental principles of Anglicanism. But beyond all that the *Lives of the English Saints* exhibit more truly than any tracts or works of controversy the secret force that was drawing men Romewards. It was Catholic asceticism quite as much as Catholic dogma which appealed to the deep

religious feeling which had just then been awakened in the hearts of so many young Englishmen.

In a future volume of this reprint it may perhaps be possible to attempt some account of the first conception and execution of the series, and and of the effects produced by its appearance. The present issue however already somewhat exceeds the limits contemplated by the publishers for these little volumes. Moreover the "advertisement" prefixed to the first edition over the well-known initials J. H. N. sets an example of brevity which it would be rash to disregard. So concisely indeed is this advertisement worded that the writer, by an ambiguity of statement, very unusual with him, left many under the impression that he was the author and not merely the editor of the Life which followed.

In re-editing Father Dalgairns' admirable sketch of the beginnings of Citeaux, contained in the present volume, the text of 1845 has been reprinted practically unchanged. A few errors of the press have been corrected, and in one or two of the longer quotations from Scripture the Douai translation of the Bible has been substituted for the Anglican Authorised Version. No other alteration has been made, as far as the editor is aware, without attention being called to the fact at the foot of the page. The book gives the impression of having been written rather hurriedly and having been sent to press without much revision. In one or two instances an ungrammati-

cal sentence has seemed to require some slight change in the syntax to make it intelligible.*

It would be unreasonable to look for completeness in a work of such slender dimensions. The present editor has consequently made no attempt to collect all the fragments of information about St. Stephen which might no doubt be gathered up by a diligent study of the chronicles and Charters of the period†. In the footnotes now added, his principal aim has been to correct a few inaccuracies, almost all unimportant, and to direct attention to recent sources of information which naturally supply more ample materials than were available to the author writing half a century ago.

This brief life of the great Englishman, who was to all intents and purposes the founder of the Cistercian Order, appears auspiciously in the

* The following (original edition, p. 171) is an example: "Thus he [Suger] lived, one of the most noble conquests of Citeaux, and through whom, as he afterwards when regent had in his hands the appointment of every bishop in the realm, Stephen's love of poverty influenced most materially the whole Church of France."

We learn for instance from a charter cited by Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne, vol. i. p. 335, that in 1123 St. Stephen and St. Bernard were both present at the consecration to God of Aremburga, daughter of Duke Hugh II. of Burgundy. So again in 1129 both Stephen and Bernard acted as assessors to Walter, bishop of Chalon-sur-Saone, in his attempt to settle the dispute between the canons of St. Etienne at Dijon and the monks of Saint-Seine. Ib., vol. ii. p. 14.

year which is being kept as the eighth centenary of the settlement of Alberic and Stephen at Citeaux.* Father Dalgairns' little biography has long since been translated into French and German, and it is noteworthy that in the commemorative volume just issued or to be issued in France by the Cistercian Fathers themselves, this Life, as I understand, is still made the basis of their sketch of the beginnings of the Order. May its republication awaken in zealous hearts the same generous response as marked its first appearance in a generation of earnest seekers after truth now almost passed away.

HERBERT THURSTON, S.J.

Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, 1898.

* Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne vol. i. p. 249, considers that Citeaux must have been founded on Palm Sunday 1099, an opinion which I have followed in a footnote on p. 76. Further investigation, however, has convinced me that he is mistaken and that the traditional date is the right one. In any case the verses (Manrique, Ann. Cisterc, I. p. 11)

> Anno milleno centeno bis minus uno
> Sub patre Roberto coepit Cistercius ordo,

can hardly be quoted in his favour. If they mean anything, they ought to mean that the Cistercian Order was founded in 1199; which is of course absurd.

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SAINT STEPHEN HARDING

Chapter I—ST. STEPHEN IN YOUTH

HOLY men of old who have written the lives of saints, universally begin by professing their unworthiness to be the historians of the marvellous deeds which the Holy Spirit has wrought in the Church. What then should we say, who in these miserable times, from the bosom of our quiet homes, or in the midst of our literary ease, venture to celebrate the glories of the Saints? We have much that is amiable and domestic amongst us, but Saints, the genuine creation of the cross, with their supernatural virtues, are now to us a matter of history. Nay, we cannot give up all for Christ, if we would; and while other portions of the Church can suffer for His sake, we must find our cross in sitting still, to watch in patience the struggle which is going on about us.* Yet while we wait for better days, we may comfort ourselves with the contemplation of what her sons once were, and admire their virtues, though we have not the power, even though we had the will, to imitate them. The English character has an earnestness and reality about it, capable of appreciating and of following out the most perfect way. Not only was the whole

* This with some other passages, to which it will not always be necessary to call the reader's attention, reflects the feeling of the Oxford movement in the year 1843, when the Life of St. Stephen was written.—*E.*

island once covered with fair monasteries, but it sent forth into foreign lands men who became the light of foreign monastic orders. Thus the Saint, whose life we have undertaken to write, was one of the first founders of the Cistercian order, and the spiritual father of St. Bernard. Little as is known of the early years of St. Stephen, all his historians especially dwell on one fact, that he was an Englishman. The date and place of his birth, and the names of his parents, are alike unknown; but his name, Harding, seems to show that he was of Saxon blood, and he is said to have been of noble birth;* it also seems probable, that he was born rather before than after the Norman conquest. His earthly parentage, and all that he had given up for Christ's sake, is forgotten; and he first appears, as a boy, brought up from his earliest years † in the monastery of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire. The rule

* We may conjecture with some probability that St. Stephen is likely to have been a kinsman and possibly a son of Harding, described as Harding de Meriet or Harding FitzElnod. It is at any rate a coincidence that Merriott though in Somersetshire is less than a dozen miles distant from Sherborne in Dorset, where Stephen entered the abbey school. Harding de Meriet appears in Domesday (1086) as holding a good deal of land about Lopen, Crewkerne, &c., "though," says Mr. Eyton, Domesday Studies, I. p. 69, "he does not seem like his father to have become wealthy or eminent." This corresponds very well with the *non ita reconditis natalibus procreatus* of William of Malmesbury. So also does the fact that Malmesbury insists a good deal upon St. Stephen being English, while Harding of Merriott is conspicuously set down in Domesday among the English (*i.e.* Saxon) thanes. Cf. Freeman, Norman Conquest, vol. iv., p. 758, and William of Malmesbury, Gesta Regum, bk. iii. § 254. Assuming the truth of the conjecture that Robert FitzHarding of Bristol was son of Harding FitzElnod, St. Stephen would in that case be a collateral ancestor of the Lords of Berkeley, who held Berkeley Castle continuously for seven hundred years and played a conspicuous part in English history.—*E.*

† William of Malmesbury, Gest. Reg., Angl. lib. iv. § 334.

of St. Benedict * allows parents to offer up children under fourteen years of age at God's altar, to serve Him to the end of their days in the cloister. In those lawless times, when temptations to acts of violence and rapine and reckless profligacy were so great, holy parents thought that they could not better protect the purity of their children than by placing them at once under the shadow of a monastery. Just as they had already in their name taken the solemn vows of baptism at the font, so they brought their children into the church of the convent, led them up into the sanctuary, and wrapping their hands in the linen cloth which covered the altar, gave them up solemnly to the service of God. At the same time, they took an oath never to endow them with any of their goods; † they then left them with perfect security in the keeping of the superior, to follow their Lord with a light step, unencumbered by worldly possessions. The discipline to which St. Stephen was thus subjected from his earliest years, was of the most careful kind. No prince could be brought up with greater care in a king's palace, than were these children offered up in the monastery, whether they were noble or low-born. The greatest pains were taken that the sight and even the knowledge of evil should be kept from them; they were instructed in reading, writing, and religious learning, but above all in music and psalmody. But the greater portions of their time was spent in the services of the Church, in which various constitutions of the

* C. 59.

† This is perhaps not quite accurate. The parents engaged not to induce their son afterwards to leave the monastery, and not to bestow upon him lands or goods which might tempt him to return to the world (*Statuta Lanfranci*, Migne, P. L. 150, p. 503.) Another celebrated case of a child thus offered to God in a monastery at a tender age is that of St. Hugh of Lincoln. His father on becoming a Canon Regular took the little Hugh into the cloister with him.—*E.*

order appoint them a principal part. Stephen thus spent his childhood, like Samuel, in the courts of the Lord's house, amidst the beauty and variety of the ceremonies with which the peaceful round of monastic life was diversified.

About a hundred years before his time, St. Dunstan had roused anew the spirit of the Benedictines in England, which had in many places fallen into decay; and according to his constitutions the monastery of Sherborne was governed. In every part of his minute rules for the order of divine service,* the part of the children brought up in the convent appears foremost; and there is a joyousness, and at the same time a sort of homeliness in some of them, which shows how much he consulted the English character. All the uproarious merriment of the nation he tames down by turning it into something ecclesiastical. Bell-ringing for instance is ever occurring in his rule, and in one place it directs that at mass, nocturns, and vespers, from the Feast of the Innocents till the Circumcision, all the bells should be rung, as was the custom in England; "for the honest and godly customs of this country, which we have learnt from the wont of our ancestors, we have determined by no means to reject, but in every case to confirm them." † Processions also from church to church, when the weather was fine, were frequent; and these were often headed by the children of the monastery. Thus on Palm Sunday the whole community quitted the convent walls, and walked in procession clad in albs to some neighbouring church, with the children at their head. On arriving at their destination, the palms were blest and the

* The Regularis Concordia here referred to is now known to have been drawn up, not by St. Dunstan, but by his friend and disciple St. Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester. See English Historical Review, Oct. 1894, p. 700.—*E.*

† Reg. Conc. c. 3.

young choristers entoned the antiphons, and all quitted the church with palms in their hands. On returning to the church, the procession stopped before the porch, and the children, who walked first, chanted the *Gloria Laus*, after which, as the response *Ingrediente Domino* was raised by the cantor, the doors of the church were thrown open and the whole line moved in to hear Mass.

Such scenes as these must have sunk deep into a mind like Stephen's, and he might have lived and died in the peaceful monastery of Sherborne. But God had other designs for His servant, and in his youth he quitted the convent, for the sake of finishing his studies.* From the words of St. Benedict's rule, it seems to have been intended that children received into a monastery should be considered as having taken the vows through their parents, and as dedicated to God until their life's end. Monastic discipline was not then considered so dreadful as it is now thought to have been; nor was this world looked upon as so very sweet that it was an act of madness to quit it for God's service. Rather, they were thought happy, to whom God had given the grace of a monastic vocation, and they were surely called by Him to the happy seclusion of the cloister, who were placed there by their parents' will; just as now we find that the wish of a father and mother decides on the profession or state of life of their child. Besides, monastic vows are in one

* William of Malmesbury, who is practically our only authority, seems to me distinctly to imply that St. Stephen in leaving Sherborne gave up all idea of the monastic life. *Pannos illos perosus* must surely mean that he had come to hate the rough dress of the monk. On the other hand we need not suppose that because he is called *monachus* he had necessarily arrived at mature age or had renewed by his own act the consecration made for him by his parents. In the Cistercian rule itself we hear of children who are *monachi*, and it is said that only such can be taught in the monastery.—*E.*

sense only the completion of the vows of baptism; and it was not thought unnatural that those, who while the child was perfectly unconscious, placed him in the awful contact with the world unseen, implied by baptism, should also put him in the way of best fulfilling the vows to which they themselves had bound him in his infancy. This was probably St. Benedict's view; but before Stephen's time, custom had in some cases relaxed the rule. St. Benedict seems not to have contemplated the case of a monk's ever leaving his monastery, except when despatched on the business of the convent. Each religious house was to be perfect in itself, and to contain, if possible, all the necessary arts of life, so that its inmates need very rarely go beyond its walls. Least of all does he seem to have thought that a monk could quit the cloister for the acquisition of learning; the end of monastic life was to follow Christ in perfect poverty and obedience; monks tilled the ground with their own hands, and wrought their food out of the hard soil by the sweat of their brow; they were therefore in very many cases what we should call rude and ignorant men, unskilled in worldly learning, though well versed in the science of divine contemplation. The natural force of circumstances however made the cloister the rallying-point of learning, and monks often quitted their own convents in order to perfect themselves in the sciences.* The active mind of Stephen longed for more than the poor † monastery of Sherborne could afford

* Instances will be found in Mabillon, Tract. de Studiis monasticis, c. 16. In the Cistercian order Otto of Frisingen was sent to Paris after his profession, and that from Morimond, a monastery founded by and under the control of St. Stephen. Manrique, 1127, 2. V. also the case of St. Wilfrid; Bede, Eccl. Hist. v. 20.

† In the goods of this world the Abbey of Sherborne was not poor. There is a long list of its possessions in Domesday (1086), that is, probably about five or six years after Harding quitted it. When he

him. He first travelled into Scotland, which at that time was the general refuge of all of Saxon race from the power of the Conqueror. It was governed by Malcolm III., who in 1070 married Margaret, a daughter of the English blood royal, and the grand-niece of St. Edward the Confessor. Her gentle virtues smoothed the rough manners of the nation, and the holy austerity of her life gave her such an ascendency over them, that she banished many horrid customs which Christianity had as yet failed in uprooting. It was probably the peace which her holiness shed around her in Scotland which attracted Stephen thither; it formed a favourable contrast to the distracted state of England, which was suffering from the effects of the Conquest, and where a Saxon monastery could not be safe from the aggressions of their Norman lord. From Scotland he bent his steps to Paris.

Up to this time Stephen's life had been one of tranquillity, spent in the peace of a monastery or in the acquisition of learning. But he seems now to be entering on the rougher portion of his career; he had not yet found out his vocation, and with that untiring energy, of which his after-life showed so many proofs, was looking out for it. He was the disciple of a crucified Lord, and his brethren all through the world were fighting; how then could he rest in peace? He left Paris and undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, at that time a journey of great danger and difficulty, when the roads were not smoothed by all the contrivances of modern travelling. Forests had not been cleared nor mountains cut through,

entered there, Sherborne was the seat of a bishopric, and the monks of Sherborne Abbey, who had been introduced to replace the secular canons in 998, formed the cathedral chapter. In 1076 the Bishop Hermann transferred his see to Old Sarum. Sherborne was an inconsiderable place, and Malmesbury declares that it was a scandal the bishopric had remained there so long —*E.*

and the towns and villages were far distant from each other, so that the poor pilgrims had often to depend on the hospitality of the monks and religious houses to find food and a night's rest after a long day's journey on foot or on horseback. A heavy rain was a most serious inconvenience, for it converted the road into a deep mass of mud,* flooded the rivers and broke down the bridges. Another great danger was the bands of robbers who infested the forests, and the frequent wars which devastated the lands. The castle of a lawless baron or an encounter with any of the numerous bands of soldiers which crossed the country in every direction in war time, was a most serious obstacle to the defenceless traveller; no religious character could protect him, for we find that monasteries were burnt and churches pillaged with as little scruple as if the combatants were heathen Normans instead of Christians. On one occasion all the bishops and abbots of France were attacked on their way from the council of Pisa, by some petty lord; some thrown from their mules, some detained prisoners, and all rifled and plundered notwithstanding their sacred character. A lonely pilgrim like Stephen would not be likely to find much mercy at such hands: undeterred by the dangers of the way, he set out with but one companion, a clerk, whose name is unknown. Rome was the bourn to which the hearts of all Englishmen naturally turned at that day across the wide tract of land and sea which separated them. Stephen had the thoughts of many illustrious examples before him to cheer him on his way; many a Saxon king had laid aside his crown and gone to assume the monastic habit at Rome. The venerable Bede, in relating one of these events, says, that it was only what many of the English, noble and low-born, clerks and

* Petrus Ven. Ep. 6, 46.

lay-men, men and women vied with each other in doing;* and their enthusiastic feelings are recorded in that saying which occurs so strangely in Bede's Collectanea,† or Common-place Book, "When the Coliseum falls, Rome shall fall; when Rome falls, the world shall fall." England had never forgotten, that whatever Rome might be to the rest of the world, it was her mother-church; from the earliest times there was an English school in Rome, and some Saxon king, tradition said Ina, had built a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, which belonged to the English, and where Saxon pilgrims who died at Rome were buried.‡ Stephen was therefore as much at home in St. Peter's when once he got to Rome, as he would have been in Westminster Abbey; recollections of his native kings would meet him wherever he went: there he might see the place where Alfred, when a boy of seven years old, was anointed king by Leo IV.; and in "the street of the Saxons," where the English pilgrims lived, stood St. Mary's church, in which was the tomb of Burrhed, the last of the Mercian princes. Stephen, on his way to Rome, never forgot that he was a monk; it was no idle curiosity which led him so far over the sea and across the Alps. It was to imitate to the letter the life of Him who came down from heaven to be a poor

* Bede, Eccl. Hist. v. 7.

† Bede, ed. Col. tom. iii. 483. [P.L. 94, 543.]

‡ Although it may not be true that the foundation was due to Ina of Wessex (689-726), the *schola Saxonum* certainly existed at the end of the eighth century; Liber Pontificalis, Duchesne, vol. ii. p. 36, n. 27, and p. 53. It was probably the oldest of the *scholæ peregrinorum* and was so important that the surrounding district came to be called the *Burgus Saxonum*, a name which has survived in the Borgo of to-day. Cf. also an article by De Rossi in the Notizie degli Scavi, 1883, p. 487, seq., on a hoard of Anglo-Saxon coins found in the Roman forum.—*E.*

man, and who had not where to lay his head; he thus courted cold and hunger and nakedness, that he might follow step by step the Virgin Lamb, as a stranger and pilgrim upon earth. In these times, an Englishman in quitting his country finds, instead of the one home everywhere, altars at which he can only kneel as an alien,* and travelling is therefore to us a source of dissipation. Stephen however found brethren wherever he went, from the parish church and the wayside chapel to the cathedral of the metropolitan city.

Still the bustle of moving from place to place, and a perpetual change of scene, are apt under the best circumstances to distract the mind from that state of habitual devotion in which it ought to rest. Good habits are very hard to gain, but very easy to lose; and nothing is so likely to destroy them as a mode of life in which every turn of the road developes something new. To guard against this danger, our pilgrims set themselves a rule, which none but the most ardent devotion could conceive. Throughout the whole of their long journey, whether they were in a crowded city, in the wilds of a forest, or clambering up the Alps, they recited together daily the whole of the Psalter. At the same time it is expressly said that they did not neglect the works of mercy, which God gave them an opportunity of doing. Thus they went on their way chanting the praises of God, and walking with a joyful heart over the thorns and briers which obstructed their path; doing good as they went to their fellow-pilgrims, and to all sufferers, of whom in those times of violence there was no lack. The road which they travelled was not an unfrequented one; and they might have found much to distract their attention if they had chosen to detach their minds from their holy

* The writer is speaking of course of his Anglican fellow-countrymen.—*E.*

occupation. They not only met the lowly pilgrim who like themselves had left his home out of devotion; but many a bishop and abbot, too often with a lordly train, hastening to have his cause judged at Rome, would overtake and pass them by; or else they would meet the young clerk, high in hopes, going to seek his fortune as an adventurer at the Roman court.* Many a more congenial companion however travelled the same way; their alternate chanting of the Psalms was at least not so singular as to be ostentatious; at each of the hours, the monk was bound to descend from his horse, pulled off his gloves and his cowl, and, falling on his knees, made the sign of the cross; then, after saying the Pater Noster, Deus in adjutorium, and Gloria Patri, he mounted his horse and finished the office on horseback.† English monks especially, when they travelled, said the usual night hours during the day,‡ so that other voices besides those

* V. Hildebertus, Ep. 3, 24, for a specimen of a letter of recommendation to the papal court.

† Statuta Lanfranci, c. 15.

‡ In the early days of Cluny the whole body of monks sang 138 psalms each day, and it was regarded as a sign of degeneracy when the number was reduced by fourteen, (*ex quibus nos XIV. dempsimus propter pusillanimorum animos.* Johan. *Vita Odonis*, c. 32.) At the beginning of the sixth century it was the custom at Agaunum and some other monasteries to continue the psalmody literally without interruption either by day or night. In the intervals of the recitation of the public office which was attended by all, a third part of the monks always remained in the church singing the psalms in a subdued tone. Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire de Genève, vol. xvi. p. 46. When on a journey it was a general custom for monks or pilgrims to recite other psalms over and above those which occurred in the Office. See Regularis Concordia (Anglia, vol. xiii. pp. 373-4). There are wonderful stories told of the perseverance of certain holy men in this practice. Of St. Odilo of Cluny it is said that even when he had fallen asleep from sheer weariness his lips still continued to form the words. (Sackur, Die Cluniacenser, etc., vol. i. p. 56). St. Udalric of Augsburg recited the entire psalter daily in addition to three offices of devotion.—*L.*

of our pilgrims were heard chanting in the open air, as they journeyed to Rome. There were pilgrims of another sort, who, unlike Stephen and his companions, had undertaken the journey to expiate some dreadful crime; some even walked with small and cutting chains round their bodies,* in hopes of obtaining absolution from the successor of Peter.

There was then many an object, both good and bad, to arrest the attention of our pilgrims on the way, and to call for their sympathy. The road to Rome was an indication of what the city was itself; it was the head of the Catholic Church, and, like the Church, had both a heavenly and an earthly aspect. In one sense it was Christ's kingdom, holding in its hands His interests, and dispensing His mysteries; in another sense it was an earthly kingdom, with earthly interests and intrigues, the rich, powerful, and intelligent, thronging its gates and endeavouring to gain the honours and the wealth which it had to dispense; and then again through this motley scene, it was Christ's kingdom working, and bringing good out of the selfishness and the avarice of men, to the wonder of the angels who look on. It was in this twofold point of view that Rome was looked upon in Stephen's time; thus, on the one hand, William of Malmesbury,† a contemporary writer, speaks in bitter terms of the Romans, as "the laziest of men, bartering justice for gold, selling the rule of the canons for a price;" and in the next page he goes on to enumerate with enthusiasm its heavenly treasures, the bodies of numberless martyrs, who rested in its bosom. If ever there was a turbulent seditious populace, it was that of Rome; its nobles, fierce and bloody tyrants; its cardinals, too often purpled princes; but then

* Ducange, Peregrinatio.

† Lib. iv. Gest. Reg. Angl. § 351.

too it was the principal treasure-house of Christ's blessings on earth, the centre of Catholic communion, and the rallying-point of all that was good; and if sometimes the side of injustice, amidst the multiplicity of causes which flowed into it, triumphed, still there was a mighty energy in its good, which at length brought good out of evil; and at all events there was ever room for the poor pilgrim to kneel at the tomb of the Apostles, from whence he went back on his way rejoicing. This was Stephen's object in going to Rome; he thought that his prayers would be most likely to be heard if he knelt near that body the very shadow of which healed the sick, and which was often so close to our most Blessed Lord; and again at the tomb which contained the precious body which gave virtue to handkerchiefs and aprons, and which bore the marks of the Lord Jesus, and by its sufferings had filled up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of our Lord for His Church's sake. How Stephen's prayers were answered we shall soon see.

Chapter II—STEPHEN AT MOLESME

STEPHEN was returning from his pilgrimage with his faithful companion, probably on his way back to Sherborne,* when God conducted his steps to the place which was to be the scene of his labours. As he was travelling through a dark forest in the diocese of Langres in Burgundy, † he came to a poor monastery situated on the side of a sloping hill, on the right bank of the little river Leignes. It could hardly be called a monastery, for it was a collection of huts, built by the monks themselves, of the boughs of trees, which they had cut down with their own hands, surrounding a small wooden oratory. Around this little knot of huts, more like an encampment than a settled dwelling, was an open space in the forest, which the monks had cleared, and which had been given them by a neighbouring baron. The brethren had no

* In the half mocking account of the beginning of the Cistercian order which Giraldus Cambrensis has given in his Speculum Ecclesiæ, (Opera, vol. iv. p. 111,) he represents Harding as quitting Sherborne with three companions all of whom remained with him at Citeaux. Giraldus makes so many statements about the foundation of Citeaux which are certainly incorrect that we can attach no weight to his assertion here. Malmesbury, who wrote while St. Stephen was still living, speaks only of one companion, but as above remarked he clearly implies that Harding had at first no intention whatever of returning to Sherborne or of resuming his life as a monk.—*E.*

† As late as Martene's time, the road to Molesme was so intricate, that he and his companions lost their way in the wood, and only arrived at the convent-gate very late at night. Voy. Litt. part i. p. 185.

means of subsistence but the produce of this piece of ground, which they tilled with their own hands, and they were as much dependent upon it as the poorest serf who gained his own livelihood by the sweat of his brow; yet amongst this poor brotherhood were men of noble birth and of high intellectual attainments. The monastery had only been established a short time, and was struggling with all the difficulties which beset an infant community. Its history is a curious one, as showing how the reckless fury of the times was beaten down by an element of good even more energetic than the evil which it had to encounter. Two brothers of noble birth were one day riding through a solitary place in a forest not far from Molesme, called the forest of Colan; both were armed, for they were riding to take part in a tournament,—a species of festivity, which with all its pageantry, its flutter of pennons and glittering of armour, was soon after condemned in strong terms by the Church.* They were both worldly men, whose only object was honour, in pursuit of which they feared neither God nor man. As they were journeying on, the devil, aided by the solitude and darkness of the place, suggested horrid thoughts to each of them—of murdering the other in order to obtain his inheritance, and it cost

* St. Bern. Ep. 376; Conc. Lat. ii. Canon 14. The decree of the second Council of Lateran (A.D. 1139,) however, only repeats in identical terms a canon which had been framed a few years earlier at the synod of Clermont. Notwithstanding these pronouncements, which were renewed in the third Council of Lateran (1179) and many times afterwards, the tournaments still went on. Richard I. made them a source of revenue by exacting a fixed contribution from all who took part in them. Theobald Walter, with the full approval of Archbishop Hubert his brother, then papal legate, was appointed collector. William of Newburgh, writing about 1198, says of tournaments that the vanity and hot blood of youth "have up to this time set at naught the prudent decrees of the Church." Bk. v. ch. 4.—*E.*

them a struggle to put the temptation down. Shortly afterwards, on returning from the tournament, they passed through the same place. The wicked thoughts which had attacked them in that spot rose to the mind of each, and each trembled secretly at the dreadful power which Satan possessed over his mind. Without revealing to each other their fears, they both hastened to the hut of a holy priest, who lived a hermit's life in the depths of the forest, and separately confessed their sin. They then revealed to each other the dreadful thoughts which had crossed their minds, and recognizing that they could not serve God and Mammon, but must either be like devils in wickedness or saints in holiness, they agreed to quit the world with all its honours, and to live in the forest under the direction of the holy hermit. The world soon heard of the conversion of these noble youths, who had quitted everything that it holds dear, to embrace a voluntary poverty, and to live a life of painful discipline; and a few others were induced to follow their example. At first they lived the life rather of hermits than of cœnobites; afterwards, as their number increased to seven, they determined on adopting the rule of St. Benedict, and looked around them for some one to instruct them in it. They turned their eyes on Robert, then Abbot of St. Michel de Tonnerre, on the borders of Champagne and Burgundy. Robert, however, was at that time unable to leave his post, and the hermits of Colan were disappointed in their hopes of obtaining him. Not long after, however, he was compelled to leave St. Michel by the incorrigibly bad lives of the monks, and to return to Celle near Troyes, his original monastery, from whence he was soon elected Prior of St. Aigulphus. At this place the hermits again sought him, and this time they applied to Rome for an order from the pope, commanding him to undertake the direction of them. Alexander II., the then

reigning pontiff, pleased with their persevering zeal, granted their request, and Robert quitted St. Aigulphus to preside over this infant community. Under his guidance they gained frequent accessions to the brotherhood; and when at last their numbers amounted to thirteen, St. Robert saw fit to remove their habitation from the forest of Colan to Molesme. The new monastery was founded in honour of the Blessed Virgin, on Sunday, the 20th of December, A.D. 1075. It was here that Stephen found the community, and he at once felt that he had reached the end of his wanderings. The place certainly had nothing tempting to common eyes. It is easy to conceive a person falling in love with what may be called the romance of monastic life. Splendid architecture, a beautiful ceremonial, and, above all, religious peace and an absence of worldly cares, are the legitimate compensations for all that monks give up for Christ's sake. But at Molesme, even these attractions were wanting. The monks, like St. Paul, worked with their own hands to get their daily bread; and so poor were they, that even this was often lacking, and they were obliged at times to live wholly on vegetables. They were visibly dependent on God's providence for their daily bread; and seeking first the kingdom of God, they trusted that their scanty food and raiment would be added to them. It was their poverty which attracted Stephen; these few men serving God in the wild of the forest were the very realization of the new order of things which was brought in by the cross of Christ, by which weakness was made strength, and suffering sanctified to bring joy. They were the salt of the earth, preserving it from corruption by their supernatural virtues, and averting the anger of God from the sinful world. Here he found St. Benedict's rule carried out to the letter without any of the relaxations which had

crept in through the lapse of time, and this we know from every one of Stephen's subsequent actions was the state of life at which he aimed in his own person, and which he tried to establish in others. This probably was the object of his prayers at St. Peter's tomb, and now they were answered, for he had thus lighted unexpectedly upon a place where he could follow after that perfection which he had already conceived in his heart.*

In thus quitting his original monastery and entering another, he was in no way violating his rule, for St. Benedict expressly allows an abbot to receive a monk of any distant monastery which was unknown to him ; that is, as it is interpreted, he excludes monasteries which are so near as to admit of intercourse. But there was another dffficulty, which it cost Stephen a painful struggle with himself to overcome. The devil often gathers all his powers to give battle to great saints, when they are on the eve of doing some action, which is to be the turning point of their lives ; and so it was with Stephen. He felt a most bitter pang at parting from the clerk who had been the faithful companion of his pilgrimage.† His affectionate heart, which from his early consecration to God's service at Sherborne, could hardly have known the love of father, mother, brethren, or sisters, had it seems fixed itself so firmly on his friend, that now it was with great difficulty that he could tear himself away. He, however, vanquished in the struggle, and remained behind at Molesme, while

* Manrique, Ann. Cist. Introd. c. 2. conjectures that he made a vow at Rome to embrace a more perfect mode of life. [On the other hand his conversion seems to have taken place before he went to Rome, after he had spent some few years in France. "Ibi," says Malmesbury speaking of France, "aliquot annis litteris liberalibus exercitus divini amoris stimulos accepit." p. 380.—*E.*]

† I know of no early authority for this statement. Malmesbury, who alone mentions the cleric, gives no hint of it.—*E.*

his friend passed on. For this one friend whom he gave up, he at once found two others in Robert and Alberic, the abbot and prior of Molesme. Both of them were his companions in the more arduous struggles of his after life; both have been, with him, held up by the Church to the veneration of the faithful, among the saints; and it was their joint work which he was afterwards left on earth to complete. When, however, Stephen joined them at Molesme, they were but simple monks, unknown to the works. Robert, the spiritual father of both Alberic and Stephen, was of one of the noblest families of Champagne; he had been a monk from a very early age, and had been distinguished for his adherence to the strict rule of St. Benedict; he had quitted the government of the abbey of Michel, as we have said above, and retired into a private station because of the incorrigible laxity of the monks. Alberic was one of the original seven hermits of Colan; he is described in the early history of Citeaux, as "a man of learning well skilled in things both divine and human, a lover of the rule and of the brethren."* These two walked hand in hand with Stephen, in all the trials in which they soon found themselves involved. The monastery at times suffered from actual want; from the loneliness of the spot and the fewness of visitors, they were quite forgotten by

* Exord. Parvum Cist. c. 9; Guignard, p. 67. The Exordium Parvum is a document which was drawn up by St. Stephen himself in order to set before Pope Calistus II. when that pope was asked in 1119 to confirm the new institute by a solemn bull. It gives a very brief historical account of the beginning of the Cistercian order, in which are inserted some letters of bishops and cardinals, and the Privilegium Romanum granted by Pope Paschal II. This with other important early documents connected with the Cistercians has been printed from the most authoritative manuscript sources by Ph. Guignard in Les Monuments Primitifs de la Règle Cistercienne. Dijon, 1878.—*E.*

the world, and the alms of the faithful were turned into other channels. They continued however in cheerful faith, winning their livelihood out of the hard ground, and feeling sure that God would not desert them ; and, indeed, they found that their faith was not misplaced. One day as they were about to sit down to a scanty meal, after the hard labour of the day, the Bishop of Troyes arrived at the monastery with a considerable retinue. The poor monks felt ashamed that they could so miserably supply the needs of their illustrious visitor, but cheerfully divided with him their hard-won meal. The bishop went away from the monastery wondering at the fervent piety of its inmates. For a long time nothing came of this visit, and the monks had probably forgotten it. Meanwhile the resources of the community became daily more straitened, till at last there were hardly provisions enough left to serve them for a few days. The brethren applied to St. Robert, and informed him of the state of the case. He bade them quietly trust in God, who would not leave his servants to perish in the solitude to which they had retired to serve Him. He ordered some of them to go to Troyes, which was much nearer to them than their own episcopal city of Langres, and bade them buy food, though he well knew that he had no money to give them. The exact conformity of their lives to the very letter of Scripture, made them look upon it as a solace and a counsel in the minutest points, in a way of which we have no conception ; thus the words of Isaiah rose to St. Robert's mind, "You that have no money, make haste and buy." * Encouraged by the faith of their abbot, the monks set out on their apparently hopeless journey. So long had the good brethren kept away from the world, that they forgot the singularity of their appearance. They were therefore surprised on

* Isa. lv. Vulg.

entering the city that their naked feet, coarse habit, and features so worn with toil and watching that the fervent spirit seemed to shine through the flesh, attracted general attention. The news flew hastily round, till it reached the Bishop's palace. He ordered them to be brought to his presence, and as soon as they entered recognised his hosts of Molesme. He received them with joy, took off their tattered habits, and sent them back with his blessing, and a waggon loaded with clothes and bread for their poor brethren at home. We may fancy the joy of the community when they saw their messengers return, not empty-handed as they went, but laden with the blessings which God had given them, as it were with His own hands, to reward their faith. This seems to have been nearly the last of their struggles with poverty, "for" says the monk who has written St. Robert's life,* "from that day forth there never was wanting to them a man to supply them with all that is necessary for food and clothing. And as they endured with the greatest constancy in God's service, many continually were added to their number, fugitives from the world, who leaving their earthly burdens, placed their necks under the yoke of the Lord."

* V. Bollandists, April 29.

Chapter III—MOLESME DEGENERATES

THE community of Molesme seemed now to be in a fair way of becoming the head of a new and flourishing congregation of the Benedictine order. It might even have rivalled Cluny, for many abbots prayed St. Robert to grant them some of his monks, by way of introducing into their own monasteries the reform of Molesme. It would have become what Citeaux was afterwards, had not the folly of the monks frustrated the designs of God. The various steps by which the change was effected in the convent, are not marked in the scanty annals of the time. The brethren appear at first in the story as saints in perfection, and a little further on are represented as degenerate.* The change, however, took place on an increase of numbers and of wealth in the community; it does not, therefore, at all follow that the original monks degenerated; it was rather the second generation who broke in upon the strictness of the first. Again, it must be remembered, that strong expressions may be used, and rightly, about the corruption of monks, without implying the existence of gross impurity. A convent may degenerate into a lax and formal way of performing its duties, or it may be ruined by internal dissensions, without falling into vicious excesses. The most common commencement of corruption was a violation of the rule of poverty, and this seems

* The fact seems to be that the thirteenth century Life of St. Robert, which is the main authority for these details, is both confused and untrustworthy.—*E.*

to have been the case at Molesme. The wealth which had accrued to them from the bounty of the faithful, had done away with the necessity of manual labour, and they refused to obey their abbot, who wished to keep it up as a portion of the discipline enjoined by the rule. Again, they insisted on keeping possession of parochial tithes, and they assumed habits of a richer and warmer sort than the rule allowed. They grounded their arguments on the general practice of monasteries about them, though it was opposed to the rule which they professed to follow. From the general state of monasticism at the period, it was quite evident that these dispensations, though sanctioned by precedent, and in themselves not incompatible with strictness of life, led in most cases in the end to laxity. On these grounds St. Robert opposed these innovations; and his opposition led to further resistance from the monks; they had first begun by despising the poverty of Christ, and they ended by disobeying their abbot. Poverty and obedience are the very soul of monasticism, and a convent which has once transgressed these two portions of the vow, is in a state next to hopeless. St. Robert saw that his presence only irritated his refractory children, and he determined on leaving them, as St. Benedict and other saints had set him the example of doing, and retired to a place called Aurum, the habitation of certain hermits.* This was a severe trial to Stephen; he had come to Molesme, because there he could serve Christ better than anywhere else, and he had for a time rejoiced in being able to follow the steps of his Divine Master. But he had gradually seen his brethren become worse and worse, till at last through their misconduct he was now abandoned by

* Mabillon, Ann. Ben. bk. lxix. n. 73, identifies this with a place called Hauz, where three hermits are said to have lived, and which was, in his time, a farm belonging to the monastery of Molesme.

his spiritual guide. It is true, he did not himself follow the laxity which he saw around him, but this, though it might set his own conscience at rest, could not restore the peace of the brotherhood. The very object of the cœnobitic life is, that all should obey the same rule, and do the same things, so that the zeal of one may kindle the other. The bond of charity was now broken, and the convent was in effect ruined. To add to his trial, he now found that a great portion of the charge of this unruly community was on his hands, for Alberic, who as prior naturally took the government of the abbey in the absence of the abbot, invested him with a portion of his authority. He therefore set about his hopeless task; but how far he succeeded we may guess, from the treatment which the monks inflicted on his colleague. They seized on Alberic, who still endeavoured to carry out Robert's principles, beat him severely, and thrust him into a dungeon. On his release, Alberic determined to quit the monastery, and he was followed by Stephen and one or two other monks.* Thus was Stephen cast upon the world, deprived of all the ides which Providence had put into his way; so true is it, that we must not set our hearts, in this world, even on

* The whole of this story about the retirement of SS. Alberic and Stephen to Vivier is of very doubtful authenticity. Our more reliable authorities, e.g., the Exordium Parvum, the Exordium Magnum, William of Malmesbury and Ordericus Vitalis, say nothing of any migration previous to that which took Alberic and Stephen to Citeaux. Moreover the account in the Life of St. Robert, which alone speaks of this first departure from Molesme, contains details which are demonstrably false, as for instance when it mentions that Joceramnus, Bishop of Langres, ordered Stephen and Alberic to return to the monastery, though Joceramnus did not become Bishop of Langres until 1114, that is at least sixteen years after the date we are speaking of. The account given in the text follows no ancient authority, but represents only the desperate attempt of Manrique to bring the incidents he relates into some semblance of consistency.—*E.*

the good which God allows us to work. Good is to be loved, not because it is ours, but because it is to God's glory; when He wills that it should perish, we must not murmur, but keep our hearts still fixed upon Him, ready to do His will.

Stephen was now, it may be said, his own master; the authorities of his convent, by abandoning it, had released him from his vow of obedience. He, however, did not choose for himself an easy lot; he again sought the desert, and retired with Alberic and the other monks to a solitary place called Vivicus, now Vivier, near Landreville, about four leagues from Molesme.† God, however, did not leave His servant in this solitude. After he had been there for some time, gathering strength by prayer and fasting for the work which he was soon called upon to perform, it pleased Him to call him back from his retreat, to his old monastery. The monks soon discovered that the flower of the community was gone, and that they could not govern themselves without Robert. It is probable that they were not thoroughly bad; they did not wish to give up the strict abstinence enjoined by the rule; it was rather the poverty which scandalized them; they did not like the coarse habit and the hard manual labour, and wished to be like their neighbours. They therefore began to long for Robert's return, and knew not how to win him back from his retreat, after once driving him away by their misconduct, and then grossly ill-treating their prior in his absence. They at last determined to apply to the holy see, and succeeded in obtaining an order, commanding Robert to resume the command of the monastery. The holy see appears to have been the great court of appeal of Christendom; monks, good and bad, bearded hermits, and mitred abbots, all brought their causes to Rome; and if he could not

† Mabillon, Ann. Ben. 66. 100.

afford to travel in any other way, the poor brother trudged manfully across the Alps with his wallet on his back, to obtain justice from the papal court. The jurisdiction of bishops over abbots was ill-defined, as may be seen by the independent way in which superiors left their monasteries, without apparently consulting their bishop. None, therefore, but a power, which held its seat at a distance from the scene of action, and could not be accused of selfish views, was able to step in when ordinary authority failed. A mandate from Rome Robert could not refuse to obey, and he again put himself at the head of the refractory monks.* Stephen and Alberic, with the other monks who had retired to Vivier, followed the example of their abbot, and the whole brotherhood was again united within the cloister of Molesme. The monks who had before rebelled, had either grown wiser, or been frightened into submission, and were ready to obey their abbot; on the other hand, Robert had learned to deal more gently with them now that they were disposed to be submissive. The command of the pope had rendered it impossible to quit them a second time, without permission from Rome itself, or from a legate; so that it was clearly his duty to manage their unruly spirits as best he could, and by concession in some particulars to win them to keep the more essential portions of the rule. The monastery began again to flourish, and new convents were even placed under the jurisdiction of

* This appeal to the Pope, which rests only on the authority of the Life of St. Robert, looks like a confused echo of the recall of St. Robert from Citeaux to be related further on. The same Life states that Stephen and Alberic after withdrawing to Vivier never returned to Molesme. This is in flat contradiction with the one fact which we do know for certain, viz., that in 1097, the year before Citeaux was founded, SS. Robert, Alberic and Stephen were all at Molesme, for their names appear as witnesses in a charter of that date cited by Mabillon, Annales, bk. lxix. n. 73.—*E.*

the abbot, and filled by monks of his choosing, who were to model the new community according to the reform introduced by him.

Though, however, the harmony of the convent was thus restored, and external decency preserved, yet it was far from being a place where those who aspired after perfection could rest in peace; the charm of holy poverty was gone, and many of the brethren of Molesme in secret regretted the changes which had taken place. The convent had ceased to be to them what it had been before; the alms of the faithful had enriched it, and they regretted the wooden huts and oratory, and the poverty which had obliged them to work in the heat and in the cold, as is the appointed lot of poor men. The foremost of their party was Stephen. Every morning the rule of St. Benedict was read in chapter, and he mourned in secret over the many departures from its holy dictates, of which the convent was guilty. To the generality of the world many of the commandments of Christ are precepts of perfection; but to monks who have sworn to quit the world, they are precepts of obligation. In token of this, a monk in some convents was buried in his habit, with the rule of St. Benedict in his hand, to show that by that rule he was to stand or fall at the last day. For a long time, however, Stephen and his companions made no formal complaint, but bore their sorrows in silence. Much might be said against taking any steps to remedy the state of things which they saw around them. It was not their fault that they transgressed their rule; besides this, peace had but lately been restored to the monastery, and it was an invidious thing again to disturb the consciences of their brethren, which had so lately been set at rest. Again, each of them might think that the feelings which actuated him were merely the effect of his own restlessness, in

which case it would be a far greater merit to obey in silence, than to afflict their bodies with fasting, and to walk about in coarse garments.

Gradually, however, by comparing his views with those of his neighbour, each man found that he was not singular in thus feeling acutely the misery of their situation. Stephen is said to have been the first to break the subject to Alberic;* his abhorrence of the dispensations and indulgences which the other monks claimed, may appear to be merely the restless feelings of one accustomed to live in the wild solitudes of nature, but they derive a meaning from the state of monasticism in his time. St. Benedict had in his rule left a power with the superior of altering or tempering the rule, according to the circumstances of the convent. The natural course of things had led abbots to take advantage of this provision, and their alterations had in time considerably changed the monastic state. It does not at all follow that any one was to blame in this. An abbot was at first the superior of a few poor brethren, who worked for their own livelihood amongst the rocks of some wilderness, or in some hidden valley, and who only differed from common labourers in their singing psalms day and night, in their fasting every day, and praying every hour; but the case was widely different when the same abbot was ruler over two or three hundred monks,

* Cum verbum innovandæ religionis in eadem domo motum fuisset, ipse Stephanus primus inter primos ferventissimo studio laboravit ac modis omnibus institit ut locus et ordo Cisterciensis institueretur.—Exord. Mag. (P.L. 185, dist. 1, cap. 15).

The Exordium Magnum is a fuller account of the early history of the Cistercians extending down to the time of Peter, eighth Abbot of Clairvaux. It was compiled by Abbot Conrad of Eberbach, formerly a monk of Clairvaux, who died at a very advanced age in 1221. See Hüffer, Vorstudien zu einer Darstellung des Lebens und Wirkens des H. Bernard von Clairvaux, p. 174.—*E.*

and when the bounty of the faithful had made him the steward of the poor, by giving him wide lands and fair manors. The abbot became a temporal lord, with vassals under his command; he had, moreover, to sit in councils, ecclesiastical and civil, besides going to Rome on the business of the abbey, and making a progress to visit his estates. Again, my lord abbot, leading a solemn service with music and chanting under the canopy of his carved stall, or blessing the people from the altar with a jewelled mitre on his head, and a ring on his finger, was a very different person from the poor lord of a few acres in a desert, ruling over a few monks with a wooden staff like a shepherd's crook. Another change in monasteries was their application to learned purposes; St. Benedict's rule implies, that many of the monks did not know how to read, and learnt the Psalter and divine office by heart; * but monasteries, naturally, became the chief seats of learning, and often contained two schools, one within the cloister for the novices, the other without it, for secular pupils. This involved a library and an establishment for copying manuscripts, so that manual labour might, in process of time, with propriety give place to literary labours. None of these changes involved a violation of the rule; the abbot often wore a hair shirt under his splendid vestments, and slept upon a hard mattress of straw, stretched by the side of the magnificent state bed in his chamber. He was often really poor amidst the great wealth of the abbey, because the whole of the revenues which could be spared from the convent were given to the poor. In this way Cluny, in St. Hugh's time, seems to have been a wonderful and stately seminary, from which proceeded the great men of the age, rulers of churches, and even of the world, through their sanctity of life.

* Reg. St. Ben. c. 8. 57, 58, with Calmet's Comment.

Still with its magnificent church, and great revenues, it was not what it was before, the poor and simple religious house. It would be absurd to depreciate it on this account; as well might one precious stone be blamed for not being another; still it was a fact that it was changed; there were dispensations from manual labour, and pittances in the refectory, and a stud of horses for the abbot and for the prior, even for each dean to ride away when he would, to visit his charge. Innocent as all this was, when such an abbot as St. Hugh governed Cluny, still it was a dangerous state; a dispensing power is necessarily beside the law; its limits are undefined, for it quits the broad line of fact and precedent, and introduces moral questions, in which it is always difficult to determine the precise point where good begins to mix with evil. Thus the very next abbot to St. Hugh ruined Cluny for a time, and in Stephen's time very many monasteries were in a miserable state, on account of the laxity introduced by abbots under the name of dispensations. Stephen lived during the whole of the long struggle between the popes and the secular power, and we shall see proofs in the subsequent actions of his life, that in the state of perplexity and confusion which ensued during that most momentous contest, pomp and luxury had power to invade even the cloister. Many were the innovations introduced under the name of dispensations, till hardly a vestige of the monastic character remained. Simony again brought with it intercourse with princes, pride, and luxury. We must not, therefore, wonder at Stephen's hatred of the very name of dispensation.

Furthermore, we must recollect that Stephen had been a dweller in the wilderness and forest; he aspired to the highest Christian perfection, so that he would not have been contented even with Cluny. Though a man of

learning, he wished to become foolish for Christ's sake; he wished to be perfectly destitute, and to depend for his daily bread, and his coarse habit, on God's providence. No record remains of any action or saying of his against the stately order of Cluny, but his vocation lay another way. God had kindled a divine love in his heart, and it was fire in his bones, and would not let him rest till he had accomplished the work which he was sent on earth to perform. God's saints are His workmanship, and the same Almighty goodness which has made the lilies, and also given its own beauty to the rose, which has created flowers, precious stones, and animals, each with a different glory, has also in the creation of His grace variously moulded the souls of His saints. Stephen's lot was to be of those who, by their utter destitution of human helps, most of all illustrate the new order of things, which our blessed Lady celebrated in the Magnificat. Out of weakness he was to be made strong; with his perfect poverty, his coarse and tattered garment, his body bowed down by labour and mortification, he was to bring in an order of men into the Church, who beat down pomp and luxury, intellect and power. His wooden staff was more powerful than the sceptre of kings, and his fragile frame was the centre, around which the whole of the saintly prelates of the Church who fought against luxury and simony in the Church, clustered and arranged their battle; the pre-eminence which God gave to His saint in after-life, is a full vindication of his conduct in these his first years, when he was a poor despised monk, treated by his brethren as an enthusiast and fanatic.

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Chapter IV—REMOVAL FROM MOLESME

THE scanty chronicles of the time give but few particulars of the history of Molesme at this period; all that is known is, that the war of dispensations continued for some time at Molesme, and that the greater part of the brethren continued to scoff at Stephen's scruples. His energetic word had, however, made a great impression on many of the community, so that the number of those who longed for a more perfect way began to form by no means a despicable part of the monastery. Seeing then that God had touched the hearts of so many of his brethren, Stephen determined on attempting a plan, out of which afterwards sprung the order of Citeaux. He conceived the idea of a new monastery, to be governed according to the very letter of the rule of St. Benedict. The scheme was in many respects a very bold one: in the first place, it involved leaving Molesme, and retiring again to the desert or the forest; it was in fact beginning the world afresh, and exposing himself naked and destitute to all the hardships which beset an infant community. These, however, were difficulties which he had already overcome, and which his faith would teach him to treat as light afflictions. But there was another point of view in which he was running a risk in his new undertaking. We are far too apt to look upon the middle ages as times to which ordinary rules of prudence will not apply. It is quite true that

now, when all is over, we can look back and wonder at the superhuman deeds which faith then achieved; but we forget that we now consider them as they are lit up by the glory which a successful result has thrown upon them. Many a man, whom we now revere as a saint, was looked upon in his day as a fanatic. Stephen had then to consider the chances of success, just as we should do now; he must have bethought himself, whether his scheme was likely to *answer*, in modern phraseology. The difference between him and one of us is simply, that he had the faith to throw himself on a great principle in spite of the chances of its not answering. There was a great chance that the opinion of even good men would condemn him; he was leading a number of monks into the desert, and that from Molesme, a regular, and, in many respects, a flourishing community. In returning to the letter of the rule of St. Benedict, he was going back from the twelfth century to the sixth, a leap almost as wide as it would be in the nineteenth to go back to the twelfth. He was moreover passing over the great precedent of Cluny, then, as has been before intimated, in the height of its splendour. On the other hand, the voice of his conscience was loud within him, bidding him embrace the most perfect way: and the sad state of a great many monasteries, which had fallen into disorder from the use of dispensations, was an external voice, hardly less loud, warning him to avoid the rock on which they had split. His first care was to ascertain the will of his superiors; he therefore and his companions applied to Robert, and stated their difficulties.* Their faith in thus throwing

* William of Malmesbury lays stress upon the initiative of St. Stephen in this return to the primitive rule. At his instigation, says William, the question was discussed in chapter after chapter, with the result that the Abbot Robert at last was gained to the cause of reform.

themselves on the will of their abbot was rewarded, for he cordially entered into their schemes. With a joyful heart, they then consulted with their abbot on the best mode of effecting what they wished, feeling now sure that God was with them in the course which they intended to pursue.

They were obliged to proceed warily, for the monks of Molesme, however unwilling themselves to follow the rule of St. Benedict in all its strictness, were still too well aware of the lustre which Robert, Alberic, and Stephen cast upon the convent, to bear to part with them easily. They did not therefore even apply to their own bishop of Langres, but went straight to Hugh, Archbishop of Lyons and legate of the Holy See in France. It was early in the year 1098 that Abbot Robert set out from Molesme on his way to Lyons, accompanied by Stephen, and five other monks, Alberic, Odo, John, Lætaldus, and Peter. The prelate to whom they applied was one of the most distinguished adherents of St. Gregory VII. and had even expectations of succeeding to the popedom on his death. He was a great friend of St. Anselm, and at the time that our abbot came to Lyons with his companions, the illustrious exile had sought and obtained shelter there. Hugh was therefore a man to appreciate their difficulties. He entered into their scheme, and on their return to Molesme, sent them a letter authorizing them to quit

Two of the brethren whose reputation for learning was on a par with their strict religious observance were appointed to study the text of the Rule of St. Benedict, to investigate the author's meaning and to expound to the rest the result of their enquiries. The Abbot, according to the same authority, did all in his power to induce his monks to come to an unanimous decision, but only eighteen could be persuaded to adopt the rule in its primitive purity. Op. cit. p. 382. William of Malmesbury's statements on this and other points carry great weight, because his narrative was written down within twenty-five years of the events which he is describing.—*E.*

Molesme; this document, as it distinctly states the object for which they wished to leave their monastery, shall be here subjoined at length.

"Hugo, Bishop of Lyons and legate of the Apostolic See, to Robert, Abbot of Molesme and to the brethren with him, who desire to serve God according to the rule of St. Benedict. Be it known to all, who rejoice in the advance of our Holy Mother the Church, that you, with certain men, your sons, brethren of the convent of Molesme, have stood in our presence at Lyons, and declared that ye wished to adhere to the rule of the blessed Benedict, which ye had up to this time kept in the said monastery in a lukewarm and negligent way, henceforth more strictly and more perfectly. Which thing, because it is evident that from many preventing causes ye cannot fulfil in the aforesaid place, we, consulting the salvation of both parties, that is, both of those who go away and those who stay, have thought it best that ye should retire to some other place, which the bounty of God shall point out to you, and there serve the Lord to your souls' greater health and quiet. To you therefore who were then present, Abbot Robert, and brethren Alberic, Odo, John, Stephen, Lætaldus, and Peter, yea and to all whom according to rule and by common counsel ye have determined to unite to yourselves, we both then gave advice to keep this holy design, and therein now bid you persevere, and through apostolic authority and by the setting of our seal confirm it for ever." *

On receiving this letter, Robert solemnly gave back into the hands of the brethren who remained the vows which they had taken of obedience to himself, at the same time giving them liberty to elect a successor. Twenty-one

* The Latin may be found in Guignard, Monuments Primitifs de la Règle Cistercienne, p. 62.—*E.*

brethren, gathered together by Stephen's energetic words, determined to take advantage of the archbishop's permission and to follow him into the desert; the others had not the courage to take this bold step. A convent is a little world in itself, and has its mixed characters and tempers, just like the world; the mass of the community in such a convent as Molesme probably consisted of men who followed the leading of others, and contented themselves with arriving at a certain standard of holiness, without rising much above or falling much below it. Let no one suppose that all is smooth in a convent life; it has temptations of its own, temptations to rising only just in time for matins, to a love of such ease as the cloister will allow, to talking vain words at recreation time, to a low standard of devotion; temptations at which those who live in the world, exposed to imminent danger of mortal sin, may smile; and yet real, because they argue habitual sloth. Those then who were contented with this low state of religion, and yet were incapable of open acts of disobedience and breaches of conventual discipline, would be able to appreciate the high character of Robert and Stephen, though they could not follow them. Such men would be painfully startled at finding that they must lose brethren beside whom they had knelt at vigils, and to whose fervour in singing God's praises they had been accustomed to look as a flame whereat to kindle their own coldness. The disobedient and rebellious, on the other hand, who considered the fervour of the saints to be a reproach on their own evil tempers, were glad to be left to themselves without the restraint which the presence of the strict party imposed upon them. It was therefore with various emotions that the monks of Molesme saw their brethren set out on their expedition. As for the little band itself who thus left their convent for the wilderness, nothing

could be more dreary than the prospect before them. They were in every respect adventurers, and none ever set out in quest of adventures across sea or land in a more destitute condition than did these twenty-one brethren. Robert took with him the ecclesiastical vestments and vessels necessary for celebrating the holy mysteries, and also a large breviary for the ordering of the divine office. Except this, they had nothing: two accounts are left us of their march; one that they left the convent gates, not knowing whither they were going, and that they sought the wildest and most rugged paths, and at last arrived at Citeaux, where a voice from heaven bade them rest. Another account says, that they had already pitched upon Citeaux, before they left Molesme, as being the most lonely and uncultivated spot that they could find. Either story gives a sufficiently dreary account of their march, for a journey, undertaken with the prospect of arriving at such a place as Citeaux is then described to have been, is no less appalling than one of which the end was altogether unknown. But however naked they appeared to the eye of the world, the heavenly enthusiasm which prompted them to enter on such a course was enough to buoy them up under their difficulties. At all events, even this nakedness was more welcome to Stephen, and such as he, than the miserable uncertainty which had hung over him ever since the degeneracy of Molesme. His conscience had been hurt by his inability to keep the rule, according to which he had sworn to live; and no suffering can be so dreadful as a state of doubt, whether we are in the place in which God would have us be. Stephen was now sure that he was right; God had blessed his endeavours after a more perfect way, by turning the heart of his abbot, and of the legate of the Holy See: and now his path was clear before him. He had entered it at the strait gate, and now had

only to pursue the way, into which God had directed his feet. There are moments when holy men feel that their crown is won; such must have been Stephen's thought as he left the gates of Molesme. His Saviour had with His own hand put the cross upon his shoulders, and he had now, with the same Saviour's help, only to carry it with a stout heart to his grave.

Chapter V—ARRIVAL AT CITEAUX

TRAVELLERS are often struck with the picturesque situations of ancient abbeys. The fact is, that those parts which are now the most beautiful, were in former times the wildest and most solitary. Little nooks, which are even now so lonely that the relentless hand of civilization has left them in their primitive beauty, must have been mere wildernesses, far from human habitation, in ages when so much of the earth was uncultivated. Besides which, rocks and mountains may be very picturesque to look at, and yet very uncomfortable as dwelling-places; and many a stream, the banks of which are now visited for the sake of a beautiful ruin, at the time when the monastery was built flowed through pathless wilds and uninhabited forests. So it was with Citeaux; at the time when Stephen and his companions first came to dwell there, it was a very different place from what it was when the stately abbey was built, which contained the tombs of all the dukes of Burgundy. Citeaux was the name of a spot situated in the midst of a wild wood, in the diocese of Chalon * and the province of Burgundy. It was only tenanted by wild beasts, who found shelter in the thickets with which the place was overgrown, and into which no one ever cared to penetrate. A small stream ran through it which took its rise from a fountain, about a league from Dijon, called

* Chalon (sur Saône), not to be confounded, as in the earlier editions of this Life, with Châlons (sur Marne). The Latin name of Chalon is *Cabillonum*, of Châlons *Catalauni*.—*E*.

Sans-fonds, because it was so deep that no one had ever found the bottom. * This stream had also a strange peculiarity connected with it, that in the time of rain it was languid and shallow, but when the heat had dried up all other rivers, it ran merrily along in a copious stream, as if it defied the power of the sun. The industry of the monks in after-ages collected its waters into three noble ponds, filled with fish; but at the time of which we write, it was ever overflowing its banks, so that the place is said to have derived its name from an old word expressive of the flags and bulrushes which the marshy soil produced in abundance.† On the borders of the wood were several scattered cottages, where dwelt the peasants who cultivated the estate of the viscount of Beaune, to whom the place belonged; and there was also a rude and small church, for the use of this rustic population. The lord of Beaune gave them leave to take possession of this most unpromising tenement, and they forthwith began to clear away the briars and the sedge, and to cut down the trees, so as to leave an open space for their habitation. They then rudely put together the trunks of the trees which they had felled, and constructed the monastery, such as it was. The rudeness of their dwelling, however, raised for them a most

* It does not seem that the first settlement of the monks was made in the neighbourhood of this stream. The wooden building which formed their original home appears to have been constructed nearly a mile off. But "after some years" a difficulty about the water supply led to a change in the site of the monastery, and a new abbey of stone was erected beside the rivulet which sprang from the well of Sans-fonds. See Janauschek, Origines Cisterciennes, p. 3.—*E.*

† Some derive it from *Cisternæ*, which means "the pools," others from *Cistelli*, which were apparently islands formed by deposits of mud. Giraldus is presumably only jesting when he says that they called it *Cis-Tertium*, because it was their *third* attempt to make a foundation.—*E.*

unexpected friend. Odo, the then duke of Burgundy, had been originally one of the wildest of the iron nobles who infested the land. A few months, however, before their arrival at Citeaux, the majestic looks and bearing of our own Anselm had cowed the ducal robber, who had set out in full armour to seize upon what he conceived to be the rich coffers of Canterbury, as the saint passed through his dominions. The eye of the archbishop seems to have converted him, for from that moment he became an altered man. Hearing from the archbishop of Lyons that a number of holy men had come to build a monastery in his territory, he inquired about them. So miserable, however, was their dwelling place, that fearing lest they should die from the roughness which they had to bear in this barren and dreary spot, he sent workmen to assist them in rearing their monastery. At length, all was ready for their reception, and they chose March 21, 1098, for the solemn inauguration of the new abbey. A double festivity in that year fell on that day; it was not only Palm Sunday, but also the feast of St. Benedict. They canonically elected Robert as their abbot, and he received the pastoral staff at the hands of Walter, bishop of Chalon, who thus regularly erected the monastery into an abbey, under the name of Novum Monasterium, or New Minster, in honour of St. Mary, to whom, from this first wooden edifice, all churches of the order were afterwards dedicated. The brethren then one by one vowed to pay him obedience according to a form preserved in the Exordium Parvum. "That profession which I made in thy presence at the monastery of Molesme, that same profession and stability I confirm before God and His saints in thy hands, that I will keep it in this place called New Minster, in obedience to thee and to thy successors to be regularly substituted in thy room." Odo of Burgundy and Rainaldus of Beaune had before

given them the allodium, or freehold estate on which the monastery was built; the serfs also who tilled the ground were given over to them, as well as the church in which they used to worship. It is characteristic of these first Cistercian fathers, that they refused to receive this church from the viscount of Beaune as an appendage to the estate, nor would they have anything to do with it, unless it were given up entirely into their hands, by his abandoning his rights in a separate act; for "the abbot and the rest of the brethren thought it by no means right to receive the church from his hands, because he was a layman."* This took place in the very heat of the contest about investitures, and thus at the very outset of their order, the Cistercians chose their side in the momentous contest, though they could as yet but show it in a small way. A few days before that Palm Sunday, St. Anselm, whom they had left at Lyons, had set out on his way to Rome, and on that very Sunday, while Citeaux was being solemnly founded, the same saint had left his train at a small town on the road to Italy, and had gone with two monks to an unknown monastery, to celebrate the feast of St. Benedict. The simple brethren did not know who he was, and bade him beware in his journey, because the lord archbishop of Canterbury had, as was reported, been stopped on his way to Rome, by the perils of the road. Anselm and the monks of Citeaux were at the same moment, in different parts of the world, fighting the same cause, and yet neither

* Gall. Christ. tom. iv. Instr. p. 233. It is is quite evident that this act of the Cistercians was meant for a protest against lay usurpation. The point seems to be that the church (i.e., the lands or tithes meant for the support of the clergy who served the church) had been impropriated by the lord and owner of the estate. The early Cistercians, denying on principle the lawfulness of such impropriations, found themselves unable to recognise the right of a layman to bestow by gift that which he could not lawfully own.—*E.*

party knew what the other was about; but true monks everywhere have a sort of instinct of what is the good and the right side; they have no earthly interests to dim their vision of what is God's cause, and we may trust a monk for being ever in his place—for the Church against the world.

The officers of the New Monastery, thus quietly established, were now appointed; Alberic returned to his old situation which he held at Molesme, that of prior; Stephen was made sub-prior. In this peaceable state everything remained for a year under Robert's guidance, but he was not destined to see the full fruit of his labours. The monks of Molesme again found that they could not do without him. It required a firm hand to rule those refractory spirits who had once broken loose, and could only be kept in order by an authority which they respected. The secession also of such men as Robert, Alberic, and Stephen from the convent had brought it into disrepute, and this could only be done away by regaining their abbot. The authority of the archbishop of Lyons however, who had countenanced Robert's departure for Citeaux, rendered it a difficult matter to win him back. The only authority to which they could appeal was Rome, and to Rome they went, nothing daunted by the length of the way. A council was celebrated at Rome in the third week after Easter, 1099; it was convened by Urban II., for the condemnation of investitures, and for devising means for carrying on the crusade. Thither the monks repaired, and represented to the pope the widowed state of the church of Molesme, deprived of its first abbot and pastor. Urban seems to have suspected them; he describes in his letter to Hugh, archbishop of Lyons, the great clamour with which they entered into the council, and seems rather to have yielded to their importunity, against his own judgment. He

did not directly command Robert to return to Molesme, but he bade Hugh do his best to bring him back if it could be done; and at all events he orders him to take care that the inhabitants of the wilderness of Citeaux (as he calls it) should be left in peace, and that the monks of Molesme be made to keep their rule. The legate held a consultation on the subject at a place near Lyons, called Pierre encise, and determined that the only way to restore peace, both to Molesme and to the new monastery, was to give up Robert to Molesme, and to forbid the two convents to have any further communication with each other, except such as St. Benedict enjoins on houses between which there is no connection but the common profession of religion. Gaufridus, the abbot who had been elected in the room of Robert, was willing to yield the government of the abbey, and nothing now remained but that Robert himself should quit Citeaux, and return to the post which he had so often quitted and resumed. He again gave up his own will to obey his superiors,* and returned to the bishop of Chalon the pastoral staff, which he had a year and a few months

* It is curious that William of Malmesbury does not credit St. Robert with very worthy motives in thus resigning his charge. He tells us that in the beginning of the new foundation he was very full of zeal, both in leading a stricter life himself and in encouraging the others. But he was a man of delicate constitution, and the hardship told upon him, so that he began to think regretfully of the comparative comfort he had quitted. This the monks of Molesme discovered, and they were thus encouraged in their attempt to get him back, *volentem cogentes*, adds Malmesbury in rounding off his sentence. One little phrase in the letter of the Archbishop of Lyons enjoining the return of Robert to Molesme lends some colour to this story. *Si deinceps*, writes the Archbishop, *eandem ecclesiam solita levitate deseruerit*,—"If with his wonted fickleness he (Robert) should desert that church again." Malmesbury further declares that all those who had come to Citeaux went back with Robert except eight, but this seems improbable, and I know of no evidence to confirm it.—*E.*

before received from his hands. He then freed the monks of Citeaux from the obedience which they owed to him, and went back to his old charge at Molesme. He was indeed a perfect pattern of obedience, and suffered himself to be bandied about from one convent to another as the will of his superiors directed; notwithstanding his aspirations for a more perfect way, he abandoned them at the command of God, knowing that no sufferings are acceptable to God, if not undertaken according to His will in charity. Doubtless he merited more in God's sight by giving up his brethren at Citeaux for his refractory subjects at Molesme, than he could have done by the most austere life. His obedience was rewarded, for Molesme appears to have flourished under his rule, if we may judge from the fact that several monasteries were founded from it. One nunnery, that of Juilly, in which St. Bernard's sister afterwards took the vows, owed its origin to St. Robert. It is probable that he still assisted Stephen and Alberic with his counsel, but his direct connection with Citeaux ceased with his last departure from Molesme. He died about the year 1110, and was canonized by Pope Honorius III.

Chapter VI—STEPHEN AS PRIOR

ROBERT left nothing behind him at Citeaux but the vestments and sacred vessels which he had brought with him; these were expressly, according to the legate's command, to belong to the New Monastery. The large Breviary also was to remain there till St. John Baptist's day, by which time the brethren were to have it copied out and then to send it to Molesme. This, and the remembrance which they kept of his virtues, was all the vestige which remained of his jurisdiction of Citeaux: he left them as free as if he had never been their abbot, or received their vows. They had therefore now to elect a successor, and their choice fell upon Alberic; under him Stephen was naturally made prior. These two had worked hand in hand from the first commencement of Molesme, and remained together even when Robert seceded from them; and now that he had finally left them, the eyes of the whole community were fixed upon them. Stephen had been in a manner the pupil of both, and it seemed as if the virtues of each were necessary to make up the defects of his original character. He had left Sherborne, as we have seen, from a violent thirst for knowledge, and had for some time roamed about the world almost without an object, certainly without a clear knowledge of his vocation. He had first learned obedience under Robert, and the stability of his character had been tried by the troubles which he had encountered at Molesme; and now he had a further lesson to learn from Alberic, that of patient prudence. "Alberic," says

the Exordium, "when he had received, though much against his will, the pastoral charge, began to bethink himself, as being a man of wondrous prudence, what stormy troubles, coming to shake the house committed to him, might annoy it." And troubles enough there were about him. The post of abbot was at all times one which involved great anxiety, from the absolute powers which were vested in him. It was to him that the strict obedience which formed so large a part of the monastic rule was due, the deepest respect was paid to him, even to bowing the knee, and profound inclinations.* The officers of the monastery, from the prior downwards, were removable at his will.† At the same time he was to be in an especial way the chief spiritual guide of all the brethren, and to temper the rigour of the rule for the weak, without introducing irregularity into the convent. To him the monks revealed all their sorrows, and recurred for advice; for which there was a place called the auditorium especially set apart. Even here, however, they could not speak without his leave; on their appearance he gave them the benediction, but if after this he kept a stern silence, the brother who applied for license left the auditorium without speaking.‡ At the same time, the regulation of the habits and of the food of the monks was in his hands, so that the temporal and spiritual prosperity of the convent depended in a great measure upon him alone. No stronger proof of the great power of the abbot need be sought, than the fact that most of the later monastic reformations attack at once the power of his office, some even making it triennial. They may have done away with some evils, but at the

* Usus Cist. Notandum quia quando Monachi osculantur Abbatem, coram eo genua flectant et post osculum profunde inclinent.—p. i. c. 90. Guignard, p. 230.

† Reg. S. Ben. 65.

‡ Reg. Magis. c. 9.

same time they changed the spirit of monasticism, for there can be no perfect obedience where all may be lords in turn. At least so the Cistercians thought, and in their reform (for so it was) the abbot had all the powers which St. Benedict vested in the office. Alberic therefore had full need of the "wondrous prudence" which the old Cistercian history celebrates. The abbot of Citeaux was not then the magnificent personage who celebrated mass pontifically with the episcopal mitre, ring, and sandals, the lord of five military orders, sitting in a lofty chair, on a level with the bishop, in the parliament of Burgundy.* Alberic was but the head of a few monks in a marshy desert, where they had to struggle to win a hard subsistence from the barren soil: they were exposed to the oppressions of any baron who might take a fancy to molest them; and, above all, they were treated as enthusiasts and fanatics by the monasteries around them. Their calumnies might at any time alienate the favour of the duke of Burgundy, who as yet had protected them; for the saintly boldness with which they determined to keep the whole rule of St. Benedict, had irritated not only their neighbours of Molesme, but even the German convents had had news of the fanaticism and disobedience of this New Monastery.

It was well for Stephen that he was brought close to Alberic, in these trying times of the Cistercian struggles for existence: his office of prior linked him to the abbot, and gave him an opportunity of watching the calm wisdom with which Alberic warded off these difficulties. The prior, according to St. Benedict's rule,† was to be entirely the abbot's minister; and the Cistercians kept up this first

* Innocent VIII. gave the Abbot of Citeaux the privilege of celebrating pontifically, in a bull dated April 9, 1489; vide also Gall. Christ. 4. 983.

† Reg. S. Ben. c. 65. Usus Cist. p. i. 111.

notion of a prior. "Let the prior, within and without, concerning all things and in all things, act according to the will of the abbot." * They even gave less authority to the prior than was usual in other rules, as may be seen by comparing Lanfranc's decrees, c. 3, with the Usus Cisterciensis. The prior was thus the eye and the hand of the abbot; his office was to take the abbot's place in all the common routine of the convent when the abbot was engaged, and specially to keep up the regularity of the brethren, by giving the signal for labour and for the chapter. He also presided in the refectory, and gave the signal by a small bell, when they were to begin, and when to leave off eating; for the Cistercian abbot, as was prescribed in St. Benedict's rule, always ate with the guests who happened to come to the abbey. Stephen's principal duty, therefore, was to work conjointly with Alberic, and he profited by the office which thus threw him in contact with that holy man.

Alberic's first care was to provide for the safety of his abbey, "that it might for ever remain in quiet, safe from the oppression of all persons, ecclesiastical or secular." It appears from the archbishop of Lyons' letter to Pope Pascal, that "the brethren of the Church of Molesme, and some other neighbouring monks, did not cease to harass and disquiet them, thinking that they themselves were looked upon as vile and despicable by the world, as long as these strange and novel monks were seen to dwell among them." † They endeavoured to entice away stragglers from the Cistercian brethren back to Molesme, and even used violence and guile in order to disturb the quiet of the New Monastery. Alberic's only place of refuge was the Holy See; and at this moment two cardinals, John and Benedict, were in France, for the purpose of devising

* Guignard, p. 231. † Ibid.

means to punish Philip, king of France, who had divorced his own wife Bertha, and was living in adultery with Bertrada, wife of Fulke, count of Anjou. The two cardinals held a council at Poictiers, and excommunicated the king; but amidst the press of business which this involved, they found leisure to attend to the affairs of Citeaux. It appears that the fame of the saintly inhabitants of this poor monastery had spread all over France, and reached the ears of the legates. The words which the cardinals use in their letter to the Pope might almost seem to imply that they had been in person to Citeaux: at all events, they must have seen some of the brethren, whose appearance struck them with admiration, and they willingly wrote to the holy father, begging him to take the monastery under his special protection. Alberic assembled the chapter, and with the concurrence of Stephen and the rest of the brethren, two monks, John and Ilbodus, were despatched to Rome, with letters from the cardinal legates, from Hugh, archbishop of Lyons, and from the bishop of Chalon. Pascal had been but a year elected to the papal throne, and was then in the height of his power; his gracious demeanour and piety had conciliated all about him, and his unanimous election had brought to Rome a peace which it had not known for a long time. The moment, therefore, which the Cistercians chose was a fortunate one. They found that Pascal was absent from Rome, and they had to follow him as far as Troja in Apulia. The warm expressions of esteem which his letter to Alberic contains, prove that he received the brethren with open arms. Himself a monk of Cluny and a disciple of St. Hugh, he could well enter into their troubles; and although he afterwards showed himself so very unable to comprehend the great cause for which his predecessors had fought, yet his character was such as to appreciate the

motives which had driven the brethren of Citeaux into the wilderness. He immediately granted the request of the two envoys, and gave them a letter by which he took the New Monastery under the special protection of the Holy See. He calls them "his most dear sons in Christ, whom he longed after very much," and he concludes with a sentence of excommunication against any "archbishop or bishop, emperor or king, count or viscount, judge, or any other person ecclesiastical or civil," who, being aware of the protection granted by the Holy See, should molest the abbey. The letter is dated April 18, 1100. The old Cistercian historian, after giving an account of the protection thus extended by the Holy See, adds with a sort of melancholy feeling, that it was granted and the messengers had returned "before Pope Pascal had been taken captive by the emperor and sinned."* This privilege of protection thus obtained from the Holy See was of the utmost consequence to Citeaux. It is evidently not an exemption, that is, it is not meant to exempt the abbot from episcopal jurisdiction, and to subject him immediately to the Holy See, for the canonical obedience to the see of Chalon is expressly mentioned. Its import must be understood from similar documents granted by former sovereign pontiffs. The jurisdiction of monasteries was always a difficulty in the Church; it is generally believed that they were from the first subject to the bishop; so far is this from being the case, that during the first 150 years of their existence, that is, till the council of Chalcedon, monks were no more under the bishop than other laymen. As monachism

* In the Eberbach codex of the Exordium Magnum these words are to be found in the 19th chapter of bk. i. in a fuller form than in the Exordium Parvum, from which fuller form it appears that the remark is not due to "melancholy feeling," but to the wish to show that the privilege of Pope Pascal, being granted before his fall, was of unimpaired authority and validity. See Hüffer, Vorstudien, p. 177 note.—*E.*

developed into a system, the bishops naturally became the ultimate authority to which convents were subject. Still it was necessary that the abbot should have an authority next to absolute in the internal management; and according to the rule of St. Benedict, he has power to excommunicate the monks who transgressed the rule. The bishop only appears as the abbot's assistant in punishing the brethren who were priests.* Again, he blessed the abbot when he had been chosen by the convent, and it was from him the abbot's authority was derived.† As time went on, bishops encroached upon the convents; they required money for the benediction of the abbot, interfered with the freedom of election, and took upon them the administration of the temporalities. The poor of Christ had no refuge but the Holy See;‡ and several letters of Pope Gregory the Great are extant, in which he commands bishops to respect the privileges of abbeys, and takes them under the special protection of the chair of St. Peter. In one case he even withdraws the sole jurisdiction over an abbey from the bishop of the diocese, and joins with him a council of six bishops. That great pontiff knew that a monastery should be perfect in itself; the very principle of obedience required it to be subject to one head, and the authority of the bishop was only necessary to constitute that head, that the obedience might be canonical, as also to superintend, not to interfere with, his authority. They were Christ's spiritual army, ready at any time to assert the faith against heresy, however powerful, and setting up the light of heavenly purity when the profligacy of the world had well nigh cast away religion. In order to do this, they must be a whole within themselves, and cut off from worldly influence, and from interest without the

* c. 62. † c. 65.

‡ Ep. lib. ix. Inst. 2. 111. lib. xiii. Inst. 6. 8, 9.

cloister. A bishop in most cases could not be a monk, and therefore could not govern a convent; he could only come in at certain times as a remedy in cases beyond the rule. Subsequent pontiffs followed St. Gregory in jealously guarding the independence of monasteries; for instance, John IV.* even granted a formal exemption to two convents, and subjected them immediately to the Holy See. The primitive meaning of such extraordinary privileges was to guard against the encroachments of which bishops had been guilty, and to keep the internal government of the abbey in the hands of the abbot; they were not, however, intended to separate monks from the canonical obedience due to the bishop. It is true that after the time of which we are writing, they came to be much abused; and St. Bernard complains of the ambition of abbots, who endeavoured to avoid the authority of their bishop, whilst he approves of the devotion of founders of monasteries, who placed their houses under the protection of Rome. Of this nature was the letter of Pascal to Alberic; it was not, as we have said, an exemption from episcopal authority, but it was a privilege, by which the defenceless house of Christ's poor ones was taken under the wings of the Apostolic See. Two things were especially commanded by the pope; one, "that it should be lawful for no person whatever to change the state of their mode of life." This left them full power to live as they pleased according to the strict rule of St. Benedict; a bishop might do his best to oblige them to keep their rule, if they broke it; but he could not compel them to observe the same customs as most other convents around them; to profess the rule of St. Benedict, but in effect to relax it under pretence of dispensations. Again, it left them free to

* Mabillon, Ann. Ben. tom. i. Appendix, No. 17, 18. Cf. K. F. Weiss, Die Kirchlichen Exemtionen der Klöster.

establish what usages they pleased; every monastery had many traditionary practices and ceremonies peculiar to itself, in matters which the rule had left open; and Pascal by this provision exempted the Cistercians from the usages of any other religious house, and left them free to form their own customs. Out of this permission arose the Usus Cisterciensis. The other special provision made by the pope was, "that none should receive the monks of your monastery called the New Minster, without a commendation according to the rule." This was in fact a confirmation of the canonical authority committed by the bishop of Chalon to the abbot of Citeaux by the delivery of the pastoral staff; it was the act by which he had authority over the monks, so that they could not leave the cloister without his consent. Without vows, and those made to a person vested with authority, monks are a mere collection of individuals, dissolvable at will; the absence of a canonical vow changes the whole idea of monastic life, and none can hope for God's blessing on the most solemn engagements which they form, unless the power in whose hands they place themselves is the representative of the Church. Otherwise they can never be sure that their obedience is not self-will. These words of Pascal, therefore, are like the recognition of a corporate body by the law; one Christian may any day that he pleases make a vow that he will live in obedience to another; but unless that other is recognized by the Church, the ecclesiastical law cannot take cognizance of the transaction. Such is the explanation of this privilege given by the pope to Citeaux, which at once raised it above the calumnies of the monks who felt their own lives to be reproved by the holiness of their neighbours.

Chapter VII—CISTERCIAN USAGES

ALBERIC, now that he had obtained the sanction of the Holy See, set forward with a bold heart in his strict following of St. Benedict's rule. In the execution of all the reforms which distinguished what afterwards became the order of Citeaux, Stephen as prior was necessarily foremost; the whole movement indeed was but carrying into effect what he had before conceived at Molesme. The first alteration effected was the cutting off of all superfluity in the monastic habit. The Church in the beginning of the twelfth century had a hard battle to fight with pomp and luxury within the sanctuary itself. Courtly prelates, such as Wolsey in a later age, were not uncommon, and this worldly spirit had invaded even the cloister, A reformation, therefore, such as that effected by Alberic and Stephen at the outset of the century, was of the utmost consequence in deciding the struggle in favour of Christian poverty. They were not as yet conscious of the importance of what they were doing; they were but a few poor monks, serving God in the midst of a marshy wild, in an obscure corner of Burgundy, and only aimed at securing their own salvation. But they arose in a critical time for Christendom, and just turned the scale as it was wavering. Let us hear the words of a good old monk, who wrote in another part of the world during the first years of Citeaux.* "How shall I begin to speak? For on all sides is the

* Chronicon Vulturnense, Muratori, Script. Rer. Ital. tom. i. p. 2. 343.

sacred end of monkish life transgressed, and hardly aught is left us, save that, as our holy father Benedict foretold, by our tonsure and habit we lie to God. We seem almost all of us prone to pride, to contention, scandal, detraction, lying, evil speaking, hurtful accusations, contumacy, wrath, bitterness, despising of others, murmuring, gluttony;" and he winds up by saying, "We are seduced by a love of costly apparel." Bitter are the complaints that we hear of one monk * clad in rich grey or party-coloured silks, and another ambling by on a mule which cost 200 solidi. What shall we say to the proud abbot with his train of sixty horse, riding forth, not like the father of a monastery, but like an armed castellan? Or to another with his robe of costly fur, and his sideboard of gold and silver plate, though he rode but four leagues from home.† And if the abbot himself was in sober black, his secular attendants rode behind him in gay clothing of scarlet or green, the motley procession arresting the eyes of beholders along the road, whilst it frightened the porter of the poor monastery where they were to put up for the night. It was high time for the Cistercian to step in with his rough woollen stuff, and to return to St. Benedict's rule. Alberic and his brethren rejected all habits that were not mentioned in the rule;‡ they therefore would not wear garments with ample folds, nor garments of fur, shirts, nor hoods separated from the rest of the habit. St. Benedict allows the habit to vary according to the climate; but for countries of a mean temperature, he gives it as his opinion

* St. Bernard, Apol. ad Guil. 10, 11.

† Stat. Pet. Ven 40. 70.

‡ "Rejicientes a se quicquid regula refragabatur, froccos videlicet, et pellicias, staminias et caputia." Exord. Parv. 15.—Staminia is described by William of Malmesbury as "illud quod subtiliter texitur laneum, quod nos staminium vocamus." Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. iv. § 336.

that a garment called cuculla, a tunic, and a scapular are sufficient. At first these were only the common habits worn by the peasants of the country. The stern old Benedictine looked for nothing picturesque; he had made himself poor for his Lord's sake, and he wore the dress of the poor among whom he lived, and with whom he worked in the cold and heat, in the rain and in the sunshine. Ancient pictures are still seen of the monk in his tunic and scanty scapular, reaching down to his knees, without sleeves, but with holes through which his arms were passed, and with a pointed cowl enveloping his head. Over this, which was his working dress, he wore in the choir, and in the house, the cuculla, which was a large mantle, not unlike a close cope, without sleeves, and enveloping the whole person.* There was many a step between this coarse garb, and the ample folds into which it had developed around the noble figure of St. Hugh of Cluny.† In the Cluniac order the scapular was called cuculla, and the upper garment was called froccus. Instead of the pointed and almost conical cowl of the primitive Benedictine, their scapular had a fair and ample cowl, and the froccus had long and pendant sleeves two feet in circumference; again, their scapular covered not only the shoulders, but it was also expanded into a covering for the arms, so that it scandalized our simple Cistercians.‡ The

* See the cuculla of St. Remaclus, the oldest Benedictine habit, existing in Martene's time. Voyage Lit. ii. 154.

† Martene, Voyage Lit. i. 229.

‡ That the froccus of the Cluniacs had sleeves, is plain from the answer made by the Cluniac. Martene, Thes. Anec. tom. v. p. 1649, 47. Their amplum caputium is mentioned in St. Bernard's letter to Robert, his cousin. For the scapular see Martene, ibid. p. 1639, 25. The difference between the Cluniac froccus and Cistercian cuculla is said by Peter the Venerable, Ep. i. 28, to consist in that the latter was "album et curtum." Again, the cowl was detached

froccus which Alberic and Stephen rejected was in fact the same garment as their own cuculla, as worn "with a difference" by the Cluniacs. They reverted as far as they could to St. Benedict's pattern, following the Italian rather than the French monks, for their scapular had the same form as that of Mount Cassino. With all their severity, there is a grace about the Cistercian habit, from the fond associations with which they connected it. In the black scapular worn over the white tunic, broad about the shoulders, then falling in a narrow strip to the feet, they saw the form of our Lord's cross, and thus they loved to bear it about with them even in sleep.* Their cuculla was compared by pope Boniface VI. to the six wings of the seraphim, for "it veils the head of the monk as it were with two wings, and the arms as it were with twain, and the body as it were with twain."† Another characteristic of the Cistercian habit was its white colour.‡ The scapular, as we have said, was black, and when on a journey, they

from the froccus, as appears from Bernard, Abbot of Cassino, quoted by Mabillon, Acta Sanct. Ord. Ben. Sæc. v. Preface, p. 44.

[The author seems to be mistaken in describing the froccus as an upper garment. According to Sackur, Die Cluniacenser, vol. i. p. 59, the froccus was nothing but the old tunica of St. Benedict's rule which came to be called froccus in the course of the eleventh century. The Cluniac cuculla was worn over this. Indeed it seems to stand to reason that the Cluniac cuculla, a sleeveless cloak which covered the arms, could not be worn underneath the sleeved froccus. Cf. Martene, Thesaurus, v. 1593.—*E.*]

* Martene, ibid. 1650, 48. † Ibid. 1649, 46.

‡ The rather obscure question of Cistercian dress is dealt with exhaustively by Dolberg in two articles in the Studien und Mittheilungen aus dem Benedictiner—und dem Cistercienser—Orden for 1893. There seems to be a doubt as to when the white habit was first introduced and how far it was compulsory in choir. The colour when outside the monastery or when on a journey seems always to have been grey.—*E.*

might ride booted and spurred, with a grey cuculla, so that they were called in Germany grey monks; but their proper habit was white, and much wonder it excited amongst the brethren of other orders. The black monks meeting a white monk on a journey would stop and stare, and point at the stranger, as if he were a traveller in a foreign dress.* They reproached the Cistercians with wearing a garment fit only for a time of joy, while the monastic state was one of penitence.† But the white monks answered that the life of a monk was not only one of penitence, but was like that of the angels, and therefore they wore white garments, to show the spiritual joy of their hearts. And notwithstanding their coarse bread and hard beds, there was a cheerfulness about the Cistercians, which may in a great measure be traced to what we should now call a sympathy with nature. Their life lay out of doors, amongst vineyards and corn-fields; their monasteries, as their names testify, were mostly situated in sequestered valleys, and were, by a law of the order, as old as the time of Alberic, never in towns but in the country. From their constant meditation as they worked, they acquired a habit of joining their recollections of Scripture to natural objects; hence also the love for the Song of Solomon, or Canticle of Canticles, which is evident in the earlier ascetic writers of the order. We shall see, in the course of this narrative, abundant proof that Stephen's white habit did not hide a gloomy or unfeeling heart.

The reason assigned for the change of colour in the habit is the devotion to our Blessed Lady,‡ observable in the

* Pet. Ven. Ep. iv. 17. † Martene, Thes. Anecd. tom. v. 1649, 46.

‡ In this and one or two other places, Father Dalgairns, writing as an Anglican, refers to our Blessed Lady by the designation "St. Mary." In view of the author's uniform practice in his later books I have felt myself justified in substituting the more affectionate phrase which is in most common use among Catholics.—*E.*

order from the beginning. It was a standing law that all Cistercian monasteries should be "founded and dedicated to the memory of the queen of heaven and earth, holy Mary;" * the hours of the Blessed Virgin were also recited very early after the foundation of Citeaux; † and the angelic salutation ‡ was one of the common acts of devotion put into the mouth of even the lay brethren of the order. The immediate cause of the adoption of the white habit is mysterious; it seems difficult to account how it should all at once appear, without the sanction of any statute of the order, especially as it was opposed to the custom if not to the rule of the primitive Benedictines. A tradition is even current in the order, that Alberic saw the Blessed Virgin in a vision putting upon his shoulders the white garment; and that he changed the tawny colour of St. Mary Magdalene to the joyful colour sacred to the mother of our Lord, in consequence of the consolation which the vision afforded him in the difficulties with which he was then struggling. The vision has not much historical

* Nomasticon Cisterciense, Inst. Cap. Gen. p. i. c. 18.

† The statement that the hours of the Blessed Virgin were recited early after the foundation of Citeaux seems to be erroneous. I can find no trace of such a custom in the Consuetudines published by Guignard, which represent the practice of the Order as late as 1152, and probably down to 1183. Mr. Edmund Bishop in his invaluable sketch of the origin of the Prymer (E.E.T.S., vol. 109, p. 30) notes it as a characteristic of the Cistercian order that they discarded the daily recital of the office of the Blessed Virgin, while retaining that of the Office of the Dead. And with this statement Malmesbury, Gesta Regum, bk. iv. § 515, is in entire agreement. On the other hand Cistercian custom prescribed that a Mass of our Lady should be sung on every day that a Mass for the dead was sung. (Guignard, p. 276.) The frequent recitation of the Ave Maria, like the Office B.V.M., seems to belong to a later date.—*E.*

‡ The latter part of the Ave Maria was not added till the sixteenth century. Vide Mabillon, Acta Sanc. Præf. vol. v.

authority, though the tradition of the order, and the strange circumstances of the change of colour itself, are in favour of its truth. The one thing certain is, that it was assumed in honour of the spotless purity of Mary, the special patroness of the Cistercians; and the circumstance that she was chosen to be the peculiar saint of the rising order is in itself characteristic. One would have thought that the austerity of Alberic and Stephen would have led them to choose some martyr or some unbending confessor of the faith; but they rather raised their minds to her on whom the mind cannot rest without joy, though her own most blessed soul was pierced through with a sword. She was the spotless lily of the valleys in which the King of Heaven deigned to take up His abode; and the Cistercians thought it well that she should protect by her prayers their lowly houses, which were hid from the world in secluded vales, and make them also the dwelling-place of her Son.

It was not, however, only in their habit that the Cistercians imitated the primitive monks; they returned also to the scanty diet which St. Benedict prescribes. It was most of all in this particular that the abuse of dispensations crept in, for in this portion of the rule the abbot was especially to exercise his discretion.* A few years after the time when the Cistercian reform was effected, the Cluniacs degenerated, after St. Hugh's death, under abbot Pontius; not only did they eat meat every day in the week except Friday,† but they ransacked earth and air for highly

* Reg. St. Ben. 41.

† Pet. Ven. Ep. vi. 15. It should not be forgotten that Peter the Venerable, one of the greatest men of his age and a most fervent religious, became abbot of Cluny in 1122, even before the death of Pontius. The latter died in Rome under sentence of excommunication. The very zeal of Peter the Venerable in the cause of reform probably led him to paint a rather exaggerated picture of the abuses he was called upon to remedy.—*E.*

flavoured dainties. They kept huntsmen who searched the forest through for venison and wild boars; their falconers brought them the choicest birds, pheasants, partridges, and wood-pigeons. The province under the archbishopric of Lyons seems at that time to have been especially full of monasteries from which religion had disappeared, inhabited by monks, "whose cloister was the whole world, whose God was their belly."* Wine, well spiced, and mixed with honey, and meats highly seasoned with pepper, ginger, and cinnamon, were then to be found in the refectory of Cluny,† with all kinds of costly spices, brought from beyond the sea and even from the East. Monks used also to retire to the infirmary under pretence of sickness, in order to eat meat, and strong healthy brethren might be seen walking about with the support of a staff, which was the mark of the infirm. The liberality of the faithful had also augmented the evil, as might be seen from the necrologies of monasteries, in which certain benefactors were commemorated, who left sums of money to be laid out in pittances or relaxations for the monks on certain days beyond the rule. St. Benedict gives his monks a pound of bread a day beside two cooked dishes; and on days when they had more than one meal, a few raw vegetables or fruits for supper. As far as the letter of the rule went, these dishes might be fish, eggs, milk, cream, cheese, roots, and vegetables of all sorts;‡ even fowls were not excluded; but the custom of the primitive monks of the order had banished all but the plainest vegetables boiled with salt. Cluny, even in its best times, had added to these frugal rules, and it is probably against the Cluniac innovations that Alberic and Stephen's regulations were framed. The

* Pet. Ven. Ep. ii. 2.
† St. Bern. Ep. i. 1. Stat. Pet. Ven. 11.
‡ Calmet, Com. Lit. ii. 32.

Cluniacs divided their messes into two sorts, one called *generale*, which was allowed by the rule, another was *pitantia*, and beyond it. The regular cooks had nothing to do with the pittance, which was always distributed by the cellarer, the theory being that it was benevolently allowed beside the rule; again, it was never blessed. The general was given separately to each monk; the pittance was in one dish between two brethren. The common food of the brethren were beans and other vegetables; minute directions are given "that the beans be stirred from the bottom with a spoon," lest they be scorched. Also they are to be boiled with grease, and one of the cooks, it is especially provided, may taste "the water of the beans, that he may prove if they be well seasoned." On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the general consisted of beans and vegetables, besides which there was a pittance, which might be four eggs, or cheese. On other days, the general, besides the vegetables, might be fish or five eggs. No one can accuse this diet of excess, and yet it was beyond the rule of St. Benedict; there is even a story to the effect, that St. Peter Damian was shocked at the style of the refectory at Cluny, and especially at their using grease with their vegetables; and that he expressed his dissatisfaction to St. Hugh.* It is also quite true that amidst the marshy soil and damp woods of Citeaux, and with much more manual labour than was practised by the Cluniacs, Alberic and Stephen succeeded in establishing a much more strict system than that of Cluny. They rejected, says the Exordium, "dishes of divers kinds of food in the refectory, grease also,† and whatsoever was opposed

* Bibl. Clun. 461.

† The Cistercian rule did not forbid all kinds of grease, but only *sagimen*, meat fat, lard or dripping. Orderic represents the monks of Molesme as arguing that in countries where the olive did not grow it was just and reasonable to supply its place by the use of *sagimen*. Migne, P.L., vol. 188, p. 639.—*E.*

to the purity of the rule." It is known that they did not eat fish,* even eggs seem to have been excluded, and milk was used only at the season of harvest, and that not as a pittance, but as one of the two dishes allowed by the rule.† After half a night spent in singing the divine office, in reading and meditation, and a day spent in agricultural labour, they assembled to what was during a great part of the year their single meal, which consisted solely of what St. Benedict allowed, and that procured by the sweat of their brow. Their fare was the convent bread, and two messes of vegetables, boiled, not with the culinary accuracy of Cluny, but in the plainest way. It is instructive to observe the contrast between St. Hugh and Stephen. The abbot of Cluny himself lived a most austere life, but he was also a builder of magnificent churches, and of ecclesiastical ornaments.‡ He also gave dispensations to weaker brethren; in one case allowing a nobleman, whose dainty flesh had worn from his birth soft silks and foreign furs, to wear for a time a less rough habit than the rest of the brethren; in another increasing the daily portion of the younger monks beyond what the rule prescribed. § Stephen, on the other hand, was cast in another mould; he was made, not to bring on the weak, but to lead the strong. All that belonged to earth he looked upon as an encumbrance, even though it was hallowed by consecration on the altar.

* The author seems certainly to be in error in supposing that fish was altogether forbidden to the Cistercians. The use of it was in many ways restricted but it was recognised as one of the permissible articles of diet. See Dolberg in Studien und Mittheilungen, 1896, p. 621. The same remark applies to their use of *lacticinia*.—*E.*

† Vid. Us. Cist. 84; for the exclusion of fish and eggs, vid. Inst. Cap. Gen. 49. ap. Nomasticon Cisterciense, et Fastredi, Ep. ap. Opp. S. Bern. ed. Ben. [The statutes, &c., here cited by Father Dalgairns, limit, but do not prohibit, the use of these articles of diet.—*E.*]

‡ Vit. S. Hug. ap. Bib. Clun. 420. § Ibid. et p. 432.

He loved coarse and scanty food, because it was a partaking of Christ's sufferings; and he clung to the rough monastic garment, because it was an imitation of Christ's poverty. It was this love of poverty which also induced them to make another regulation, widely differing from the general practice of the monasteries at that time. "And because," it is said, "neither in the rule, nor in the life of St. Benedict, did they read that that doctor of the Church possessed churches, or altars, or oblations, or burial-grounds, or tithes belonging to other men, or bakehouses, or mills, or farms, or serfs,—therefore they rejected all these things." They did not by any means intend to do away with the lands or offices of the convent; on the contrary, they had already accepted a grant of land with the serfs, and all that was upon it, from the Viscount of Beaune, and we may be sure that both mills and bakehouses were already in full operation at Citeaux; for St. Benedict's rule prescribes, "that all necessary things, such as water, a mill, a garden, a bakehouse, should if possible, be contained within the monastery, and that divers arts should be exercised there.* Monks were to be their own millers and bakers, farmers and gardeners; and doubtless such strict observers of the rule as the brethren of Citeaux had already sunk wells and enclosed a garden. Doubtless, too, they had erected a mill, though it may be safely conjectured, that it was not so large as that of Farfa, a convent which was built after the pattern of Cluny, the mill of which was an edifice seventy feet long, and twenty broad, with a tower over it; nor had it adjoining, as at Farfa, a manufactory where goldsmiths and other artificers were at work.† At Cluny the mill was an important place, where specially before Easter and Christmas a servant of the

* C. 66. † Annales Benedictini, tom. iv. p. 208.

abbey ground the corn of which the altar-breads were to be made, dressed in an alb, and with a veil enveloping his head. * The bakehouse, too, was not left without ornament; it was adorned with boughs of walnut-tree; † many things connected with household affairs were at Cluny consecrated with rites of an almost oriental beauty, which reminds one of patriarchal times; thus the new bread was specially blessed in the refectory, as were the first-fruits of beans; and again, the first grapes, which were blessed at the altar during mass.‡ Our poor Cistercians were as yet struggling for existence, and the place were they baked their coarse food was not so picturesque as that of Cluny; but they did not mean by the regulations above quoted, to make use of mills and bakehouses out of the precincts of the abbey; and they expressly say, a little further on, that "they will receive lands far from the dwelling-place of men, vineyards, and fields and woods, and water to make mills, but for their own use." The wood of Citeaux was, therefore, already an active scene, where the monks might be seen working in silence, broken only by the stroke of the spade, or the noise of the water turning the wheels of the mill, or the bell calling them from their labour. The meaning of the above regulation, then, was, that they were not to possess large domains, with wood and water, corn-fields and vineyards, which they did not cultivate themselves, but let out to tenants. Many were the broad lands possessed by the monks of Cluny, with vassals, and servants, both men and women. For the use of the three hundred brethren, as well as of the poor and the guests of the abbey, 560 sextarii of wheat, and 500 of rye monthly, were stored up in

* Udal. iii. 13. ap. D'Achery, Spicilegium, tom. i.
† Calmet, Com. Lit. 2. 428. ‡ Udal. i. 35.

granaries from the various farms which were within reach.* The possessions of the abbey were divided into districts, over each of which was a dean, appointed to take care that it sent in the proper quantity of whatever was required of it.† As for those lands which were too far from Cluny to send thither their produce, the corn and wine which grew there was sold on the spot, and paid to the Camerarius, who procured clothing and all necessaries for the brethren.‡ Italy, Spain, and England, sent the produce of their lands to clothe the brethren; one province especially, from the Rhone to the Alps and the sea, was appointed to this duty, and sent its treasures to the camera § of Cluny. An English manor, given by King Stephen, usually furnished the monks with shoes and stockings. ‖ Such was Cluny, and that not in a time of degeneracy, but under St. Hugh, and afterwards under Peter the Venerable, when the monks fasted and prayed, and rose in the night to sing psalms; when its vast revenues were not misspent, but daily fed a large number of poor. It was a vast kingdom where Christ reigned, where His saints rested in peace, and which raised an image of peace in a world of strife and bloodshed. Happy were the vassals transferred from a secular lord to the rule of the abbot of Cluny; instead of being robbed and harried two or three times a year, by exactions over and above their rents, and bought and sold like the cattle on the estate, they were treated as brethren and sisters. ** A castle given to the Cluniacs, instead of a den of thieves, became an oratory. If the brethren sold the produce of the estates at a distance from the abbey, their dealings were marked with a fairness and a generosity,

* Dispositio facta a D. Pet. Ven., Baluzii, Miscellanea, tom. iii. p. 72. † Udal. iii. 5. ‡ Ib. iii. 11.

§ "Camera est locus in quem thesaurus recolligitur." Ockam.—*E.*

‖ Disp. facta, &c. ubi sup. ** Pet. Ven. i. Ep. 28.

which showed that they trafficked not for gain, but for their own support and to feed the poor.*

Still with all this, what our Cistercians said was quite true; Cluny had, we will not say degenerated from, but changed St. Benedict's institution. The possessors of these wide domains, though they lived a life of more than ordinary strictness, never touching animal food, and mortifying the flesh with watchings and fasts, yet could not be said to be Christ's poor ones, in the same sense as men who had nothing to depend upon but their own manual labour. It may be said that Cluny was an ancient abbey enriched by the bounty of kings and bishops, and that Citeaux was but a poor monastery, struggling into existence; but it is also certain, that a stricter profession of poverty was the very distinction between Citeaux and other abbeys; if ever, therefore, it became rich, it was because it broke through its original institution, whilst the riches of Cluny were not necessarily a mark of decline, but a legitimate development. The idea of the monastic state in Stephen's mind was quite different from that conceived by Peter the Venerable.

We have purposely put off the first part of Alberic and Stephen's regulation as to the possessions of the convent, because it forms the most striking contrast with the spirit of Cluny. They would not possess any of the property which had originally belonged to the parochial clergy. The Church, about the end of the eleventh century, was endeavouring to win back the tithes and the revenues of livings from the hands of their lay possessors; but the iron gauntlet of the feudal noble was found to retain as tight a hold as the dead hand of the Church. The tithes had probably first come into the possession of laymen by the

* Udal. iii. 11.

gift of the bishops themselves, in time of danger; the system of feudalism was extended even to church property, and the parish churches were put as fiefs into laymen's hands, on condition that they would defend the Church. Though they were never meant to be a perpetual gift, yet the nobles who had them in possession would not give them up; they had won them by their good sword, and keep them they would. Other nobles had simply seized upon the tithes by violence, principally in the lax times of the Carlovingian dynasty; and the same injustice which had at first robbed the Church, afterwards resisted it. In vain did St. Gregory VII. and Urban II. order the restitution of tithes, the nobles in very many cases would not disgorge the spoil. The supreme pontiffs acted with the greatest moderation in not pronouncing, though they often threatened, the sentence of excommunication. In the meanwhile, a middle course was found; laymen possessing tithes were allowed to give them up to monasteries, or to found religious houses with them, if the consent of the bishop of the diocese was first obtained. In this way tithes first got into the hands of monasteries; and though this was not the best possible course, as was afterwards proved, yet it was at the time a remedy for a glaring evil. Bishops, who at one time vehemently opposed this transfer, were led to sanction it by the necessity of the case. In other instances, bishops themselves, with the sanction of their chapter, gave parish churches into the hands of abbeys, thinking that they would exercise their patronage with the greatest wisdom. The feeling which induced the Cistercians to rule that their monasteries should possess no tithes, was probably rather a zeal for poverty than a notion that the thing was wrong in itself. A monk, according to the Cistercian idea, was not to administer the Sacraments nor to teach, but he was to remain

within his cloister, in prayer and contemplation, in poverty and mortification. In the regulation quoted above, tithes and church property in general are classed with mills, and bakehouses, and lands; all come under the same head, as being possessions, and therefore opposed to poverty. Stephen himself, when abbot of Citeaux, as will be seen by and by, was present at the council of Troyes, where the Templars were allowed to possess tithes, if the bishop consented; and St. Bernard, his disciple, himself wrote to an archbishop, to exhort him to consent to the gift of tithes, presented by a layman to a monastery.* Their argument, therefore, was not that monks, as being laymen, cannot under any circumstances possess tithes, but that, as cultivating lands of their own, they do not come under the old distribution of Church property,† one-third to the bishop, another to the clergy, and the rest to the poor, who have no means of earning their own living. Their principal reason then was, that monks must till their ground with their own hands, instead of living upon property which belonged to the clergy. Very different were the maxims of Cluny; one bishop alone gave sixty parish churches to different priories of the Cluniac order.‡ Exclusive of the parish churches in and about Cluny itself, more than 150 churches were at one time in the gift of the abbot. § It is easy, from this fact, to frame an idea of the almost pontifical power of the ruler of this vast abbey; and the whole of the affairs of the house were conducted on a scale of corresponding grandeur. It was not in the person of the brethren that this magnificence was seen, at

* Ep. 316.

† The division was a fourfold rather than a threefold one, one share being allotted to repairing the fabric of the church. See the Institute of the primitive Cistercian Fathers in the Exordium Parvum, Guignard, p. 72.—*E.*

‡ Pet. Ven. de Miraculis, i. 24. § Bibl. Clun. col. 1753.

least not in the good times of Cluny, for the price which their habit was to cost was fixed,* and they were not above menial arts, such as taking their turn in the kitchen as cooks; but the church and the buildings of the abbey were in a style which befitted its importance. So far, then, were they from giving up tithes and church lands, in order to depend on their own labour for daily bread, that manual labour was very little practised at all. Udalric, the compiler of their customs, says that he must ingenuously confess, that their manual labour was confined to shelling beans, weeding the garden, and sometimes baking bread. Their time was occupied in long and splendid services in the church,† in reading, praying, and meditation, and in the usual routine of the abbey. They were even allowed to write, after vespers, when all were sitting in the cloister in silence, provided the pen slipped so noiselessly over the parchment, that no sound broke the perfect stillness.‡ How is it possible, says Peter the Venerable, for monks fed on poor vegetable diet, when even that scanty fare is often cut off by fasts, to work like common labourers in the burning heat, in showers of rain and snow, and in the bitter cold? Besides, it was indecent that monks, which are the fine linen of the sanctuary, should be begrimed with dirt, and bent down with rustic labours. § The good part of Mary must not thus yield to that of Martha. And yet Stephen and his companions found it possible to do all

* Udal. 1. 30.

† It should be noted that the many supplementary offices and psalms recited by the Cluniac monks in addition to the office of the day must have occupied a great deal of time. The Cistercians on the other hand cut away all these devotional excrescences—nulla appenditia extrinsecus adjiciunt præter vigilias pro defunctis (Malmesbury, p. 383)—thus leaving to themselves much more time for manual labour.—*E.*

‡ Udal. 2. 24. § Pet. Ven. Ep. i. 28.

this. Their poor worn-out bodies did not sink under their heavy burdens, nor were the garments of their soul less white because they were thus exposed to suffer from the inclemency of the season. It was, indeed, inexplicable, even to their contemporaries, how they thus could live; but the secret lay in the fervency of the spirit, which kept up the lagging flesh and blood; their lives were above nature, and because, for Christ's sake, they gave up church-lands and tithes, in order to be poor, He bore them up, so that they did not faint under their labours. Besides, they were not the less like the lowly Mary sitting at the Lord's feet, because they worked in the fields; suffering is not incompatible with the better part. The order which produced St. Bernard cannot be accused of not being contemplative. While their bodies were bent in agricultural labours, their souls were raised to heaven. Again, they had an expedient by which they were enabled to remain within a short distance of the cloister, however scattered their farms might be, and thus no time was lost in journeys to and from the place of their labour, and they could always return to the duties of the choir, and be within the monastery at the times set apart for meditation. Alberic at once felt the difficulty of keeping up the choir service, when the monks might be obliged to sleep in the farm-houses, or, as they were called, granges of the monastery, and he determined on obviating it by turning to account the institution of lay brethren, which had subsisted for a long time in the Benedictine order. It arose from the nature of things, and not by a regular distinction into choir and lay brethren, at the time of the taking of the vow, as it was afterwards to be. Amongst a great number of monks, many could neither read nor write, and had no faculties for learning the choir services; it was natural that these should be employed in the many menial offices which a large monastery

would require. Hence arose the institution of lay brethren;* it however appears to have taken its most systematic shape at the very beginning of the Cistercian order. Some of them dwelt in the abbey itself, others in the scattered and lonely granges around it; they kept the flocks and herds of the community, and were its tailors, shoemakers, and blacksmiths. Those who were in the granges were excused from the fasts of the order, except in Advent, and on the Fridays from the 14th of September till Lent.† Whenever the bell of the abbey rang for a canonical hour, they fell on their knees, and in heart joined the brethren who sang the office in the abbey church. There was thus in every Cistercian abbey "two monasteries, one of the lay brethren, another of the clerics." ‡ The choir brethren were thus enabled always to work within a short distance of the abbey, and were strictly forbidden to remain a whole night in any of the granges, without pressing necessity. The relations between the choir and lay brethren were of the closest kind; instead of being treated as slaves, as they were by their feudal lords, these poor children of the soil, and artizans, were looked upon as brothers, and were by a special law of the order to partake in all spiritual advantages as though they were monks, which in fact they were, in all but the name, for they made their vows in the presence of the abbot, like the other brethren. Politicians, who love equality and liberty, may thank the monks for placing on a level the nobleman and the villain, and for ennobling the cultivator of the soil by stooping down to his lowliness, and partaking of

* Cf. the articles of L. Dolberg, Die Cistercienser Mönche und Conversen als Landwirthe und Arbeiter, in Studien und Mittheilungen, 1892.—*E.*

† Nomasticon, Inst. Cap. Gen. 1. 14.

‡ Dial. inter Clun. et Cist. 3. 43.

his labours. The world may thank Alberic for this scheme, by which the choir brother imparted his spiritual goods to the poor lay brother, who in turn by his labour gave him time for singing the praises of God during the night, and for meditating on His glories continually. The disciples of Alberic and Stephen in after time followed their steps; and Alanus, one of the greatest of the schoolmen, finished his life in the rough and lowly labours of a lay brother of Citeaux,and was represented in a recumbent figure on his tomb, in their habit, holding a rosary in his hand. There are few more touching pictures in the annals of Citeaux than the story ‡ of the poor lay brother, sitting to watch by night in the lowly grange, thinking of his brethren in the abbey, while they celebrate the feast of the Assumption, and repeating over and over again the angelic salutation with such devotion, that the angels brought news of it to St. Bernard, then preaching on the subject of the feast-day at Clairvaux.

‡ Manrique in ann. 1129, c. 6.

Chapter VIII—THE TIMES OF ALBERIC

THE customs of Citeaux have been thus minutely contrasted with the customs of other places, that the reader might know with whom he had to do, what Cistercians were, and why they were not Cluniacs, or Carthusians, or simply Benedictines, though they so strictly professed St. Benedict's rule. They are not an order yet, but only a monastery, and that a very poor one; it was left to Stephen afterwards to constitute them an order; they were not yet even Cistercians, but only the poor brethren of New Minster in the wood of Citeaux, and we have called them Cistercians by anticipation. Alberic's rules were very well kept by his brethren; so that the fervour of the monastery began to be noised abroad. Their old patron, the Duke of Burgundy, was astonished at them; while some other monks put themselves in the way of receiving the alms of the faithful, these brethren hid themselves from the world. It seemed wonderful how they could subsist in such a damp, out-of-the-way hole as that in which they had seated themselves. Nothing was heard of them, except that day and night went their bells, first the bell for matins, then the great bell tolling out for the lay brethren to get up, and all day long for the hours, and for vespers in the evening, and compline at night fall. Nobody knew how they lived, except that their white habits were seen in the fields, as they worked; and yet they asked for nothing. There they were, a wonderful fact in the way of all irreligion and wickedness, men, whose faith was not an

abstraction, but who evidently believed that Christ had come down from heaven to die, since such was their love for Him, that they chose to be like Him in all things, even in suffering. And there was the prior Stephen, leading them out to work with his sweet smiling face, notwithstanding all this suffering.* His spirit had continued unbroken through all his trials, and well might he now be joyful in the Lord, since God had so blessed him in them; he had borne the cross when it entered into his soul, and he now tasted the joy which it always brings with it. Truly "wisdom is justified by her children," and so thought Odo of Burgundy, for he loved the poor monks, and the forest of Citeaux, and he built him near the abbey a lodge, which in after times was still called the palace even in its ruins. At most of the principal festivals he would come there with his court; he would not celebrate them in the cathedral of Chalon, or in the monastery of St. Benignus of Dijon, but he loved better the brethren of the new monastery, for they sang the praises of God so sweetly, and with such joy that his heart was touched, and caught fire at their devotion. He found, in the same year as Alberic made the above rules, an opportunity of assisting the monks. † It will be remembered, that only a portion of Citeaux had been given by the Viscount of Beaune; the rest had been given them by Odo of Burgundy, who agreed to pay the lord of Beaune twenty solidi a year for the hire of the land.

* Gul. Malm. Gest. Reg. lib. iv.

† The Cistercian annalist places this gift in the year 1102, when it could not have happened, for Duke Odo set out for Jerusalem in 1101. The charter preserved in Du Chesne, Histoire Généalogique des Ducs de Bourgogne, says, that it was "post biennium," that is two years after the foundation of Citeaux, in March 1098 (or rather 1099 new style). It would thus come in the year 1101. This charter also proves that the author of l'Art de vérifier les Dates is wrong in making him leave Burgundy in 1097.

The collectors of the revenues of the lord of Beaune, however, found it a much easier matter to get the money from the monks, who would bear patiently to be oppressed, than from the people of the Duke of Burgundy. They therefore applied to the monastery for the twenty shillings, instead of applying to the treasury of the duke. The monks paid the demand in silence, though they could ill afford it out of the poor returns which their land yielded. At length, Odo heard of the exaction, and determined to free them from it for ever, by assigning a portion of his own ground to the lord of Beaune, out of the produce of which he was to help himself to his twenty shillings; and the viscount in return, freed the monks for ever from all claims which he himself, or his heirs, might have upon them. This was indeed the last service which the good duke rendered them, for he set out for the Holy Land that very year in which he conferred this benefit on the monastery.* Jerusalem had not

* It would seem that the donations to the New Monastery even at the very beginning were not confined to the vast uncultivated domain of Citeaux itself. Amongst the charters of the Abbey is to be found a document of Duke Hugh II., the son of Odo, drawn up apparently about the beginning of 1103, from which we learn that on a certain Christmas day (apparently 1099), when Odo had come to Citeaux with a numerous retinue of courtiers, he presented to Robert, then abbot of the New Monastery, the vineyard of Meursault. Meursault it may be noted is nearly twenty-five miles distant from Citeaux. That this was an endowment of considerable value may be judged by the fact that Duke Hugh bought up the interest of a certain knight who owned the tithe of this territory, by a payment of ten livres a year. In this way the Cistercians became masters of the vineyard of Meursault free from all incumbrance. The same scruple which prevented them from receiving the church of Citeaux from the Viscount of Beaune would not permit them to accept this tithe of Meursault from the hand of Duke Hugh. Hence it is stated that Nargold, the Bishop of Autun, in whose diocese the vineyard lay, conferred the tithe upon the monks. See Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne, vol. i. p. 413.—*E.*

long been taken by the crusaders, and Christendom was now arming in support of Godfrey's new kingdom, which was hemmed in on all sides by infidels. The crusaders had obtained possession of the holy sepulchre; but as if to show that the keeping of this precious treasure depended on the good behaviour of Christians, God never permitted them to hold it by a firm tenure. Its honoured guardians had to defend it at the point of the sword; the harness was hardly ever off their back, and no crown could be less easy than that of Jerusalem. Odo of Burgundy never reached the Holy Land;* he died in 1102, almost as soon as he had reached the army of the crusaders. On his death-bed the sweet song of the Cistercian choir rung in his ears, and he desired that his body should not lie in a foreign land, but should be carried across sea and land to be buried at Citeaux. So his followers obeyed his dying request, and brought his remains back to Burgundy. In dying he gave the last proof of affection for the brethren of Citeaux, by wishing to be buried among them. He might have been buried beneath the walls of many a cathedral or abbey church, better befitting the high and puissant Duke of Burgundy, but he chose to lie where his faithful monks would watch around his body, and say a prayer for his soul as they passed his tomb. Times were indeed changed with the old wood of Citeaux, which had a few years before been the habitation of wild beasts; and now the funeral procession of a prince might be seen moving through it; and it was a strange meeting, that of the banners and coronet, and the armour of the deceased duke, with the white habit of the monks, who had

* This is questionable. According to some authorities he died at Tarsus in Cilicia; according to others however he perished in the terrible battle of Rama fought against the Saracens, May 27, 1102. See Petit, Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne, i. p. 269.—*E.*

renounced the world and its honours. They had given up pomp and grandeur, and now one of the highest princes in Christendom was come to lie down at their feet, that they by their intervention might assist his soul before the tribunal of Christ. Truly many men would wish to live in a king's court, but most would rather in death be with the monks. It is not known in what part of the first church of Citeaux Duke Odo was buried; indeed it is doubtful whether his body did not lie in the cemetery among the monks. In the magnificent church afterwards built at Citeaux, his tomb was under the porch of the church, in a place called the chapel of the dukes, where his two sons were buried with him.*

To be the burial place of the princes of the earth was not however enough for Citeaux; and however regular and admirable was his abbey, yet Alberic had one care which pressed upon his soul, it seemed as if the very existence of the convent was likely to pass away with the present generation, for no novices arrived to fill up the ranks of those who died. If matters did not mend, Citeaux would return again to its former possessors, wolves and wild boars. Alberic's patience was sorely tried; it was not only that their name would perish from the earth, which would be but a light evil, but the failure of Citeaux would be a proof to the world that the monks of Molesme were right, and St. Benedict's rule could not now be observed to the letter. It was too much for mortal man to bear, it

* The inscription dating from 1163 engraved upon their common tomb runs as follows: Hic jacent tres illustrissimi Burgundie duces, Odo fundator hujus monasterii, qui obiit anno mcii. Hugo, filius ejus qui obiit anno mcxlii. Odo, filius dicti Hugonis, qui obiit mclxii. Anime eorum requiescant in pace. Amen." Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne, vol. v. p. 433. Father Dalgairns would seem therefore to be mistaken in saying that Odo's two sons were buried with him. It should be son and grandson. — *E.*

might be said, and God had shown His disapproval of this over-strictness, by depriving the monastery of spiritual children. They passed many a long day in expectation of an increase of numbers, but the monks who joined them were far too few to give hope of the ultimate continuance of the monastery. Alberic however persevered, feeling sure that at all events it was God's will that he should continue in his present position, and he left the future in God's hands. Stephen and he had seen worse days than this, when they were compelled to leave Molesme, and to betake themselves to the solitude of Hauz, and it might please God to reward them with the sight of an increase of their spiritual children before they died. Alberic certainly did die long before Citeaux became what it afterwards was; but our Lord is said to have given him a supernatural intimation that his order would one day flourish beyond his expectations. The vision is mentioned by no contemporary writer, but we give it, because nothing can be said against the truth of it, in itself, and because it contains some remarkable circumstances. Considering the influence that Citeaux afterwards had upon the fortune of the Church, there is no improbability in the supposition that our blessed Lord might, in His condescension, be pleased to console the abbot when his courage was flagging, by extraordinary means. It is said, that one day, the community was surprised by the entrance of a clerk, who offered himself as a novice. The porch of the monastery at which the new comer knocked was not an inviting one; it was not an imposing archway with a large gate, with bolts and bars; it was a poor door of wicker work, at which hung a huge iron knocker, at the sound of which a porter appeared with his usual salutation of *Deo gratias*, as if he would say, Thanks be to God that He has sent us a stranger to feed and entertain. This time, however, the

new comer seemed to be no stranger; he seemed to recognise the porter, though the monk could not recollect ever to have seen him before. When brought to the abbot, he appeared to know him also, as well as the prior Stephen, and all the brethren. At length he solved the mystery, by relating his history. He was a clerk, who when a student of the schools of Lyons, saw in a vision a valley, stretched at the foot of a mountain, and on the mountain was a city of surpassing beauty, on which none could gaze without joy, as its radiant towers crowned the eminence on which it was built. The beholder felt a strange and irresistible desire to enter its gates and dwell there. Around the base of the mountain, however, was a broad river, the waters of which flowed about it, and were too deep for the traveller to ford. As he roamed about in quest of a place where he might cross it, he saw upon the bank twelve or fourteen poor men washing their garments in the stream. Among them was one clad in a white garment of dazzling brightness, and his countenance and form were very different from the rest; he went about helping the poor men to wash the spots off their clothes; when he had helped one, he went to help another. The clerk went up to this august person and said, "What men are ye?" And he answered, "These poor men are doing penance, and washing themselves from their sins; I am the Son of God, Jesus Christ, without whose aid neither they nor any one one else can do good. This beautiful city which thou seest is Paradise, where I dwell; he who has washed his clothes white, that is, done penance for his sins, shall enter into it. Thou thyself hast been searching long enough for the way to enter into it, but there is no other way, but this one, which leads to it." After these words the sleeper awoke, and pondered over the vision. Soon after he returned home from the schools, and related to the bishop

of Chalon, with whom he was intimate, what he had seen in sleep. The bishop advised him to quit the world for the cloister, and above others recommended the new monastery at Citeaux. Thither the clerk went, and he found everything unpromising enough; the place was barren and desolate, and the brethren dwelling "with the wild beasts." The gate of the monastery did not look a whit more inviting, but what was his astonishment when he saw the porter who answered to the sound of the rude knocker; he immediately saw that he was one of the men whom he had seen washing their clothes white in the stream. On seeing the abbot and the other brethren, he observed the same thing, and he at once fell on his knees at the feet of Alberic, and begged to be received as a novice. He afterwards became a good monk, and succeeded Stephen as prior.

Chapter IX—THE DEATH OF ALBERIC

From the time of the admission of this monk, which took place in the year 1104, there is a great gap in the Cistercian annals. The greater portion of those chapters in the greater and smaller Exordium of Citeaux which relate to the abbacy of Alberic have been lost;* and nothing more is heard of Stephen till the year 1109, when Alberic died. The Exordium simply mentions his death in the following few words, "Now the man of God, Alberic, after having exercised himself in the school of Christ by the discipline of the rule, for nine years and a half, departed to the Lord, a man glorious in faith and virtue, and therefore to be blessed by God in life everlasting for his merit." He died on January 26. St. Alberic has been canonized by the veneration of the faithful, and many miracles are said to have taken place at his tomb. Certainly, if any one deserved well of the Church it was St. Alberic. The regulations which he passed into law may be called the first statutes of the order, and they first gave to Citeaux a tangible form by which it was distinguished from other monasteries. He worked on in faith, without seeing the fruits of his labours, and he was called away from it when the infant community was in great perplexity. It seemed dying away as its members

* It is not likely that anything is really lost, but the lacuna now apparent in the Exordium Magnum seems to have been originally filled with extracts taken from the Exordium Parvum. See Hüffer, Vorstudien, p. 177.—*E.*

successively died, and bade fair not to outlast its first generation. His death was therefore a most painful trial to Stephen, who was thus deprived of his friend and companion, whom he had found at Molesme, when he first came there, and who had shared with him all his hardships; now he was left alone when he most needed counsel and support. Stephen's spirit seems however to have risen with the thought that his dear friend already possessed his crown, and might help him with his prayers even more than he had done with his counsels when alive. He had as prior to incense and sprinkle with holy water the body of his friend, and to throw earth upon it, when it lay in the grave; and then the procession returned in inverse order, the lay brethren and the convent first, and himself last, with the cross borne before him.* They then repaired to the chapter, where he addressed them a discourse which has been preserved. "All of us have alike a share in this great loss, and I am but a poor comforter, who myself need comfort. Ye have lost a venerable father and ruler of your souls; I have lost, not only a father and ruler, but a friend, a fellow-soldier and a chief warrior in the battles of the Lord, whom our venerable father Robert, from the very cradle of our monastic institute had brought up in one and the same convent, in admirable learning and piety. He is gone from us, but not from God, and if not from God, then not from us; for this is the right and property of saints, that when they quit this life they leave their body to their friends, and carry away their friends with them in their mind. We have amongst us this dear body and singular pledge of our beloved father, and he himself has carried us all away with him in his mind with an affectionate love; yea, if he himself is borne up to God, and joined with him in individual love, he has joined

* Usus Cist. p. i. 98.

us too, who are in him, to God. What room is there for grief? Blessed is the lot, more blessed he to whom that lot has fallen, most blessed we, to be carried up to such a presence, for nothing can be more joyful for the soldiers of Christ, than to leave this garment of flesh, and to fly away to Him for love of whom they have borne so many toils. The warrior has got his reward, the runner has grasped his prize, the conqueror has won his crown, he who has taken possession, prays for a palm for us. Why then should we grieve? Why mourn for him who is in joy? Why be cast down for him who is glad? Why do we throw ourselves before God with murmurs and mournful words, when he who has been borne up to the stars, is pained at our grief, if the blessed can feel pain; he who by an earnest longing prays that we may have a like consummation. Let us not mourn for the soldier who is at rest; let us mourn for ourselves, who are placed in the front of battle, and let us turn our sad and mournful words into prayers, begging our father who is in triumph, not to suffer the roaring lion and savage enemy to triumph over us." Such were Stephen's words when he had just parted with his dearest friend; as usual he seems to rise with his difficulties. Indeed he had full need of this bold spirit, for he was about to succeed the sainted Alberic in his most painful dignity. The monks unanimously elected him their abbot, and he found himself with the whole weight of spiritual and temporal direction of the new convent on his shoulders. William of Malmesbury says that he was absent at the time that he was elected, and some suppose that he withdrew from Citeaux for fear of being elected. It does not however appear how his absence could have prevented his election, unless he intended to leave Citeaux altogether, of which there is no record whatever. Saints fly from dignities, which bring with them rank and splendour; but the poor abbey of

Citeaux had nothing to recommend it but hardship and labour, and these were a species of distinction from which Stephen was not the man to shrink. It is therefore most probable that some other motive occasioned his absence, though it does not appear what it was. He elected Robert, the monk who saw the vision which we have related, prior in his room.

Chapter X—STEPHEN AS ABBOT

STEPHEN found himself heir to all St. Alberic's difficulties, as well as to his dignity. He received from him a convent perfect in its internal arrangement, but one which men seemed rather disposed to admire at a distance, than to enter. The new abbot however felt certain that the principle on which Citeaux had been founded was right; it was one, which must in time catch all the ardent spirits in the Church, who wished to be monks in order to crucify the flesh, and not merely to seek for peace. Hatred of poverty had been the great bane of monasteries, and his aim was to restore the primitive discipline of St. Benedict, which had well nigh been forgotten. In order to do this, he must not only exhibit it in his own person, but he must create, so to speak, a monastery in full operation, one to which novices crowded, and which was to last to the end of the world, a school of Christian discipline. He took what would appear a strange expedient to entice novices to Citeaux. His first act was, to all appearance, the cutting off all earthly support from the monastery. Hugo, the successor of Odo, the duke of Burgundy, who was buried at Citeaux, followed his father's example in frequenting the church of the monastery on all great festivals. He brought with him a large train of nobles, whose splendid appointments were but an ill match for the simplicity and poverty of the church. The presence of this brilliant array seemed to Stephen ill-suited to the place; the jangling of steel spurs, and the varied colour of the dress of the courtiers, were a poor accompaniment to the grave chant and the

poor habit of the brethren. Every one knows that the sight of a king's court is pleasing, and men go a great way to see it; now the echo of earthly pleasure and the presence of earthly joy are inconsistent with the profession of a monk, whose conversation ought to be in heaven. Men may say what they will about ideal perfection, but it is a sure fact, that saints are very much nearer perfection than we may think. Human frailties are in the long run unavoidable; but, at all events, the frailty of liking the vicinity of princes and nobles is not one of these, for Stephen did avoid it. He declared that no prince should henceforth hold his court in the church of Citeaux. Apparently this act was at once cutting himself off from all earthly protection; the presence of a ducal court was no empty show, it was a guarantee that swords would be drawn and lances put in rest to defend Citeaux. All this Stephen, as it seemed, threw away; he knew that God specially guarded the destitute, and he preferred the guardianship of saints and angels to that of an earthly prince. God rewarded his faith, for he did not ultimately lose the favour of Hugo,* who after his death rested side by side with his father in the chapel under the porch of the abbey-church. Before that time, however, the community had suffered many a hardship, which might have been averted had the powerful Duke of Burgundy been as good a friend to the convent as heretofore. Stephen's next step was one with which modern notions of monasticism are still more inconsistent. He forbade that, says the Exordium, "in the house of God, in which they wished to serve God devoutly day and night, any thing should be found which savoured

* It would seem from the charters cited by M. Petit, Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne, Vol. I., Appendix, that if Hugh was alienated at all, it can only have been for a very short period.—*E.*

of pride and excess, or can in any way corrupt poverty, that guardian of virtue which they had chosen of their own accord." According to this, no crucifixes of gold or silver were to be used; one candlestick alone was to light up the church, and that not branching with elaborate ornaments, and studded with precious stones, but of iron; censers were to be of brass; chasubles, not of gold and silver tissue, or of rich silk, but of common stuff; albs and amices of linen; copes, tunicles, and dalmatics were inexorably excluded. Even the chalices were not to be of gold, but silver gilt, as was also to be the pipe through which they received the blessed Blood of the Lord in the Holy Eucharist. This was indeed a strange way of attracting novices: the monastic churches were frequented by men on account of the splendour of the services, for sacred vessels, and altars adorned with gold and gems, for the number of ecclesiastics in splendid vestments passing to and fro before their eyes in seemly order. But by this act Stephen proclaimed to the world that they did not wish their church to be crowded with visitors; they wished to remain known only to God, in the heart of their marshy forest; but he knew that there must be many in the Church who longed to serve God in poverty and oblivion, and he reckoned upon receiving them into Citeaux. The novice who came there must come from the pure love of God, since he even gave up what was considered the heritage of monks, and the compensation for their toils, a striking ceremonial, and solemn rites. This is indeed very different from the notion which our fancy frames of monks, men of warm imaginations, who retired to a cloister to wear a picturesque habit, and to be free from toils; and it reads a salutary lesson to those whose Catholicism consists in a love of "æsthetic" religion. Stephen did not at all by

rejecting these means of external devotion intend to pronounce against the consecration of the riches of the world to the service of the sanctuary; he was a monk, and had to do with monks alone; it was quite certain that St. Benedict intended poverty to be an essential feature of the cloister, and Stephen was determined to prove that St. Benedict's rule might be kept in the twelfth century as it had been in the sixth. The Church was not in her dotage, and her children could do then what they had done before. Another reason for the rejection of splendour of worship was because it interfered with meditation, properly so called, the contemplation of heavenly things without the aid of the senses. Not only were splendid vestments excluded from Citeaux, but, as we learn from its early statutes,* sculptures and pictures were not allowed in the Church, "because while the attention is given to such things, the profit of godly meditation and the discipline of religious gravity are often neglected." † Without determining which of the

* Inst. Cap. Gen. i. 20.

† In thus insisting upon an extreme simplicity in all that belonged to religious worship, St. Stephen cannot altogether be regarded as the first pioneer of a new reform. In the Carthusian Order founded by St. Bruno in 1084, fourteen or fifteen years before the migration from Molesme to Citeaux, an exactly similar usage prevailed from the beginning. So close indeed is the correspondence in this matter between the earliest statutes of the Carthusians and Cistercians that it is difficult to believe that these regulations can have been framed quite independently. Almost every one of the points mentioned in the text was observed by the Carthusians also. We may specify in particular the exclusion of gold and silver ornaments, except for the chalice and the pipe used for receiving the Precious Blood, the entire rejection of dalmatics and copes, the extreme simplicity of the chasuble, the restrictions placed upon sculptures and paintings, and, last but not least, the prominence given to the crucifix. It may be added that the early Carthusian chronicles explicitly affirm that it was an account brought to

two is the better, it will at once be seen that the devotion which floats to heaven on the sounds of beautiful music, and is kept alive by a splendid religious scene, is very different from that which, with closed eyes, and senses shut up, sings the praises of God, and at the same time is fixed on the heavenly mysteries without any intermediate channel. This latter species of devotion can only exist without danger in the Catholic Church, whose creed is fixed, and her faith unchangeable, while she herself is an external body, the image of her Lord. Stephen, therefore, could securely reject to a certain extent the aid of external religion; for his mind, trained in the Catholic faith, had a definite object to rest upon, the Holy Trinity, with the inexhaustible and incomprehensible treasures of contemplation therein contained. Though the chalice was not of gold, he knew what was in it; even his blessed Lord; and he could think upon the saints, with their palms and crowns in heaven, though their images were not sculptured about him. Again, though sculptures and paintings were not allowed, yet one image is expressly excepted; crucifixes of wood, painted to the life, were placed in the church, and these must, from the colouring and material, have been much more real than golden or silver figures, however well sculptured, could have been. It should also be observed that architecture is not excluded from this list of prohibi-

Molesme of the manner of life adopted by St. Bruno and his companions, which first aroused in the breast of St. Robert and St. Stephen the desire of a stricter observance of the primitive rule. This much is certain that in a "title" written by the monks of Molesme on St. Bruno's mortuary roll in 1102, he is described as *noster familiarissimus*, and the monks state that they have offered Mass for his soul for thirty days and have inserted his obit in their necrology. He had occupied a cell dependent on Molesme. See Le Couteulx, Annale Ordinis Cartusiensis, Vol. I., pp. 117-118 and 274-277.—*E.*

tions; the old church of Citeaux, built in Stephen's time, still existed when Martene * came to visit the monastery; it stood in all its simplicity beside the vast and splendid edifice, a strange relic of the ancient times of Citeaux; yet, notwithstanding the contrast, its beauty is praised by the Benedictine. The line which Stephen marked out for himself was therefore definite; costliness, pomp, and unnecessary ornaments were excluded, but beauty of shape was kept. He would not have a misshapen chasuble, though he eschewed cloth of gold, nor would he have an unsightly church, though he loved simplicity. It is scarcely possible to conceive a better type of Citeaux than a great Norman church, such as is seen in the abbeys of Caen, with its vast round arches and simple shafts clustering round a massive pier; even its austere capitals, looking like an imitation of the architecture of the Roman empire, might come in as the counterpart of Stephen's notion of going back to St. Benedict as his model.

These new regulations of the abbot of Citeaux were the more bold, because they were directly opposed to what may be called the leading religious men of the day. St. Hugh of Cluny died the very year that they were put in force, and the state of things which he had introduced at Cluny of course acquired a new sanctity from the saintly memory which he had left behind him. Differing as they did in other respects, nothing can shew the difference of his spirit and that of Stephen,

* Voy. Lit. i. 223. Martene there incidentally says that this church was consecrated in 1106; if so, it must have been a different church from that built by the duke of Burgundy. This event is not recorded by the Cistercian historians; no notice has been taken of it in the text, because the Benedictine gives no authority for the assertion, though it is exceedingly likely in itself.

than the contrast between them in this particular. St. Hugh had a great fondness for ecclesiastical ornaments. "He said within himself," writes his biographer, "with the Prophet: 'I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth;' and whatsoever the devotion of the faithful gave, he entirely consecrated to adorning the church or to the expenses of the poor." * The vast church which he built at Cluny, (as it is said, by the divine command conveyed in a vision,) was reckoned the most beautiful of his time; it contained stalls in the choir for 220 monks. It had two side aisles and two transepts, and two vast lanterns gave light to the whole. At the upper end was a beautiful apse supported by eight marble columns, each of which could hardly be embraced by two men. All the precious things of the world were consecrated to the adornment of this splendid basilica: one beautiful corona of lights, the gift of Matilda, queen of England, made after the pattern mentioned in Exodus,† especially caught the eye of beholders, as it hung before the high altar: it was made of gold and silver, and its delicate branches blazed with crystals and beryls interspersed among its beautifully wrought lilies.‡ Even the immense hall, which was the refectory of the convent, had its own religious ornaments; it was painted all round with figures of saints of the Old and New Testament, and of the founders and benefactors of Cluny: but the principal object was a large figure of our Lord, with a representation of the terrible day of judgment. All the ceremonies in the church were most solemn and imposing, seen by the dim light of its narrow windows § cut through the thick wall, or with the sun

* Hildebert ap. Bibl. Clun. 420. † Exod. xxv. 31-39.
‡ Bibl. Clun. 1640. § Ann. Ben. tom. v. p. 252.

shining through the ample lanterns; or again with its blaze of lights, and especially the seven before the holy Cross on the night of our Lord's nativity, when the church was adorned with rich hangings, and all the bells rang out, and the brethren walked in procession round the cloisters, their hearts burning with the words of good St. Hugh, spoken the evening before in the chapter.* Who can blame the holy abbot for enlisting the senses in the service of religion? He could not be accused of pomp or pride, who in his simplicity took his turn in washing the beans in the kitchen;† his heart in the beauties of the sanctuary saw but an image of the worship in the courts of heaven, and was not entangled or brought down to earth by the blaze of splendour around him. Still all this, as we have said before, was a development upon St. Benedict's rule, and does not seem to have been contemplated by him; if he had walked in a Cluniac cloister, and had seen its grotesque ornaments, with the apes and centaurs peeping out from the rich foliage, the huntsmen with horns and hounds, and the knights fighting together, on the walls,‡ he would hardly have known where he was. Stephen's doubtless was the original conception of monasticism, which time had altered, if it had not corrupted. St. Hugh would have the church all glorious within, and her clothing without of wrought gold; but Stephen wished her to be like her Lord, in whom was found no comeliness that men should desire Him; but Stephen's pastoral staff was a crooked stick such as an old man might carry; St. Hugh's was overlaid with foliage wrought in silver, mixed with ivory:§ yet the souls of both were the workmanship of that One blessed Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as He will. Though the abbot of Cluny took advantage of

* Udal. i. 11. 46. Bibl. Clun. 1273. † Udal. i. 46.
‡ St. Bern. Apol. ad Guil. § Voy. Lit. i. 226.

all the treasures of art and nature, and turned them to the service of God, while on the other hand Stephen in many cases rejected the help of external religion, yet both could find a place in the Catholic Church, whose worship is not carnal, nor yet so falsely spiritual as to cease to be the body of the Lord.

Chapter XI—STEPHEN IN TIMES OF WANT

THE consequence of Stephen's thus boldly casting off the protection of the duke of Burgundy, and all that could attract the world into the solitude of Citeaux, soon began to be visible. In the year 1110 it was discovered that the world was inclined to forget those who had forgotten it; for either from the failure of crops, or from some other unknown cause, the convent was reduced to a state not only of poverty but of beggary, and no one was found to relieve it.* Stephen's was but a poor abbacy; he had now been scarcely a year in his new dignity, and he found himself lord of a starving community; but he had already counted the cost, and he knew that his Lord would not leave his servants to die of want in the depths of their forest. His countenance was therefore not a whit less smiling on account of his difficulties, and he cheered up his brethren by his earnest words. At length the extremity of want came upon the monastery, and one day the brother cellarer came to the abbot, and informed him that there was not enough for one day's provision in the house. "Saddle me two asses," was Stephen's only answer: when they were ready, the abbot himself mounted one, and bade a lay brother mount the other. He then ordered his

* It can hardly be that the new abbey was so entirely destitute of friends as this might seem to imply. We find in the cartularies of Citeaux a few grants of land belonging apparently to this period, although, as charters were then rarely dated, it is difficult to assign them to any definite year. See Petit, vol. i. pp. 306, 307.—*E.*

companion to beg bread from door to door in a certain village while he himself went to beg in another, and he appointed a place where they should meet after making their rounds. To a passing stranger the holy man must have looked very like one of those Sarabaitæ* or wandering monks, of whom St. Benedict speaks, on a voyage in quest of gain, so strange must have been his figure, mounted as he was on the ignoble beast, in his white habit, and his rough cowl over his shaven head; but his face was radiant with joy, for never was he more like his blessed Lord than when he was thus reduced to beggary. After having gone through the village, begging as he went, he met this lay brother returning from his task; on comparing notes the brother's wallet was found to be very much more full than his superior's. "Where hast thou been begging?" said the abbot, with a smile; "I see thou hast been gleaning in thicker stubble than I. Where, prithee, hast thou been gleaning?" The lay brother answered, "That priest whom you know full well filled my wallet," and he mentioned the priest's name. The abbot at once recognized the priest to be one who had obtained his benefice by simony. It was then in the thick of the contest about investitures, and Stephen shuddered at receiving aught from hands stained with such a sin; and he groaned aloud and said, "Alas! for thee; why didst thou receive aught there? thou didst not know then that that priest had been simoniacally ordained; and what he has accepted is leprosy and rapine. As the Lord liveth, of all that he has given us, we will taste nothing. God forbid that we should eat of his sin, and that it be turned into the substance of our bodies!"

* Cassian (Collat. 18, c. 7), who speaks of these wandering monks attributes a Coptic etymology to the word. There are frequent allusions to them from the time of St. Jerome to that of John of Salisbury.—*E.*

He then called some shepherds, who were near the spot, and emptied all the contents of the wallet into their laps. This is but one instance, which has been preserved almost by chance, of the difficulties under which the convent laboured, and of Stephen's unworldly way of meeting them. The particulars of their daily life in these trying times have been forgotten. Many other facts of the same sort doubtless were handed down and told by the monks in aftertimes, as this which we have mentioned was related by Master Peter, surnamed Cantor; but the convent traditions have died away, and the chronicles have not recorded more, till we come to the last acts which closed these times of difficulty. It was by what would be called a strange coincidence that the wants of the brethren were at last relieved. The monks called it a miracle wrought by God at Stephen's prayers; and if the truth be told, we think they were right. It seems to be but scriptural to believe that it happened, as our Lord has promised, "He that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he shall do also; and greater than these shall he do, because I go to the Father."* However, the reader shall judge for himself. It was a long dreary season, the time of this downright beggary of Citeaux. It was of no great consequence during Lent; but Lent passed away, and Easter came without alleviation. Still the monks, buoyed up with the cheerfulness of their abbot, did not allow their spirit to flag, and only rejoiced the more because they suffered for Christ's sake. At length Pentecost came, and it was found that there was hardly bread in the house to last out the day; nevertheless the brethren prepared for the Mass of that great day with ecstasies of joy. They began to chant the solemn service with overflowing hearts, and before the Mass was over God rewarded their faith, for

* John xiv. 12.

succour arrived at the gate of the monastery from an unexpected source. "In these and the like events," says the old monk who relates it, "the man of God, Stephen, weighing within himself how true are those words of Scripture, 'They who fear the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good,' looked with wonder on the bounty and mercy of God on himself and his brethren: more and more did he progress in holy religion, and gloried in the straits of blessed poverty as in all manner of riches. At length the crisis came; even after the mercy of God on Whitsunday their sufferings were not over: nay, they were at their height, and with them proportionately rose the abbot's faith. He called to him one of the brethren, and, as says the same historian, "speaking to him in the Spirit of God, said to him, 'Thou seest, dearest brother, that we are brought into a great strait by want; nay, well nigh are our brethren's lives brought into peril by hunger, cold, and other sufferings. Go then to the market of Vezelay, which is very soon coming on, and buy there three waggons, and for each waggon three horses, strong and fit for draught, of which we are very much in need for carrying our burdens. And when thou hast laden the waggons with clothes and food and other necessaries, thou shalt bring them with thee, and come back to us in joy and prosperity.'" The poor brother was astonished at the good abbot's command, and it probably crossed him that he was sent on a fool's errand; however, in the spirit of holy obedience he said, "I am ready, my lord and father, to obey thy commands, if thou wilt but give me money to buy these necessaries." The abbot, however, had no such

† Father Dalgairns seems to be quoting imperfectly from memory the Prayer Book version of Psalm xxxiv. 10, A. V. In the Vulgate it is Ps. xxxiii, 11.: "Inquirentes autem Dominum non minuentur omni bono."—*E.*

intentions; he felt quite sure in his royal heart that the crisis was come, and that God was now going to help them. As a physician can see deeper into a disease when it is at its height than the bystander, so can the spiritual man see into God's providence further than other men. He issued, therefore, his orders with a quiet tone, as if the wealth of Peru was at his command. Regardless of the monk's astonishment, he said, "Be it known to thee, brother, that when, in care and anxiety, I searched for means for relieving the wants of our brethren, I found but three pence in the whole house. Take them, if thou wilt. As for the rest, whatever is wanting, the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ will provide it. Go then without fear, for the Lord will send His angel with thee, and will prosper thy way." It is not on record whether the monk took the three pence with him; but it is certain, whether he did or no, that they would not help him much on his mission. However, he started for the town which the abbot had mentioned. When he got there, he went to the house of a friend, and told him of his difficulties. Now it happened that a rich neighbour of this friend was on his deathbed, distributing alms to the poor. Thither then the man went, and related in what straits were the monks of Citeaux, whose holiness was well known all over the country; the dying man on hearing this, sent for the monk, and gave him as much money as would suffice to buy all that the abbot had ordered. Away then he went, and bought his three waggons and nine horses, and all the articles of which the brethren stood in need, and then started merrily for Citeaux. When he got near the monastery he sent word to the abbot that he was coming, and how accompanied. Stephen, in the holy rapture of his heart, assembled the chapter and said, "The God of mercy, the Lord God of mercy, has frankly and bountifully dealt with

us. Yea, nobly indeed, generously indeed, hast Thou done, Thou who providest for us, our Shepherd, opening Thine hand and filling our poverty with plenteousness." Then the abbot put on his sacred vestments, and took his pastoral staff in his hand, and with the whole convent in procession, the cross and holy water solemnly borne before him, went to meet the brother and his convoy at the abbey gate. This was the last of the trials which Stephen had to undergo from the failure of the temporalities of his convent. The alms of the faithful flowed in apace, and the cellarer had never again to report an empty granary to the abbot.*

* A long list of donations of landed property might be compiled from the extracts from charters published by Petit. Another writer remarks: "The possessors of the fiefs which bordered upon the estate of the new monastery took pity on their sufferings and helped them generously with gifts of land. With the addition of some few purchases the religious of Citeaux soon saw themselves the owners of the principal vineyards from Meursault to Dijon. The rich abbey of S. Germain-des-Prés in 1113 gave them lands and rights of pasture at Gilly and Bretigny." Histoire du Village de Gilly-les-Vougeot by M. Chalmandrier, in Mémoires de la Société Bourguignonne, vol. xi. pp. 153, 154. Cf. Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne, i. pp. 308, 309.—*E.*

Chapter XII—THE MORTALITY AT CITEAUX

ALL however was not over yet; the sorest trial of all was yet to come, far worse than the obstinacy of the monks of Molesme, or the penury of Citeaux. In the year 1111 and 1112, a mortality broke out amongst the brethren; and Stephen saw several of his spiritual children dying off one by one before his eyes. In that year the whole Church was sick, for it was then that pope Pascal was held in captivity by the emperor Henry V., and what was worse, gave up the right of granting investitures. Then some bishops spoke harsh words against the sovereign pontiff, that he should be deposed, and the hearts of all men were failing them for fear. But the repentance of Pascal and the firmness of the bishops, and specially of Guido, archbishop of Vienne, saved the Church after a season. It was during this time of confusion for all Christendom, that Citeaux was in mourning. First one brother went and then another; independently of all other considerations, the loss of men who had borne with him the burden and heat of the day must have been most painful to Stephen. The ties which bound one member of a religious community to another, in death as well as in life, were of the closest kind. As in life they had helped one another on in the painful task of crucifying the flesh, so in death they who remained behind on earth helped their brother, who was passing away before them from this world, by their prayers and by their presence. Though monks all their lives through looked death in the face in frequent meditations, yet they did not consider that they could ever be too well

prepared for that dreadful moment. It is dreadful, not only because the soul is about to appear before its God, but also because it is an hour of actual conflict with the devil, who then often marshals all his powers for a last effort, and endeavours to shake the faith of the dying man. It was therefore the rule in a convent, that all the brethren should come unto the deathbed of a dying monk to help him against his spiritual enemy. The death of a brother was thus a subject of personal interest to each member of a convent, and in this point of view alone, the successive deaths of his friends must have been a bitter trial to Stephen. As abbot, it was his lot to go, at the head of the brethren, clad in alb, stole, and maniple, and with his pastoral staff in his hand, to the chamber of the dying man, to administer to him extreme unction, and to give him the holy rood to kiss.* Again and again during those two painful years he was summoned to the bedside of the brother, to anoint his limbs before his soul passed away from his body. And how often when the last agony was actually come, did the harsh strokes of the wooden mallet†

* Usus Ord. Cist. i. 93. Guignard, pp. 204 seq. The whole ceremony to be followed in administering the last rites to the dying is detailed with singular minuteness in the earliest collection of Consuetudines. It is easy to see the supreme importance which was attached by these early Cistercian lawgivers to the manner of the soul's passage out of this world.—*E.*

† Tabula. It would not seem that the community were *usually* summoned by striking the board (tabula) with a mallet. This signal appears to have been reserved for the "still days" of Holy Week, and for this special purpose of notifying to the community that one of the brethren was near death. It is consequentiy often called the *tabula morientium* (cf. Herbertus, Liber Miraculorum, bk. i. c. 2). Mention of this tabula occurs frequently in monastic chronicles, e.g., in the Life of B. Stephen of Obazine. "Cumque jam morti evidentius propinquaret . . . . pulsata tabula omnes undique convenerunt," &c. Cf. Udalric, Consuet. Clun. iii. 29.—*E.*

which usually called the convent together, resound through the cloister, together with the tolling of the bell, to summon the community to the deathbed of a brother. Then all labour was hastily given up, and even the divine office was broken off, and all went to the dying man's room, repeating aloud the words of the Creed. There they found him lying on ashes sprinkled on the floor in the form of a cross, for that was the posture in which monks died; and then they commended his soul to God with Litanies and the Penitential Psalms. In all these mournful ceremonies, and in all those which took place around the corpse before and at the burial, Stephen as abbot had the chief place; the crosses and the graves silently multiplied before him in the churchyard, and still no novices arrived to fill the empty stalls of those who were dead. The cause of the mortality is not known; it may have been that the marshy soil of the wood had not been properly drained, and that the brethren sunk under the damp air, to which, from their long abstinence, their bodies were peculiarly sensitive. It could not have been the austerity of their life alone, for thousands afterwards followed their steps, and died of a good old age; still it was certain that the world would put it down to that cause, and even the monks of the day would look upon the convent as one cursed by God on account of the fanatical austerities of its inmates. Stephen's cares thus multiplied upon him, and he found no consolation from them except in the time of the divine office. It is recorded of him, that after the evening collation was read, as he entered into the church he used to pause at the entrance with his hand pressing on the door. One of the brethren, whom he especially loved, frequently observed this silent gesture as he went into the church, and ventured to ask him what it meant. "The holy father," says the Exordium, answered,

"I am forced during the day to give free course to many thoughts for the ordering of the house; all these I bid to remain outside the door, and I tell them not to venture in, and to wait till the morrow, when I find them all ready for me after Prime has been said." * However the abbot might manage to drive away distressing thoughts during the quiet hours of the night, while the monks were chaunting the office in church, yet they recurred with tenfold force during the day, when all the cares of the house came upon him, while his spiritual children were dying about him. At times even his faith all but failed; it crossed his mind that the monks who scoffed at Citeaux might after all be right. The Cistercian manner of life might be displeasing to God, and the frequent deaths of the brethren and the barrenness of the monastery might be a punishment for their presumption in attempting to go beyond what God allowed. Pain in itself is not pleasing to God, and an austere life, unless it be joined by charity to Christ's sufferings, becomes simple pain, for His merits alone convert our sufferings into something sacramental, and make them meritorious in the eyes of God. He might therefore have been leading his poor brethren into the wilderness, and have made them there perish with hunger, and their blood would be required at his hands. These melancholy thoughts tormented him, and at last they broke out into words, when with the whole convent he was summoned to attend the deathbed of another brother who was

* Almost identically the same story is told of St. Hugh of Lincoln (✠ A.D. 1200). When he was procurator at the Grande Chartreuse, and had to come some distance from the house of the lay brothers, where he presided, to the church, he used to say to his temporal worries as he threw off his cloak at the entrance of the choir; "Stay you there at the door with my cape; when I come out, it will be time to pick you up again." Sutor, De Vita Carthusiana, l. ii. tr. 3, c, 5.—*E.*

about to follow the many inmates of Citeaux who had already died. All the brethren wondered as he spoke the words, at the calm faith with which he pronounced them, notwithstanding the deep anxiety which they displayed. Thus then in the presence of all he addressed the dying man. "Thou seest, dearest brother, in what great weariness and failing of heart we are, for we have done our best to enter upon the strait and narrow way, which our most blessed father Benedict has proposed in his rule, yet we are not well assured whether this our way of life is pleasing to God; especially since by all the monks of our neighbourhood we have long been looked upon as devisers of novelty, and as men who kindle scandal and schism. But more than all, I have a most piercing grief which cuts me through to the heart like a spear, and that is, the fewness of our members; for one by one, and day after day, death comes in and hurries us away. Thus I very much fear this our new religious institute will perish with ourselves, for God has not thought fit, up to this time, to associate with us any zealous persons, who love the lowliness of holy poverty, through whom we could hand down to posterity the model of this our rule of life. Wherefore, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, for whose love we have entered upon the strait and narrow way which He proposes to His followers in the Gospel, and by virtue of thine obedience, I command thee, at whatever time and in whatever way the grace of the same our Lord may determine, that thou return to us, and give us information touching this our state, as far as His mercy will allow." He spoke these words with a quiet confidence, which looked beyond the grave, so that he appalled the brethren; but the dying monk, with a bright smile lighting up his features, said, "Willingly will I do, my lord and father, what thou commandest, if only I, through the help of thy prayers, shall be

allowed to fulfil thy command." The result of this strange dialogue, held on the confines of life and death, was not long in appearing. The brother died, and a few days after he had passed away, the abbot was in the fields working with the brethren. At the usual time he gave the signal for rest, and they laid aside their labour for a while. He himself withdrew a little way from the rest, and with his head buried in his cowl, sat down to pray. As he was in this position, lo! the departed monk appeared before him, surrounded by a blaze of glory, and, as it seemed, rather buoyed up in air, than standing on the ground. Stephen asked how he fared. "Well, good father abbot," he answered, "well is it with me, and well be it with thee, for by thy teaching and care I have merited to obtain that never-ending joy, that unknown peace of God, which passeth all understanding, to gain which I patiently and humbly bore the hard toils of our new order. And now according to thy bidding I have returned to bring news of the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to thee, father, and to thy brethren; you bade me certify you of your state, and I say unto you, Lay aside all doubt, and hold it for certain that your life and conversation is holy and pleasing to God. Moreover, thy grief at thy want of children to leave behind thee, which gnaws deep into thy heart, shall very soon disappear and turn to joy and triumph; for even yet the children, which thou who wast childless shalt have, shall cry in thine ears, 'The place is too strait for us, make us room to dwell in.'* For behold, from this time forth, the Lord hath done great things for you, in sending many men unto you, and among them very many of noble birth and learned. Yea, and like bees swarming in haste and flowing over the hive, they shall fly away and spread themselves through many

* Isaias xlix. 20.

parts of the world; and out of that seed of the Lord, which by His grace has been heaped together here, they shall lay up in the heavenly granaries many sheaves of holy souls, gathered from all parts of the world." On hearing these words the abbot sat rapt in joy at the favour which the Lord had shown to him. Though the heavenly messenger had finished his task, he still lingered and remained visible to Stephen; he had undertaken the mission while on earth, in obedience to his superior, and he must not go without the leave of him who had imposed the task upon him; just as he would have done, had he still been a living monk, speaking to his abbot in the little parlour at Citeaux, the glorified spirit waited for the benediction of the father. At length he said to Stephen, "It is now time, lord abbot, that I return to Him who sent me; I pray thee dismiss me in the strength of thy blessing." Stephen shrunk back at the thought of assuming authority over that blessed soul, and at last broke silence: "What is it that thou sayest? Thou hast passed from corruption to incorruption, from vanity to reality, from darkness to light, from death to life, and thou wouldest be blessed by me, who am still groaning under all these miseries? This is against all just right and reason; I ought rather to be blessed by thee, and therefore I pray thee to bless me." But the glorified brother answered: "Not so, father, for the Lord hath given to thee the power of blessing, for He has placed thee on a pinnacle of dignity and of spiritual rule. But me, thy disciple, who by thy healthful doctrine have escaped the stains of the world, it befits to receive thy blessing; nor will I go hence till I have received it." Stephen, though confused and filled with wonder, did not dare to refuse, and lifting his hand, he blessed him, and the happy soul immediately disappeared, leaving him in a transport of wonder at the favour which our Lord had

accorded to him. It required a holy daring at first to seek for this mysterious meeting; and none but one who, like Stephen, had from dwelling alone with our Lord in the wilderness and forest, realized the unseen world, could have behaved with calmness and presence of mind when that world was so suddenly opened upon him. A modern philosopher has in mere wantonness sported on the brink of the grave, and made such an agreement as Stephen made with his dying disciple; but this boldness arose from infidelity, Stephen's from strong faith, and God punished the infidel for thus tempting Him by leaving him in his error, while He rewarded the holy abbot by a vision.* Let no one venture into the world unseen, who does not live above the world of sense. Stephen, however, was now rewarded for all his trials, and for his confidence in God, who never forsakes those that trust in Him. He passed at once from the dreadful state of uncertainty which had harassed him, to one of assurance; he had still a long and dreary journey before him, and his crown was not yet won, nay it might yet be lost, but at all events he now felt sure that the path on which he had entered was the very narrow way of the Lord, and not one which he had chosen for himself in self-will.

* "Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer, and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement, that the one who happened first to die, should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfilled his promise."—Franklin's Life, vol. i. p. 57.

Chapter XIII—THE ARRIVAL OF THE NOVICES

THE vision not only assured Stephen that the Cistercian way of life was acceptable to God, but seemed also to prophesy a speedy increase of numbers in the monastery. Shortly afterwards another event occurred, which the monks interpreted as pointing the same way. Another of the brethren was dying, and on his deathbed he told the abbot that he had dreamed that he saw a vast multitude of men washing their clothes in a fountain of most pure water near the church of Citeaux, and that he heard a voice saying the name of the fountain was Ænon. This it will be remembered was the name of the place where the austere St. John baptized a multitude of men with the baptism of penance. The dream then was taken to mean that a multitude would come to Citeaux to wash their stained garments white by repentance. Whatever the vision portended, it is certain that the days of mourning for Citeaux were nearly over. Fourteen years of widowhood and barrenness had now passed away since its first foundation, and the fifteenth at last was to bring consolation with it. In the year 1113,* the iron hammer which hung at the lowly gate of the monastery sounded, and a large number of men entered the cloister, which was hardly ever visited except by some traveller who

* The early chronology of the Cistercian order, owing apparently to the trouble created by dates sometimes recorded according to the old and sometimes according to the new style, is very confused. Vacaudard, Vie de St. Bernard, vol. i. p. 39, asserts positively that St. Bernard's arrival at Citeaux must be assigned to the year 1112.—*E.*

had been benighted in the forest of Citeaux. Thirty men entered, and coming to Stephen, begged to be admitted as novices. There were amongst them men of middle age, who had shone in the councils of princes, and who had hitherto worn nothing less than the furred mantle or the steel hauberk, which they now came to exchange for the poor cowl of St. Benedict; but the greater part were young men of noble features and deportment, and well might they be, for they were of the noblest houses in Burgundy.* The whole troop was led by one young man of about twenty-three years of age, and of exceeding beauty.† He was rather tall in stature; his neck was long and delicate, and his whole frame very thin, like that of a man in weak health. His hair was of a light colour, and his complexion was fair; but with all its paleness, there was a virgin bloom spread over the thin skin of his cheek. His face was such as had attracted looks of many high-born ladies;‡ but an angelic purity and dove-like simplicity shone in his eyes, which showed at once the serene chasteness of his soul. This young man was he who was afterwards St. Bernard, and who now came to be the disciple of Stephen, bringing with him four brothers and a number of young noblemen, to fill the empty cells of the novices of Citeaux. Well was it worth toiling all the cold, dreary night of expectation if such was to be the ultimate result of the fishing. "On

* Similar instances of a number of men of gentle birth betaking themselves to the cloister *en masse*, often with their wives and daughters, were not rare at this epoch. In 1083 Engelbert, one of the sons of Walter I., Count of Brienne, came to the monastery of Molesme to dedicate himself to God together with just such another train of young nobles. See Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne, i. p. 244.—*E.*

† Vid. description of St. Bernard's person by Gaufridus, intimate friend and secretary of the saint, and afterwards abbot of Clairvaux. St. Bern. Vit. i. lib. iii. 1. ed. Ben.

‡ Guil. i. 3.

that day," says an old monk, "the whole house seemed to have heard the Holy Spirit responding to them in these words, 'Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for many are the children of the desolate more than of her that hath a husband.'" Stephen's expectations were fulfilled to the letter; those regulations which appeared so little likely to attract novices to the convent, had brought St. Bernard to its gates. If he had wished to attract the lukewarm and indifferent, he would have made rules of another kind; so true is it that the children of wisdom have a policy of their own, though it be different from that of the world. St. Bernard would have been received with open arms by the monks of any order, nay he might have created an order for himself; but he preferred finding out the poorest and most hidden monastery in the world, and he found that it was Citeaux, just following the train of reasoning which Stephen knew would be that of a saint-like mind. During the whole time of the desolation of Citeaux, and the internal conflicts of its abbot, the Holy Spirit had been silently leading Bernard, and preserving him from the world, that he might come pure and undefiled to this poor abbey. All that concerns him is of such vital importance to a clear understanding of the work which Stephen was sent upon earth to perform, that the history would be incomplete without an account of the steps which brought him to sit at the feet of our abbot. It was not without a painful struggle that he had been brought there, as indeed such is God's way; all great saints have had great trials, for there can be no crucifixion without pain. After the death of his mother, whom he loved tenderly, and to whom God entrusted the forming of his holy mind, he began to think seriously of becoming a monk. Though she died in his youth, yet her sacred memory haunted him

even in manhood, and she is even said to have appeared to him to beckon him on to the cloister. The beauty of his person and the corrupt manners of the age, more than once at this critical time put his purity in danger, and though through the grace of the Holy Spirit, he walked through the midst of the burning fire, even without feeling it, yet he determined to shun a world where wickedness so abounded. His noble birth would have opened his way to the highest dignities of the Church; "but," says his historian, "he deliberated in what way he could most perfectly leave the world, and began to search and to trace out where he could most safely and most purely find rest for his soul under the yoke of Christ. The place which occurred to him in his search was the new plantation of Citeaux, where monastic discipline was brought anew to what it had been at first. There the harvest was plenty but the labourers were few, on account of the exceeding severity of the life and of its poverty, at a time when the fervour of the monks at their first conversion was hardly at all on the decline." Bernard had no intention of becoming a monk, with a mitre and pastoral staff in reversion; his object was that his life should be hid with Christ in God, and that his conversation should be in heaven. His first step was however comparatively easy; but much remained to be done before Stephen received his illustrious disciple within the the walls of Citeaux. Bernard had gained a victory over the concupiscence of the flesh, and over the pride of high-birth; military glory, which was the passion of all his brothers, had no attractions for him, but he had still a weak side on which the tempter could assail him, and this was the pride of intellect. No one can read his writings without seeing the wonderful genius which they show: the same burning eloquence which made him a Christian preacher, if it had been heard in kings' courts would have carried all

before it; and the acuteness with which he at once sees deep into metaphysical questions, would have put him at the head of philosophical schools. And was all this to go too? Was his tongue to remain silent in Cistercian dreariness and his acuteness to be buried with rude and unlearned monks? Yes, so it was; all was to be sacrificed, beauty of form, noble birth, quickness and depth of thought, brilliant eloquence; all were to be nailed to the cross, and he was to become a common labourer, planter, reaper, ploughman, and if so be, hedger and ditcher, wrapped in a coarse cowl, with low-born men for his fellows. We have not yet spoken of one tie, perhaps the strongest of all, and the one which cost the most pain to break, and that was the love of friends and relations. The slightest acquaintance with his life will show the painful struggle of his affections, even when he was abbot of Clairvaux; how he mourns with passionate grief over the death of his brother, or still more over the spiritual death of any one whom he knew. Besides his kinsmen, his brilliant and amiable qualities had endeared him to all the flower of the nobles of Burgundy. As soon as the slightest hint was known of Bernard's intention, all these were up in arms; there were his sister Humbeline, a noble and beautiful young lady, his eldest brother Guido, already a married man, and a good soldier of the duke of Burgundy; Gerard, too, the accomplished knight, the enthusiastic soldier, and the prudent leader, beloved for his sweet disposition, and his friend, Hugh, the lord of Macon, all thinking his project absurd, and himself half mad. Was he to throw himself at the feet of a fanatic like Stephen, and to bury himself in the corner of an old wood? The thing must not be. Impossible indeed it was with man; but very possible with God. This was one of the wonders of the cross, going on about them, which was in time to shake the whole of France, nay the whole world.

Even they themselves discovered that it was possible; it was a dangerous thing to come across Bernard in his vocation, as they soon found to their cost. However, though they could not move, yet they could cause much pain to Bernard. As he acknowledged afterwards, his steps were well nigh turned back, and the struggle was most painful. If it had not been for his mother's memory he would have fallen, but her sweet lessons were evermore recurring to his mind and urging him on. One day, he was on his way to see his brothers, who were then with the army of the duke besieging the castle of Grancey; * these thoughts burst so forcibly on his mind that he entered into a church which was open by the wayside, and prayed with a torrent of tears, stretching his hands to heaven, and pouring out his heart like water before the Lord his God. From that hour the purpose of his heart was fixed, and he set his face steadfastly to go to Citeaux. "It was not, however," pursues his historian, "with a deaf ear, that he heard the voice of one saying: "Let him that heareth say, Come." Truly, from that hour, like a flame which burneth the wood, and a fire consuming the mountains, here and there, first seizing on all about it, then going forth to things farther away, thus the fire which the Lord had sent into the heart of his servant, and had willed that it should burn, first attacks his brothers, all but the youngest, who could not yet go into religion, and who was left to comfort his old father, then his kinsmen, fellows, and friends, and all of whose conversion there could be any hope." First came his uncle Galdricus,† a puissant noble and a valiant knight,

* Grancey-le-Château seems to have been regarded as all one name and to have been the distinctive appellation of one branch of the family of Grancey, as opposed to that of the house of Grancey-sur-Ourse. Petit, i. p. 308.—*E.*

† This Galdricus or Gaudri de Touillon had already given to th Monastery of Molesme the church of Crais and other property (the

well known for feats of arms; he quitted his good castle of Touillon, his vassals, and his riches, and gave in to the burning words of his nephew. Then the heavenly fire kindled his young brother Bartholomew; his heart gave way easily, for he had not yet been made a knight, having still his spurs to win. Then came Andrew, the fourth brother; it was a sore trial to him to give up the world, for he had just received his knightly sword from the altar, at the hands of the bishop, and had seen his first field; but at last he yielded, for he saw in a vision his sainted mother smiling upon him, and he cried out to Bernard, "I see my mother," and at once gave in. But the trial was still sorer when it came to the turn of Guy, the eldest of the brothers; he was a married man, and his young wife loved him tenderly, besides which he had more than one daughter, with whom it was hard indeed to part in the age of their childhood; and even after he had yielded to his brother's persuasions, and had broken through all these ties, a greater difficulty than all remained behind. It was a law of the Church, that neither of a married pair could enter a cloister without the consent of the other; and how was it possible that a delicate and high-born woman could consent to part with her husband and enter into a monastery? Bernard, however, declared to Guy, that if she did not consent, God would smite her with a deadly disease; and so it turned out; she soon after fell ill, and "finding," says William of St. Thierry, "that it was hard for her to kick against the pricks, she sent for Bernard" and gave her consent. None, however, clung to the world with such deep-rooted affection as Gerard, the second brother; as we said before, he was a frank high-spirited soldier, yet, withal,

charters are dated 1080 and 1100) on condition of being received at Molesme with his two sons and two daughters. Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne, vol. i, p. 245, note. Presumably they would have entered as *oblati*, not as members of the community.—*E.*

sage in counsel, and he had won all about him by his kind-heartedness. The world was all open before him : his talents were sure to raise him to high rank and honour ; and he was ardently fond of feats of chivalrous daring. To him the conduct of his brothers seemed to be mere folly, and he abruptly repelled Bernard's advise. But the fire of charity was still more powerful than the young knight's ardour ; "I know, I know," said Bernard, "that pain alone will give wisdom to thine ears," and laying his hands upon Gerard's side, he continued, "A day will come, and that soon, when a lance, piercing this side, will tear a way to thy heart for this counsel of thy salvation which thou dost despise, and thou shalt be in fear, but shalt not die." A few days after this, Gerard had in the heat of the battle charged into the midst of the enemy ; there he was unhorsed, wounded with a lance in the very place where Bernard had laid his finger, and dragged along the ground. His brother's words rose before him and he cried out, "I am a monk, a monk of Citeaux." Little did Stephen think, in the midst of his perplexities, that the name of his poor monastery had been heard in the thick of a deadly fight, and that a nobleman had chosen that strange place to make his profession, with swords pointed at his breast, and lances and pennons flying about him. Notwithstanding Gerard's exclamation, he was taken captive, and lodged in a dungeon within the castle of his enemies ; he, however, soon after made his escape from prison in a way which seemed perfectly miraculous, and joined his brother Bernard. Now the whole band of brothers had been won over ; but Bernard was not yet satisfied ; the fields were white for the harvest, and he went about collecting his sheaves, that he might lay them all up in the garners of Citeaux. Hugh, the lord of Macon, was also to be brought to Stephen's feet ; the young nobles drew together

into knots in self-defence, whenever Bernard passed by, for fear of being carried away by his powerful word; mothers hid their sons, lest in the flower of youth they should hide themselves in a cloister. All however was in vain; "as many," says the abbot of St. Thierry, "as were so pre-ordained by the grace of God working in them, and the word of His strength, and through the prayer and the earnestness of His servant, first hesitated, then were pierced to the heart; one after another they believed and gave in." Thirty men of the most noble blood in Burgundy were thus collected together; as many of them were married men, their wives also had to give up the world; all these arrangements required time, and for six months they put off their conversion till their affairs could be arranged. The females retired to the Benedictine monastery of Juilly, whence afterwards it is supposed that many were transferred to the first Cistercian nunnery, the abbey of Tart, near Dijon. When the time for proceeding to Citeaux was come, Bernard and his four brothers went to the castle of Fountains, which was their family place, to take leave of their father and sister. This was their last glimpse of the world; they then left all and followed Christ. The little Nivard was playing about with other boys as they passed. Guy, the eldest brother, stopped his childish glee for a moment, to tell him that all the broad lands of Fountains, and many a fair portion of the earth, were to be for him. "What," said the boy, "earth for me, heaven for you! the bargain is not a fair one." Probably he knew not then what he said, but as soon as he could he followed his brothers. Thus the old father was left to sit alone in his deserted halls with his daughter Humbeline; he was now a barren trunk, with the choice boughs lopped off; his noble line was to come to an end, and when he dropped into the grave, the castle

of his fathers was to pass into the hands of strangers.

Now, it may be asked, that Stephen has housed his thirty novices, what has he or any one else gained by it? what equivalent is gained for all these domestic ties rudely rent, for all these bleeding hearts torn asunder, and carrying their wounds unhealed into the cloister? Would not rustics suit Stephen's purpose well, if he would cultivate a marsh in an old wood, without desolating the hearths of the noblest houses of Burgundy? Human feeling revolts when high nobles, with their steel helmets, shining hauberks, and painted surcoats, are levelled with the commonest tillers of the soil; and even feelings of pity arise when high-born dames, clad in minever, and blazing with jewels, cast all aside for the rough sackcloth and the poor serge of St. Benedict. What shall we say, when young mothers quit their husbands and their families to bury themselves in a cloister? There are here no painted windows, no golden candlesticks, with chasubles of white and gold to help out the illusion; feeling and imagination, all are shocked alike, every faculty of the natural man is jarred at once at the thought. Such words might have been spoken even in Stephen's time, but "wisdom is justified of her children." One word suffices to silence all these murmurers; Ecce Homo, Behold the Man. The wonders of the Incarnation are an answer to all cavils. Why, it may as well be asked, did our blessed Lord choose to be a poor man, instead of being clothed in purple and fine linen? why was His mother a poor virgin? why was He born in an inn, and laid in a manger? why did He leave His blessed mother, and almost repulse her, when she would speak to Him? why was that mother's soul pierced with agony at the sufferings of her divine Son? why, when one drop of His precious Blood would have healed the whole creation, did He pour it all out for us? in a word,

why, when He might have died (if it be not wrong to say so) what the world calls a glorious death, did He choose out the most shameful, besides heaping to Himself every form of insult, and pain of body and soul? He did all this to show us, that suffering was now to be the natural state of the new man, just as pleasure is the natural state of the old. Suffering and humiliation are the proper weapons of the Christian, precisely in the same way that independence, unbounded dominion and power, are the instruments of the greatness of the world. No one can see how all this acts to bring about the final triumph of good over evil; it requires faith, but so does the spectacle of our blessed Lord, naked on the cross, with St. Mary and St. John weeping on each side. After casting our eyes on the holy rood, does it never occur to us to wonder how it can be possible to be saved in the midst of the endearments of a family, and the joys of a domestic life? God forbid that any one should deny the possibility! but does it not at first sight require proof that heaven can be won by a life spent in this quiet way. Again, let us consider the dreadful nature of sin, even of what are called the least sins, and would not any one wish to cast in his lot with Stephen, and wash them away by continual penance? Now if what has been said is not enough to reconcile the reader's mind to their leaving their father in a body, which looks like quitting a positive duty, it should be considered that they believed themselves to be acting under the special direction of God. Miracles were really wrought to beckon them on; at least, they were firmly convinced of the truth of those miracles, which is enough for our purpose, and they would have disobeyed what they conceived to be God's guidance, if they had remained in the world. Miracles, indeed, cannot be pleaded to the reversing of commands of the Decalogue; but persons leave their parents for causes which do not involve religion at all, as to follow some

profession in a distant quarter of the globe, or to marry ; and we may surely excuse St. Bernard and his brothers for conduct which was so amply justified by the event. One word more ; every one will allow, that he who is continually meditating on heaven and heavenly things, and ever has his conversation in heaven, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, is more perfect than he who is always thinking on worldly affairs. Let no one say that this perfection is ideal, for it is a mere fact that it has been attained. Stephen and Bernard, and ten thousand other saints, have won this perfection, and it may be that it is won now, for the Church verily is not dead, nor have the gates of hell prevailed against her. All cannot attain to such a high state on earth, for it is not the vocation of all. It was, however, plainly God's will that all Bernard's convertites should be so called, from the fact of their having attained to that state of perfection. They were happy, for to them it was given not to fear those words of our Lord, "Whosoever loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me ;" or again, that terrible saying, spoken to one who asked to go and bury his father, "Let the dead bury their dead." Moreover they knew that blessing, "Amen, I say to you, there is no man who hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for My sake and for the Gospel, who shall not receive an hundred times as much, now in this time ; houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions : and in the world to come life everlasting." Bernard did receive back both father and sister, for his father died in his arms a monk at Clairvaux, and his sister also in time retired to a cloister. Let any one read St. Bernard's sermons on the Canticle of Canticles, and he will not doubt that monks have joys of their own, which none but those who have felt them can comprehend.

Chapter XIV—THE WORLD EDIFIED BY THE BRETHREN OF CITEAUX

THE times of refreshing from the Lord had indeed come to the forlorn monastery; the unheard-of conversion of so many noble youths filled the world with wonder. It was a proof that the Church was not only not dead, but not even asleep. At the beginning of the eleventh century, the heart of Christendom seemed to have failed, and all men thought that the world was coming to an end; throughout the whole of the century the Church was either preparing for, or actually engaged in a deadly struggle with the civil power, and in that miserable confusion men seemed to have lost their landmarks, and not to know what was to come of all the perplexity which they saw about them. Meanwhile, the Church herself felt the deteriorating effects of the struggle; men saw the strange spectacle of courtier-bishops, acting as the ministers of kings, and behaving in all respects like the wild nobles, from whom they were only distinguished by wearing a mitre, and carrying a crozier. Let anyone think how the bishops behaved in the contest between St. Anselm and the king, or again in Germany, how many of them sided with the emperor against the pope, and he will see how the feudal system had worked upon the Church. In the beginning of the twelfth century, the struggle seemed as doubtful as ever, when the emperor, Henry V., like a loving son of the Church that he was, took Pope Pascal prisoner in the very Basilica of St. Peter and would not let him go till he had given him a blessing; that is, till he had given up the question of investiture,

and acknowledged himself vanquished by crowning his tyrant.* This, however, was the last act of the great struggle; three years after Bernard's entrance into Citeaux, the Church resumed her former attitude, when, in the Lateran council, the Pope acknowledged his error, and allowed the bishops to excommunicate the emperor. The time of the triumph of the Church was at hand; but though she might conquer the powers of the world, how was she to expel luxury from her own bosom? Enough has been said in these pages to show that the cloister itself was deeply infected by a spirit of worldly pomp. What was worst of all, even Cluny, the nurse of holy prelates and of great popes, was degenerating; in St. Hugh's time, its vast riches had been used in the service of God, but now that he was dead, it became evident in how precarious a situation is a rich monastery. One bad abbot is enough to spoil the whole,† and St. Hugh's successor, Pontius, was utterly unequal to the task of governing this vast abbey. He was a young, ambitious man, high in favour with the popes, emperors, and all great men, the go-between of high personages in important matters, and withal specially neglectful of the business of the monastery. For three years he went on well enough, but just about the time of the prosperity of Citeaux, he began to vex the monks by his haughty conduct. To finish a melancholy story, after ten

* Baronius in ann. 1111.

† It seems quite certain that the majority of the monks of Cluny had little sympathy with the ambitious aims of Pontius despite the worldly glory which his participation in political affairs and his favour with great personages brought upon the abbey. It was the opposition encountered from the more observant monks which forced him into resigning the abbey. Moreover nothing could be a better proof of the survival of the religious spirit in the hearts of the majority than the election as abbot of such a man as Peter the Venerable, then only twenty-eight years of age. See Pignot, Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny, vol, iii. pp. 44-46.—*E.*

years of bickering he threw up his abbey in disgust. After various acts of turbulence, this accomplished and high-spirited man, who might have been one of the greatest personages of his day, died in a prison, excommunicated. Out of reverence for Cluny, he was allowed to be buried in consecrated ground, and long afterwards his tomb was shown in the church, on which lay his effigy, represented with a cord round his hands and feet.* His mismanagement ruined Cluny for a time, and threw the whole of its dependent priories into disorder. When the monastic state was thus on the wane, how could any improvement be expected in the bishops, who were mostly supplied from the monks? The Church might shake off the feudal yoke, but how was the leprosy of pomp and luxury to be shaken out of her own bosom, if her own rulers were tainted? At this juncture, the voice of one crying in the wilderness is heard, calling to repentance those who dwell in kings' houses, clothed in soft raiment. Stephen's burning love of poverty astonished the world, especially when God set His seal upon His servant's work, by bringing to his feet such a disciple as Bernard, with a train of noble followers. It was a movement in favour of holy poverty, which vibrated over the whole of Christendom. Robert, Alberic, and Stephen had thus created a new ideal in the Church; not that there ever were wanting men who would be poor for Christ's sake, but the Cistercian monk in his white habit, and his train of lay-brethren working for him, that he might have time for contemplation, is a personage the precise likeness of whom has never been seen brought out in a regular system before. The institution of lay brethren had always existed, as we have said before, but

* Pignot (Histoire, iii. p. 73) says that one hand of the effigy was cut off while the other held a broken crozier to symbolize his excommunication and deposition.—*E.*

it was more systematized in the Cistercians, and had a more distinct object. The lay brethren took charge of the granges, which were often at some little distance from the monastery. The choir brethren were thus enabled always to remain within the cloister, and had an uninterrupted time for spiritual reading and prayer. Meditation had thus a marked place in the system; and it is more observable, because the length and intricacy of the splendid services of Cluny took up a very great part of the time of the monks. The result of this system was, what may be called a new school of ascetic writers, of whom St. Bernard is the chief, followed by Gilbert of Hoyland,* abbot of Swineshed in England, Ælred of Rievaux, and William of St. Thierry. The science of the interior man thus began to be more especially developed by the Cistercian reform. Again, Stephen and his disciples were destined to exercise a more direct influence on the world than the old Benedictines; from the fact of their being a reform in the particular direction of a revival of poverty, they occupied, so to speak, a more militant position than the monks before them. They found themselves at once opposed not only to monasteries, but to all luxurious prelates, and secular churchmen who were the favourites of kings, and so, indirectly, to kings. We shall soon see, that all the reforms in the Church naturally connected themselves with Citeaux, as their centre.

* Hoyland is merely the older spelling of what is now called Holland, a district of Lincolnshire. (Cf. the Historia Croylandensis, where the *Hoylandenses* and the *Croylandenses* are frequently contrasted.) This is perhaps worth noting, as Mabillon seems to have regarded it as a corruption of Holy Island and to have inferred that Gilbert was an Irishman. Gilbert, who was a disciple of St. Bernard, wrote a continuation of his homilies on the Cantica Canticorum, to which, says Mabillon, they are hardly inferior in elevation.—*E.*

Chapter XV—A DAY AT CITEAUX

ST. ROBERT and St. Alberic had both a share in the establishment of the new monastery; it was Stephen, however, exclusively, who framed the order of the Cistercians. Before his time it was only a single convent; but under him it grew into the head of a vast monastic federacy, extending through every country in Europe. He was the author of the internal arrangement of this large body; and let no one suppose, that legislating for many thousands of monks is at all an easier task than settling the constitution of an equal number of citizens. Before, however, proceeding to consider Citeaux in this dignified capacity, as the queen and mother of an order, it will be well to go through the daily exercises of a Cistercian convent, that the reader may know what it is that is growing up before him. Suppose the monks all lying on their beds of straw, ranged in order along the dormitory, the abbot in the midst. Each of them lay full dressed, with his cowl drawn over his head, with his cuculla and tunic, and even with stockings on his feet.* His scapular alone was dispensed with. Doubtless no one complained of heat, for the bed-clothes were scanty, consisting of a rough woollen cloth between their limbs and the straw, and a sort of woollen rug over them.† The long dormitory had no fire, and currents of air had

* Us. Cist. 82. The rule says not only stockings but shoes: "Sine cuculla vero, tunica, caligis jacere non debent." Guignard, p. 187. A. de Jubainville, Abbayes Cisterciennes, p. 141.—*E.*

† Calmet on c. 55 of St. Ben. Reg.

full room to play under the unceiled roof, left in the native rudeness of its beams. A lamp lighted up the apartment, and burned all night long. At the proper hour the clock awoke the sacristan, who slept, not in the dormitory, but near the church. He was the timekeeper of the whole community, and regulated the clock, which seems to have been something of an alarum, * for he used to set it at the right hour overnight. His was an important charge, for he had to calculate the time, and if he was more wakeful than usual, or if his clock went wrong, the whole convent was robbed of a part of its scanty rest, and the last lesson had to be lengthened that the hour of lauds might come right again. The time for rising varied with these strict observers of the ancient rule. St. Benedict commands that his monks should get up at the eighth hour of the night during the winter. In his time, however, the length of the hours varied in summer and winter. Day and night were each divided into twelve hours; but as the day dawns earlier in some parts of the year than in others, the twelve hours of night would then be distributed over a less space of time at one period than at another, and would therefore be shorter. The eighth hour of the night would thus, though always two hours after midnight, be sometimes closer to it than at others. It, however, always fell about two o'clock, according to our mode of reckoning. † In

* Us. Cist. 114.

† Bona, Div. Psal. c. iv. 3. Cæsarius of Heisterbach tells the story that when Richard Cœur-de-Lion was on his way to Palestine he was caught in a terrible storm during the night, and the ship seemed on the point of foundering. In his extremity the king kept crying out, "Oh! when will the hour come when the grey monks (the Cistercians) rise to sing the praises of God? I have been so generous to them that surely when they leave their beds they will begin to pray for me, and then God will think of our deliverance." Now it happened, Cæsarius says, that exactly at the eighth hour of the night when the Cistercian

summer, the hour of matins was so fixed, that they should be over a short time before lauds, which were always at daybreak. The sacristan, as soon as he was up, trimmed the church lamp, and that of the dormitory, and rang the great bell; in a moment, the whole of the little world was alive; the sole things which a minute ago looked as if they were watching were the two solitary lamps burning all night long, one in the dormitory, the other in the church, as if they were ready trimmed with oil for the coming of the Lord; but now every eye is awake, and every hand is making the sign of the cross. Most men find it hard to leave even a bed of straw, and the seven hours in winter and six in summer were but just enough for bodies wearied out with hard work, and always hungering; doubtless the poor novice often stretched himself, before the tones of the bell which had broken his slumbers fully roused him to consciousness; but starting from bed, and putting himself at once into the presence of his Lord, was but the work of a moment for the older monk. The prayer which they were to say in rising is not prescribed in the rule; it is probable, however, that after crossing themselves in the name of the Holy Trinity, they repeated the psalm, *Deus in adjutorium meum intende*,* and then walked towards the church. One by one these white figures glided along noiselessly through the cloister, keeping modestly close to the walls, and leaving the middle space free, where none but the abbot walked.† Their cowls were drawn over their heads, which were slightly bent down; their eyes were fixed on the ground, and their hands hung down motionless

monks begin their matins, the storm abated and the sea grew calm. Dialog. Mirac. Dist. x. ch. 45. Very similar stories are related of other orders, e.g., of the Carthusians of Witham and Henry II.—*E.*

* Martene, de Antiq. Mon. Rit. lib. i. 1. 27.

† Rit. Cist. 1. 5.

by their sides, wrapt in the sleeves of the cuculla. The old Cistercian church, after the model of which was built even the stately church which afterwards contained all the brethren in the flourishing times of Citeaux, * was remarkable in its arrangement. It was intended for monks alone; few entered it but those guests who happened to come to the abbey, and they were not always allowed to be present. † It was divided into four parts; at the upper end was the high altar, standing apart from the wall; the sole object which Cistercian simplicity allowed upon it was a crucifix of painted wood; ‡ and over it was suspended a pix, in which the Holy Sacrament was reserved, with great honour, in a linen cloth, § with a lamp burning before it day and night. ‖ There do not

* Rit. Cist. 1. 3. There is a great deal of valuable information upon all these points collected in Dolberg's article on Die Kirchen und Klöster der Cistercienser, in Studien und Mittheilungen, 1891, pp. 29-44.—*E.*

† Us. Cist. 17. 21. 55

‡ This crucifix was movable and was used for the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday. It was even carried in procession to the cells of those in extremis. Dolberg, p. 32.—*E.*

§ Ib. 21. Cæsarius (ix. ch. 15) tells of a priest who accidentally shook the pix—quæ super altare cum corpore Domini pendebat—and caused five hosts to fall to the ground.—*E.*

‖ V. c. 82, in the collection of statutes of the general chapters before his time, made by Stephen's successor. The words, "et potest," show, that it was in a place not accessible to all. The lamp is mentioned again in a later collection of statutes, Nom. p. 277. [The maintenance of the lamp in the church seems to have been quite optional: Lampadem tam die quam nocte ardentem in oratorio qui voluerit et potuerit habeat. Guignard, p. 276. Father Dalgairns refers to Matt. Paris (i.e. Walsingham), Gesta Abbatum Sti. Albani, for what he describes as a "contemporary instance of a light before the high altar." Walsingham (i. p. 60) mentions indeed a lanternam pyxalem, i.e., a lamp in a box which could be carried about, but he expressly says that it is to be carried round the choir to see whether

appear to have been even candlesticks upon the altar, though two large lights burned during the time of mass immediately before it. * The part in front of this most sacred place was called the presbyterium, and there the priest, deacon, and sub-deacon, sat on chairs placed for them, when the holy sacrifice was to be celebrated. Next came the choir itself, where the brethren sat in simple stalls, ranged on each side of the church. In front of the stalls of the monks were the novices, kneeling on the pavement,† and sitting on low seats. The stall of the abbot was on the right hand, in the lower part of the choir, and the prior's place was on the opposite side; just where the head of a college and his deputy sit in one of our own collegiate chapels. Beyond this was the retro-chorus,‡ which was not the Lady chapel, but was at the other end of the church, nearest the nave, and was the place marked out for those in weak health, but still well enough to leave the infirmary. § Last of all came the nave, which was smaller than the rest of the church, || unlike the long and stately naves of our cathedral churches. Into this church, called by the modest name of oratory,¶ the first

the monks keep awake during office. The practice of keeping a lamp burning before the Blessed Sacrament seems not to have been common in England before the preaching of Eustace, Abbot of Fleay, in A.D. 1200. See Walter of Coventry, vol. ii. p. 165. Still a lamp before the Blessed Sacrament was not unknown in the twelfth century; a notable instance may be quoted from the Chronicle of Battle Abbey, p. 167.—*E.*]

* Us. Cist. 55.

† Fosbrooke, Monachism, p. 203.

‡ Dolberg, l. c. p. 39, seems to be right in maintaining that the retro-chorus was not beyond the choir but behind it, *i.e.* a free space on either side at the back of the stalls in which the monks sat.—*E.*

§ Us. Cist. 101. Rit. Cist. 1. 3.

|| Voy. Lit. i. 224.

¶ Although the word *oratorium* occurs frequently, *ecclesia* seems to

fathers of Citeaux entered nightly to sing the praises of God, and to pray for the world, which was lying asleep beyond the borders of their forest. It had many separate entrances, by which different portions of the convent flocked in with a quick step to rouse themselves from sleep, but all in perfect silence; by one side entrance the brethren came in between the presbytery and the stalls, * while the abbot and prior, and those about him, entered at the lower end; there was also a door leading into the cloister, † through which processions passed. Each brother as he came in threw back his cowl, and bowed to each altar that he passed, and then to the high altar. They then, except on Sundays and some feast days, knelt in their stalls with their hands clasped upon their breasts, and their feet close together, and said the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. In this position they remained till the *Deus in adjutorium* had been said, when they rose and remained standing during the rest of the service, except where it was otherwise especially marked. Matins lasted for about two hours, during which they chanted psalms, interspersed with anthems; the glimmering light of the lamp was not intended to do more than pierce through the gloom of the church, for the greater part of the service was recited by heart, and a candle was placed just in that part where the lesson was to be read; ‡ if it were not that their lips moved they might have been taken for so many white statues, for their arms were placed motionless upon their bosoms in the form of a cross, § and every movement was regulated so as to be as tranquil as

be still more commonly found in the earliest Cistercian Statutes. Dolberg, l.c. p. 30.—*E.*

* Us. Cist. 68. Rit. Cist. 1. 5.

† Us. Cist. 7. 21.

‡ Us. Cist. 68.

§ Rit. Cist. 1. 8.

possible. * The sweet chanting ot the early Cistercians struck some of their contemporaries as something supernatural. "With such solemnity and devotion do they celebrate the divine office," says Stephen of Tournay, "that you might fancy that angels' voices were heard in their concert; by their psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, they draw men to praise God, and they imitate the angels." † Yet this effect was simply produced by common Gregorian chants, sung in unison. As in the other parts of divine worship, the Cistercians were reformers in church music. They sent, in their simplicity, all the way to Metz to procure the antiphonary of that church, as being the most likely to be pure from innovation, probably because Amalarius, a deacon of Metz, was a celebrated liturgical writer in the time of the son of Charlemagne; but they soon found that many ages had passed over the Church since the time of the great emperor of the West. The book was very defective, and was filled with innovations, and they immediately set about correcting it. ‡ Monastic music had suffered, as well as other portions of St. Benedict's rule; and our Cistercians speak with contempt of womanish counter-tenor voices, § which they inexorably banished from their churches. The chanting was especially suited for contemplation; they dwelt on each syllable, and sucked in the honied sense of the psalms as they pronounced the words. It is not wonder-

* Ib. 1. 6. † Bona de Div. Psal. 18. 5.

‡ Tract. de Cantu in St. Bernard's Works. Migne, P.L., vol. 192, p. 1121. The correction can hardly be said to have been undertaken "immediately," for it was not until after St. Stephen's death that St. Bernard was entrusted with the task by a general chapter. Vacandard, Vie de St. Bernard, vol. ii. p. 101. Up to that time, it seems, *pace* Vacandard, that they put up with the antiphonary as they received it from Metz.—*E.*

§ St. Bern. in. Cant. 47. Inst. Cap. Gen. 71. ap. Nomasticon.

ful if the men of that time believed that devils trembled, and angels noted down in letters of gold * the words which dropped from their lips, as these grave and masculine voices chanted through the darkness of the night the triumph of good over evil, and the glories of the Lord and of His Church. Few, indeed, are worthy to chant the Psalms: who can repeat, for instance, the 118th Psalm as he should? but Stephen and his brethren might pronounce those burning words of the Spirit without shame, for they had indeed given up the world. "Ignitum eloquium tuum vehementer, et servus tuus dilexit illud."

After matins were over they never returned to sleep, but were permitted either to pray in the church, or to sit in the cloister. In summer, when the day dawned upon the convent almost as soon as matins were over, the time thus allowed was very short, for lauds followed close on the first glimmer of morning light. In winter there was a considerable interval between lauds and matins, and it was during this part of the day that the monk was left most to himself. This was the time allotted to mental prayer, and many a monk might then be seen kneeling in his stall, occupied in that meditation which, according to St. Bernard, "gathers itself up into itself, and by divine help, separates itself from earthly things, to comtemplate God." † It was one of the rules of the order that they were not to prostrate themselves full length on the ground in church, ‡ but should keep their souls in quiet before God, without violent action. Others again remained in the cloister, which, with all its strictness and tranquillity, was a busy scene. Let no one think of the cloister as it is now, in a state of desertion about our cathedrals, cold and comfortless, with all the glass taken out of its windows; its religious silence has given place to the

* Exord. Mag. 2. 3. † De Con. 5. 2. ‡ Inst. Cap. Gen. 86.

silence of the churchyard. It was formerly the very paradise of the monk, from which all the rest of the convent was named; * it shut him out from the world "with its royal rampart of discipline;" and was an image of the rest of heaven. It was the passage by which each part of the convent buildings was connected with every other part, and around which on Palm Sunday they walked in procession, with green palms in their hands. At the east end of the church, at right angles with it, was the dormitory; opposite the church was the refectory, and adjoining the church was the chapter-house; † in the centre was a cross. ‡ After matins, then, those of the brethren who were not in the church, were all together in the cloister. In one part was the cantor marking out the lessons, and hearing some brother repeat them in a low suppressed tone; or else a novice would be learning to recite the psalter by heart. In another part, ranged on seats, the brethren would sit in unbroken silence reading, with their cowls so disposed about their heads that it might be seen that they were not asleep. It was here that St. Bernard gained his wonderful knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, meditating upon them before the morning light. In another corner of the cloister, the boys of the monastery

* St. Bern. Serm. de Div. 42.

† Calmet, Régle de St. Benoît, ch. 66. The order observed in processions falls in with Calmet's opinion, v. Us. Cist. 17. It is there implied that the deacon, who went first, had at the last station of the procession his face to the east and his back to the brethren. The whole convent, therefore, after having made the round of the cloister, and finished at the point where they began, looked to the east; they must, therefore, at first starting from the church, have moved towards the east. And this fixes the position of their first station, which is known to have been the dormitory, at the east end of the church.

‡ An admirable bird's-eye view exhibiting the arrangement of the buildings at Citeaux is given in Viollet le Duc, Dictionnaire de l'Architecture Française, vol. i. p. 271.—*E.*

would be at school, under the master of the novices. * The library, from which the monks took the books in which they read, was between the church and the chapter-house, and was under the care of a sacristan: and let no one despise the library of a Cistercian convent. St. Augustine seems to have been a favourite author with them,† and Citeaux itself had no lack of expositions of Scripture by the Fathers.‡ Shall we not be surprised to find a copy of the Koran in the armarium of Clairvaux? and yet there it was, the gift of Peter the Venerable, who had ordered it to be translated carefully. § Citeaux had its scriptorium as well as its library, where manuscripts were copied by the brethren. It is true that the antiquary would despise the handiwork of the Cistercians, for no illuminated figures of saints, elaborate capital letters, or flowers in arabesque creeping up the margin, were allowed ; || jewelled covers and gold clasps were also forbidden ; ¶ but instead of this, religious silence was

* The Cistercian Consuetudines say (Guignard, p. 272) that no boys are to be taught unless they are monks or novices. It is added that none can be received as novices before the age of fifteen. The limit of age was somewhat later raised to eighteen, and it was strictly forbidden to receive any one into the noviceship who was not robust enough to live upon two meals a day. From this, it would follow that there was no Abbey school for children in Cistercian houses.—*E.*

† Mabillon de Mon. Stud. App. Art. 24, St. Bern. de Bapt.

‡ St. Bern. Vit. Guillel. i. 24. ap. Ben. [P.L. 185, 241.]

§ Pet. Ven. Ep. iv. 17.

|| Litteræ unius coloris fiant et non depictæ, says the rule (Guignard, p. 272) ; but it is a curious fact that the Bible executed by command of St. Stephen between 1105 and 1109, in the days of Citeaux's greatest poverty, is a most sumptuous work in four volumes. The official catalogue of the public library of Dijon, where the volumes are now preserved, speaks with enthusiasm of the "titres en belles capitales" and the "superbes lettres ornées" which occur throughout the work. See the supplementary note at the end of the present chapter, p. 150.—*E.*

¶ Inst. Cap. Gen. 13, 81.

strictly observed, and the scriptorium was a place for meditation as much as the cloister itself.* Their labours did not consist in simply copying the manuscripts; they took pains to discover various readings, and to compare editions. It might have been supposed, that the cold winds of the forest, with the burning sun and drenching rain, must have fairly bleached out of Stephen's mind all the learning which he had gathered in the schools of Paris. But he left behind him a work, which proved that he kept under his Cistercian habit the same heart which had urged him to leave his old cloister of Sherborne to study in Scotland and in France. A manuscript edition of the Bible, written under the eye of our abbot himself, was preserved with great reverence at Citeaux up to the time of the French Revolution. Not content with consulting Latin manuscripts, he even had recourse to the Rabbins, in order to settle the readings of the Old Testament. In this way there could never be a lack of books for the brethren to read in the cloister, since there was at home a power of multiplying them as long as there were friendly monasteries to lend them new manuscripts to copy, when the original stock of the library had failed.

As the Cistercians followed the natural divisions of the day, the hours in winter and in summer differed considerably, as has been already mentioned; again, the ecclesiastical divisions of the year altered their mode of living to a great degree. From Easter to Holy Cross day, that is the 14th of September, they broke their fast after sext, and had a second meal after vespers, except on Wednesdays and Fridays, which were fast days: during the rest of the year, from Holy Cross day to Easter, they never had but one meal a day, and that after nones, up to Ash Wednesday, but

* Inst. Cap. Gen. 87.

during Lent not until after vespers. It will be necessary, therefore, to give a sketch of their mode of living, first in summer and then in winter. Lauds, as has been said before, followed matins very soon in summer, after which an interval was allowed, during which the brethren might go to the dormitory to wash themselves, and change portions of the dress in which they had slept. As soon as the day had fully dawned, prime was sung, and then they went into the chapter. If ever there was a scene revolting to human pride, it was the chapter; more than any other part of the monastic life, it shows that a convent was not a place where men walked about in clothes of a peculiar cut, and spent their time in formal actions, but a school of humiliations where the very last roots of self-love were plucked up, and the charity of the Gospel planted in its stead. Humility was the very soul of the cloister, and a great part of St. Benedict's rule is taken up with an analysis of the twelve degrees of humility, which form the steps of a Jacob's ladder, leading up to perfect love, which casteth out fear.* Our Cistercians had studied this part of the rule well, and St. Bernard's earliest work is a sort of a comment upon it. The chapter-house was the place where this mingled humility and love was most of all exercised. Around it were ranged seats, one above another; the novices sitting on the lowest row, or rather on the footstools attached to the seats; in the midst was the abbot's chair.† The chapter opened with the martyrology, and with those parts of the service now attached to the office of prime. Then followed the commemoration of the faithful departed, and, in some cases, a sermon; after which a portion of St. Benedict's rule was read. Then each brother, who had in the slightest way transgressed the rule, came forward and confessed it aloud before the whole

* Reg. c. 7. † Rit. Cist. 3. 8.

convent. He rose from his seat and threw back his cowl that all might see his face, then he muffled up his face and head, and threw himself full length on the low stool of the lectern, without speaking a word. At length the abbot spoke, and asked him, "What sayest thou?" The brother answered, "Meâ culpâ," "It was by my fault;" then he was bidden to rise in the name of the Lord, and he again uncovered his features, and confessed his faults, and after receiving a penance, if it were necessary, he went back to his seat at the bidding of his superior. When all had confessed their own sins, then a still more extraordinary scene followed: each monk accused his brother if he had seen or heard anything amiss in him. He rose, and mentioning his name said, "Our dear brother has committed such a fault." Happy they who could thus bear to hear their faults proclaimed in the face of day, without being angry. The angels are blessed because they cannot sin; next to them in happiness are those who are not wrathful when rebuked. But what shall we say to the punishments for greater offences against the rule? The monk who had grievously offended stripped himself to his waist, and on his knees received the discipline at the hands of a brother in the face of the convent. Blessed again are they who thus are willing to suffer shame on earth, if by any means they may escape shame at the dreadful day of judgment. It was not, however, only in public that they confessed their sins; any serious transgressions of the rule * were to be confessed over again to a priest for the benefit of absolution, though they had already been proclaimed in the chapter; and during all the intervals of work, before they had broken their fast, the

* Father Dalgairns wrote, "mortal sins against the Rule," probably not intending to use the phrase in its technical sense. As the words might be misleading, I have ventured to change them.—*E.*

brethren might confess their sins in private in the chapter. An instance is incidentally related, in which a novice, on entering into Clairvaux, made a general confession of the sins of his whole life;* and this was probably a common practice, though not enjoined by the rule; at least it had become common at the end of the century in which Stephen lived.† After the chapter was over, the brethren went out to manual labour; this was one of the peculiarities which distinguished Citeaux from Cluny. Their labour was good hard work by which they gained their livelihood, and with the help of their lay brethren supported themselves, and gave abundant alms to the poor.‡ Few things are more

* Vit. St. Bern. 7. 22. [P. L. 185, 435.]

† Vid. Adam, abbot of a Cistercian monastery, quoted by Calmet on c. 58 of the Rule.

‡ There is one aspect of Cistercian life which Father Dalgairns seems rather to have left out of account, and this is the duty of hospitality. Even Giraldus Cambrensis, the bitter enemy of the Cistercians, who wrote at the end of the twelfth century, at a time when relaxation had already begun to creep in amongst them, admits that if their monastic establishments had departed from primitive Cistercian simplicity by great expenditure and extravagance, it was their generous hospitality which was to blame more than anything else. It was the duty of the Abbot to take his meals, not with his community in the refectory but with his guests. The very arrangement of Cistercian houses seemed designed almost primarily for the entertainment and convenience of the pilgrims and the poor people who flocked to them. The lodging of both the Abbot and the porter was near the main entrance of the monastery, apart from the rest of the brethren. The door of the monastery being always kept shut and fastened, it was necessary that the porter should be near, "in order that the guest, on his first coming, might find someone to welcome him." The Liber Usuum directs that the porter should open the door, saying, *Deo gratias*, and after a *Benedicite* should ask the stranger who he is and what he requires. "If he wishes to be admitted, the porter kneels to him, and bids him enter and sit down near the porter's cell, while he goes to fetch the Abbot." This returning of thanks to the stranger

remarkable than this mixture of all the details of spades and forks, ploughing, haymaking and reaping, with the meditation, and constant prayer of the Cistercians. During the harvest-time, the daily mass was, if the abbot so willed, attended only by the sick and all who were too weak to work, for the whole convent was in the fields.* And when mass was said, the priest put off chasuble and stole, and with his assistants followed the brethren who had gone before to work.† St. Bernard put off the finishing of one of his wonderful sermons on the Canticles, because the brethren must go to work which their rule and their poverty required. ‡ It was a

for his coming shows how the Cistercian regarded him as one sent by God's Providence, one in whose person our Lord Himself deigned to be entertained. The Rule of St. Benedict (cap. 53) says: "All guests are to be received as Christ, because He said, 'I was a stranger and ye took Me in!' . . . For in all arriving and departing guests, Christ is to be honoured, with bowed heads and bodies bent to the ground." (See further, Dolberg in Studien, 1895, Die Liebesthätigkeit der Cisterci-enser in Beherbergen der Gäste und Spenden von Almosen, three separate articles.) Of the open-handed generosity of St. Stephen himself an interesting glimpse is preserved to us in a remark of William of Malmesbury, who must, I think, have been personally acquainted with our Saint. "Happy," says the historian, "does any dweller in that land account himself who makes over his money to God by the hand of Stephen. Many gifts has he received; but, with the exception of a little spent upon the needs of himself and his community, he has lavished all the rest at once upon the destitute and upon the building of monasteries. For Stephen's purse is the public treasury of all who are in want." (Est enim Stephani marsupium, omnium egentium publicum ærarium.) Gesta Regum, bk. iv. § 337.—*E.*

* Cf. Guignard, pp. 190-192; and St. Bernard, In Cantica Serm. 50, No. 5: Quoties pro administrandis terrenis, justissime ipsis super-sedemus celebrandis missarum solemniis? Ordo præposterus; sed necessitas non habet legem. Migne, P.L. vol. 183, p. 1023.—*E.*

† Us. Cist. 84.

‡ Serm. i.

peculiarity of the Cistercians, that they did not sing psalms, but meditated while they worked;* again, no one was allowed to take a book with him into the fields. This last regulation was probably made by Stephen himself, for it is recorded of St. Alberic that he took the psalter † with him when he worked. Field-work was not, however, it may be said by the way, the only labour of the Cistercian; he took his turn to be cook, which office went the round of the convent, and was changed weekly. Again, he might be cellarer, infirmarian, master of the novices, or porter, with a variety of other offices, which would give him employment enough. The cellarer, especially, was an officer of considerable dignity in the community; he had the whole of the victualling department under his care; cooks and lay brethren especially referred to him in all matters which came under his jurisdiction, and he had to weigh out the proper quantity of food for each of the monks. Prudence and experience were not, therefore, qualities thrown away in a convent, which, as has been said, was a little world in itself, and even, in its way, a busy world. But each servile occupation was hallowed by obedience and religious silence, in which the Lord spoke to the heart.

The brethren left the fields as soon as the first stroke of the bell for tierce was heard. The early Benedictines said tierce in the fields, and continued working till near ten

* This point seems somewhat doubtful. Dolberg in Studien und Mittheilungen, 1892, p. 222, says that in Germany, at any rate, the Cistercians sang psalms during their work. During seasons of special pressure it would seem that the little hours were often said in the fields, and the mid-day meal partaken of there.—*E.*

† It is rather difficult to understand this. Every mediæval monk, *i.e.* every choir monk, knew the Psalter by heart; and it does not seem likely that a man like St. Alberic would have been deficient in such a matter.—*E.*

o'clock, thus giving two hours and a half to manual labour. The reason why the Cistercians worked for a shorter time was, because mass followed immediately upon tierce. In St. Benedict's time there was no daily mass,* but since then a change had taken place in the discipline of the Church, and the holy sacrifice was offered up every day at Citeaux. At this mass any one might communicate who had not communicated on Sunday, which was the day on which the whole convent received the Body and Blood of our most blessed Lord, who was at that time given to the faithful under both kinds. After the celebration of these adorable mysteries, the brethren again retired into the cloister to read, or went into the church for meditation. At about half-past eleven the bell rung for sext, after which the convent assembled in the refectory, for the first and principal meal of the day, except on the Wednesdays and Fridays out of the Paschal time, on which days, as has been said before, they had only one meal, and that after nones. This Cistercian dinner, or breakfast as it might be called, needed the seasoning of early rising and hard labour to make it palatable. It consisted of a pound of the coarsest bread (one third of which was reserved for supper if there was one), and two dishes of different sorts of vegetables boiled without grease. † Their drink was the sour wine of the country, well diluted with water, or else thin beer ‡ or a decoction of herbs called sapa, § which seems to have been more like vegetable soup than any other beverage. Even fish and eggs, which had always been considered to be

* Martene, de Ant. Mon. Rit. 2—4.

† As has already been pointed out, p. 63 note, not all kinds of grease but only animal fat—lard or dripping—seems to have been prohibited.—*E.*

‡ Sicera is mentioned, Us. Cis. 117.

§ Sapa occurs Vit. St. Bern. 2. 1. (P.L. 185, 272.)

legitimate diet for monks, were excluded.* Their contemporaries wondered at their austerity; how, weak and delicate bodies, worn out by hard labour and by night-watching, could possibly subsist on such coarse food: but St. Bernard tells us what made it palatable. "Thou fearest watchings, fasts, and manual labour," he says to a runaway Cistercian, "but these are light to one who thinks on the eternal fire. The remembrance of the outer-darkness takes away all horror from solitude. Think on the strict sifting of thine idle words which is to come, and then silence will not be so very unpleasing. Place before thine eyes the everlasting weeping and gnashing of teeth, and the mat or the down pillow will be the same to thee." And yet theirs was not a service of gloom or fear. Christ rewarded the holy boldness of these noble athletes, who thus afflicted their bodies for His sake, by filling their souls with the joys of devotion. "Oh that by God's mercy," says St. Bernard to one whom he was persuading to quit the world, "I could have thee as my fellow in that school where Jesus is the master! Oh that I could place thy bosom, if it were but once pure, in the place where it might be a vase to catch that unction which teacheth us of all things! Thinkest thou not that thou wouldest suck honey from the rock, and oil from the rugged stone?" Every action was sanctified to the monks; even at their meals a strict silence was observed, and one of the brethren read aloud some religious book, during the time that they were in the refectory. After it was over, according to the custom of hot climates, and in order to make up for the shortness of the night in summer, they went into the dormitory to sleep. After about an hour's rest the bell rang to rouse them up, and in the

* This also is not quite accurate. The use of fish and eggs, though in many ways restricted, was not forbidden.—*E.*

interval before nones, they washed themselves, and either sat in the cloister or repaired to the church. Nones were said at half-past two, after which they were allowed a draught of water in the refectory before they returned to manual labour, which lasted till half-past five, when they sang vespers.* The vesper-hour was especially the monk's season of quiet, when the day was over with all its work, and the shades of evening were closing about him. St. Bernard interprets the evening in Scripture to mean the time of quiet,† and Cistercian writers, even in late times, are fond of collecting together all the mystical import of the time of vespers.‡ They went into the refectory after returning from their work, and partook of a slight repast,§ consisting of the remainder of their pound of bread, with a few raw fruits, such as radishes, lettuces, or apples furnished by the abbey gardens.

Before we close the day with compline, it will be necessary to mark the difference between the summer and winter rule. Their seasons followed the ecclesiastical division of the year; summer was reckoned from Easter to the middle of September, and the rest of the year was called winter. The Church in winter sits in expectation of her Lord's coming, and the Cistercians redoubled their austerities during this long period of the gloom of the year. They arose in all the cold and snow of winter, in the dark and dreary night, to watch for the coming of the Lord, and to pray for the world which was lying without in the darkness and shadow of death. As the world is engaged in turning day into night, in order to have its fill of pleasure, so they multiplied time

* Calmet, c. 48. † In Cant. Serm. 57.

‡ Bona de Div. Psal. 10.

§ It would seem that the evening repast was not necessarily a slight one. Two cooked dishes (cocta pulmentaria) were allowed as at dinner. Cf. Dolberg in Studien und Mittheilungen, 1896, p. 622.—*E.*

for devotion, by stealing from the hours when men are asleep. On Christmas night a fire burned merrily in the calefactory, and all with glad hearts might cluster around it; but at other times no fire is mentioned during the night hours, and it was in cold and hunger that they waited for the nativity of the Lord, and thought upon the cold cave at Bethlehem, where the Blessed Virgin waited for the time when He, who is the only joy of the faithful, came forth from her to save the world. He was the centre of all their exercises, and His holy fire burning in their hearts, gave them heat and light in the dreariness of their watching. Winter brought its compensation with it at Citeaux, as well as to the rest of the world. It was then that they had most time for meditation and prayer in the cloister, or in the church after matins; for lauds were never said till the early dawn, which would of course be then much later than in summer. Prime followed immediately upon lauds, and would generally begin about seven o'clock. Then came the mass, tierce, and the chapter, so that they did not begin to work till after the time prescribed by St. Benedict, which was after tierce, or about half-past nine or ten. The chapter is not here noticed, nor indeed is it mentioned systematically anywhere in his rule; it probably became a system, and the hour for it was fixed, after St. Benedict's time.* From the time that they went into the fields after the chapter, till nones, which were said between two and three, they worked on without breaking their fast till after the hour was said, that is between half-past two and three.† After the meal was over, they walked into the church two and two, chaunting the Miserere, and there said grace. Vespers followed soon after; for it seems probable that they were said about sunset, but before the twilight had so far faded away as to

* Reg. St. Ben. 48. † Calmet, c. 41.

require candles. Such is Cardinal Bona's opinion, himself a Cistercian, and the lighting of the lamps for vespers is not mentioned among the duties of the servant of the church, as he was called. * In summer, when a slight repast was allowed in the evening, the quiet of the twilight hour was necessarily interrupted; but in winter, when nothing was permitted after their meal but a draught of water, nothing broke the repose of the monks after vespers were said. The most breathless stillness reigned in the convent.† The brethren sat reading in the cloister, and even signs were forbidden except on special occasions. ‡ The evening twilight between vespers and compline was the monks' sabbath. They were forbidden expressly to get into knots and talk together, and almost the only sign allowed was when one brother motioned to another to take care of his book, if anything called him out of the cloister. Strange accidents happened to books in those ages, which might have made this precaution necessary, as when a bear

* Bona de Div. Psal. 10. Us. Cist. 105.

† This point seems somewhat doubtful. Vacandard (Vie de St. Bernard, vol. i. p. 58) says in reference to the question of silence and the "collation," spoken of a little further on: "Every day . . . after vespers in winter all the brethren assembled to assist at what afterwards came to be called the *collation*, that is to say a short instruction or pious reading. During that time, which was meant to relax the tension maintained during the day, the strictness of the rule of silence, which was rigorously kept at all other hours, was somewhat mitigated. The reading probably ended in a general conversation in which all tongues were untied. During these pious colloquies, the novices had to content themselves with listening respectfully to their elders." Vacandard cites in support of his opinion the seventeenth Sermon of St. Bernard, de Diversis, No. 3, and also these words of James de Vitry: Silentium autem per totum fere diem observantes in mutuis collationibus spiritualibus unam sibi horam reservant, invicem consolantes et invicem instruentes. Histor. Orient. et Occid. p. 300; Guignard, pp. 185, 186, 274.—*E.*

‡ Us. Cist. 79.

swallowed or at least sadly mangled the manuscript of St. Augustine's Epistles at Cluny,* though it is true such visitors would hardly enter a cloister full of monks. During Lent, as their bodily labours were greater, so a longer time was allowed them for meditation and reading. As they did not break their fast till about five o'clock in the evening,† they said sext and nones in the fields, or at least they returned to their work as soon as they had said them, and continued working till four o'clock. ‡ But a longer time was allowed for reading in the morning, and additional mental prayer is specially enjoined at this season. § The only reading allowed seems to have been the Holy Scriptures; and on the first Sunday in Lent the cantor distributed a portion of the Bible to each brother, which he was to receive reverently, and stretching out both hands "for joy at the Holy Scriptures." No greater proof of their austere penitence in the time of Lent can be found, than the way in which St. Bernard speaks of it. Sweetly and with the tenderness of a mother, does he always speak to the brethren at that time. "Not without a great touch of pity, brethren," he once said, "do I look upon you. I cast about for some alleviation to give you, and bodily alleviation comes before my mind; but if your penance be lightened by a cruel pity, then is your crown by degrees stripped of its gems. What can I do? Ye are killed all day long with many fasts, in labours oft, in watchings overmuch, besides your inward trials, the contrition of heart, and a multitude of temptations. Yea, ye are killed; but it is for His sake who died for you. But if your tribulation abounds for Him, your consolation shall abound through Him. For is it not certain, that your

* Pet. Ven. Ep. 1. 24. † Calmet, c. 48.
‡ Usque ad decimam horam. St. Ben. Reg. 48.
§ Us. Cist. 15.

sufferings are above human strength, beyond nature, against habit? Another then doth bear them for you, even He doubtless, who, as saith the Apostle, beareth up all things by the word of His power." *

Two things alone remain to be noticed, which throughout the whole year were the last events of a Cistercian day, and those are the collation or the reading of the collations of Cassian, and compline. At Citeaux these collations, which were a collection of the lives of the early monks, or else some of the books of saints' lives, were read aloud in the cloister. On the finishing of the reading, all turned their faces to the east, and the abbot said, "Our help is in the name of the Lord;" the convent responded, "Who hath made heaven and earth;" and then they proceeded into the church to sing compline, which was the last office of the day. The time for compline varied according to the hour when they retired to rest, which in winter would be about seven, and in summer about eight.† As their motions were regulated according to the duration of the light, an approximation only can be made as to their hours of going to bed and rising. After compline the abbot rose and sprinkled with holy water each brother as he went out in order. They then pulled their cowls over their heads and walked into the dormitory.

Such was the Cistercian life in its first fervour, as it was under Stephen and St. Bernard. Put down upon paper it appears but a dead letter of outward observances; the spirit of obedience, humility and charity, which animated the whole cannot be described in words. The angelical countenances and noiseless regulated motions of the monks, which had a certain monastic grace of their own, are all missing to light up the whole. The presence again of such an abbot as

* Serm. in Psal. xc. Preface. † Calmet, c. 8.

Stephen must be taken into account, before a correct idea can be obtained of Citeaux. He could modify the rule to the weak, and direct the energies of the strong; he could call the faint-hearted into his presence in the parlour, and give them words of holy counsel. Many things are scattered up and down St. Bernard's writings, which show that a rule without the living tradition is not fully intelligible. For instance, from scattered hints it appears that the monks had sometimes a certain time allowed them for conversing together, though that is not mentioned at all in St. Benedict's rule. The fact is that silence was the general order of the day, but the abbot might allow those whom he judged fit to converse together. * In after ages, and not so long after Stephen's time, these conversations were systematized, and placed at set hours; but before then they seem to have been at the discretion of the abbot. How naked and dead are the words of a rule without the living abbot to dispense them, to couple together the strong and the weak, that the sturdy warrior might help on the trembling soldier, and to mingle the roughness of discipline with the tender hand which dropped oil and wine on the wounded heart! Stephen, though God had removed the pains which had so long afflicted him, had now an anxious charge upon his hands, no less than the training up of St. Bernard.

* V. Calmet, c. 6. St. Bern. Serm. de diversis, 17, and Benedictine note; also de Grad. Superbiæ, 13. Also Speculum Monachorum, in the Benedictine St. Bernard, written by Arnulfus, a monk of Bohéries, who flourished in the latter part of the twelfth century. The master of the novices held frequent conversations with them Vide Adam of Perseigne, in Baluzius, Misc. vol. ii. 236.

Note to Chapter XV.—*E*.

As attention has been conspicuously directed of late years to the revision of the Bible undertaken by St. Stephen Harding, it seems desirable to supplement, by some additional details, the brief reference made to it in the foregoing chapter. The manuscript spoken of on p. 136 as "written under the eye of our abbot himself," is still in existence in the municipal library of Dijon, and some few years since it was made the subject of an important monograph by an eminent biblical student, the late Abbé J. Paulin Martin.* What is specially interesting in the Bible in question is the "note" or memorandum written at the end of the second volume, in a different hand from the rest, and possibly by the pen of Stephen himself. The memorandum is prefaced by the statement that "In the year after the incarnation of our Lord, 1109, the copying of this book was completed under the rule of Stephen, the second Abbot of the monastery of Citeaux."† The memorandum itself is somewhat too long to be translated here, but a short account of it may be given, condensed from the articles of the Abbé Martin.

It must be premised that the Bible in question is a most sumptuous work in four volumes, which, both from the amount of vellum employed and from the elaboration of

* St. Étienne Harding et les premiers Recenseurs de la Vulgate Latine, first published in the Revue des Sciences Ecclésiastiques, 1886-1887, and afterwards separately.

† It is a curious and interesting fact that St. Stephen, in so authentic a document, should be called the *second* Abbot of Citeaux. The year or more of St. Robert's government of the abbey seems to be completely ignored. With this agrees the fact that in the Necrology of Citeaux St. Alberic is commemorated as the first and St. Stephen as the second abbot. Petit, Ducs de Bourgogne, vol. v. pp. 389 and 401.

its writing and ornamentation, could not have been produced without considerable cost. That such a magnificent manuscript should have been transcribed at Citeaux during the years of its extreme desolation and penury, may strike us with astonishment, but it should be remembered that a Bible was not only a book of primary necessity in a monastic house as a work of instruction and edification, but also that the ordinary offices of the Church in choir could not be carried on without its aid. Moreover, it was part of the spirit of the Cistercian reform that the utmost efforts should be made to restore, and to perpetuate in their primitive purity, both the text of the rule of St. Benedict and all that appertained to the liturgy of the Church. Of the committee of revision appointed to examine into St. Benedict's rule we have already spoken. The revised text resulting from their labours, faultlessly written out, and noted as the model and type approved by the Order to which all future copies are to conform, is still preserved to our own days in the same municipal library of Dijon which has become the depository of so many of the literary treasures of Citeaux. It is from this volume, which contains the text of other important documents equally approved as exemplars by the general chapter of the Order, that M. Guignard has printed the copies contained in his *Monuments Primitifs*. Among the very first constitutions of the Cistercians, drawn up in the lifetime of St. Alberic and St. Stephen, was one enjoining uniformity in the liturgical books and especially in the Bible, which is called *Textus*, the *Text*, according to the custom then coming into vogue.* It was necessary therefore to revise the books which should serve as models for the rest, and one of the first to be

* In a note at the beginning of the Psalter of St. Robert of Molesme, of which we shall shortly have to speak, allusion is made to this Constitution. Voyage Littéraire de Deux Bénédictins, etc., 1717, p. 222.

taken in hand would naturally be the Bible, of which there were already a few copies at Citeaux. St. Stephen knew that these copies varied considerably in their readings, and before deciding which should serve as the type to which the others were to conform, he sent for other copies, applying to different churches for that purpose, in order, as he tells us in the memorandum above referred to, "*ut veraciorem sequeremur*," that the most correct text should, if possible, be found and adopted.

This was in 1100-1105. Among the versions thus compared, there was one, as St. Stephen says in his "note," which differed considerably from all the rest. The text was more complete; it contained all that the other copies did, and, in addition, there were numerous passages peculiar to it alone. The question arose as to the value of these additions. Were they a part of the sacred text, and should this version consequently be adopted as the model to which the others should be made to conform? Stephen acknowledges that he had a leaning for this version as being apparently more complete than the others, but he was much disturbed and troubled at seeing so many variations in Bibles, which all came originally from the same source, the translation of St. Jerome. He determined, therefore, to refer to the original text, the Hebrew and Chaldee,* for the Old Testament, and the Greek for the New. With regard to the former, he consulted certain Jews well versed in the Scriptures, who, having referred to their Chaldee and Hebrew codices, did not find in them the additions which St Stephen's manuscript contained. Thereupon the Saint, without hesitation, erased all these passages, in order to bring his copy into harmony with the original. The greatest number of errors, we are told,

* Now more commonly termed Aramaic.

was found in the books of Kings. In this way St. Stephen, in the early years of his rule at Citeaux, conceived and executed a project of biblical revision, which was afterwards resolved upon by the Council of Trent, and carried out under the auspices of the Holy See in the sixteenth century. If the existence of this earlier revision had been known at that time, doubtless it would have been made use of by the correctors of the Vulgate, under Sixtus V. and Clement VIII. But St. Stephen's labours were then a secret to all but his own Order. It was Mabillon, who by publishing the "note" of St. Stephen, in his edition of St. Bernard, first revealed the existence of this treasure to the scholars of his generation.*

Upon the importance of this revision of St. Stephen in relation to the critical history of the text of the Vulgate, the Abbé Martin was inclined to lay considerable stress. We may in any case concede to him that "it is the only revision of the Latin Bible about which we possess precise and authentic information," and that for this reason "it holds a position which is to some extent unique." None the less, later scholars—and notably Father Denifle, O.P., who has carefully discussed the Abbé Martin's pamphlet—are not disposed to accept his conclusions, either as to the precise type of manuscript to which St Stephen's examples belonged or as to the value of the text which resulted from his collation.† This, however, has little to do with

* Mabillon, Opera S. Bernardi, iii. xi. (Migne, P.L. clxvi. col. 1373, D.) The "note" has also been printed recently by Denifle in Archiv für Literatur und Kirchen-Geschichte, 1888, p. 267. Mabillon has omitted the chronological passage at the beginning of the note.

† See Archiv für Literatur and Kirchen-Geschichte des Mittelalters, 1888, pp. 268, seq. Father Denifle considers that St. Stephen's Bible was not a copy of the recension known as that of Bishop Theodulf of Orleans, but that it was an interpolated and corrupt version which followed the same arrangement of books of the Old Testament.

our present purpose. It is of more interest to note that the very book carried off by the primitive Fathers of Citeaux from Molesme to their new home, is also believed to exist at Dijon, side by side with the volumes in which St. Stephen's revision is enshrined. It is true that that book is described as a *Breviarium* in the agreement in virtue of which it remained at Citeaux, while the codex now preserved at Dijon is simply a Psalter, but we know that the use of the word Breviary was then extremely vague and indeterminate ; * and the identification rests upon no less authority than a memorandum inscribed on a flyleaf of the codex itself, in a handwriting of the twelfth century. The note we refer to runs as follows :—

"The Blessed Father Robert, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, going forth from Molesme which he himself had founded, and like a busy bee of the Lord, attended with a holy swarm of his brethren, coming to the spot supernaturally revealed to him, in which he was to found the blessed monastery of Citeaux, he the head of so excellent and pious an order, presented to that house, amongst other things, this present Psalter, which afterwards, by the terms of the agreement made by apostolic authority between the monks of Citeaux and Molesme, was suffered to remain at Citeaux. And on the model of this Psalter all other Psalters of this holy Religious Order ought to be transcribed and corrected both as regards the text, the accent and the pointing. But the calendar which precedes and the litany which follows, the Order has not

Similarly M. Samuel Berger, in his lecture, L'Histoire de la Vulgate en France (1887), p. 8, remarks : "Sound as were the ideas of Stephen Harding, he did not possess the scholarship that was needed for a real reform of the text of the Bible."

* See Batiffol, History of the Roman Breviary (Eng. translation), pp. 201-206.

adopted." The editors of the catalogue of Dijon add that it is beyond a doubt that this volume was used by the Cistercians as the type to which their other Psalters were made to conform. The text of it, in fact, was printed by them in 1486.*

* See Catalogue Général des Manuscripts des Bibliothèques Publiques de France, Dijon, p. 8.

Chapter XVI—STEPHEN AND BERNARD

THE poor house of Citeaux was now, as we have seen, perfect; it had not only a strict rule, and a ruler to teach it, but it had also novices to whom it was to be taught. It had now become too small for its inmates, and the despised convent, which but lately was looked upon with fear rather than admiration, had now the choice of all the fair fields of France, and by and by of Europe, at its command. Many were the children of her that was called barren, and every year band after band of monks were sent out from the now teeming house to form new monasteries, and these again increased and multiplied, till every kingdom of Europe was filled with the daughters of Citeaux. Soon after the arrival of St. Bernard and his companions at the convent, Stephen was summoned away from home for the purpose of founding the new monastery of La Ferté in the diocese of Chalon. Walter, bishop of Chalon, and two noblemen of the country, on hearing that Citeaux was too full, had immediately looked out for a place where they might house the new colony, and proposed to Stephen to found a convent on their ground. He gladly accepted the offer, and himself accompanied the brethren whom he destined for this service to their new abode.* In a few days he returned to his abbey of Citeaux. The charge which God had intrusted to him was the more anxious, because St. Bernard's state of health was exceedingly precarious. The thinness of his slightly

* This foundation took place on May 18, 1113, the little colony having reached the spot the evening before. See Janauschek, Origines Cistercienses, p. 3; Jobin, St. Bernard et sa Famille, pp. 564-566. The date 1115 given by Petit, i. 309, must be a misprint.—*E.*

built frame* showed in what a frail earthen vessel that precious soul was contained. His neck especially was very long and delicate, so that when he threw back his cowl, none could help remarking it, and the monks praised its snowy whiteness and its elegance, like that of a swan.† His life was even endangered by the narrowness of his throat; but his most troublesome infirmity was the weakness of his stomach, which rejected a great portion of the food which he had swallowed. With all these ailments he had entered the strictest order of the day, and now that he had thus put his hand to the plough, he was determined not to look back. He had entered the abbey of Citeaux in order to bury himself from the world, to become a poor man and a rustic, not simply to hide under a white cuculla an ambitious heart, nor even to give himself time to exercise a fine imagination on holy subjects. Every day therefore he used to excite himself forward, by repeating to himself, "Bernard, Bernard, wherefore art thou here?" He earnestly set himself to work on the rough occupations in which the Cistercians passed their day. His attenuated frame was bent down with the rude labours of the field, and his delicate skin worn with holding the spade and the hoe. Nor did he work listlessly like a man who takes a fork and makes hay on a fine sunshiny day, but he laboured with a will in downright earnestness, as if it had been the business of his life. His weak body often sank under these labours; and often the awkwardness of his hands, which were used to far other work than digging and mowing, and such like toils, obliged his superiors to separate him from his brethren at the hours of manual labour. He was, however, never happy on those occasions, and if he could not work with the

* Corpus tenuissimum, statura mediocritatis honestæ, longitudini tamen vicinior apparebat." Gauffridi Vita, c. 1.

† Bernardi Vita, vii. 17. [Migne, P. L., vol. 185, p. 428.]

convent, he immediately began cutting wood or carrying burdens on his shoulders.* Stephen seems to have been especially careful of him in this respect; during the harvest he had made many attempts at reaping, but was too weak and too little accustomed to such work to succeed: he was therefore ordered to lie by, and sit by himself, while, as says William of St. Thierry, the brethren were reaping with fervour and joy in the Holy Ghost. This was a sore trouble to him, and in the simplicity of his heart he began to weep; he then prayed to God to give him grace, so that he might be able to join his brethren in their labours. From that day forward he became a most expert reaper, and the same William, his personal friend, asserts, that even up to the period when he was writing his account, St. Bernard was wont to say with self-gratulation, and a sort of joyous triumph, that he was the best reaper of them all. This hard work, to which he subjected himself in order to carry out his rule, was the more remarkable in him, not only because of his extreme weakness, but from the exceeding austerity with which he lived. His very existence was a miracle, for he hardly seemed to eat, drink, or sleep, and his friends wondered how he could live. In after times he himself severely taxed his own austerity, which according to his own account had made him useless in the church. It is not on record that Stephen checked him in his mortification of the flesh; he probably looked upon his youthful novice with a saintly wonder, as one whom God's Holy Spirit was leading according to His own blessed will, and with whom he must not interfere. Indeed so much had this severe way of life become the habit of both body and soul, that he hardly could have increased his diet if he would.† St. Bernard is indeed one who cannot be judged by ordinary rules. God has set His seal upon His saint, by the wonderful

* Guil. Vita 1. 4. [P.L. 185, 240.] † Guil. Vita 1. 4. [P.L. 185, 238.]

things which He wrought through him, and none must rudely venture to blame his actions. He, in his white Cistercian dress, was raised up for the needs of the Church, just as was John the Baptist in his garment of camel's hair; and when he came forth from his monastery, and the world streamed forth to view him, and kiss the hem of his poor monkish habit, it was then seen that his weak frame, with the spirit of love and supernatural energy shining through it, and the flaming words of divine eloquence bursting from his lips, could serve God and His Church to good purpose indeed. But this is not the place to speak of him as the companion of kings, the setter up of popes, and the real governor of the Church, it is only as a Cistercian monk that he appears here, and in this capacity his wonderful way of life was not thrown away. It subdued his body to his spirit to such a degree, that he seemed to live the life of an angel upon earth. His soul was wrapped up in a ceaseless contemplation of God, and he realized the crucifixion of the flesh of which St. Paul speaks, and all things which belong to the Spirit grew and flourished in him. His senses, from the abstraction of his soul, seemed to be dead within him. He did not know whether the ceiling of the novices' cell was arched or flat, though he passed there every day of his life. Again, the choir of the church of Citeaux had three windows, but to the last, he fancied it had only one.* So little conscious was he of the sense of taste, that he more than once drank oil instead of water, without perceiving it. It was this deadness to earth, which made him see so far into the heavenly things as he did. Earnest as he was in working at the lowest manual labour, this habit of praying always never forsook him. It was this habit, which he

* The church in question was still standing in the last century, and Martene in his Voyage Littéraire (I., part i. pp. 223-4) gives a description of it.—*E.*

acquired at Citeaux under Stephen's discipline, which was the source of all his power. The Holy Spirit filled him with rapturous joys which only crucified souls can know; and this unction which anointed him from above, he poured back upon the Church, and thus enabled her to resist the dry and cold rationalistic heresies which then threatened to overwhelm her with the maxims of worldly science. It was this education too, in the cloister of Citeaux, before the morning light, and at the feet of Stephen in the auditorium, which made him the great founder of the science of the interior life of the Christian. He has been called the last of the Fathers, and he thus stands on the confines of the system of the early Church, which contemplated God as He is in Himself, and that of the later ages, in which the mysterious dealings of God with the soul of the individual Christian were minutely analyzed. It is not to be supposed that he was so abstracted from the world as to be either singular in his demeanour or dead to earthly affection. He cast off a hair shirt which he had constantly worn next to his skin, lest in a monastery where all things were done in common it should be observed. Though his habit was of coarse and poor materials, yet it was always scrupulously clean.* He used to say that dirt was the mark of a careless mind, or of one that cherished a fond idea of its own virtue, or loved the silly praise of men. His motions were ever regulated, and bore humility on the face of them, and a sweet fragrance of piety was shed around his person and his actions, so that all looked upon his countenance with joy.† His voice was singularly clear, nothwithstanding the weakness of his body, and in after times, its very tones won even those who did not understand the language which he spoke. In conversation

* In vestibus ei paupertas semper placuit, sordes nunquam. Bern. Vita, Bk. III. ch. ii. n. 5.—*E.* † Gauf 2.

the spirit of charity shone through all his words, and he always spoke of what most interested his companion, making inquiries about his trade or profession, as if he had especially studied it all his life. Stephen did not prevent his seeing and conversing with his relations when they came to Citeaux, and on these occasions his courtesy was such, that his exceedingly tender conscience would sometimes prick him as though he had spoken idle words. On one occasion he devised a strange expedient; when summoned to see some of his friends who had come to visit him, he stopped his ears with tow, so that his deafness might give him an air of stupidity. Loud laughter in a monk was an object of his special aversion, and he has recorded it in one place of his writings, by a graphic picture of the light-minded monk laughing to himself. He describes him covering his face with his hands, compressing his lips, clenching his teeth, and laughing as though he would not laugh, till at length the suppressed mirth broke out through his nostrils. * With all this hatred of levity, which thus appears in the almost ludicrous vividness of his description, he would on occasion even force himself to smile. Another characteristic of Bernard's soul, was the wonderful strength of his affections. Though he had torn himself thus rudely from all earthly affections, yet the wounds which he had suffered in the conflict did not close over a hardened heart, but he carried them with him all bleeding to the cloister. Even long after his novitiate was over, nay, to his last day, the tenderness of this maternal heart cost him many a pang; chiefly if any of his brethren went wrong, he mourned over them with a passionate grief, with which he in vain struggled, as though it were an imperfection. On occasion of his brother Gerard's death, he endeavoured to preach one of his sermons on the Canticles without alluding to it, but it was too much

* De Grad. Hum. et Sup. 12.

for him: in the midst of the sermon, his grief bursts forth, and down fall the bitter tears, which he had pent up so long, and he breaks out into expressions of the most vehement and impassioned sorrow. He kept to the very last the most vivid recollection of his mother; he carried it with him into Citeaux, and every day before he went to bed, he recited the seven penitential psalms for the repose of her soul. This practice is connected with the only time on record when Stephen reproved his illustrious disciple. One night he went to bed without having repeated his psalms: in some way it came to Stephen's knowledge that it was his practice thus to pray for his mother, and that night he knew that his novice had left that duty unfulfilled. It may be that God revealed to him the whole matter, or else by the strange spiritual instinct which those intimately connected with others possess, he read in his face that something had been left undone overnight. Mothers possess this instinct, and why should not the abbot, who watched over his young disciple with a mother's love? However it came into his mind, at all events he did know it, and that in some uncommon way. Next morning he called Bernard to him, and said, "Brother Bernard, where, I pray you, hast thou dropped those psalms of thine yesterday, and to whose good keeping hast thou committed them?" Bernard, being shy, as says the history, blushed, and marvelled much within himself how the abbot knew that of which he alone possessed the secret. He perceived that he stood in the presence of a spiritual man, and fell at Stephen's feet, begging pardon for his negligence, which, as we may suppose, he was not long in obtaining. Such is one of the few specimens of Stephen's way of guiding his novice, which time has spared. The other circumstances of the intercourse between these two elect souls are known only to God and His angels. Historians mention but slightly even the solemn ceremony

by which St. Bernard knelt at the feet of Stephen to take his vows on quitting the noviciate, the year after his entering the convent. This was the culminating point of the abbot's life; his great work was the training of St. Bernard; henceforth the materials for his history become scanty, for he appears only as the administrator of his order, the history of which is merged in St. Bernard. He had passed the great trials of his life, and he now lived in comparative peace, founding new abbeys every year, and quietly watching the growth of the mighty tree into which his grain of mustard seed had grown. Doubtless he who had so often tried to hide his head in the depths of a forest, did not now regret that his light had waned before his illustrious disciple. And let no one suppose that he is doing nothing, because his name occurs but seldom; every new monastery founded year by year is his work, and he is gradually becoming the head of a vast federacy of which he is the legislator, as well as abbot of his own convent of Citeaux. While St. Bernard is astonishing the world by his supernatural power over the minds of men, every now and then, from Citeaux, the central point in which these vast rays of glory converge, some new act of monastic policy issues, which is owing to its abbot.

Chapter XVII—STEPHEN CREATES AN ORDER

MEANWHILE, the Cistercian order was silently growing up about him; in 1114, Hugh, once lord of Mâcon, St. Bernard's friend, was sent to Pontigny with a colony of monks from Citeaux; in 1115, Morimond and Clairvaux were founded. And who was to be abbot of Clairvaux? Surely some brother of mature age, and of tough sinews, and hardy frame, for the other three abbeys were founded by special invitation of some bishop, nobleman, or other holy person, but the colony which peopled Clairvaux set out like knight errants on an adventure, not knowing whither they went. Yet to the surprise of all,* Stephen fixes on St. Bernard, though he was hardly out of his novitiate, and was just twenty-five years of age; and though his weak frame was but ill able to bear the exercises of Citeaux, far less apparently to set out on a voyage of discovery, to find out the most lonely forest, vale, or mountain-side, that the diocese of Langres could produce. Twelve monks were sent with this

* Quibus abeuntibus ipsum etiam domnum Bernardum præfecit abbatem, mirantibus sane illis, tanquam maturis et strenuis tam in religione quam in sæculo viris, et timentibus ei tum pro tenerioris ætate juventutis tum pro corporis infirmitate et minori usu exterioris occupationis. Mr. Cotter Morison has well remarked, "Of all qualities requisite in a ruler a ready and deep perception of character is one of the most important. Of this power the Abbot of Citeaux (Stephen) often gave proof, but he never exercised it with more effect than when he selected out of all before him the young Bernard, just four-and-twenty, to be the head of the new community." Life of St. Bernard, p. 24.—*E.*

youthful abbot, to represent the twelves Apostles; he himself was to be to them in the place of Christ. The usual form with which such an expedition set out was characteristic. Stephen delivered to him, who was to be the new abbot, a crucifix in the church of Citeaux,* and then in perfect silence he set out, his twelve monks following him through the cloister. The abbey gates opened and closed upon them, and the great world which they had not seen for many a day lay before them. Forward they went, over hill and down dale, St. Bernard going first with the holy rood, and the twelve following, till they came to a deep glen between two mountains, whose sides were clothed with a forest of oaks, beeches, and limes; between them flowed the clear waters of the river Aube. The place was called, for some unknown reason, the Vale of Wormwood, and had been the haunt of robbers. In St. Bernard's hands it became Clairvaux, or the Valley of Glory. Here, then, with the assistance of the peasants round they established themselves,†

* It seems tolerably certain that it was a crucifix and not simply a cross, which was given to the new Abbot. Chevallier in his Histoire de St. Bernard (vol. i. p. 70) gives the following description of the scene: "The Abbot (Stephen) entones the *Benedictus*, takes a great cross of wood, and coming down from the altar to the stalls of the monks, places it in the hands of Brother Bernard. It is the symbol of the plenary authority now bestowed upon him as abbot. Thereupon Bernard rises from his place and follows the abbot into the middle of the choir, where the twelve monks who are to accompany him have been lying prostrate on their faces. Then there is distributed to them the baggage they are to take with them to their new home. One has committed to his charge the relics of the Saints, another the sacred vessels, others are entrusted with the priestly ornaments, the crosses, the books necessary for the celebration of holy Mass and the divine office. After which all stand up, receive the farewell embrace and the blessing of the abbot, and then make their way out of the monastery gate."—*E.*

† The Cistercian monk leaves the world in order to learn how to die. It was the custom accordingly, in making a new foundation, to

and Stephen soon had the consolation to hear, that the daughter of Citeaux was rivalling her mother. These first four abbeys founded by him, La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, were the heads of what were afterwards called the four filiations of Citeaux; from each of them sprang a whole line of monasteries.* Stephen foresaw that this would be the case; in fact it could not be otherwise; the only thing which in those ages of faith was required to found a monastery was men, and those he had with him already. There was no need of money, or of leave from king, privy

begin with what was to be the monk's last resting-place. St. Bernard will have first marked out with crosses the site of the burial ground, and blessed the place for the chapel before he traced the plan of the cloister and the buildings to be erected round it. Chevallier, vol. i. p. 73.—*E.*

* Petit remarks: "There can be no doubt that Stephen was acting in accordance with a design deliberately planned, when he grouped the first four daughters of Citeaux round the mother-house in such a way that they lay at each of the four points of the compass: La Ferté to the south, Pontigny to the west, Clairvaux to the north and Morimond to the east. Moreover he intended that each of these should be an advanced post and become a centre of monastic influence radiating into the regions beyond. . . . What has not been so commonly noticed is that these new foundations were each situated upon the line of intersection of several different dioceses and could draw for their resources upon different countries subject to different rulers and distinguished by different customs. Pontigny lay upon the borders of the provinces of Auxerre, Tonnerre and Champagne, and at the same time at the intersection of the dioceses of Auxerre, Sens and Langres, so that it was a saying in the country that 'three bishops could dine upon the bridge with the abbot of Pontigny without leaving their own dioceses.' Clairvaux lay at the junction of the dioceses o Langres and Troyes; La Ferté adjoined Chalon and Mâcon; Morimond commanded Langres, Toul and Besançon." Ducs de Bourgogne, vol. i. p. 312. Whether Providence or design presided over this arrangement, it seems clear that the situation of St. Stephen's first foundations was admirably calculated to foster the development of the Order.—*E.*

council, or parliament. All that was wanted was an old wood or a wild waste, which the owner, if there was one, would be glad enough to give up to any one who chose to expel the wild beasts, and break it up for tillage. The spiritual children of Citeaux were therefore sure to increase now that four flourishing abbeys had already sprung from it. The question, however, was, how these were to be bound to the parent monastery. In after ages, as soon as the first generation had past away, they would become simply Benedictines, with a white habit, and there was no guarantee whatever that they would keep to the peculiar institutions of Citeaux. Stephen's first step to remedy this evil was the institution of the general chapter; every year all the abbots of monasteries descended from Citeaux were to meet there on Holy Cross day, to confer on the affairs of the order; and their first meeting took place in the year 1116. Though only four abbots were present at this assembly, it is an important event in the history, not only of the Cistercian, but of every other order. In the institution of the general chapter, Stephen had devised an expedient, which went far to remedy the great defect of the early monasteries—the want of a proper jurisdiction. His idea was as yet imperfectly developed; it was but the first germ of the government, which was to bind the Cistercian order together: but it was a hint by which all Christendom profited; for so beneficially was it found to work, that Cluniacs, Dominicans, Franciscans, and the various congregations of the Benedictine order, adopted it.* Innocent III. seems to have been struck with the profound wisdom of

* This was perhaps most conspicuously the case with the Carthusians. While it seems certain that the Cistercian rule of life in the beginning borrowed much from St. Bruno, the Carthusians in turn adopted from Citeaux the institution of General Chapters, apparently as early as 1145.—*E.*

Stephen's plan, for in the celebrated fourth Lateran council, where he presided, it was the system brought in to revive the monastic discipline, which in many places had been ruined ; and the general chapters of Citeaux are expressly taken as a model.

This assembly at Citeaux was remarkable also in another respect ; it has been said that only four abbots were present at it. Where then was my lord of Clairvaux ? Alas ! it is not hard to know what has become of him. In the midst of the holy conference, an unexpected visitor comes into the chapter-house in the dress of a bishop. The abbots ought to have risen to beg the blessing of this prince of the Church, thus suddenly appearing among them. Instead of this, he prostrated himself on the ground in the presence of Stephen and his brethren. This was no other than the celebrated William of Champeaux, once the great doctor of the schools, now Bishop of Châlons ;* in that lowly posture he informed the abbot of Citeaux that Bernard was hard at death's door, and would certainly die if he were allowed to continue administering the affairs of his abbey. On his knees, therefore, the venerable Bishop begged of Stephen to transfer his authority over St. Bernard to himself for the space of a year. The abbot of course willingly acceded to his request, backed as it was by the humble guise of William, and St. Bernard was accordingly, by virtue of his vow of obedience, compelled to give himself up entirely into his hands. For the space of a year, therefore,

* This was Châlons-sur-Marne. In the absence of his own diocesan, the Bishop of Langresa, St. Bernard had obtained consecration as abbot from William of Champeaux. After this first introduction they became so intimate that, as Bernard's biographer tells us, Clairvaux became a sort of bishop's palace, and Châlons became in a measure another Clairvaux. This constant intercourse is the more remarkable seeing that Clairvaux is nearly 200 miles distant from Châlons-sur-Marne.—*E.*

he was removed to a habitation built for him outside the walls of Clairvaux, and was put under the hands of a physician, whom he was ordered implicitly to obey.

Stephen began about this time to enter into relation with another illustrious personage, whose friendship was afterwards of great use to the order. William of Champeaux was not the only bishop who came to Citeaux; in the year 1117 it received within its walls Guido, archbishop of Vienne, then apostolical legate in France, and afterwards destined, as Pope Calixtus II., to close the great struggle which Gregory VII. began. He had been to Dijon to celebrate a council, to which it is probable that Stephen himself was summoned. When the council was over, he repaired to Citeaux as Stephen's guest, and there conceived an attachment to the rising order, which he carried with him to the papal throne. However different was the lot to which Guido and Stephen had been called, one shut up in a cloister, the other a powerful archbishop and leader of a great party in the Church, yet there was something not uncongenial in their characters. The untiring and patient energy with which Stephen had struggled through his difficulties, and was now in fact reviving monastic discipline throughout France, was not unlike the quiet firmness with which Guido was awaiting the conclusion of the contest between Church and State. When Pascal committed the unhappy fault which embarrassed the cause of the Church, the archbishop of Vienne, as legate of the Holy See, immediately excommunicated the emperor, and then, though he did not join in the impetuous zeal of those who would have deposed the pope, he waited patiently, without for a moment quitting the position which he had taken up, till Pascal, the year before this visit to Citeaux, confirmed the sentence which he had pronounced. Before he left the abbey, he begged of Stephen to send a colony of monks into his own diocese of Vienne, promising

to provide them with all that was necessary. To this request Stephen willingly acceded, and went thither in person to found the abbey of Bonneval.

These few years which followed St. Bernard's entrance into the abbey, are quite a specimen of the general tenour of Stephen's life. In 1118, the year that Bonneval was founded, two more abbeys were also peopled with Cistercian colonies, Prouilly in the diocese of Sens, and La Cour-Dieu in that of Orleans.* At the same time, two more monasteries were founded from Clairvaux. Nine abbeys, therefore, had sprung from Citeaux, in the short space of five years, and it now became needful to provide a constitution for the rising order. This was effected by Stephen at the general chapter, in 1119; and the means which he took to effect this great object, have a sagacity about them which shows how deeply he had studied the wants of the monastic body. They entitle him to rank amongst the most illustrious of the many founders of orders, who have in different ways given a new direction to the enthusiasm of Christians, as the Church required. He filled up a want which St. Benedict's rule did not, and indeed was not intended to supply, and that was the internal arrangement of a body of monasteries connected with each other. St. Benedict legislated for a monastery, Stephen for an order. The idea of the great patriarch of western monks was, that each monastery was to be a monarchy under its abbot; no abbey, as far as the rule of St. Benedict goes, is in any way connected with another. In one extraordinary case the abbots of neighbouring monasteries may be called in to interfere in the

* Father Dalgairns seems to be following here the chronology of Manrique, but the researches of Janauschek (Origines, pp. 6-7) have shown that many corrections have to be made in the dates given by the earlier writer. Neither Bonneval nor La Cour-Dieu was founded until 1119.—*E.*

election of an abbot;* but in general each monastery was an independent community. This rude and imperfect system of government was the ruin of monastic institutions; the jurisdiction of bishops was utterly inadequate to keep refractory monks in order, or to preserve monastic discipline in its purity. So entirely had the rule of St. Benedict at one time disappeared from France, that its very existence before the time of St. Odo of Cluny has been questioned. In some monasteries lay abbots might be found quietly established, with their wives and children, and the tramp of soldiers, the neighing of horses, and baying of hounds, made the cloister more like a knight's castle, than a place dedicated to God's service.† A specimen of the way in which bishops were treated when they undertook to reform abbeys, may be found in the conduct of the monks of Fleury, on the Loire, when St. Odo was introduced into the abbey to tame them. Two bishops, and two counts, accompanied the abbot, but the monks minded them, says the story, no more than pagans and barbarians; they fairly buckled on the sword, posted themselves at the gates, got a plentiful supply of stones and missiles on the roof, and declared that they would rather die than receive an abbot of another order within their walls. The bishops might have remained outside the walls for ever, had not the intrepid abbot mounted his ass, and quietly ridden alone into the abbey, to the astonishment of the monks, who were too much struck with his courage to oppose him. Two general reformations of monastic institutions were effected before Stephen's time, and both were directed at the evil which we have mentioned; St. Benedict of Aniane, by his personal influence, united all the abbeys of the Carlovingian empire into one congregation: but after his death, they relapsed into their former state.

* Reg. c. 64. † Mabillon, Pref. in Sæc. 5.

The other reform was much more permanent; it was effected by the celebrated congregation of Cluny. When monasteries were in a state of the lowest degradation, still there was vitality enough in this mass of corruption to give birth to a line of saints, such as that of the first abbot of Cluny. By the sole power of their holiness they bound into one a vast number of abbeys, all dependent upon their own. This great congregation appears not to have been fully systematized till the time of St. Hugh; before him, abbeys seem in some cases to have become again independent, when the abbot of Cluny died who had reformed them. He, however, required it as a previous condition of a monastery which joined itself to the congregation, that it should become a priory, dependent on Cluny, and that its superior should be appointed by himself and his successors.* A noble and stately kingdom was that of Cluny; 314 monasteries and churches were its subjects;† its lord was a temporal prince, and in spirituals subject to none but the Holy See; he coined money in his own territory of Cluny, as the king of France in his royal city of Paris, and the broad pieces of the convent went as far as the fleurs-de-lis of the Louvre. This spiritual kingdom extended to Constantinople, and even to the Holy Land. Great indeed it was; too great for any man to possess, who was not as noble-minded as St. Hugh, and as free from selfish feelings as the graceful and loving soul of Peter the Venerable. At the time when Stephen completed the Cistercian order, Cluny was in the hands of one who ruled it between the time of St. Hugh and Peter, Abbot Pontius, who spoilt the whole. He must needs be called the Abbot of Abbots, and assume a haughty superiority over the abbot of Mount

* Mabillon, Sæc. v. Pref. 56.
† Thomassin de Nov. et Vet. Disc. 1. 368.

Cassino, the most ancient Benedictine abbey. This was the fault of the system; one bad abbot ruined all; Pontius left to his successor a house loaded with debt, with 300 monks to support* on revenues which were barely sufficient to maintain 100, besides a rabble of guests and paupers, who infested the gates of the abbey. With these disorders before his eyes, Stephen determined on instituting a system of reciprocal visitation between the abbeys of his order. He might, as abbot of Citeaux, have constituted himself the head of this increasing congregation; but his object was not to lord it over Christ's heritage, but to establish between the Cistercian abbeys a lasting bond of love. The body of statutes which he presented to his brethren in the general chapter of 1119, was called the Chart of Charity. In its provisions, the whole order is looked upon as one family, united by ties of blood; Citeaux is the common ancestor of the whole, and the four first abbeys founded from it, La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, as its four eldest daughters, respectively governed the abbeys sprung from them. The abbot of Citeaux was called Pater universalis ordinis; he visited any monastery that he pleased, and wherever he went the abbot gave up his place to him. On the other hand, the abbots of the four filiations, as they were termed, visited Citeaux, besides which each abbot went every year to inspect the abbeys which had sprung from his own. Every year a general chapter was held at Citeaux, which all the abbots in the order, without exception, were obliged to attend under heavy penalties. The chief abbot of each filiation could, with the advice of other abbots, depose any one of his subordinate abbots, who after

* In the time of Peter the Venerable we learn on the best authority that there were 460 monks at Cluny. See Pignot, Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny, vol. iii.—*E.*

admonition continued to violate the rule; and even the head of the whole order might be deposed by the four abbots, though not without a general chapter, or in case of urgent necessity, in an assembly of abbots of the filiation of Citeaux. Each abbey was to receive with joy any of the brethren of other Cistercian abbeys, and to treat him as though he were at home. Thus the most perfect union was to be preserved amongst the whole body; and if any discord arose in the general chapter, the abbot of Citeaux might, with the help of other abbots, called in by himself, settle the question in dispute. This is but a faint outline of the famous Chart of Charity, which was copied by many other orders, and in part even by that of Cluny. This rigid system of mutual visitation might seem to have precluded the visitation of the bishop, and so in fact the order became in time exempt from episcopal superintendence; but Stephen by no means intended that such should be the case. Exemptions from the jurisdiction of the Vicar of Christ, as St. Bernard calls the bishop of the diocese,* formed one of the special grievances against which the early Cistercian writers most loudly declaim. It was a portion of the ambition of abbots of the day, and was therefore classed by them with the assumption of the pontifical mitre and sandals, which was such a scandal in Cistercian eyes. Exemptions, however, which were not gained at the suit of the abbot, but conceded by the Holy See to the piety of founders of monasteries, are excepted from the censure by St. Bernard; and, notwithstanding Stephen's submission to

* De Off. Episc. 9. It is one thing to call a bishop a vicar of Christ, as St. Bernard does, and another thing to call him *the* Vicar of Christ with a capital V. If Father Dalgairns had been writing as a Catholic, he would probably have directed attention to this. Any legitimately constituted superior is strictly and truly a vicar of Christ, i.e. a representative of the authority of Christ.—*E.*

diocesan authority, he took care to secure his order against the influence of secular bishops. Even from the time of Hugh, the second abbot elected by Stephen, the words, "salvo ordine nostro," were added to the oath of canonical obedience, taken by every abbot on receiving the benediction from the bishop. Another important step was taken by him to secure his order, and its new constitution, from undue interference. He determined to apply to the Apostolic See, for a confirmation of the Charta Charitatis; without this sanction it was a mere private compact between the then ruling Cistercian abbots, but with the papal sanction it became in some way a law of the Church. Stephen was not obliged to send all the way to Rome to obtain this confirmation from the pope; great things had been doing in Christendom all this while that Citeaux had been flourishing. Pascal II. had died, and, after one short year, Gelasius too had died, not at Rome in his own palace but an exile at Cluny. Into that year were crowded troubles, as great as had befallen the successor of St. Peter, since the days of martyrdom. A troubled life, indeed, had been the life of Gelasius, ever since he had left his peaceful studies at Mount Cassino, and been made Chancellor of Rome, to amend the latinity of the papal court, where, as says Pandulf, "the ancient style of elegance and grace was almost lost." * Rougher tasks he found than this, for he shared in all the troubles of the popes during that long struggle, and at last he himself from Cardinal John Cajetan was made Pope Gelasius II. In the very ceremony of the enthronement, he was thrown from his seat by the emperor's party, dragged by the hair out of the church, and at its very door stamped upon, so that the rowels of the spurs of his persecutors were stained with his blood. Then he fled from Rome by water, amidst a tempest of thunder and wind and,

* Muratori, Scrip. iii. part i. p. 378.

what was worse, amidst the curses of the Germans, who stood on the shore ready to seize him if they could; and so they would, if it had not been for the fearful night, and for Cardinal Hugo, who, when they landed, carried the holy father on his back to a safe castle. In exile he remained the rest of his life, with but one short interval, when he ventured to return to Rome, and again the impious nobles rose, and swords were drawn about him, till at last he said, "Let us fly this city, this Sodom, this new Babylon!" and all cried, "Amen!" and so he left Rome for ever, and came to France, the general refuge of popes in those dreadful times.* His successor was chosen in France, and this was no other than Guido, archbishop of Vienne, of the noble house of Burgundy, and the friend of Stephen and of Citeaux, who now was called Pope Calixtus II. He it was to whom God gave grace to finish the struggle between the Church and the emperor, and to receive the submission of Henry V. But this was not to be till afterwards. During the year when the Chart of Charity was framed, which was also the first of his ruling the Church of Christ, he remained in France, and held a council at Rheims, where he excommunicated the emperor. In December Stephen's messenger found him at Sedelocum, a place supposed to be Saulieu, in Auvergne, and with the consent of the bishops of the dioceses in which the Cistercian abbeys were situated, he fully confirmed all the measures which Stephen had, with the consent of his brethren, determined upon for the preservation of peace in his order. The Chart of Charity was not a dead letter; if the Spirit of God had not been in that house, it would

* As Luchaire points out, the friendly relations between the French kings and the papacy were largely inspired by political considerations. The French supported the popes because they realised that in this way they were indirectly attacking the emperor. Institutions Monarchiques, vol. ii. p. 270.—*E.*

have been but so much parchment. But that blessed Spirit was there in effect; else how could so many men of different age, temper, rank of life, and country, have lived together in peace? It is easy at times to make great sacrifices; but it is hard to keep up the intercourse of every day life without jars and rents, and still harder, while the body is suffering from fatigue and mortification, to preserve the graceful and noiseless considerateness, which attends without effort to a brother's little wants. The very chapter where the Chart was passed presents an instance of the sort. It appears, that on occasion of the general chapter, to mark the joy of Citeaux at the presence of its sons, the stranger abbots were regaled with a pittance or addition to their frugal meal. But the fathers saw, that in consequence of this additional mess everything went wrong in the abbey;* the poor cooks were put out by the unwonted feast, and then when all was over the dishes had to be washed, and the servers† had to get their dinner, and so vespers were late,‡ and the poor monks robbed of a portion of their scanty sleep. The abbots were unwilling that their arrival should give so much trouble, and they begged of Stephen that the pittance should no more be given; and he with the consent of the brethren acceded to their request.

* The somewhat sad history of relaxation and decline which is connected with the spread of the practice of the pittances amongst the Cistercians is admirably illustrated in Arbois de Jubainville's Abbayes Cisterciennes, pp. 128-134.—*E.*

† Father Dalgairns prints "servants," but must mean I think *servers*, i.e., the monks who served at table.—*E.*

‡ Us. Cist. 108. 77.

Chapter XVIII—ABBOT SUGER

THE administration of his order was quite enough to occupy Stephen's time; year after year new abbeys were founded, and Cistercian monasteries rose up on all sides to the astonishment of the world. He had often to undertake long journeys for the foundation of some new community; and besides these toils, the actual government of such a large body of men required no ordinary attention. It is not to be supposed that there were no dangers in the way of monks, or that signal falls, even in his most promising disciples, did not at times happen to grieve his heart. For instance, in the year 1125,* Arnold, whom he had made abbot of Morimond, one of the four governing abbeys of the order, suddenly grew disgusted with his charge, and while Stephen was absent in Flanders, suddenly left the cloister, carrying away with him several of the brethren. His pretence was a pilgrimage; but he never returned to his abbey, and died soon after at Cologne, a runaway monk. While, however, Stephen was thus busied in managing his own abbeys, a reform was silently going on in another, and a most important quarter, from the mere increasing weight of the Cistercian order. It might have been supposed that the Cistercian, occupied in digging the soil, in draining marshes, and reducing waste land into

* Vacandard, Vie de St. Bernard, i. p. 162, points out that this must have happened in 1124 at latest, as the letter 359 referring to it is addressed to a Pope, the initial letter of whose name is C. Arnold died seemingly on January 3, 1125. St. Bernard writes of him: Cujus præsumptio digno sed pavendo fine in brevi est vindicata. Ep. 141. —*E.*

cultivation, would certainly be a great comfort to the poor amongst whom he laboured, and whose life he imitated; but it could hardly be expected that their influence could reach higher; and yet so it was. The bishop's palace and the king's court, unhappily at this time too much allied, both began to feel the influence of the bold stand in favour of Christian poverty which Stephen was making. About the year 1124, Peter, abbot of La Ferté, had been chosen archbishop of Tarantaise, and with the consent of Stephen and the general chapter had accepted it.* Cistercian bishops were still bound to keep the rules of the order; they did not wear the fur garments, with sleeves lined of a blood-red colour,† which scandalized St. Bernard, but they kept the habit of the order, covered with only a poor mantle, lined with sheepskin.‡ In the two following years France was astonished by the conversion of three of the most powerful prelates of the country, Henry, archbishop of Sens, Stephen, bishop of Paris, and the celebrated Suger, abbot of St. Denis. By conversion it is not meant that these men led vicious or immoral lives; on the contrary, they were men whom it was impossible not to admire for the noble way in which they led what was then the better party in the state; but they were ambitious and courtly men, half soldier or statesman, and the rest churchman. It was the time when the French royalty was with the help of the Church rousing itself; the king of France had been but

* It is interesting to notice a link which binds together two of our English Saints. St. Peter of Tarantaise, whose early life was spent under the fostering care of Stephen, the Englishman, the Abbot of Citeaux, passed his last days at the Grande Chartreuse in intimate companionship with St. Hugh, the Burgundian, then a simple Carthusian monk, but one who was destined to become Bishop of Lincoln, and one of the glories of the English Church. See the Magna Vita Sti Hugonis, bk. i. ch. 13.—*E.*

† St. Bern. de Off. Epis. 2. ‡ Inst. Cap. Gen. 59.

a king in name, often pious and devout, but seldom great or intellectual. In England our Norman lords were the real heads of a feudal sovereignty; they ruled by right of conquest, and the barons were kept under by common fear of the Saxons. But the poor king of France, in his royal city of Paris, was hemmed in on all sides by dukes of Normandy, and counts of Anjou, Blois, and Flanders, a mere shadow of Charlemagne, very different from his wily, unscrupulous, powerful majesty of England, the fine clerk who held his brilliant court at Westminster. In Louis VI.'s time, however, the French monarchy began to develop itself; he was an energetic, and in many respects an estimable prince,* brought up in his youth in the abbey of St. Denis, and even at one time inclined to become a monk. He made common cause with the Church against the nobles, who were wholesale robbers of Church lands, and respected neither his royal crown nor the bishop's mitre. But what has monarchy to do with Stephen, or Stephen with monarchy, that his poor order should be brought into the affairs of the kingdom? And yet strange to say, it came across King Louis's plans by converting his minister. The very head of the political movement was won, when Suger's heart was touched by St. Bernard's burning words, and when the royal abbey of St. Denis was reformed by the example of the Cistercians. A noble heart was Suger's, even while the world had too great a share in it. Nothing low or mean ever entered into it; all, as even St. Bernard allows, that stained it, was too great a love of show and of worldly grandeur.† Who but that man of little stature, of piercing eye, and sagacious and withal upright heart, had when provost of Toury, broken the power of Hugh of

* Louis, says Suger, took care of the interests of the Church, and, what had been for long unknown, was anxious for the peace of the labourers and of the poor. Vita Lud. Grossi, cap. i.—*E.*

† St. Bern. Ep. 78.

Puiset, that thorn in the side of the Church, who put lance in rest against the king himself? In his monkish cowl he rode into the town of Toury, even through the enemies who besieged it, and saved it for the king. No business was safe unless Suger was in it; his abbot Adam and the king both loved him, and sent him more than once even across the Alps; and no wonder, for his eloquence and learning was so great, that not only could he quote the Fathers, but even would repeat two or three hundred lines together of Horace by heart. He had once just quitted Pope Calixtus on one of these expeditions, and was on his way back to France at an inn, and had said matins at night, and had laid him down again to sleep, when he dreamed a dream—that he was at sea in a little boat tossed about by the waves, but was rescued by the help of the blessed martyr St. Denis. Then he went on his journey, and was pondering what it all meant, when he saw coming towards him a brother of the abbey, with a face of mingled sorrow and joy; and the brother told that Abbot Adam was dead, that the monks had chosen him abbot of St. Denis, even without waiting for the king's leave, and that the king was very angry, and had put in prison some of the brethren. At this news Suger's heart was sad; he loved his abbot dearly, and besides his brethren were in prison for his sake, and worst of all, he foresaw a contest between the king his master and the pope, about the liberty of election. However, the blessed martyr's prayers helped him through all, and the king confirmed the choice of the monks, and he was installed abbot of the first abbey in France. Then what a life was his when he was thus raised on high! If a turbulent noble was to be put down, Suger was to be there; on one occasion, when he was riding at the head of a body of soldiers to Orleans after his lord the king, he fell in with an officer of Hugh of Puiset, whom he took captive, and put

securely into the abbey prison. Rome saw him in 1123 at the Lateran council; next year the Church of St. Denis showed a memorable scene. The emperor, stung with the excommunication pronounced against him at the council of Rheims, invaded France, the constant ally of the Church. Then the royalty of France plucked up heart, and the men of the country gathered round the king, and all together went to St. Denis, where Louis received the Oriflamme from the hands of Suger at the high altar, with all the chivalry of France standing around him. The cause of God's Church prevailed, and the emperor took himself back to Germany, without waiting to see the Oriflamme unfurled. This was all very well; Suger was on the right side; his policy was the best for France, which was thus slowly finding a bond of union in the king, and getting rid of the petty tyrants which disturbed it. Again, he was on the side of the Church, for these nobles were its intolerable oppressors; but still something was wanting to the abbot of St. Denis. The concerns of his soul were not prospering amidst this perpetual tumult. Its wear and tear fretted his body down, and "Abbot Suger," says a monk, "did not get fat as other abbots did." * The prayers of the Cistercians, however, were at work, and St. Bernard's words pricked his conscience. Indeed, an honest mind like his, could not be long in seeing that he looked very little like a churchman and a monk, as he rode at the head of troops, or moved in the brilliant train of a court. Besides, his own abbey was in a most miserable state: without believing the calumnies of Abelard, it is evident that it was as unlike a monastery as it could well be. It was thoroughly secularized; this ancient sanctuary, once the very soul of the devotion of France, and the burial place of its kings, was now the centre of the business of the whole realm.

* Vit. Sug. 2, 3. ap. Du Chesne.

"Deftly and faithfully did Cæsar get his own there; but as for the things of God, they were not paid so faithfully to God."* Posts came rushing in from all quarters; the cloister was often filled with armed men; monks might be seen lounging about, idly talking with strangers, and even women were sometimes admitted within its precincts. No wonder that this scene raised Cistercian indignation; but it was not long to continue so. Suger's was an honest heart; he had been entangled by the force of circumstances, even from his youth, in secular affairs, and the hurry of business had prevented his looking about him. Now, however, that the fearful responsibility of the government of the abbey was upon him, it made him shudder.† The Cistercian reform was spreading with a wildfire speed about him; it was a declaration from heaven against his own most criminal neglect of the important charge which God had committed into his hands. His long troop of armed retainers, and his sumptuous habits, formed but a poor contrast to Stephen's paltry equipage, as he travelled about in his coarse white garment, with a monk or two and a lay brother in his train. The soul of Suger sinks within him at the thought of his danger, and he determines to reform both himself and his abbey. If Citeaux had never done more than turn to God this noble heart, its labour would not have been thrown away. By thus suggesting the reform of St. Denis, it was conquering the very stronghold of worldliness; it was purging the Church from the thorough secularization which a long mixture with the world had brought on. Oh! how must Stephen's heart have leaped within him, when he thus saw his order doing his work. He would most cordially have joined in the devout gush of quiet joy with which Suger thanked God. "Amidst the recovery of the ancient

* St. Bernard, Ep. 78. † Cf. Vétault, Suger p. 166.—*E.*

iands of the Church, and the acquirement of new, the spread of this Church all around, the restoration or construction of its buildings, this is the chief, the most grateful, yea, the highest privilege which God in His mercy has given me, that He has fully reformed the holy order, the state of this holy Church, to His own honour and that of His saints in the same place, and has settled in peace the end and object of holy religion, by which man attains to the enjoyment of God, without causing scandal or trouble among the brethren, though they were all unaccustomed to it."* The conversion of Suger is in itself the justification of Stephen, in the rigid rules of poverty which he adopted at Citeaux; it was the best way of gaining an upright heart, like that of the abbot of St. Denis, to put before him a clear and unquestionable example of holy poverty, which must reach him even in the whirl of secular business. France afterwards called him the father of his country, and it is to the influence of Cistercian reform that he owed that single-hearted conscientiousness, and that habit of devotion, which kept him up, when he was afterwards regent of the whole realm.

It is true, that in one particular he was not a disciple of Stephen; he could not bear poverty in the adornment of churches; it was not in his nature, and could not be helped. He even seems evidently to aim at his good friends at Citeaux, when he says, "Every man may have his own opinion; I confess that what pleases me best is, that if there be anything more precious than another, yea most precious of all, it should serve to the ministration of the blessed Eucharist above all things." This difference between St. Denis and Citeaux was in after days curiously illustrated; for abbot Suger was pondering within himself how to get

* Vit. Lud. Grossi ap. Du Chesne, tom. iv. 311.

gems to adorn a magnificent crucifix * on the high altar of the abbey church, when in came three abbots, among whom were my lord of Citeaux (probably Stephen's successor), and another Cistercian abbot, with such a store of jewels as he had never seen before. Thibault, count of Champagne, another disciple of Citeaux, had out of love for holy poverty broken up two magnificent gold vases, and given them as alms to these abbots, and they came at once to St. Denis, knowing that they should be sure to find a market for them. Unlike the simple choir of Citeaux, the sanctuary of the royal abbey blazed with gold and jewels, with painting and sculpture; there was the cross worked by Eligius the goldsmith saint, and there was the jasper, the ruby, the sapphire, the emerald, and the topaz, "yea," says Suger, "all the precious stones of old Tyre were its covering, save the carbuncle." All the crowns of the kings of France were there deposited after their death, on the shrine of the martyrs. Yet the abbot's delight in thus adorning the shrine of his Lord was utterly unmixed with selfish feeling, "for," he says, "it is most meet and right that with all things universal we should minister to our Redeemer, who in all things without exception has mercifully deigned to provide for us, who has united our nature to His own in one admirable never-to-be-divided Person, who, placing us on His right hand, has promised us that we shall verily possess His kingdom; our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, One God for ever and ever. Amen." † It is instructive to see how the Cistercian influence extended to persons whose minds were of a texture so different from that of the abbot of Citeaux.

* This huge crucifix of solid gold took two years in construction. The nails in the feet and the hands, and the blood running from the wounds were all represented by wonderful rubies. Vétault, Suger, p. 246.—*E.*

† Adm. Sug. c. 32.

However Stephen might have been scandalized with the unmonastic appearance of the high altar of St. Denis, he would have found a kindred spirit in its noble-minded abbot, a very Cistercian in simplicity, amidst all this splendour. "This man shames us all," said of Suger a certain abbot of Cluny, "he does not build for himself as we do, but for God only." With all his love for architecture, he built but one thing for himself, and that was a cell ten feet broad and fifteen long. Here was his little bed of straw, hid in the day time by handsome covering, but during the few hours that he lay there at night, it had nothing on it but the rough Cistercian læna or woollen rug, which St. Alberic substituted for the many coverings of the Cluniac dormitory. Thus he lived, one of the most noble conquests of Citeaux, and through Suger, when he afterwards, as regent, * had in his hands the appointment of every bishop in the realm, Stephen's love of poverty influenced most materially the whole Church of France.

And what said King Louis, when this strange influence appeared in his own palace? He was doing his best for the Church, and was the alliance between Church and State to be broken up, and his ecclesiastical friends to be taken from his very side, for the sake of a monk like Stephen? The king had patronised the Cistercians, and, as appears from a letter written at this time, † had at some former period joined himself in a fraternity of prayers with them: but now that Henry of Sens and Stephen of Paris left his court to govern their flocks like good pastors, he began to think that Cistercian prayers were very well in their way, provided they did not convert his ministers. ‡ Annoyed by the

* A slight change has been made in the syntax of this sentence; see Preface.

† St. Bern. Ep. 45.

‡ On this rather puzzling quarrel see Luchaire, Institutions Monarchiques, vol. ii. pp. 251-252, and Louis le Gros, pp. 198-

conduct of the bishops, he took occasion of some cabal in the diocese of Paris, to seize upon the temporalities of the see; and when the archbishop of Sens, as metropolitan of Paris, took the part of the bishop, he began also to persecute him. It appears that the king had partizans amongst the cardinals, and it was doubtful how the matter would turn out: the poor bishop knew not where to find help, but he bethought himself that there was then sitting an assembly of fearless men who had nothing to expect from the world. He applied to the chapter of Citeaux for letters to the pope to recommend his cause. The abbot judged it best to write first to the king himself, and St. Bernard composed a letter in the name of the abbot of Citeaux, and his brethren assembled at their annual meeting. Here then was Stephen in direct opposition to kings and cardinals. Strange is the style of the opening of this bold epistle: "To the noble king of the Franks Louis, Stephen, abbot of Citeaux, and the whole assembly of Cistercian abbots and brethren, health, safety, and peace in Christ Jesus." * The wooden crozier of Citeaux against the gold sceptre of the Louvre! the match seems most unequal; but the wooden crozier won the day at last. The cardinals hung back, and there came a decision from Rome in favour of the king, and all seemed to be prospering on his side. But there was still a party unsatisfied, which had sprung up silently and imperceptibly around the king, and whose influence now began to be felt across the Alps. Its wishes must henceforth form an item in the consultation of popes and kings. St. Bernard and Hugh of Pontigny cry aloud to the pope himself, in spite of the murmurs of some of the cardinals, who loved not such importunate partizans of justice. At

209. The account given by Luchaire does not substantially differ from that of Fr. Dalgairns.—*E.*

* This letter is translated in Cotter Morison's Life of St. Bernard, p. 116.—*E.*

last the Holy See interfered in the bishop's favour, at or about the time of the council of Troyes, 1128, at which Stephen and St. Bernard were both present.* Shortly afterwards, Stephen, with the abbots of Clairvaux and Pontigny, wrote to the pope in favour of the archbishop of Sens, whom King Louis was still persecuting. They were an uncompromising set of men, whom nothing could satisfy, till the oppressed was delivered from the tyranny of his oppressor; these Cistercian frogs would croak out of their marshes, † and would not hold their peace, for all the bitter complaints of the cardinals, whose rest was sadly disturbed by their noise. They must needs be at the bottom of every movement in the Church, with their importunate poverty. Even the warlike Templars felt its influence, and clothed themselves in their white cloaks "without arrogance or superfluity," and in plain armour, with horse-trappings unadorned with gold and silver. They were first made an order at the council of Troyes, in the presence of Stephen, and each provincial master of the Temple took an oath,‡ that he would defend all religious, but above all, Cistercian monks and their abbots, as being their brethren and fellows.

* Mabillon's Notes on St. Bernard, Ep. 45.

† St. Bern. Ep. 48. In this and the three following letters St. Bernard fights the battle of the archbishop of Sens with undaunted courage. He insists that, even if the cause be judged by the tribunal of the King of France, there ought to be left to the archbishop the right of appeal to the Apostolic See.—*E.*

‡ The oath contained these words: "I swear that I will defend holy Church, etc. . . . Moreover I promise obedience to the Grand Master of the order and submission, . . . according to the statutes of our Blessed Father Bernard. . . . I will assist by my words, my arms and my actions all Religious in general, and in particular the abbots and monks of the order of Citeaux, as being our brethren and our particular friends, to whom we are bound by special ties of fellowship. . . . . " The rule of the Templars drawn up by St. Bernard and written by John Michel, secretary of the Council (of Troyes), was read at a general session. The Fathers unanimously approved the form and character of the new statutes.

Chapter XIX—TROUBLES IN THE CHURCH

THE Cistercian influence had, however, not reached its height even at the council of Troyes: two years after occurred the schism of Anacletus, the decision of which in favour of Innocent II. was, under God, entirely owing to St. Bernard. The question did not originate in a mere quarrel between two parties amongst the cardinals. The election of Innocent II. was a bold innovation, by which the turbulent people of Rome were excluded from any share in choosing the supreme pontiff.* There were many wild and unscrupulous barons in Europe, but a Frangipani, a Colonna, or a count of Tusculum could match them all. The very last election of Honorius II. had been brought about by a notorious trick of a Frangipani; and a short time before, Gelasius, in leaving Rome, had said solemnly, that if so be, he had rather fall into the hands of one emperor than of so many. The cardinals, who in this case had elected pope Innocent, met together without the knowledge not only of the Roman clergy and people, but even of a very large part of the sacred college. This they did, says Suger, for fear of the turbulent Romans. Hence, not only the election of Petrus Leonis the antipope, but even of the real successor of St. Peter was informal; it required the subsequent voice of Christendom to constitute Innocent the rightful pope. The impression left on the mind by Suger's clear, statesman like view of the transaction is, that of the two elections that of Peter was the more formal; and he adds that the council

* Lupus, tom. v. p. 69.

of Étampes in its decision inquired more about the character than the election of the candidates. The cardinals of Innocent's party had, however, another and a cogent reason for proceeding thus surreptitiously in the election.* "They elected Innocent," says an old chronicler, "with too great haste, as some think, in order to exclude Peter, who seemed to aim at the popedom on secular grounds." † They were the religious party amongst the cardinals, and they dreaded the election of Peter, who "placed not God for his help, but trusted in the multitude of his riches, in the power of his relations, and in the strength of his fortifications." He was the head of the secular party in the Church, and at a time when the struggle with the emperor on the subject of investitures was but just over, and when the pride and luxury which a long sojourn in kings' courts had introduced were rampant in the very sanctuary, his elevation might have been productive of the worst results. He had at one time been a monk of Cluny, but had been recalled to Rome by Pascal II., who made him a cardinal. From that time he had been actively employed as a legate by the papal court, and in this occupation had added enormous wealth to the already large property of his family, originally of Jewish extraction. He was one of those purple "satraps, lovers of majesty rather than lovers of truth," whom St. Bernard calls "wolves;" companions not of the "successor of St. Peter, but of Constantine," followers of the pope in the time of triumph, when he rode on a white horse, adorned with gems and gold, not of "the vicar of Christ, the hammer of tyrants and the refuge of the oppressed." ‡ The cause of Innocent was

* According to Bernhardi, Lothar, pp. 295-299, n., Innocent had only eleven electors. Zoepffel (Die Papst-wahlen, p. 368) and Mühlbacher (Die streitige Papstwahl des Jahres 1130, p. 105) say that there were between eleven and fifteen.—*E.*

† Chron. Maurin. ap. Du Chesne. ‡ De Consid. lib. iv.

therefore that of holy poverty, and it was taken up by all the new monastic orders which sprang up about this time to the edification of the Church, as also by the most flourishing of the ancient convents. "The Camaldolese," says St. Bernard, "they of Vallombrosa, the Carthusians, Cluniacs, and they of the Great Monastery, my own Cistercians too, the monks of Caen, of Tiron, and Savigny, in a word, all together and with one heart, the brethren, whether monks or clerks, who lead a regular life and are of approved conversation, all following the bishops as sheep their pastors, adhere firmly to Innocent." St. Bernard does not here say whom the pastors themselves followed, but it was plain to every one else that he himself led the Catholic world. All the bishops of France, with king Louis, were assembled at Étampes, to decide on this question of vital importance even to the existence of the Catholic Church; but the abbot of Clairvaux was not there, and nothing could be done without him. He came at their bidding, trembling, and with a heart beating with fear: but God reassured his servant in a dream, showing him a vast Church with one accord praising God. When he arrived, the whole assembly with one voice declared that Bernard should decide. * Calmly but still with trembling, the servant of God examined the manner of the election, the merits of the electors, and the life and character of the candidates, and then with a royal heart, trusting in the help of God, he pronounced aloud that Innocent was pope; and the whole assembly received his decision without any doubt, believing that he spoke by the Holy Ghost. It does not come within our subject to say how St. Bernard went about, and by his very presence and energetic words turned the hearts of all the kings of Europe

* It must be owned that the contemporary chronicles do not lend much support to this story, which depends almost entirely on the authority of S. Bernardi Vita, lib. ii. cap. i.—*E.*

to Innocent, the wily Beau Clerc Henry,* the hesitating Lothaire, even at last the wild boar of Aquitaine,—how he bowed the soul of Christendom as the soul of one man, and placed the successor of St. Peter in his rightful chair, in the teeth of Roger of Sicily, with his new crown, and all his Normans. Stephen of course followed his illustrious disciple; the success of Innocent was the consummation of the triumph of holy poverty, in which he had led the way; and he cheerfully and gladly now gave up the cause into the hands of St. Bernard. While the saint was travelling over land and sea for the peace of the Church, and to his regret was obliged to leave his beloved Clairvaux, Stephen remained quietly in his own abbey, continuing to rule his order. Innocent, however, did not confine his love for Cistercians to St. Bernard. He addressed to Stephen a letter, in which he calls him "his dear son in the Lord," † and grants to him and his successors for ever two important privileges. They appear from the terms of the grant to have been given at Stephen's own request, and both are certainly the result

* Although at first inclined to favour Anacletus, Henry I. after St. Bernard's appeal went out of his way to show his devotion to Innocent both at Chartres and at Rouen. Cf. Jaffe, Regesta, nn. 7472,7473, 7476; Henry of Huntingdon, p. 252.—*E.*

† This document is found in Manrique, An. 1132, 1. 5; it is dated Cluny, February 10; another, dated Lyons on the 17th of the same month, is found among St. Bernard's works. They were given by Innocent on his way from France back into Italy. It is singular that these two documents are dated according to two different modes of calculation. The privilege granted to St. Stephen, though it was prior to the other, is dated 1132, whilst that granted to St. Bernard is dated 1131; the reason is, because in the latter the year is reckoned to begin on March 25, in the former, on January 1. Mabillon, overlooking this, has given 1131 instead of 1132 as the date of the privilege given to St. Bernard; as Innocent dated his years from his election, February 5, 1130, a document signed on February 17, in his third year, must be referred to 1132 according to our calculation.

of the action of his own principles. His notion of a monastery was a place devoted to contemplation, where the noise and the cares of the world could not penetrate. He wished his monks to know nothing of the bickerings, and the lawsuits, and the selfishness, which were all going on beyond the cloister; a short time before, he had himself been drawn away from Citeaux, to settle a quarrel between the abbeys of St. Seine and of St. Stephen of Dijon. One privilege therefore, granted to all Cistercian abbots, was concluded in these terms, "And because, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, that ye may be able with the greater freedom to follow out the service of God, and with the clear vision of the soul to dwell at peace in contemplation, we forbid that any bishop or archbishop should compel thee, or thy successors, or any abbot of the Cistercian order, to come to a council or synod, save on account of the faith." Stephen, however, not only wished his monks to be out of the way of the quarrels of their neighbours, but also to be independent of worldly cares. The intention of St. Benedict was, that a monk should be a poor man, living on the labour of his own hands; he did not, however, wish him to be in abject penury; the monastery was to possess all necessaries within its walls, so that nothing need be sought for out of the cloister. Stephen had more than once been himself reduced to a state of real want, and had stoutly braved it out, with a few energetic spirits about him. Now, however, that Citeaux was a large community, and the head of a flourishing order, the case was widely different; there are comparatively many who can live on coarse bread and vegetables, but very few have the heroic patience necessary to struggle under the pressure of want. The soul of conventual life is regularity, which must disappear when the brethren are obliged to make shifts to obtain absolute necessaries. Though Citeaux was not now in danger of so

sad a plight, it was a hard matter for the brother cellarer to make both ends meet. The Cistercians had renounced most of the sources of revenue by which other convents were maintained. There was nothing to attract seculars into their churches; no public masses, no shrines of gold and silver. Their property consisted entirely in land, of which they sold the produce; before however it could be brought into cultivation, granges were to be erected, and live stock to be bought, and much hard labour to be expended. Thus the more land was given to them, the more their expenses increased; and after all there came round the tithe collector, claiming so much for the parish priest or for the brethren of a certain monastery, to whom the tithes of the parish belonged. It should be remembered that they had themselves renounced all tithes * and ecclesiastical property, which was the chief source of revenue in many monasteries, where the brethren never worked with their own hands; besides which, the lands which were given to them were often waste and uncultivated, covered with a rank growth of entangled wood, or else mere marshy pools, the haunts of the heron and the bittern, and which consequently had never paid tithes at all. Considering the poverty of the Cistercians, Innocent freed them from the payment of all tithes. This was no new privilege; all the monasteries of Thuringia, and amongst them the great abbey of Fulda, were at one time exempt from tithes; and the archbishop of Metz, though he claimed

* It might excite surprise that we often find mention of tithes among the gifts recorded as having been made to the monks in the early charters of Cistercian houses. The tithes so given, at any rate in the beginning, were simply the tithes due from the lands which the monks already owned, and the gift consequently was tantamount only to a remission of the payment of tithes to other people or to the parochial clergy. At a later date, however greater laxity seems to have grown up in this matter.—*E.*

tithes from them, allowed that such privileges were granted to rising monasteries. A short time before the rise of Citeaux, the same favour was accorded to the Knights Hospitallers in consideration of their poverty. Again, Peter of Blois, strongly as he reprobated the continuance of the privilege when the order had grown powerful and had been placed above all the difficulties which its very fecundity, astonishing as it was, at first entailed upon it, allowed that at first it was necessary. Reasonable, however, as was Innocent's grant, it raised a tempest about Stephen and his poor Cistercians, which it took many a long year to allay. Enough has been said to show that the Cistercian movement, being in all respects a reformation, would be most likely to meet with opposition from the older monastic institutions. There had long been heart-burnings between Cluny and Citeaux; an ancient and flourishing order like that of Cluny, with all its imposing dignity, and its religious magnificence, could not but stand reproved before the elastic spirit and young life which were developing from the obscure convent of Citeaux. It might be venerable and beautiful, but there was a vigour in the uncompromising fervour of the new order, and an unencumbered grace in its holy poverty, which was sure to attract all the ardent spirits in the Church. Hence many a promising monk passed over to the Cistercians, and left sore displeasure behind him among his brethren, to whom his fervour seemed to be a reproach. Around the ancient monasteries there arose everywhere new institutions, not hallowed by time and adorned by the piety of kings, but carrying with them the hearts of the people by the sanctity of their inmates. This new privilege granted by Innocent caused all this smothered flame to burst out; a Cluniac monastery, that of Gigny in Champagne, refused to allow its neighbour, the house of Miroir, to take advantage of the privilege, and still exacted

the tithes in the teeth of the authority of the Holy See. It was for this contumacy put under an interdict, * in consequence of which the whole Cluniac order was up in arms. It was fortunate that Pontius had ceased to be abbot of Cluny, and that Peter the Venerable now ruled over the order. From his position Peter was obliged to support the vast body of which he was the ruler; he therefore addressed a letter of sharp remonstrance to the chapter of Citeaux, and did his best to get the privilege reversed at the papal court: he however never for a moment lost the unbounded love which he felt for the great men who were at the head of this new movement in the Church. The next year, fearing lest his former letter should have been too severe, he wrote to the assembled chapter, to protest that he had the real interests of peace in his heart, when he wrote that letter, and concludes with saying, "I rest in peace and I will rest on you. I rejoice and I will rejoice in you, yea, though injured, I will not depart from you." From the really Christian spirit of this noble-minded man, a real love was maintained among the higher authorities of the two orders; among the inferior members there was, it must be

* This statement seems to be hardly accurate. Gigny was not actually laid under an interdict, but only *threatened* with it, first by Innocent II., and then again twenty years later by Eugenius III., for pillaging and setting fire to the granges of Miroir. It appears that Gigny suffered a loss of one tenth of its revenues owing to the Cistercian exemption from paying tithes (Jaffe, Regesta n. 7544). Pope Eugenius tried to settle this difference between Peter and St. Bernard, and an agreement was concluded at Dijon in 1151, but it did not last six months. Before the following spring the monastery of Miroir was pillaged, set fire to and completely gutted. Among the incendiaries several monks of Gigny were seen. The pope insisted on full reparation, and Peter and St. Bernard were to fix the amount, but no agreement could be come to, and before the matter was concluded St. Bernard had died. See Chevallier, Histoire de St. Bernard, vol. p. 274; Jaffe, Regesta, nn. 9562 and 9563.—*E.*

confessed, on the Cistercian side often a Puritanical adhesion to the letter of the rule, and on the Cluniac, a most unchristian tone of jealousy and mistrust.* But the most perfect harmony prevailed between the abbot of Cluny and the ruling body of Citeaux with Stephen at their head. It was not that Peter did not feel a most filial affection for the noble monastery in which he had learned to know Christ, and over which he now ruled; nor did he fail to be really and acutely pained when the force of circumstances necessarily placed him in collision with the Cistercians. But notwithstanding the blows which he thus received in his most tender affections, he ever maintained an unbounded reverence for this new institution which God through Stephen's means had raised in the Church. He was content that his light should wane while Stephen, whom the world would call his rival, increased in power and influence every day. Above all, he rejoiced with enthusiasm in St. Bernard's sanctity, and even kissed his letters, when they appeared to gladden his heart; he seems to repose in perfect confidence, as it were on the bosom of a friend,

* Vacandard (Histoire de St. Bernard, vol. ii. p. 486) remarks that after fifty years the rivalry between the two orders was still as keen as ever. Peter the Venerable spared no pains to appease the mutua ill-feeling (in mutuo rancore. Lib. iv. ep. 17), but in vain. The vicinity of the rival monasteries rendering it inevitable that the monks should come in contact with one another, increased the occasions of dissension. Peter the Venerable says: "How often have I seen Cluniacs at the very sight of a white monk affect astonishment and point the finger of scorn, as if they had before their eyes some monstrosity or extraordinary freak of nature! On the other hand I have seen the white monks, who were conversing as they went along, suddenly stiffen into silence when they saw a Cluniac coming, just as if they were in presence of an enemy; . . . and all this over a mere matter of dress! Noli, noli, oro te pater, si ovis Christi esse cupis, vanis de vellere causari. Do not, do not, I beg of thee, brother, if thou wouldst be a sheep of Christ, do not be so sensitive about the colour of thy fleece."—Æ.

when he writes to the saint; he exercises his playful and polished wit on these occasions, professing that he feels quite secure, in thus giving loose to his cheerfulness in his letters to his dear friend; and St. Bernard in return compliments him by saying that he at least could indulge his wit without sin. He strenuously set about reforming his order; and so far from being angered by St. Bernard's indignant remonstrances in his Apology, his new statutes adopt, as far as possible, all the suggestions contained in that celebrated treatise. Some of his reforms are evidently taken from Cistercian regulations, and especially from those made by Stephen himself. Crucifixes of wood were ordered to be used instead of the precious metals, when the holy rood was applied to the lips of a dying monk;* it was not a cross of gold or silver, but a cross of wood which redeemed the world. Again, the magnificent candlestick of Cluny, which scandalised Cistercian simplicity, was not to be lighted up except on the great festivals; at other times iron candlesticks were to be used. † Thus did Stephen's influence extend even to Cluny, notwithstanding the angry monks. The quarrels on the subject of tithes lasted many years even after Stephen's death, but it never destroyed the harmony which prevailed between Peter the Venerable and his friends of the chapter of Citeaux.

* Stat. 62.

† Stat. 52. In reliquis vero festivitatibus, quibus accendi solebat machina illa ferrea quæ vulgo ercia vocatur, pro illa lampadibus vitreis illustretur.

Chapter XX—DEATH OF STEPHEN

SINCE the admission of St. Bernard into Citeaux, the life of Stephen has been that of his order. History only speaks of him occasionally as a monastic legislator, or as the founder of some new convent. The lord abbot of Citeaux appears sometimes amongst the signatures attached to a council, or to some document which the labour of the Benedictines has brought from the chartulary of a convent. It is well that it should be so, for the great order of Citeaux was Stephen's structure, and on that his noble work his claims to the veneration of the faithful rest. We now, however, come to a part where he is put forward exclusively; his long and laborious life is now drawing to a close. It comes suddenly upon the reader of the Cistercian annalist, and takes him by surprise to find that the chapter to which Peter the Venerable's letter was addressed was the last held by Stephen. No data are given in his history to ascertain his age; so that his years go on silently, numbered by those of Citeaux, and it seems strange that all at once, when his order is in the height of prosperity, his life, which was the moving principle of the whole, should come to an end. Yet so it is even with the greatest saints; man goeth to his labour until the evening, and then leaves it unfinished, and goes home to rest in the grave. At the chapter of 1133, the year after the privilege was granted to the Cistercians by Innocent, when, says the Exordium, "our blessed father, Stephen, had stoutly administered the office committed to him, according to the true rule of humility given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was worn out with old age, and his eyes were blind so that he could not see, he laid aside his pastoral

charge, wishing to think in peace on God, and on himself through the sweet taste of holy contemplation." This is the first word that is said of Stephen's old age, and up to this time we might have fancied him as vigorous as ever, with his eyesight clear, and his faculties unimpaired. But although his eyes had failed, and his body was in darkness, yet the vision of his soul was as bright as ever; he was still to the last the Cistercian contemplative, who had fled to the forest, and to the desert, to dwell with God alone. Before, however, his soul was freed from its earthly tabernacle, Stephen had still a trial to undergo; God willed that his saint should die with his arms in his hands. The electors to whose task it fell to choose a successor, on Stephen's resignation, pitched upon a man who was utterly unworthy to succeed him. Wido,* abbot of Three-Fountains, had by some means deceived men into an opinion of his sanctity, and though, as the Exordium calls him, he was but a whited sepulchre, the abbots pitched upon him to govern the abbey and the whole order. Stephen knew what sort of man he was; it is even said, that God specially revealed to him the wickedness of this new abbot. By that wonderful inward vision which God sometimes grants his saints, he could see his successor receiving the profession of the monks, though his outward eye was blind; when lo! God showed him the evil spirit entering in at his mouth, as he sat on high amidst the brethen, coming one by one to do him reverence. Stephen however remained still; he felt sure that God would not abandon the rising order, and he did not choose to take upon him again a government which he had just laid down, by interfering with the free choice of the monks. St. Bernard was ab-

* The form of this name more commonly used by later writers is Guy. Guido and Wido of course are only variant spellings of the same name.—*E.*

sent in Italy, and therefore he could not apply to him; in full trust therefore upon God, he waited till the designs of Providence should manifest themselves. With this dreadful secret on his mind he held his peace. He had not long to wait, for "scarcely had one month passed away, when by the revelation of the Lord his uncleanness was laid bare, and this bastard plant which the heavenly Father had not planted was rooted out of Paradise." What was the sin of Wido is not known, and his name does not even occur in the common catalogue of Cistercian abbots; the brethren seem to have tried to sink his memory in oblivion. He was succeeded by Rainaldus,* a monk of Clairvaux, and a man in whose hands Stephen rejoiced to leave his order. His work was now done upon earth, and his strength was fast sinking; he did not live many months after Rainaldus was elected. It is not known whether his illness was short or lingering, but the Exordium gives the following account of the death-bed of the man of God. "As the time approached when the old man lying on his bed was, after his labours were over, to be brought into the joy of the Lord, and from the lowest room of poverty, which he had chosen in the world according to the counsel of our Saviour, was about to mount up to the banquet of the Father of the family on high, there met together, besides others, certain brethren, abbots of his order, to accompany by their most dutiful services and prayers their faithful friend and most lowly Father thus on his way to his home. And when he was in his last agony, and was near death, the brethren began to talk together, and to call him blessed: being a man of such merit, they said that he could go securely to God, who had in his time brought

* Dom Le Nain (Histoire de Citeaux, t. v., p. 217) speaks of the successor of St. Stephen as *Saint* Rainaldus, but I know of no other authority for so styling him. Dom le Nain especially commends his zeal and gentleness, quoting of him the words: Favus distillans labia ejus.—*E.*

so much fruit to the Church of God. He heard this, and gathering together his breath as he could, said with a half-reproachful voice, 'What is it that ye are saying? Verily, I say to you, that I am going to God as trembling and anxious as if I had never done any good. For if there has been any good in me, and if any fruit has come forth through my littleness, it was through the help of the grace of God; and I fear and tremble much, lest perchance I have kept that grace less worthily and less humbly than I ought.' Beneath this shield of the perfect lowliness which sounded on his lips, and grew deep in his heart, he put off the old man, and putting aside in his might all the most wicked darts of the enemy, fiery and sulphurous though they were, he passed with ease the airy region of storms, and mounted up and was crowned at the gate of Paradise." It was on the 28th of March, 1134, that Stephen quitted this weary life to join St. Robert and St. Alberic, whom he had so long survived. The 17th of April, on which his name occurs in the Martyrology, and which was his festival, was probably the day of his canonization. His day is not now remembered amongst us;* many will not even have heard of his name, and those who have heard of him, may possibly be surprised to find that he was an Englishman. His eyes were probably never gladdened with a sight of the green fields of merry England ever since he quitted his monastery of Sherborne to study at Paris. Yet his country may be proud to own this great saint. He was the spiritual father of St. Bernard, and was, it may be said, the principal founder of the *Order* of Cistercians. Before he died, he had founded twenty monasteries of the line of Citeaux; the number

* The feast of St. Stephen Harding, though not kept in the Anglican Church, is observed by the Catholic Church in England as a semidouble with proper collect and lessons.—*E.*

of houses of the whole order was upwards of ninety.* St. Stephen was in character a very Englishman; his life has that strange mixture of repose and of action which characterises England. Contemplative and ascetic as he was, he was still in his way a man of action; he had the head to plan, and the calm, unbending energy to execute a great work. His very countenance, if we may trust his contemporary the monk of Malmesbury, was English; he was courteous in speech, blithe in countenance, with a soul ever joyful in the Lord.† His order seems to have thriven in St. Stephen's native air; most of our great abbeys, Tintern, Rievaulx, Fountains, Furness, and Netley, which are now known by their beautiful ruins, were Cistercian.‡ The Order took to itself all the quiet nooks and valleys, and all the pleasant streams of old England, and gladdened the soul of the labourer by its constant bells. Its agricultural character was peculiarly suited to this country, though it took its birth beyond the seas. Doubtless St. Stephen, when he was working under the hot sun of France, often thought of the harvest moon and the ripe corn-fields of his native land. May his prayers now be heard before the throne

* These facts are substantially borne out by the researches of Janauschek in his Origines Cistercienses. Apart from Cistercian foundations for nuns, he numbers 82 Cistercian monasteries which were certainly founded before 1134, and 12 others founded before 1136 though the precise date is uncertain.—*E.*

† Gesta Reg. Angl. lib. 4.

‡ The earliest English foundation of the Cistercians was Waverley in Surrey, which dates from 1124. Tintern began in 1131, Rievaulx in 1131 or 1132, and Garendon in 1133. It is possible that Fountains in Yorkshire and Melrose in Scotland were also founded before the death of St. Stephen. There is an admirable article on "The Settlement of the Cistercians in England," by Miss Cooke in the English Historical Review for 1893, pp. 625-676.—*E.*

of grace, for that dear country now lying under the wrath of God for the sins of its children. "Pray ye for the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem, and abundance for them that love Thee." O Lord, "our eyes have failed for Thy word; saying, when wilt Thou comfort" us? "We have rejoiced for the days in which Thou hast humbled us and for the years in which we have seen evils. For the Lord will give goodness and the earth shall yield her fruit."*

* *Ps.* cxxi. 6.; cxviii. 82.; lxxxix. 15.; lxxxiv. 13.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

A note having been accidentally omitted in its proper place, it seems worth while to point out here that the description in Chapter IV. p. 32 seq. of the state of things in Molesme before the migration to Citeaux must be to some extent modified by a study of its cartulary. "Ever since its foundation in 1075," writes M. Petit, "anchorites had flocked thither from every quarter, and the number of religious had grown so rapidly that in each year the Mother House, the precincts of which were too narrow to accommodate all, had sent out one or more colonies animated with the religious spirit of their abbot and founder" (Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne, Vol. I. p. 240). In the year 1097, the year before the foundation of Citeaux, we have definite record of four new priories, Fouchêres, l' Isle d' Aumont, Vernonvilliers and Saint-Broin-les-Moines; ib. p. 242. Altogether it would seem that between about 1095 and 1110, twenty-five or thirty new foundations were made from Molesme, though some of these were afterwards given up.—*E.*

THE END.

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