

CHAPTER XV

Bridget's Companions and Successors

HAD Bridget stood alone as a solitary phenomenon of Irish history, the only woman interested in the development of her intelligence in her day, her own greatness would rather have been diminished than enhanced by that fact. She was but one of many however who in that period devoted themselves to the intellectual as well as the spiritual life. Her influence was deeply and widely felt and many Irish women, stimulated by her example, developed not only their minds but a spirit of helpfulness for the solution of human problems that has given them an enduring place in the history not only of Ireland itself but the culture of the world. It is manifest from what we have learned in recent years of ancient Irish history that the women of Ireland played a very important rôle in that chapter of the history of civilization which we owe to the Irish. The women of the Teutons as pictured for us by Tacitus who undoubtedly emphasized many traits because he wanted to make the contrast with the women of Rome so much more striking, have held a high place in the thoughts of modern feministic leaders. It is evident that the women of the Gael deserve an even greater place because they stood not only for