Anselm

Archbishop, Confessor, Saint

E.M. Wilmot-Buxton

Stabat Mater Press

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Chapter One

The Awakening of the Eleventh Century

Everybody knows that the history of nations is but the history of the individual 'writ large'; and this is perhaps most clearly seen in that period of awakening and growth that we know as the eleventh century.

The stormy years of the youth of Europe were nearly at an end; those years of struggle and warfare, when the limits of countries and the rights of nations were yet unsettled, and men were so busy fighting one another for the things of the material world that those which belong to the world of the intellect and the soul were wellnigh forgotten.

But when this time of stress was over, Europe, like a youth emerging into studious, thoughtful manhood, began to take heed of these higher matters and to realize the superior claims of things spiritual. And so it came about that this eleventh century was to see a great struggle between Church and State, representing, in those days, the forces of religion, morality, learning, often of civilization itself, arrayed against the claims of absolutism and brute force.

Two pairs of striking figures represent to us this struggle of spiritual rights against secular demands. In Europe we find the fiery Hildebrand, as Pope Gregory VII, opposing with all his might the claims of the Emperor Henry IV; in England the two

conflicting elements are Anselm, gentlest of archbishops, and the stubborn-faced, angry-eyed Red King, William II.

Nominally, the question upon which the struggle turned in either case was that of 'Investiture,' or the right of granting to the recipient of a bishopric or abbey the spiritual rights symbolized by the ring and staff.

Actually, these 'spiritual rights' were themselves only the symbol of a far more important matter, summed up in this question:

Was the government of the kingdoms of Christendom to pass entirely under the control of lay princes, who at any time might be heathen in heart if not in name? Or was it to be shared to any important extent by that great organization, standing in those days for learning of all kinds, for morality, for discipline, which, since the days of Charlemagne, had been known as the Holy Roman Empire?

Now, to understand the importance of the answer to this question we must try to realize the condition of Europe in those days.

The 'Dark Ages,' during which to a great extent brute force held sway, were almost over when the eleventh century opened. A long struggle against the powers of paganism had been fought, and, thanks to the influence of the Church, even where, as in Normandy and England, the heathen conquerors had overspread the land, the faith of civilized Europe had asserted itself again and again, and the conquering Northman had become a convert to Christianity.

But in such a period of struggle and darkness it was inevitable that the lights of Christendom should burn very low. The end of the reign of Charlemagne, 'Second Emperor of the West,' broke up his great Empire, and amid the gloom and darkness of the tenth century we look in vain for any influence for good in the highest quarters of the Church. Where it had once been the aim of bishops and kings to build up, strengthen, establish, all alike

had become absorbed with the rest of Europe in a passion for ruin and destruction.

When neither the realm of the sovereign nor the loaf of the labourer was free from marauding bands, it became scarcely worthwhile to attempt to rule righteously or to labour for one's daily bread. And so, in an age when every man's hand was against his neighbour, when all were content to destroy rather than construct, the dignity, the obligation of honest work as well as the still more necessary duty of prayer, became a lost ideal.

The rapid growth of the feudal system, depending as it did almost solely on the principle of 'might is right,' did little to improve matters; for the powers of religion had now to pit themselves not only against the hordes of heathendom, but also against that spirit of greed, injustice, and ferocity which soon became the characteristic of feudalism.

Not seldom the Church was found on the side of the great feudal lords. Almost of necessity the bishop was forced to handle the sword rather than the missal, and to leave the altar for the battlefield; and though the Empire whose Head sat in the chair of St Peter in Rome managed to keep its hold upon Europe, this was done not so much by spiritual bonds as by secular force.

This state of things lasted throughout the tenth century and well into the eleventh; yet even before the tenth century was over there were some among the few who had leisure to watch and judge who saw the first faint dawn of a vast impulse toward better things.

It came from the direction of Cluny, a monastery founded in Burgundy by some few men who, despairing of the condition of society in the world of that day, hoped to live, under the strict rule of St Benedict, a common life more in accordance with the ideals of Christianity.

From thence the movement spread. New monasteries arose which in course of time brought about a great revival of religion.

As has been well said, "When Christendom had won a clear space in which to pray and think, the Church returned to its proper task."

That task was no light one. Feudal Europe had to be taught that war for war's sake was no part of the teaching of Him who said "Love your enemies"; that this life is but a preparation for another; that honest labour is of greater merit than brilliant conquests.

And for many more years the Church, as a whole, stood dumb, waiting for her own great revival in the days of Hildebrand, the monk of Cluny, who as Gregory VII was to make the authority of the Pope supreme in Europe.

Meantime the message was left in the hands of these 'reformed Benedictines,' destined, curiously enough, to bring about by their very withdrawal from the world a reformation of society as far-reaching as it was thorough. Their method was to set up high ideals rather than to destroy existing abuses; for the spirit of St Benedict was all "for service rather than destruction, for love rather than for strife."

"Every Benedictine community stood for one thing Europe; it preached the sacred dignity of labour and the hatefulness of destruction. In an age when men counted their manhood by the amount they could destroy, when their pastime, as their pride, was to wreck, or to prevent others from wrecking them, the rule which commanded labour as necessary to the soul's health reminded an astonished world of the dignity of labour."

No sooner was this ideal accepted and made a permanent influence in Europe than a new aim arose. Since the merging of Church and State for the sake of unity against a common foe had inevitably led to the loss of high spiritual aims, any real attempt at reform must set up a kingdom of Christ that was not under the rule of earthly monarchs. The Church must be kept separate

from the State, and must be free from the interference of the secular power.

Such an ideal would be hard to fulfill in any age, since it must always be the duty of the Church to concern herself with the reform of that very society which it is the work of the State to organize. It was almost impossible in a period when the line of action taken by the Church depended very largely on the character of popes who, not content with spiritual authority, were determined to make their voices very distinctly heard in secular affairs.

So it came to pass that when, as we shall see, a clever, ambitious, and courageous man such as Hildebrand sat as Pope Gregory VII in the chair of St Peter, he was able to humble a proud emperor to the dust and to assert beyond doubt the triumph of Church over State. But this had its own inevitable drawback.

In a movement of *spiritual* reform the worldly success of Hildebrand counted as very little. To the onlooker it was merely the old strife of feudal lords under a modern disguise. No doubt it was necessary to reassert the high position of the Church, to insist upon her claims to spiritual supremacy; but the spectacle of an emperor shivering in his thin tunic among the snow-wreaths of Canossa, and there refused admittance to the Pope to whom he had offered his submission, did less to strengthen the Papacy in Europe than did the decrees against buying and selling spiritual offices, or the reform of the private life of the clergy.

The story of Hildebrand will be told more fully in a future chapter. We may turn from it now to the happier tale which tells of the foundation of the abbey that was to be the place of preparation for one who, in his own quiet way, was to do much to uphold the high ideals and spiritual rights of the Church, while caring not a jot for worldly privileges.

For what was really needed during the eleventh century was a man not only of learning but of saintly life; a man who might combine keen spiritual insight with a firm and courageous grasp of the just rights of the Church he served.

Nowhere, perhaps, in Europe was a man of this kind so much needed as in England; and it was therefore, all unknowingly, for England that a certain young monk was being prepared and trained within the walls of that abbey whose story shall now be told.

Chapter Two

The Founding of St Marie Du Bec

Nothing in the eleventh century illustrates more effectively the contrast between the worldly life of the knight and courtier and that of the monk in his cloister than the story of the founding of the Abbey of Le Bec. For this contrast, curiously enough, is seen in the life of one man, sometime soldier and gentleman at ease, who became the founder and first abbot of this famous monastery, and performed his task, not when he was worn out with years and weary of worldly joys, but in the prime of his strength and at the height of popularity and success.

At the court of Gilbert, Count of Brionne, cousin of Robert Duke of Normandy, lived a certain gentleman named Herlwin, who some few years before the birth of Anselm had won for himself a high reputation as a "very perfect gentle knight." Both in Brionne and Normandy his prowess was known: as first in the field of battle, as bravest of his lord's companions, as the flower of knightly chivalry.

In those rough days a man was fortunate indeed who escaped any semblance of quarrel with his overlord, and a story of the time tells how Herlwin, his honour touched by some rude personal affront of Gilbert, once withdrew himself and all his following from court and retired to his own castle. Soon afterward he heard that his lord had been obliged to go out against an ancient foe, who, being far the stronger in his forces of war,

was likely to win the day. A meaner man would have felt the threatened humiliation a worthy penalty for Gilbert to pay; but the generous Herlwin at once laid aside his private quarrel, called his men together, and, riding rapidly to the field of battle, took his place by the side of his lord and helped to ensure him the victory.

For this act honours of every kind were heaped upon him by Gilbert, and the praises of all men were his. And then at the very height of success, flattered and honoured by everyone, Herlwin suddenly found his whole position unbearable, and from it he longed, like any prisoner, to make his escape.

For to the man of the world, the accomplished courtier, the successful soldier, had suddenly and unmistakably come the call of God to leave all and follow Him.

Many were the difficulties in his path. To leave his lands and people to the mercy of an offended overlord seemed altogether wrong; the permission of Gilbert to leave his service was withheld, with a jeer, indeed, but firmly enough; and he had, moreover, no knowledge of what religious order he should enter, nor much idea of all that the monastic life implied. In those days of difficult travelling Cluny would be little more than a name to him, and probably appealed not at all to a man of mature years who yet knew nothing of how to read or write.

For a while he tried the impossible task of living the life of a monk in the world, and, while obeying the command of Gilbert to attend the court, laid aside his gay clothes, ceased to trim hair and beard, and sitting at the banquet table contented himself with dry bread and a cup of cold water. In vain did his master and the other courtiers reason with him, jeer, or threaten. Gilbert in desperation even tried the expedient of sending Herlwin as ambassador to some of the ducal courts, where he had always been treated with such signal honour. It was hoped that very shame and dread of ridicule would make him put off his shabby

tunic, trim his beard, and ride forth upon his discarded warhorse. But, to the dismay of all, the knight set off calmly on his errand in his poorest attire and most unkempt appearance, riding upon a humble ass.

Some scoffed anew, but Gilbert put him to further test by bidding him take a message, that would involve one of his neighbours in an unjust war, to Duke Robert the Norman. Herlwin refused absolutely, and abruptly left the court he had grown to hate. His master proceeded in a tempest of rage to declare his estates forfeit and to deprive his vassals of their homes and goods. At the entreaties of his distressed dependents, Herlwin returned to court and implored Gilbert's mercy upon them. "For my own possessions, take them and do with them what you will, if only these poor folk, who have done nothing to deserve your displeasure, have their goods restored."

The courtiers burst into a storm of reproaches for his previous defiance of Gilbert's commands. The Count and the knight looked steadfastly upon one another with softening gaze. Then Gilbert, hurrying to his chamber, broke into bitter tears at the thought of the loss, now clearly inevitable, of one he dearly loved. Herlwin, going sorrowfully forth, wept also for the lord he had once served so well. It needed only one more incident to bring matters to a climax.

At Gilbert's most earnest entreaty he had consented to stay a while longer at the court, partly, no doubt, because the future was still so dark and uncertain. He even took up arms again and followed his lord on one of his many border raids, this time against Ingelram, Count of Ponthieu. But Ingelram, falling upon them with a very great force, put to flight Count Gilbert and all his men, most of whom were overtaken and slain. And then it was that by Herlwin, fleeing for his life, the vow was made that "if he escaped from so present a danger, he would henceforth be soldier to none but God."

So in the year 1031, two or possibly three years before Anselm, his future novice and monk, was born, Herlwin went forth from the court of Brionne, intent, not on founding a great abbey, nor on a striking reformation of society, but merely on the salvation of his own soul in answer to the call of God.

We find in the history of this one man at this time an epitome of what was going on in the Europe of his day; a call to those who wished to be sincere and upright and just to leave the world of feudalism, with its constant petty wars, its injustice, its spiritual ignorance, and to come apart, not necessarily as monks, but with the intention of living up to the monastic ideal of simplicity and honour and labour and self-sacrifice. It was the protest of the age against a life practically of heathenism, which, had it gone on unchecked, would have swamped Europe anew in the black gloom of the Dark Ages.

So Herlwin went forth to find out what he could about the monasteries then existing in Normandy in the hope of eventually making one of them his spiritual home. In this quest he was singularly unfortunate. Not all the Benedictine houses of his day were of the reformed type of Cluny; and Normandy, barely civilized as yet, was not likely to possess monasteries of the most refined character.

Timidly he entered the doorway leading to the cloister of one of these, and stood gazing with eager interest at the monks within. It was the time of recreation, and to his mind, tuned perhaps a trifle too high at that period, the men whom he was ready to revere as almost saints were conducting themselves in fashion frivolous enough even to one accustomed to the idle amusements of a court. But, even as he stood gazing, there came suddenly upon him a brawny lay-brother, porter to the gate, who, taking him for a thief, struck him a heavy blow on the nape of the neck, and, seizing him by the beard as he fell, thrust him headlong forth.

At another monastery of some renown in Normandy he found the monks passing in procession to the church. Hoping to find here the devotion he longed after, be joined the band of lookers-on, and was scandalized to see the vanity with which the brothers displayed their fine vestments, and the way in which they freely distributed nods and smiles to their friends among the crowd. Finally, the spectacle of their struggle to be first to enter the church, in which struggle one of their number was stretched headlong by a blow from an angry fist, so disgusted the would-be monk that he turned away almost in despair.

The obvious solution for a man of property like Herlwin was to found his own monastery and to introduce therein his own high ideals. At Burneville, near Brionne, he made his first attempt, helping to build with his own hands a humble dwelling-place, where he was joined by a few companions, probably his former men-at-arms. But the site was a bad one. Vowed to live upon the produce of the land, the tiny community was often faced with instant starvation owing to the unproductive soil, and had scarce strength to crawl the necessary mile or two to the nearest spring for water. Yet for nearly five years they remained there, suffering extreme privation with the utmost cheerfulness, and training themselves in that fine spirit of detachment that was to be the glory of their future abode.

In 1034 the humble church was consecrated by a neighbouring bishop, who also 'clothed' with the coarse cowl and hood of St Benedict, Herlwin, the former fine gentleman of the court, together with his brother-in-law, his nephew, and two of his own former servants.

Herlwin Building His First Church

There, against his own will, but at the urgent request of the tiny community, Herlwin, now ordained priest, was consecrated the first abbot. For the past few years, while the convent had been a-building, he had set himself to accomplish a task of great difficulty to a man of forty years. A monk must say his office, must know his psalter, and hence must be able to read. Thus, while busily employed in laying the stones of the walls of a monastery that was, in another place, to be famous for its learning throughout Europe, we see its future abbot spending the night hours in the study of the alphabet, and later of the Holy Scriptures, and giving to prayer the time that the rest spent in sleep.

But even the most ascetic of monks cannot live on air, and after some consideration Herlwin determined to move to a more fertile spot just above a tributary stream known as Le Bec, or 'The Rivulet.' Here were raised the humble buildings afterward to become famous as the Abbey of St Marie du Bec, Our Lady of the Brook; and here, amid more hopeful surroundings, the number of the monks increased. Abbot Herlwin was not the only soldier to lay aside the sword for the psalter in those days, and these once warlike converts naturally sought a foundation where they would be received with sympathy and understanding.

In this there was one distinct disadvantage. A monastery without learning was a contradiction in terms, for spiritual wisdom needs as much serious study as secular. Herlwin, though

by hard work he had made himself very familiar with the sacred Scriptures, was not the man to educate the rest. Scholarship was badly wanted at Le Bec, and even as the need made itself felt, there approached its gates one of the finest scholars of the Europe of that day.

Educated as a secular teacher and lecturer, Lanfranc of Pavia had made his way into France, and at the town of Avranches had earned golden opinions from all who heard him speak. But success of this kind became more and more unsatisfactory to his ardent soul, and about the year 1042 he set out for Rouen with one companion, all his worldly goods being strapped upon the back of an ass. His aim was either to seek entrance into some unknown monastery, where the great teacher could be forgotten in the humble monk, or to make the experiment of living on the outskirts of the city as a hermit.

On the way he and his clerk, or secretary, were attacked by robbers, who carried off all that they possessed, leaving Lanfranc only a threadbare cloak in which to continue his journey. They had not gone far, however, when Lanfranc's well-stored mind recalled how one in former days, having been robbed of his horse, offered the thieves, as they were riding away, the whip for which he had no further use; and how this so touched them that they repented promptly of their wickedness and returned the good man both his horse and his whip. Simplicity is ever a quality of noble natures, and Lanfranc forthwith determined to try the same course. Hurrying after the robbers, he offered them the cloak they had left him; but they took the matter very ill, beat him soundly for what they considered his impudence, and finally left him bound to a tree and almost naked, with his friend in like case close by.

For a while the air was filled with the lamentations of the unhappy scholar and of his clerk, for the forest was full of beasts of prey, and they expected that every moment would be their

last. But, since nothing happened, the peace of the forest night stole over their souls, and morning light found Lanfranc, with mind weary but calm, attempting to recite his Matins and Lauds, the morning offices of the Church. Then he made a strange discovery. He, the famous scholar of whom all Europe had heard, did know how to repeat his morning prayers as well even as an ignorant child in the preparatory school. Breaking down with sobs and tears he cried:

"O Lord God, how many years have I spent upon this world's learning! I have wearied both my and soul with secular studies, but have not yet learnt to recite Thy praises. Deliver me from this trouble, and I will so order my life as to learn how to do Thee loyal service."

Soon after, he and his companion were found and released by some charcoal-burners of the forest; of whom, in his new passion of humility, Lanfranc asked the way to the poorest monastery of the district. They directed him promptly to Le Bec, saying that there the monks were too poverty-stricken In keep a light burning perpetually in their chapel.

It was still early in the morning when Lanfranc approached the humble dwelling and asked for the abbot. They pointed out a little bake-house, within which Herlwin, a dimly seen figure, was busy building an oven.

"God save you," said the stranger. "Are you the abbot?"

"I am," replied Herlwin, taking up a trowel-fill of mortar. "God bless you, my son; but why do you ask?"

"Because I wish to become a monk."

"Are you a Lombard?" asked Herlwin, struck by the more refined accent of the South, "and are you clerk or layman?"

"I am a clerk, a teacher in schools, and a Lombard. My name is Lanfranc."

With a premonition that this was the man he sought, Herlwin stooped forward, and, after taking a long look at the unexpect-

ed postulant through the half-finished aperture, said tranquilly: "Very well, my son. I receive you in the name of the Lord."

Upon this Lanfranc threw himself upon his knees, and, having kissed the clay-stained hands of his future superior, immediately set to work to help him build his oven.

The meeting of these two men under such homely circumstances is a landmark in history. For the influence of Lanfranc, developed by Anselm, was not only to make Le Bec famous throughout Christendom, but was to produce a type of man, spiritual and yet practical, wise with the wisdom of both worlds, able to rule as well as to obey. From the ranks of such men as these were drawn some of the most notable ecclesiastics that have ever lived, and by means of them not only were great educational reforms brought about, but the best side of the Benedictine spirit was developed, a spirit which did an immense amount to leaven, civilize, and uplift the moral state of Europe in the eleventh century.

It was not easy for Lanfranc, when he found that his only companions were ignorant monks, to settle down at Le Bec and divest himself of his pride of intellect and ambition while taking the position of an ordinary novice.

Humility had to be learnt in many bitter ways; and once his heart seems to have so failed him that he determined to go away and live the life of a hermit. But Herlwin's grief and deep affection constrained him to remain, and encouraged him to cultivate his real vocation as a teacher while living the life of a monk. Before long he was made Prior of Le Bec, and presently his skill in teaching his fellow-monks was noised abroad. Men asked in wonder: "Is this that Lanfranc who once had the learned world of France at his feet?"

Old pupils sought him out and brought new ones with them, and soon the classroom in the humble monastery became crowded with eager students, who lived in the cottages of the

neighbourhood. Fresh interests arose in other directions also, for he was soon called upon to play a part in the history of his own time.

Count Gilbert of Brionne had now been dead for is twelve years past, and his successor, Count Guy of Burgundy, had shown himself a generous friend to Le Bec, giving Herlwin a fertile stretch of land lying for some three miles above the monastery, containing a grange, or grassy enclosure for the storing of corn, protected by a thick palisade of wood.

But Duke William of Normandy, son of Duke Robert, had besieged the castle of Brionne in one of his many quarrels with neighbour barons; and while he was in the neighbourhood, being always interested in religious matters, he sought the counsel and spiritual help of Prior Lanfranc. Soon the two men, though of absolutely opposite types of character, established a sound friendship, which was not altogether, however, without peril. For William had an indomitable pride and Lanfranc a hatred of flattery and pretense that once bade fair to make shipwreck of their affection, when the monk boldly opposed the marriage of William with his kinswoman, Matilda. Of this we shall hear more later on. Now, the Duke had a certain ignorant upstart chaplain named Herfast, who had announced with great importance that he intended to patronize the lectures of Lanfranc. Riding down, surrounded by courtiers, to the little thatched building where the class was held, he very soon exposed his ignorance and vanity to such an extent that Lanfranc determined to teach him a really necessary lesson.

With great ceremony he set an alphabet before him, at which Herfast was so enraged that he posted back to William and succeeded in convincing him that Lanfranc had mocked and insulted, not only himself, but his royal master. Mindful of Lanfranc's attitude toward his marriage, and falling into one of his sudden fits of rage, the Duke commanded that the monks' grange, stored

as it was with corn, should forthwith be burnt, and Lanfranc banished from that region.

Amid the bewildered tears and moans of his companions, the Prior of Le Bec mounted a lame horse, the only one they possessed, and calmly set off for the limits of the duchy. Before long he met the Duke astride of his great warhorse, and cheerfully saluted him with gentle and unmoved countenance.

The Duke dropped his head on his chest, and, turning his horse, growled words to the effect that he had expected the banishment to have been carried out ere this.

"Give me a better horse, and I shall go the quicker!" replied the monk, unmoved; upon which the Duke, his sense of humour touched, cried with a great roar of laughter "Who is this that asks presents of his offended judge before he has cleared himself of accusation?" Lanfranc took the hint, made good his case, and received the warm embrace of the man whose heart he had fairly won.

For the next few years, during which the monastery was again rebuilt on a larger scale and on a higher and healthier site above the rivulet, the classrooms of Prior Lanfranc were closed, and he himself, during the latter part of this time, was busy in Rome, striving for a more favourable verdict from the reigning Pope concerning the marriage of Duke William and Matilda.

That excommunication was averted from William was no doubt due to the tact and wisdom of the Benedictine monk, which certainly won for him the lasting affection and respect of the Duke.

And now that affairs were happily settled in Normandy Lanfranc was free to return to Le Bec and resume his work of teaching.

This brings our story up to the year when our real hero, Anselm, of whom we have scarcely heard as yet, was to appear as postulant and pupil at his classroom door.

For the years have slipped fast away, and Anselm, not even born when our story of Herlwin began, is now a youth of four or five and twenty. Yet we could ill spare the tale of these busy years, seeing that the influence of that spot, which did so much to make and mold his character, was due, before most other things, to the curious blend of the practical piety and rough moral force of Herlwin the Abbot, with the refinement, spiritual strength, and sound learning of Lanfranc the Prior of Le Bec.

Chapter Three

The Boy of the Val D'aosta

Beyond the great St Bernard lies the little town of Aosta, one of the 'gates of Italy,' but touching the borders both of the Lombardy and Burgundy of the eleventh century.

Italy and Switzerland were only separated at this spot by the high ridge of the Alps, and so the little place must have been strangely cosmopolitan in its inhabitants. Lombards and Burgundians, Swiss and Italians must have climbed the pleasant Val d'Aosta under the shade of the chestnut-trees or skirting the bank of the rapid stream of the Dora Riparia, which hurries from its mountain home to join the peaceful waters of the Po far down in the sunny meadows of the plain.

Two noble families, the one of Burgundian, the other of Lombard stock, were united somewhere about the year 1032 by the marriage of Gundulf the Lombard, of near kin to Manfred, Marquis of Susa, and Ermenberg, cousin of the Emperor Henry II, and a close connection of the Bishop of Aosta.

The latter was the great man of the district, the most important civil magistrate as well as chief ecclesiastic; and as Ermenberg was herself a landowner of no small consideration in the Val d'Aosta, her marriage with the gallant and high-spirited Gundulf was no doubt a notable event in the everyday life of the restless little cosmopolitan town on the high road to Italy.

To this happy young couple, in their palace near the cathedral of Aosta, was born in the springtime of the year 1033 or 1034 a boy baby whom they named Anselm. Both the brothers of Ermenberg were 'reverend lords,' canons of the collegiate church of St Ours in the town, and one of these became the child's godfather, or *nutritor*, a word that implies the responsibility of training him not only in spiritual matters but also in mind and body.

For the first few years, however, his mother had him to herself. His father, Gundulf, generous and open-handed to a fault, loved to ride abroad, to share in the gay life of the time, to enjoy the wealth that his young wife had brought him; and no doubt he looked forward to the time when all this tiresome period of education and training should be over, and he would have a gallant son riding by his side, ostensibly to look after the valley lands that were his inheritance, but actually to see something of the world of fashion and gaiety that lay beyond the Alps.

But Ermenberg had other dreams. Her gentle heart had never ceased to yearn after the life of the cloister, the life that would have been her choice had not the marriage with Gundulf been arranged for her by her relatives. She was the best of wives and housekeepers, her sense of prudence affording just the restraint needed by her somewhat too lavish husband; but her deepest interests lay in the supernatural world, that world to which from his earliest days she directed the wondering attention of her little son. And as she watched the upturned face and wide baby eyes gazing into the blue distance of the Italian skies, she would pray that her lost dream might in this child be fulfilled, and, speaking to that Mother-heart which understood so well, would cry: "Blessed Mother of my Lord and Saviour, I give him to you; take care of him!"

If it be true, as a great poet-thinker has told us, that the Heaven from which the soul has so lately come "still lies about us in our

infancy," the teaching of Ermenberg must have quickly taken root in the mind of the little Anselm.

The very scenery upon which his young eyes rested fitted readily those descriptions of the Heavenly Country of which he never tired to hear. The road to the City of God was uphill and none too easy; on that everyone was agreed; and the same might surely be said of that steep path across the river that scaled the ledge of rock called Gargantua, before ascending beyond the eye of man up the slope of the 'Noontide Peak' that guards the entrance to the Alps. Beyond lay the dim white mountain-tops, snow-covered, mysterious; but the Becca di Nona, at any rate in the autumn season, has lost its snow after the summer heat, and gleams golden in the sunshine. Where else, then, should lie that city of pure gold, whose gates were of one pearl and the streets like unto transparent glass?

And so to the little child Anselm came in the autumn-time a dream that was, at any rate to the loving mother-mind of Ermenberg, a presage of the future.

He thought in his dream that he toilsomely crossed the river, and, scrambling up the steep cliff of the Gargantua, found himself among fair meadows full of corn ready for the harvest. But the maidens who should have gathered the ripe ears were slothful and intent rather on their own amusement; to these the child, to be noted in later days for his hatred of idleness, spoke words of rebuke before he went his way.

Then, leaving the harvest-fields, he made his way up through forests of pine-trees, broken here and there by lawns of turf and lavender, wondrous sweet, and thence over steep bare rocks, where at every moment he stumbled and fell. Then suddenly the toilsome path ended, and the glory of the heavenly city shone forth upon the little pilgrim. In the midst of it, upon His throne, the Lord awaited him, alone, save for His seneschal, for the rest of the heavenly host were busy in the harvest-fields.

To Him the child confidently approached and sat down at His feet. "And the Lord with gracious gentleness would know who he was and whence he came and what was his desire. He answered all according to the truth; and so the Lord gave order, and the seneschal brought him bread of the whitest, and he ate and was refreshed in the presence of the King."

Long years afterward the remembrance of this dream was yet fresh in the mind of the great archbishop, whose earthly pilgrimage, sustained so constantly by heavenly bread, was then almost at an end.

Anselm was probably still but a very young boy when his mother was called upon to send him forth from her gentle arms in order that his education might be commenced. It was the universal custom of those days that high-born children, especially boys dedicated to what such a parent as Gundulf would describe as a 'career' in the Church, should be sent to the household of a great prelate or wealthy canon to be trained and educated. For even high-born mothers could seldom read, and fathers wedded to the world could little more than stumble through the alphabet; and so we find ambitious parents sending off babes of four years old, and sometimes very much younger, to learned priests or noted bishops, in whose households they would breathe a bookish atmosphere, and whence they could attend the primary school of some adjacent monastery.

So we may imagine the sweet-faced mother endeavouring to hide her tears as she left her little son of four or five within the walls of her brother, canon of the collegiate church, sponsor and *nutritor* to the boy, and returning with a lonely heart to the country house at Gressau, some three miles from the city, where the family was probably living at this time. No doubt she hoped to see him fairly frequently, but her grief at losing him for the present was not softened by the contemplation of the kind of life upon which her tender youngling was about to enter.