

SAINTS AND SAINTHOOD.

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THE word "sainthood" connotes not a person, but an idea. As a conventionalized type of person, living a conventionalized type of life, the saint belongs not to history, but to faith. In this sense the conception of the saintly life, as embodied in the hagiological tradition of the church, has its clearly defined psychological background—an assumed dualism of matter and spirit, or natural and supernatural, with the necessary corollary of a moral order of the universe, however vaguely or sharply defined. It involves a notion of the subjection of the material to the spiritual, as of evil to good, and the view that the power of man amid the facts of earthly life is directly conditioned by the degree of approach by him, in kind of life, to unity with the personalized moral order. Without going too deeply into the more or less abstract philosophical speculations with regard to the nature of the deity, we may say that the common denominator of all definitions of the divine life is in the belief in the non-relativity of the divine principle to the natural life. Could one but live, it is held, in such a state of absolute non-relativity, the human and the divine in him would be united. As a matter of fact there have in all ages been persons in whom the reaction to the facts and conditions of earthly life was such as to give the impression that their lives were bounded by such a state of non-relativity. Collectively these persons form a type which constitutes the nucleus of the saint-complex. And as other types of abnormal¹ man—for instance, idiots, epileptics, insane and monsters—have received in the past their share of veneration paid by primitive credulity, so in the case of the saints honor has been rendered to the neuro-pathic type of disordered personality.

Historically, of course, it would be quite unfair to place in the

¹In this essay, the words "normal" and "abnormal" are used in the common and accepted biological sense of the terms.

category of the abnormal every person whom the church has seen fit to canonize. One has only to read the life of Bruno of Cologne to be convinced of this fact, and Bruno, possessed of a character as sterling as his mind was able and well-balanced, is not an isolated exception. Yet the composite picture of the life of sainthood that one gets from reading any number of works from the pens of busy hagiographers only serves to emphasize the fact that Bruno is the exception, and not the rule. In these accounts the saints live in a world whose atmosphere is that of a psychopathic clinic rather than that of the world of normal men and women. They are frequently pictured as morbidly self-analytical;² the records of a well-nigh universal practice of rigorous asceticism testify to nerve-degeneration manifesting itself in superficial or general anaesthesia. St. Wiborad, a contemporary of the great Ekkehard, was subject to visual and auditory hallucinations.³ St. Adelaide, the beatified consort of Emperor Otto I, suffered from attacks of psychic epilepsy.⁴ In a word, the hagiographic method, carrying out the idea of the moral dualism of matter and spirit, lays hold of, and brings into the foreground, such phenomena as the naive mind tends naturally to attribute to the influence of the higher, moral and spiritual element in the primitive conception of consciousness. Not that either in the popular mind or in the mind of the conventional hagiographer do these abnormal phenomena constitute sainthood in itself, rather are they felt to be incidents in, and evidences of a life elevated to a plane of non-relativity.⁵ The fact, however, that they have continued to be recorded and emphasized is witness to their historical presence in the instances out of which a literary tradition constructed the type of sainthood.

Man is, however, a practical being. Though he speculate ever

² St. Wiborad and her younger sister, typical examples of the saint-infant, shrink from childish pastimes as sinful. *Acta Sancti. Boll.*, 2 May, I, sect. 1, 2, p. 284). St. Adalbert of Prague, having unintentionally touched a girl-priamte, forthwith tortured his young mind for supposed unchastity.

³ *Acta Sancti. Boll.*, 2 May, p. 284ff., 926 A. D. The younger sister of St. Wiborad shortly before her early death had an auditory hallucination in which she seemed to hear the songs of angels (*ibid.*, 2).

⁴ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXLII, col. 983: "Quadam vero die... ipsa simulata intentione edentis, cultrum manu diutius tenuit, sicque non ad suam voluptatem convivium protraxit, cum subito colore faciei cum mentis habitu permutato, ferrum de manu super mensam cecidit, atque in hoc, non insolentiae notam accidisse, sed mira quaedam per divinam revelationem se sensisse, cum suspirio annotavit." Cf. also, *ibid.*, col. 984.

⁵ Their value as evidence dies hard. Ophthalmic migraine is still mistaken for theophany and psychic epilepsy for the visit of the soul to heaven. Most unsophisticated persons will mention only in awed whispers instances of glossolalia at revivals.

so much about things or ideas, their value for him remains in the last analysis conditioned by the use he may make of them. As religion originates not so much in the sense of dependence as in the instinct for power, the value attached to the spiritual life by its host of interpreters from St. Paul to Eucken has been intensely utilitarian. As exponents of the spiritual life, that is, of the life removed to a plane of non-relativity and unconditioned by the facts of common experience, the saints were held to possess powers from the use of which ordinary persons were excluded, and for this reason to be particularly worthy of veneration. Hence through the church with its hagiological tradition came the greatest and most enduring development of the conception of miracle. Simply stated, the notion of miracle is to define the case-type of events or acts in which the effect stands in no possible relation of physical nexus to the cause. This applies equally well to the definition of all such acts or events. As far as individual miracles are concerned we have no right to allow any thought of a definition in kind to color our criticism either of a miracle in the New Testament or of the latest alleged wonder-working in the grotto of Lourdes.⁶ That does not mean, however, that we are to remove the miracles, as events, so far from their environment in the life of the saints as to place them in the category of history, since their proper place is in the category of faith as part of a tradition.

Within the limits of the present essay, it is not possible to make more than a brief survey of a single period, to mark out the way for a more extended investigation. This period centers in the tenth century of our era. It is a period notable for the high incidence of hagiographic activity, especially on German soil. Conditions, as Zoepf has pointed out,⁷ were favorable to this high incidence. "Never with less joy was the coming of a new century awaited" than in the year 900.⁸ Crops failed, famine and pestilence ravaged the land, war added its horrors, and marauding heathen neighbors were ever a present menace. As the century went on, it came to be known as "the iron, for its hardness and unproductivity of good, the lead for the ugliness of its abundant evil, the dark, for its literary barrenness."⁹ It was characterized, moreover, by intellectual capacity and attainment of a low order; fit accompaniment for its ignorance was

⁶ Protestant apologists rally to defend scriptural miracles, but reject ecclesiastical miracles *in toto*, despite the fact that, to say the least, the latter, as events, are supported in many cases by much better evidence.

⁷ L. Zoepf, *Das Heiligenleben im zehnten Jahrhundert*.

⁸ Giesebrecht, *Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit*, I, p. 166.

⁹ Baronius, *Ann. Eccl.*, ed. 1624, p. 649.

its trustful credulity. Saint-worship as revived on a large scale, was the natural issue of such antecedents,—the distress of the times, the credulity of the people, the vitality of the doctrine of moral dualism and its corollaries. From the point of view of the religious orders, at least, the cult of the saints was very profitable. One instance is known of a bitter “trade rivalry” between two hermitesses,¹⁰ nor is the other side of the picture unknown, as the maintenance of a very modern “trade agreement” between the cults of St. Verena and St. Ottilie shows.¹¹ And as saint-worship became the social reaction to the distress of the times, so the literary reaction to the sterility of the times was in the formation of a new strain of hagiological tradition.

In the first place, it is to be noted that the saint is represented as sacrosanct in person and in property.¹² The inviolability affected not only persons, whether their acts of sacrilege were intentional or innocent, but was held to extend to the elements as well. Fire, for instance, was believed not to harm anything that belonged to a saint. A lighted candle, left by a careless monk, fell upon a piece of tapestry covering the tomb of St. Ulrich, and burst into flame, yet, strange to say, the tapestry itself was not so much as scorched.¹³ Two versions of a story of the attempt of a band of Huns to burn the cell of a hermitess are recorded, the one as of St. Wiborad,¹⁴ the other as of St. Ida.¹⁵

More interesting, however, are the accounts of various acts of sacrilege and their consequences. These consequences were, as might have been expected, more serious when the sacrilege was in-

¹⁰ The hermitesses were St. Wiborad and one Cilia,—the latter, envious of St. Wiborad, experienced in time the justification of her fears that her business would be injured; reduced to obscurity, she was finally expelled. (*Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 298.)

¹¹ A woman, long barren, becomes, by favor of St. Ottilie, the mother of three daughters, and is told to go to St. Verena, if she wishes to have a son! (*Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 169.)

¹² This belief was doubtless exploited by the church, as a practical means of self-protection in troublous times.

¹³ *Acta Sanct. Mab.*, VII, p. 457, i: “Custos advenit. . . tapetiumque sollicitè inspexit, si ab igne aliquid laedaretur, vestigium ignis de minimis micis cerci invenit, unum vero pilum in superficie et in latere sepulcri in tapetio exustum invenire non potuit.”

¹⁴ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 290: “Cum mansiunculam sanctae virginis exurere vellent, divina virtute flammae restinctae sunt.”

¹⁵ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 4 Sept., II, p. 264: “Ea tempestate qua Ungariorum gens detestanda ignicremis vaporibus cuncta devastavit, praefatum quoque sanctae Ydae oratorium nefanda legio adiit. . . Deinde in altiora scandentes focos nonnullos in laquearibus construxerunt, sed virtute Dei carbo sopitus nulla flammaram incrementa haurire luit, excepto quod raras quasque tabulas insidendo peredit.”

tentional. A band of robbers invaded the monastery founded by St. Pirmin, and took captive a number of the inmates, that they might torture them to death. One of the band scoffed at the prayers of the wretched monks, saying, "Pirmin knows not how to fight; a sword of wood, not of fire, carries he,—he sleeps, and wakes nevermore!"¹⁶ For this blasphemy, the robber was stricken blind and died.¹⁷ In the life of St. Ulrich, we are told of one who declared that the saint had no more power than a dog to work miracles, wherefore, losing forthwith his human speech, he began to growl and bark like a dog, and soon perished miserably.¹⁸ A certain knight robbed the poultry-house of a peasant, scorning the latter's plea for mercy "in the name of St. Adelaide," since, forsooth, he was "a live person, and the saint a dead one!" With the first taste of the stolen food he went mad and gnawed the flesh from his own arms.¹⁹ St. Ulrich, to anticipate somewhat the account of the healing-miracles, was much sought by victims of malignant fever, who left at the shrine, birch rods, evidently as symbols of the illness from which they had been healed.²⁰ A certain Eisenhart, having appropriated one of these rods as a walking-stick, fell ill of fever; a priest named Adalgar was stricken for a similar offence.²¹ Other persons, who used these rods to lean on, during divine service, likewise suffered from the fever, till finally nobody dared touch a single one of them, and the rods accumulated in the church till they became a nuisance.²² Similar examples might be multiplied indefinitely.²³

¹⁶ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 3 Nov., II, p. 52: "Bellare Pirminius tuus nescit, lignum non igneum gladium habens, dormit, numquam vigilans."

¹⁷ A similar fate befell a band of robbers who set upon a company of the faithful while they were celebrating the natal day of their patron. (*Acta Sanct. Boll.*, *ibid.*, p. 52: "Omnipotens Deus immisit hostibus profundissimam caecitatem.")

¹⁸ *Acta Sanct. Mab.*, VII, p. 460: "Quid mihi prodest charitas illius Episcopi, quia ille signa facere non potest plusquam unus canis? Illo verbo emisso, diabolo concessus, loquelam hominis amisit, et more canis furendo sonare, coepit, et gannendo atque latrando, parvo tempore evoluto, heu miserabiliter vitam finivit."

¹⁹ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXLII, col. 987: "Aves domesticas occidit, alienaque substantia fecit sibi praeprae cibaria. . . 'Ego,' inquit, 'vividus in hac nocte tui tuorumque dominor, Adalheida vero mortua, impotens est tibi praestare tutamina.'"

²⁰ *Acta Sanct. Mab.*, VII, pp 457-8.

²¹ Of Adalgar it is said, "invasit eum oscitatio et obripilatio cutis maxima, et omnia membra taedio occupata sunt,"—evidently a severe onset of malaria. (*Acta Sanct. Mab.*, *ibid.*, p. 458.)

²² *Acta Sanct. Mab.*, VII, p. 458: Nullus praesumebat vel minimum bacillum sine licentia inde auferre, et ideo tanta multitudo baculorum excrevit ut facile dinumerari non potuisset, nec sine impedimento in angulis ecclesiae collocari."

²³ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 4 Sept., II, p. 264: "Diabolicis tendiculis irretita, finitima rura deseruit, et ubi facile dignosci nequiverat, nefaria simulatione manum

Two notable anecdotes may be drawn from the hagiological tradition to attest the fact that the prerogatives as well as the person and estate of the saint were adjudged to be sacrosanct. The first of these is doubly interesting as showing that the malingering beggar is no new excrescence of modern city life. A certain woman, by name Eggu, whose right hand was withered and distorted, had a dream in which she was directed to offer up a wax model of her hand at the shrine of St. Ida. This being done, she was healed. Unwilling to work, however, she made her way to a locality where she was not known, and feigning still to suffer from the deformity of which she had been cured, imposed on the charity of strangers. Sacrilege such as this, according to the hagiograph, was not permitted to go unpunished—a return of the malingerer's former disability attested the anger of the outraged saint.²³ The interest connected with the second anecdote is in the evidence it gives that the prerogatives of the saints might be touched with a sanctity which would transcend all rights of property in their neighbors. St. Verena,²⁴ while a guest at the house of a certain priest, devoted herself to works of mercy in a leper-colony on the banks of the Rhine. To this end she freely availed herself of the stores in her host's larder and wine-room. A servant, however, informed against her, and with the priest, intercepted her in the act of carrying the stolen bread and wine to the lepers. On being questioned she said the wine-jar contained water for bathing her patients. The priest examined, and found a miracle had been wrought: the wine was turned to water.²⁵ Prostrating himself at her feet, the priest asked and received absolution from St. Verena; the servant, however, fell under the curse of violated sainthood. Paralysed and stricken blind, he became the ancestor of a stock of defectives.²⁶ In his family were recorded cases of blindness, mutism, crippling, paralysis, epimentitur uncan. . . Mox, recenti dono frustrata, in pristinum deformitatis statum, ut prius suapte, sic tunc redigitur coacte."

²³ St. Verena, in medieval hagiological tradition, is quite unhistorical, being one of the Theban legion, translated by folk-lore to Germany.

²⁵ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, pp. 166-7: "Et dum pariter irent venerunt in viam, ubi occurrit eis virgo Verena, portans panem et vinum in vasculo suo,—dixitque ad eam presbyter, 'ubi vis ambulare, et quid est quod portas in vasculo tuo?' Virgo Dei respondit, 'volo ambulare ad istos pauperes, et in isto vase est aqua et volo eis lavare pedes et capita.' Ait ei presbyter, 'volo probare utrum sit vinum aut aqua.' Et cum accepisset vasculum in manus suas vidit in eo carbones vivos iacentes, et statim in illa hora versus est vini rubor in pallorem aquae."

²⁶ *Ibid.*: "Sancta Virgo respondit. . . 'qui huc te duxit. . . non moriatur prius donec aliqua signa in corpore sustineat, et omnis generatio eius, antequam exierint de hoc mundo, aliqua signa in eis fiant. Et ipse servus. . . fuit caecus et paralyticus.'"

lepsy,—at least one grandson was a thief. Evidently, the story had its source in some effort to account for the origin of a family of defectives which had become a burden to the community.²⁷

As in the New Testament, so in the hagiographic tradition, the greater number of miracles are miracles of healing. Without going too deeply into the problem of the reality of miracles of healing, it may be stated that the common and accepted view of impartial critics in dealing with both scriptural and ecclesiastical tradition of healing miracles, is to admit the presence of a substratum of truth as a creative nucleus for the stories as they have come down to us. This substratum of truth is in the undoubted fact that the distressing minor symptoms of hysteria and neurasthenia, often closely simulating the symptoms of organic disease, are at least temporarily relievable by suggestion,—or, if not the symptoms, at least their accompanying phobias.²⁸ The popular mind, however, cannot discriminate between the false and the true symptoms of organic disease. Let a few hysterics or neurasthenics obtain relief from a “divine healer” or at the shrine of a saint, and an active folk-tradition needs no greater stimulus to change truth stranger than fiction into fiction stranger than truth. Thus into the literary tradition have passed many records of alleged healing of organic diseases by methods in which cause and effect were unrelated. For the purposes of this essay, however, the miracles of healing with which the hagiographic writings of the tenth century are filled, have a significance quite apart from their credibility as events.

In the first place, from the accounts of the alleged healings it is often possible to gather evidence as to the prevalence of certain types of organic as well as of functional diseases. A few items in this connection may be noted. Thus it has been observed that St. Adelaide was a victim of psychic epilepsy; moreover, St. Wiborad, who was neurotic and migrainous, had, according to one of her biographers,²⁹ had the disease in its typical form.³⁰ Typical epilepsy, however, was usually taken as evidence of demon-possession; ref-

²⁷ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 167: “Omnis generatio eius usque in hodiernum diem antequam diem huius vitae finierint, aliquam laesionem sui corporis sustinent,—alius caecus, alius surdus, alius claudus, alius paralyticus, alius contractus, alius epilepticus.”

²⁸ Mutism is a frequent symptom of hysteria; the scotoma of ophthalmic migraine is at least as distressing to the patient as actual blindness.

²⁹ Hepidannus, who wrote about 1072, and drew partly from the earlier biography of St. Wiborada by Hartman, c927.

³⁰ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 304: “Faciem aliquantisper inclinans, gelido sopore fuso per artus, obdormivit.” The description *gelido sopore fuso*, clearly indicates the epileptic aura.

erences to the disease and its healing are quite numerous.³¹ In one case at least, the duration and severity of the symptoms indicate that the patient had *status epilepticus*.³² St. Cadroa, on one occasion, checked a severe attack of migraine with the sign of the cross.³³ Cases of paraplegia, described in unmistakable terms, are frequent.³⁴ St. Colman was credited with the cure of a man who "had an eye extruded by a swelling from its socket," probably a case of exophthalmic goitre.³⁵ Among the patients of St. Ulrich was a man who had a severe case of umbilical hernia.³⁶ The great Ekkehard was cured of dropsy by the simple means of covering his body with the sackcloth garment once worn by St. Wiborad.³⁷ Two of the miracles attributed to St. Ida are worthy of special notice. One of these was the healing of a woman suffering from dropsy, whose condition was such that she could only with difficulty pass through a doorway. Her recovery followed a night of prayer.³⁸ The other case was that of a man who suffered for ten years from unrelieved abscess of the middle ear, which caused headache and deafness. We are told that the abscess burst with a noise like the breaking of a dry stick and after a copious flow of pus the man recovered his hearing!³⁹

Furthermore, it is possible from the accounts of these miracles to learn something of the crude therapeutics of the period. Prayer and incubation were most consistently employed⁴⁰—sometimes the

³¹ See especially, "Vita S. Pirminii," *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 3 Nov., II, pp. 33-45.

³² *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 15 Sept., V, p. 72 (Miracula S. Apri): "Ferocissimo daemone invasus huc olim adductus est hora prima dominicae diei. Qui,—mirum dictu,—in pavimeno ecclesiae sese volutans, et ut fera manibus per illud reptans, clamore valido cuncta replens, luporum imitabatur ululatus, porcorum grunnitus, taurorum mugitus, serpentium sibilos, et stridores foricum,—hocque tormento se attrivit continuatim, usque ad lectionem Evangelicam publicae missae." *Status epilepticus* is the form of the disease in which a succession of fits occurs.

³³ *Acta Sanct. Mab.*, VII, p. 491: "Qui cum fere in medio itineris oculum graviter dolere coepisset, ab eo signo crucis super se edito, dolorem mox sanus..."

³⁴ See esp. "Vita S. Idae," *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 4 Sept., II, pp. 265.

³⁵ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 13 Oct., VI, p. 361: "Vir quidam tanta infirmitate est correptus, ut uno oculorum eius in modum craterae extra locum tumore eiecto... a Beato Viro auxilium flagitavit."

³⁶ *Acta Sanct. Mab.*, VII, p. 461: "Quidam pauper de oppido Affelterbach, Rudpret vocatus, . . . ilia sua de ventre prolapsa in loco umbilici, portans in sinu suo."

³⁷ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 294.

³⁸ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 4 Sept., II, p. 264.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 265: "Ecce dextera auris subito crepuit, veluti sarmentum torridum subito frangeretur, . . . a quo crepitu mox tabifluus de aure humor coepit emanare, totaque discessit sanies, donec venenoso liquore penitus egesto, redi-vivo rursus auditu donatur."

⁴⁰ See esp. "Vita S. Wiboradae," *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I.

saints in person executed cures by the sign of the cross. Sympathetic magic appears a custom recorded by the biographer of St. Ulrich, to the effect that fever patients made offerings of birch rods,⁴¹ also in the account of the malingering beggar whose disabled hand was restored by St. Ida, and in the record of the healing, at the shrine of the same saint, of the man with the ten years' abscess of the middle ear.⁴² Fetishism, too, played a certain part. As the estate and personal property of the saints was held sacrosanct, any article which a saint had touched might become a potent charm for healing. St. Wiborad's sackcloth shirt cured Ekkehard of dropsy; together with her walking-stick, it availed to save the life of one Kebinina, who in a fit fell into the fire and was severely burned.⁴³ Preserved as a precious relic, the comb of St. Wiborad also possessed healing powers,⁴⁴ and a splinter from her wooden bowl effected the cure of a desperate case of ulcerated teeth.⁴⁵ At the shrine of St. Evre, maniacs were said to have been restored to sanity through the use of a chain employed for that purpose by the saint himself.⁴⁶ In two instances, however, a primitive method in therapeutics had passed beyond the borderline of fetishism. A merchant of Zurich cured himself of blindness by touching his eyes with the dried blood of St. Wiborad, scraped by him from the wall on which it had spattered when she was martyred by the Huns.⁴⁷ More remarkable is the case of a widow who had mourned for her husband till she became blind. In a vision she was directed to find a stone jar in which St. Verena had carried water to bathe the lepers, and in which she had also washed the clothes of her patients. The widow washed her eyes with some of the water in this jar, and recovered her sight!⁴⁸ One cannot marvel, on reading such an account, that the popular demand for miracles of healing was large.

To the wisdom and cleverness of those who shaped the hagio-

⁴¹ See note 20.

⁴² *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 4 Sept., II, p. 165.

⁴³ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 308.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

⁴⁶ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 15 Sept., V, pp. 71, 78.

⁴⁷ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 290: "Quidam Turicini pagi mercator oculorum dolore graviter laborabat, ita ut tanta caecitate obtenebratus incederet, ut vix callem baculo regente teneret, . . . cultello parum quid sanguinolenti pulveris abradens, et linteolo, involvens, secum retinuit, . . . pulverem sanctificatum paene caecatis luminibus iniecit."

⁴⁸ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 173: "Est vas lapideum in quo infundens aquam calidam cum cinere mixtam, lavi capita leprosoꝝ, aliorumque vestimenta infirmoꝝ. Si ex illo laveris. . . visum habebis."

graphic tradition, the cult of the saints owed the means of turning to practical use the failures of the petitioners to get what they asked for. Though such failures must have been frequent, the fact that failures did occur, was taken as evidence, not to refute, but to attest the supernatural power inherent in sainthood. The age being one of deep-rooted, childlike credulity, it can readily be understood that the exploitation of this credulity would add to the influence, at least, of the religious orders which supported the shrines of individual saints. Evidences of such exploitation are scattered through the documents. In the life of St. Evre is a record of the experience of a blind man who secured permanent relief only after making an offering;⁴⁹ also of a servant-girl whose relapse, after being healed from blindness, was due to her master's refusal to permit her to take the veil, as she had vowed.⁵⁰ Reginsinda, a migrainous woman, who, having been cured at the shrine of St. Wiborad, failed, in accordance with her vow, to keep holy the saint's natal day, suffered an attack of the disease in its worst form, accompanied by fainting spells.⁵¹ Of trade-rivalries and trade-agreements, mention has already been made. In passing, an anecdote in the life of St. Verena may also be noted. A certain tenant of the estate of the saint, having moved away with his family to avoid the payment of rent, was summarily dealt with. Death overtook him and his wife, and their only surviving child, at the time the hagiograph wrote, was a profound idiot, totally paralysed and deaf-mute.⁵² Thus, though the tradition aimed to disclose the merits of the saints with respect to the community, it was more intimately concerned with maintaining the cult as a source of income.

And as the person and estate of sainthood was held to be sacrosanct, so, locally at least, the natal day of some saints was to be kept unprofaned by labor. In the life of St. Ulrich, a man who on the saint's natal day went into the field and stacked hay found afterwards that every stack was reduced to ashes, save for what rested

⁴⁹ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 15 Sept., V, p. 70.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 71: "Lumen meruisset recipere, se ipsam servitutam eidem delegavit. Sed reversa ad priorem dominum, . . . ad illius violenter redacta servitium, mox pristinae caecitatis incommodum dolenter perpessa est."

⁵¹ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 292: "Nec mora doloribus capitis antea sibi valde notis stimulata cecidit, stratumque causa huius infirmitatis veluti oblivioni traditum per vim requisivit."

⁵² *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 172: "Nam ipse et eius coniugata defuncti sunt ambo, morte inspirata. Procreatio autem eius, quae nunc superest, patitur paralysim, cunctorum carens officio membrorum, nisi tantum habens visum oculorum."

on the outside.⁵³ A peasant who stowed hay on St. Verena's day, was cursed by the priests, and went insane.⁵⁴ Another rustic, who profaned the day of dedication of a church to St. Verena by cutting wood, had his axe cleave to his hand, so that he could not drop it.⁵⁵ A variation of this latter theme is in the story of a murderer to whose shoulders the corpse of his victim was fixed, and whose companion's sword clove to his hand as he tried to cut away the ghastly burden.⁵⁶

Lastly, folk-lore elements constitute a certain part of the hagiological tradition. The well-known myth of the expulsion of snakes from a holy place, familiar from the legend of St. Patrick, is found also in the lives of St. Pirmin,⁵⁷ and St. Verena.⁵⁸ St. Kunigund hangs her glove on a sunbeam;⁵⁹ St. Pirmin's walking-stick, unsupported, remains standing where he left it.⁶⁰ Fennel, planted on the grave of St. Wiborad by her brother, the monk Hitto, blooms all winter long.⁶¹ A saint's presence is indicated by a sweet odor.⁶² The stolen ring of St. Verena was recovered from the belly of a fish that swallowed it when the thief cast it into the river.⁶³ Similar examples might be recorded indefinitely—the unstandardized resi-

⁵³ *Acta Sanct. Mab.*, VII, p. 464: "Exterius formosam invenit,—cum autem bidenti ligno interius tangeret, totum in favillas immutatum invenit."

⁵⁴ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 172: "Villanus quidem diem sollemnem sanctae Verenae dignis feriis noluit observare, sed abiit ad proprium pratulum, volens foenum aridum evertere de loco in locum. . . Maledixerunt ei presbyteri, . . . ille autem miser, sex vicibus cecidit, lunatice in terram cadens, stomachi coepit."

⁵⁵ "Rusticus quidem, cum in dedicationis die eiusdem ecclesiae ad colligenda ligna abscindendo silvam intraret, manubrium quod tenebat manu, firmiter adhaerebat." (*Ibid.*, 15.)

⁵⁶ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 25 Feb., III, 531-2.

⁵⁷ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 3 Nov., II, p. 36.

⁵⁸ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 165.

⁵⁹ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 3 Mar., I, p. 275: "Dexteræ manus suæ chirothecam detrahens. . . a se reiecit, quam radius solis per fenestras rimulas intrans suscepit, et tamdiu quasi famulando sustinuit."

⁶⁰ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 3 Nov., II, p. 36: "Sanctus Pirminius. . . baculum suum, nulli materiae acclinem in limpido erectum statuit pavimento."

⁶¹ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 291: "Hitto, viridis foeniculi germen circa tumulum eius fixit quod dispensante gratia divina radicem figens terrae per totam hiemem floruit."

⁶² In the case of St. Wiborad, *Acto Sanct. Boll.*, 2 May, I, p. 291), and of St. Verena, (*ibid.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 167).

⁶³ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 1 Sept., I, p. 167: "Piscem ipsum quoque cum ceteris obtulerunt sancto presbytero. . . visceribus erutis invenerunt anulum in intestinis eius. . . O mirum modum! Quis umquam vidit ista, aut quis audivit talia? O fidelis piscis, qui mavult mori, quam quod non redderetur thesaurus virgini! O animal irrationale multo fidelius animali rationale, scilicet homini!" The person who stole the ring was of a family of defectives,—grandson of the servant who informed against St. Verena, concerning the wine she took from her host's store, to give to the lepers. (*Acta Sanct. Boll.*, *loc. cit.*, p. 167.)

due of certain elements of the popular religion which ever remains much the same. Two cases, however, may be cited, in which actual myth-making sought to account, in the one instance, for a birthmark, in the other for malformed eyes. Thus it is told that St. Kunigund had a disciple of whom she was very fond, a pious young woman who lapsed to the ways of the world, giving herself up to feasting and dancing. Good advice, rebukes, threats, availed nothing. Finally, when on one occasion St. Kunigund found her at a banquet, she slapped her face, and left thereon the marks of her fingers which never faded away.⁶⁴ In the life of St. Adelaide is the story of a man who, suspected of horse-stealing and convicted on circumstantial evidence, was punished by having his eyes put out. Through favor of the saint he recovered his vision, but for the rest of his life showed the marks of mutilation in the form of fissures in the iris of the eyes.⁶⁵ It is obvious that the man had *coloboma*, a congenital malformation of the eyes; the hagiograph records an interesting, if absurd, bit of folk-anatomy.

⁶⁴ *Acta Sanct. Boll.*, 3 Mar., I, p. 275: "Zelo pietatis armata, cum verbo correptionis dextera maxillam eius percussit, quae quasi sigillum quoddam formam digitorum eius accepit, qua omni tempore vitae suae non caruit."

⁶⁵ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, Vol. CXLII, col. 988: "Qui dum per sylvam iter haberet quae rustico vocabulo nuncupatur Biwalt, (Bienwald) forte ab equo imptu pascente usque ad oppidum Saiense comitatus est. Quam ob rem, apud quendam polentem, nomine Hinnonem furti accusatus est, qui eodem tempore cum praedicto imperatore Heinrico illuc venerat. Ille de incertis, certam sententiam prope-rans, iussit hominem miseris modis flagellari, spoliari, excaecari. Mox advena caecatus, levans ad caelum mentem et manus, 'si ego' ait, 'furti dolique innocens immerito tanta mala perpessus sum, tu, sancta Adalheida, redde mihi tuis precibus et meritis visum.' Post haec cuiusdam viri nomine Bennonis domo et cura receptus, post paucos dies lenito dolore ad pretiosi thesauri thecam accessit, testificansque suam innocentiam, oculorum sanitatem recepit. Idem tamen, medietate oculorum pupillae divisa verae caecitatis postmodum ostendit vestigia."