

THE LIFE OF
ST. MALACHY
OF ARMAGH

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St. Bernard of Clairvaux

TAN Books
Gastonia, North Carolina

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PREFACE

1. It is indeed always worth while to portray the illustrious lives of the saints, that they may serve as a mirror and an example, and give, as it were, a relish to the life of men on earth. For by this means in some sort they *live* among us, even *after death*,¹ and many of those who *are dead while they live*² are challenged and recalled by them to true life. But now especially is there need for it because holiness is rare, and it is plain that our age is lacking in men. So greatly, in truth, do we perceive that lack to have increased in our day that none can doubt that we are smitten by that saying, *Because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold*;³ and, as I suppose, he has come or is at hand of whom it is written,

1 Ecclus. xlviii. 12 (vg.).

2 1 Tim. v. 6. Cp. Rev. iii. 1.

3 Matt. xxiv. 12.

*Want shall go before his face.*⁴ If I mistake not, Anti-christ is he whom famine and sterility of all good both precedes and accompanies. Whether therefore it is the herald of one now present or the harbinger of one who shall come immediately, the *want* is evident. I speak not of the crowd, I speak not of the vile multitude of *the children of this world.*⁵ I would have you lift up your eyes upon the very *pillars*⁶ of the Church. Whom can you show me, even of the number of those who seem to be *given for a light to the Gentiles,*⁷ that in his lofty station is not rather a smoking wick than a blazing lamp? And, says One, *if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*⁸ Unless perchance, which I do not believe, you will say that they shine who *suppose that gain is godliness;*⁹ who in the Lord's inheritance *seek not the things which are the Lord's, but rather their own.*¹⁰ Why do I say *their own*? He would be perfect and holy, even while he seeks his own and retains his own, who

4 Job xli. 22 (vg.).

5 Luke xvi. 8.

6 Gal. ii. 9.

7 Isa. xlix. 6.

8 Matt. vi. 23.

9 1 Tim. vi. 5.

10 Phil. ii. 21; 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

should restrain his heart and hands from the things of others. But let him remember, who seems to himself to have advanced perhaps thus far, that the same degree of holiness is demanded even of a gentile.¹¹ Are not *soldiers* bidden to *be content with their wages* that they may be saved?¹² But it is a great thing for a doctor of the Church if he be as one of the soldiers; or, *if*, in truth (as the prophet speaks to their reproach), *it be as with the people so with the priest*.¹³ Hideous! Is it so indeed? Is he rightly to be esteemed highest who, falling from the highest rank can scarce cleave to the lowest, that he be not engulfed in the abyss? Yet how rare is even such a man among the clergy! Whom, likewise, do you give me who is content with necessaries, who despises superfluities? Yet the law has been enjoined beforehand by the Apostles on the successors of the Apostles, *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content*.¹⁴ Where is this rule? We see it in books, but not in men. But you have [the saying] about the righteous man, that *the law of his God is in his heart*,¹⁵ not in a codex. Nor is that

11 Cp. Matt. v. 47.

12 Luke iii. 14.

13 Isa. xxiv. 2; Hos. iv. 9 (inexact quotation).

14 1 Tim. vi. 8 (inexact quotation).

15 Ps. xxxvii. 31.

the standard of perfection. The perfect man is ready to forgo even necessities. But that is beside the mark. Would that some limit were set on superfluous things! Would that our desires were not infinite! But what? Perhaps you might find one who can achieve this. It would indeed be difficult; but [if we find him] see what we have done. We were seeking for a very good man, a deliverer of many; and lo, we have labour to discover one who can save himself. The very good man today is one who is not utterly bad.

2. Wherefore, *since the godly man has ceased*¹⁶ from the earth, it seems to me that I do not employ myself to no purpose when I recall to our midst, from among those *who were redeemed from the earth*,¹⁷ Bishop Malachy, a man truly holy, and a man, too, of our own time, of singular wisdom and virtue. *He was a burning and a shining light*,¹⁸ and it has not been quenched, but only removed. Who would with good right be angry with me if I move it back again? Yes indeed, neither the men of my own age, nor any succeeding generation should be wanting in gratitude to me if by my pen I

16 Ps. xii. 1.

17 Rev. xiv. 3.

18 John v. 35.

recall one whom the course of nature has borne away; if I restore to the world one *of whom the world was not worthy*;¹⁹ if I preserve for the memory of men one *whose memory may be blessed*²⁰ to all who shall deign to read; if while I rouse my sleeping friend, *the voice of the turtle be heard in our land*²¹ saying, *Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*²² Then again, he was buried among us; this duty is eminently ours. Nay, is it not mine, inasmuch as that holy man included me among his special friends, and in such regard that I may believe that I was second to none *in that respect of glory*?²³ Nor do I find that intercourse with holiness so eminent misses its reward; I have already received the first-fruits. He was near the end; nay, rather, near the beginning, according to the saying, *when a man hath finished then is he but at the beginning.*²⁴ I ran to him that *the blessing of him that was ready to die might come upon me.*²⁵ Already he could not move his other limbs;

19 Heb. xi. 38.

20 Ecclus. xlv. 1.

21 Cant. ii. 12.

22 Matt. xxviii. 20.

23 Apparently a confused reference to 2 Cor. iii. 10; xi. 17 (vg.).

24 Ecclus. xviii. 7 (inexact quotation).

25 Job xxix. 13.

but, mighty to give blessing, he raised his hands upon my head and blessed me. I have *inherited the blessing*;²⁶ how then can I be silent about him? Finally, you enjoin me to undertake this task, Abbot Congan, my reverend brother and sweet friend, and with you also (as you write from Ireland) *all that Church of the saints*²⁷ to which you belong. I obey with a will, the more so because you ask not panegyric but narrative. I shall endeavour that it may be chaste and clear, informing the devout, and not wearying the fastidious. At any rate the truth of my narrative is assured, since it has been communicated by you; and beyond doubt you assert nothing but things of which you have most certain information.

26 1 Pet. iii. 9.

27 Ecclus. xxxi. 11 (vg.).

CHAPTER I

The early life of Malachy. Having been admitted to Holy Orders he associates with Malchus.

1. Our Malachy, born in Ireland, of a barbarous people, was brought up there, and there received his education. But from the barbarism of his birth he contracted no taint, any more than the fishes of the sea from their native salt. But how delightful to reflect, that uncultured barbarism should have produced for us so worthy *a fellow-citizen with the saints and member of the household of God.*²⁸ He who brings *honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock*²⁹ Himself did this. His parents, however, were great both by descent and in power, *like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.*³⁰ Moreover his mother, more noble in mind than in blood, took pains, *in the very beginning of his*

28 Eph. ii. 19.

29 Deut. xxxii. 13.

30 2 Sam. vii. 9.

ways,³¹ to show to her child *the ways of life*,³² esteeming this knowledge of more value to him than the empty knowledge of the learning of this world. For both, however, he had aptitude in proportion to his age. In the schools *he was taught* learning, at home *the fear of the Lord*,³³ and by daily progress he duly responded to both teacher and mother. For indeed he was endowed from the first with a *good spirit*,³⁴ in virtue of which he was a docile boy and very lovable, wonderfully gracious to all in all things. But he was [now] drinking, instead of milk from the breast of a mother, *the waters of saving wisdom*,³⁵ and day by day he was increasing in discretion. In discretion, shall I say, or in holiness? If I say both, I shall not regret it, *for I should say the truth*.³⁶ He behaved as an old man, a boy in years without a boy's playfulness. And when because of this he was regarded with reverence and astonishment by all, he was not found on that account, as commonly happens, more arrogant, but rather quiet and subdued in

31 Prov. viii. 22.

32 Ps. xvi. 11.

33 Ps. xxxiv. 11.

34 Neh. ix. 20; Ps. cxliiii. 10.

35 Eccclus. xv. 2, 3 (vg.).

36 2 Cor. xii. 6.

*all meekness.*³⁷ Not impatient of rule, not shunning discipline, not averse from reading, not, therefore, eager for games—so especially dear to the heart of boys of that age. *And he advanced beyond all of his own age*³⁸ in that learning, at least, which suited his years. For in discipline of morals and advance in virtues in a short time he even outshone *all his instructors.*³⁹ His *unction,*⁴⁰ however, rather than his mother, was his teacher. Urged by it he exercised himself not slothfully also in divine things, to seek solitude, *to anticipate vigils,*⁴¹ *to meditate in the law,*⁴² to eat sparingly, to pray frequently, and (because on account of his studies he had not leisure to frequent the church, and from modesty would not) *to lift up holy hands everywhere*⁴³ to heaven; but only where it could be done secretly—for already he was careful to avoid vainglory, that poison of virtues.

2. There is a hamlet near the city in which the boy studied, whither his teacher was wont to go often,

37 Eph. iv. 2.

38 Gal. i. 14.

39 Ps. cxix. 99.

40 1 John ii. 20.

41 Ps. lxxvii. 4 (vg.).

42 Ps. i. 2.

43 1 Tim. ii. 8.

accompanied by him alone. When they were going there both together, as he related afterwards, he would *step back, stop a moment*, and standing behind his teacher, when he was not aware of it, *spread forth his hands toward heaven*,⁴⁴ and quickly send forth a prayer, as if it were a dart; and, thus dissembling, once more would follow the teacher. By such a pious trick the boy often deceived him who was his companion as well as teacher. It is not possible to mention all the qualities which adorned his earlier years with the hue of a good natural disposition; we must hasten to greater and more useful matters. One further incident, however, I relate because, in my judgement, it yielded a sign, not only of good, but also of great hope in the boy. Roused once on a time by the reputation of a certain teacher, famous in the studies which are called liberal, he went to him desiring to learn. For indeed he was now grasping after the last opportunities of boyhood, and was longing eagerly for such learning. But when he went into the house he saw the man playing with an awl, and with rapid strokes making furrows in the wall in some strange fashion. And shocked at the bare sight, because it smacked of levity, the serious boy dashed away from

44 1 Kings viii. 22, 54.

him, and did not care even to see him from that time forward. Thus, though an avid student of letters, as a lover of virtue he esteemed them lightly in comparison with that which was becoming. By such preliminary exercises the boy was being prepared for the conflict which awaited him in more advanced age; and already in his own person he was challenging the adversary. Such, then, was the boyhood of Malachy. Moreover he passed through his adolescence with like simplicity and purity; except that as *years* increased, there *increased* also for him *wisdom and favour with God and man*.⁴⁵

3. From this time, that is, from his early adolescence, *what was in the man*⁴⁶ began to appear more plainly, and it came to be seen that *the grace of God which was in him was not in vain*.⁴⁷ For the *industrious young man*,⁴⁸ seeing how *the world lieth in wickedness*,⁴⁹ and considering what sort of spirit *he had received*, said within himself, “It is *not the spirit of this world*.”⁵⁰ What have

45 Luke ii. 40, 52.

46 John ii. 25.

47 1 Cor. xv. 10.

48 1 Kings xi. 28.

49 1 John v. 19.

50 1 Cor. ii. 12.

the two in common?⁵¹ One has no *communion* with the other any more than *light with darkness*.⁵² But my spirit is of God, and I know the things that are freely given me⁵³ in it. From it I have innocence of life till now, from it the ornament of continence, from it hunger for *righteousness*,⁵⁴ from it also that *glory of mine*, by so much more secure because it is more secret, *the testimony of my conscience*.⁵⁵ None of these is safe for me under *the prince of this world*.⁵⁶ Then, *I have this treasure in an earthen vessel*.⁵⁷ I must take heed lest it should strike against something and be broken, and the *oil of gladness*⁵⁸ which I carry be poured out. And in truth it is most difficult not to strike *against something amid* the stones and rocks of *this* crooked and winding way and life. Must I thus in a moment lose together all *the blessings of goodness with which* I have been *prevented*⁵⁹ from the beginning? Rather do I resign them,

51 Cp. John ii. 4 (vg.).

52 2 Cor. vi. 14.

53 1 Cor. ii. 12.

54 Cp. Matt. v. 6.

55 2 Cor. i. 12 (vg.).

56 John xiv. 30, etc.

57 2 Cor. iv. 7.

58 Ps. xlv. 7.

59 Ps. xxi. 3.

and myself with them, to Him from whom they come. Yea, and I am His. I *lose my very soul*⁶⁰ for a time that I may not lose it for ever. And what I am and all that I have, where can they be as safe as in the hand of their Author? Who so concerned to preserve, so powerful to hold, so faithful to restore? He will preserve in safety. He will restore in good time. Without hesitation I give myself to serve Him by His gifts. I cannot lose aught of all that I spend on my labour of piety. Perchance I may even hope for some greater boon. He who gives freely is wont to repay with usury. So it is. He will even heap up and *increase virtue in my soul*.⁶¹

So he thought—and did; *knowing that* apart from deeds *the thoughts of man are vanity*.⁶²

4. (3) There was a man in the city of Armagh, where Malachy was brought up—a holy man and of great austerity of life, a pitiless *castigator of his body*,⁶³ who had a cell near the church. In it he abode, *servicing God*

60 Matt. x. 39.

61 Ps. cxxxviii. 3 (vg.).

62 Ps. xciv. 11.

63 1 Cor. ix. 27 (vg.).

*with fastings and prayers day and night.*⁶⁴ To this man Malachy betook himself to receive a rule of life from him, who had condemned himself while alive to such sepulture. And note his humility. From his earliest age he had had God as his teacher—there is no doubt of it—in the art of holiness; and behold, he became once more the disciple of a man, himself a man *meek and lowly in heart.*⁶⁵ If we did not know it, by this one deed he himself gave us proof of it. Let them read this who attempt to teach what they have not learned, *heaping to themselves* disciples,⁶⁶ though they have never been disciples, *blind leaders of the blind.*⁶⁷ Malachy, *taught of God,*⁶⁸ none the less sought a man to be his teacher, and that carefully and wisely. By what better method, I ask, could he both give and receive a proof of his progress? If the example of Malachy *is* for them *a very small thing,*⁶⁹ let them consider the action of Paul. Did not he judge that his *Gospel*, though he had *not received it*

64 Luke ii. 37.

65 Matt. xi. 29.

66 Cp. 2 Tim. iv. 3.

67 Matt. xv. 14.

68 Isa. liv. 13; John vi. 45.

69 1 Cor. iv. 3.

*of man but from Christ,*⁷⁰ *should be discussed with men, lest by any means he was running or had run in vain.*⁷¹ Where he was not confident, neither am I. If any one be thus confident let him take heed lest it be not so much confidence as rashness. But these matters belong to another time.

5. Now, however, the rumour of what had happened went through the city, and it was universally stirred by this new and unexpected event. All were amazed, and wondered at his virtue, all the more because it was unusual in a rude people. You would see that then *thoughts were being revealed out of the hearts of many.*⁷² The majority, considering the act from a human standpoint, were lamenting and grieving that a youth who was an object of love and delight to all had given himself up to such severe labours. Others, suspecting lightness on account of his age, doubted whether he would persevere, and feared a fall. Some, accusing him of rashness, were in fact highly indignant with him because he had undertaken a difficult task, beyond his age and strength, without consulting them. But without coun-

70 Gal. i. 11, 12.

71 Gal. ii. 2.

72 Luke ii. 35.

sel he did nothing; for he had counsel from the prophet who says, *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth*, and adds, *He sitteth alone and keepeth silence because he hath borne it upon him.*⁷³ The youth sat at the feet of Imar (for that was the man's name) and either *learned obedience*⁷⁴ or showed that he had learnt it. He sat as one that was at rest, as meek, as humble. *He sat and kept silence*, knowing, as the prophet says, that *silence is the ornament of righteousness.*⁷⁵ *He sat* as one that perseveres, *he was silent* as one that is modest, except that by that silence of his he was speaking, with holy David, in the ears of God: *I am a youth and despised, yet do not I forget thy precepts.*⁷⁶ And for a time *he sat alone*, because he had neither companion nor example; for who before Malachy even thought of attempting the most severe discipline inculcated by the man? It was held by all indeed to be wonderful, but not imitable. Malachy showed that it was imitable by the mere act of sitting and keeping silence. In a few days he had imitators not a few, stirred by his example. So

73 Lam. iii. 27, 28 (inexact quotation).

74 Heb. v. 8.

75 Isa. xxxii. 17 (vg.).

76 Ps. cxix. 141 (vg.).

he who at first *sat alone*⁷⁷ and the only son of his father, became now one of many, from being *the only-begotten*⁷⁸ became *the firstborn among many brethren*.⁷⁹ And as he was before them in conversion, so was he more sublime than they in conversation; and he who came before all, in the judgement of all was eminent above all in virtue. And he seemed both to his bishop and to his teacher, worthy to be promoted to the degree of deacon. *And they constrained him*.⁸⁰

6. (4) From this time onwards the Levite of the Lord publicly girded himself to every work of piety, but more especially to those things in which there seemed some indignity. In fact it was his greatest care to attend to the burial of the dead poor, because that savoured not less of humility than of humanity. Nor did *temptation* fail to test our modern Tobit, and, as in the old story, it came from a woman,⁸¹ or rather from the serpent through a woman.⁸² His sister, abhorring the indig-

77 Lam. iii. 28.

78 John i. 14, 18.

79 Rom. viii. 29.

80 Luke xxiv. 29.

81 Tobit ii. 12 (vg.).

82 Cp. Gen. iii. 12 f.

nity (as it seemed to her) of his office, said: “What are you doing, madman? *Let the dead bury their dead.*”⁸³ And she attacked him daily with this *reproach*.⁸⁴ But he *answered the foolish woman according to her folly*,⁸⁵ “Wretched woman, you preserve the sound of the *pure word*,⁸⁶ but you are ignorant of its force.” So he maintained with devotion, and exercised unweariedly the ministry which he had undertaken under compulsion. For that reason also they deemed that the office of the priesthood should be conferred upon him. And this was done. But when he was ordained priest he was about twenty-five years old. And if in both his ordinations the rule of the Canons seems to have been somewhat disregarded—as indeed does seem to have been the case, for he received the Levitical ministry before his twenty-fifth, and the dignity of the priesthood before his thirtieth year—it may well be ascribed to the zeal of the ordainer and the merits of him who was ordained. But for my part, I consider that such irregularity should neither be condemned in the case of a saint, nor deliberately claimed by him who is not a saint. Not content

83 Matt. viii. 22.

84 Tobit ii. 23 (vg.).

85 Prov. xxvi. 5.

86 Ps. xii. 6.

with this the bishop also committed to him his own authority *to sow the holy seed*⁸⁷ in a *nation* which was not *holy*,⁸⁸ and to give to a people rude and living *without law*,⁸⁹ the law of life and of discipline. He received the command with all alacrity, even as he was *fervent in spirit*,⁹⁰ not hoarding up his talents, but eager for profit from them.⁹¹ And behold he began to *root out* with the hoe of the tongue, *to destroy, to scatter*,⁹² day by day making *the crooked straight and the rough places plain*.⁹³ *He rejoiced as a giant to run* everywhere.⁹⁴ You might call him a consuming *fire* burning *the briers* of crimes.⁹⁵ You might call him *an axe* or *a mattock casting down*⁹⁶ evil plantings. He extirpated barbaric rites, he planted those of the Church. All out-worn superstitions (for not a few of them were discovered) he abolished, and,

87 Luke viii. 5.

88 1 Pet. ii. 9.

89 Rom. ii. 12.

90 Rom. xii. 11.

91 Cp. Matt. xxv. 24 ff.

92 Jer. i. 10 (vg.).

93 Isa. xl. 4.

94 Ps. xix. 5.

95 Cp. Isa. x. 17.

96 Ps. lxxiv. 6 (vg.).

wheresoever he found it, every sort of malign influence *sent by evil angels*.⁹⁷

7. In fine whatsoever came to his notice which was irregular or unbecoming or perverse his *eye did not spare*,⁹⁸ but as the hail scatters the *untimely figs from the fig-trees*,⁹⁹ and as *the wind the dust from the face of the earth*,¹⁰⁰ so did he strive with all his might to drive out before his face and destroy entirely such things from his people. And in place of all these the most excellent legislator delivered the heavenly laws. He made regulations full of righteousness, full of moderation and integrity. Moreover in all churches he ordained the apostolic sanctions and the decrees of the holy fathers, and especially the customs of the holy Roman Church. Hence it is that to this day there is chanting and psalmody in them at the canonical hours after the fashion of the whole world. For there was no such thing before, not even in the city. He, however, had learnt singing in his youth, and soon he introduced song into his monastery, while as yet none in the city, nor in the whole

97 Ps. lxxviii. 49 (vg.: inexact quotation).

98 Ezek. v. 11, etc.

99 Cp. Rev. vi. 13.

100 Ps. i. 4 (vg.).

bishopric, could or would sing. Then Malachy instituted anew the most wholesome usage of Confession, the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Marriage contract—of all of which they were either ignorant or negligent. And let these serve as an example of the rest, for [here] and through the whole course of the history we omit much for the sake of brevity.

8. (5). Since he had a desire and a very great zeal for the honouring of the divine offices and the veneration of the sacraments, lest by chance he might ordain or teach anything concerning these matters otherwise than that which was in accordance with the rite of the universal Church, it came into his mind to visit Bishop Malchus, that he might give him fuller information on all points. He was *an old man, full of days*¹⁰¹ and virtues, and *the wisdom of God was in him*.¹⁰² He was of Irish nationality, but had lived in England in the habit and rule of a monk in the monastery of Winchester, from which he was promoted to be bishop in Lismore, a city of Munster, and one of the noblest of the cities of that kingdom. There so great grace was bestowed upon him from above that he was illustrious, not only for life and

101 Gen. xxxv. 29; 1 Chron. xxiii. 1; Job xlii. 16.

102 1 Kings iii. 28.

doctrine, but also for signs. Of these I set down two as examples, that it may be known to all what sort of preceptor Malachy had in the knowledge of holy things. He healed a boy, who was troubled with a mental disorder, one of those who are called lunatics, in the act of confirming him with the holy unction. This was so well known and certain that he soon made him porter of his house, and the boy lived in good health in that office till he reached manhood. He restored hearing to one who was deaf; in which miracle the deaf person acknowledged a wonderful fact, that when the saint put his fingers into his ears on either side he perceived that two things like little pigs came out of them. For these and other such deeds, his fame increased and he won a great name; so that Scots and Irish flowed together to him and he was revered by all as the one father of all.

When therefore Malachy, having received the blessing of Father Imar, and having been sent by the bishop, came to him, after a prosperous journey, he was kindly received by the old man; and he remained with him for some years, in order that by staying so long he might draw fuller draughts from his aged breast, knowing

that which is written, *With the ancient is wisdom*.¹⁰³ But I suppose that another cause of his long sojourn was that the great Foreseer of all things would have His servant Malachy become known to all in a place to which so many resorted, since he was to be useful to all. For he could not but be dear to those who knew him. In fact one thing happened in that period, by which in some measure he made manifest to men what had been known to God as being in him.

9. A conflict having taken place between the king of South Munster—which is the southern part of Ireland—and his brother, and the brother being victorious, the king, driven from his kingdom, sought refuge with Bishop Malchus. It was not, however, in order that with his help he should recover the kingdom; but rather the devout prince *gave place unto wrath*¹⁰⁴ and made a virtue of necessity, choosing to lead a private life. And when the bishop was preparing to receive the king with due honour, he declined it, saying that he preferred to be as one of those poor brothers who consoorted with him, to lay aside his royal state, and to be content with the common poverty, rather to await the

103 Job xii. 12.

104 Rom. xii. 19.

will of God than to get back his kingdom by force; and that he would not for his earthly honour *shed man's blood*,¹⁰⁵ since it would *cry unto* God against him *from the ground*.¹⁰⁶ When he heard this the bishop rejoiced greatly, and with admiration for his devotion satisfied his desire. Why more? The king is given a poor house for his dwelling, Malachy for his teacher, bread with salt and water for his food. Moreover for dainties, the presence of Malachy, his life and doctrine, were sufficient for the king; so that he might say to him, *How sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth*.¹⁰⁷ Besides, *every night he watered his couch with his tears*,¹⁰⁸ and also with a daily bath of cold water he quenched the burning lust for evil in his flesh. And the king prayed in the words of another king, *Look upon my affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins*.¹⁰⁹ And *God did not turn away his prayer nor His mercy from him*.¹¹⁰ *And his supplication was heard*,¹¹¹ although oth-

105 Gen. ix. 6.

106 Gen. iv. 10.

107 Ps. cxix. 103.

108 Ps. vi. 6 (vg.).

109 Ps. xxiv. 18.

110 Ps. lxvi. 20.

111 Ecclus. li. 11.

erwise than he had desired. For he was troubled about his soul; but God, the avenger of innocence, willing to show men *that there is a remainder for the man of peace*,¹¹² was preparing meanwhile *to execute a judgement for the oppressed*,¹¹³ which was utterly beyond his hope. And God *stirred up the spirit* of a neighbouring king:¹¹⁴ for Ireland is not one kingdom, but is divided into many. This king therefore seeing what had been done, was filled with wrath; and indignant, on the one hand, at the freedom of the raiders and the insolence of the proud, and on the other, pitying the desolation of the kingdom and the downfall of the king, he went down to the cell of the poor man; urged him to return, but did not succeed in persuading him. He was instant, nevertheless, pledged himself to help him, assured him that he need not doubt the result, promised that God would be with him, *whom all his adversaries would not be able to resist*.¹¹⁵ He laid before him also the oppression of the poor and the devastation of his country; yet he prevailed not.

112 Ps. xxxvii. 37 (vg.).

113 Ps. cxlvi. 7.

114 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22.

115 Luke xxi. 15.

10. But when to these arguments were added the command of the bishop and the advice of Malachy—the two men on whom he wholly depended—at length, with difficulty, he consented. A king followed a king, and according to the word of the king, *as was the will in heaven*,¹¹⁶ the marauders were driven out with absolute ease, and the man was led back to his own, with great rejoicing of his people, and was restored to his kingdom. From that time the king loved and always revered Malachy; so much the more because he had learned more fully in the holy man the things that were worthy of reverence and affection. For he could not be ignorant of the holiness of him with whom he had enjoyed so much intimacy in his adversity. Therefore he honoured him the more in his prosperity with constant acts of friendship, and faithful services, *and he heard him gladly, and when he heard him did many things*.¹¹⁷ But enough of this. Nevertheless I suppose it was not without purpose that the Lord so magnified him then *before kings*,¹¹⁸ but *he was a chosen vessel unto Him, about to bear His name before kings and princes*.¹¹⁹

116 1 Macc. iii. 60.

117 Mark vi. 20.

118 Ps. cxix. 46.

119 Acts ix. 15.