

Sylvester O'Halloran the author of the work  
 was an eminent Surgeon & an able writer, as  
 well as a celebrated Physician. He was born in  
 the North Liberties of Limerick, Ireland 31. 1725.  
 (old style). Studied physics & surgery in Paris &  
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 21 years old he published his first work. on Glaucoma  
 a Cataract (a New Instruction) Dublin 1750,  
 which was frequently quoted by the celebrated  
 Professor Baron Haller.

2. A Critical Analysis of the New Operation on a  
 Cataract. Dublin 1755.

3. A Complete Treatise on Gangrene & Aphrodisia  
 with a new method of Amputation London & the author 1765

4. A new & easy method of the general Venereal disease arising from some  
 permanent foundation for the Preservation of the  
 human Annals. Illustrated with the history  
 of the disease. London 1770

5. An Introduction to the Study of the History &  
 Antiquities of the City of Dublin  
 The second edition 1772

6. 'Halloran (Sylvester) Ierne Defended: or,  
 a Candid Refutation of such passages in the  
 Rev. Dr. Leland's and the Rev. Mr.  
 Whitaker's Works, as seem to affect the  
 Authenticity and Validity of Antient Irish  
 History. In a Letter to the Antiquarian  
 Society. 4to, unbound, pp. 36. Dublin,  
 Printed for the Author, 1774. 16s 380

7. A general History of Ireland  
 from the earliest Accounts to the  
 Close of the 17th Century, in  
 two royal volumes London 1778

8. A Dissertation on the Ancient Arms of Ireland,  
 sent to the Royal Irish Academy of which he was one  
 of the earliest members.

He also wrote a Treatise on his Philosophical & Medical  
 in two parts, another on Diseases of the Head, a Comedy  
 & a Farce, a several Essays Medical, Natural  
 & Political in the magazine showing that he was not  
 only skilful in his Profession, but learned in the  
 Irish language & ancient laws, & a warm  
 advocate for the honour & interest of his native Country.



He was elected in 1811 & 1785, & soon after 1800, becoming the  
Royal College of Surgeons & Dublin. His study of birds  
was his avocation. His performance as headmaster of ~~the school~~  
He was tall & thin, wore French dress with powdered hair  
beautiful Paris wig, & cocked hat. His collection was nearly  
given up to the children of Antiquary & discovery.

W O'Malley died in 1807 & was buried in  
St. Mary's Church, Dublin. His portrait is preserved in a portrait gallery  
in 10011 of the Dublin Museum. He died in 1807.  
entered the British army & rose to the rank of General.  
The portrait of O'Malley, who died in 1807, is in the  
Hall of the Royal Society, Dublin. O'Malley, who died  
in 1807, is in the Hall of the Royal Society, Dublin.  
St. Mary's Church, Dublin, is in the Hall of the Royal Society,  
the portrait of O'Malley (1773) is in the Hall of the Royal Society,  
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A Limerick surgeon and writer on Irish history.



A N  
INTRODUCTION  
TO THE STUDY OF THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES  
OF  
IRELAND:

IN WHICH THE ASSERTIONS OF  
MR. HUME AND OTHER WRITERS  
ARE OCCASIONALLY CONSIDERED.

ILLUSTRATED WITH COPPER-PLATES.

ALSO  
TWO APPENDIXES:

CONTAINING

1. ANIMADVERSIONS ON AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY  
OF G. BRITAIN AND IRELAND, BY J. MACPHERSON, Esq.
2. OBSERVATIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF GREAT-BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND, BY SIR JOHN DALRYMPLE.

By SYLVESTER O HALLORAN.

L O N D O N :  
PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, N° 32, FLEET-STREET.

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LONDON

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1835



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## SECOND APPENDIX.

Observations on the Manners of Great-Britain and Ireland, by Sir John Dalrymple.



## ACCOUNT OF THE PLATES.

**PLATE I.** P. 86. **FIG. I.** The Mausoleum of Donald ô Brien, King of North Munster, near the High Altar in the Church of the Holy Cross in the County of Tipperary.

**FIG. 2, 3.** Plan and elevation of a building in this Church, wherein it is supposed the piece of the Cross was deposited. This receptacle is in a pier between two chapels in the South wing of the Church.

### *Account of the Foundation of the Church and Abbey of Holy-Cross.*

Murtough, monarch of Ireland, and grandson to Brien Boru, having received from pope Paschal II. in 1110, a gift of a piece of the cross, covered with gold, and ornamented with precious stones, determined to found a monastery, and dedicate it to the Holy Cross; but did not live to finish it. Don. ô Brien, king of North Munster, compleated the church and abbey in 1169, as appears by the charter which begins thus: "Donald, by the grace of God, king of Limerick, to all kings, dukes, earls, barons, knights, and other christians of whatsoever degree throughout Ireland, greeting," &c. and to which the bishop of Lismore as legate, the archbishop of Cashel, and the bishop of Limerick, are subscribing witnesses.

**PLATE II.** P. 86. Inside of king Cormac's chapel at Cashel, and plan of the cathedral.

This chapel was built by Cormac Mac-Cuillenan, King and Archbishop of Cashel, who died in 908. The stucco on the walls appears to have been done when the chapel was built. Donald ô Brien, king of Limerick, built the cathedral in the reign of Henry II. and converted Cormac's old church into a chapel, or chapter-house, on the south side of the choir. The roof of Cormac's chapel is arched over with stone, and the roof formed of stones corbelled so as to form the pitch of the roof. The roof of Brien's chapel at Killaloe (built also before the arrival of the English) is arched in the same manner; and so is the roof of the chapel of St. Dulogh near Raheny in the county of Dublin.

The Anchoret's tower on the north side is also much better built than any other in the kingdom, the roof arched in the manner  
above





## ACCOUNT OF THE PLATES.

above described, and the workmanship within so exceedingly true, that if you look up from the bottom it appears like a polished barrel of a gun, or the inside of a polished cone. Harris has given an elevation of the south side of the cathedral of Cashel, where Cormac's chapel may be distinguished.

PLATE III. P. 213. FIG. 1. An octogonal building, part of the abbey of Melefont.

FIG. 2. Gothic entrance into the chapel of the abbey of Melefont.

The abbey of Melefont was founded in the year 1142, by ô Carol prince of Orgiel, for the canons regular of St. Augustine. It has been said, that in 1152 cardinal Papiro here held the famous synod in which he distributed Palliums to the four archbishops of Ireland. It is certain that in 1157 a synod was held here, at which the Monarch, the king of Ulida, the prince of Breffni, and prince of Orgiel assisted, when the great church was consecrated, and among other offerings, 180 ounces of gold, and a gold chalice were presented.

PLATE IV. P. 213. FIG. 1. St. Boyne's Cross near Drogheda. There is an Irish inscription on its Base, for which see Phil. Trans. abridged, vol. v. part 2. page 57.

FIG. 2. A round tower, or anchorite retreat, adjoining St. Boyne's cross. These towers were built in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries.

These few Plates of Buildings, erected in Ireland before the landing of the English, are presented to the reader as the most satisfactory reply to the assertions of Mr. Hume, and others, concerning the state of this kingdom before Henry II.'s reign. Whoever is acquainted with the works of Usher, Ware, Harris, the *Monasticon Hibernicum*, &c. can attest that there is no imposition in the account given of each Plate. It would have been easy to multiply these ornaments, had the state of arts in Ireland, before the twelfth century, been the subject of this work.



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## PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

**H**AVING a natural reverence for the dignity and antiquity of my native country, strengthened by education, and confirmed by an intimate knowledge of its history, I could not, without the greatest pain and indignation, behold on the one part, almost all the writers of England and Scotland, (and from them of other parts of Europe,) representing the Irish nation as the most brutal and savage of mankind, destitute of arts, letters, and legislation; and on the other, the extreme passiveness and insensibility of the present race of Irish, at such reiterated insults offered to truth and their country: instances of inattention to their own honour, unexampled in any other civilized nation.

For, though unhappily for this antient kingdom, *unnatural* distinctions have but too long been kept up by artful and designing enemies, to the almost entire ruin of the whole; yet are we in fact, but *one* people, and as unmixed a race as any in Europe. There is not at this day a Milesian, or descendant of Strongbow, whose bloods are not so intimately blended, that it would be impossible to determine which should preponderate. A modern Englishman of the most exotic and heterogeneal ancestry, and though, perhaps, but fortuitously dropt there, grows



grows up as warm an advocate for the honour of his country, as the oldest Briton in North-Wales; whilst an Irishman, who has no honour, no fortune, no consequence perhaps, but what he derives from his country, scarce feels, in his whole life, one *warm pulsation* for national honour: To this it is, that we should attribute, in ages of literature and politeness like this and the last, those groundless, and as yet unanswered charges, made on our country, which in days of profound barbarism, would be deemed degradations to humanity.

But why, it may be said, should English and Scottish writers, be so particularly indefatigable to misrepresent and traduce the Irish nation, and its annals, if they were not convinced that they merited such treatment? It is a subject worth discussing, and I shall endeavour to do it with brevity and perspicuity.

The venerable Bede, and most early British writers, are diffusive in praise of this nation, their humanity, their hospitality, their love of letters, their noble endowments for the education of British youth, and the uncommon pains they took in converting and civilizing the Saxon race; but the moment a *fatal* connection arose between the two people, we find the tables turned, and every crime that human malice can invent, or human frailty imagine, imputed to them.

Henry II. through unhappy civil feuds, of which the histories of all nations are full, was called over to Ireland; and like a politic prince, he availed himself of our domestic misfortunes. The Irish, though early Christians, tho' renowned for spreading Christianity and letters over most parts of Europe, and little differing in essentials from the Western Church; yet for many centuries, paid little attention to the decisions of Rome. Henry having once got an opportunity of meddling in Irish affairs, (as is clearly related in the last part of this work,) was determined



## PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

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determined never to lose sight of *so glorious a prize*. It was then the custom, as at this day, to cover with the most specious pretences the worst actions. He was elected to the monarchy of Ireland; and he studied to make that appear a work of necessity, which was a work of choice, and to transfer it to his posterity. The contributions, called Peter's Pence, which the English paid to Rome, the Irish gave to the See of Armagh; and whilst we read of Italians, and other foreigners appointed to English bishopricks, the Irish before this epocha, scarcely consulted Rome about her dignitaries. It was no hard matter to prevail on Pope Adrian (an Englishman) to bestow the dominion of an island in which he had scarce any power, and from which he derived no profit, to an English prince, when both power and profit were to be the consequences. By the bull of donation, *Henry* was to *enlarge* the bounds of the church, pay to the See of Rome a penny a year out of every house in the kingdom, promote the growth of virtue and Christianity, and spread the knowledge of truth through a kingdom—the most exemplary perhaps for all Christian virtues in the world! I know it has been asserted, that this famous bull was granted some years before the landing of Henry. *Adrian*, its supposed author, was raised to the pontificate in 1154, died in 1159, and yet it never appeared till 1172. His successor, *Alexander III.* confirmed this donation; and the learned Dr. *Lynch* in his *Cambrensis Eversus*, has spent some pages to shew the nullity of both grants. But whether they were or were not spurious, it is clear to any one acquainted with human nature, that these Popes, or any Popes, would be pleased that they were solicited to bestow on a powerful prince, their title to a kingdom, which cost them nothing, when the most solid advantages were to accrue from the donation. In 1185 *Henry* procured a patent from

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Rome to crown his son John king of Ireland; and with this young prince came Gerald Barry, from his country called Cambrensis, who was appointed to write a history of it. Treated by the church as Heretics, it was no hard matter in an age of ignorance like that, to impose the greatest absurdities on a superstitious people. In 1190 Cambrensis's book was read and published at Oxford, with great form and splendour. In it the Irish clergy are abused, the laity insulted and traduced, and care is taken to shew that many English princes, antecedent to Henry, claimed a sovereignty over Ireland. Thus Henry's elevation to the Irish monarchy, which was the free choice of the majority of the nation, was attempted to be construed into an absolute right in the prince: and we must blush at public ignorance, or public insincerity, when so lately as the days of Elizabeth, we find the parliament of the *pale*, in their famous attainder of ô Neil, assert the sovereignty of England over us long before Henry's days, whereby they weakened their own independency, and lessened the obligations that crown was under to themselves and their ancestors.

This policy of Henry with regard to Ireland, was pursued by Edward I. about 130 years after, in the case of the Welsh and Scotch. An appeal was then, as before, had to Rome. Edward, from imaginary legends, promulgated by Jeoffrey of Monmouth, &c. sets forth, that Brutus the Trojan, from whom Britain was called, divided the country among his three sons. To Legrus, the eldest, he left England, from him called Laegria; to Camber, Wales; and to Albanctus, Albany; and therefore as representative of the chief line, he claimed a superiority over the other two. But however the Welsh might, the Scotch were determined not to be outdone in fabulous history, or give up their pretences to antiquity in a case where invention was to supply



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supply the place of truth. Centuries therefore before a *Brutus* was heard of, their advocates in their answers to Edward's claim affirmed, that a monarchy was founded in the mountains of Scotland by a colony from Ireland, headed by Gathelus, who was himself cotemporary with Moses. The ground-work for a national history being thus *boldly* laid, of which it appears their country had preserved very few and imperfect particulars, their honour was engaged to support this imaginary antiquity. John Fordon a Scotch priest, was therefore sent to Ireland soon after to collect more authentic materials; and tho' he was humbly content to admit the Caledonian monarchy to be very many centuries later, yet even this could not be done, without calling in question the authenticity of the Irish annals. From these motives, whilst the English, for near 500 years, from the most savage policy, were by their writers, vilifying the Irish abroad, and by their governors and emissaries *here* endeavouring to destroy every domestic record; the Scotch, thro' a spirit of pride, (the more condemnable as being less useful to their country) were endeavouring to steal from us, and arrogate to themselves, those eminent and illustrious Irishmen, who from remote antiquity have distinguished themselves at home and abroad: and with greater certainty to effect this, they have omitted no means whatever to throw our history and antiquities into contempt. But though England has, for more than a century past, rejected this brutal policy, better assured of the friendship and support of Ireland from affection and inclination than restraint, though her literati wish for some fuller investigation of our antiquities, and her nobility, particularly the present duke of Northumberland, seem to interest themselves more in these matters than the very natives themselves, yet have not the Scotch relinquished the pursuit. More determined and less restrained than ever, their writers have not been ashamed to run into the most  
indecent:



indecent excesses, and fall into the greatest absurdities in pursuing their favourite scheme; and this upon a presumption that, as our annals have been not only shamefully neglected, but in a manner despised by the late race of Irish, no one would at present be found in the kingdom of spirit and capacity sufficient to break through vulgar prejudices, and recall his countrymen to a sense of themselves.

However inadequate to so great an attempt, as the cause was a glorious one, I was determined by application and assiduity to supply what I might want in capacity or parts; and I had hopes of inspiring some abler of my countrymen with the generous sentiments of encountering these modern bravoes. To this end I many years since set about collecting the best materials. But though we wanted not from age to age men of erudition to defend the honour of their country; yet so little has this subject been attended to, particularly since the revolution, that their writings are with the greatest difficulty obtained. This is the case with the learned writings of Ward, Lombard, Routh, ô Flaherty, &c. and I was above four years on the search, before I could procure a copy of Gratianus Lucius. Even the old MSS. so easily to be met with formerly, are now with great trouble procured. Having at length furnished myself with a collection, I set about examining, in the most severe and critical manner, our history and annals. Instead of apologizing for, or flurring over many seeming absurdities in the relations of our senachies, and particularly with regard to the migrations of our Scythian ancestors, when I perceived that the national history had been a constant object of the state, I concluded that they must stand the most severe scrutiny; or that a learned nation must for ages have countenanced and protected impositions.



The admirers of modern reveries tell us, it is absurd to suppose, when navigation was in its infancy, that a colony of people should make such long and distant voyages before the use of the needle was found out, whilst they admit that the Phœnicians, the Tyrians, and Greeks, traversed vast oceans: yet surely there can be no more reason for denying the fact in one, than the other instance, since they alike depend on the faith of history. But in many particulars how are we assured of our superiority to the ancients? The Chinese have been *long* possessed of those discoveries, we modern Europeans boast as our own; and we have more than bare presumption for supposing that our Milesian ancestors were very early acquainted with navigation, astronomy, and even the use of reflecting and refracting glasses. Father Kegler, president of the Mathematical Tribunal in China, has informed the public of a map of the heavens made there long before the arrival of the missionaries, in which not only the visible stars, but those discoverable by glasses only, were delineated; and our early writers inform us that, the Irish coasts were first discovered with glasses, by Ith, the son of Milesius. In the island of the Hyperboreans we are told, the people could bring the moon near to them, and discover in it hills and valleys; and yet till the modern use of glasses was found out, the story was treated as a fiction. But to wave all this, let us ask, what motives could our senachies have for imposing on the public an imaginary relation of the different migrations of their ancestors from Egypt to Greece; from thence to Spain, and so to Ireland? We see the same unvarnished tale transmitted from age to age, from the remotest antiquity, without the least alteration; and the collateral evidences which I have produced from the histories of these different nations, are astonishingly strong, considering the very early times in which they passed. This critical enquiry, which

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a desire to prove in the clearest manner the truth of our antient history made me undertake, I apprehend will throw a very great light on many obscure parts of antient history; at least the reader will judge for himself, when he reads the 6th and 7th chapters of the first part of this work. The Hyperborean island, described by Diodorus Siculus, has been supposed by some, like Sir Thomas More's Utopia, an imaginary one; but the many Greek writers who speak of this extraordinary island, leave no doubt as to its existence: the only doubt that remains is, where to fix it. When the two last chapters of the first part of this introduction are examined, the critical reader will be enabled to determine whether Ireland is not the country described in every line, and how far her history is capable of reconciling many controverted parts of antient history.

The early Greek and Roman writers have represented the Druids as the priests and philosophers of the Celtic nations of Europe; as a race of men, eminent for the most exalted virtues, and for their extensive knowledge in arts and sciences. Yet if we credit most learned moderns, these Druids borrowed their acts and mysteries from the very Greeks themselves; tho' these last tell us, that they were confined to the remote parts of Europe, and mention them as a people they were little acquainted with!

Finding in all periods of our Pagan history, constant mention of Druid priests, and having yet in our language no other word than *Draithe* whereby to express a diviner, or teller of future events, I began to suspect that this extraordinary body of men, took their rise amongst us; and that with arts and letters, they spread their doctrine over the continent of Europe. I read with attention all that had been advanced by foreigners relative to them: I particularly considered every passage in Cæsar, who was an eye-witness; I compared these, with the  
accounts



accounts of our Druids as delivered by Colgan in the lives of our early Christians, and with many parts of our antient history; and in the whole have found a most astonishing coincidence of facts. The mistakes of Scaliger, Selden, and other modern critics, with respect to Cæsar's relation, I have hereby been enabled to correct; and hence every lover of truth may learn how dangerous and presumptuous it is in modern critics and commentators, merely because some parts of a relation seem to them abstruse, boldly to contradict what are advanced as positive facts by antient writers, and living witnesses. In a word, a perusal of the 3d, 4th, and 5th chapters of this first part, will convince the unprejudiced, that the Heathen Irish were the polishers and instructors of the adjacent nations; and that the Irish history should be diligently studied by every learned European; nay, that is impossible to become a profound antiquarian without a knowledge of it.

Cæsar tells us, that lettered men were in the highest estimation among the Gauls; he describes their governments, and affirms, that in all transactions, whether of a public or private nature, religious ones only excepted, they made use of letters. He is positive they had public Colleges for the education of youth; and that these were instructed not only in religion and discipline, but in the sublimest parts of metaphysical and philosophical knowledge. Yet modern writers, in opposition to these assertions, affirm, that these and the circumjacent nations were rude, ignorant, and illiterate, without public records, without history, or any marks of a civilization. How is this consistent with the veneration they express for the Roman historians? Must it follow because through various revolutions these annals are long since lost to us, that Cæsar intended to impose on the Roman people? Our history will clearly shew he



never meant any such thing ; and *our* History *only* can vindicate the learning and honour of the Celtic nations, from the aspersions of their very descendants. Cæsar tells us the Druids were great astronomers, and the Irish word for a year literally signifies the circle of Beal, or the Sun. He tells us, to them were committed the education of youth ; and in every part of Ireland colleges were founded for the same purpose. He says, that such as chose to become eminent in letters, repaired to the isles of Britain, or rather to Ireland ; and at the reception of Christianity, and for centuries after, was a man of letters of Britain, or of the continent missing, it was a proverbial expression, *Amandatus est ad disciplinam, in Hiberniâ*. Thus, in the days of Druidism as in subsequent times, was Ireland the great school of Europe, and it will be found that our antient history, like pure gold, the more severely it is analysed, the *brighter it becomes*.

Convinced that our ancestors came here a great and polished people, I expected from our records every proof of it, and was not deceived. Literary foundations, for the instruction of foreign as well as their own youth, shewed them indeed a learned nation ; but their attention to every other useful object, proved them a great and wise state. Not even at this day in China, is agriculture carried to a higher pitch than it was formerly among the Irish, the traces of which are yet visible in our wildest and most uncultivated mountains. By this they promoted population, formed an hardened yeomanry, and gave rise to new wants and new industry. It was from the countenance afforded by our princes to agriculture, that trades and manufactures early flourished amongst us ; that the bowels of the earth were explored for new riches ; that Ireland was renowned for her mines of gold, silver, copper, and tin ; that our commerce was extensive ; and that, as Tacitus confesses, our ports were more frequented



quented by foreigners, than those of Britain. By this were our navies and armies supplied with hardy warriors, who kept in subjection the neighbouring states, and who even fought in foreign climes those tyrants of the world, the antient Romans. We may judge of the riches of Ireland formerly, from the early laws made in the *little parliament* of the *pale*, against the use of gold bits, and ornaments of gold to bridles, except by persons of a certain rank; and by the duty on pure silver exported. Such are the consequences that must ever flow from a strict attention to agriculture.

I considered our antient mode of legislation with great attention; and I flatter myself that I have viewed its advantages through a clearer medium, than any preceding writer. It is a fact admitted by the most celebrated historians, &c. that the antient laws, institutions, and customs of Europe were in no degree borrowed from the Greeks and Romans; and in Ireland I found their rise could be traced as well as the origin of the Celtic literature. Cæsar, for example, divides the Gauls into different classes: thus were the Irish arranged. He says, next to the *literati*, their knights were in the highest esteem, and that they were remarkable in his time;—exactly our case. Pausanias describes their manner of fighting; and every page of our history is pregnant with proofs of their romantic bravery and humanity; yet most moderns are of opinion that orders of chivalry took their rise in Europe at a much later period. Hottoman in his *Franco-Gallia* judges that the crown of France was always hereditary in the three royal races; whilst Du Hailan, on the contrary thinks, that under the two first races it was merely elective. To reconcile opinions so opposite, the learned Pere Daniel imagines, that the crown of France was hereditary under the first race, elective under the second, and again hereditary under the third. Vertot has with great solidity of



argument proved, that in all instances it was both hereditary and elective. That is, that in point of blood, it could not depart from the reigning line; but that the succession did not pass directly to the next in blood, but was determined by the choice of the chiefs of the people. Such has been the Irish modus of succession, from the remotest antiquity even to the beginning of the last century. None but the male line could govern in France; and through our extended history, but one instance occurs of a female regent. Among the Celtic nations we find all crimes, even murder, punished by fine, or servitude; and the fine was settled according to the dignity and quality of the deceased. In Ireland, from the days of Ollamh-Fodla, till the last century, all crimes, (violations offered to females, and insults offered to any of the estates assembled at Tara excepted) were in like manner punished by mulct; and this has been by our lawyers called the law of Eiric, or retribution. English writers in particular have been wanton in their censures of this law, which they have accounted to the last degree barbarous; and this apparently for no other reason but to run down the Irish legislation, since it is certain that their ancestors strictly adhered to the same. It has not appeared however that the more sanguinary and fiery ones that have succeeded have been the least check upon vice and immorality; and since the encrease of those laws, there has visibly been an increase of public executions and public crimes. If a reverence for strict and impartial justice, as well as for the distributors of it, be a proof of salutary laws duly administered, it must be granted that those of Ireland were eminently so, as those English lawyers, who first introduced the present form of legislation into the Irish counties in the last century, most fully acknowledge.

But



But beside the great lights which our history is capable of throwing on the antient laws and customs of Europe in general, England is more particularly interested in this enquiry. I have wrote a particular chapter on this head; and if I shall not have the thanks of British antiquarians for it, I can only say, that I have taken no small trouble to deserve it. The learned Cambden was too great an antiquarian to be totally ignorant of the Irish language, as his *Britannia* proves. It was in consequence of this knowledge, and to be able to account for the many Irish words found in the British, that he supposes the Aborigines of Ireland came from thence. Mr. Lhuid, from the employment he engaged in, found himself under an indispensable necessity of becoming a master of our tongue. It was from this acquisition that he was enabled to answer the expectations of his patrons, and to prove to the curious, how much the antiquities of Britain could be illustrated by those of Ireland. He too supposes the first settlers in Ireland to have come from England, and thereby accounts for the most antient names of places, &c. *there*, being radical Irish. The lately deceased Dr. John ô Brien, titular bishop of Cloyne, astonished at the light which our language throws, not only on the British, but the other Celtic dialects, is forced to adopt, in his Irish Dictionary, the modern system of population in direct opposition to all antient history, and particularly to that of his native country. But, convinced by the silence of the venerable Bede on this head, and the positive assertions of our very antient writers, that the first inhabitants of Britain went from Ireland, (and I do contend that their testimonies should have the greater weight) I have clearly, I think, accounted for the affinity between the two languages, without attempting to subvert antient



antient history. Thus much for an account of the first and second parts of this work.

The Circumstances taken notice of in the preceding Sketch will, I imagine, appear to every candid Reader very strong proofs of the alledged power, dignity, and civilized state of the antient Irish; there is however one objection to this system that deserves attention, not indeed so much on account of its intrinsic weight, as the confidence with which it has been urged, and the credit it has obtained. How, it is said, can the abject submissions of the Irish to an handful of Norman adventurers, who, in the decline of the 12th century accompanied the exiled king of Leinster to Ireland, be reconciled to the Idea of their power, their good government, and their discipline?

All English writers who have wrote of Irish affairs from the time in question to this day, are positive, that the restoration of Mac Murrough was an absolute conquest of Ireland, and a conquest made by two or three hundred foreigners. There is not perhaps in all history a revolution more intricate, more involved in obscurities than the one in question; nor is there any in which Irishmen are more interested. From a thorough acquaintance with the records of this transaction, and a strict attention to the passions and prejudices of the several writers, I hope to have penetrated and satisfactorily laid open the nature of this revolution and its consequence, without calling the intrepidity, or the importance of my countrymen into question. The transitions from courage to timidity, from greatness to obscurity, must be gradual; and nothing can be more preposterous, than to suppose a warlike nation, the uncommon exertion of whose courage was so conspicuous through the whole Danish wars, should at once be subdued by an handful of people, scarcely sufficient at this day to take a battery of two guns. Yet English writers have not been  
ashamed



ashamed to affirm this to be a conquest, and I shall not be afraid to set them right in the important question.

The voluntary *abdication* of Mac Murrough I consider in the same light, as that of Labhra, of Tuathal, mentioned by Tacitus, of Eogan the great, and Mac Con, several ages before. Like them he was animated by a spirit of revenge, and a desire of recovering his former greatness; like them he applied to a neighbouring nation for assistance; like them he raised troops, who were allured by the hope of gain; and like them he returned and triumphed over his enemies. Ingratitude is a crime which the Irish cannot be accused of; and Mac Murrough, like his predecessors, royally rewarded those aliens. Thus far their establishment in Ireland, could be no more deemed a foreign conquest, than that of those adventurers who followed the standards of the exiled princes of York and Lancaster, and of the late king William into England; or of the subsequent advancement of many noble Irish families in France and Germany. In all these instances the acquisitions of the adventurers were the rewards of merit and bravery, freely conferred by princes of the country only. If Henry's elevation to the Irish monarchy may be deemed a conquest, then must the election of the duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry III. of France, to the crown of Poland, in 1573; and the later ones of Augustus of Saxony, &c. be accounted conquests of Poland. This also clearly explains, why until the days of James I. the laws of England were confined to a narrow tract of land, not the tenth part of Ireland, and which was only the domain allotted to support the state of the Irish monarchs, independent of their own particular territories.

Most writers have been remarkably severe in their censures of the Stuart line; yet by their accession to the English throne, the brightest jewel in the British diadem was secured.

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The Irish, who before this period, were perpetually in arms struggling for their liberties, the moment they beheld a prince of the royal line of Milesius wear the British crown, immediately declared themselves peaceable subjects; and what the force of 400 years could not accomplish, the simple accession of one prince completed. By the compacts between him and the Irish, all distinctions were for ever to cease; and the laws of England, or rather those of Ireland, were to be implicitly obeyed over all the kingdom, as may be seen in the acts of James I. and Charles I. Since that day, all ranks of Irish own the power of the kings of England, as *Monarchs of Ireland*; the Irish of British origin from natural affection, and those of the *old stock*, from the pleasing consideration that they are *still* governed by a prince of their own blood. Such is the light in which they behold his present majesty; and warmer or faithfuller subjects his extensive dominions cannot produce.

Civil wars, the greatest curse that can befall a country, because generally more sanguinary and cruel than those of nation against nation, soon destroyed that peace which ought to have subsisted between the people of Ireland. Blinded by the intemperance of religious and political rage, each party painted their opponents as prejudice and passion dictated; and the war in 1641, has been looked upon as the last degree of human ferocity and wickedness! The farther we are removed in point of time from national revolutions, the more impartially they are considered, and the charges of massacres and carnage on the whole Irish nation, now appear clearly the work of two or three great bad men. It must be, from the general customs and inclinations of a people that we are to form their character; and from due observation of these it will assuredly ap-

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pear that cruelty of disposition is no more the characteristic of the Irish in general, than of the neighbouring nations.

To view the two islands of Britain and Ireland, one would think them intended to support and protect each other. The antient Greeks and Romans called them indiscriminately the *British Isles*, as if they were inhabited by the same people; and Cambden thinks Albion, the most antient name of Britain, was given it as it were a second Ireland (Eile-Ban, another Ireland;) Ban, or Banba being one of the antient names of our country. Cæsar too says, the customs and manners of the two people are nearly alike; and in his present majesty, and his ancestors from James I. the royal blood of the three kingdoms is united. All these circumstances considered, is it not astonishing that any distinctions should be kept up between them? Yet so it is, that we are scarcely treated with common decency by English or North-British writers. I have however already observed, that the most sensible Britons are far from approving of these indecencies; and from the specimen which Dr. Warner has afforded us in his Irish history, we may form some notions of *native British candour*.

Such, in a cursory way, is an account of the present work. As to the motives to this undertaking, I do affirm them to have been of the purest kind; a love for my country, and ALL her sons; a desire to place them and their ancestors, in that point of view which their courage, their hospitality, and other *manly* virtues, justly intitle them to: a wish that a spark of public spirit might catch every breast, and banish for ever from amongst us all ruinous distinctions. To say that this work could not be made more correct and extensive than it appears, would be asserting much more than truth; and yet when the reader considers how little leisure a person considerably engaged

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in an active profession, and the improvement of it, can find ; and what little encouragement or emolument he could propose to himself, by the attempt, he will perhaps pardon its faults, and commend his industry.

In fact, let us consider history in every light which it is capable of, and it will appear that a *rational* history of Ireland may afford as much amusement and instruction as that of any other antient nation whatever. Would we view it philosophically, where shall we find the history of the human mind more elevated and more amiable ? Do we look for incentives to the brightest actions for national liberty ? Let us behold *Ceallach in Caísbil* ; a prince gallant, brave, and young, insidiously imprisoned by the Dane ; and threatened with perpetual confinement in a foreign land, if he will not consent to deliver up his country a prey to these strangers. Instead of acquiescing to demands so injurious to his people, he *privately* directs his successor, though of another family (for Munster was alternately ruled by two houses for some centuries) to make no kind of concession to these Barbarians, and to take advantage of this negotiation to arm his country to their destruction, without any regard to his particular fate. How noble a subject for the Muse. Are we taught to venerate Judith for destroying the oppressor of her country ? Behold a character more amiable, as less culpable, in an Irish princess of the royal line of Heremon ; exposing her person, whilst she preserved her honour, to rid her country of a foreign tyrant. And do we admire a *Curtius*, sacrificing his life to the good of his country ? how much more sensible, glorious, and worthy of imitation, was the conduct of a *Fingal*, a *Seadbna*, and a *Connal* ; who, in the famous sea-fight off Dundalk, finding theirs and their country's liberty at stake, at one desperate effort, grasp in their arms the commanders of the enemy's ships and plunge with them into the fathomless abyss.

Would



Would we be acquainted with a people where true liberty was wisely fenced from Aristocratical oppression, and Democratical insolence; where a line was drawn between religion and bigotry, intemperate zeal, and true charity; behold the faithful pages of Irish history, bearing testimony to all these points. We shall see a *Patrick* coming to convert an whole nation to a new religion. See with what a wise and philosophic temper these altercations are conducted on both sides. No civil wars, no persecutions, no countries laid waste, and their innocent inhabitants destroyed, as immolations to some angry deity. Nothing of all this! Their disputes are managed with decency; and the public no further interested than to be convinced which doctrine was most orthodox. When Christianity took the lead of Druidism, we find the same *tolerating* spirit preserved; and though Druidical tenets were kept up for above three centuries after the landing of Patrick, yet were its professors unmolested. What a lesson of instruction to modern nations! Had such wise and conciliating measures animated the councils of European states in these later times, happy had it been for the public. Spain, would not have been debilitated by the expulsion of the Moors. France would not have regretted the revocation of the edict of Nantz; and after a profound peace of 80 years, the effects of the *Popery laws* would not be felt in Ireland.

Such is a sketch of the history of a nation whose annals I have laboured to *drag* from obscurity to light: with what success, time only must determine. This however I may affirm, that whoever undertakes hereafter to write an history of Ireland, will find the present work an useful assistant: in it he will find many things, seemingly dark and mysterious, cleared up, and illustrated. When a spirit of curiosity begins to break forth, truth should



should ever be its concomitant; and I have not been afraid to oppose the faith of history to modern errors, and modern prejudices.

In what light this work will be considered by my country I am at a loss to know. I am sensible that men reluctantly part with their prejudices and their opinions; and the later periods of our history have been so shamefully misrepresented, that it will require some time to establish the antecedent facts. But let it be considered in what light it may, my intentions fortify me against the event. During the long period of this laborious enquiry, I have fervently and repeatedly wished for resolution, perseverance, and health, to pursue the subject, and I adore that Supreme Being which has at length enabled me to bring it to a conclusion.

Limerick, October 10, 1771.

S. O HALLORAN.



AN  
INTRODUCTION  
TO THE STUDY OF  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES  
OF  
IRELAND.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

*The inutility of enquiring after a primeval language. Uncertainty of an original Celtic. The true use to which an antiquarian should apply a knowledge of antient languages; particularly applicable to that of Ireland.*

THE original intent and institution of Letters being to make every age wiser and better than the former, it were sincerely to be wished, the better to promote these laudable ends, that persons of the clearest heads, were appointed, or would devote themselves, to lay out regular plans of the most certain methods of improving each particular science; and to point out what enquiries should be totally rejected, as beyond the comprehension of limited beings, and of course fruitless, or which when known, added little or nothing to the real fund of knowledge. It is true, by these means, much fewer books would be published; but then, we should be much more knowing in every branch of useful Science. To apply this to our present purpose, what volumes have been written on the origin of languages, the primeval one, &c. and yet how little



to the edification of the laborious and critical Enquirer! In the composition of such works, great erudition is displayed; and we only wish, that such talents were employed on subjects more worthy of them.

Had there been any original language, as cannot be doubted, it being expressly said in Scripture, "Behold the people are one, and the language one;" yet what solid proofs have we, that after the confusion of tongues at Babel, this original language was preserved in its purity, as it is pretended to have been, by the descendants of Heber? The projectors and undertakers of that daring, that stupendous work, were assuredly men of great abilities; they must have been philosophers and mathematicians, well acquainted with the laws of motion, and the properties of bodies; add to this, that they must have had great weight and influence on their friends and dependents, to engage them in this enterprize. But had this original Language been preserved by any particular sect of these Men, would it not have been worthy their ambition to attempt, by instruction, to draw back the rest of the assembly to the use of this language, and to a resumption of their work; especially as it appears by Scripture, that this was the only mean used by the Almighty to defeat their impious designs? And sure it will not be said, that men were then more incapable of acquiring a knowledge of different languages, than at present? It is more than probable then, that in the confusion of Tongues which ensued, they totally differed from each other, and *none* retained the least vestige of the great original. And Scripture is clearly of this opinion; for Moses tells us, that God said, "Let us go down and confound their languages, that they may not understand one another's speech." In the division of the isles of the Gentiles,  
by



by the posterity of Noah, he observes, “ By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one *after his tongue*, according to their families, and in their nations.” It seems to me evident then, that whatever this original language was, it is in vain to hope for a discovery of it from the knowledge of tongues, how antient soever; and indeed, the unsatisfactory attempts, and different hypotheses of critics and philologists on this head, for a considerable time past, give weight to the assertion.

But, if from general Premises we descend to particular facts, we shall find more reasons for these surmises; for the further we advance into remote history, the more distant we find ourselves from an universal language. Cæsar for instance assures us, that different tongues were in his days spoken in Gaul, and the German nation differed from them. In Britain, more languages were formerly spoken than now. In the South, they used the British or Welch, the Saxon and Cornish, besides the Latin; and in the North, the Irish and Pictish prevailed. This being the case, the laborious researches into the original Celtic, or primeval language of the descendants of Japhet, will, I fear, prove as fruitless an undertaking as those after an universal one. And after all the enquiries and pains of Pontanus, Menage, Pezron, Lhuid, &c. what do we learn? That a very few words have some small degree of affinity, in some languages; but that the radices, structure, and grammar declare them to be totally different!

It cannot be contested, but a knowledge of different tongues, confined to its proper sphere, must greatly assist the antiquarian in explaining many abstruse points of antient history, besides the facility of reading different works in them. Thus, a general scholar, unacquainted with the history of Physic, from the vast



number of Greek technical terms, scattered thro' such writings, would naturally conclude, that it was highly cultivated by the antient Greeks, and that from them other nations learned the first rudiments of it: and for precisely the same reason he would affirm, that they were great philosophers and rhetoricians. In Chymistry, Pharmacy, and Astronomy, we find very many Arabic terms of art; and though we did not know from history that the Arabs eminently protected letters, and highly improved these sciences; and that *from them*, the Italians got a taste for the fine arts, and an acquaintance with the early Greek writers, long before the destruction of the Grecian empire, yet should we naturally infer, that these sciences, were greatly advanced by them. But, instead of confining ourselves to these natural inductions should we rashly affirm, that the Europeans were a motly aggregate of Greeks and Arabians, as such numbers of their words were to be found among us, especially in the sciences; is it not manifest, that we should rather injure than serve the cause of letters? And yet something similar to this has been advanced by many writers of great eminence, and particularly by the great Mr. Cambden: This gentleman, from the bare consideration that the antient Britons and Gauls had the same religion, and that some Celtic words latinised by Cæsar and other Roman writers, seemed to be of British origin, has boldly advanced, that the Britons and Gauls were originally one people; but, in my opinion, conclusions more limited would be more convincing; since Cæsar expressly declares, that the inhabitants, particularly of the interior parts of Britain, were Aborigines. Besides, why should the sameness of religion and customs of different nations, in antient times, be admitted as a proof of their being one people, which would be treated with contempt in a modern case? A Chinese or Persian



Persian superficially viewing the different countries of Europe, and observing at Paris, Rome and Vienna, the same religion, rites and ceremonies, and in the same language; though from such appearances, his affirming these different nations to be one common stock, might appear conclusive to his countrymen, yet it must be admitted, that the hypothesis would be justly ridiculed by the knowing European.

Since then it appears certain, from the earliest periods of history, that Europe was divided into many states, each speaking its own dialect, and governed by its own laws and customs; and that the Romans, near two thousand years ago, found no vestiges, nor even heard by tradition, of an universal language; the success of such enquiry may now be justly doubted. But, in exploring the customs, laws, and manners of different antient nations, if we find technical terms, especially religious and literary ones preserved, the roots of which are not to be found in their languages, we may safely affirm that such rites and mysteries were not the invention of those people. Where we can fix them, there we may conclude they took their rise. But, if the history of a people asserts the same, especially if they appear to have been a polite and lettered nation, the proofs are irrefragable. So far therefore a knowledge of antient languages becomes useful and interesting; and the light it is capable of throwing on the obscure parts of history, as well as on the remote laws and customs of different nations, must be undoubtedly great. But, instead of making these natural inductions, the result of plain sense and reason, if we indulge a luxurious fancy; if we form, from such slight appearances, historical hypotheses of population, unaided—indeed opposed, by history, it is evident, that instead of conviction and knowledge, scepticism and disorder must follow. It is precisely in this light that I have considered, and have endeavoured



voured to explain the antient rites and customs of Europe, both before and after the promulgation of Christianity, by the aids which the history and language of my native country afford me. However warm an advocate I may be thought in the cause of a country insulted, with impunity, by almost every scribler of modern date; yet I hope my zeal will not hurry me into assertions that I cannot support. If it shall appear, and I trust it will appear, that whatever religion and learning prevailed among the Celtic nations of Europe, particularly the Britons and Gauls, before the admission of Christianity, came from Ireland; and, if from its language and history, I shall be able to explain and clear up many things, as yet involved in the greatest obscurity, I flatter myself I shall render an essential service to letters, and restore to *my country*, part of that honour which she has been, so long, and so unjustly deprived of.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Druids. Different accounts of their manners and customs—presumed not to have offered human sacrifices. Rowland's claim to their prime residence in Anglesey, examined and refuted.*

**T**HAT there were, amongst the Gauls, a set of people highly eminent in arts and sciences, the crowded evidences of antient Greek and Roman writers prove; according to these, they were divines and legislators, philosophers and poets, had particular privileges and immunities, and were held in the highest veneration by the people. Laertius, in the proem to his account of philosophers, deems the Druids the principal authors of barbarous theology long before the Greeks. In his account of Aristotle, he judges the Druid philosophy more antient



tient than the Greek, and that these last might have borrowed theirs from the Gauls, whom he compares to the sages of Chaldea, or the Magi of Persia. Phurnutus \* affirms, that amongst the many fables the antient Greeks held concerning their Gods, some were taken from the Magi, some from the Egyptians, and some from the Gauls. Strabo, in his fourth book, divides them into three orders, the, *Ovateis*, or Vates, who assisted at their sacrifices, the Druids, who were divines and philosophers, and the Bardi, who sung the praises of their heroes; they were, says Diodorus, the justest of men, and often ended a dispute in peace when two armies were drawn out ready to decide it by the sword! Ammianus Marcelinus † tells us, “that a knowledge of the liberal arts, was communicated to the unpolished people, by means of the Druids, “ Euvates, and Bards.” Diodorus Siculus, and Cicero, mention another order amongst the Druids, called Saronides; but this, later critics have judged to be a mistake, as both *Δρῦς* and *σάρονις* are synonymous words for the oak; so that, in fact, Saronides and Druidæ, were but different words to express the same thing. Later writers however have omitted all these distinctions, uniting them all, under the single name of Druids.

But of all the foreigners, who have wrote of this body of men, none seem to have been better acquainted with their customs, than Julius Cæsar. In the sixth book of his commentaries, he is minute in his account of them. “The persons most distinguished amongst the Gauls (says he) are of two orders, the “ Druids and the Knights. The Druids superintend the worship “ of the Gods, and the care of religion: To them are committed “ the education of youth; and so much are they esteemed, that all “ disputes

\* De natura Deorum.

† Lib. 15.



“ disputes public or private, are left to their decision. If any  
 “ murder is committed, or law-suit about inheritance commenced,  
 “ they determine it, directing rewards and punishments. If any  
 “ man attempts to go retrograde to their decisions, they interdict  
 “ him from their sacrifices; and the excommunicated are deemed  
 “ impious and abominable. Their company is carefully avoided by  
 “ all who would avoid a like censure; nor are they capable of hold-  
 “ ing any employment or gaining justice or redress from the com-  
 “ munity. Over this whole body presides an Arch-druid, whose  
 “ power is absolute. After his death, the most worthy succeeds  
 “ him; but if there are many candidates, the election is deter-  
 “ mined by votes, and sometimes by force of arms: they meet  
 “ every year in the country of Chartres, which is in the middle of  
 “ Gaul, in a place appointed and consecrated for that purpose.  
 “ Hither all who are at law or variance repair, and submit their  
 “ causes to their decision. It is thought that their institution came  
 “ originally from Britain, and from thence passed over to Gaul;  
 “ and at this time they who are ambitious of becoming eminent  
 “ in their rites, repair thither, for their edification.

“ They never attend war, and are exempt from all taxes  
 “ and duties consequent upon it; for which reason many em-  
 “ brace this order, and others are admitted, thro’ the intervention  
 “ of friends. They must commit to memory a great number of  
 “ verses, as it is deemed unlawful to trust their mysteries to  
 “ writing; wherefore, some remain twenty years at study.  
 “ On other occasions, public or private, they use the Greek cha-  
 “ racter. The first point of their theology is, the immortality of  
 “ the soul, and the metempsychosis, or passage of the soul from  
 “ one body to another. This they think a great incentive to virtue,  
 “ by inspiring a contempt of death. Many other things they in-  
 “ struct their disciples in, as of the stars and their motions, of the  
 “ world



“ world and the earth’s magnitude, of the nature of things, and  
 “ the immortality and power of the Gods :” thus far Cæsar.

Pomponius Mela declares the Druids to be “ well instructed  
 “ in the form and magnitude of the earth, the motions of the  
 “ heavenly bodies, and a knowledge of future events.” Pliny,  
 in his natural history tells us, that their places of worship were  
 furrounded by groves of oak, and that they were not permitted  
 to sacrifice but in them. Lucan alludes to this in his first  
 book, where, addressing the Druids, he says,

—————*Nemora alta remotis*  
*Incolitis Lucis.*

Pliny also tells us in what reverence the oak was held,  
 insomuch that they thought it a tree chosen by the Deity  
 himself; and the misleto was deemed a sovereign remedy against  
 all disorders: the high priest dressed in white, cut it at the pro-  
 per season with a gold sickle, and received it on his sagum, at  
 which mystery all their religious assembled, according to Ovid:

*Ad viscum Druidæ, Druidæ clamare solebant.*

Pherecides, Præceptor to Pythagoras, as Moreri tells us, in-  
 structed the people in the principles maintained by the Druids,  
 as to the immortality of the soul; and Stephanus says, that the  
*Eubages*, or *Ouvates*, who were the prophets, and the *Samno-*  
*thei* or acting priests of the Gauls, were so considerable in num-  
 ber, as to be deemed a distinct people from the rest of the com-  
 munity. They were believed to be remarkably endued with a  
 spirit of prophecy; on which account, Tacitus tells us, that  
 they were frequently consulted as to the event of things. The

C Emperor



Emperor Aurelian applied to them to know if the Roman empire would remain in his family; and their prediction that Dioclesian should become Emperor of Rome, while a common soldier, is a well-attested fact. But Cæsar, Strabo, &c. while they allow these people extraordinary talents and virtues, are positive that they offered human sacrifices to their Gods; and Tacitus charges the British Druids with the same crime. When we consider the acknowledged zeal and bigotry of the Gauls to their religion, insomuch that for it they were ready to sacrifice every thing; when we also reflect on the reverence in which they held their priests; the learning, rational and exalted sentiments of the latter; their notion of the soul's immortality, and the new bodies which the souls of the Just should animate; their reverence for the Deity, &c. is it natural to imagine them capable of such horrid immolations? Is it not probable their hatred to the Roman power might, by way of recrimination, give rise to this charge? I know the authority of the ancients is against me on this head; but what we see daily happen might formerly have happened. Who, in looking over some books of controversy, would imagine, that some sects of Christians had any thing human but the form? The Acts of a few individuals are frequently made charges against a whole body; and one body of Christians accuses another of doctrines absolutely damnable! Certain it is, that in the whole Irish History no instance occurs of the Druids offering up human sacrifices; on the contrary, when St. Patrick opposed Druidism singly and unsupported, no violence was offered him. Both the Druids and he pretended supernatural calls; and as usual, called in the Deity as evidence. Disputes of this kind, should ever be determined, as they then were. The books containing the rites and mysteries of both doctrines, were,



were, by mutual consent, put under water, and which ever remained longest unaltered by this element, were to be looked upon as the purest. From this single instance, we may form a judgment of the great humanity and philosophic spirit of the antient Irish. They wisely considered, that every system of morality should have virtue for its basis ; and whilst the professors of the new religion adhered to this fundamental point, they viewed every other circumstance in the same indifferent light we do opposite systems of philosophy, just as the Chinese have done with respect to the Christian Missionaries, in our own days : Christianity, by degrees, superseded Druidism ; its votaries with a pious and fiery zeal destroyed all traces of the old doctrine ; and with them, no doubt, those systems of Philosophy and Metaphysics, so much applauded by Cæsar, and other antient writers.

Various have been the conjectures of the moderns on this extraordinary body of men. Mr. Dickinson \* imagining some affinity between the rites of the Druids and those of the antient Patriarchs, supposes this religion Anti-Diluvian, and to have been spread over the face of the earth by the posterity of Noah. The learned Dr. Rowland, † observing some likeness between the *Carneades* and *Crom-Liacs* of the Druids, and corresponding Hebrew words, concludes, that the Hebrews were the original authors of this institution. And, as Cæsar expressly says, that they did not commit their mysteries to writing, and that their religion came originally from Britain ; that Tacitus ‡ describes the Druids of Anglesey, and the destruction of their groves and altars by the Romans ; and that British writers have been hitherto silent on this head ; he boldly claims the island of Anglesey for the metropolitan residence of these doctors ;

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\* De origine Druid.

† Mona Antiqua.

‡ Annal. L. 14. C. 29.



tors; whence, as a pure fountain, orthodox Druidism flowed to all parts.

But against his hypothesis (for such only it is) it has been observed, that the conclusion is too forced, to suppose the Druids to have taken their religion from the antient Patriarchs, because a few words happen to have the same meaning in the Hebrew and Celtic language. Besides, Scripture tells us, that the Jews were under the immediate direction of the Supreme Being; and we are willing to believe that Druidism was a mere human invention. But to allow Mr. Rowland's argument its full force, (that after the dispersions of mankind, some faint notions of Theology were preserved by the posterity of Japhet) a question will naturally arise, how the Germans became totally ignorant of this worship, as Cæsar assures us, "*Germani multum ab hac Consuetudine differunt; nam, neque Druides habent, qui rebus divinis præsent, neque sacrificiis student.*" How came the Romans, and even the Greeks, who were nearer the fountain of knowledge, (supposing population from the East) to be unacquainted with this religion, and to mention it as a worship confined to the remote parts of Europe? Why fix on the isle of Anglesey, so remote from any foreign commerce, so barren in itself, and of such little consequence, in prejudice to every other part of Britain? Besides, the acknowledged ignorance of the Britons in point of letters, ill accords with the character which Cæsar gives of the learning and wisdom of these devotees. Almost all British writers, from Ninius, who lived in the sixth century, to Cambden, Lhuid, and Rowland, agree, that at this period, the Britons were barbarous, rude, and ignorant; and Mr. Rowland himself, whilst he contends for his favourite country, yet owns, "That the very Druids

of



“ of Britain, neither kept nor transmitted to posterity, any  
 “ monuments of their country.”

After the conquest of Mona by Agricola, says Mr. Rowland, the Druids fled, part to Scotland, part to Ireland, and others to the Isle of Man; and to prove this, he observes, that in the days of St. Patrick, Ireland was full of Druids; but sensible that this body of men were HERE in the highest reputation, from the foundation of the monarchy, he attempts artfully to evade the objection, by declaring, “ That from the remotest  
 “ antiquity, the Irish had a set of Druids amongst them, planted  
 “ there with some of the first British colonies; but from the ac-  
 “ counts given by their antiquarians, they, in many particulars,  
 “ relating to power and jurisdiction, *and the use of writing*, dif-  
 “ fered from the Gaulish and British Druids.” Since then,  
 “ in many particulars, *besides the use of writing*,” our Irish Druids differed from these, the Druids in Ireland, in St. Patrick’s time, could not be from Mona, nor could their ancestors take their rites from Britain; especially as both antient Irish and British writers are *positively* silent as to any early British migrations to Ireland, though supposed by some moderns.

In the first part of his *Mona Antiqua*, he gives a note on page 29, which overturns his whole system: “ The Irish Memoirs are,  
 “ *undoubtedly*, (says he) in many things, of good report and credit,  
 “ supported by the many reasons in defence of them. That the  
 “ Irish had early learning amongst them, such at least as related to  
 “ family history, and the like; and that they made the best use of  
 “ it, is not to be questioned: their Druids having less of  
 “ power and authority amongst the people, became thereby,  
 “ as more tractable, so more obliging and kinder to posterity  
 “ than the British Druids were, as will appear hereafter; who,  
 “ hu-



“ humorfomely bigoted in their way, *by their haughty disdain*  
 “ *of letters and contempt of writing*, treafured all in their own  
 “ noddles : whereas the Irish Druids, lefs ftrict in the antient  
 “ rules of their profeflion, fcrupled not *to record in writing*,  
 “ and thereby transmitted to future times the many Hiftories  
 “ of their Monarchs and Princes, the Genealogies of their  
 “ chief tribes and families, and other occurrences of note,  
 “ many of which, are to this day to be feen amongst them ;  
 “ all which helps, the Britons, in a great meafure wanted, by  
 “ the inexcufable pride and folly of our British Druids, who  
 “ fuperftitiously avoided that way of communication. This  
 “ unhappy temper of our British Druids has left our nation fo  
 “ much in the dark, that, *during their time*, we have very  
 “ little to depend on, but what the names of places and other  
 “ footfteps of antient things will give us room to make the  
 “ beft ufe we can of, by gueffes and conjectures.”

The learned antiquarian Lhuid, in his Archæologia, fo far  
 from imagining that we borrowed any thing from Britain, re-  
 commends it ftrongly to future British antiquarians to ftudy  
 attentively the language and hiftory of Ireland, as of the  
 greateft utility, to investigate the antiquities of their own coun-  
 try ; thefe are his words \* : “ Hence it is clear, that the Irish  
 “ language is abfolutely neceffary to thofe who would write of  
 “ the ifle of Britain ; and that it is *impossible* to be a complete maf-  
 “ ter of the antient British, without a competent knowledge of  
 “ the Irish.” The learned Cambden gives a moft defpicable ac-  
 count of the antient British in thefe early days ; “ for their lives  
 (he fays) “ were altogether uncivilized, and perfectly rude, being  
 “ wholly taken up in wars, fo that they were long without learn-  
 “ ing ; moreover, their Druids and Bards thought it unlawful to  
 “ commit

\* Preface to his Welch Dictionary, &c.



“ commit any thing to books, and supposing they had, they  
 “ must be long since lost.” The learned Dr. Warner, in his  
 account of the great Cormoc ô Cuin, thus apostrophizes,  
 “ Will it be any longer doubted after this, whether the an-  
 “ tient native Irish, had any philosophy, literature, or arts, in  
 “ their Pagan state? ought we not rather take shame to our-  
 “ selves, that we have hitherto always treated that *antient people*  
 “ with such illiberal contempt, who had the *start of the Britons*  
 “ *for many ages, in arts and sciences, in learning and in laws?*”

Thus, by the confession of Cambden, Lhuid, and even Mr. Rowland himself, the British Druids could have no pretences whatsoever to the prime seat of Heathen literature or theology; whilst those of Ireland are acknowledged to have cherished arts and sciences, from the most remote antiquity. Hence it must appear manifest, that our Druids could have borrowed no part of their religion from those of Britain; but the presumption is strong that they took from us.

Mr. Rowland confesses, that above 900 years before the birth of Christ, the metropolitan seat or principal college of the Irish Druids was established at Tara, but at the same time, he transfers the chief residence of these doctors to Britain! and while he contends for their instructing the nations around, he affirms, “ they  
 “ were themselves so extremely proud and ignorant, that they  
 “ carefully avoided any communication by letters; whereby they  
 “ left our nation so much in the dark, that, *during their time*, we  
 “ have very little to depend on, but what the names of places,  
 “ and other footsteps of antient things, leave us room to make the  
 “ best uses of by guesses and conjectures!” So that, except by intuition, it is hard to conceive how Mr. Rowland could find that Druidism came originally from any part of Britain.



## C H A P. III.

*Druidism not a Greek, but Celtic institution. The different names of their priests and altars, radical Irish. High illustration which the Irish History gives to Cæsar's account of this body of men. Evidences offered in support of Ireland's claim to the prime seat of Druidism.*

MANY learned moderns, who are fond of making Greece the fountain of all sciences, will have it, that the Druids of Gaul took from thence their theology; and support the assertion by observing, that the word *Druid*, like many other of their technical terms, is Greek, and derived from the Greek *Δρῦς quercus*; but, Buxhorn Dickinson, and others, have fully cleared up this point, by proving the word *Druid* to be pure Celtic, adopted by the Greeks, as they did many other words; for the old radical Greek for an oak, is *σάργωνις*. Hence the gulph of Engia is called by Pliny, *Sinus Saronicus*, on account of its having been surrounded by a wood of oak; and it is from this obsolete word, that the Druids have been called by this people, *Σάργωνίδες*, as Diodorus in his 5th book observes. Godovinus, in his note upon this word, in Cæsar, tho' he confesses his ignorance of its true etymology, judges it to be rather Celtic, than foreign; "*Perincerta est (says he) illa etymologia, verique sit simile, Gallos illis Gallicum nomen im-*" "*posuisse, non peregrinum.*" Besides, even the Greeks admit, that Druidism was an institution more antient than themselves; and that they rather borrowed from the Druids, than these from them.



them. Plato also owns, that his countrymen adopted many words of barbarous origin, for such is the epithet they bestowed on all strangers; and it only remains to be resolved by these learned moderns, why the Greeks should instruct foreigners in the rites and mysteries of a religion they were very little acquainted with, in preference to their own received worship?

The word Druid being Celtic, its radix and its compounds are to be found in the Irish only; *deir* being the pure Irish for an oak. Our Heathen priests, from the most profound antiquity, have been called *Draithe*, from which the word Druid is evidently formed; as the T and D, were formerly used indiscriminately, for each other. A soothsayer, or diviner has at present, no other name amongst us; and it appears, that divination was one of the offices in which the Druids were employed. In Archbishop O'Donnell's elegant Irish version of the New, as well as in Bishop Bedell's translation of the Old Testament into Irish, this word is constantly used to express a forcerer, a soothsayer, &c. What the Greeks call aeromancy, or divining by the air or clouds, we call *Cea-Draitheacht*; and second sight, a power supposed inherent to this order of men, is still named by us, *Draith-fhios*, or Druid-knowledge. The Vates and Bardí, or inferior orders of Druids, have their names from the Irish as well as the first: *Faidhe* with us, signifies a prophet, and *Bardus* seems derived from Bar, a man of letters; or, it may be taken from the *Bared*, or honorary cap conferred on them, when they passed Doctors in Poetry, as we know the chief Bards constantly did; but be its derivation what it may, that the word is radical Irish is evident from this, that an hereditary family of antient Irish Bards, who go by the English name of Ward, retain to this day, the name of  
D Mac



*Mac en Bhard*, or the Son of the Bard, and *Bard* is Irish for a Poet. From these out-lines, let us descend to more minute proofs of our country's claim; and from its history and Customs, elucidate foreign accounts of this extraordinary body of men.

By Cæsar's relation, the Druids were divines, legislators, philosophers and poets; though such different, and some of them opposite studies, would seem too much for a set of devout recluses like them. In very remote times, there is no doubt, but the Druids, like the Patriarchs, exercised all these different functions: That they did so in Ireland is certain; for, Amergin, a son to Milesius, and who was appointed by his brothers *Ard-Draithe*, or Chief of the Laws, exercised them all; to which, ô Cormoc, a very antient Bard, (in his account of the eminent Literati of Ireland) alludes, in his description of this legislator, and which Mr. ô Flaherty thus renders into Latin:

*Primus Amerginus genu-candidus, Author IERNE;  
Historicus, Judex Lege, Poeta, Sophus.*

And the following Hemistic, a part of that Prince's works, implies the same.

*Eagna la Eagluir aidiu: agur feabta la flaitibh.*

Let wisdom direct the church: Conduct and prudence the state.

But as people began to multiply, and families divide, these different sciences were judged too complicated for any one set of men. The Literati of Ireland, were therefore very early divided into different classes: The Druids amongst them, as the Jewish priests, were of a particular family; so were the Bards; the lawyers of another sept, &c. How soon after Amergin, our first legislator, the sciences were thus wisely divided, our histories



histories do not clearly express, but that it could not be very long, we know to a certainty. In the reign of *Ollamb Fodbla*, or the learned Doctor, who flourished, according to Mr. o Flaherty, A. M. 3236, or 764 years before Christ, a law passed, which continued for ever after an unalterable maxim of state, by which the different sciences were to be confined for ever, to different families, which seemed not so particularly ascertained before. To support these different professions with suitable dignity, public stipends were allowed them by the state; and it was decreed, that in all wars, or intestine commotions, their persons and properties should be held sacred and unmolested by all parties: and so great was the veneration of our ancestors, for arts and letters, that, though by violence the monarchy was but too often acquired, and ambition occasioned the most bloody conflicts, yet, for a space exceeding 2000 years, a single instance cannot be produced of the violation of this law. Even for a long time after the incursions of the Saxons, so great was the veneration for letters, that rude, rapacious and cruel, as these invaders were, they did not dare to break through this law, lest the whole kingdom should unite against them; and even so late as the days of James and Charles the first, this custom continued in some vigour, especially in Ulster, Connaught, and Thomond.

The respect paid to letters in Ireland, extended to its professors, who were held, in rank and estimation, next to the blood royal; as appears by a sumptuary law passed in Ireland, about the year of the world 3050, which allows to *Ollambs*, or Doctors in different sciences, but one colour less in their garments than to the princes, viz. six; the knights and prime nobility being allowed but five; the *Beatachs*, or



keepers of constant open house for all strangers, four; military subalterns, three; soldiers, two; and artizans and plebeians, one. This custom of many coloured garments, we find to be extremely antient: thus we read in Genesis, “Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a coat of many colours.”

Schools and colleges were founded by the Druids, for the education of youth, in different parts of the kingdom, which, on the reception of Christianity, were converted to Christian seminaries. But Tara was their principal university. There the Arch-Druid, chief Brethon, or Judge, *Ar-d-Fhileadh*, or Poet Laureat, Historian, Antiquarian, constantly attended the Monarch's court. There the general convention of the estates was held every third year, with the literati of the kingdom, to form new laws, examine the registries, and finally determine disputes and law-suits, just as Cæsar tells us, was the custom in Gaul many centuries after. The opening of this great assembly was solemn, awful, and magnificent; they met three days before the month of *Sambuin*, or November, and sacrifices being offered, and the holy fires lighted up, accompanied by all kinds of musical instruments, and succeeded by different odes in favour of the Deity, they repaired to the great hall, called *Moidb-Cuarta*, where each person took his place, according to the nobility of his blood and dignity of his sept; for honours and appointments being hereditary in families, no confusion could ensue; and to remove even pretences for dispute, the heralds were careful to place the arms of each chief over his seat. Probus\* and Jocelyne† compare the magnificence of this meeting, in the days of St. Patrick, to that of Nebuchadnezzar, when he assem-

\* Vita S. Patricii. Lib. 1.

† Ditto, Cap. 40, &c.



bled his princes and nobles, to worship the golden calf on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. “The King (says Probus) “and chiefs of the people, the princes peers and magistrates, the Druids, Inchanters, Soothsayers, and Doctors in all “Arts and Sciences, being assembled, Loagaire the Emperor, like “a second Nebuchadnezzar, had the assembly of Tara opened, “with songs and lutes, timbrels and harps, and every species of “verse.”

Cæsar tells us, “That the Druids were exempt from taxes, from attending the wars, &c. for which reason *only*, numbers embraced the profession. The high immunities enjoyed by men of letters here, we have already shewn; and so early as the year 3236, the number of registered Druids, Annalists and Poets, &c. royally supported amongst us, exceeded 200 of each order; besides such as were retained by private families. The *Ollamb* or Doctor in each science, had in his train 30 subordinate graduates; and on account of the great liberties enjoyed by them, many idlers enlisted themselves under their banners. This became so great an oppression on the public, that the estates of the kingdom deliberated more than once, to expel them entirely the kingdom; and though they did not unanimously agree in this point, their numbers were so far reduced, and such other prudent regulations made with regard to them, that the burden was no longer complained of.

Cæsar says, “This order of men were said, to take their rise in Britain;” but were I to venture the smallest alteration of the text, it would remove the obscurity of the passage, and do honour to the great historian. That Britain, from what has been said in the last chapter, could not be the prime seat of Druidism, I think must be admitted; and of this the public are so well satisfied, that.





that some eminent critics contradict the entire passage, affirming that Druidism must have taken its rise in Gaul; as if they could be better informed, of transactions, at the distance of about 1800 years, than Cæsar himself. If these gentlemen, however, with impunity, entirely contradict so great a writer, may I not be indulged in an attempt to clear up and illustrate this passage? If we suppose, instead of “*Disciplina in Britannia reperta, &c.*” that Cæsar wrote, “*Disciplina in insulis Britannicæ reperta, atque inde in Galliam translata esse existimatur,*” we shall find the sense full and strong: That in the original copy it was so, from the great accuracy of this writer, and from his superior opportunities of knowing a set of people he was so long among, may be well presumed; and also as Eng’land and Ireland were both before and after this writer’s time, called indiscriminately *Insulæ Britannicæ*. An author of his eminence might well express the chief seat of Druidism, in this careless way, as an affair so little interesting to the Roman people. Thus Ptolemy the Geographer, *The British Islands are two; one called Albion, the other Ierne*. Eustatius, the Greek interpreter of Dionysius says, *There are two British Islands, Ouernia and Allowin, or Birnia and Albion* and St. Chrysostom \* in more than two places, calls Britain and Ireland *The British Isles*.

But though Cæsar mentions the rise of Druidism in Britain as traditionary, yet, he is *very positive*, that in his own times, “Such as chose to excel in letters repaired to Britain,” or rather to the isles of Britain. Now from the evidence even of English writers, it should appear less incredible to affirm, that Druidism might have taken its rise in Britain, than that the British Druids in Cæsar’s time, instructed the learned of the

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\* Opera, tom. 6.



continent in Divinity and Philosophy, the magnitude of the earth, the motions and distances of the planets, the immortality of the Gods; and that there only, these sciences were perfectly cultivated. Wherefore we must totally reject these *two* passages as false, or admit them as positive truths; and if we admit them, they can become credible by such alteration and interpretation only as I have proposed; for it were absurd to suppose, that an island, such as Britain was in his days, exposed to the incursions of the Irish and Picts, invaded by the Romans, and in which it appears letters were far from being either countenanced or cultivated, should become the *Chief Seat of the Muses*. Ireland, therefore, great and powerful at home, and dreaded and respected abroad, whose happy shores the Romans durst not approach, must have been, I conceive, the country alluded to. But to proceed,

Our great author tells us, “That on account of the great number of verses the Druids were to get by heart, some of them remained twenty years at college;” and it was necessary that the most eminent of them should do so; for besides the antiquity of their country, and the exploits of their heroes, we find they treated of the most sublime branches of physical and metaphysical science, “of the heavenly bodies and their motions, the magnitude of the earth, and the nature of the Gods.” That history, as well as every other useful branch of knowledge, has been preserved in verse, in all our early records, is what is admitted; and this has even served as a pretence to sceptics to reject entirely our antient annals. But in the most antient nations of the world, history and other sciences have been thus preserved, as the smoothness and harmony of versification, must impress them more strongly on the memory: an important consideration, it must



must be allowed, among nations to whom printing was unknown, and where the preservation even of a few MSS. was the business of the Poet, Historian and Antiquarian only. Aristotle had the same opinion of verse, \* “Every one (says he) better remembers metre than prose;” and so antient is this practice that Pliny † affirms, before the days of *Pherecydes* (who flourished in the days of Cyrus) prose writing was unknown; and nearer our own times, verse has been thought not ill suited to the gravest subjects: Strabo ‡ tells us, the *Turduli* and *Turdetani*, bordering on the Ocean in Spain, preserved all their laws, rites, and history in verse, for above 6000 years back; and they, it is more than probable, were a Scythian Colony. Horace’s admired Art of Poetry was published in verse, &c. Lucretius wrote a Treatise of Philosophy in verse, which has been confuted, in the same style by Cardinal de Polignac. Rules for Health were wrote some Centuries past, in Monkish verse, by the most celebrated Physicians in Italy, the title of which is *Schola Salernitana*. Fracastorius wrote on the venereal disease, in Latin Verse; Vida published his Silk Worm, and Game of Chess, in the same style and language; as did Fresnoy his *Ars Graphica* or Art of Painting. Pope wrote his Ethics; and Prior, an ingenious System of Physics, in verse. At all periods, the most respectable of our Irish annals have been wrote in verse; and most of our later antiquarians, as ô Daly, Canti, ô Gnive, ô Higgin, Mac Daire, ô Heoghfa, &c. have wrote in verse; as did some years ago ô Connell, a Kerry Bard, an Epitome of Irish History.

Cæsar says, “it was not permitted the Druids of Gaul, to commit their sacred mysteries to writing;” but he assigns the reason,

\* Lib. Rhetor. 3. Cap. 9.

† Lib. 17. Cap. 55.

‡ Lib. 3.



reason afterwards by observing, that such as choose to excel in their arts, repaired to the *isles* of Britain, or rather to Ireland, where they were, most carefully treasured up; the Hieroglyphic, or *Ogham*, being the letter sacred to these mysteries, and which is yet preserved. That they would not suffer foreigners to be instructed in this occult writing, may be well accounted for, from this single consideration; that it was penal, even in the natives, to study it, the Druids and *Senachies* only excepted; for, together with the rites and ceremonies of their religion, the great Arcana of State were therein preserved; their foreign pupils were therefore obliged to commit their rites to memory.

This care of their religion was not peculiar to the Irish: we find it practised by the most polite nations of antiquity, as the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, &c. and how very difficult it was for strangers to gain any tolerable knowledge of their learning appears from the well-known story of Pythagoras, who submitted in Egypt to circumcision, and many other hardships, before he could be instructed in their mysteries.

That the Irish Druids committed their mysteries to writing, may be collected from the following historical facts. To determine which religion was purest, St. Patrick and his disciples agreed with *Loagaires*, Arch-druid, to put the Books or Gospels of both religions under water, and that whichever should appear least injured by the element, should predominate. And after the new religion took the lead, St. Patrick had influence enough to get above 200 volumes of Druidical Theology and Philosophy burnt.

Why this apostle caused these writings to be destroyed, cannot be easily accounted for. If they were too immoral or bad, which the tenor of the lives of these Druids and their predecessors,



fors, will by no means permit us to think, the preservation of some of them would rather do honour to Christianity; but we have too much reason to imagine, that they contained many philosophical tracts, which were thought incompatible with the Christian system, and it was therefore judged safest to destroy them. For we have strong reasons to believe that the antient Irish were excellent astronomers, and understood the use of telescopes, as will appear more evident, by a perusal of the last chapter of this first part. And, as our great Virgilius was formerly condemned for asserting the antipodes; and in later times, Galilæo was clapt into the inquisition, for affirming a plurality of worlds, so the works of our Druids were most probably destroyed for similar reasons.

Though Cæsar observes that the Gauls were interdicted the use of letters in sacred affairs; yet in other business, public or private, he says they made use of the Greek character. This paragraph merits our most serious attention, and a very little alteration in the text, will give full satisfaction, and reconcile the opposite notions of critics on this passage.

That Cæsar was a complete master of the Greek is universally admitted, and that the Gauls were totally ignorant of it, the following anecdote proves. When Quintus Cicero was besieged in Beauvais by the Gauls, Cæsar wrote to him in Greek, that if his letter happened to be intercepted, it should give no information to these people. From this fact, the learned Scaliger, Selden, &c. contend, that the word *Græcis* has been foisted into the copies, and is no part of the original; and in the best modern Editions of this writer, this word is put into a parenthesis, as if no part of the work. However, by way of amendment, it would seem, that the Critics have rather taken from than added to the sentence; for it must certainly appear very absurd



absurd to suppose, that a learned and wise people, such as the Druids have been painted to us, and from whom the Greeks, by their own confession, borrowed part of their mythology, should idly adopt the letters of a language, totally unknown to them, and of a people they seemed to have very little intercourse with. What character could they be possibly supposed to use, but that of the country from whence their arts and sciences came? Now, people well acquainted with our Irish alphabet, will find a great similitude between many of its letters, and the corresponding Greek ones. Of this Idea, the late Mr. Harris was so full \* that he gives it as his opinion, That as the Britons, from whom the Gauls borrowed their religion, used the Greek letter, so the Irish, who took this doctrine from the Britons, adopted the same character, which, in process of time, might DEGENERATE into Irish.

It is surprising, that this gentleman, who in the same page affirms, That he never met with any alphabet, no not the Runic itself, in the same order and structure with the *Beth-luis-nion* and *Ogham* of the Irish, or our antient, common, and sacred characters; and who could observe that, *as there was no prototype to copy them from, they must be originals*, yet, in a few lines after, should advance, by way of conjecture, that the Greek letter, supposed to be used by the Britons, might, in time, degenerate into Irish! But what will the supporters of this opinion say, if we shall be able to prove that the Greeks themselves borrowed their alphabet from our Scythian ancestors †.

There being then, a sensible likeness in many of our letters to those of the Greeks, we may very well suppose, that, instead of *Literis Græcis*, Cæsar wrote “*Literis Græcis simillimis*.”

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\* Harris's Works, vol. ii. p. 22.

† See chap. 6th, of this first part.



This amendment will illustrate the whole passage, and prove, that Cæsar was right, though his commentators blundered. For as the early Saxons, by the acknowledgement of *Cambden*, and their best antiquarians, borrowed from us the use of letters, and even adopted our character, why not suppose the Gauls (as much indebted to us, for arts and sciences, before Christianity, as they were in both improved by us afterwards) to have adopted it also? Nay, it appears that most nations in Europe, as well as these, made use of our letter. For instance, *Wormius* † owns, that his countrymen have an antient alphabet, which they call *Ira-Letur*, or *Irlandorum Literæ*; and to this day, the Germans call a letter *Buschtab*, which in English signifies bookstaff; and all the old Northern nations, for the same reason, called it *Bogstav*. Now it would appear odd to give a letter this name, were it not known, that the name of every letter in our alphabet, is the name of a particular tree. Thus it appears, and in the succeeding chapters it will become more evident, what lights our annals and language are capable of throwing on the antient state of Europe, and how carefully both should be cultivated by learned antiquarians.

Our constitution, from its foundation, seemed calculated as well for arts as arms. Our great ancestor *Gathelus*, from whom the Irish are to this day called *Clana-Geadbelig*, or the posterity of *Gathelus*, and our language *Gaoidhalg*, was so called from his great veneration for letters; *Gaoith* denoting learning, and *dil*, love. It appears likewise that Druidism was first brought into Ireland by these conquerors; for our annals are clear, that when *Itb*, the son of *Milesius*, was sent from Spain upon the discovery of the Western or Fortunate island (Ireland) it was in hopes of accomplishing the prophecy of *Caircer*, the Arch-druid, who,

say

† *Literæ Runicæ*, cap. 5.



say they, had predicted three centuries before, “ that the *Gatber-  
“ lian*, or *Milesian* race, would never find repose, till they con-  
“ quered the most Western island of Europe, where they would  
“ become a mighty nation.” It was in consequence of this  
prediction, that they directed their course from Greece to Spain,  
then thought the most Western part of Europe, and not finding  
there all the security they expected, they sent ships, in order to  
make new discoveries, under the command of this prince, who  
appears not only to have been an able navigator for those times,  
but an astronomer too, since it was by glassess, as we are expressly  
told, that he first discovered the Irish coasts. Thus, above  
3000 years ago, our histories bear evidence to the existence of  
the Druids, and their pretensions to fore-knowledge.

As a new instance of the originality of our characters, we  
may add, that our letters in antient times were called *Feadha*,  
alluding to woods: Our *Ogham* or hierographic character, is  
to this day called *Ogham-Creabh*, or the branchy type; and  
every letter in our common alphabet, alludes to some tree. Thus,  
*Beith*, or *B*, is the Birch-tree; *Luis*, or *L*, a quick; *Nion*, or  
*N*, the ash; *Fearn*, or *F*, the alder; *Sail*, or *S*, the willow;  
*Deir*, or *D*, the oak; *Uath*, or *U*, the whitethorn, &c. and  
had we no other proofs than those here hinted at, that Ireland  
was the chief seat of the Druids, and of Druidism, spreading from  
hence to Britain and the continent, they must be admitted, by every  
candid enquirer, to be very weighty; and especially as no other  
nation can offer any so good. Our earliest writings were on the  
tablets of birch-tree, called, *Orauin*, and the collected pieces  
*Taibhle-Fileadb*, or Philosophical Tablets. It was to this custom  
undoubtedly, that Horace alluded, when he stiled the first com-  
position of laws, engraving them on wood, *Leges incidere Ligno*.



## C H A P. IV.

*Another order of Religious amongst the Gauls, called Samnothei, of Irish origin. Of the Senæ or Druid-Priestesses. Antient Italians adhered to Druidism. Deities of the antient Irish; their Catherns, Crom-liacs, and circular pillars. Gaulish Hercules explained. Of the Dallans, or Pillars of the Irish.*

BESIDES the Druids, we find another order of religious amongst the Gauls, called Samnothei, of whom writers afford us little satisfaction: the general opinion is, that Samnothes, a son of Japhet, was the founder of Druidism amongst the Celtæ, as well as of arts and letters; hence their *literati* were called Samothei: they were, according to Aristotle, highly skilled in the laws of God and men; and Berofus affirms, that from Samnothes the Greeks borrowed their alphabet. Hollingshead, in his Chronicle, from Bale, declares, that the priests of Samnothes became so renowned in Britain, that from them the island was called Samothea. Lewis in his Histor. Brit. cap. 2. asserts him to have been the founder of the Celtic monarchy, and that he wrote a code of laws and discipline, in the Hebrew tongue, but in the Phœnician character; and that, from him the Greeks borrowed their letters. Diogenes Laertius, with a vanity peculiar to the Greeks, in making all compound words, from Greek roots, calls this order of men Σεμνοθει, from Σεμνος venerandus, and ΘΕΟΣ Deus; but as they were a Celtic order of religious, we, with more justice, derive this word from *Samb*, which is Irish for acceptable, pleasant; and *Dia*, God. But to demonstrate, that the Samnothei, as well as Druids, were an Irish institution; we find as the month of May was sacred to Beal, or Apollo amongst us, so was the month of November dedi-



dedicated to Samothēs, being to this day called *Sambuin*. I know some learned antiquarians, and particularly Mr. Lhuid, think, that our *Sambuin*, or November, was so called, from *Samb-fuin*, *i. e.* the gathering in of Summer; but this I cannot agree to: for Spring is the time of sowing; and harvest that of gathering; and the last we call *Fombar*, probably from *Fuin-arbhar*, the gathering in of the corn. Besides, the first of November was as high a festival with our Heathen ancestors, as the first of May: on its eve was the great fire of *Sambuin* lighted up, all the culinary fires of the kingdom being first extinguished; and it was not only deemed sacrilegious, but highly penal, to light up the Winter fires but from this sacred one, given out by the Samnothei, or priests of *Sambuin*; and for which the head of every house paid an annual tax. The supreme temple of *Sambuin* was called *Tlachta*, in Meath; and from him the Sabines, and then the Romans probably borrowed their *Sancus*, *Semo-Sanctus*, and *Fidius*; for according to Ovid, all these names implied the same Deity.

*Quærebam nonas, Sanco, Fidione referrem,  
An tibi Semo pater; cum mihi Sancus ait  
Cuicunque ex illis dederis, ego munus habebo.*

*Nomina trina fero: sic voluere Cures:*

*Hunc igitur veteres donarunt æde Sabini,*

*Inque Quirinali constituere iugo.*

Thus Samothēs appears, I think, with great probability, to have been an Irish Deity, and his worship to have spread from hence, with Druidism, to Britain and the Continent. Besides these, Pomponius Mela tells us of a female order of religious amongst the Gauls, dedicated to one of their deities, who made vows of perpetual celibacy; and these votaries were called *Senæ*.

Mr.



Mr. Cambden, an able and zealous advocate for his country, would have it wrote *Lenæ*, and that, he says, is old British for a Nun, as he found it in some antient glossary. But 'til a better reason is offered for this alteration, we shall adhere to the original, and especially, as it appears satisfactorily, that these Senæ must have been the priestesses of *Sambuin*; and from them I conjecture, that some of our antient females might take names, as they do now from Christian Saints; thus, amongst our early Christians, I find, a Saint Samthana, Abbess of Clonbrone, whose life is yet extant.

I have hinted, that the Sabines might have borrowed their Sancus from our Samhuin; as I am clear, that the antient States of Italy, did their religion from us. Thus, in the reign of Tiberius \* we are told, on account of the great inundations of the Tyber, it was proposed in the senate, to stop the currents of lakes and rivers into it; but before they would resolve on any thing, they first consulted their allies. These last observed, that nature pointed out the true current of rivers; and that it would be highly sinful to attempt any alteration in them, especially, as they had consecrated woods, altars, and priests, to the rivers of their country. Aufonius, a poet of the fourth century, tells us (and as being a Gaul, his testimony cannot be doubted) that the Gauls had their river Gods; and he thus speaks of a fountain near Bourdeaux:

*Divona Celtarum Lingua, fons addite Divis.*

Now *Divona* is positive Irish for a river god, and we have sufficient proofs that such were part of our heathen Deities. We are told in the life of St. Patrick, † that the Saint being in Conaught, attended by three bishops, and many clergy, one morning

\* Tacit. Annal. Lib. 1. Cap. 79.

† Ogygia, p. 20.



morning early, the Saint and his company were singing hymns at a fountain adjoining the palace of Cruachan; and being interrogated by two daughters of Loagaire the monarch, (who were there educating) as to their business, &c. we find, amongst other questions, the eldest demands, who their God was, and where he dwelt? If in heaven, under it, or on earth? In mountains, or valleys, the sea, or in rivers? And it seems more than probable, that the early missionaries finding this great attachment of the natives to wells, which, to this day, are generally shaded by oak trees, they, in order to divert the course of their superstition, dedicated them to Christian Saints, instead of their antient Druid Patrons. Cæsar, in his sixth book, tells us that Mercury was a God greatly revered by the Gauls, and of whom they had many images; and Livy in his sixth book says, that by the Spaniards he was called Teutates, or the God of travellers, which compound is manifest Irish; *Dia* signifying God, and *Tuath* a country. Apollo also was a Deity of great consequence, whom they called Belin, and Belinus, and by this name the month of May is yet called HERE. Next to him, Cæsar mentions Mars, whom they called Hesus; and from whom, perhaps, our ancestors called Friday *Haisn*. Jupiter, whom the Greeks from Thunder called *Brantaïos*, we find the Gauls adored by the Name of *Tamaris*; and *Taran* is Irish for Thunder. *Circius* is a wind to which Augustus Cæsar built a temple in Gaul; and Phavorinus, a Gaul by birth, says “Our Gauls call by the name of *Circius* that wind which blows “on their own coast, and which is the fiercest in all these parts.” With us, *Chriche* signifies a country or territory, and by this name many tracts of land are yet known, as *Criche Cualan*, in the county of Wicklow; *Criche na Ceeadach*, in the county of Meath, &c. That the wind was worshipped by our heathen an-

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cestors,



cestors, does not admit of a doubt; for when Loagaire the monarch, and cotemporary with St. Patrick, vowed to exonerate the province of Leinster from the *Boreimb*, or tribute paid to the Irish monarch, the oath he swore, was, “By the sun and the wind,” as the annals of Ulster declare; and what the Greeks called Aeromancy, or divining by clouds, we yet call *Cea Draitheacht*. It may not be amiss to inform the curious reader that this tribute, imposed in the first century, and paid for about 400 years, consisted of 6000 cows, 6000 ounces of pure silver, 6000 cloaks richly wove, 6000 copper caldrons, &c. Mr. Harris \* thinks that the Sun was adored in Ireland by the name of *Cean Grioth*, or head of the Sun; and that Jocelyne the monk, in his life of St. Patrick, ignorant of the Irish language, mistakingly calls it, *Cean Croithi*, or head of all the Gods. But I apprehend the mistake is Mr. Harris’s; because our own writers, who were perfect masters of their native language, call our chief deity *Cean Croithi*; and Colgan† in the same page, calls him *Cean-Croithi*, and *Crom-Cruadb*. By this name was Jupiter adored, as is manifest, by *Cruim*’s being obsolete Irish for Thunder; hence *Cruimtheas*, the most antient name for a priest, signified the priest of *Crom*, or Jupiter. The sun was here worshipped by the name of *Beal*, which name the month of May still retains; but to demonstrate that by *Beal* our ancestors understood the sun, I observe, that the Irish for a year is *Bliaghain*, derived from *Beal*, the Sun; and *Ain*, a great circle, as within it the Sun went through all the signs of the zodiac; and perhaps, a more learned and expressive word, cannot be found in any other language. St. Patrick, in his Confession, addressed by way of Letter to the Irish nation, censures this worship, by observing, that their attention should be, not to this planet, but to

\* Volume ii. p. 122.

† Vita S. Odrani.



to its great Fabricator; “For, (says he) that sun which we see  
 “rise, performs its course constantly, by the command of God,  
 “for our use; but the splendor of it shall not always continue,  
 “whilst those who adore it, shall unhappily fall into eternal pu-  
 “nishment.” In a MS. life of our great Collumba, apostle of the  
 Picts, mention is made of a celebrated Druid Temple: on the  
 altar, which was of exquisite workmanship, was curiously de-  
 picted on glass, the sun, moon, and stars, being the heathen  
 deities. The learned ô Flaherty tells us, \* that at the great  
 convention at Tara in the first Century, the estates swore alle-  
 giance to *Tuatbal* and his family or blood, by the sun, moon,  
 and the other deities, celestial as well as terrestrial.

That no doubt should remain, as to the antient religion and  
 learning of Europe being from Ireland, I must observe, that  
 the stone altars on which the Druids sacrificed, many of which  
 yet remain in France, Britain, and Ireland, are in all these  
 places called *Crom-liachs*; and *Crom* was our chief deity, and  
*Lia* is Irish for a large stone; hence the *Lia-fail*, or stone of  
 destiny, on which our antient monarchs were crowned, was  
 called *Crom-lia*, or the altar of *Crom*. I know most of our an-  
 tiquarians think these altars were so called from the covering-  
 stone being placed rather sloping than horizontal; the word *crom*  
 signifying also bending, adoring; but this will not account for  
 a flamen or priest in the antient Irish being called *Crumtbear*,  
 which evidently signifies the servant of *Cruim*, Jupiter, or  
 Thunder; besides, we find many of these covering-stones quite  
 flat, which destroys the very principles of this derivation. The  
 fact, I conceive, was this: Our chief deity was called *Crom-*  
*crudb*, sometimes *Cean Croithi*; and it is most likely, the word



*Crom* was never pronounced without some mark of veneration to the head of all the Gods ; as Virgil sings,

*A Jove principium Musæ ; Jovis omnia plena !*

Whence, after the reception of Christianity, from the custom of bowing and bending at the name of *Crom*, it, by degrees, became expressive of the act itself. The reader must observe, that I here totally reject the far-fetched Hebrew derivations of Dickinson, Rowland, &c. The *Carneades*, *Catherns*, or piles of stones heaped on one another, not unlike the mercurial heaps of the Greeks, are so called in all the Celtic dialects ; and is still the common name with us, being derived from the verb *Carnaim*, to pile up. The rise of these Catherns, are variously accounted for ; but the most current opinion is, that they were raised as evidences of some great event. We find one of the maxims of Pythagoras was, “ *Locus lapidibus obruendus, ubi sanguis humanus sparsus est ;*” and as it is very near a certainty, that he himself was a Druid, (for, from our remark from Tacitus, it is evident, the Italian states adhered to that religion,) it furnishes us with a plausible conjecture, that these Catherns were commemorations of signal victories : As the Belus of the Gauls, and Apollo of the Greeks, appear to be the same deity, perhaps the *Carnean* feasts of Apollo, might be taken from us, Apollo being surnamed Carnus, and from whom May was called *Καρνεῖς Μην.*

Besides, the Catherns, and *Crom-liacs*, we find the Druids had, in their groves, very large stones, pitched on end, forming exact circles, but between each stone was a considerable space ; these were of different diameters, but all observing the circular form. The greatest number of these, and the most perfect I believe in Europe, are yet standing near *Lough-guir* ;  
and



and on the road-side, between Limerick and Bruff. Some of the single stones of these circles, I am sure exceed two tons weight; and at the top of an hill adjoining, a fine *Crom-liac* yet stands. This place and the adjoining lake, have been famous, from the remotest antiquity, and of which many fabulous stories are told; near to it was a famous city, or probably a Druid academy, as the name of Cathair, by which it yet goes, declares; and the remains of streets, and marks of a town, may yet be traced. What the particular use of these circles were, can now only be guessed: there is a passage in the 56th chapter of Jocelyne's life of St. Patrick, which may, on this occasion assist us; he tells us that *Loagaire* the Irish monarch adored an idol, called, *Cean Croitbi*, or the chief of the Gods; that it was magnificently adorned with gold and silver; and that twelve other brazen images of inferior degree, stood ROUND HIM, in a bending posture, expressive of his superiority. Now, when we reflect that in these stone circles, there is one always in height and thickness superior to all the rest, and that these last are of different sizes, we should be tempted to imagine that they were a rude indication of the national worship, placed on the high roads, as crosses are now in Catholic countries to excite public devotion; or they may have been so constructed, in honour of Beal, and by their figure, intended to denote the annual course of the sun.

Lucian relates the following remarkable story. He tells us, in Gaul he saw Hercules painted like a little old man, drawing after him an infinite number of persons who seemed to be led on with pleasure, by very fine chains, fastened on one side to their ears, and on the other, to the point of his tongue. Lucian admiring this cavalcade, demanded of a learned Druid its explication? he told him, that Hercules did not in Gaul as in Greece.



Greece denote strength, but the power of eloquence, of which this figure was emblematical, for which reason, he was in their language, called *Ogmios*. Now, whilst critics have formed a thousand defective conjectures, concerning this word and its meaning, our language at once explains it. Our hieroglyphic, or letter sacred to divinity and antiquity, was called *Ogma*, *Ogam*, or *Ogham*, and was the study of the Druids and Senachies. Of this *Ogham*, or occult manner of writing, there were several species, yet preserved, as the *ogham Creabh*, or branchy alphabet, *ogham Coll*, or method of writing by vowels and diphthongs, &c. and Mac Curtin, a curious antiquarian, some years dead, tells us, that he has seen no less than thirty-two different methods of forming the *Ogham*: *Ogmios* therefore amongst the Gauls, denoted the Father of Letters, from whom alone eloquence can proceed. Mr. Toland, in his *Dissertations on the Druids* goes further; and as *Ogma* was a proper name, he conjectures, that some of our early princes must be alluded to by this Gaulic image. Perhaps *Ogma Grianan*, who was married to Aethna, a celebrated poetess, and who, on account of his superior talents, was called *Grianan*, or the Shining, might be the person alluded to. We have a recent evidence that the word came from Ireland, for William Halloran, head of the *NOMINALS* at Oxford, the contemporary and great opponent of our Scotus, is better known amongst school-men, by the name of William of Ocham, and Ogham, than by his real name of ô Halloran; the name of Ogham being given him by his countrymen, on account of his great knowledge in this occult writing; and in which, Ware declares, he was possessed of an entire book wrote on vellum.



Large single stones, we find were formerly erected through most parts of the kingdom, with inscriptions on them, mostly wrote in the Ogham, or occult manner of inditing, and which the Druids and Senachies only could explain. Whether these were memorials of great actions, and of the different tributes paid by each province, to the national support, such as we read were the uses the antient Egyptians made of their obelisks, I shall not affirm. \* These were called Dallans; one of which stood some years ago (and probably does still) near Kill-Dorery, in the county of Cork, with an inscription on it, which I could not interpret; the stumps of many such are yet to be seen, but with the points broke off, as well as the inscriptions, tho' they still preserve the name of Dallan. I cannot, however, find, that many of them were shaped with the chissel. Yet it is probable that some superb obelisks, which still remain with old Christian inscriptions in Irish characters, may have been originally Dallans, changed from their primitive intention, and the hieroglyphics erased.

\* Tacit. Annal. Lib. 2. Cap. 60.



## C H A P. V.

*Cæsar's account of the Gaulish Knights, confirmed, by the very early institutions of chivalry in Ireland. Different orders of Knighthood in Ireland, with their manner of education, &c. Pausanias' relation of the Gaulish Knights illustrated. German Knighthood, of Irish origin. The Ambacti, or third order amongst the Gauls, an Irish institution. Remarkable instance of the elevated principles of our Knights: not confined to any period of History, but common from the foundation of our monarchy to this day.*

THE second order amongst the Gauls, Cæsar assures us was, the *EQUITES* or Knights. Of this class the histories of Britain are totally silent; nor does Mr. Rowland, sanguine as he is, in his attempts to shew that the Druids, or first order, took their rise in Anglesey, take the least notice of this. Here again our history vindicates the Roman writer, and strongly confirms our claim to the prime seat of arts and arms. Military orders of knights were very early established in Ireland. Long before the birth of Christ we find an *hereditary* order of chivalry in Ulster, called *Curaidhe na Craoibhe ruadh*, or the Knights of the Red Branch, from their chief seat in Emania, adjoining to the palace of the Ulster Kings, called *Teagh na Craoibhe ruadh*, or the Academy of the Red Branch; and contiguous to which was a large hospital, founded for the sick knights and soldiers, called *bron-bhearg*, or the house of the sorrowful soldier. The kings of Munster had their order of chivalry called *Clana Deagha*, or the progeny of Deagha, a most intrepid hero. The Conaught knights of the Dananian race were called *Gambanradh Jorrus*, or the guardians of Jorrus; and



and those of Leinster were called *Clana Booisgbne*. Each order chose a master or superior, to whom they were bound by certain promises or vows; and these chiefs were always of the most distinguished bravery and generosity. Accordingly we find, A. M. 3950, a contest, between the renowned heroes, Connal, surnamed Cearnach, or the Victorious, Cucullin, and Loare Buach, for the mastership of the Ulster knights, which was yielded to Connal; whilst at the same time Olliol-fion presided over those of Conaught; and Conraoi, commonly called *Cuirigh Mac Dair*, or the hero *Mac Daire*, ruled the Munster knights. Perhaps *Ridaire*, one of the many names to express an hero or knight, was peculiar to the Munster order *only*, to commemorate this famous *Daire*; for *ri*gh which is joined to *Daire*, signifies in Irish the fore-arm, and the compound might denote the knights formed by the arm of *Daire*, or rather the imitators of his valour. From hence also, probably, arose the custom of laying a drawn sword on each knight at his creation; and it would seem also, that, from this word the Germans borrowed their *ruiter* or knight: this much is certain, that we find the word used by writers of the second and third century amongst us.

But, beside these provincial orders of knighthood, there was another superior to them, which seemed peculiar to the royal line of Milesius only; at least, without this *Gradb-Gaisge*, or order of chivalry, no prince could presume to become a candidate for the monarchy, as will appear in its place: these knights were called *Niagh Nase*, or of the collar, from a *Nase-or*, or collar of gold, which they wore round the neck. None could gain admittance into any of these orders but such as were of the purest blood, of great personal strength, beauty of person, and distinguished bravery; and so famed were our Irish knights, for

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elegance of shape, strength, and size, that our annals assure us, they were all over Europe called, by way of pre-eminence, the **HEROES** of the **WESTERN ISLES**. From what I can collect from our annals, the candidates for knighthood were entered as pensioners in the different academies, at seven years of age; from this to thirteen they were in training in all military exercises, and in scholastic discipline; they then took their first vows, and at eighteen entered into action. It was at the age of seven, that Conal Cearnach, Cucullin, &c. were placed in these military schools, as our accounts of them tell us; and they flourished near 1800 years ago. In the life of St. Carthag, bishop of Lismore, who lived in the seventh century, it is said “that Moelfulus, King of Kerry, intending to knight St. Carthag, whilst he was yet a boy, put into his hand a sword and target, being the badge of knighthood.” In 1395, Richard II. made a royal tour to Ireland, and was met in Dublin by the four provincial kings, whom he intended knight-ing; but they excused themselves, as having received this honour from their different parents at seven years old, that being the time at which the Kings of Ireland knighted their eldest sons, or next in blood, as Froissard, (an eye-witness) and from him Selden, &c. inform us. Certainly this method of carefully training and educating young gentlemen, from seven to eighteen years, must be admitted as more honourable to chivalry, and to the wise institutors of it, than the modern methods of qualifying for, and of conferring these honours. But knighthood, in antient Ireland, was not a mere title!

Pausanias, in his *Phocica* tells us, that the Gaulish knights were called *Trimarkisian*, in their language, from each knight's being attended by two horsemen to remount him, in case his horse should be killed; “for, (says he) the name of an horse amongst



amongst the Gauls is known to be Markan." Καὶ ἵππων τὸ ὄνομα ἴσῳ τις Μάρχαν ὃν ὑπο τῶν Κελτῶν. But this is a further proof that these orders of chivalry took their rise in Ireland; for the *markifian* and *markan* of Pausanias, are original Irish words, Μάρκ being Irish for an horse, hence we call an horseman, *marcach*; cavalry, *marcsluagh*; a race-horse, *luath-mharc*, &c. and this Gaulish custom, was constantly observed in Ireland, and the attendants were called *Giollaidhe-cin-eách*. The cavalry of the Gauls we find armed with a javelin and hatchet, and these were the arms of ours also; and at the use of the battle-axe they were so adroit, that Cambrensis tells us, "It was a common thing with them, to cut the thigh off at a single stroke; the mutilated part dropping off on one side of the horse, and the dying body on the other." Tacitus \* tell us, that they never meet upon any public or private business unarmed; that the youth cannot bear arms without the approbation of the community, and that this honour is conferred by the prince, the father, or next in blood, by presenting to the candidate, a sword or javelin, and a shield, as his first ensigns of honour. Selden in his titles of honour, page 363, is clear, that the original of chivalry in Germany and Gaul, had no sort of reference to the knights of antient Rome, but must have arose from themselves, "or the other war-like nations of the north." That they must have taken their rise in Ireland is very probable. 1. From the very early institutions of such bands amongst us; 2. from the manner of conferring this honour in Germany, exactly corresponding with our customs; and 3. from the very name of knight amongst the Germans, being Irish; for I scruple not to affirm that the German *ritter*, or knight, is derived from the Irish *ridaire*, because I



find it used in old MSS. here, in the 2d, and 3d centuries, which is earlier than their knowledge of letters; add to this, that in Germany, the first ornament necessary for a knight was the *torques*, or collar of gold, which the Irish knights never omitted; many of which collars, of the purest gold, are daily found, one of which is now in my possession. \*

According to Polybius, the principal troops of the Gauls were called *geffatæ* and *soldarii*, and our infantry were called *coisithe*, and *saighdeori*; the first signifying foot-soldiers, and the second archers; their bravest men were called *geffi*; and *gaisgeab*, in Irish, signifies valour; the Gaulish spear was called *geffum*, and with us *geoffadan* is the name of a shaft or arrow.

Cæsar tells us, that the knights were attended by their *ambacli*, and clients. The Druids in Ireland, as in Gaul, were of the first order; these were followed by the knights; and next in succession were the *ambacli*, *beatach's*, or keepers of open houses. It is, for want of a knowledge of our history, that lexicographers have rendered the word *ambacltus* a servant or attendant, whereas it, in truth, signifies a man of hospitality, being derived from the Irish words *biadb*, meat, and *eadach*, cloaths. No man could presume to assume the title of *beatach*, who had not † seven town-lands, each town-land comprehending seven plow-lands; he was also to have seven plows going, and be master of seven herds of cattle, each herd containing 120 cows; his house was to be accessible by four different roads; and an hog, a beef, and a mutton, were always to be ready for the entertainment of the traveller; and of such houses no less than 1800 belonged to the two Munsters only. This spirit of hospitality, which the antient Irish carried be-

\* Selden's Titles of Honour, p. 366. † Mc. Curtin's Irish Antiquities, p. 63.



yond all other nations, is still nobly kept up by individuals, as such foreigners as from time to time visit us, can well attest. The lands appropriated to this service by the state, in many places, still retain the name of *Baille Beatach*; and the *Beatach's*, an honourable family in Conaught, in all appearance took their name from their employ. It is worthy remark, that the present Turks, confessedly of Scythian origin, keep up to this day, the same laudable spirit of hospitality; great inns being erected on all their public roads, at the national expence, for the reception and entertainment of travellers.

Where we find academies founded, masters regularly chosen, such attention to discipline, and hospitals for the sick and wounded, as in Ireland for about 2000 years, we may conjecture, that each knight, on his admission, or rather dismissal, made vows of obedience, &c. What the particular vows of our antient knights were, cannot at present be exactly ascertained; but from what the soldiery, on their admission into the Irish legions, were obliged to swear, we may reasonably believe they were romantically brave. The soldiery bound themselves on pain of death,

1. Not to commit violence on women, but rather to defend them.
2. To relieve the poor, the distressed, and oppressed, to the utmost of their power.
3. Never to retire, much less fly, though attacked by nine men of any other country.

However, we have, in a very respectable MS. whose title is, *Ionysuidhe magha leana*, or The surprise on the plains of Lena, a hint of our antient state of chivalry, too interesting and curious to be buried in oblivion, which may enable us to form some idea of what our knights must have been. In the latter end of the second century, the long and bloody wars carried on for some years, between Con the monarch, and Eugene the great, king of Munster, were terminated by a peace, by which the kingdom,

from



from the port of Dublin to Galway, was divided by a deep ditch, supported by redoubts at proper distances, and was called *Eisgir-ri-fhada*, or the Long Bounds, the ruins of which are at this day visible in many places. By this division, all the North part of the kingdom, with the title of monarch, was preserved to Con: and the Southern half to the king of Munster. The shipping coming in and going out of the ports, were also to pay their duties to the princes in whose partition they happened to lie. In 192, this peace was broken on the following account: On a royal tour, Eugene found in the port of Dublin most of the shipping anchoring at the North side of the Liffey, and of course, paying duty to the Monarch; and being a prince both enterprising and powerful, he made this a pretence to renew the war, alledging, that by the partition treaty, the duties on goods should be equally divided. Both parties met on the plains of *Lena*, in Connaught; but the Monarch dreaded the issue of the battle, on account of the uncommon bravery of Eugene, and of his veterans. It was therefore proposed in council, the evening before the battle, to attack the Munster army at mid-night. Gaull Mac Morni, Con's general, and the chief of the Connaught knights, after declaring that his fight was impaired, and that he could not see but in clear day-light, concluded his opinion with these words, "On the day that the arms of a knight  
" were put into my hands, I swore, never to attack my enemy at  
" night, by surprize, or under any kind of disadvantage, nor  
" shall I now break it." The attack was nevertheless made at mid-night, and in the disposal of the troops, Gaull agreed, at break of day to attack, with his Clana Morni, the king of Munster and his guards; for as Eugene was the most formidable hero, the post of danger necessarily fell to the bravest of his antagonists. The slaughter of the Munster troops was great and dreadful:



ful: incapable themselves of taking any advantages, but what superior bravery gave, they neither dreaded nor expected an assault, and in the beginning fell an easy prey to their insidious enemies; but, Eugene recovering from the general confusion, as well as Froech, prince of Spain, his brother-in-law, attacked the enemy with their accustomed fierceness; and so great was the slaughter made by Eugene and his guards, that Gaul was sent for, (for it was now morning) and reminded by the Monarch of his particular appointment against the king of Munster; the gallant knight then led on his troops to the attack, and Eugene opposed him, till, with his body pierced in a hundred places he bravely expired, together with his brother-in-law, in the midst of the enemy. Where this decisive battle was fought, there yet remain two hills, said to be the burial-places of these two heroes.

I know Mr. ô Flaherty \* is positive, that in this surprize, Eugene was killed in his bed, by Gaull, and this seems to be supported by the following lines of Torna-Eigis, a writer of the fourth century, and chief poet to *Nial* the great,

Do nað Goll, ceañ na gcoiadh, acoig a gceañ Righ Muimhan,  
Gur bladhaidh leir Cnamha a Chinn; rGur liadh an lap dha ríchinn.

I choose, however, to follow the MS. account, so consistent with the rest of our history, and with the principles of our knights.

But such high and extraordinary instances of generosity and bravery were not peculiar to the age in question; we shall find them practised in almost every period of our history, from the *very foundation* of the monarchy, to the last wars in Ireland; according to the poet,

\* Ogygia, p. 316.



—*Genus & proavos, & quæ non fecimus ipsi  
Vix ea nostra puto.*

Thus, when the Milesian fleet (after the murder of Ith, who had been sent from Spain to make discoveries on the coast of Ireland) had made good their landing; and the inhabitants complained that they came on them ungenerously and by surprise; by the advice of Amergin, their Arch-Druid, the following articles were agreed on: That the Milesians were to retire to their fleet, re-embark, and sail off the coast, and after this, if the Dananian inhabitants could not prevent their making good a second landing, they were to submit to their government. No doubt but many readers will stare, to think a people already in possession of a country, should, from a point of honour, expose themselves anew to the dangers of the sea: but such was the fact! by this piece of romantic honour on one side and craft on the other, several ships and many brave men perished in a great storm which ensued, and which the Irish probably expected, as the *Book of Conquests* particularly relates. This misfortune, which the Westerly winds (blowing on a bold and dangerous coast, such as that of Kerry, where this landing was effected) very naturally occasioned, was soon ascribed by the Milesian Druids, to the force of magic, in order to impress on the people the greater respect for religion or the clergy; and even the Christian Senachies have recorded it as the effect of magic; a proof indeed of pitiable credulity in the latter; but a no less striking one, how careful our antiquarians were, not to make the least alterations in the national records.

In the third century, we find another instance; which as it serves to expose the genius of the Irish nation, and has not been much noticed by later writers, we shall briefly touch on.

In



In the reign of Art, son of *Con*, *Mac Con* (nephew to the king of Munster) was expelled the province for mal-administration, as chief justice of Munster; it appears, that he appealed to the Monarch, who, not only confirmed the provincial decree, but banished him the kingdom \*. The banished prince full of rage and disappointment, applied to many foreign princes, particularly to Beine Briot, prince of Wales, and raising an army composed of French, British, and Picts, he landed them in the Western coasts of the county of Clare; here a council was held, and heralds were sent to Tara, to denounce war against the Monarch, if he did not agree to make the same partition of the kingdom with him, that his father had done with Eugene the Great, in which Dublin was particularly included in the division of the last. From this, one would think that Mac Con's banishment was for an higher crime than mal-administration; that of attempting to dethrone the King of Munster; and this will explain why this last prince sent his nineteen sons, and all his forces to join the Monarch against his nephew: but though Mac Con was declared a rebel by the estates of the kingdom, yet it appears, that he sent his heralds (and men of the first quality, namely Lugh, brother to the King of Munster, as his champion, and Muadh, his chief poet) on his landing, with the above proposals; their demands, and the Monarch's answer, deserve attention. "We come (say they) from Mac Con, to desire you Art Mac Cuin, to quit Tara, and divide Ireland with him,

\* In the MS. account of this war called *Cata mairg Mreime*, or, the battle on the plains of *Moicruimbe*, when the ambassadors of this exile came to Tara, to denounce war against the Monarch, before they declared their business, the latter asked where was their master, and why he did not wait upon him? and that he would even welcome him to Tara, though he did not merit it? They answered, when he did wait on him there, he did not find it so; which is a confirmation of my assertion that Mac Con applied to the Monarch.



or meet him on the plains of Moicruimhe, where he waits for you with 30 batallions." "I cannot consent to divide the kingdom, (replied Con) nor will I refuse him battle, for he is unworthy the name of king, who declines such a challenge, and it was thro' torrents of blood that my father arrived at the fovereign command of Ireland." The question then was, to appoint the day of battle: Art demanded twelve months time as he was in a manner surprized by Mac Con; but the ambassadors observed, that as their Master's army was full of foreigners, who could not be long absent, an earlier day must be chosen. A fortnight after the delivery of this message the battle was fought. In it Art lost his life and crown, and there fell with him the King of Connaught, seven of the King of Munster's sons, with many others of prime note, which entirely ruined his army. This battle became so remarkable an event in Ireland, that, till the reception of Christianity, many of our Senachies, reckoned a new æra from it. Here we see, a lawless invader, under the ban of his country, not only make good his landing, but bold and open enough, instead of taking the advantage which his situation afforded, to declare his intention, and by agreement, to fix the issue of it to a certain day.

In the beginning of the eleventh Century, Brien Boru, King of Munster, aspired to the monarchy; but, agreeable to the rules of his country, he sent an herald to Malachy the second, then Monarch, announcing his intentions, and to inform him, that he intended marching a large army to take possession of Tara; and to require hostages for his future good behaviour. The monarch replied, that nothing was more remote from his thoughts than an abdication; that the King of Munster took advantage of his troops being disbanded, and that if he would allow him a month to collect them, he would



would then let him see that he was worthy the empire of Ireland. The terms Brien agreed to, but such was the weakness of the Monarchy, by reason of the long Danish wars, and the little union in the estates of the kingdom, that the ambassadors which *Malachy* sent to the princes of Ireland, to demand their quota of troops to defend the Monarch, returned without success: thus unsupported and friendless, at the time appointed he waited on Brien, who was encamped at some distance from Tara, at the head of 1200 horse, and told him candidly his misfortunes; that it was not through fear of him, or his forces, that he surrendered to him the Imperial throne, but that necessity compelled him to take this humiliating step. Brien accepted his surrender; settled on him the domain of Tara, presented him with 240 horses, and dismissed his retinue, with many magnificent presents. It is remarkable that this is the first instance in Irish history, of a Monarch's surviving the loss of his crown.

The princes of Ireland, though they had been frequently tributaries, never acknowledged subjection to the crown of England till the beginning of the last Century. In the person of James I. the Irish beheld on the throne A DESCENDANT of the royal line of Milesius; they hoped, from his blood, from the close alliance he held with them when King of Scots, and from his religion, then supposed Catholic, happier days than they and their forefathers had experienced for some ages. They saw their country torn to pieces by internal divisions, artfully fomented by a powerful, and, it must be acknowledged, till then, a most cruel and relentless foreign enemy; and they thought the very pretences for *those distinctions*, the bane of every country, but particularly destructive to Ireland, must cease, upon giving up their hereditary jurisdictions; they, therefore, in con-



junction with the rest of their countrymen, declared James universal monarch of Ireland; and then, *for the first time*, from the erection of the Irish monarchy, or, *for the first time*, in 2800 years, they beheld a new and foreign mode of law and justice exercised throughout the whole country; for Sir John Davis, then attorney general, declares, that this was the first time that judges ever entered on circuits, beyond the pale.

It is needless to inform the public, that soon after this submission of the Irish a sham plot was pretended, by which six entire counties of the North became forfeited, which James, with a liberal hand, bestowed on his Scotch favourites. But as the ways of Providence are great and inscrutable, it is worthy remark, that the descendants of these new colonists, were the most determined enemies of his HOUSE, and contributed largely to their total expulsion.

The base ingratitude of the father did not lessen the attachment of the Irish to the son; and though Charles, called the martyr, in many instances deceived the Irish, and falsified his word \*; (acts scandalous in any gentleman, but unpardonable in a Prince;) yet was their enthusiastical love to his family still unshaken; they followed the fortunes of his son in crowds; formed themselves into regiments, which they transferred from the French to the Spanish service, as the interest of this *fugitive* required. They did more than this: from the colonel to the private soldier, they divided their pay, and voluntarily gave half of it to the support of the voluptuous and ingrateful Charles! And what was the return? Deaf to the calls of honour, of gratitude, of interest, of humanity, he did an act of such injustice, as even Cromwell never thought on; he confirmed for

\* Historical Memoirs of the Irish Rebellion. Civil wars of Ireland, vol. 2. &c.



ever to the *posterity of the enemies of his house*, those lands which the usurper suffered them to hold for the arrears of their pay *only*; and left the poor Irish to curse their own folly, and rail at Pictish faith.

On the expulsion of James the II. from Britain, better instructed in the principles of his insidious family, the Irish did not precipitately enter into the war. A parliament was called at Dublin, wherein the independence of this *Imperial* kingdom was acknowledged, Poyning's act abolished, and several laws passed for the security of posterity, and for the good of the kingdom. It is needless to touch on the nature of this war, so well known; let it suffice, that, from a romantic spirit of honour, unprecedented in the annals of any other country, the Irish declined the generous offers of King William, who admired their bravery and revered their principles; nor yet availed themselves of the signal privileges which the capitulation of Limerick afforded them. They thought, that in honour and conscience, they could not transfer that allegiance they swore to James, to his antagonist; and chose rather to abandon their country, their families, and their great possessions; to remain in exile the avowed enemies of William, than continue at home his insidious friends. After the surrender of Limerick, the number of Irish that followed the fortunes of the fugitive, exceeded 19000; and with what bravery and distinction they served abroad, a few instances will remind the reader\*.

\* On the surprize of Cremona, February 1, 1702, by Prince Eugene, when Villeroy the French general, most of the officers, military chest, &c. were taken, and the Germans, horse and foot, were already in possession of all the town, one place called the Po-gate only excepted, which was guarded by two Irish regiments, commanded by O'Mahony and Bourke; before the prince commenced the attack *there*, he sent General Mc. Donnell, an Irishman, to expostulate with his countrymen, and shew them the rashness of sacrificing their lives, where



## C H A P. VI.

*Remarkable attention of the antient Irish to their national history; migrations of their very early ancestors; objections to this relation; evidence of their residence in Egypt, of their landing in Greece, and their instructing the natives in arts, agriculture, and letters.*

FROM the unexampled attention, paid by the Irish nation through all periods of their government, to the antiquities and history of their country, one should think that they ought to be regarded with an higher degree of credit than those of any other country whatever. For, not only every great

where they could have no probability of relief, and assure them if they would enter into the Imperial service, they should be directly and distinguishedly promoted. The first part of this proposal they heard with impatience, the second with high disdain. Tell the prince, said they, that we have hitherto preserved the honour of our country, and that we hope, this day, to convince him that we are worthy his esteem; while one of us exists, the German Eagle shall not be here displayed: this is our determined resolution; nor will we admit of further expostulation. The attack was made by a large body of foot, supported by 5000 cuirassiers, and after a bloody conflict of two hours, the Germans retreated: the Irish pursued their advantage, rushed from behind their works, and attacked them in the streets. In a word, before evening, the enemy were expelled the town, the French general, &c. redeemed, and the military chest recovered.

In the beginning of the late war in Germany, after the surrender of the Saxons, near Pirna, the king of Prussia did every thing which a brave prince should not do to corrupt the Saxon troops, and alienate them from their sovereign: he soothed, he flattered, he menaced; and his endeavours were very successful. He applied, amidst a circle of officers, to ô Cavenagh, colonel of the king's guards. "Sire," replied this brave soldier, "my life, my fortune, you may dispose of, as they are in your power; but my honour, far beyond the reach of human greatness, you cannot, you shall not wound; I have given my faith to the king of Poland, and this faith I will carry unsullied to the grave." After this bold speech, mentioned in many of the foreign papers of that day, and minutely detailed in a political weekly paper, then publishing in Holland, under the title of *L'Observateur Hollandois*, the king no longer in person solicited the defection of the Saxons.

family



family of the kingdom retained an historian, but the state appointed others of superior degree, to examine critically and accurately, every third year, the different annals of the senachies; and whilst the severest punishments awaited such as would dare to abuse this great trust, by advancing the least falshood, their persons and properties were inviolate whilst they adhered to truth. From these different records, a code of History was formed, of which besides great numbers in private hands, several well-attested copies, as the psalters of Tara, of Cashell, &c. were lodged in different public repositories.

By these it appears, that from the most remote antiquity, the Irish were a LEARNED, a PIOUS, and WARLIKE nation; that they were originally a Scythian colony, who, under Phenius, the famous inventor of letters, first settled in Egypt; that Niul, his son, who was learned like his father, married Scota, daughter to the King of Egypt, and resided near the Red sea, and had an only son called Gathelus. In the days of Sru, grandson to Gathelus, the Egyptians becoming jealous of these people, expelled them the country. These exiles landed in Greece, and particularly at Crete, where they resided about fifty years. Some time after this they sailed to Spain, and from thence invaded Ireland in thirty ships: here it appears, they found *a people* not unacquainted with arts and letters, and such account as *these* gave of their ancestry our Senachies transmitted to posterity; this account however true or false, cannot affect the certainty of the faithful Milesian records: thus far our annals.

Such however is the modern rage of Pyrrhonism, that ideal systems of history are opposed to real history, and plausible conjectures to positive facts. Regardless of the real origin of nations, modern hypothesis tells us, that population coming from the East,



East, all parts of the globe must receive their inhabitants from thence, according to their vicinity only. The continent must be inhabited before islands, and these in proportion to their proximity to the continent; thus it is said, Britain was peopled from Gaul, the Northern parts from the South; and from both, and after both, Ireland! Doubtless where we have no better guide, plausible conjecture, even in history, is admissible; but still only as conjecture; but nothing can be more preposterous than to attempt to overturn historic evidence by such reveries. In philosophy, hypothesis is sometimes admitted for want of sufficient experiments to reason from facts; in history it should be received with the greatest circumspection; but both antient and modern history, stand in direct opposition to the aforesaid hypothesis: it is acknowledged, that the Tyrians, the Phœnicians, Greeks, &c. made very early settlements, and at a vast distance from home; Cæsar \* is positive, that the inhabitants of Britain, particularly its interior parts, were Aborigines; and Tacitus † assures us, that such as in remote times, made distant settlements, effected them chiefly by sea. All the colonies established by the different states of Europe, these four or five centuries past, are known to have been formed in, and are daily extended to regions the most distant from the mother country: let us therefore see how far an enquiry into the histories of the different countries, through which our ancestors are said to have passed, will enable us to judge of the truth of their accounts.

It appears, from our annals, that Phenius, or, as he is sometimes called, Fenusa-farsa, was our first great ancestor; and from him, by a poem, wrote in the ninth century, beginning with *Canam bunadhay na nGaoidhal*: “ Let us rehearse the origin

\* Comment. Lib. 5.

† De Morib. German. Lib. 2.



“ of the Irish:” we are told, that

*Fen o Phenius adbearta: bhuig Gan dochta.  
Gaoidhil o Gaoidhal-glas garta: Scuit o Scota.*

“ they were called Phenians, from Phenius, Gathelians from Gathelus, and Scots from Scota.”

The name of Fion, or Fenius, we find used through all the periods of our history. Fion, a descendant from the great Ol-lamh Fodla, was monarch of Ireland, A. M. 3302. Fion Mac Cumhal, was general of the crown army, in the third century; Sir Finigin ô Driscoll was famous in the days of Elizabeth; some tracts of land, go by the name, as Fermoigh in the county of Cork, called Fermoigh Feine, or the plains of Phenius; an island in the Shannon, is called Inis Finne, or, the island of Phenius, &c.

Diodorus Siculus tells us, that in very remote times, the river Nile, like the country, was called Egypt; but was afterwards changed to its present name, in honour of a great prince, who by aqueducts and canals, conveyed its waters to the interior parts of the kingdom. It is worthy remark, that in the whole Egyptian history, one prince only, of the name of Nilus, or Niulus, is to be found. Now this is a name peculiar to Ireland; and by which many of our princes were called, as some of our gentry are at this day. The Nile has been also called by very antient writers, Abanhi, Abanis\*, &c. but which name signified the Lord, or Father of rivers. *Ab-an*, is obsolete Irish for the Father, or Lord of rivers: *ab* father, *an*, a river. Egypt was antiently called *Æria*; Ireland retains the same name yet. The Egyptians, we find, were classed in different orders, according to the ranks of their Septs; and so were the Irish: to their priests the Egyptians committed the care

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of

\* Moreri, under the article Abanhi.



of religion, as well as the history and antiquities of their country: the same offices were HERE delegated to the Druids, Senachies, and Bards. The Egyptians had their hierographic or sacred character, in which the mysteries of their religion were treasured up; and it was with the greatest difficulty, that strangers (who, it is observable, were the most learned amongst the Greeks and other nations) would be permitted instruction in their hallowed rites. The Irish had, from remote antiquity, their ogham, or hierographic letter, in which were wrapt up the most solemn and abstruse parts of Druidism; but which, on the reception of Christianity, was applied to the secret transactions of history only; and so far were they from permitting foreigners any knowledge of it, that its study became penal to any, even of the natives, the Druids and sworn antiquarians only excepted. And whilst the sacred and common character of the Egyptians is totally lost, the Irish have, to this day, preserved both of theirs pure and uncorrupt, notwithstanding the long and cruel wars they have been engaged in for some centuries past, and the shameful neglect, nay, reproachful contempt shewn to both, for near a century: and this clearly explains what Cæsar asserts; "That such as desired a more profound knowledge of Druidism, were obliged to repair to this country." The learned antiquarian Lhuid \* owns, "The Irish, who have kept their letter and orthography beyond their neighbouring nations, still continue the same, which makes their written language differ from what they speak." The oath of the Egyptians was generally by the life, or by the head of their prince: thus, Joseph swore, by the life of Pharaoh; such were the vows of our ancestors, and such their manner of swearing on public trials. The Egyptians had inscriptions on their obelisks, in their

\* Archæologia, 1. 9.



their sacred character, which recited the tributes paid by the different provinces: the Irish had, at all times, such obelisks, but rather of rude stone, with inscriptions in the ogham, or occult character, probably of the same import with the Egyptians\*.

This strong resemblance and connexion between the Irish and Egyptians did not cease on the reception of Christianity; and it will appear surprising to find, that, the Christian system, in the most Western country of Europe, should be found exactly to correspond with that of the Asiatic and Egyptian Churches. This is proved, 1. From the form of their Tonsure: 2. From the time of celebrating the feast of Easter: but, 3. and above all, from the anchorite towers yet standing in Ireland, and which cannot be found in any other parts of Europe. Our early writers tell us (and archbishop Usher says the same) that the famous *Connal Cearnach*, master of the Ulster knights, was actually at Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour, and related the whole story to Cormoc, king of Ulster, on his return. Our great poet Sedulius, in the fifth century, traversed the East, and dedicated a book to Theodosius the Emperor. Bede, in his Ecclesiastical History of Britain† tells us, that a famous Synod was held in Northumberland, A. C. 663, to determine the time of celebrating Easter, as the Irish bishops, who then, and for thirty years earlier, *governed and presided* over the churches of Britain, adhered to the Eastern churches in this and other points of discipline; and in a solemn debate, in the presence of Oswin the King, his Queen and court, St. Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarren, delivered himself thus: “The time of celebrating the solemnity of Easter which I ob-

“serve, I have received from my ancestors, who sent me hither

I 2

“ as

\* Vid. ô Brien's Dictionary, under the word Dallon.

† Lib. 3. cap. 25, 26.



“ as your Bishop ; *and who being all virtuous and godly men*, did  
 “ after the same manner observe it. But that you may not think  
 “ too lightly of this season, or that it may not be easily rejected,  
 “ know that, it is the self-same which St. John the Evangelist,  
 “ Christ’s especially beloved disciple, with all the churches under  
 “ him, observed.”

In the Litany of our famous St. Aengusius, (who flourished in the eighth century, and who, on account of his being engaged in writing the Lives of Saints, was called Hagiographus) we find him, amongst other foreign saints deceased in Ireland, call upon the seven Egyptians who were interred in Disert Ullid ; his words are these ; SS. *Septem Egyptios de Disert Ullid, invoco in auxilium meum, per Jesum Christum* ; and Jocelyne, in his Life of St. Patrick, tells us, that the antient Irish, “ For contempt of  
 “ the world, for solicitude after heavenly things, for holy mortifications, and self-denials, were equal to the recluses of  
 “ Egypt, in *number* and merit ; infomuch that foreign and most  
 “ distant regions were edified and instructed by their preaching  
 “ and example.” Thus the correspondence between our ancestors and the Egyptians is shewn, and indeed in an extraordinary manner, considering the remoteness of the times in which they happened.

As to the residence of our ancestors in Greece, all Greek writers are unanimous, that, in remote times the Greeks were rude and uncivilized, totally ignorant of arts and culture, and lived on bread and water, till about twelve centuries before Christ, that a set of people, expelled from Egypt, came to Greece in quest of new settlements : with these strangers, say they, came arts and letters, a knowledge of agriculture, of religion, and of civil government. This state of Greece is acknowledged by the best writers, even in the days of their greatest splendor ; thus Isocrates,

O,



Οἱ δυσυχῆντες, ἐν τοῖς βαρβάροις τῶν Ἑλληνιδῶν πόλεων ἤζισιν ἀρχεῖν. Their first care was, to cut down the woods, of which the country was full, and to teach the people tillage. Cadmus instructed them in the use of letters; their first alphabet consisted of but sixteen letters; and Crete and Samo-thrace, were their principal residences. Clemens Alexandrinus tells us, \* that here they first promulgated letters, instructed King Minos in the art of ship-building, and by their means, he acquired the sovereignty of the sea. In the history of Samo-Thrace, I find mention made of SOAN, the son of Jupiter and Nympha, or with others, of Mercury and Rhena, who, (after the inhabitants had been dispersed by an inundation which had nearly destroyed the island, with most of the cities on the coast of Asia) collected them together, made wise laws and regulations for their conduct, and divided them into five tribes, as Diodorus Siculus observes †. Whether this Soan and our Deity Samhuin, to whom the month of November was sacred, were the same, I shall not venture to decide; but his being placed after a general flood, and our Winter beginning with most solemn adorations of, and invocations to SAOUIN (as the word is pronounced) would lead me to conjecture that they were; and especially as it is asserted, that from these exiles the Greeks first formed their theology. Diodorus affirms, that these exiles brought with them to Greece a language of their own, some words of which were preserved, even in his days; but particularly in what regarded their sacred rites: their Gods they called Cabiri, their priests Corybantes; their Curetes or warriors were held in the highest estimation over all Greece; and he adds, that *They celebrated their religious Mysteries in woods and groves.*

Thus

\* Stromat. Lib. 5. † Lib. 5.



Thus far the Greek writers agree; but who these extraordinary luminaries were, has to this day, remained a secret. If we compare this account with the relation of our Senachies, we will however find an astonishing coincidence of facts. The time fixed by the Greeks for the arrival of these strangers in their country, exactly agrees with that of our historians, and what improvements they made there exactly resemble those our Milesian ancestors made, after their landing in Ireland: their first care here, as in Greece, was to cut down the woods and lay the country open for tillage; for which purpose, we find in their retinue twenty-four principal agrarians, and the twenty-four plains they sowed with grain, retain to this day the names of their first improvers, and are: *Aidbne, Ai, Asal, Meidhe, Morba, Meide, Cuibh, Cliu, Cearra, Reir, Slan, Leighe, Liffe, Line, Ligean, Trea, Dula, Adbar, Airi, Deise, Deala, Fea, Fembean* and *Seara*, as the learned Doctor Keating observes. The attention of the Milesian settlers was not confined to the surface of the ground; they explored the bowels of the earth, and early discovered mines of gold, silver, and copper; and we shall prove in the second part of this work, that the natural history of Ireland was better known 2000 years ago than at this day. Whether the Cadmus who first taught the Greeks the use of letters will be allowed to be our Gathelus, or Caircer, the chief Druid, must be submitted to the learned; but it may, be presumed for the following reasons, that their original letter was the very same used by us at this day; 1st, From what has been already advanced; 2dly, From the similitude of character; 3dly, from the number of his letters being but sixteen, (as the additional Greek letters were the invention of Palamedes, at the siege of Troy, as the learned Meursius † assures

† De Fortuna Athenar.

us;)



us;) and ours, at this day, consisting of but seventeen; 4thly, The Greeks made use of many abbreviations, which are still preserved; the Irish use the same at this day, but with more conciseness and ingenuity ‡; 5thly, The Greeks, like the Irish, write from left to right, whereas all their neighbours, the Asiatics, write from right to left; a demonstration they could not have borrowed their letters from them.

Here are opposed the two alphabets; that of the Irish, according to its antient order, to prove it an original one, and the Greek letters in the same order.

| Irish Letter. | Name.   |  | Greek Letter. | Name.    |
|---------------|---------|--|---------------|----------|
| b, b,         | Beith,  |  | B, β,         | Beta,    |
| l, l,         | Luis,   |  | Λ, λ,         | Lambda,  |
| ṽ, ṽ,         | Nuin,   |  | N, ν,         | Nu,      |
| f, f,         | Fearan, |  | Φ, φ,         | Phi,     |
| s, s,         | Suil,   |  | Σ, σ,         | Sigma,   |
| ð, ð,         | Duir,   |  | Δ, δ,         | Delta,   |
| τ, τ,         | Tinne,  |  | T, τ,         | Taw,     |
| C, c,         | Colt,   |  | X, χ,         | Chi,     |
| ṁ, ṁ,         | Muim,   |  | M, μ,         | Mu,      |
| ḡ, ḡ,         | Gort,   |  | Γ, γ,         | Gamma,   |
| p, p,         | Poth,   |  | Π, π,         | Pi,      |
| ṛ, ṛ,         | Ruis,   |  | Ρ, ρ,         | Rho,     |
| ā, ā,         | Ailim,  |  | Α, α,         | Alpha,   |
| O, o,         | On,     |  | Ο, ο,         | Omicron, |
| u, u,         | Ux,     |  | Υ, υ,         | Upsilon, |
| e, e,         | Eadha,  |  | Ε, ε,         | Epsilon, |
| i, i,         | Jodha,  |  | Ι, ι,         | Iota.    |

‡ Eirin is contracted by placing an E over an N thus,  $\overset{E}{N}$ , which literally pronounces Eirin; Erie by placing one E over another; Dabhi, or David, by putting one B after another,  $\overset{B}{B}$ ,



Beside the antient arrangement of our letters, so different from that of all other nations, the name of each letter alluding to one tree or another, proves the homogeneity as well as great antiquity of them; and the same arborous scheme is preserved in our *Ogham*, or occult character, which must be still more antient than the vulgar one. From the whole, as our writers are unanimous that we borrowed not our letters from other nations; and that the Learned of antient and modern times agree, that *Pbenius*, whom, I think, we have proved to be our GREAT ancestor, was the first inventor of letters; as the Greeks themselves confess that their first alphabet came from Egypt; and, I believe it will be admitted, that it could not be the Egyptian; it is I think powerfully evident that the Gathelian colony, were the first improvers of Greece; and that their first alphabet was the very same we use at this day: but of this I shall offer further proofs in the next chapter.

#### C H A P. VII.

*Further proofs of their residence in Greece, and the light thrown on the obscure parts of Greek History thereby; their beathen theology sensible and manly: Arrival in Spain supported.*

**D**IODORUS SICULUS acquaints us, that the first improvers of Greece had a language of their own, many words of which were preserved even in his days, but particularly in what regarded religion. Let us see how far our language corresponds with his Testimony. Aod-haire (pronounced aire) is Irish for a shepherd, and in Greek Ερως, signifies to watch, or take care of. Ερα, is Greek for earth, and in Irish it is Ura. Δρῦς an oak, in Irish is Dair. Δεμος a people we call



call Daoine. Hefychius conjectures that the word ocean comes from 'Ωγὴν, which was its old name; why not from *Abban*, pronounced *Ouen*, which is the Irish for a river? Hefychius says, that βελα signifies Ἡλιος, or the Sun; and that in *Crete* they worshipped this planet under the name of Abelius. How near is this Abelius to our Beal, or the Sun?

*Tighcarna* is Irish for a Lord or Ruler (pronounced *Tierna*) and in Greek he is Τυραννῆς: Homer calls his countrymen υἱοὶ Ἀχαιῶν, the sons of Greece; to this day we invoke our countrymen by the name of *Clana Gaoidhelig*, or Sons of Ireland. I should be more minute in this investigation, did I judge it necessary; but such as desire further information may consult a work very lately put into my hands, wrote by the learned Dr. John ô Brien, titular Bishop of Cloyne, called *FOCALOIR Gaoidhilge-Sax-Bhearla*, or, an Irish English Dictionary. The Gods of these strangers, our author says, were called *Cabiri*, and *Cobbar* in Irish signifies help, assistance from above; their priests were called *Corybantes*, and *Oban* is Irish for sudden, speedy. Hence it would seem, that the *Cabiri* were the *Penates*, or household Gods, of these emigrants, and the *Corybates*, the priests of the *Cabiri*, as they were called on all sudden emergencies; in like manner we find, in our Domestic History, that the priests of *Crom*, or *Jupiter*, were called *Cruim-thear*, or the priests of *Crom*. Their warriors were called *Curetes*, and *Curaithe* is the Irish for an Hero or Champion, and a most renowned order of Chivalry, in *Ulster*, formerly went by this name. To these it was that *Pliny* attributed the invention of the warlike dance; and *Virgil* calls *Crete*, *Curetum oris*:

*Et tandem antiquis Curetum allabimur oris.*



From the Curetes, or Curaithe, I think we may safely derive the ΚΡΑΤΟΣ and Κράτος, of the Greeks; but lest all this should not be thought sufficient to identify the people, we are told that *they sacrificed in woods and Groves*; a worship indisputably observed by our ancestors. From this practice, it is more than probable that succeeding Greeks took the hint of dedicating groves to study and contemplation; thus, a place near Athens, planted by one Academicus, according to Laertius, or, according to others, by Cadmus the Phenician, or rather Egyptian, and first inventor of the Greek alphabet, was sacred to letters. Here it was that Plato taught his disciples, and from it they were called Academici. Cicero gave the same name to one of his country-houses, where a fine grove was planted, dedicated to Contemplation, to which Horace alludes:

*Atque inter Silvas Academi, quærere verum.*

Similar to the Isthmian and Olympic games of the Greeks, were our famous games, *Aenach's*, or meetings at Tailtean, in Meath, which consisted of charioteering, horse-racing, tournaments, and all the gymnastics; and as in them, were the victors celebrated by the bards, and rewarded by the princes. These sports, our writers tell us, were instituted by Lughaidh Lamhfada, many centuries before Christ, in honour of Tailte, daughter to Maghmore, King of Spain, who took care of his education in his minority. They began fifteen days before, and continued fifteen days after the first of August, and that day (being observed with the greatest pomp to commemorate their institutor, and on which all the prime nobility attended,) is still called *La Lughnasa*, or the commemoration day of *Lugha*; and from this, I conjecture, it was called, in English, Lammas-day. These games had been, for some years omitted towards the decline of

our



our constitution, but were renewed with great splendor, by Trieldach, the father of Roderic, the last monarch of Ireland.

It was a custom among the Greeks to entertain their guests many days before they demanded their names; so Telemachus, and his companions, were entertained by Menelaus; and he entertained Paris and his company ten days, before he demanded who he was: but Cretan hospitality was highly celebrated. In their public halls were two apartments; the first for strangers, who were served before the king or his nobles. It is to be remarked that all our antiquarians agree, that at Crete our ancestors principally resided during their stay in Greece, and which, for this among other reasons, has been supposed, like Ireland, to be free from venomous insects: Junius, the Dutchman, alludes to this tradition in these lines,

*Illa Ego sum Graiis, olim glacialis Ierne  
Dieta, & Jassoniae puppis, bene Cognita Nautis:  
Cui Deus, & melior rerum nascentium origo,  
Jus commune dedit cum Cretâ, Altrice tonantis,  
Noxia ne nostris, diffundant sibila, in oris.*

It is needless to add any thing to what has been already said of the hospitality of the antient Irish, since modern Ireland, even under all her hardships and oppressions, is still celebrated for this virtue.

Having thus, as I conceive, very strongly supported the notion that our common ancestors rather communicated arts and sciences to the Greeks, than received them from them, I shall just transiently remark that, whilst the Egyptians, notwithstanding their boasted learning, dishonoured humanity and the Deity, by paying divine worship to the most abject animals and reptiles; whilst the Greek theology





was equally absurd; and whilst both attributed to their deities, actions unedifying and impious, the Irish worship was sensible and manly, and free from such excesses. They adored the Supreme, under the name of *Crom*, or *Cean Croithi*; the Sun, by the name of *Beal*, the Wind, the god of travellers, &c. They never, as the Romans often did, paid divine honours to deceased princes, much less to men of the most infamous characters, tho' many of their monarchs were as warlike, pious and just, as any history can produce.

The Scythian colony landed in Spain, under the conduct of *Bratha*; and by *Breogan* his son, was the city of *Braganza* built; *Bille* was his successor, from whom came *Gollamh*, or *Milefius*; the sons of this prince, with their followers, invaded Ireland in thirty large ships, about eleven centuries before Christ; of this our annals are as positive as of their Egyptian and Grecian migrations, and we accordingly find, a close and friendly connection between Spain and Ireland constantly kept up, and frequent intermarriages and alliances among the inhabitants; and whilst these facts are recorded in Ireland, they have been constantly preserved by tradition in Spain. *De Feria y Sousa*, a Spanish knight, in his History of Portugal, mentions *Gathelus's* arrival there, and sailing from thence to Ireland, as traditionary. *D'Altereti*, in his Spanish antiquities, as well as *Florianus del Campo*, affirms the same; and even *Cæsar*, as well as *Tacitus*, takes notice of the happy situation of Ireland with respect to Spain. In the days of Elizabeth, we find the Irish enter into treaty with Spain, on the footing of being one common stock; "We," says *ô Sullivan*, Prince of *Beara*, in his letter to the king of Spain, wrote in Irish, and intercepted and translated by Sir George Carew, then president of Munster, "the true Irish, " long since deriving our root and original from the famous and  
" most



“ most noble race of Spaniards, and from Milesius, &c. as the  
 “ testimonies of our most venerable antiquities, our histories, and  
 “ our chronicles declare,” &c. hence it is that, to this day, the  
 privileges of natural-born Spaniards are accorded to the Irish  
 who settle in Spain, particularly in Galicia, and the Northern  
 provinces; hence it is that the very dress of the Spaniards is  
 found exactly to agree with the old Irish one, that their customs  
 are pretty much the same, and even their passions and inclina-  
 tions. But no evidence can be fuller on this head, than a MS.  
 found some years ago, in a monastery in Galicia, by Sir John  
 ô Higgins, counsellor of state, and first physician to Philip the  
 fifth, fairly wrote on parchment by Sedulius *the younger*, (for  
 in the fifth century, there was an eminent poet, of the same  
 name and country) who flourished in the eighth century;  
 the title of it is, *Concordantia Hispaniæ, atque Hiberniæ a*  
*Sedulio Scoto, genere Hibernensi, & Episcopo Orotensi*; and the  
 following affair gave rise to this tract. Some \* ecclesiastical  
 disputes having arisen in Spain, he was appointed by Pope  
 Gregory the second, Bishop of Oretto, in hopes, by his  
 learning and sanctity to heal those breaches, and he was also to  
 preside at a Synod, to be held for this particular purpose; but  
 the Spaniards objecting to him as a foreigner, to prove to them  
 that as an Irishman he was entitled to the privileges of the coun-  
 try, he wrote the above tract. The close connection between the  
 early Spaniards and Irish can be traced from many other circum-  
 stances; as from names, Isabella being a common name in Spain,  
 and amongst our Irish females; from words, as *strade*, a  
 street, which is Spanish; from coins, as we still call four-pence,  
*testoon*; a six-pence, *real*; and an half-crown is yet called in  
 Irish a piece of eight *testoons*. But least these might be supposed  
 mere Irish names, I observe, that our antient small coins were  
 the

\* Harris, vol. iii. p. 48. Mac Geoghegan, vol. i. etc.



the *prinigin*, or penny; *scrubal*, or three-pence, and *bon*, or four-pence piece.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Of the Hyperborean Nation: Ireland the country alluded to: proofs that the Druids made use of temples.*

**D**IODORUS SICULUS, in the 11th Chapter of his third book, describes, after Hecataeus, (a very antient writer,) an island of considerable extent, little less than Sicily, lying opposite to the Celtæ, and inhabited by the Hyperboreans. "It is," says he, "a fruitful pleasant island, dedicated to Apollo, and most of the inhabitants are either priests or songsters. In it is a large grove, and a temple of a round form, to which the priests frequently resort, with their harps, to sing the praises of their deity, Apollo; they have a language peculiar to themselves, and some Greeks have been to visit this island, and to present valuable gifts to their temples, with Greek inscriptions. From this famous island came Abaris to Greece, who was well known to the Delians. They can shew the moon very near to them, and have discovered in it large mountains, and the priests and rulers which preside over their sacred temple, they call *Boreades*."

Nothing has perplexed critics more than this famous passage, and great variety of opinions have been formed, as to the situation of the hyperborean island; some moderns have doubted if any such country did exist; but the number of evidences to the affirmative leave no doubt as to that point; the difficulty is to find out its true name and situation. Let us see how far our history, which has hitherto thrown such light on many obscure passages in antient writers, may assist us in explaining the above.

That



That Ireland is intended by the Hyperborean Island is, I conceive, in the strongest degree probable from every part of the description. The island being compared for size to Sicily, is one evidence, seeing that we know of no other in the European seas of such dimensions; and its lying opposite to the Celtæ, *i. e.* to Britain, is a still greater. The Irish sea, towards the North, in Cambden's account of the British ocean, he says, was antiently called, the Hyperborean ocean, to which name Claudian alludes in the following line,

*Frigit HYPERBOREAS remis audacibus undas.*

And this sea was, by the antients, supposed so listless and heavy as to be passable but for a few days in summer, and then only to be managed with oars. Subsequent writers mistaking this word Hyperborea, imagined it to be a Northern situation, which supposition, however it would seem, even pointed at Ireland, which was supposed intensely cold: hence the word *Hibernia quasi ab Hiberno Aëre*; and Claudian's expression,

*Scotorum Cumulus flevit Glacialis IERNE.*

Junius Adrianus thus introduces Ireland,

*Illa Ego sum Graiis, olim, glacialis IERNE,  
Dicta.*

though being for a considerable time, a resident in Britain, one should suppose, that he ought to be better acquainted with our climate; but being a man of reading, he adopted the sentiments of foreign antient writers only.

But a bare analysis of the word Hyperborea will strongly enforce the foregoing conjectures; it strictly and literally signifies, the country



try beyond the reach of Northern blasts; "Ὑπὲρ Βορέαν, beyond the North: and this derivation is justified, from the description of the country; but Roman writers, little acquainted with Ireland, mistaking the meaning of the word, supposed the country extremely cold. It is, however, evident, the Greeks never understood it in that sense; for Pinder calls the Islanders Δᾶμον Ὑπερβορέων Ἀπόλλωνος Θεράποντα: "The servants of the Delphic God," whose country he tells us was,

————— Χθονα

Πηλοῖας ὅπισθεν Βορέα.

"A land placed beyond the chilling Northern blasts;" and Callimachus calls them Ἱερὸν Γένος, or the Sacred Nation.

The Hyperborean island appears then to have been a land very happily situated; free from the extremes of heat and cold, fruitful and pleasant, and nothing but joy and festivity reigning amongst its inhabitants throughout the year. And what country with greater propriety, can lay claim to all these blessings, than Ireland? here the scorching heats of Summer and chilling blasts of Winter are equally unknown; a perpetual verdure appears: the arbutus and myrtle grow spontaneously, and the cattle seldom require housing: no savage beast, or noxious animal annoys the fearless traveller: its inhabitants are distinguished for a chearful and unbounded hospitality; and had the fathers of the present race of Irish, adopted the plain principles of legislation of the neighbouring nations, it would undoubtedly be at this day the Eden of Europe. But, alas! whilst three fourths of the nation are chained down, if I may be allowed the expression, to almost invincible poverty, by a system of laws and politics, as new as unprecedented; and whilst the few, who through uncommon pains have acquired fortunes, are obliged to send their  
acqui-



acquisitions to purchase in a foreign country that permanent security which their own *refuses* them, Ireland cannot hope for those improvements which IT ONCE POSSESSED, and which it is capable of. In its present state however, tho' little better than a state of nature, and whilst our fruitful plains, which should be the joy of the husbandman, afford protection to brutes only, we find the country, in many places, to answer the most luxuriant description. How much better it corresponded with the Greek account, above 1100 years ago, we may infer from the following picture of it, then given by Donatus, bishop of Fesulæ, or Fiesoli, near Florence.

*Finibus occiduis, describitur optima Tellus,  
 Nomine & antiquis Scotia scripta Libris.  
 Insula dives opum, Gemmarum, vestis, & Auri:  
 Commoda Corporibus Aere, Sole, Solo.  
 Melle fluit pulchris & lacteis Scotia Campis,  
 Vestibus, atque Armis, frugibus, Arte, viris.  
 Ursorum rabies nulla est ibi; sæva leonum  
 Semina, nec unquam Scotica terra tulit.  
 Nulla Venena nocent, nec Serpens serpit in herbâ,  
 Nec Conquesta Canit, garrula rana lacu;  
 In qua Scotorum Gentes, habitare merentur:  
 Inclyta Gens hominum, Mi'ite, Pace, Fide!*

Far westward lies an isle of antient fame,  
 By nature blest'd; and Scotia is her name,  
 Enroll'd in books: exhaustless is her store,  
 Of veiny silver, and of golden ore.  
 Her fruitful soil, for ever teems with wealth,  
 With gems her waters, and her air with health;

L

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Her verdant fields with milk and honey flow,  
 Her woolly fleeces vie with virgin snow.  
 Her waving furrows float with bearded corn;  
 And arms and arts her envied sons adorn!  
 No savage bear, with lawless fury roves,  
 Nor fiercer lion through her peaceful groves;  
 No poison there infects, no scaly snake  
 Creeps through the grass, nor frog \* annoys the lake;  
 An island worthy of its pious race,  
 In war triumphant, and unmatch'd in peace!

Hecataeus tells us, that this Hyperborean island was dedicated to Apollo, and most of the inhabitants were either priests or songsters. That Beal, or Apollo, was one of *our* principal heathen deities, we have already most amply proved; and that most of the people were priests or songsters, that is, devoted to music and Religious Ceremonies, is certain. Callimachus calls them, the Holy Nation; and we have already seen with what justice they merited this appellation, by spreading their Druidical tenets such as they were, not only in Britain, Gaul, and Italy, but by Abaris even in Greece. The name of *Insula Sacra*, taken from the Greeks, has been supposed to have been conferred on Ireland, after their conversion to Christianity; but I contend for it, and I think, shall be able to prove in my second part, that they enjoyed this appellation long before the admission of the Christian religion amongst them. Their fondness for music and poetry exceeded that of all other nations. Every family retained a Filea or Poet, and a Crotarie or Harper.

\* We must here remark, that we never had frogs in Ireland till the reign of King William. It is true, some mighty sensible members of the Royal Society, in the time of Charles II. attempted to add these to the many other valuable presents sent us from England, but ineffectually; as they were of Belgic origin, it would seem they could only thrive under a Dutch prince; and these with many other exotics were introduced at the Happy Revolution.



The language seemed happily adapted to poetry, by its softness and sweet tones; and its luxuriance and expressiveness, never left the bard at a loss for words. In the book intitled *Uraiceacht na Neaigios*, or rules for the poet, above an hundred different species of Irish poetry are described. Hence it is, that manuscript Profodies, with examples of Versification, have been at all times, and are to this day, common. O Mulloy, in his Irish Latin Grammar, published at Rome, in the beginning of the last century, has given the rules and specimens of our modes of versification, which may be seen in Dr. Lhuid's *Archæologia*; also Gratianus Lucius, and Mr. O'Connor, in his *Dissertations*, p. 67: nor does Dr. Linch allow them to be exceeded in this art by any nation of Europe. Even Dr. Mac Pherson, in his 14th Dissertation, (lately published with many others, with no other design than to invalidate and destroy our History and Antiquities,) acknowledges that "Never  
 " did any nation encourage or indulge the profession of  
 " Bards with a more friendly partiality than the Irish. Their  
 " nobility and gentry, their kings, both provincial and supreme,  
 " patronized, caressed, and revered them! The Bards of distinguished character had estates in land settled on them and their  
 " posterity; and even amidst the ravages and excesses of war;  
 " these lands were not to be touched; the poet's person was  
 " sacred, and his house was deemed a sanctuary."

The same privileges, accorded to the poet, were conferred on the Crotaries and *Ollamb-Redan's* or doctors of music, on lawyers, and indeed on all the learned professions. In every house was one or two harps, free to all travellers, who were the more caressed, the more they excelled in music; and it was a reproach to a gentleman to want this branch of education. I do not confine this custom to antient times; it was observed



forty years ago, and still subsists in many parts of the kingdom. How celebrated they were for music formerly, Cambrensis himself attests.

In the Hyperborean island, we are told, was a large grove, and a temple of a round form, to which the priests frequently resorted with their harps. Amongst the many names given to Ireland, *Inis na BFbiodhuide*, or the Woody Island, was one; and their worshipping in groves, plainly points out the Druid sacrifice, which from the circular stones, still standing and mentioned in the fifth chapter, we may well suppose, was offered in round temples; the plains on which these stones were erected, were called *Maigh-Adhair*, or the Fields of Worship. As to the harp, we find in all nations antient and modern, the Deity praised with musical sounds: may we not suppose this was especially the Case in Ireland? But, with regard to the Druid temples, little satisfactory has hitherto been advanced. From the account of Cæsar, the hints of Lucan, &c. it would seem, that the Druids worshipped in groves; and from the altar-stones, and circular pillars yet standing, that this adoration had been constantly paid in the open air. The learned writers of the Universal History have considered this matter very attentively, and from the whole conclude, that the Druid worship was not confined to temples of stone, but in the open air, under the great vault of the Heavens \*. Our annals tell us, that *Tighernas*, was the first of our princes that adored idols; and they add, that the Supreme was so incensed, that he, with most of his people were destroyed the eve of *Sambuin*, or November, as they were worshipping the great idol Crom, which place, from this catastrophe, was called *Maigh-Sleachta*, or the Field of Worship. Tighernas flourished about 700 years before the Christian Æra.

\* Univers. Hist. vol. 5. and 18.



From this Chief Deity of Ireland, many places yet retain the name; as Crom, in the county of Limerick; Maigh-Crom, or the plain of Crom, in the county of Cork, &c. All these facts collected, amount to strong evidence, that in the times of Druidism, temples were not in use; however, upon a more close and critical investigation of the matter, we will find, that even then temples were dedicated here as in Egypt, Greece and Rome, to heathen Deities.

Suetonius, in his life of Julius Cæsar, charges this General with actually plundering and rifling the Druid temples in Gaul; hear his own words, “*In Galliâ, Fana, Templaque Deum, Donis referta expilavit;*” and Tacitus, in his annals\*, affirms, that Germanicus destroyed the famous temple of Tanfane, and chief of all the houses in Germany. In the reign of Tuathal, A. C. 60, we read of a superb edifice raised near Tara, sacred to the fire of Samhuin, in which the priests of this Deity resided to attend the holy fire, and which place was called *Tlachta*. Another temple for the fire and priests of Beal, or Apollo, was erected much earlier at *Uisneach*, in Meath; but it is to be remarked that these were the chief temples of the deities, as in other parts of the kingdom there were the like, but subordinate to these supreme ones. Jocelyn the monk † tells us, that Loagaire, the Irish monarch, cotemporary with St. Patrick, adored the great idol Crom, or Cean Croithi, who they believed could resolve all questions, as being the chief oracle; and this Deity, he says, “was magnificently adorned with gold and silver; and that twelve other brazen idols, or gods of an inferior degree, stood ROUND HIM, in a bending posture, in token of his superiority.” In another life of this saint, recorded by *Colgan*, we are told, that, at His approach, all

\* Lib. 1. cap. 51.

† Vita S. Patricii, cap. 56.



the idols fell to the ground; and from the Sunday before the first of August being called, *Domnach Crom-duibh*, or the Sunday of Black Crom, the learned ô Flaherty † conjectures that this was the very day on which this miracle was wrought. Now, it is a point easily resolved, that Deities ornamented as the above, would not be suffered to remain in the open air; and the Greek History makes it clear, that oracles were delivered in temples; and that the priests derived considerable advantages from them. The bishopric of Clogher still keeps its heathen name; it literally signifying, the Golden Stone; and the antient temple, on the ruins of which the present church was raised, was dedicated to *Herman Kelsach*, the chief Deity of the North. Cathaldus Mac Guire, Dean of Clogher, and who flourished in the fifteenth century, ‡ observes on this subject, that the stone idol, and chief deity of the North, called *Kerman Kelsach*, and covered over with gold, was preserved in the church of Clogher, at the entrance, and on the right hand. Dr. Keating, from a MS. life of St. Collumba, assures us, that, in this apostle's days, a most superb Druid temple stood in Tire Connell, in which was an altar of exquisite workmanship, ornamented with precious stones. Add to all this, that *Lann* is antient Irish for a Temple; (the word *Eaglais*, introduced by the early missionaries, being manifestly derived from the Latin *Ecclesia*) and by this very name some churches yet pass, as *Crom-linn*, near Dublin, or the temple of Crom, which it literally signifies; another in Conaught, dedicated to St. Midabare, called *Crom-linn*, &c. &c. But from the story of Tighernas, and the great concourse at May and November from all parts, to the temples of Beal and Samhuin, we may well presume, that at these particular festivals, the

† Ogygia, p. 198.

‡ In Scholiis.



sacrifices were in the open air, as no temple could be supposed capable of containing so great a croud; just as in Catholic countries, on Corpus Christi day, altars are erected in the most public streets; but which can be no more conclusive, against their having temples in the one, than, that we have not churches in the other instance.

From these domestic proofs, let us now recur to foreign ones. Archbishop Usher \* tells us, and he brings his proofs, that in the reign of Lucius king of Britain, when this prince and his subjects received Christianity, there were then twenty-eight flamens, and three arch-flamens, who governed the heathen worship; in whose place he substituted twenty-eight bishops, and three archbishops:

*Assignant Urbes viginti octoque sacratis, præsulibus totidem: sed submittunt tribus illos Archi-præsulibus. Pars subjacet Eboracensi cum sibi submissis populis, pars Londinensi, pars Li-*

We are also told, that Lucius destroyed the temple of Apollo at Westminster, called Thornie, and on its ruins began the church of St. Peter, A. C. 169; and that the temples of the idols he enlarged, and dedicated to the living God. The venerable Bede, is very full on this head. † He records a letter of Pope Boniface to King Edwin, wherein he exhorts him “to abandon the worship of his idols, and the falsity of his South-sayers, and to forsake the temples of his false gods.” And again he conjures him, “to break to pieces these false gods, made of one metal or another.” In the 13th chapter of the second book, is a speech of one of the heathen dignitaries, praying king Edwin, to abandon the temples, and burn those altars, which they

\* De Britan. Ecclesiæ. primord. p. 56.

† Histor. Eccles. Brit. Lib. 2. cap. 10.



they had consecrated in vain ; and the king demanding who would do this service, he answered, that he himself would, and he did accordingly destroy them, with all their ornaments ; and the remains of this temple, Bede declares, were to be seen in his own days. As many writers however have most confidently affirmed, that the Irish knew not the art of building with lime and stone till the 12th century, I shall, before I proceed further in this introduction, give the fullest proofs to the contrary.

## C H A P. IX.

*Taste of the antient Irish for architecture ; absurdity of supposing our maritime towns to have been built by the Danes ; Greek evidences of our early cities ; Hecatæus's account of the Hyperborean nation, pursued ; Abaris, an Irish Druid ; the Hyperborean knowledge of astronomy and optics, illustrated by our early use of telescopes ; Virgilius's acquaintance with astronomy ; Danish and Norman depredations on our antient annals ; proofs that the Danes possessed many of our MSS.*

IT is certainly surprising, that in these modern ages of erudition and curiosity, so great a people as the Irish nation should be so grossly and basely misrepresented by writers totally unacquainted with the history and language of the country. Amongst the other charges against them, that of their total ignorance of architecture has been one ; and it is admitted by the late Dr. Warner \*. But this very charge carries with it, its own confutation. For Cambrensis himself, that avowed enemy to Ireland, and who visited the country in 1172, describes minutely those narrow and lofty round towers, peculiar to, and so common

\* Introduction to the History of Ireland.



mon in Ireland †; and Mr. Harris ‡ has clearly demonstrated them to have been anchorite retreats, in imitation of the early churches of Asia, and to have been reared in the sixth and seventh centuries. Not only in the more open, but in the most sequestered parts of the kingdom, we find these towers, with remains of small elegant churches, the retreats of hermits. On the Shannon, is the tower of St. Senanus, with the remains of eleven small churches, raised in the sixth century, as well as his monument in the island of Scatterry. Another fine anchorite tower, with seven small churches, raised in the seventh century, by St. Camin, which bespeak in miniature an elegance of taste in building, yet remain on Inis Cailtre, or the Holy Island, both of which I lately visited. Even at Killaloe, in the most antient building there, adjoining to the cathedral, and which I have proofs was a mausoleum, we see, at the o'd entrance on the West of it, now shut up, the arch supported by two pillars, which, though low, are covered by capitals, of the Ionic order. Since then such a writer as Cambrensis speaks of these antient monuments, and since they appear from their solidity at this day, to have been built with such art and firmness as almost to defy the ravages of time, and that they were the retreats of wretched hermits and pious recluses only, what must not be the care of the people in erecting churches, colleges, and other public works, of greater consequence? All our annals agree, that soon after clearing the country of woods, and laying it out for tillage, the next care of our ancestors was, to erect sumptuous edifices; and sure no one will doubt, but that they who built the city of Braganza in Spain, and whose forefathers resided so long in Egypt, must have acquired some knowledge of architecture. Heremon the first Milesian monarch, reared

† Topograph. Hibern. Dis. sec. cap. 9.      ‡ Antiquities of Ireland, part 2. p. 182.



his palace at Airigid-ross on the Sure, in Ossory, and called it Rath-Beothach. Amergin, his brother, and chief justice of Ireland, built the castle of *Turlagh Inbher-more*; now called Arcloe. *Heber-fion* built his in Leinster, and called it *Rath-Lolumhuim*; and in imitation of the chiefs, their followers raised lofty places of residence. The palace of Tara, the royal residence of our monarchs, was erected before the days of *Ollamb Foldbla*, above 2500 years ago. This house has been highly celebrated for its magnificence and elegance; and we have a description of it, from a writer of the sixth century, yet extant. Next to this, was the palace of Emania, or *Eamhuin-Macha* in Ulster, the residence of the princes of that province, built some centuries before Christ; and some remains of which, *Colgan* assures us, from his own knowledge, he traced out, and probably others might still discover, did a spirit of curiosity lead people to examine them; his words are these, “*Regia sedes Ultonorum, erat Emania, seu Eamhuin Macha prope Ardmacham, nunc fossis latis, vestigiis murorum eminentibus & ruderibus, pristinum redolens splendorem.*” Soon after, we read of a superb edifice, raised for the kings of Connaught, called *Rath Eochaidh*, and *Rath-Cruachan*, which last name the place still retains; and *Rath-Carman*, was the chief of the royal houses of Munster. The arch-temples of *Beal* and *Sambuin*, at *Uisneach*, and *Tlachta*, in Meath, as well as that of *Tailte*, (dedicated to tournaments, charioteering, horse-racing, and all the gymnastics, where the principal nobility of the kingdom, both male and female, attended, and where alliances by marriage were formed) are particularly noticed by our writers.

In the life of St. Patrick, (in three parts) we are told, that his first landing in Ireland was, “at a CASTLE called *Rath Inbheir*, near the sea, which seems to be, by its situation, the very



very one raised by Amergin himself, on the first landing of the Milesians. Soon after, we are told, that after his converting *Conall*, brother to the Irish monarch, this prince bestowed on the apostle “His *Castle*, and all the domain, saying unto him, “make of this place, a monastery and a city, for your use, “and I shall erect another habitation near it.” Bishop Bedel, in a \* letter to archbishop Laud, acquaints him, “that the Cathedral of Ardah, one of the most antient in Ireland, said to be built by St. Patrick himself, was then fallen to “the ground.” Besides the number of churches, founded by this apostle, all the writers of his life (and we know they exceed 60) agree, that he not only built the magnificent church of Ardmach, which he made the metropolitan of Ireland “but “founded here also his favourite city, in which he delighted, “and wherein he established his chief glory, for succeeding ages, “and where the prime seat of letters ever after remained.” Jocelyne tells us, that Macarton, companion to St. Patrick, built a monastery in the street, before the Royal Seat of the Kings of Ergial.

In the latter end of the 7th century, Usher informs us that bells were used in the churches of Ireland †; and immediately after we are told, that Turgesius the Dane, amongst other instances of devastation, caused the church of Mayo, covered over with lead, to be burnt to the ground. It will be difficult to conceive, that any building but of stone, should be covered with lead. In the life of St. Gelasius, consecrated in 1137 archbishop of Ardmach, we are told ‡ that he set most assiduously about rebuilding and repairing that Cathedral, with the adjacent religious houses; to which purpose he had a kiln constructed of such enormous size

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\* His Life, p. 32. † Eccles. prim. p. 1168, and 73. ‡ Acta Sanct. Hib. p. 775.



as to extend 60 feet in diameter. In the year 1004, the great church of Tuam was built. In 1139, *Maolseachlin* the monarch, founded St. Mary's Abbey in Dublin. In 1159, Mac Murrough erected the Abbey of Baltinglass; and the famous Abbey of Holy Cross, in the county of Tipperary, at this day one of the finest remains of antient structure in Ireland, was compleated many years before the Saxon invasion. The present Cathedral of Limerick was originally a palace for the kings of North-Munster, and built in the 11th century: This Donald ô Brien afterwards bestowed on the Canons Regular. In the second tome of the Chron. gener. ordin. Bened. it is asserted \* “ that the greatest number of Monks, and the most “ superb monasteries that Europe has seen, are in Ireland;” and we have in the city of Limerick, the remains of a most spacious and magnificent monastery yet standing, to justify the truth of this remark; and *Buan-ratha*, not far from thence, has a princely hall and spacious chambers, the fine stucco, in many of which is yet visible, though uninhabitable for above a century.

In the reign of Tureldach ô Connor, A. C. 1130, three grand and spacious bridges were compleated; that of Athlone, and *Atha Cruichta*, over the Shannon, to open the communication with Leinster †, and that of *Dun Leoga*, over the Sue; and about this time it would seem that Thomond Bridge was also built. The Irish were not only skilful in building, but also in sculpture and statuary; witness the superb repositories of our deceased heathen princes, recorded by *Torna Eigis*, chief Bard to Neill the monarch, in the fourth cenrury. In this poem, quoted by *Keating*, and other antiquarians, and which is yet extant, we find described the attitudes of the marble effigies of these different heroes, preserved at *Rolic na Riogh*, and *Brugh na Boine*, in Connaught. We have yet, at *Cluin Mac Nois*,

\* Vita S. Rumoldi, p. 193.

† Keating, Grat. Luc. &c.



*Nois*, very noble remains of Christian Mausoleums, some figures of which may be seen in Mr. Harris; and inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek have been frequently dug up there, as Sir James Ware attests. The venerable monuments of St. Patrick, St. Bridget, and St. Columba, the pride of ages, and the glory of Ireland, were demolished by Le Gray, lieutenant of the pale, in the days of Henry VIII. in the city of Down, as the learned *Lombard*, archbishop of Ardmach \* observes; “but what,” says he, “was then deemed a crime, we have since, and in our own memory,” (to wit, in the days of Elizabeth and James,) “seen practised with high applause,” &c. In the East end of the cathedral of Scatterry, and in the stone that closes the top of the altar window, is yet to be seen the head of St. *Senanus*, with his mitre, boldly executed. I was surprized to find it so little defaced by time; but attributed this to its situation, and its being so well defended from the South and East by a fine round tower, and the contiguous churches. Near to this church, they shew his monument. Ardfeart, the seat of Lord Brandon, was erected into a bishoprick in the fifth century. In it there remains a fine figure in *alto relievo* of St. Brandon, its + patron, with his crozier and mitre. Mr. Smith, I know not why, will have it to be that of Bishop Stack. Near this fine church was a lofty anchorite tower, which partly fell to the ground last year; but from the known taste of Lord Brandon, it can hardly be supposed that he will suffer so fine a piece of antiquity, and such an ornament to his improvements, to be lost, especially as all the materials lie on the spot. In a word, over all the deceased of any consequence, were formerly stone inscriptions, some few of which, in sequestered churches, yet remain, which I have not been able to understand, though some of the letters are Hebrew. It was by the assistance of inscriptions, that those

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\* *Analest.* p. 555, &c.



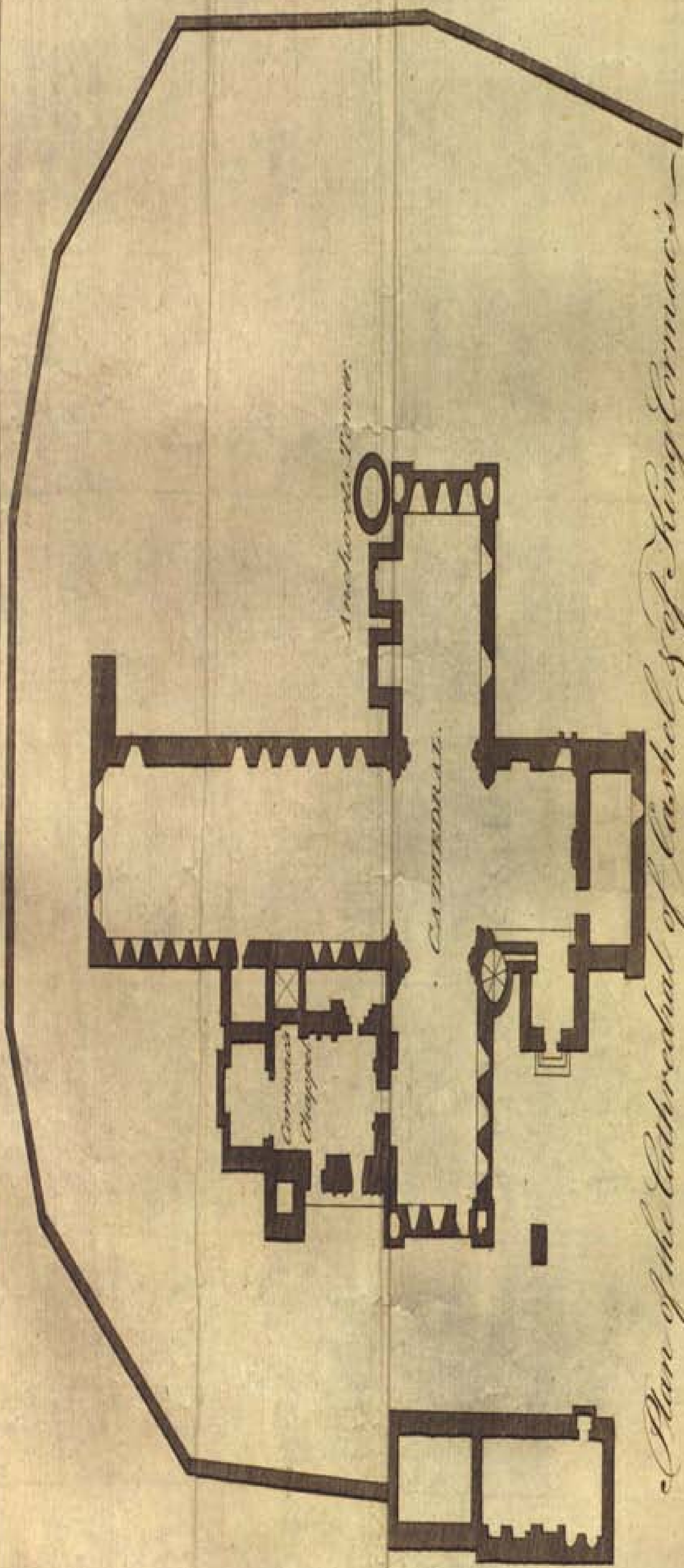
most laborious and learned antiquarians, Ward, & Clery, Colgan; &c. were enabled to class the Saints of Ireland, and to distinguish the different saints of the same name\*: But alas! in most of the churches of the kingdom, you seldom find at present any inscription above an 100 or two years old: It is true, you will see the niches where monuments were erected, with part of the ornaments yet standing, but every thing else defaced. What the holy rage of the first reformers left undone, Cromwell's soldiers compleated; even the monument of the Earl of Thomond, in Queen Elizabeth's time, erected in the cathedral of the city of Limerick, could not escape their fury, though none of this country deserved more from England; since his influence and authority at that time prevented a great part of Munster from entering into the war. Nay, within these few years, the fine monument of *Feidelm*, King of Connaught, surrounded by his *Galloglach's*, or body guards, executed in fine Irish marble, in the church of the Friars preachers, near Roscommon, has been with more than savage brutality, destroyed by a parcel of drunken dragoons; though in any other country so curious a piece of antiquity would have been highly esteemed. Near *Drogheda*, at *Chuan Mac Nois*, &c. † are stately crosses, curiously carved in stone, with very antient Irish inscriptions on them.

So blindly and wilfully prejudiced have modern writers concerning Ireland been, that our very maritime cities, in which the lofty towers, strong walls, and elegant buildings, bespeak the power as well as taste of the antient Irish, are all attributed to the Danes——a savage, barbarous crew, whose irruptions like those of their successors the Saxons, were every where marked with blood, rapine, and desolation!

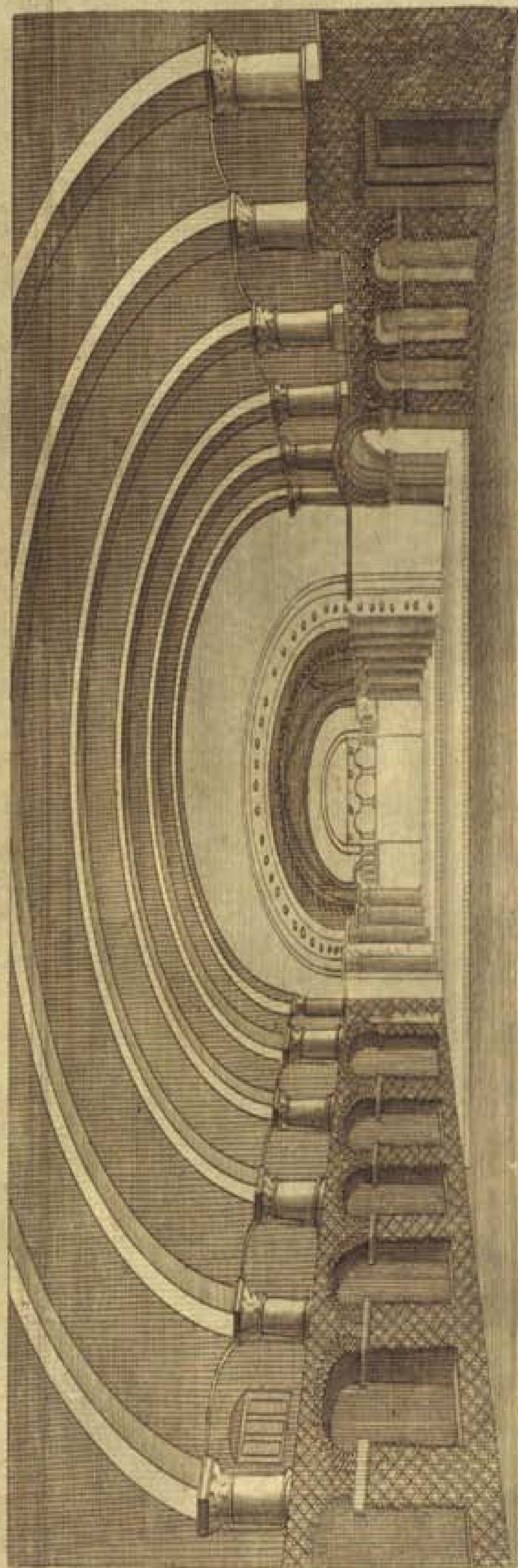
\* Act. Sanctior. Hibern. p. 338.

† Philos. Transact. Abridged, vol. 5. p. 57, &c.





Plan of the Cathedral of King Cormac's Chapel.



Interior of King Cormac's Chapel at Cashel.



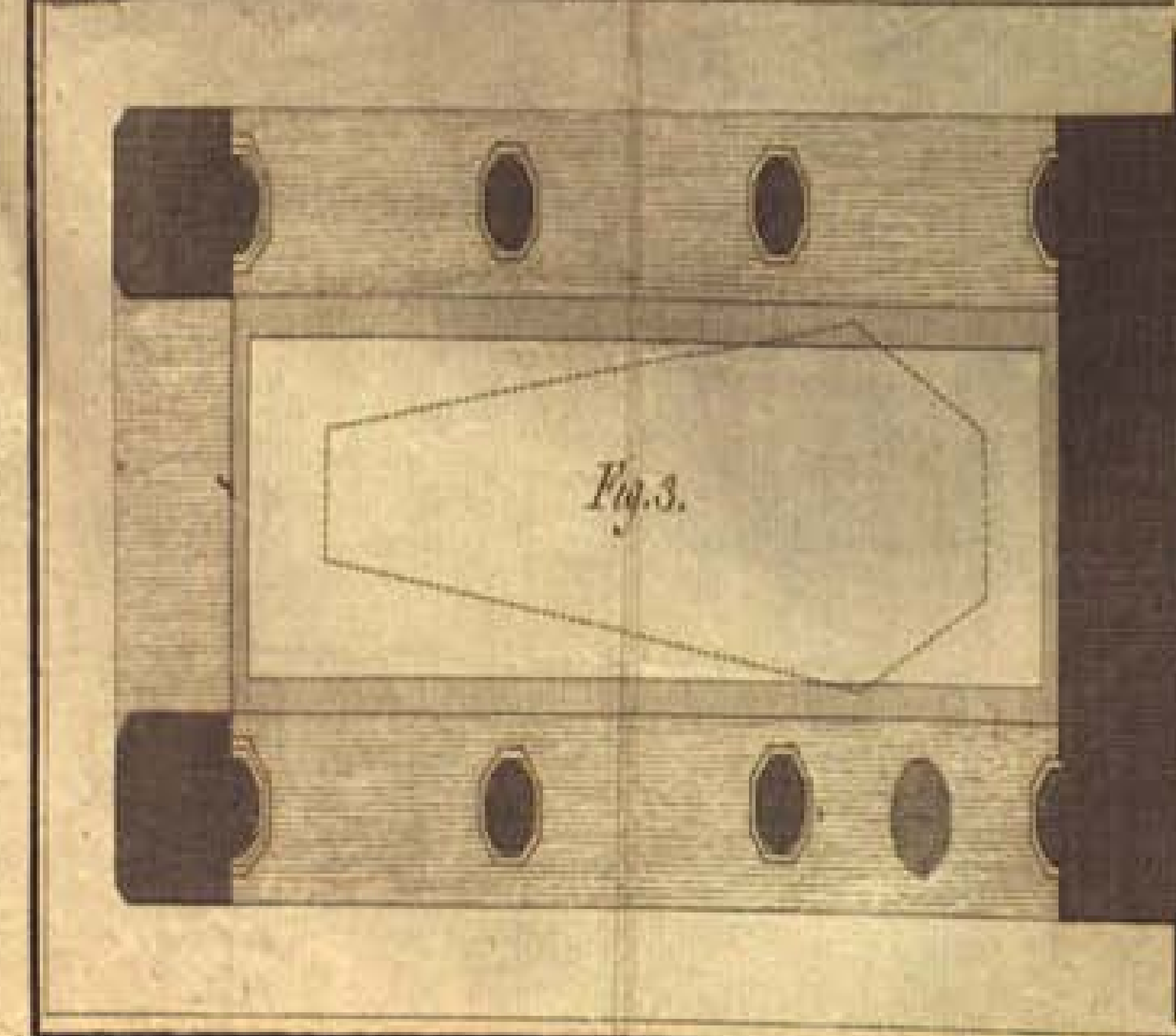
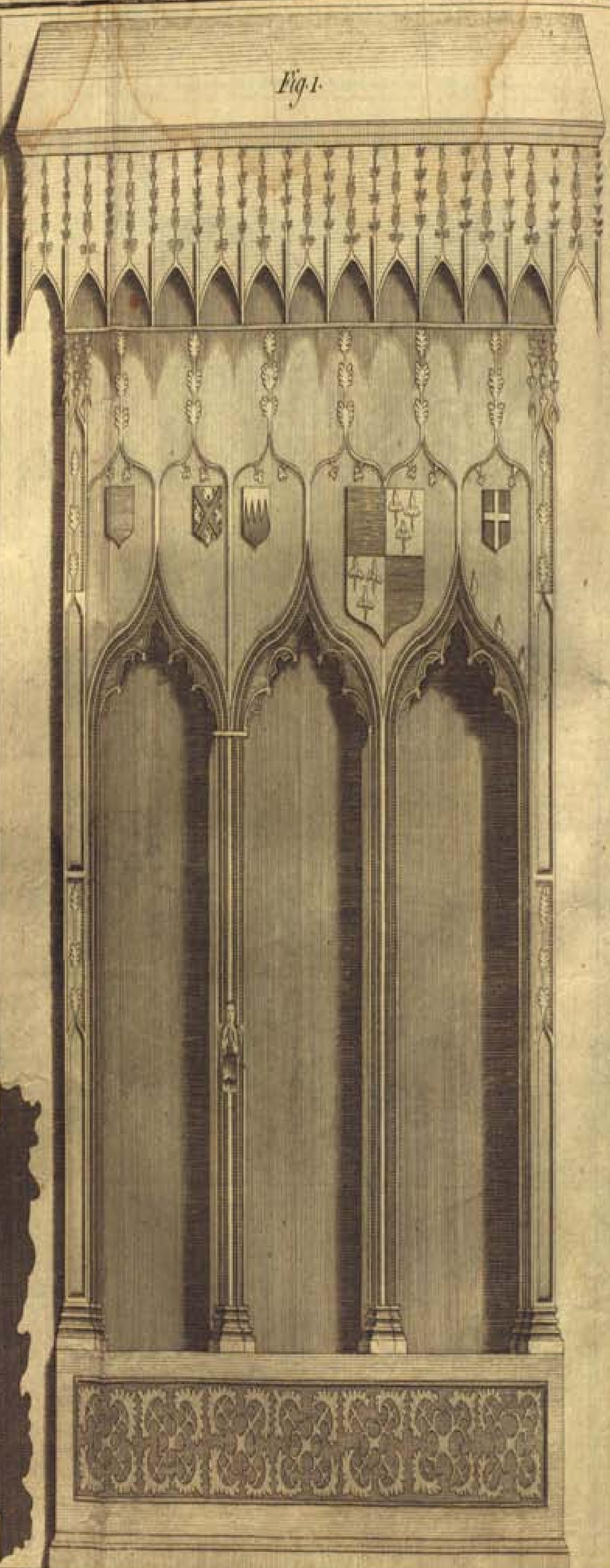
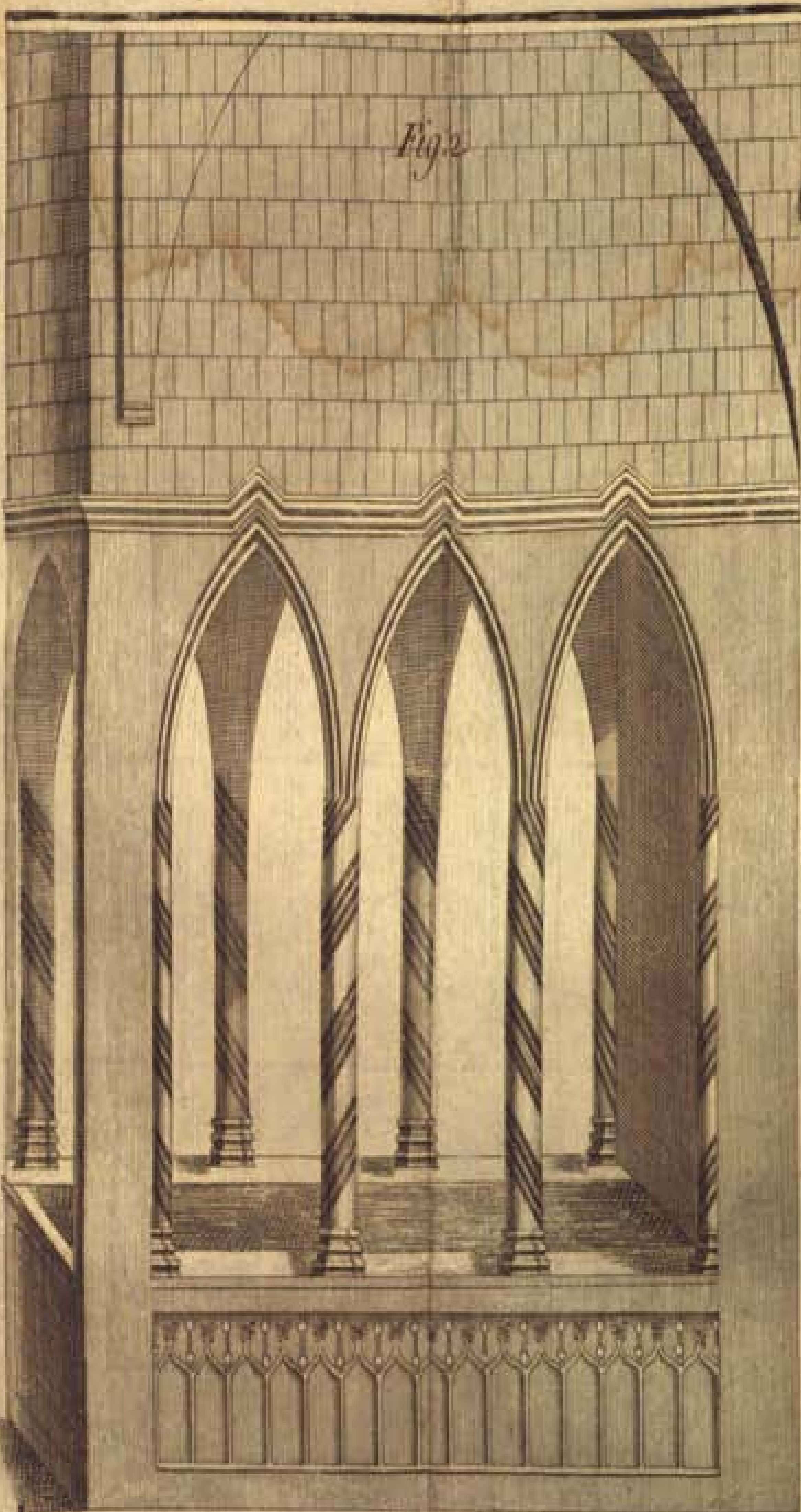


Fig. 2. 3. Plan & Elevation of a Building in the Church of Holy Cross wherein the Piece of the Cross is supposed to have been preserved. It is in a Pier between two Chapels in the South Wing of the Church.

Fig. 1. The Mausoleum of Donald O'Brien King of North Munster near the High Altar in the Church of the Holy Cross in the County of Tipperary. The Abbey & Church were completed by this King in 1163.



tion! We every where read of countries laid waste, people as well as buildings destroyed by these barbarians, but not a word of improvements, whilst the evidences of foreign, as well as domestic antient writers, are clearly in our favour. Not to notice our own annals, a very antient geography, (attributed to Marcianus Heracleota, but which appears \* to have been the work of Scymnus Chius,) tells us, “That in antient Ireland were sixteen nations, eleven famous cities,” &c. Ptolemy, in his Geography, mentions many cities in Ireland. In the second century a bloody war was carried on, to determine whose right the bare duties on the exports and imports of the city of Dublin ONLY were; and Jocelyne, an English writer of the twelfth century, in his life of St. Patrick, describes Dublin as “a most famous city, renowned for the number and magnificence of its inhabitants, the beauty of its situation, the extent of its commerce,” &c. Killmaloc, in the county of Limerick, though twice burnt down, in the Elizabethian wars, and ever since going to decay; though many of the finest stones of its antient buildings, as well as spacious walls, have been, long since removed and converted to private use, is at this day, and under all these disadvantages, so striking an object, that I doubt if a more venerable and august ruin can any where be found.

But since these corrupters of truth and history, refuse us the honour of building our own cities, we must not be surprized to find them confidently affirm, that we had not houses of stone amongst us, till the detested accession of the first Stuarts! Though evidences to the contrary, through every part of the kingdom, reproached their barefaced falsehoods, yet were they little solicitous about this matter, provided they could make the

\* Holsten. Or. in Apollon. Rhod. lib. 4. v. 284.



the public believe that we were barbarians, till such time as by every kind of oppression, they had rendered us truly such. Even in the city of Limerick, upon throwing down the old castles, to give way to more modern edifices, elegant and early inscriptions, coats armorial, &c. on fine marble, have been removed, as almost every one knows; and Smith tells us \*, that on rebuilding Castle-Lyons, the seat of the Lords Barrymore, in the county of Cork, this old inscription was found, and is yet preserved, *Cullane ô Libane hoc fecit, 1104.* This country was the antient property of the ô Lihane's, of which they were dispossessed by the Barrys or Mac Adams, as they called themselves, in the 12th century, and called *Eoibbe Ui Libane*, or the territory of ô Lihane.

But to return: Hecatæus tells us, "that the Hyperboreans had a language peculiar to themselves; that some Greeks had been on their island, and presented valuable gifts, with Greek inscriptions to their temple." That the Irish is a pure, homogeneous, and original language, all our writers agree; nay, some affirm it to be so incorrupt †, as to be formed on the very confusion of tongues at Babel. Temple ‡ admits, that it is the purest of all the languages of Europe; and, for this reason, the learned antiquarian *Lbuid*, thinks it the most useful tongue an antiquarian can cultivate. That Ireland was well known to the early Greeks, cannot be doubted: the proofs of this are the most respectable of antiquity; such proofs, as our great Usher observes, as the antient Romans could not produce, in support of their antiquity. Orpheus of Cretona, not him of Thrace, as Suidas remarks, who flourished about 400 years before

\* Nat. Hist. County Cork, Vol. 1. p. 165.

† ô Sullivan Beare's Hist. Cathol. p. 35.

‡ Introduction to the History of Britain.



before Christ, in his Argonautics, describes Jason's "sailing by the island of Ireland."

Πὰρ δ' ἄρα νῆσον ἄμειβεν ΙΕΡΝΙΔΑ.

To this line it is, that Hadrianus alludes, when he says of Ireland :

*Illa Ego sum Graëis, olim glacialis Ierne  
Diēta; et Jassoniæ puppis bene cognita Nautis.*

and we have seen above, Scymnus Chius, a very antient Greek geographer, (as does Dionysius) describe Ireland.

Amongst other charges brought by the early English adventurers against the Irish, it is said that they adhered more to the Greek than Roman customs : "*Ante Henrici 2di, in Hiberniam adventum,*" says Rivius, "*Romano more in Hiberniâ non vivebatur, sed magis Græco.*" We have already seen the early churches of Ireland adhered to the Greek and Asiatic customs. Our early professors were eminently skilled in these, and spread them not only over Ireland, but the continent. At *Cluan Mac Nois*, many inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek have been dug up ; and I am persuaded, might in other places, did curiosity or encouragement prompt people to search. To this day, at Lismore they have a tradition, that many Greeks formerly studied there. The church of Trim, in Meath, is yet called the Greek church : some remains of antient buildings bespeak a knowledge of Greek architecture. Dobda, a Greek bishop, accompanied our famous Virgilius into Germany ; and in many of our churches, divine service was formerly performed after the Greek manner, as Usher, Ward, Colgan, &c. affirm.



Abaris (says Hecataeus) came from the Hyperboreans, to visit Greece; and though a barbarian in dress, as Himerus the Sophist (apud Photium, p. 1136.) remarks, yet he spoke Greek with so much eloquence that you would have thought "you had heard an orator in the midst of the Lyceum." The dress of this Scythian, exactly corresponded with our ancient habits, and we find him celebrated by the Greeks, for divination, and foretelling future events: thus Clemens Alexandrinus \* "Pythagoras the great, was given to divination, as was Abaris the Hyperborean." *Apollonius* † affirms, "that he wrote oracles in the countries through which he passed, which were extant in his days." Hence it happens, as *Artemidorus* observes, "that as soon as ever a man dreams he becomes a prophet, he generally turns out a vagrant." *Iamblichus* ‡ says he was a priest of Apollo; and on his return to his own country, dedicated to the Hyperborean Apollo, the gold he had collected in his travels.

Mr. Rowland, filled with a laudable zeal for his country of Anglesey, would have it, that this happy Hyperborean island, must mean Anglesey; and that the famous Abaris, might be, an Ap. Rees, in the Welsh. But his pretensions are justly censured by the authors of the Universal History, who think the island alluded to, must be Ireland or England. His conjecture that Abaris was mistaken for Ap. Rees, shews what absurdities the clearest heads may be led into, to support a favourite hypothesis; especially when he makes Abaris a surname near two thousand years before they were known.

It is highly probable then, that Abaris was an Irishman, and a Druid; and the name is common and *peculiar* to us, even to this day!

\* Stomat. lib. i. p. 334.

† Admirab. Hist. Sect. 4.

‡ Vita Pythagor. cap. 19.



day! Heber and Herimon were the first Milesian Kings in Ireland: Heber Scot was one of their ancestors, who dwelt in Greece; Heber Fion, a successor to him, with many others; and this name we find rendered Abarus, and Ibarus in Latin. Thus our early Christian writers mention an Abarus, or Ibarus, who instructed his countrymen in the Christian religion, before St. Patrick; but on the arrival of the latter, when St. Albe, St. Declan, and St. Kieran submitted themselves to him, Abarus could not be prevailed upon; for, says the great Usher, \* “Abarus would by no means consent to the supremacy of St. Patrick; unwilling that the patron of Ireland should be of any other nation.” Colgan calls him, “a noble dispenser of divine truths, and amongst the first preachers which the Almighty chose for the conversion of the Irish nation.” That divination was a particular claim of druidism, cannot be doubted. Hear the learned Colgan on this head, than whom a more knowing antiquarian, in the antient history and language of his country, these latter ages have not produced †. “And although (says he) the Druids believing in Christ, abjured their *divinations*, their *incantations*, their *spells*, and other magic arts, yet did their successors, the senachies and poets, assiduously cultivate the study of antiquities, preside over the public schools, and by these means become in the highest esteem through the kingdom.” In the lives of St. Berach, Finanus, David, Kieran, Senanus, &c. we find many instances of their great skill in spells, and other arts magic. That they were endowed with a rambling spirit, as Artemidorus remarks, is certain. This it was, that led Abarus

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\* Ecclesiar. Britan. primord. p. 801.

† Act. Sanctior. Hibern. p. 149.



to Greece, as well as carried others to Britain, Gaul, and Italy, to make profelytes; and it appears much more than probable, that Pythagoras was one of their disciples. This same spirit diverted to another channel, made our early Christians more remarkable than those of any other nation, in propagating the new religion in different countries.

That a people skilled in languages, and studious in moral and philosophical subjects, as Cæsar declares the Druids to be, should be acquainted with Telescopes, will not appear extraordinary. Those who treated of the earth, the sun, moon, and stars \*, their magnitude and distances, could not handle the subject satisfactorily, without the use of glasses; and we cannot doubt but they must have thrown great light on these abstruse subjects, or so great a man as Cæsar would not have borne testimony to these facts. The affirming that they could shew the moon very near to them, and discover in it mountains and vallies, led many subsequent writers to doubt the existence of the Hyperborean nation; but the later discoveries of Copernicus, Tycho-Brache, Galilæo, Gassendus, &c. justify the truth of this old account. Besides, our own history here comes in as evidence, as our early annals tell us, that Ith, the son of Milesius, first espied the Irish coasts, by means of Glasses. Maitland † with that want of candour peculiar to Caledonian writers, (the learned Dr. Robertson only, excepted,) upbraids Dr. Keating, for affirming that *Ith* discovered the famous *Western-isle* by means of a Telescope, from the top of the tower of Braganza, in Spain; whereas he asserts on the contrary, that this pretended discovery was a mere fiction; and accounts for the early know-  
ledge

\* Cæsar Commentar. lib. 6.

† Introduction to his History of Scotland.



ledge the Spaniards had of Ireland, from a friendly intercourse by means of traffic and alliance. Indeed, *Keating*, sensible that telescopes were deemed but a modern discovery, was afraid to mention fully what our antient records are clear in; namely, that *Ith* did first observe these coasts by glasses, lest it might throw his whole history into discredit. However, we find the Chinese \* from the remotest antiquity, well acquainted with the use of glasses and telescopes; and their astronomical tables for ages past, have been carefully examined by the Jesuits, and other missionaries, and were found to be just. Why not then suppose, the early Irish well acquainted with these sciences? *Bliadhan*, which is the Irish for a year, seems to prove it, being derived from *Beal* the sun, and *Æin* a circle, or the sun's revolution, which is just a year; and *ratha*, which is Irish for a quarter of a year, the learned Dr. *ô Brien*, in his Dictionary, thinks radically to signify the arch of a circle, or three months. Our famous *Virgilius*, bishop of Saltburgh in Germany, was complained of by *Boniface*, archbishop of Mentz, to *Zachary* the Pope, for advancing tenets dangerous to Christianity, in asserting the antipodes, and new worlds; for which he was censured, if not degraded and confined. He flourished in the 8th century; and at this very time, and for a considerable space after, Druidism was in some repute in Ireland, as *Colgan*, *Ward*, &c. assert. But, in these latter times, since the Jesuits condemned as fabulous all the astronomical tables and histories of China, which went further back than 6000 years, why not suppose that the early Christians did the same in Ireland? Certain it is, that *St. Patrick* caused above 200 volumes

of

\* Lettres Edifiantes.



of Druidical Writings to be burnt; and there can be no doubt, but besides their theology, whatever in physics and astronomy that seemed repugnant to the new religion, shared the same fate. In a learned country like this, we may suppose that numberless copies of philosophical and religious works must be scattered through the kingdom; and such as adhered to Druidism, carefully preserved many of their writings, notwithstanding the fiery zeal of the new reformers to destroy any evidences of it. Many of these lived in the eighth century; and Virgilius might very well adopt their philosophy, whilst he despised their religion. The condemnation of his tenets, however, must have stifled every generous attempt of the literati of Ireland, to enlarge the human mind beyond the narrow bounds which the fathers supposed were allotted to it by the gospel.

But what the false piety and mistaken zeal of the early Christians left unfinished, the Danes continued, and the Saxon and Norman invaders compleated! It is highly worthy remark, that, whatever country these invaded, or attempted to conquer, there they warred against arts, sciences, and letters, as much as against men. In Wales, they carried this savage policy to the greatest length; not only destroying all the records they could find, but putting to the sword all the poets and antiquarians, that fell into their hands. In Scotland, the same Gothic frenzy possessed them; and in Ireland, till the accession of James the first, it was a part of state policy to destroy or carry off all the manuscripts that could be discovered. Even Sir *George Carew*, in the days of Elizabeth, though himself a scholar, has been accused by the author of the *Analect*, amongst many other outrages of this kind, of bribing the family historian

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rian of the *Mac Carthies*, to convey to him some curious manuscripts \*. “But what,” adds my author, “the president Carew did in one province (Munster) Henry Sidney, and his predecessors did all over the kingdom; being charged to collect all the manuscripts they could, that they might effectually destroy every vestige of antiquity and letters throughout the kingdom!” The learned Archdeacon Lynch † with many others, gives too many melancholy instances of this kind.

The people of England and Ireland seem at present greatly to regret the depredations committed on Irish writings, and to wish for some method to collect them. The late Dr. Warner ‡ tells us, that application was made to the King of Denmark, from England, to enquire after Irish manuscripts, scattered in the royal library; but after a close search, none could be found; and he thinks none were ever carried to Denmark; but that what the Danes could come at, they destroyed. However, we have strong reasons to think, though such writings are not now, that they were formerly, in great abundance there; for the author of the *Analest* tells us § that the King of Denmark, in the days of Elizabeth, was so solicitous to have the Irish manuscripts in his possession translated, that he applied, by his ambassador, to the Queen, for some able Irishmen to set about this work. Donal ô Daly, a man every way qualified for the undertaking, then confined in the King’s Bench, was applied to, and ready to engage in the work; but, on a council’s being called, a certain member, whom he says, *it is not necessary to name*, opposed the scheme, lest it might be prejudicial to the English interest. Here we

see

\* *Analest*. p. 555, &c.

† Introduction to the Hist. of Ireland.

‡ Gratian. Luc. p. 42, 51.

§ P. 563, &c.



see the fact established by an Archdeacon, who wrote of what happened in his own days. He also gives us a list of several learned works, wrote by Irishmen, some of which were then recovered in Germany, &c. and others he thinks might, with some care.

END OF THE FIRST PART.



INTRODUCTION  
TO THE STUDY OF THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES  
OF  
IRELAND.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAP. I.

*Of the Milesian System of Government.*

**I**T is worthy remark, that at every period of time, in which letters were countenanced, men of genius and abilities were not wanting; as Martial has wittily remarked:

*Sint Mæcenates, non deerunt Flacce, Marones,  
Virgiliūque tibi, vel tua Rura, dabunt.*

In the Augustan age, arose a Virgil, an Horace, a Sallust, a Cicero, &c. Amongst the Arabs, under their Caliphs, who were eminent protectors of science, men of genius in almost every branch of knowledge appeared, but particularly



under the famous Al Raschid. As soon as science found a powerful protector in Italy, in the person of Pope Leo X. whose age was called the Golden Age, arts and letters began to revive: By the countenance of Francis I. they crossed the Alps; and under the auspices of Lewis XIV. they shone with uncommon lustre. But since we find this the case in different countries, at particular periods of time, what must it not have been in Ireland, where the fine arts were protected, for ages, and that in a more eminent degree than in any other country? The very form of government was both philosophical and military; *Tam Marte quam Minerva*. Arts and arms supported each other; and it was from a peculiar combination of both, that the constitution continued longer in vigour than that of any other nation which history describes. To hope, by severe and penal laws, the reformation of mankind; to make men better and juster by oppression, is what the histories of all nations deny; but to form a constitution, which the people, with all their varieties of virtues and vices, shall be equally interested to preserve; and which shall be at once fully and equally fitted, to render a small state compact and respectable, and one more extensive, great and powerful, seemed reserved for the Hyperborean island. Hence notwithstanding all posts of trust and power were elective, and that these elections must be sometimes attended with serious consequences, yet, for a space exceeding 2000 years, the fundamentals of our government suffered very little alteration, and continued in vigour. Every part of the constitution had an eye to the whole, and the security of the people, from the highest to the lowest, depended on the preservation of the state inviolate: for it will appear, even from a slight view, that the smallest successful  
attack



attack upon any part of the constitution, must have been the destruction of the whole.

After the settlement of the Spanish invaders in Ireland, when they had cleared the country of woods and morasses, and cultivated the ground, their next care was, to form a wise, and permanent legislation; and this they prudently considered, could not be effectually done, till the people were divided into different classes, and of course, that every sept or family knew the particular station they were to fill in the state. The remains of the Firbolgs, and other antient inhabitants, being confined to the province of Connaught, the rest of the kingdom was to be governed by the sons of Milesius, and their posterity *only*. To each of these was assigned his particular province; but to prevent those wars which princes upon an equality might be drawn into, a supreme monarch was chosen out of the royal blood, to whom, and to the great council of the nation, assembled every third year at Tara, (but which could be called oftener, and to other places, according to the exigencies of the state and will of the monarch,) all disputes and appeals from the provincial councils, were submitted. Did any prince presume to go retrograde to their determinations, he was admonished, he was interdicted, and if necessary, compelled to submit to the voice of reason and justice. Next to the monarch and provincial kings, the literati ranked; and among these the Druids held the first place, as well on account of their birth, as the high veneration they were held in by the people. Such was *Cathbaid*, grand-father to the great *Cucullin*; *Tages*, the great ancestor of *Fionne Mac Cumhal*; *Dubhcomar*, chief Druid to *Fiacha*. And the archbishops and bishops, who, on the reception of Christianity, succeeded these Druids, were mostly of royal blood. The nobility were the



third order of the state, the chiefs of whom were the knights. The fourth order were the Beatachs, or keepers of open houses for strangers and poor distressed natives; and, as honourable stipends were settled on the literati, so were particular tracts of land, on the Beatachs, to support with proper munificence their station; and these lands and villages, in many places, to this day, declare by their names, their original appointment. The inferior military officers held the fifth place; and the artizans, husbandmen, and common soldiers, composed the last order. But to prevent any kind of confusion, sumptuary laws were at the same time passed, by which the dress, and number of colours in their garments, declared the rank and quality of the owners: thus princes of the blood, and ollamhs, or doctors in different sciences, were allowed six colours, besides a birede on the head and gold ring on the finger. The knights and prime nobility five, with a gold chain round the neck, and breast-plate of pure gold. The Beatachs four; military officers three; and so on. This regulation so wise in itself, we find practised by the politest nations of antiquity. Gjemsbed, one of the most learned of the antient Persians, directed the different states of the kingdom to be distinguished by their dress; and among the modern Chinese, confessedly a civilized nation, and in possession for ages of many discoveries which we vainly arrogate to ourselves, we find the same regulations established. In the missionaries letters we are told, that in China, “ the state is so well regulated, that  
“ every one knows his place, from the prince to the peasant.  
“ Their pensions, their houses, the number of their servants,  
“ the size of their carriages, the marks of honour by which  
“ they are distinguished, and the proportionable respect to be  
“ paid by the public to each, is known. Even private men have  
“ their marks; and there is no learned man but his degree and  
“ rank



“rank may be discovered by the figure and colour of his garment.”

As posts of honour and profit became hereditary in different septs and families, purity of blood became of course a national object: the literati were therefore the ministers of state, and men of the greatest power, as they only could determine the rank and station of the people; and this will prove the necessity for the great number of antiquarians we formerly mentioned. The monarchs and provincial kings, being of the royal line of Milesius *only*, great care was taken of their genealogy and descents; and every candidate for the imperial or provincial command, was obliged to give, 1st, proofs of the purity of his blood: 2dly, of his having been a knight; (for in each of the provinces was an equestrian order; but there was an order superior to these, which it would seem was peculiar to the blood royal, and a necessary qualification to every candidate :) and 3dly, that he had no remarkable deformity; so that his person might command respect, as well as his birth and accomplishments. As to the first circumstance, namely, the purity of blood, no nation of the world could be more careful of it; and though the monarchy was elective, and seldom went in a lineal descent, yet from the landing of the sons of Milesius to the coming of St. Patrick, including the space of 1500 years, and from this to the invasion of Henry II. being 640 years more, none filled the throne of Ireland, who did not derive his pedigree from the three sons of Milesius, except three of the line of Ith, uncle to that prince, and an unnatural usurpation of *Cairbre Cineait*, in the first century, which was but of short duration. A circumstance unexampled in the history of any other country; and which proves, how well instructed the people were in the nature of the constitution,



constitution, and the great reverence in which they held the laws; for which Sir John Davis, and Lord Coke, in these later days of anarchy and oppression, have highly honoured them. The second qualification was so indispensable that the election of a prince of the blood royal to the monarchy, who was not a knight, became void; of which we have a striking instance in the fourth century\*; for on the death of *Crionthan*, *Eochaidh* king of Leinster repaired to, and hastily took possession of the palace of Tara, in hopes to succeed to the monarchy; but on his own Druids and Senachies representing to him the violence he offered to God and the constitution of his country, by presuming to enter the house of Tara, who was never knighted, he relinquished his claim to *Niall* the great, fir-named of the nine hostages. An instance of moderation and veneration for the laws not easily paralleled from the history of other nations. As to the necessity of being free from any remarkable deformity, we have two remarkable proofs of it in one prince, and he, as great a legislator as any the kingdom produced†: When *Cormoc*, in the third century, was soliciting suffrages to succeed *Mac Con*, in the monarchy, he prepared a grand entertainment for the princes of Ulster; but the brother of *Fergus* king of Ulster, in order to defeat *Cormoc*'s intentions, and to make way for *Fergus*, who also aimed at the monarchy, contrived it so, that in the height of jollity his beard was burnt, by which he was for some months prevented appearing as a candidate; and *Fergus* became monarch. *Cormoc*, on the death of *Fergus* ascended the throne, and after a glorious reign of 20 years, having lost his sight, peaceably resigned it to his son *Cairbre*, and afterwards led a retired philosophical life.

But

\* Keating, etc.

† Keating, p. 1. ô Flaherty, p. 331, etc.



But tho' the monarchy was elective, yet to prevent as much as possible the inconveniences which litigated elections produce, the successor to the monarch was appointed in his life-time, and was called Roy-Damna; and this it is observable is to this day the practice in China, and in Germany. The Ollamhs or doctors in the different sciences, who were of the most noble families, had also their *Adbbbar's* or successors declared in their life time. And he that was to fill the post of honour or command in the state, had his *Tanaiste* appointed to succeed him in office. Even artisans and tradesmen, had supervisors to examine their skill and abilities, who were called *Iollanuidh*, or Masters in Arts and manufactures. O'Mealchonry, most profoundly skilled in the laws of his country, affirms, that tribunals were erected to examine and reform abuses in traffic and mechanic arts, and that a magistrate was assigned to superintend and govern each particular trade §.

The provincial Kings were in miniature, what the monarch was at large. Each had his order of chivalry, of which he was chief; his Ard-Droithe or High Priest, to superintend religion; Chief justice, to expound the laws; physicians, antiquarians, chief treasurer, marshal, standard-bearer, generals of horse and foot, &c. all hereditary honours in families, and to which the most distinguished in each, was elected: and these customs continued more or less in use, even to the middle of the last century \*. The hereditary marshals of Connaught,

§ Cambrensis Eversus, p. 118.

\* Thus we find so early as the third century † the Princes of Leix, appointed treasurers to the Kings of Leinster. This territory includes the Queen's county, and got this name from Laoighseach, of the progeny of Connal Cearnach, to whom it was bestowed by the Kings of Leinster, for his personal bravery, and whose representative is the present *ó More* of Bally-na. When Strongbow, by his marriage with the King of Leinster's Daughter,

† Keating, p. 1.

became.



Mr. ô Conor tells us, were the Mac Dermotts; and the ô Kelly's hereditary treasurers. The ô Gallaghers were the hereditary marshals and the Mac Caffries the standard-bearers of Ulster. The Mac Namaras marshals of Thomond. The Mac Swineys and Mac Shehies, hereditary commanders of horse and foot; the Mac Clanchies, Mac Eagans, Mac Firbis's, &c. were judges and lawyers; the ô Callinans, ô Canavans, ô Fergus's, Hickies, Nealans, Caffidies, &c. were of the medical tribe, as the Wards, Mac Curtins, ô Gnives ô Mealchonries, &c. were the hereditary sons of Apollo. The doctors in music, the Senachies, &c. were classed in the same manner. And it was from this practice (of families cultivating only particular branches) in the Patriarchal age, that we are told in Genesis that "Jabal  
 " was the father of such as dwelt in tents, and kept cat-  
 " tle; Jubal, of such as handled the harp and organ: and  
 " Tubal Cain an instructor of artificers, in brass and iron."

When the monarch, or a provincial King, was nominated, before his title became universally acknowledged by the people, the chief justice declared the legality of the election; and the chief senachie of the kingdom or province, stepped forth, and after making his reverence to the prince, recited aloud and distinctly,

became at his death, king of that Province, we find him bestow on Robert de Quiney his son-in-law the constableness of Leinster, with the banner and ensign of the same, and certain tracts of land for its support. The duty of the standard-bearer was, to be in the van of the army on an attack, and in the rear on a retreat, as posts of the greatest honour. Even in this Prince's time, we find these posts hereditary; for when his son-in-law Quiney was killed in Battle by the ô Dempsey's, Raymond le Gros, asked his sister in marriage, with the charge of standard-bearer of Leinster, till his grand daughter Quiney, was at age to be disposed of, to some one worthy of that honour. Strongbow also appointed John de Clahul, marshal of Leinster, with the lands thereto annexed †.

† ô Regan's Fragment of Mac Murrough's Restoration.



distinctly, his pedigree thro' all its channels 'till he came up to Gollamh, or Milesius; when the *Algham Ríogh* or royal shout, proclaimed the approbation of the people. And this is the reason, that in our printed as well as manuscript annals, the ancestry of each prince is traced back; which, tho' probably disgusting to some readers, is however a strong evidence of our antient constitution, and of the exactness of our antiquarians. This method of proclaiming our Princes, was adopted by their descendants the Kings of North-Britain: At the crowning of Alexander the 2d in 1249, Major, &c. tell us, that a venerable old man, stepped forth, and bending the knee, expressed himself in the Irish language thus, "*Deinmachadh dhuit, a Rígh Alban, a Maicneam mhic, &c.* God preserve you, O King of Albany, Alexander, the son of Alexander, the son of William, &c. and this ceremony Mac Kenzie \* assures us, was observed at the crowning of Charles the first. This genealogy is one of the strongest proofs offered by the Caledonians in support of their claim to an high antiquity in Britain; and it seems to have been extended by Fordon, a Scotch priest, who came to Ireland to collect materials for his *Scoto-Chronicon*; but those learned antiquarians Ward, † Usher, Colgan, Dr. ô Kenedy ‡, Mac Geoghegan §, &c. have abundantly confuted the pretences of North-British writers on this head.

Purity of blood became an object of state in Ireland very early. In the reign of Ollamh Fodla, rape or violence offered to women, was punished by death, and out of the power of  
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\* Defence of the Royal Line of Stuart.

† De vitâ & patriâ Scti Rumold, p. 366.

‡ Mac Pheron's Fingal, etc. Dissertations on the History of Scotland, etc.

§ Histoire d'Irlande, Tom. 1. p. 33.



the Prince to pardon; and Adultery of course must have been held in equal detestation, as it was in all the other Celtic Nations of Europe. Yet Mr. Hume *asserts* that Adultery was *common* in Ireland, whilst he confesses with astonishment, that Mac Murrough was expelled for it.

The genealogies of the different families of the kingdom, of the Milesian race, were preserved with the greatest care, as well as those of the blood-royal; and to secure the literati from any temptation to abuse this great trust, honourable provision was made for them, by the state. From their rank they were presumed to be beyond the reach of corruption; and the laws secured their persons and properties inviolate; so that they had nothing to apprehend, from the asperity of their remarks: and from the foundation to the dissolution of the monarchy, a single instance does not occur, of any violence offered to this body of men. But from the number of idlers who inlisted themselves under them, in two or three reigns, the kingdom was found to be greatly impoverished, and it was found necessary to reduce the number.

From the practice of making all offices civil and military hereditary, and at the same time not *lineally* hereditary, some writers have *inferred* consequences highly pernicious to the kingdom, and injurious to the reputation of its antient lawgivers. The first circumstance in this law, they alledge, was a great restraint on genius; and the second, (whereby the uncle or brother often succeeded to the honours of the family, in preference to the immediate heir) kept property in so fluctuating a state as to check the spirit of Improvement. To the first I must observe, that this law did



did not *absolutely* preclude men from embracing professions different from those of their progenitors, of which many proofs occur \*; and as to the second, that, though *public* appointments thus fluctuated, *private* property descended in its lineal course. The stipend to support each public officer was inseparably annexed to the employment; and it may, with much greater propriety, be affirmed, that, as modern princes have the sole disposal of civil and military employments, and which are *transferable at pleasure*, that property is too mutable at present to admit of improvement. But many facts evince that notwithstanding this law, the ancient Irish did considerably cultivate two arts, productive of all others, agriculture and building †.

It would seem to have been the great object of the wisest legislators of antiquity, to promote a love of virtue and justice amongst the people, and to check immorality and vice. Diodorus Siculus, mentions a tribunal amongst the Egyptians, where

\* The *Mac Liaghs* were hereditary physicians, as the name declares, yet we find an archbishop of Cashel of this name, and the chief historian to Brien Boru, was Mac Liagh.

† Smith, in his History of Kerry, page 102, deplures the suffering (very lately) a most curious old bridge over the river Inny, which he calls the Irish Rialto, to fall to decay for want of a little repair: In the small islands called the Skelligs, he describes elegant ruins of religious edifices, and the remains of a considerable town, still braving the force of wind and seas; with many other very early pious foundations still in good part standing: and in his History of the county of Cork, he acknowledges, that a stone inscription of the house of ô Lehan, dated 1010, was found in its ruins, when rebuilding by the first of the Barries, who dispossessed this family in the 12th century; yet, in his Introduction to the History of Kerry, this very man tells us, that the Irish built no castles till after the English invasion! and that they had not houses of stone, till the days of James and Charles I! and he concludes with a most unfair picture of the ancient Irish legislation.



where the actions and passions of their deceased princes and great men were critically examined, and as virtue or vice seemed most predominant, their memories were transmitted to posterity, with honour or infamy. What an excellent incentive to virtue! Amongst the Chinese, the missionaries letters tell us, that one or two persons constantly attend the Emperor, whose sole business and duty it is, to note down every word and action; and that these records are not examined 'till after his decease, when his real character is ascertained. How much more efficacious must the Irish institution have been, where such numbers were appointed, not privately or by stealth, but publicly, and in open day, to observe, and faithfully transmit to posterity the true character of their princes and great men? and the effects were such as might be expected, for in no Country in the world did a love of letters, nobility of sentiment, and a generous hospitality, more universally prevail.

## C H A P. II.

*The account of our antient legislation continued; its effects on arts, manufactures, commerce. Armies and Navies of the antient Irish.*

**F**ROM the spirit of our antient constitution, the love of praise became the first object of the people, and for which, through all ages, they were characterized. But, as this could not be procured without adequate merit, they sacrificed every consideration to it. To be hospitable, generous, and



and brave, was the sole business of the princes, the knights, the nobility, and soldiery: to blazon these virtues, was the duty of the historian, antiquarian, and bard! Even men of eminence in every station had their share of applause: such was Juchadan, the famous Director of Mines, many centuries before Christ: such were the twenty-four husbandmen, under whose directions so many different tracts of land were reclaimed and cultivated in the very infancy of the Milesian government, and which plains yet go by their names. Such was Feighinin, who, in the first century, *successfully* trepanned the king of Ulster, &c. and indeed *eminence* was not only necessary, to obtain applause, in all other ranks and conditions in the kingdom, but among its established recorders; for the literati themselves for similar reasons, could only derive to themselves honour from superior talents, or superior application. We have, in the last chapter, given a most uncommon instance of the strict regard the Druids and Judges had to the laws of their country, which they deemed sacred, in the case of Hugh, King of Leinster; to it we shall add that, in the second century, Mac Con, president of Munster, though of the blood-royal, was expelled for injustice; and in the fourth century, when that successful hero and invader of Britain and Gaul, Criomthan, made a donation of Munster to his favourite, Conall; upon an appeal to the judges, they decreed it, with more justice, to Core, the son of Luigdheach\*. We have even a still stronger proof of the extreme justice of our Brethons, in the case of St. Patrick: in the infancy of his mission, the charioteer of this Apostle, named Odrane, was killed by Failge, general of horse to *Loagaire* the monarch, whom St. Patrick a little before, had disobliged. Nevertheless, upon the fact being proved, he was condemned to a severe mulct,

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as

\* Keating, p. 1.



as is set forth in a very old manuscript in the Harleian Miscellany, read and quoted by the Dissertator on the Memoirs of the Marquis of Clanricarde, page 182, but in which he mistakes the names of the parties, calling the charioteer *Orane*, and the murderer *Euna*; but all writers are unanimous, that the general's name was Failge, and the servant's Odrane. When they sat to determine in solemn and interesting trials, we are told that the Chief judge had a kind of collar placed round his neck, which had the wonderful power of contracting or pressing in proportion to the injustice of the sentence, and to fit easy where impartial justice was administered, and which, from that most just judge Moran, was called Moran's collar; hence, even to this day, in litigations between people, *Óar an loadh Mhoran*, or, *by the judgment of Moran's collar*, is a most solemn appeal. Whether this collar had such a property would be ridiculous to examine; but that so solemn an appearance, upon public trials, must impress on the people a great reverence for the laws, especially, when the decisions were founded upon the most impartial justice, is very certain. And, it is from this great respect for their antient laws, that, upon the reception of those of England, in the reign of James I. the Irish were found more amenable to juridical decisions, than any other nation of the world, as Davis, then attorney general, and an indisputable judge of the matter avers\*.

Our annals inform us, that the learned men in the kingdom had various and distinct branches of science to cultivate, and which were variously denominated: the poets' province was called Bearla na Bhfileadh; the historians' Bearla na Deagharfgar; the medicinal, Bearla Theibidhe; the military, Bearla na Fienne, &c. the

\* Davis's State of Ireland.



the Druids had theirs, and used the ogham, or sacred character, which, till the reception of Christianity, it was penal for any other persons to study; but which, after that period, became the property of the Senachies. The Brehons, or Judges, had a language peculiar to the law; so had the Physicians and surgeons, the Bards, Crotaries, or Harpers, &c. and in the few remains left of these different sciences, we find the technical terms, radical Irish; a very strong proof that they borrowed little from, whatever they might have lent to, other nations. By these means the language became refined, and highly expressive; and if (as it is universally acknowledged) the state of a language is a proof of the state of arts and sciences in a country, Ireland may justly refuse the lead to any nation whatever, though her language has been on the decline for three or four centuries past, and shamefully neglected in the present. Had we no other proof of the Italians cultivating letters earlier than other modern nations of Europe, than their language, it would be irrefragable; because we can at this day, read with ease, their poets and historians of four five and six centuries past, whilst English and French writers of a much later date, are scarcely intelligible.

It would little argue the wisdom of a nation, any more than it would that of individuals, to say they were wise and learned, if facts did not prove them so; but we have sufficient evidence, this day, that the antient Irish highly availed themselves of their superior knowledge, and of the happy situation of their country. They were rich in mines of gold, of silver, of copper, and tin, and wrought them to the highest perfection, as our antient annals declare, and as we shall, in another place, prove: hence, the very great abundance of all these metals formerly. Precious stones of all kinds were here formerly used, as orna-



ments by our princes and nobility; yet it is only within these thirty years, that our modern Irish, have found amethysts in Ireland; the finest and hardest in the world! And I shall venture to affirm, that the greater knowledge we acquire in the natural history of our country, the fuller the evidences will be, of the superior wisdom of our *great* ancestors. Woollen goods of all kinds, we have reason to think, must have been formerly wrought here to great perfection; for it would ill support the character of a great nation, who explored the bowels of their country, and the depths of the bordering ocean for riches, not to make the proper use of so obvious a commodity. Hence, Donatus, bishop of Feficoli, who figured in the seventh century, declares the great riches the antient Irish drew from their minerals, their gems, and their woollen goods,

*Dives opum Argenti, Gemmarum, vestis, et Auri.*

And in the famous Boreimhe Laghean, or annual tribute imposed on the province of Leinster, in the first century, by the monarch Tuathal, we find 6000 Braths, or outside garments richly woven, were a part of it, which were distributed at the monarch's pleasure. In a poem of Teige Dall o Higgin, a very celebrated antiquarian of these latter ages, beginning with,

Daome raona, riol Colla,

“The posterity of the Colla's are a free people.”

We find the Orgiallians, about the monarch's court, were distinguished, by gold handled swords, the borders of their helmets gilded, and their cloaths interwoven with threads of gold.

Op, doibh ar doim Cloimh alan,

Or, ar Cloiamh a Ceathbhan:

Braighde an tyloigh a bhraonath breag

Do Caol rnaith oir, an Eamadh.

And



And, in another part of said poem, we are told, that on their return from court, their cloaths were adorned with gold, and their buskins stitched with gold threads.

The Linen manufacture, was carried on *here*, in very early days, to a great extent; and Gratianus Lucius quotes a description of Ireland, printed at Leyden, in 1627, in which the author tells us, “ that this country abounds with flax, “ which is sent ready spun in large quantities to foreign na- “ tions. Formerly (says he) they wove great quantities of “ linen, which was mostly consumed at home, the natives re- “ quiring above 30 yards of linen, in a shirt, or shift \*. The same is confirmed by Morison, a living witness; and so truly expensive was the Irish fashion of making up shirts, on account of the number of plaits and folds, that in the reign of Henry the VIII. a statute passed, by which the Irish of the Pale, were forbidden under a severe penalty to put more than 7 yards of linen, in a shirt or shift. As the Irish had superintendants over each mechanic trade, as we observed in the last chapter, it is reasonable to conclude, that mechanic arts, the sure proof of a maritime power, flourished here; and the rather as in the first century we find a national assembly called, whose chief object was the regulation of trade and commerce.—Thus in the will of Cather-More, made before the battle of Tailtean, and which Mr. ô Flaherty affirms he had seen, amongst other bequests, we find the following †. “ To his son Brasil, he left five ships of burthen; 50 shields embossed, ornamented and inlaid with gold and silver; five swords, with gold hilts; five chariots, with their harnesses and steeds, To

\* Grat. Luc. p. 112.

† Ogygia p. 311.



To Fiech another son, amongst other legacies, he left 50 pied horses, with brass bits."—To others of the nobility, swords, javelins, shields, chariots, rings, &c. and appointed his eldest son, Roffe Failge, executor. That we had jewellers in Ireland, as well as many gold-smiths, cannot be doubted, because most of the church plate in the kingdom formerly, was of pure gold, and silver. From an old manuscript quoted by ô Duvegnan \*, we are told, that St. Patrick alone, had no less than three gold-smiths, in his family, whose very names are preserved. In the life of St. Bridget we are told, that the King of Leinster presented to Dubtachus her father, who was a Leinster captain, a sword ornamented with many costly jewels, which sword she sold, and distributed the produce, amongst the poor. We often find mention made of Canons of scripture, with their covers ornamented with gold, silver, and gems; and Usher †, mentions a version of the four evangelists by St. Columba, ornamented with grand plates of silver, to have been preserved in the church of Kells. In the year 1140 Tireldach the then monarch, presented the churches of Cluan Mac Noise, with crosses, goblets, and chalices of pure silver, ornamented with gold; and he distributed among the clergy of these churches his vessels of gold and silver, his jewels and musical instruments, &c. ‡. We have reason to think, that even painting was not unknown in Ireland, in those early days; for in a manuscript life of St. Columba, we are told §, that in his days, in the North, was a famous Druidical Temple of exquisite workmanship; and on its altar which was very superb, were painted *in Glass*, beautiful representations of the sun, moon and stars, being the heathen

\* Cambrenf. Everf. p. 118.

† Usher Prim. Ecl. Brit. p.

‡ Ward de Antiq. p. 114. Gr. Luc. p. 85.

§ Keating, p. 2.



heathen deities. We are told, that the Irish taught the English not only the liberal arts, but even instructed them, in music, painting, &c. as is particularly noted in the life of St. Dunstan\*. In the abbey of Buttevant, in the county of Cork, were fine paintings in Fresco, the remains of some of which are yet visible; and so near us, as Adare, the hospitable seat of Col. ô Quin (representative for Kilmalloe) some remains of painting are yet visible, in the old dismantled abbeys; particularly a bishop, with his crozier and mitre, giving his benediction.—In the Cathedral of Killaloe, at the entrance, you see the remains of an elegant mausoleum, by some supposed to have been the burial place of Brien Boru, near which his palace stood; but the stones where-on the inscription should be, are totally destroyed; as indeed they have been, in almost all the old churches, and abbeys of the kingdom, though the cornishes and other ornaments in stone, surrounding many of them, yet stand, as do the very gildings on these stones. Stone works of all kinds the antient Irish eminently excelled in, as is visible *still*, in all the old churches thro' the kingdom; whence also we may conclude them, not unskilful in statuary; and particularly from the poem on the burial place of our heathen princes, wrote by Torne Eaguis, in the fourth century, and given us, by Dr. Keating†, in which we find the altitude of the marble busts, of our antient monarchs, described; and from Cluan Mac Noise, the repository of many of our christian kings, yet standing.

That vast numbers were employed in Fisheries here, we cannot doubt; because Solinus‡, expressly says, “that the Irish form the handles of their swords, from the teeth of large sea monsters, which they polish, to a most beautiful  
whiteness;

\* Ward, Antiquit. p. 356.

† Keating, p. 1.

‡ Cap. 25.



whiteness; for (says he) their greatest pride is in the brightness of their arms." Even Cambrensis himself bears witness to the Irish fisheries \*. Nennius, a British writer of the 9th century †, relates the *abundance* of pearls in Ireland, which their princes, he says, hang behind their ears; and this we find confirmed by a present made, A. 1094, by Gilbert, bishop of Limerick, to Anselm, arch-bishop of Canterbury, of a considerable quantity of Irish pearls; from which we must infer that the pearl fishery was not unknown to them; especially as I find in the second volume of the Philosophical Transactions Abridged, p. 828, an account of the method of pearl fishing in Ireland.

Thus we see with what justice Tacitus affirmed ‡ in the first century, that the ports of Ireland were more resorted to by foreigners, and better known for trade than those of Britain; and the account we have already given the reader (in the fifth chapter of the first part of this work p. 43) of the contest between Con the Monarch, and Eugene the Great, king of Munster, on account of a partition § of the duties arising from commerce in the port of Dublin, is a most striking proof of the importance of the trade of Ireland in those early days.

It may not be amiss to inform the reader in this place that, while the great resort of shipping was to the North side, *Dubblin*, for so this city was called in those days, lay at the South side of the Liffey, and seemingly at some distance from the river; and it would seem was so called from *Dubh*, black, and *lin*, a pool; because built down Patrick-street, Kevin's-port, and the Poddle, which last probably got its name from its low, dirty situation, *quasi*, Puddle. The North side was called *Altha-Chlath*, or the Ford of Hurdles, communicating with *Dubhlin* by that mean;

\* Particularly Topogr. p. 2. c. 5.

† De Hibern. mirabil.

‡ Vitâ J. Agricol.

§ This partition was called *Leth Mogha*, or *Mogha* (one of Eugene's names) his half; and *Leth Quin*, or Con's half.



mean ; and from its contiguity to the water, was more convenient for traffic. This distinction, which may seem conjectural, acquires some degree of credit from a manuscript Life of St. Coemgin's, wrote above 1300 years ago \*, in which it is said, " that Saint Garbanus lived near the city of Ath-Cliath, " which lies on the North side of Leinster, on an arm of the " sea, and is powerful and warlike, and its inhabitants intrepid " in battle, and very skillful in shipping." I must, however, acknowledge that the manuscript adds, *said city was also called Duvelin*; but whether this is an inaccuracy only is submitted to critics. We cannot, I think, suppose, that so political a prince as Eugene, would be satisfied, without Dublin, in a partition which he forced the monarch into, if he had not had a city on his own side of the river. Besides, in the times of the Danes, the *Oost-men*, who then monopolized the trade of Dublin, had their city on the North side of the river; and the plain surrounding it, near the present barracks, yet goes by the name of Oostmens'-town-green.

Jocelyn, who lived in the 12th century, tells us, that, in the days of St. Patrick, Dublin, was, renowned, for the number and magnificence of its inhabitants, the extent of its commerce, &c. and we may form some idea of what the trade of Ireland must have been in better times, when so late as the reign of Brien Boru †, notwithstanding the ravages and distresses which a Danish war, of above 200 years continuance, must have produced throughout the kingdom, the annual duties arising from goods, imported into the single port of Limerick, and paid in red wine, amounted to 365 pipes! Even, so lately as the last century,

\* Ward. 148.

† Keating, p. 2.



tury, it is scarcely credible, what riches this city derived from the bare manufacture of shoes, which were exported in amazing quantities; whereas now, instead of shoes and boots we see the raw hides daily shipped off, for foreign markets.

Whilst letters, arts, and manufactures, made a rapid progress in Ireland, arms and chivalry kept equal pace with them. A standing army was appointed for the aggrandizement of the monarchy, and for the monarch's particular defence. This army, in times of profound peace, consisted of three legions, or 9000 men; but in time of war, or when any foreign invasion was apprehended, it was augmented to seven legions, or 21000 men. This augmentation, however, could not take place, nor the war be entered upon, without the consent of the national assembly. Of this last circumstance our history furnishes a remarkable proof. In the year 569, Hugh the monarch convened the estates of the kingdom at Drumceat; principally with a view to obtain assistance towards compelling the Dal Rieda of North-Britain, to pay their annual tribute, which they had for some time withheld: St. Collumba took his seat at this *Feis*, as representative of the clergy of North-Britain, and *Aodhan*, the son of Gabhran, on behalf of the king his father\*; but the intercession of the saint in behalf of Scotland, had greater weight with the assembly than the dictates of sound policy, or the influence of the Monarch; for he not only had the address to divert the impending war, but even to get a total abolition of this very tax. This anecdote, by the bye, may convince us that the repartee of the Spanish ambassador to James the second, on account of the influence he allowed the clergy in temporals, will remain in every age, a sound maxim in policy as well as sterling wit: His

excellency

\* Leabar Glin da Loch, Keating, &c.



excellency having hinted to the king his disapprobation of the number of clergy about St. James's, the latter demanded, if at the *Escurial*, they had not great weight? It is very true, Sire, replied the ambassador, and that is the reason our affairs go on so badly.

Though our historians have not clearly mentioned more, yet it would be hard to suppose a kingdom very powerful at home, and respectable abroad, whose whole land forces amounted but to 21000 men: but the fact is, that this *Fionne-Eirion*, or national militia, was that part only of the military which was immediately under the command of the Monarch or his general. Similar military bodies subsisted in each of the provinces; and in all cases of emergency, these sent their particular quotas of troops to the Imperial army. This is so true, that in the reign of Art, when Mac Con made a descent on Ireland, and even corrupted the general of the crown army, so that his troops did not appear, the Monarch, in fourteen days, by his Munster and Conaught allies *only*, raised a very considerable army, and fought the invader; and it was chiefly by means of the *Clana Morni*, or Conaught militia, that this Prince's father defeated *Eugene* the Great. The treachery of the *Fionne Eirion* to Art, determined his son Cormac never to trust them; and his grand-son Cairbre having advanced the *Clana Morni* to the honour of being *the Imperial army*, he pursued these degenerate traitors so fiercely that in the famous battle of Gabhra, their power was totally annihilated.

If in the infancy of the Scottish monarchy, part of the province of Ulster *only* could furnish its Kings with 12000 men, to recover their possessions there, what may we suppose the collected power of this kingdom to have been? Should we affirm that in



cases of emergency, each of the provinces could raise 21000 men, the whole power of the kingdom will appear to have been, in land forces *only*, 105000 fighting men; and this calculation will I am confident, appear, on the severest scrutiny, to be but moderate; because it is an incontrovertible fact, that in those days, the kingdom was above four times more populous than at present; and because so lately as the latter end of the last century, (at the termination of a most bloody intestine war, of near 500 years continuance, carried on, for a considerable time before its conclusion, with uncommon carnage and cruelty,) the Irish, in a short time, raised an army of 30000 men, though almost the whole North were in arms against them, and some insurrections weakened them in the South: and they might have increased it to 50000, if there had been money or arms to supply them.

These antient militia were, for comeliness of appearance, for activity and personal courage, equal to any troops in the world; and the proofs they were obliged to give of these qualifications to obtain admittance into the corps are surprizing, and can only be accounted for, from the military genius of the people; which was so great, that the utmost wish of our very females formerly was, that their children might die in the field; and it was, next to knighthood, a distinguished honour to be ranked amongst those national troops. The stories related of these militia are possibly a good deal exaggerated; but it was from the remnants of the odes of our antient bards, on different tribes of these heroes, that honest James Mac Pherson formed his famous Epic Poems of Fingal and Temora, in which he has judiciously synchronized heroes who notoriously flourished at very distant periods from each other. The famous Cuchullin and Conall Cearnach, knights of the  
red



Red-Branches, he makes contemporary, with Fionne-Mac Cumhal and Ossine, tho' the two first, figured about the birth of Christ, and the others near three centuries later; and to carry imposition to the height, he joins them all in a Danish war, tho' these invaders, were not heard of in Europe, till the beginning of the 9th century! Further, the general of these troops, was often called *Righ-Phionne*, or King of the Militia, and sometimes *Righ-mope-Phionne*, or great chief of the military; but Mr. Mac Pheron ignorant of all this, renders this last, *King of Morvin*, and is at no small pains, to find, where this Morvin lay in Scotland!

These troops, all our writers agree, had regular pay settled on them, according to their rank and posts, in the reign of Seadhna, who flourished near 600 years before the Christian Æra, and who from this institution was called *Jonnaradh*. This Monarch also formed a military code of laws and discipline, for their use, which was a standard for many ages\*. In the reign of *Tuatbal the acceptable*, we find new dignity added to the military regulations, by his ordering a registry to be kept of all officers names, their pay, and the date of their several commissions†.

Beside their standing armies, we find the Irish kept up a considerable naval force, whereby from time to time, they poured troops into Britain and Gaul, which countries they long kept under contribution. To this, however, many objections have been made; as if a people who invaded Ireland, in 30 large ships, could ever be condemned to use Noevogs and Currachs! Their migrations, from Egypt to Greece, and from thence to Spain, have also been doubted, from the supposed difficulty of procuring shipping; whilst at the same period of time, no objections have been made to the accounts of the Phæ-

\* Keating, p. 1. Ogygia, p. 248, &c.

† Keating, &c.



nicians, the Tyrians, and after them the Greeks, having considerable fleets, and making very distant settlements! The antient Romans, carried the terror of their arms, to the most remote parts of the Globe, yet the modern Italians have not been able, for some centuries past, to preserve the independance of their own country; and who rejects the histories of *their* former glory? The Danes in the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries, were so powerfull by sea, as to be able to invade almost at the same time, every country in Europe; yet were we to judge of their former power by the present state of Denmark, we should give litte credit to the accounts, which the united testimonies of all Europe support. *Pisa*, for two centuries past, tributary to the Florentine, and Genoa, long since on the decline, were formerly able to cover the sea with their navies, and almost all the trade of the world was then in their hands. Soon after, the Portuguese became so powerful by sea, as to extend their conquests and trade, to the very extremities of India, and to make considerable incursions into Africa; yet their present poor condition doth not invalidate these historic facts. If we would reverse our prospect let us look into the antient state of Britain. There we behold an abject cowardly people, who tamely bent their necks to every yoke. We see them the humble tributaries of the Romans; and after this period, when invaded by the Irish and Picts, instead of bravely facing their enemies in the field, skulking for safety behind mounds of earth; and when these were forced through, and desolation spread over the land, so far from forming those generous and desperate resolutions which the situation of their country required, they, as Gildas and Bede, affectingly relate, butchered their wives and children, and lastly destroyed themselves! The succeeding generations implore  
the



the aid of the Angles and Saxons, who from their protectors become their masters ! The Danes, make an easy prey of them next, and afterwards the Normans ! And much later than this, their posterity send their Wooll to be manufactured in Flanders, and their very trade is carried on, by foreigners ! Yet so great is the power of England by land and sea, and so extensive her commerce at this day, that she may in a manner be said to give laws to all Europe, and has extended her conquests to the extremities of the Globe ! But what in all these cases, have we to inform us, but the faithful records of history ? And if we reject them without reason in one, why not in every instance ? Surely to form our notions of antient times, from modern appearances, or of modern times from antient ones will more probably involve us in scepticism and ignorance.

The evidences that our ancestors, had a considerable naval force, are full and clear ; and our antient annals assure us, that even in Egypt, they were so powerful, and so expert in maritime affairs, as to be able to seize on the fleet of Pharoah. From Egypt they invaded Greece ; from thence sailed to Spain, and finally to Ireland, in large ships. We have shewn, and proved beyond a reasonable doubt, the close intercourse the Asiatics held with the Irish, which surely must have been kept up by Ships. The marriages likewise of our monarchs and provincial kings, with distant princeesses, shew our naval power ; and that most learned antiquarian Ward, quotes a book *De Matribus regum, principumque Hiberniæ*, \* in which these alliances, are particularly recited. Such was the marriages of Ugaine More, A. M. 3620, with Cæsaria daughter to the King of France ; of Derbogallia daughter to the King of Fomuire,

\* De Vitâ S. Rumoldi, p. 79.



Fomuire, or Danemark, with Lughad Riabh-Dear; of Naria, a Pictish Princess with Criomthan Naniar; of Eathna another Pict, with Fiacha-Fionolaigh: Feidelm the law-giver wedded Una, a Danish Princess, and Con of the 100 Battles, Aifa, daughter to Alpin King of the Picts. Eugene the great, this monarch's sworn enemy, married a Spanish Princess; and when expelled the kingdom, by a powerful assistance of Spaniards, headed by her brother, he recovered his kingdom of Munster, and sorely annoyed the monarch, ever after. Many more instances of this kind could be produced, if necessary. Eochaid Furcas, A. M. 3506, being expelled the kingdom by a powerful faction, kept the Sea, near two years, with a fleet of 30 ships; and he was surnamed Furcas, from being the inventor of those little skiffs covered with hides, since called Currach's, with which he made sudden landings from his fleet, to annoy, and raise contributions on, the country\*. About 150 years later, Labhra, surnamed Loingseach, being equally distressed, collected a number of ships, with which his troops were landed in the bay of Wexford; and the name of Loingseach was given him to denote his gaining the Monarchy by his navy†. Mac Con in the 3d century, by the assistance of his fleet, landed a great army, and wrested the monarchy from Art, surnamed the Melancholy. We have even Caledonian evidence of our early power by sea. Campbell tells us, "that the Scots appear to have had a very considerable naval force, whereby they held in subjection all the adjacent isles, long before the coming of Cæsar." Tacitus in the first century, is a Roman evidence of our naval force; and Claudian, in his Panegyric on his Patron Stilicon, strengthens it by his testimony:

*Me*

\* Keating p. 1. Ogygia p. 25, &c.

† Ogygia. p. 1. 262.



*Me quoque vicinis pereuntem gentibus, inquit,  
Munivit Stilicho; totam cum Scotus Iernem  
Movit, & infesto spumavit remige Tetbys.*

In the year 388, Cambrensis himself acknowledges \*, that Niall the Irish monarch, equipt a mighty fleet, to invade Britain and Gaul; and by it, expelled the old inhabitants from the North of Britain, seized on the country, and peopled it. It was in one of the many sea expeditions, which the Irish undertook in those days, that our great Apostle Patrick, and his sisters, were, among other captives carried out of Britany.

No country in the world, seemed better calculated, for a great maritime power. Our ports convenient to every nation in Europe, and our havens safe, and spacious. The great plenty of timber, the superior excellence of our oak, and the acknowledged skill of our antient artisans, in wood-work, are circumstances clearly in our favour. Even the names of places, still point out, our antient naval power. Thus Carrig-Colltach (the rock or fortress of the navy) on the Shannon, was so called, from its being the rendezvous of the Munster fleet; Carrig, signifying a rock, and Cobhloch or Colltach being old Irish, for a fleet of ships of war: And Corcabhaiscin, and Corcumruadh on the Shannon, were alone obliged to supply the King of Munster, with 30 ships, when called for. Lis-Laoch-ton, a little higher up, on the South-side of the Shannon, was so called, from its being a marine academy: from Lios a Court, Laoch an Hero, and Ton, a Wave: Can any compound word be more poetically expressive? But should any still doubt, the power of antient Ireland at sea, the following remarkable and uncontroverted

\* Topograph. Hibern. Distinct. 3. Cap. 16.



verted fact, may perhaps convince them. The Danes invaded Ireland, for the first time, in the beginning of the 9th century : their incursions were sanguinary and cruel ; and notwithstanding their utmost efforts, they never could gain any footing in the country, till they began politically to ally themselves, to different families. Thus we see, divide and govern, is not quite a modern piece of policy. For near 150 years after their first landing, this kingdom was nothing but a scene of blood and carnage ; and this continued state of warfare, between two martial and determined people, must certainly have greatly impaired the national strength. At this period, however, Ceallachan King of Munster was, by the artful wiles of the Danes, made prisoner and detained in Dublin ; and *Kenedy, Roy Dambna* or heir to the crown of Munster, raised a potent army, the command of which he gave to Mac Kieffe, prince of Fermoigh, a general of great abilities, and the Munster fleet consisting of seventy sail of shipping being equipt, set sail under the auspices of Feilbhe-Fionn, its admiral ; both fleet and army determined to destroy the perfidious Dane, or perish in the attempt. The Danes, well informed of these preparations, and unable to face the Mammonians in the field, had their royal captive conveyed on board their fleet, then lying in the bay of Dundalk, intending to carry him to Danemark. Thither Feilbhe directed his course : the Danes, thinking they should get to sea, long before the Munster navy could be ready, were not a little surprized, to see the arms of Munster displayed in the admiral ship. Both sides prepared for hostilities, and the conflict soon became fierce and bloody. To intimidate the Irish the more, the Danes bound the King of Munster to the mainmast of the admiral's ship, commanded by Sitric the Dane, and his two brothers, Tor and Magnus ;



Magnus ; but this fight, produced a very contrary effect. The indignity offered their beloved prince, exalted to a pitch of fury the courage of the Irish. Failbhe immediately bore down on the Danish admiral, boarded her sword in hand, followed by the flower of his ship, and cutting his way thro' all opposition redeemed his prince ; and putting a sword into his hand, desired him immediately to take possession of his ship, and suffer him (who was at this time mortally wounded), to die gloriously, in the midst of his enemies. Ceallachan, on whose safety the fate of the day depended, accordingly took the command of the admiral's ship ; but Fiongal next in rank to Failbhe, both in post and courage, seeing his chief expiring, rallied the remains of those who boarded the Dane, and with redoubled fury renew'd the action. Innate resolution was in vain opposed, to superior numbers : the Danish power seemed at length to prevail ; and Fiongal saw no alternative, but death, or captivity. In such a situation, he took a resolution worthy his noble blood ; at one bold effort, he forced thro' his enemies, seized on Sitric, and grasping him round the body, suddenly plunged into the sea, bearing with him, his mortal enemy : Seagda and Conall, captains of approved valor, fired with this noble action of their chief, like lightning darted thro' their foes, took up Tor and Magnus, and precipitated with them into the ocean where all four perished ! During this *unexampled* scene of horror, the other ships on both sides, were not idle. The Irish every where boarded the Danes ; nor in their fury, had they regard, to rank or condition, though all the Danish land-forces, were on board. These last, astonished with the impetuosity and deadliness of the onset (for quarter was not given to a single Dane) every where shrunk before the Irish, and so entire was the defeat of the enemy, that

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their whole fleet was destroyed or taken, except a few light galleys which escaped by the help of a sudden breeze \* !

Thus we see, in the year 960, a single province of Ireland, after sustaining a Danish war, with some intermissions, for near 150 years, suddenly able to equip a fleet, and to defeat, by sea, those strangers, who, on account of their great bravery and distinguished skill in maritime affairs, were called *loch lomherh*, from *loch*, an hero, or champion, and *lomher*, a ship. And even a considerable time after the battle of Clontarf, we find Tireldach ô Connor, then Monarch of Ireland, equip a fleet of 150 ships, with which he sorely infested the Munster coasts for some years; and which, in the end, as we shall shew elsewhere, laid the foundation of the ruin of this great kingdom †.

### C H A P. III.

*The populousness of antient Ireland proved, from the universal tillage of the kingdom, from its cities, universities and churches; and their emigrations and conquests in Britain and Gaul. Union with the Gauls and Germans, against the Romans. A passage in Tacitus animadverted on.*

THE same wisdom and foresight, which formed the great out-line of the constitution seems to have been extended to its minutest parts. The greatest nations of antiquity have venerated the plough and the harrow; and antient Ireland, in this particular, may rank among the foremost. The traces of agriculture, and remains of inclosures, are, at this day, visible on the tops of the highest mountains and most uncultivated wilds; and it reflects great honour on our antient historians, that, whilst many

other

\* *Tonnghaet Cealaean Chait*. Keating, p. 2.

† Gr. Luc. p. 85.



other particulars of our monarchs are flurred over by them, they never omit to mention particularly, those princes, who were eminent encouragers of tillage.

Beside the plains immediately cleared by the first adventurers, we find, in the reign of Irial the prophet, about thirty years after, many woods cut down, and fifteen large plains, laid open for tillage. In the days of Eithrial, his successor, seven large woods were cut down and sowed with grain. In the reign for Eochaidh, surnamed Foabharglas, or, of the Green Edge, because the edges of his arms were so coloured, seven more large plains were fitted for the plough; and in that of Aongus, nine more extensive tracts of land were cleared of woods and cultivated. So that in little more than two hundred years, from the first Milesian landing, besides what private industry reclaimed, no less than sixty-two large tracts of waste ground, became, by royal munificence, obedient to the husbandman! How clearly does this account for the speedy increase of population, and of riches, in Ireland.

In the latter end of the last century, when it became fashionable to ridicule every thing that was Irish, the proofs of early industry in this country, could not be got over: Mr. Sam. Molyneux, in a letter to the then Arch-bishop of Dublin, (which, with other detached pieces, was, some years ago, reprinted;) is forced to acknowledge, that, “Ireland has certainly  
 “been better inhabited formerly than it is at present. Mountains  
 “that are now covered with bogs, says he, have been formerly  
 “ploughed; for when you dig five or six feet deep, you discover  
 “a proper soil for vegetation, and find it ploughed into  
 “ridges and furrows. This is observable in the wild mountains  
 “between Ardmach and Dundalk, and likewise on the mountains  
 “of Altmore. The same, as I am informed, has been  
 “observed



“ observed in the counties of London-Derry and Donegal. A  
 “ plow was found in a very deep bog, in the latter; and an  
 “ hedge, with wattles standing under a bog that was five or six  
 “ feet in depth. I have seen the stump of a large tree in  
 “ a bog ten feet deep, at Castle Forbes; the trunk had been  
 “ burnt, and some of the cinders and ashes still lay on the  
 “ stump. I have seen likewise, large old oaks grow on land  
 “ that had the remains of ridges and furrows; and I am told,  
 “ on the top of an high mountain in the North there are  
 “ YET REMAINING the streets and other marks of a large  
 “ town; and in truth, there are few places, but, either at present  
 “ or when the bog is removed, exhibit marks of the plow,  
 “ which surely must prove the country formerly to have been  
 “ *well inhabited.*” This same Mr. Molyneux however, goes on  
 to assure his Grace, without assigning the least reason for it,  
 “ That he does not believe a *single word* of the learned ô Fla-  
 “ herty’s Ogygia, then newly published.”

In the most wild and uncultivated parts of the county of Cork, you find the vestiges of high roads cut through the mountains; and the remains of many enclosures yet visible, bespeak the number of its antient inhabitants. The bog of Cullin, in the county of Tipperary, has been, within these 200 years, arable ground; for in digging deep into it, the learned Mr. ô Murphy has assured me, a fine soil for vegetables was visible, and even tobacco pipes half smoaked, have been found in it, near the trunks of half-burnt trees. In cutting the canal through the large bog of Doonass, it is well known, the roots and shoots of a fine oak wood were discovered under the turf; and I am told, the same has been found in many bogs cut into for the Dublin canal. In a word, nothing is more certain than, that in almost all our bogs, when dug deep, a fine vegetative soil has  
 been



been found, or large trunks of oak and fir trees; which last prove that such ground as was not fit for tillage, was laid out for timber, and other suitable purposes. That the antient Irish exported large quantities of timber, is manifest from the churches of Gloucester, Westminster, &c. being covered with Irish oak.

This attention to agriculture, the first object of every well regulated state, and for which our ancestors were famed, has been denied by later writers; and its neglect made a reproach on our old constitution, notwithstanding the indelible marks to the contrary throughout the kingdom, and the positive testimony of our antient historians; Thus Morison, a wretched scribler, who attended Lord Montjoy to Ireland, in Elizabeth's days, and published a scandalous misrepresentation of the country, which he had the presumption to call an History of Ireland, like many other writers of his stamp, upbraids the Irish for their ignorance in tillage; yet forgetting himself in the first volume of this wretched performance, he tells us, that in an irruption into Leix, ô Mora's county, or the present Queen's county, where the unhappy natives were, *à l'Anglois*, reclaimed and polished by fire and sword, he was surprized at the beauty and fertility of the country, and the neat manner in which it was laid out for tillage; and he even acknowledges, that the Irish exported great quantities of corn. Had he, and other writers like him, taken the pains to consult their own early writers, they would have seen the impertinence of their censures. Bede calls Ireland, "*Dives Lactis ac Mellis Insula* \*," a land flowing with milk and honey; and Cambrensis himself was forced to confess the beauty and fertility of the country. "*Frugibus* (says he) *arva, pecore montes, nemerosa feris abundant* \*". A country  
whose

\* Histor. Eccles. Brit. lib. 1. cap. 1.



whose plains are covered with corn, her hills with cattle, and her woods with wild beasts. What an honourable evidence to Ireland, from an avowed enemy to the country, and who came here with the first English invaders.

The universal tillage of the kingdom; the amazing number of Christian bishops formerly here, (at least three times the number to be found in any other country of the world of equal dimensions) and the number of cities and colleges, of some of which scarcely the vestiges are left, loudly proclaim the early and remarkable populousness of antient Ireland. Hence we must not be surprized, to find that, on the landing of the Picts in Ireland, some centuries before Christ, they were refused an habitation here; and that the reason should be, “that the “kingdom was even then, scarcely large enough for its own “inhabitants;” for, not only the kingdom, but all the little islands in and about it, swarmed with people; and this is so true, that to this day, in almost all these islands, you see the remains of churches and other public buildings. *Inis Catha* or Scatterry, on the Shannon, had formerly eleven churches †, the ruins of which, as well as an entire anchorite tower one hundred and twenty feet high, are yet to be seen; and *Inis Cailtre*, another island in the Shannon, present (to the reproach of our taste and curiosity) the unnoticed remains of seven fine churches, besides a round tower, and on neither of these islands an inhabitant now lives. I shall just here mention transiently the islands of Arran. These are to the number of three, lying on the Western ocean, between Thomond and Galway, now the property of the Digby family, and on which only a few families reside to mind the cattle, &c. yet so famous were these islands in early days

\* Topog. Descript. cap. 6.

† Histor. Cathol. p. 12.



days, that in the largest, which contains about 5000 acres, and which was called *Ára na Nádair*, or Ara of the blessed, and sometimes *Ára Oirthir*, or Eastern Ara, no less than ten monasteries were built by the pious *Endeus*, besides thirteen churches; and so great was the number of saints and hermits here interred, that the writer of the Life of St. Kieran thus expresses himself, *In qua Insulá (says he) multitudo virorum sanctorum manet, et innumerabilis sancti, omnibus incogniti, nisi soli Deo omnipotenti, ibi jacent* \*! From *Inis Caorach* (in English Mutton Island) on the North side of the Shannon, to the main land, which is two miles distant, a very antient cause-way extends forty feet wide, over which you may safely pass, at the ebb of Spring tides, particularly at the Equinoxes. The diocese of Limerick alone, formerly contained 130 churches, the ruins of which are yet visible, besides monasteries and chapells of ease; and it is now doubtful, if the whole county, which constitutes two dioceses, namely, Limerick, and Emly, has forty incumbents! Besides Limerick the capital, this county had several large walled towns, the ruins only of which are now to be seen; as Adare, Ardah, Askeaton, New-castle, Hospital, Lough-Guir a celebrated place of arms, Kilmallock, now a stately ruin, Cathir-con-Lis, &c. and the noble college of Mungred. In a word, if we turn our eyes to any part of the kingdom the remains of old churches and other public buildings, sufficiently proclaim the number of its antient inhabitants.

The surplus of inhabitants, began early to extend their quarters; and the Isle of Man (where a coarse dialect of the Irish, is yet the vernacular tongue) the Hebrides, &c. became their possessions. Our antient annals assure us, that prior to

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this

\* *Acta Sanctor. Hib. p. 714.*



this Epocha, North Britain was peopled by a colony from Ireland, conducted by Briotan, the son of Fergus Leathdearg, who, on the landing of the Picts there, advanced further South; and St. Cormoc, in his Psalter of Cashell, declares the Welsh to be the descendants of this Briotan. An antient poet, quoted by the author of the *Gabhalaca Eirion*, or Conquests of Ireland, affirms the same; and that from him the country and people took their name; these are his words:

Briotan mól, mac na flatha, raon an ríocht namh daí ríatha:  
Mac an leath-dearg, don leath mharg, o taid bneathmarg an bheatha.

How easily and simply is a name hereby accounted for, for which Bochart and others have vainly ransacked the Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, and even Phœnician languages? and in the last chapter of this second part we shall support this account of our Senachies by something stronger than mere presumption.

In a constitution so framed as Ireland, where the people were either scholars or warriors, we see that foreign expeditions became necessary to preserve internal peace, and dispose of the redundancy of inhabitants; and accordingly, our writers take early notice of them: thus, in the reign of Aongus, surnamed Oibhuadhack, or All-victorious, we find not only the Picts, but the descendants of Briotan, or the Britaines of Scotland, brought under subjection. This prince flourished A. M. 3150\*. *Eochaidb Furceas*, was another prince powerful by sea; and, as we observed at page 128, had the name of *Furcas* from being the inventor of light skiffs, by which he made sudden landings; and which led Gildas†, and later writers, domestic as well as foreign, to suppose that

\* Keating, p. 1. ô Flaherty, p. 206, Grat. Luc. &c. † Gildas de Excidio Britanniz.



the invasions of Britain, were chiefly in these wicker vessels ; than which nothing seemed to them more improper ; and especially when they had enemies, respectable as the Romans to cope with : But their landings in North-Britain, were from large ships, effected by means of these noevogs ; and when united, with their allies the Picts, they in the same vessels, crossed the arm of the sea, described by the venerable Bede, which formerly separated \* North from South-Britain. That they used large vessels to transport their troops, we cannot doubt. Tacitus, in his life of Agricola, tells us, that he built forts, in those parts of Britain, most exposed to the incursions of the Irish ; it is true, he adds, *more thro' hope than fear* ; but it is submitted to the critics, what this Hope must mean. It could not be the hope of invading Ireland ; because building forts in Britain, seems to have no tendency towards such a design. It must be then, the *hope* of preventing the Irish from throwing further supplies of men, into Britain, and thereby delaying the Roman conquest ; and the rather, as Claudian after this period, in his Panegyric on his Patron Stilichon, supports this opinion ; for what else can he mean by

. . . . . *Totam cum Scotus Iernem*  
*Movit ; & infesto spumavit remige Tetbys ?*

In the reign of Conuing, surnamed the Dauntless, our historians tell us, that our ancestors distinguished themselves on the Continent, as well as in Britain. In the year 3610 according to ô Flaherty, reigned Reachta, called Righ-Dearg, or of the Red Arm. In his reign, we read in the Psalter of Cashell, of an

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expedition

\* Hist. Eccles. Brit. Lib. 1. Cap. 1.



expedition to Britain, and of his assuming the Title of Sovereign of Ireland and Albany\*. This prince's successor was Ugaine-More, or the Great, whose naval power was so formidable that he was stiled *Monarch of all the Western Isles of Europe* †. In the reign of Crinthan *Niadbna*, or the Hero, we are told, that Ireland was greatly enriched by the immense treasures he brought home, in the course of his many invasions of Britain and Gaul ‡. Cathire the Great is renowned for his conquests; and from the Monarch Cormac was descended the famous Cairbre Reuda, who first made a solid establishment in North Britain, as Bede witnesses §. “The Scots (says he) coming into Britain from Ireland, headed by Reuda their captain, obtained from the Picts, either by force or friendship, those settlements, which they still hold; and from whom, to this day, they are called Dal-Reudini (or Reuda's portion); for in their language *Dal* signifies a part:” And by this name of Dal, with the Epithet of the first possessor, many territories in Ireland, yet pass. Criomthan, Niall the Great, and Dathy, the last of our heathen princes, are celebrated in our annals, for their sea expeditions to Britain and Gaul, &c. and for their success against the Romans; whose Emperors they stile in some old manuscripts, *Kings of all the World, Ireland excepted*: A circumstance expressive at once of the civilized understandings, and independant spirit of our forefathers.

If we compare our own accounts of sea expeditions to the Continent, from their commencement, to the beginning of the fifth century, with the relations of foreign writers, we shall be surprized to find how exactly they agree; and this will also, more

\* Grat. Luc. p. 63, ô Flaherty, Keating, &c.

† Ogygia p. 295, &c.

‡ Ibid.

§ Hist. Eccles. Brit. Cap. 1.



more and more confirm us in the opinion, of the great accuracy and truth of our antient records. The Roman writers mention frequent revolts, and insurrections, by the Gauls and Germans : Our histories tell us, that the incursions into Gaul, Germany, and Britain, were intended to give the Romans so much ployment abroad, that they could not think of attacking us, at home. Cæsar in his fifth book, describes Ireland very exactly ; and nothing is clearer from Tacitus, in his life of Agricola, than that the Romans, looked with a jealous eye, on the Irish. The depredations committed on the Gaulish Coasts, in the 2d and 3d centuries, by the Uarines, or Varins\*, and the powerful fleets appointed by Constantine, &c. to protect the country, point out clearly the number, and boldness of the invaders ; and I take it for granted, that by that name, the Erenochts, or Munster forces were known to them. It seems very clear from effects and circumstances, that the Irish were in close alliance with the German and Gaulish nations most averse to the Roman name ; and whilst the grand coalition of the Western states, the sworn enemies to the Roman power, went under the name of the *Saxon Ligue* ; and the coast, from the mouth of the Rhine to lower Normandy, was called (to express the invasive quarter) *Littus Saxonicum*, the sea separating Britain from Ireland, was particularly named *Vallis Scythica*. Hence, indeed, it would seem, that in the invasions on the Continent, the Irish were only parties ; but that in those on Britain, they were principals.

Claudian makes this alliance between the Irish and Germans, as clear as can be, in the following lines ; as well, as the pre-eminence of the first.

—*Maduerunt*

\* Mezeray Origine des Franc. T. 1. p. 225, &c.



*Maduerunt Saxone fuso  
 Orcades, incaluit Piëtorum sanguine, Thule :  
 Scotorum CUMULUS, flevit Glacialis Hibernia.*

Here three distinct nations are pointed out ; the Saxons landing in the Orkneys, as the nearest navigation from their country ; the Picts of Thule, from Thule, a barren place, which the North of Scotland, confessedly is ; and the Irish, from Ulster, where the proximity of the two lands, made it safest ; and thus uniting, forming a considerable power. In his second Book de Laudib. Stilichonis, Claudian (as before mentioned) thus introduces Britain,

*Me quoque vicinis pereuntem gentibus, inquit  
 Munivit Stilico. Totam cum Scotus Iernen  
 Movit, & infesto spumavit remige, Tethys.  
 Illius effectum Curis, ne bella timerem  
 Scotica, ne Pictum tremere, ne littore toto  
 Prospicerem, dubiis venturum Saxona ventis.*

If this be not a confessed coalition of different states, to distress Britain, or indeed rather the Romans, (since similar attacks were made on them on the Continent, the more to distract and divide their forces,) I am greatly deceived. It certainly had this effect, that the Romans were obliged to give up Britain entirely ; for after this it is, that Gildas \* and Bede †, give most melancholy accounts, of the sanguinary irruptions of the Scots and Picts into Britain, without any mention of the Saxons, probably because they thought themselves more than a match for them, while unsupported by the Romans. From all this however it should appear, that the invasions of Britain and Gaul, were not the incursions of a lawless banditti, but deep concerted schemes, of a brave and generous nation, to break the shackles

\* De excidio Britan.

† Hist. Eccles. Lib. 1. Cap. 12.



shackles of an enslaved people. This grand coalition or ligue between the Irish and Germans, becomes more manifest from the single consideration, that, the moment the Saxons were called to the assistance of the Britains, all incursions from Ireland ceased. Besides, *Bede* bears witness to the affinity between the Irish and the latter; and by him we shall prove, that, from us, they received the Christian Doctrine, as well as the use of Letters.

Maitland who like most of his country-men, seems to be supernaturally divested of decency, truth and even common sense, when touching on Irish affairs, tells us, in the first Volume of his History of Scotland, that, the Vallis Scythica, or Sea between Ireland and Britain, should be wrote Vallis Tithyca, or the Vale of Tieth, a river which runs by Stirling in Scotland; but as a river which it was necessary for a large army to cross by boats, should imply both *depth* and *breadth* to make such a manoeuvre necessary, he has found out, by the vast quantity of Moorish ground there about, that it *must* have been *formerly* a mighty stream! And woe be to sceptics and misbelievers! At the same time also that he denies the existence of Irish fleets or armies, and tells us, they were so despicable a people, as not to dare to look beyond their own country, he makes no strictures on the Saxons, (tho' inhabitants of Germany, and of course less conveniently situated than the Irish,) joining their forces to the Scots and Picts to invade Britain! This candid Pict, takes it for granted, from a passage in Tacitus's life of Agricola, (in which it is said, that an Irish Prince, who applied to the emperor for assistance to recover his territories, assured the writer at Rome, that with one legion and a few auxiliaries, a conquest might be made of the country;) that the Irish were a people of no consequence. But beside this passage, we have nothing further, to  
strengthen



strengthen the assertion ; while it appears on the other hand, that this general sailed round Britain, without any design of making a descent on Ireland, and that he raised forts, and placed troops, in those parts of Scotland, most exposed to the Irish incursions ! Admitting the expression of the Roman writer in its utmost latitude, the conquest of Ireland, with so inconsiderable a force, must needs imply friends there, ready to assist the invaders ; for the historian is clear, that Agricola under the colour of friendship intended using this Irish adventurer, (as we have seen in our own days, happen more than once in Scotland) for his own ends ; and I am sure that this Pict, would think it no compliment to truth or his country, were I to affirm, that the son or grandson of James the second, undertook to conquer all Britain with 6000 men, and yet we know, such had like to have been the case, without any auxiliaries whatever ! The Irish prince alluded to by Tacitus, must have been Tuathal, surnamed the Acceptable ; for by an horrid conspiracy of the Plebeians about this time, the Monarch of Ireland and most of the nobility were massacred, and Tuathal the young prince and his mother, obliged to fly for refuge, to his grand-father, the Pictish-King ; it would even appear, that he was rather taken prisoner by the Romans, than that he applied to them for assistance, the word *excesserat* in Tacitus, implying as much the one, as the other. This prince was afterwards invited home, and restored by the loyalty of his subjects, without any foreign aid whatever ; and then got the name of Teachtmhar, or the Well-come. Maitland further tells us, (following no doubt the advice of Tully *ne quid falsi dicere audeat*,) that the Irish were ever an easy prey to every invader ; however, their noble efforts against the Danish Hosts, whom they never ceased contending with for above two centuries, till they finally expelled them the country, seems not

exactly



exactly to correspond with our historian ; and as for the English invasion, as I purpose treating particularly of it, I shall refer his ill informed country-men for better intelligence, to the third part of this introduction.

## C H A P. IV.

*The Princes of Ireland, wore crowns of gold. Strong presumption, that the ceremony of anointing was used, at their inaugurations. Qualifications of the candidates, with the manner of crowning them. Magnificence of their palaces. Hereditary officers of their Courts. Number of church dignitaries. The rank which Ireland held, among the states of Europe.*

THE pomp and splendor displayed by the monarchs and provincial kings of Ireland was equal to the power and riches of the country. The proofs of this may be collected, from the solemn manner in which they were crowned ; from the elegance and riches of their palaces ; From their body guards, and hereditary crown officers.

Without dispute no country of Europe, and few in the world, can give clearer proofs of an early civilization, than Ireland. We find one of the names of Ireland, even before the landing of the Milesians was Inis-Fail, from a famous Marble-Chair, in which their predecessors *The Tuatha da Danains*, were crowned ; and which coronation chair, the writer of the *Book of Conquests* tells us, the Milesians carried to Tara, for the perpetual enthroning the monarchs of Ireland : According to this author it was a constant prophecy, that “ where-ever the chair was lodged, there the Irish should rule ;” For which he quotes this rann or verse,



Man abhaghid an liag-fail, olighid flathas do ghabail,  
Cume Sgrat raon an phime, mun ba breag an phairidme.

This chair was lent by the monarch of Ireland, to Fergus King of Scots, and it remained at Scone, till the year 1296, when it was with other Regalia carried to England, by the first Edward.

It has been said, that the Irish Monarchs and provincial Kings, wore not crowns of gold; but our history throughout its whole course, proves the contrary. All our writers relate, that when Fergusius, the deposed King of Ulster, with Maud Queen of Conaught, marched into Cuailgne in the County of Louth, the queen, went in an open chariot, surrounded by four others, so disposed as to keep off the horse-men, “left the dust and foam of the  
“horses, should stain the golden *Asion*, or crown which she wore  
“on her head.” The *Asion* of the queen of Cathire the Great, was stolen at the convention of Tara, A. C. 174; and the very great antiquarian Ward \* assures us, that in battle, and at all public assemblies, the kings of Ireland, constantly wore their crowns. It was by means of his crown, that, Brien Boru, after the battle of Cluantariff, was discovered by some fugitive Danes, and put to death; and when his son Donatus, out of devotion or policy, went to Rome, he carried with him his provincial crown, which he made a tender of to the Pope. As Ireland however is the only country in the world, whose history will not be admitted as legal evidence in her behalf, without collateral proofs; it may not be improper to observe, that in the year 1692, a crown of gold was found † in the county Tipperary, raised in chased work, which, must have been made before the Christian *Æra*, as

\* De vitâ & Patriâ S. Rumoldi, p. 170.

† Harris's Works, Vol. 2. p. 95. Mac Gheoghan Histoire d'Irlande, Tom. 1. p. 101.



it had not the cross, which after that period the crowns of christian princes never were without. It seems also to have been a Monarch's crown, having a resemblance to the close crown of the Eastern Empire. This Crown, was purchased by Mr. Joseph Cumerford; and is still preserved in the castle of Anglurre in Champagne, the present residence of the family, and whither they retired soon after the last war in Ireland. In 1744, Mr. Joseph Kinshalloe, a jeweller of Limerick, bought of John Clery, a shopkeeper still living at Cullen in the county Tipperary, a golden crown, weighing six ounces: this he melted, and he affirmed it had the least alloy, of any gold he ever met with: It was found in the bog of Cullen, where many other curiosities have been discovered, particularly some gorgets of gold, and gold handled swords; for which reason, it since goes under the name of the Golden-Bog. In the manuscript life of that hero, and scourge of the Danes, Ceallachan King of Munster, we are expressly told, that "The nobility of Munster waited upon him at Cashell; each took him by the hand; they then placed the Royal Diadem on his head, and proclaimed aloud his title of King." *Rangadan na Maiche ym rle go Ceallachan, agus tugadan rle a laimhe ma laimh, agus do gabhadan Almon-Riogha rme chean, agus tugadan Algam-Righ oy and.* These are incontestable proofs, that, not only our monarchs, but provincial kings, wore crowns of gold, and constantly on all public occasions.

Whether our christian monarchs were anointed at their inauguration, is not quite certain, tho' mentioned by Gratianus Lucius: But it will appear highly probable from a due consideration of the following circumstances. Our monarchs, or indeed rather emperors, for such *Alm-Righ* strictly means often assumed the titles of Emperors of Ireland, Kings of *Albany* and *Man*; and sometimes of all the Western islands of



Europe ; whence too it is, that Ptolemy the geographer speaks of most of those islands as belonging to Ireland. The learned Ward \* and Arch-deacon Lynch † quote an early provincial of all the churches of the world, preserved at Rome, in which the Emperor of Ireland is stiled *The Catholic*. Christianity was early received, and more diligently cultivated in Ireland, than in any other country in the world, and among many other ceremonies, that of anointing was soon borrowed from the Jewish rites by the Christian bishops. Adamnanus, who wrote in the seventh century, in his life of St. Columba, the apostle of Scotland ‡, has the following relation ; “ that an angel appeared  
 “ to Columba in the night, and holding in his hand a transparent  
 “ book of the ordination of kings, ordered him to read it. In it  
 “ he was directed to consecrate Aidhan the son of Gabhran, king  
 “ of the Dal-Rieuda ; but the Saint objecting that Aidhan’s brother Jogenanus was the elder, the angel struck him on the side  
 “ with his staff, the impression of which remained ever after,  
 “ adding, Know for a certainty, that I am sent from God, with  
 “ this book to you, and that according to the words in it you  
 “ must consecrate Aidhan king, or I will again strike you.  
 “ The messenger of God repeated his visits for three successive nights, constantly holding this book in his hand, on  
 “ which the apostle sails to the isle of Huy, sent for Aidhan,  
 “ and anointed him king of the Albanian Scots.”

To enable the reader to understand properly this wonderful fable, I must acquaint him, that Columba founded the famous monastery in the isle of Huy, which was the metropolitan of all Scotland, as Bede remarks ; that though by profession a saint, he was not able to subdue those passions and resentments

\* De Patria S. Rumoldi, p. 165. † Cambrenf. Eversus, p. 90. ‡ Lib. 3. cap. 5.



resentments so common to the rest of mankind,; that being of the blood royal of Ireland, (the fourth in descent from Niall the Great,) he had such influence on the people, that to gratify his pride and resentment, three bloody battles were fought in Ireland; and that as part of his penance for giving rise to so much bloodshed, his confessor, St. Morlaife, ordered him to Scotland, never more to *behold* his native country. In this place of exile, by his preaching, fasting, and other acts of devotion and mortification, he obtained the greatest ascendancy over the people, insomuch that in the year 569, he (having passed through the country with his eyes covered) attended, in behalf of the Scots of Albany, Hugh Monarch of Ireland, at a national assembly at Drumceat, and how successful an advocate he proved, we have already related at page 122. This famous vision, we may, therefore, well presume, was fabricated by the saint soon after, for this political end; that by using the Chrism with the future princes of Albany, which as delegates from Ireland, could not be done before, the Scots might regard their own chiefs with greater reverence, and lose by degrees their attachment to the Irish Monarchs; and this is the more probable, as about this very time, some French writers affirm, that the holy oil, preserved at Rheims, for the unction of their kings, was sent from Heaven, and with which St. Remis anointed Clovis; however, others think Pepin to be the first king of France, who received the unction at his coronation\*. From all these circumstances, however, I imagine every sensible reader will incline to believe that the oil was used at the inauguration of our Monarchs before the days of Columba; and it is not even improbable that the ceremony of anointing the princes on the continent, was, as well as many military and literary distinctions, borrowed from us.

All

\* Selden's Titles of Honour, p. 112.



All candidates for the regal power, as we have already observed, were to be, 1st, of the direct line from Milesius; 2dly, they must have been admitted at seven years old, of the *gíadh gáirge*, or order of chivalry; and 3dly, their persons must be such as to command reverence and respect. Thus qualified, they publicly solicited the suffrages of the princes, nobility and people. On the day of election, he that had the greatest number of suffrages was elected; and I believe these were given *in the open air*; *On the plains of Tara*, if for the monarchy; at Emania, for the Kings of Ulster; at the Naas, anti-ently called Naas-Laighean, or the Leinster assembly, for the princes of that province, &c. My reason for conjecturing that such elections were in the open air, as is yet practised in Poland, is, because in this manner, the *ô Connor's* of Kerry, the *ô Donnell's*, *Mac Carthies*, &c. were proclaimed. The legality of the election was declared by the chief justice of the kingdom or province; the purity of the Prince's blood was proved by a loud recital of his pedigree through all its branches, till the chief antiquarian came up to Milesius or Gollamh; then it was (if my conjectures on this point will be allowed) that the primate, or arch-bishop, after the reception of Christianity used the chrism. The marshal of the kingdom or province, placed the crown on his head; the standard-bearer displayed the royal banner; and the *gáim Ríogdh* or royal shout announced the approbation of the people. That no doubt may arise, as to the crowning of our Kings, the arms of Munster always were, and still are, a King enthroned in Majesty, with the crown on his head, and a sceptre in his hand; and Philip *ô Sullivan* (an excellent astronomer and historian, as well as a gallant soldier, who lived in the days of Elizabeth, when the manner of proclaiming the princes, or rather at that time, the great lords of counties, resembled



resembled in miniature the pomp of days of greater liberty) tells us, that “ the chiefs of Ireland were inaugurated by such whose  
 “ hereditary duty it was so to do, or by others. Being come  
 “ to the place appointed, accompanied by a grand retinue of  
 “ followers, and by the people, the judges declare from the  
 “ established laws, the right of the candidate. An oath is  
 “ then administered to him, in which he swears, to be steadfast  
 “ in the religion of his ancestors, to protect his subjects, and  
 “ administer impartial justice to them. High mass being said,  
 “ and a wand consecrated, it is delivered as a sceptre to the  
 “ chief; when, by certain words, pronounced by the family  
 “ inaugurator, he is declared ô Sullivan, ô Reilly, &c. and  
 “ as such is acknowledged by the people, nor ever after uses  
 “ his Christian name. *Sic vetustati* (says he) *placuit, nec bodie*  
 “ *etiam displicet* \*.

The palaces of our antient kings were highly celebrated for their magnificence, and the taste of their decorations; and the triennial meetings at Tara, were uncommonly splendid. It appears, by the concurrent testimonies of all our writers, that at these assemblies, the Monarch or Emperor sat in the royal banqueting house, called *Moidbcuarta*, on his *Breas-fhóra*, or throne, his crown or *asíon* on his head, and his sceptre in his hand, with his face to the West; the provincial kings were also seated on thrones, less lofty than the monarch's, in the following order; the king of Munster on his left hand, the king of Ulster on his right, the king of Leinster fronting him, and the king of Conaught behind. The nobility, the clergy, and literati, took place according to their rank; and this was settled with a precision that would do honour to the politest nations of the

\* Compend. Histor. Cathol. p. 33.



the world. In the days of *Ollamb Fodla*, and afterwards of Cormoc ô Cuin, these meetings were uncommonly pompous; for besides the palace of Tara, of which the *Moidbcuarta* was but a state room, there were others erected for the reception of the different provincial kings. A noble academy was founded also, for the educating and instructing the knights in feats of arms, adjoining to which was the hospital for sick and wounded. *Grianan na Ningbean* was the palace where the provincial Queens were entertained. *Realta ne Fbileadb*, was the place appointed for the judges, poets, antiquarians, and other literati, to examine records, adjudge litigated suits, and other such business. *Caircer ne NGuiall*, was the state prison; and here were lodged the hostages which the Emperor took from such of the princes whose fidelity or attachment he doubted. However, by a particular and curious law, the hostages from the people of Orgiall, or the Ma Guire's, Mc. Mahon's, &c. were never to be confined, nor to wear any kind of shackles, but such as were of gold; hence Or-Giall, or the golden hostage. The grandeur of the palace of Tara has been celebrated by very antient writers, and a description of it may be seen in Keating, ô Flaherty, ô Connor, &c. The days of Cormoc were those of its greatest glory; and we have yet a poem in ô Duvegnan\* beginning with *Teamhair na Ríogh, Rath Cormaic*. "Royal Tara, "the palace of Cormoc," particularly descriptive of its magnificence. We are told, that in his time, most of the utensils of the court were all pure gold or silver: when he dined in state, that he was waited upon by 150 of the most distinguished gentlemen of the kingdom; and that on his side-board were 150 cups of massy gold, and silver. It is here to be noticed, that Meath

was

\* Ogygia, p. 336, Keating, p. 1. Gr. Luc. Ward.



was a fifth province, early taken from the other four, and annexed to the crown as a demesne; which, together with the established taxes, on the rest of the kingdom, and the personal estates or hereditary dominions of the prince, formed the whole of the Imperial revenue. We may form some Idea of the munificence, truly royal, which prevailed at Tara, by the annual consumption at *Ceann-Corrabh*, the provincial palace of Brien Boru; where the annual consumption was, 2670 beeves\*, 1370 hogs, 365 pipes of red, and 150 hogshheads of other wine.

The attendants on the courts of the Emperors and provincial kings; their body guards; and of above all, the hereditary officers of the crown, of the purest blood of the kingdom, are very striking proofs of the splendor of the antient Monarchs of this country, and of the politeness of their courts. The different military orders of the kingdom seem to have been the particular guards of each prince. We are told, that Con of the 100 battles was murdered by fifty ruffians, attired like women, who waited their opportunity, and surprized him, unattended by his *Loachs* or guards. The guards of his great opponent Eugene, were called *teagh leach*, *teagh leach*, or household troops, but indeed more properly household heroes, *Laoch* signifying a champion, or hero. The guards of Art the Monarch, and son of Con, were called *franc Ambuis*, or French guards; and indeed, in these early writers, we often read of French, Spanish, &c. and British auxiliaries, called in to the assistance of the different competitors, which proves the extensiveness of their foreign connections. Cormoc the son of Art, whose reign makes so glorious a figure in Irish history, had, as his immediate guards, 150 of the principal knights of the kingdom, beside 1000 men to guard his palace. The

X

guards

\* Keating, p. 2. &c.



guards of the Munster Kings, in early days, were the people of Ossory, (Quasi, *Almhuiſ Riogh*, *Ambuis Riogh*, or the King's guards,) whose country was the extreme boundaries of that kingdom; and by the *Book of Rights*, &c. wrote by St. Benignus, we find the duty imposed on that people by the King of Munster was, to wait on him constantly with a certain number of armed troops. In later ages the Munster guards were called *Dal Geais*, a most intrepid body of men; and the palace of Brien Boru, beyond Killaloe, was called *Cean Corradh*, or the house of the chief of the heroes. The Leinster guards were called *Clana Baoisgne*, from *Boaisgne*, a renowned warrior; and those of Ulster, *Curaidhe na Craoibhe ruadh*, or Champions of the Red Branch.

Beside their knights and body guards, their courts were rendered conspicuous by the hereditary crown officers. The duties of the hereditary marshals were, at every inauguration, to place the Afion or crown on the prince's head; to see the nobility take place according to their different ranks, and to draw up the army. That of the hereditary standard bearer was, to preserve the royal banner; to be amongst the foremost of the troops in action, and in the rere on a retreat; for the troops had ever their eye on the standard, and when the prince was killed (for they seldom survived a defeat) the standard was struck, which was the signal for a retreat. Thus, in the bloody battle of *Moicruimbe*, between the Monarch Art, and Mac Con, on the death of Art, we are told, *Do éirí meirge Catha Crí, Do thuit meirge Catha Cuin*, “the standard of the battle of Con fell, or was “struck”. The business of the hereditary treasurers was, to see the king's contributions and taxes regularly paid in, which was done every first of November. These taxes were fixed, and registers kept of them, and to this day the particular duties imposed



posed on the different parts of the kingdom are known. It may not be improper to observe here from Tacitus \*, that “ when Germanicus went to visit Ægypt, he saw Obelisks at Thebes, on which were letters engraved in Ægyptian characters, containing, an account of their conquests over the Lybians, Ethiopians, Medes, and Persians, &c. and also of the tributes imposed, in gold, silver, horses, arms, corn, and other necessaries of life †.” The royal cup-bearer, or *Giolla Cupan an righ*, and the hereditary admirals, I have not been able to find to what families they belonged ; tho’ I conjecture the ô Falvies were admirals of South Munster, and the ô Keefs, generals ; because, in the manuscript Life of Ceallachan Cashil, the Munster fleet was commanded by *Falvie-sionn*, and the army by Mac Keeffe.

No subject, at public assemblies, durst approach nearer the Monarch or prince, than the length of a long spear ; and there they sat, each according to his dignity, as may be collected from a poem of ô Higgin’s. I take it for granted, that the first place was given to the Arch-Druid in times of Paganism, and to the primate, or Arch-bishop of the province, after the reception of Christianity ; because all our writers are unanimous, that the literati ranked immediately after the blood-royal. Next to him was the hereditary marshal ; then the standard bearer ; and then the hereditary treasurer. Why I place these crown officers thus, is, because in the reign of Cuchorb king of Leinster, in the second century, Laoighfeach, chief of the ô Mora’s, was appointed treasurer of Leinster, and to take the fourth place at the council board. Beside these great officers of state, there were a chief justice and surgeon, poet, historian, antiquarian, and three stewards of the house-hold, with their attendants con-

X 2

stantly

\* Annal. Lib. 2. cap. 60.

† *leabhar benighm*. Keating, Mc. Curtin, &c.



stantly residing at court. All these different offices, have been kept up, in Ulster, and in parts of Munster and Connaught, till the accession of James the first. Thus in the days of Elizabeth, A. C. 1562 ô Neal, prince of Ulster, made a visit to London, in consequence of a promise, made the preceding year; and Cambden tells us, “He appeared at court with his guards of  
 “Gall-oghlachs, bare headed, armed with Hatchets, their hair  
 “flowing in locks on their shoulders, on which were yellow  
 “surplices dyed with Saffron, with long sleeves, short coats,  
 “and trum-jackets, at which strange sight, the Londoners marvelled much.” Mac Sweeny was the captain of his guards, Mac Caffry, his hereditary standard-bearer, o Gallagher marshal, ô Gnive his poet, &c. In the monastery of the friers preachers, near Roscommon, a monument of Feidelm ô Connor, who died in the year 1253, in fine Irish marble, is still preserved, tho’ lately, maliciously and considerably defaced, in which he lies, surrounded by his body guards, in their antient dresses. Were there no other evidence left, of the polished state of the antient Irish, that these hereditary appointments, I think they must be allowed, by every man of sense and candor, to be unexceptionable.

The very great number of arch-bishops and bishops consecrated, even by St. Patrick himself, being not less than 350, as all the writers of his life (who were very numerous) agree, strongly bespeak the power and consequence of antient Ireland throughout Europe. Before the Danish eruption, there were 96 bishops in Ireland \*! Even so late as the year 1112 †, we read of a Synod held at Uisneach, at which assembled 50 bishops, 300 priests, and 3000 regulars. In the year 1150, when by the Danish

\* Vita S. Rumoldi, p. 158. † Keating, Ward, Colgan, &c.



Danish ravages, the nation was not able to support with proper dignity, the number of bishops, they were reduced by a decree of Pope Eugene the third; and cardinal Papirone came to Ireland, with palliums for the four arch-bishops, under whom were appointed 25 bishops only. Since that time, so weakened has the kingdom been, that in some places two, in others three bishoprics are united, to support a single dignitary.

The primates of Ireland, in many instances, were stiled the heads of the religion of Ireland, and of the greatest part of Europe; and with great justice, since it is admitted, that, not only the Picts and Saxons, but great part of Germany, France, &c: still submissive to the Roman See, was converted by Irish bishops. In the annals of Donegal † Malbrigid, arch-bishop of Ardmach is stiled “ Successor of St. Patrick, St. Collumba and St. Adamnanus, Primate of all Ireland, and of the greatest part of Europe.” Others are called, *Arch-Bishops of all the Scots, i. e. of Albany*, as well as Ireland; and St. Bernard calls St. Mallachy, Arch-Bishop of Ireland and Scotland. That Scotland as well as Britain, at least the Saxon territories, depended in spirituals on Ireland, formerly, is what I affirm; and my proofs are full. St. Collumba, Apostle of North-Britain, an Irish-man, founded the Abby of Huy, which was the head of the religious houses of that country. The venerable Bede tells us ‡, that the head of this monastery, tho’ but a priest, was supreme of all the Churches and Bishops of Scotland; and this priest it must follow, received his ordination at home. His house must be therefore subject to the primacy of Ireland, and our arch-bishops we see, were accordingly stiled, “ Successors of St. Patric, Col-  
“ lumba

\* Vita S. Rumoldi, p. 171. Act. Sanct. Hibern. p. 386, &c. † Hist. Eccles. l. 3. cap. 4.



“Iumba and Adamnanus,” or Arch-Bishops of Ireland and Albany. It is a fact, acknowledged by North-British writers, that ’til the reign of James the III. there were no Caledonian Arch-Bishops instituted; when, at the request of this prince, Sextus the IV. appointed two, to superintend the Church of Scotland; and ’til the year 1161, the Arch-Bishops of Ardmagh, consecrated the Scotch Bishops; after which period, the Arch-Bishops of York, assumed this power, ’til 1471, as appears by the Bull of Alexander the III. then Pope. Bede thro’ great part of his Ecclesiastical History, acknowledges, that the early Saxons were converted by the Irish, and that Irish Bishops presided over them. St. Colman, the third Irish Bishop of Lindisfarren, in a famous synod, held in Northumberland, A. C. 664, (at which King Oswin, his queen and court, and some foreign bishops, particularly Agilbertus Bishop of Paris, assisted,) tells them, “The  
 “time of celebrating Eāsther, which I obīerve, I took from my  
 “ancestors, *who sent me hither, as your bishop* \*.” The same writers also declares, that, for a long time after, the Saxon priests and bishops, were ordained in Ireland. *Azorius*, in his recital of the Primate of the Western world, places the Arch-bishop of Toledo first, as primate of all Spain, next follows the Arch-bishop of Ardmagh, primate of all Ireland †; and in the council of Lyons A. C. 1241, we find the arch-bishop of Ardmagh, subscribes his name, before all the ecclesiastics of France, Spain and Italy ‡, thus, “*Albertus Armachanus*.” In the life of St. Magnus, as I find it quoted by Wardeus, p. 176, it is said, “His-  
 “torians and Geographers have described Ireland to be a king-  
 “dom renowned in Europe, her fields most fruitful, her waters,  
 “&c.” Hence we find, in the council of Constance in 1417,  
 on

\* Hist. Eccl. lib. 3. c. 25, 26. † Vita S. Rumoldi, p. 165, Colgan, Gratius, Lucanius, &c.

‡ Annal. Min. Tom. 1. p. 605.



on account of some disputes, between the French and English nations, these last were refused the liberty of voting as a nation ; the canonists declaring that they were but a province, connected with the nation of Germany, as they were not governed by their own princes, but had submitted to German allies, who were themselves, tributaries to the Empire. The English advocates alledged in their answer, “ That learned doctors, in their division of christendom, have ranked England as a nation,” But this was not allowed ; at length they urged “ That, it is evident from “ Albertus Magnus, and Barthol. de Glanville, that the world “ was divided into three parts, Europe, Asia and Africa. “ Europe was distributed into four Empires, the Roman, the “ Constantinopolitan, Irish and Spanish. The king of England “ therefore as monarch of Ireland, is amongst the most eminent, and most antient of the Kings of Europe ;” and in consequence of this plea, England was declared a fifth nation in the council \*.

## C H A P. V.

*The lights which a knowledge of the history and language of Ireland, is capable of throwing on some customs, even among the Romans ; on the origin of chivalry, and literary institutions on the Continent ; on the antient Celtic, &c.*

Nothing can more fully prove the veneration in which the Druids were held, on the Continent, than the accurate relation Cæsar has vouchsafed to give, of their religion and learning ; and that no mistake should happen concerning the prime seat of their learning, he is careful to tell us, that in Ireland only,

\* Aët. consil. Const. See also an English translation, vol. 2. p. 42, &c.



only, a thorough knowledge of their mysteries, could be acquired. We have already observed, from Tacitus, that the states of Italy, adopted the same worship; and we have already given some, and shall hereafter afford further reason to think that Pythagoras learned those tenets *here*, and then spread them through Italy. We even find many of their customs adopted by the Romans themselves. *Aurelian* the Emperor (whose mother Vopiscus \* tells us was a priestess of the Sun, and a foreteller of future events; probably a Druidess) applied to the Druids, to know if the Empire would continue in his family; and after subduing the famous Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, Herodian tells us, he erected at Rome a temple sacred to Belus.

In the days of Domitian, we find mention made of the *Agones*, and contests of poets, and other literati: they were of two kinds, the Agon Capitolinus, celebrated in honour of Jupiter, and the Quinquatria, dedicated to Pallas. In both instances they were crowned, on judgment being pronounced by the Emperor or his judges. In the Agon Capitolinus, the victor was crowned with branches of oak, (the sacred tree of the Druids) and in the Quinquatria, the crown was of olives, mixed with fillets of gold. If there were many candidates, and but one only approved of, he was said to be crowned, *contra omnes poetas*. Gruter † tells us, that Domitian crowned L. Surrelius, "*Contra omnes SCENICOS*;" and that M. Ulpianus was so dignified "*Adversus histriones, et omnes SCENICOS*." This word Scenicus is singular, and to be met with in no Latin writer before this period, nor does Gruter seem to have understood its meaning; it is, however, a manifest Iernicism, as we have already shewn many other Celtic words, latinized by Roman writers, to be, and strictly signifies

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\* In Aurel. cap. 14.

† Inscription. N. 486. p. 331.



an Antiquarian. This Irish word *Senachie*, our Latin writers render into *Senacus*, and *Senaciores*, as may be seen in Ward, Colgan, &c. &c. but even long before the period in question, we find men of letters, at least the lawyers were dignified in antient Rome by gold rings.

———— *Ciceroni nemo ducentos  
Nunc dederit Nummos, nisi fulserit annulus ingens.*

JUVENAL, Sat. VII.

The well-known story of Dioclesian, and many others might be produced as evidence of the acquaintance of the Romans with Druidism. But it will be a reasonable question, if the Roman people borrowed any customs from the Irish nation, why have all their writers been silent on this head? the answer is clear. Though Druidism, as well as letters, came originally from Ireland; yet the Romans became acquainted with it only by their intercourse with the Italian states, the Iberians and the Gauls; and nothing can shew more fully the justness of this assertion, and the utility a knowledge of our history and language must be of, to an antiquarian, than the light it throws on many obscure passages in their writers. If in pharmacy, chymistry, and mathematics, we find many technical terms, of Arabic origin, the induction is as natural as true, that they improved (if not invented) these sciences, and that they taught them to the neighbouring nations. The same plain reasons support the claim of the Greeks to philosophy, physic, &c. and our being obliged to recur to the Irish language and history for explanations of words in antient Celtic theology, poetry, and philosophy, &c. unintelligible without this aid, must make as strongly in our favour.

Augustus Cæsar built a temple in Gaul, to Circius, or the wind that blows on the Gaulish coast; the wind, we



know, was worshipped in Ireland; and Criche, from which Circius seems evidently derived, signifies a territory, or country. Mercury was worshipped by the name of Teutates, or the god of travellers; and the very word is Irish for the god of a country. A temple was built at Rome, to Belus, or the Sun, and such is the deified name of this planet here. Public contests began at Rome, in the days of Domitian, who before his elevation to the empire, cultivated the fine arts. Such were always kept up in Ireland, and there were public sessions of the poets at stated times, to exercise their genius. Mr. Mac Donnell, a man of great erudition, and a profound Irish antiquarian and poet, whose death I sensibly feel, and from whom, when a boy, I learned the rudiments of our language, constantly kept up this custom. He had made valuable collections, and was writing in his native tongue, an History of Ireland; but a long sickness prevented his finishing this work. He proposed to some gentlemen in the county of Clare, to translate Homer into Irish; and from the specimen he gave, it would seem, that this prince of poets would appear as respectable in a Gathelian as a Greek dress. But the death of the late—Mac Namara put a stop to this attempt. This learned and worthy man died in the year 1751, near Charleville, and I have never since been able to find how his papers were disposed of, though I am told he left them to me.

We find the literati of Rome, as well as the knights, wore gold rings; and this custom was established in Ireland a considerable time before the foundation of the Roman republic. In Germany, about the 9th, 10th, and 11th centuries, we find a custom introduced of knighting the Emperors, and their declared successors, or Kings of the Romans; thus Frederick the



the First held a feast at Mentz, “to create his son Henry a Knight, by girding a sword on his thigh.” Frederick Duke of Suabia was knighted by the same Emperor. The Emperors themselves, when they were not knighted by their predecessors received this dignity from some prelate of eminence. Henry III. was knighted by the Arch-bishop of Bremen. In 1247, William Earl of Holland, intended King of the Romans, was first knighted. In 1461, Lewis XI. of France, just before his coronation, received the honour of Knighthood from the hands of Philip Duke of Bourgogne, and afterwards conferred it on many gentlemen. At a much earlier period, we have an instance of this kind in England; for William of Malmfbury tells us, “that King Alfred, viewing, with delight, the youth and beauty of his grandson Athelstan, invested him, *at a very early age*, with the order of Knighthood.” The very learned *Selden*, in his *Titles of Honour*, is clear, that the custom of knighthood in Germany could not be borrowed from the antient Romans, but must have taken its rise amongst themselves, or from some nations their allies; to the reasons offered in the 4th chapter of the first part of this work, to shew that the Germans borrowed this custom from Ireland, I shall here add, that they and the Irish held always a close correspondence, and that the patrons of many churches in Germany are Irishmen. But had we not even these clues to the origin of chivalry on the continent, to what history of any European nation, but the Irish, could we recur, to trace out this custom? We find military orders so antient that we can scarcely tell when they began among us. Our ancestors had them in Egypt; we are certain they were respected in Greece; and in Ireland they were in so high repute that our princes were adjudged unworthy and incapable of com-



mand, who did not enter into the military schools at seven years old, and were not at eighteen found fit to receive the *Gradh-Gaisgaib*, or order of chivalry! This too was not a capricious or occasional custom amongst us, it continued invariably through all periods of our history. The Saxon chiefs preserved this power, conferred on them by Mac Murrough. The Geraldines of Desmond made knighthood hereditary in some branches of their family: Hence the *White Knight*, the *Knights of the Valley*, and the *Knights of Kerry*, honours carefully kept up to this day. The Butlers did the same in Ormond; and so likewise the other chiefs. In the church of St. Mary, in the *Holy Island*, and above Killaloe, is a curious monument over the burial place of the Mac ô Briens of Ara; the last of which princely line, and but a gentleman farmer, was killed by his horse lately. By the inscription we find, that Sir Tireldach Mac ô Brien Ara, was there interred, A. D. 1626, and this was an hereditary honour continued in the family for centuries; the same may be said of the ô Flaherties, and of many other distinguished Milesian houses.

About the time that chivalry was introduced on the continent, we find Poets-laureat solemnly crowned with great pomp, and an oath administered to them: before they received this dignity, they were obliged to be Masters of Arts. In 1616, Crusius\* from a M. A. was created Poet-laureat at Strasbourg.—The ceremony began by some verses in praise of this honour, and his earnest wishes to be found worthy of it; this was followed by a long harangue of the Count Palatine who presided, in praise of this Divine Art, and shewing the necessity of admitting none as professors of it, but such as had given high proofs of their abilities; then addressing himself to Crusius,

he

\* Aët. Cæsar. Argentaur.



he desires he may, by some public act, convince the illustrious assembly of his qualifications in this way; this the bard attempts by reciting a poem of 300 lines; which being approved of, and the Count's title from the Emperor produced, an oath is then administered to him to be true to the Emperor and his successors; to celebrate at proper times his actions, and the glory of his country, to abstain from satire and abuse, &c. a crown of laurel is then, with great ceremony, placed on his head, and a gold ring on his finger: The laurel and ring we find in Germany, were the constant emblems of Doctors in Poetry; thus in 1593, Wagnerus was made Doctor in Poetry, "by the imposition of laurel, and the delivery of the ring." In 1618, Michael Bartschius, with delivery of the like insignia, was declared a doctor in poetry.

Salust. Tiber. à Corneto \* gives the form of a Diploma in physic and philosophy, conferred on a candidate, after proper examination, in which we find the following remarkable words, "*Biretrum in Capite, Annulum in Digito, &c. et singula Doctoratus Insignia.*" We learn also that soon after the foundations of Universities on the continent, such as passed doctors in different sciences, contended, even with knights for precedence; and to settle the frequent disputes which arose therefrom, many of them were knighted; but others refusing this mark of degradation, as they thought it, preserved their rank without it, and were called *Milites Clerici*.

I shall not in this place insist on what has been long since proved by the learned Ward, Colgan, Lombard, Routh, &c. that Irishmen were the first founders under Charlemagne, and regents and professors of the Universities of Paris and

\* Formul. lib.3.



and Pavia, the great originals of all the Universities on the continent ; but only just remark, that literary degrees, have been at all times carefully encouraged in Ireland. The Ollamh's or doctors in every science, preceded all the nobility, and had in their garments, but one colour less, than the princes of the blood. As military orders, were known by a gorget of gold, hung round the neck by a chain of the same metal, and of which numbers are daily found in cutting and draining bogs, so were the literati, by a *Birede*, or cap on the head, and a gold ring on the finger ; and this regulation took place in Ireland, so early as the days of Aldergoid the monarch, that is, above 2500 years ago ! We have seen, that, not only our monarchs and provincial kings, were most solemnly inaugurated, but even the chiefs of different great families, were elected as such, with great pomp, even to the days of Elizabeth, as ô Sullivan, and Sir George Carew (living witnesses,) acknowledge ; and this being the case, it can hardly be doubted, but the ollamh's or doctors, in different sciences (each of which had, after he passed doctor, 30 attendants of his own profession of inferior degrees, appointed for his retinue) must have received this last and highest degree, with great parade and shew. Beside, the word *Biretrum* is not latin, nor to be found in classic writers, ('tho' I am told the cap of cardinals yet goes by that name,) but an Irishcism, being derived from *Bar*, a man of letters, and *Eadagh* a covering ; and this *Birede*, formerly peculiar to the literati, became at length so much in use, as to be worn in common, even to our times.

There is a dissertation prefixed to an edition of Clanrickard's Memoirs, printed in London in 1722, in which are some remarks on the study of poetry in Ireland, worthy perusal ; we are there told, that a candidate must have been seven years at very  
close



close study, before he could obtain any literary degree ;  
 “ Which (says the writer) you’ll the less admire, upon confi-  
 “ dering the great difficulty of the art, the many kinds of  
 “ poems, and the exactness and nicety to be observed in each,  
 “ to render their numbers soft, and the harmony agreeable and  
 “ pleasing to the ear.” The duties of our bards, to their prin-  
 ces and chiefs were, to record the actions of their sept, their  
 conquests, alliances, &c. and to present odes on births, marriages  
 or deaths in their families. If they complimented a stranger  
 to their particular sept, it was an invariable rule, to dedi-  
 cate one verse at least, to the praise of their chief, or his family.  
 The recital of these was grave and solemn ; a large company  
 was invited, and vocal and instrumental music prepared ;  
 then the songsters (for every poet had many such) having  
 received their instructions from the bard, began the ode, keeping  
 exact time to the Crotaries or harpers, who certainly excelled all  
 other nations in harmony and composition ; and the Irish music,  
 is at this day, allowed to be a pure original.

These few facts, will point out to the learned foreigner  
 and antiquarian, how attentively and carefully our history  
 should be studied, and our language cultivated ; and what  
 light both are capable of throwing on the antient laws and  
 customs, of the European nations in general, will appear still  
 more fully, from the learned antiquarian Llhuid’s *Archæologia*.  
 This candid writer, to ascertain more fully the antient state  
 of Europe, and particularly of Britain, than Picardus, Box-  
 hornius, Cambden, &c. had done, judged a knowledge of  
 the Irish language, of the greatest consequence. He was sen-  
 sible (as he observed in his English preface to his work)  
 that it was in too much disrepute, among the generality of  
 people, and too much ridiculed, to gain that attention it  
 deserved.



deserved. Such reflections did not however discourage him ; who observed, “ That in any uncommon undertaking, the judgment of men of distinction (or at least of particular experience in the subject proposed) is to be ONLY regarded.” He asserts, that Pontanus’s Celtic Glossary, and Menage’s Etymologicon, will be much more intelligible, by a knowledge of the Irish and old British ; and that many words, which *Menage* owns he knows not, nor from whence derived, and others, whose radices he makes very far fetched, would become immediately clear and satisfactory, by a knowledge of those tongues.

This learned gentleman struck with the great lights, thrown on the antient Celtic, by the Irish language, concludes them, of real Celtic origin ; and Dr. ô Brien, in his valuable Irish Dictionary, just published, unable to account for most technical Celtic words being of Irish origin, seems to agree with Llhuid, in his conjectures ; but these mistakes we shall rectify, in a succeeding chapter. Here follow some Celtic words, latinized by antient writers, of visible Irish extraction, as may be seen in the above Llhuid.

*Allobrox*, a stranger,—*Eile* is Irish for another, and *Bruach*, the border of a country. *Armorici*, a maritime people,—*Armbuir*, in Irish, signifies, bordering on the sea. *Axona*, the river of Aisne.—*Ufige*, is Irish for water. *Bardus*, a poet, in Irish *Baird*. *Belgæ*, a people of Gaul.—*Fir-bolg*, a colony in Ireland, antecedent to the Milesians, supposed of Gaulish extraction. *Bondineus*, an Abyss—*Bondhanach* bottomless, from *Bon*, a bottom, and *Gan* without. *Bracca*, a garment, the same name given to the Plaids, in the the High-lands. *Cateia*, a dart or spear, in Irish *Gath*. *Crupellarius*, a soldier in a coat of mail.—*Cath-fbir*, is Irish for a warrior, *Cath-bharr*, an helmet, *Cruadb*, steel, &c. *Divitiacus*, King of the Ædui,—*Duvtach*, a common name in Ireland.



Ireland. *Druidæ*, Augurs, *Draoidhe* in Irish. *Dunum*, in the names of towns, imports their being placed on hills, as *Lug-dunum*, *Mellodunum*, *Neodunum*, *Uxellodunum*, &c. the same signification it hath in Irish, and these very compounds, are from Irish roots. *Lug-dunum*, the town near the lake. *Melle-dunum*, the Sluggard's town. *Neo-dunum*, the Knight, or Hero's town. *Uxello-dunum*, the town on the water. *Goesus*, a champion, in Irish *Gaisgeach*. *Leudus*, a Celtic ode, *Laoi*, is irish for a poem. *Magus*, in the name of towns, signified a field, as *Duro-magus*, &c. *Magb* is Irish for a field, and *Deir*, for an oak, hence *Duro-magus*, or oak-field. *Palla*, a Celtic garment, in Irish a Mantle. *Vercingetorix*, a general of the Arverni; *Fear-ccean-go-turus*, is literal irish, for the *chief man of the expedition*. *Veregillaunus*, another commander of the Arverni. *Fear-go-saegblan* the standard bearer. *Vergobretus*, signified in Gaul, the chief magistrate; and *Fear-go-breith* is Irish, for, *the man to judge*.

## C H A P. VI.

*The name of the Island of Saints, bestowed on Ireland, prior to Christianity. Schools opened by the early Missionaries, to which foreigners as well as natives resorted, and the Fame of them. Number of learned strangers, deceased in Ireland, from Ængus's Litany. A passage in Bolandus censured.* ✕

IT has been said, for what may not be said, when we find *System* currently received in history, altho' banished from Philosophy, that it was from the admission and cultivation of christianity, that Ireland by universal consent, acquired the glorious title of, *Insula Sanctorum & Doctorum*; but the smallest degree of reflection, will expose the futility of the supposition. Why  
 Z should



should Ireland be the only country of the world, honoured by so illustrious an appellation, when we know that on many parts of the continent, Christianity was much earlier established? and if christianity brought with it, arts and letters, why should these be confined to Ireland *only*, while the religion was the same in other countries? And do we not find long before this period, this country called by the Greeks *Ierne*, and the people *Ἱερὸν Γένος*, or the sacred generation?

The fact is, if we abate their inspiration, the early christians were extreamly ignorant, and rather the enemies, than friends of literatures. We hear of no literary foundations, on the continent, for some centuries after the reception of christianity; and in Britain, long after this period, in so abject a state were letters, that Asser, in his Life of Alfred surnamed the Great, and the most learned of the Saxon-race, publicly complains, that, “From the Humber to the Thames, there was not  
“ a priest, that understood the liturgy in the mother tongue;  
“ and that from the Thames to the sea, there was not one, able to  
“ translate the easiest piece of Latin!” It is manifest then, that the great reputation Ireland acquired in letters, could not take its rise from the christian system; and to explain it, we must recur to times, much more remote. Literary establishments subsisted in Ireland, from the most profound antiquity: They continued on the admission of christianity; and it is, much more than probable, that had not the proselytes to the new religion, remarkably exerted themselves, in their attention to erudition, they would never have found the people so tractable. When the jesuit missionaries first landed in China, they found the Religious of the country extremely pious, leading sequestered lives, and subjecting themselves to great austerities, which drew on them the veneration of the multitude. In vain did these fathers  
after



after the fashion of Europe, preach, teach and exhort: The harvest of souls, was very poor; and they were obliged to exceed the Religious of the country, in acts of mortification and self denial, before they were properly attended to. So, on the reception of christianity, in Egypt, as in Ireland, we find the kingdom filled, in a short time, with monks truly pious, and lettered christians.

Not to mention the school of Dymma, an holy priest, prior to St. Ibarus who preceded Patrick in the Irish mission, and whose fame and learning is so well acknowledged, we find this last apostle, form in his own time, the famous university of Ardmach, the chief of the colleges of Ireland, “ And which as “ Jocelyne remarks, ever after remained the prime seat of let- “ ters.” Ibarus himself, after his return from Rome, built an academy at a place called Beg-Eirion in Leinster, as Usher \* notes, “ Where he instructed very great numbers of Irish, as “ as well as foreigners, in sacred and polite letters.” In Colgan’s life of St. Abbanus we are told, that at an early age, he was put under the care of his uncle Ibarus, “ To whom, “ from all parts people crouded, to learn sacred letters, as well “ as the knowledge of the *fine arts*.” St. Albe, cotemporary to Ibarus or Heber, Usher tells us, had his school at Emly, where St. Colman was sent to study. Thus we see christian seminaries were established before the days of St. Patrick, for the education of youth, in the polite arts as well as religion. How shall we account for this procedure, so different from that of christian missionaries in other countries? By our constitution men of letters were not only in the highest esteem, but their persons and properties were inviolable; what surer protection then



then could these strangers have, than that which letters gave them? And since our writers bear testimony to the truth of what Cæsar remarks, that to the Druids was committed the education of the youth; how could they instruct their disciples more securely than under the sanction of teachers? *Ollamb Fodhla*, A. M. 3236, founded a university at Tara, which was the chief of the kingdom, and called it, *Murollamban*, or the college of doctors, as only doctors in the different sciences, were here allowed to teach.

The christian missionaries, therefore, early opened schools, in opposition to the Druids; as they could only hope for scholars, and of course for proselytes, by their superior attention to letters. The principal Druid universities, were at Tara, the capital of the kingdom, Emania the seat of the Ulster kings, Cruachan and Carman, the royal cities of Conaught and Munster; and the chief Christian ones in opposition to these, were Ardmach, Emly, Beg-Eirion, &c. From the great number of pupils foreigners as well as natives, under Ibarus, Heber, or Abaris, we must conclude the schools of Ireland to have been as much resorted to, in the times of Druidism, as after this period, or what could at that time have brought Strangers there; since Heber was one of the four bishops who preceded Palladius and Patrick, and who went on purpose to Rome, to be instructed in the new religion? As Druidism fell into disrepute, christian seminaries multiplied; and never were the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Greeks or Persians more celebrated, for pre-eminence in all the liberal arts, than the Irish were, from the 5th to the latter end of the 9th century. Soon after the first foundation, we read of a most noble city and seminary founded at Clonard near the Boyne. In the days of St. Finan, A. C. 500, we find it to contain no less



less than 3000 scholars, among whom, were some of the first eminence, for piety and learning. Colgan calls it a repository of all knowledge ; he adds, “ St. Finan like the sun in  
 “ the firmament enlightened the world, with the beams of  
 “ his virtue, his doctrine and his miracles. For the fame of  
 “ his learning brought illustrious men, from divers parts of the  
 “ world to his school, as to an holy repository of all Wisdom.”  
 About the same time, the academy of Ross, called Ross-Ailithri, in the county of Cork, was formed by St. Fachanus, as Ware notes ; and Hanmer in his Chronicle, tells us, that here St. Brandan taught the liberal arts. Ware mentions it as a school of great distinction; and Colgan tells us, “ It became a great city,  
 “ and was highly esteemed, as the antient seat of the Muses.”

The fame of the city and antient university of Lismore, in the county of Waterford, and of the number of students who from all parts of Europe crowded thither, may be collected from the character of it, as given by Bonaventura Moronus, a Tarentine born, in the first Book of his Life of our St. Cathaldus bishop of Tarentum in Italy, in the latter end of the fifth century, and who was here educated.

*Undique convenient procures, quos dulce traherat*

*Discendi studium, major num cognita virtus*

*An laudata foret. Celeres vastissima Rheni*

*Jam vada Teutonici, jam deseruere Sicambri :*

*Mittit ab extremo gelidos aquilone Boiemos,*

*Albis & Arverni coeunt, Batavique frequentes,*

*Et quicunque colunt altâ sub rupe Gebenas*

*Non omnes prospectat Arar, Rhodanique fluentes*

*Helvetios : multos desiderat ultima Thule.*

*Certatim*



*Certatim hi properant, diverso tramite ad urbem  
Lismoriam, Juvenis primos ubi transigit Annos.*

The schools of *Clonfert, Bangor, Rathene, Cashell, &c.* were not less remarkable; and the crouds of strangers that flocked to Ireland to study, are astonishing, as may be particularly seen in the lives of St. Patrick, Kieran, Declan, Heber, Albeus, Endeus, Senanus, &c. The venerable Bede, a Saxon, does more justice \* to our country in this particular, than even our native writers. He tells us, that they were not content to visit Britain to convert those infidels, but opened schools, and founded convents for their instruction at home; that they supplied them gratis with meat, drink, cloaths, lodging and even books! No wonder then, that such unexam-pled bounty, should fill the schools of Ireland with foreigners; and that the antient letter on the continent, as well as in Britain, should be the Irish! Was a man of letters in Britain or on the continent missing, it became a proverb, *Amandatus est, ad disciplinam in Hiberniâ!* Thus in the life of Sulgenius, a Briton, as published by his John, we are told,

*Exemplo Patrum, Commotus amore legendi,  
Ivit ad Hibernos, SOPHIA mirabile Claros!*

And Aldhelm, pupil to our famous Maildolph, from whom Malmshury took its name, as Cambden, in his Account of Wiltshire observes, and the first Saxon that ever wrote Latin verse, makes our country the chief seat of the Muses,

*Primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita superfit,  
Aonio rediens, deducam vertice musam.*

The

\* Histor. Eccles. Britan. lib. 3. cap. 27.



The destruction of the Roman Empire, and the ravages and excesses of war on the continent made most of the literati of Europe flock to Ireland, as to a sure asylum: here they lived in learned ease, and died honoured and revered. The number of venerable foreigners deceased in Ireland was immensely great; and we will be enabled to form some estimate of them, from the Litany of St. Aengusius, who died in 824, and who, from having wrote the lives of the Saints, obtained the name of Hagiographus. I shall only single out of it from Ward and Colgan, the names of such foreigners as were interred *here*; and perhaps this very Litany is amongst the first in the church; and the style and manner differs from all others.

Sanctos Romanos, qui jacent in Atha Galma in Ybh-Echin invoco in auxilium meum per Jesum Christum.

S. S. Romanos de Letter-Erca, invoco in auxilium meum, per &c.

S. S. Romanos, qui cum *Cursecha* filia *Brochani*, jacent in Atha-Dalrach, invoco, &c.

S. S. Romanos de Cluain-Chuinne invoco, &c.

S. S. Peregrinos de Cluain-Mhoir, invoco.

S. S. Romanos qui cum S. Aido, jacent in Cluan-Dartadha, invoco.

S. S. Duodecim Conchenacios, qui, cum utroque Sinchello jacent in Keil-Achuidh, invoco, &c.

S. S. Septem Monachos Ægyptios, qui jacent in Disart-Ulidh, invoco, &c.

S. S. Septem Peregrinos de Imleach-mhoir, invoco.

S. S. Peregrinos qui cum S. *Mochna*, filio Luscani, jacent in Domnach-Rosen, invoco.

S. S. Peregrinos de Belach-forch-dail, invoco.

S. S. Peregrinos de Cuil-ochtar, invoco.

S. S. Duodecim



- S. S. Duodecim Peregrinos, socios St. Sinchelli, invoco.  
 S. S. Peregrinos Romanos, qui in centum quinquaginta Cymbis,  
 five Scaphis, advekti, comitati sunt.  
 S. S. Eliam, Natalem, Nemanum, et Cornutatum, invoco, &c.  
 S. S. Centum quinquaginta peregrinos Romanos, et Italos, qui  
 comitati sunt S. Abbanum, in Hibern. invoco.  
 S. S. Gallos, de Saliduic, invoco.  
 S. S. Gallos de Magh-Sallagh, invoco.  
 S. S. Saxones de Rigair, invoco.  
 S. S. Saxones de Cluan-mhuicedhe, invoco.  
 S. S. Peregrinos de Inis-puine, invoco.  
 S. S. Duodecim peregrinos, de Lethglas-mhoir, invoco.  
 S. S. Centum quinquaginta peregrinos, in Gar-mic-mögla, invoco.  
 S. S. Quinquaginta Monachos de Britannia, socios filii Mainani,  
 invoco.  
 S. S. Quinquaginta peregrinos de Suidhe Cocl, invoco.  
 S. S. 150 Discipulos S. Manchain magistri, invoco, &c.  
 S. S. 510 Qui ex partibus transmarinis venerunt cum S. Boethio,  
 Episcopo, decemque Virgines eos comitantes, invoco, &c.  
 S. S. Duodecem socios S. Riochi transmarinis invoco in auxilium  
 meum, per Jesum Christum !

The zeal of these pious and learned Christians, like that of their predecessors the Druids, was not confined to teaching, inspiring sentiments of piety, and establishing literary foundations for foreigners who might resort to them for instruction : they braved the dangers of wind and seas, to establish Christianity and letters among the nations around. The Picts, the Saxons, the Britains and Gauls ; nay, the remotest parts of Germany and Italy experienced the zeal and piety of our early Christians. Nor were they men obscure in birth or talents that engaged in these



these dangerous missions; but men of the noblest blood of Ireland, the descendants of princes, and of the first nobility. It may not be amiss in this place to make a few cursory remarks on the learned Bollandus, a Jesuit and Hagiographer of the last century, who in his Life of St. Patrick, has unwarily affirmed, that this Apostle, with Christianity, instructed the Irish in letters, of which they were totally ignorant. From the sketch of our alphabet, already given, so different in its order from that of other nations, we must certainly conclude it an original one. And had St. Patrick given it to us it would then have been the Roman, which sure no one will affirm. It is, however, certain that by his influence, the order of our alphabet was changed, for instead of beginning with the consonants, in imitation of the Latin, it commenced with the liquids. It is possible too that he might have introduced the Roman alphabet, for the use of the clergy, if Dymma, Ibarus, and Declan, &c. did not do it before him; but to affirm from this, that letters were not known amongst us before, is no less absurd than from the late missionaries teaching the Roman alphabet to their proselytes in China, to say, that the latter were illiterate before that period. The account given by Jocelyne, Probus, &c. of the contest between Patrick and the Druids, proves the latter to have known the use of letters; and Mac Kenzie \* acknowledges to have seen an Irish manuscript, brought from Colum-Kill, which was wrote by Cairbre Liffaicir, some centuries before the days of St. Patrick.

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C H A P.

\* Defence of the Stuarts, p. 33.



## C H A P. VII.

*St. Patrick's mission to Ireland. The great number of Bishops consecrated by him accounted for. A Censure of St. Bernard's explained: another of Cambrensis commented on: the great pains and labour of the Irish to propagate Christianity and letters in Britain and on the Continent: Irish Surnames accounted for.*

WHEN the Apostle Patrick, in 431, landed in Ireland, he found the inhabitants a warlike, powerful and lettered nation; and had we no other proof of this last, than the very manner in which Christianity was introduced amongst us, so different from its reception in Britain, and on the continent, it would prove the politeness and humanity of our ancestors. All the writers of his life agree, that at the commencement of Patrick's mission, and when he approached Tara, on the eve of Samhuin, (where were assembled the Monarch with the different estates of the kingdom, waiting for the Druids lighting up the sacred fires and offering their prayers to bless the national councils) this apostle caused a very considerable one to be lighted near them, the blaze of which the Druids beheld with amazement and horror: They immediately complained to Loagaire of this violence offered to religion and the fundamental laws of the kingdom; (for, as we have already observed, on the eves of May and November, even the culinary fires were extinguished through the kingdom, and it was death to light any but from the sacred fires of *Uisneach* and *Tlachta*,) and Patrick was sent for, and examined, as to this extraordinary proceeding: but he justified it, from the tenets of his doctrine; and the monarch

heard



heard him patiently, with a silent contempt; but excused in a foreigner an action which was death to a native, and contented himself with giving to the saint strict injunctions, to be more cautious for the future. More of a philosopher, than a devotee, he despised the new doctrine, but never interdicted it. Nevertheless, this summons to Patrick, served christianity: The intrepidity of the act engaged attention, and he had the good fortune to convert Conall, one of the kings brothers, on the spot. And his inveighing so freely against Druidism, without any exemplary punishment falling on him, which the people expected and were taught to believe, abated the veneration for the old doctrines.

Patrick continued his mission with astonishing success, praying, preaching, and converting in all parts of the kingdom; and we are assured, by Ninius and Jocelyne, both Britons, the first in his History of Wales, the other in his Life of St. Patrick, that the number of bishops *only* consecrated by him, was 365, and 3000 priests. Yet so great was the care that none should obtrude into the priesthood without proper qualifications, that none were consecrated who did not give (say the same authors) the most evident proofs of a holy and pious life.

It will perhaps be here objected that however populous Ireland was in those early days, and tho' her cities on the coast and inland were many and considerable; this number of bishops, by the \* canons of the church settled long before our apostle's

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time,

\* In the early councils of the church, we find the bishops ordained for large cities, or considerable tracts of land only. Thus, in the œcumenical council of Sardis, held A. C. 374, and composed of 376 fathers, as well of the eastern as western churches, it was decreed, "No bishop shall be ordained for a village, or midling city, where a presbiter would answer; lest the dignity and authority of episcopacy"



time, is far too great for the extent of the kingdom. To reconcile this account, therefore, with truth and credibility, it is necessary to recur to the form of the Irish government.

It is highly worthy remark, that the introduction of Christianity into different countries, was attended with no extraordinary revolution in the state. Reflecting on the text of scripture, *Give to Cæsar his due*, its votaries wisely judged, that the words of Peace should not be enforced by sword or fire, but that they should in introducing their doctrine, conform as much as might be, to the constitution of each country, without abating in fundamentals; and this innocent policy, has been successfully practised in later times, particularly in the conversion of the Chinese.

By the constitution of Ireland, every occupier of public posts, had his successor declared in his life time. As the heirs to the crown, were called *Roy-Dambna*, and those of the Ollamhs or doctors in different sciences, *Adhbhar*, and those of the chief nobility *Tanaiste*; the christian bishops, who succeeded the Druid Flamens, had also their successors declared, who were called *Combarbhar*; which signified not as hath been supposed, what antient divines call *Choro-Episcopi*, or bishops of country villages, but the intended successors, to the bishops then in being. Thus, tho' Patrick was himself the first arch-bishop of Ardmagh, yet during his life, we find no less than three *Combarbhars*, or substitute arch-bishops of this See, to die,

St.

“pacy, should be lessened. But the seat of a bishop should be in those cities,  
 “where bishops have before presided. If nevertheless a city shall become so po-  
 “pulous and considerable, as to be judged worthy of a bishop, let him be placed  
 “there.” This regulation was adopted by the council of Laodicea, as may  
 be seen in the 57th Canon; and the learned Baronius thinks it was earlier than  
 that of Nice.



St. Benignus, Iarlath and Cormoc. So that he was himself the first and fourth arch-bishop of Ardmagh. Now if we admit, that the number of dignified clergy in the church of Ireland, in the days of Patrick and his immediate successors, was 96 bishops, which our antient writers affirm, (a supposition far from improbable, since the number settled by cardinal Papiron, some centuries after, when the kingdom was greatly impoverished by the long and most bloody Danish war, was 39; and that in the year 1112, we read of a synod held at *Uisneach*, at which 50 bishops, 300 priests, and 3000 regulars assisted) it may be very reasonably credited, considering the length of Patrick's mission, that three or four incumbents might have died in every other see, in the same time; whereby the number of his consecrations, will appear far from exaggerated. And here I have an opportunity of explaining a censure of St. Bernard, in his Life of our St. Malachy. Notwithstanding the justice he renders the nation, yet he severely censures them for an abominable custom, of confining episcopacy and church government to certain families; insomuch, that the See of Ardmagh, for fifteen generations, or 200 years, became the property of one Sept; and (according to an old verse, in the Book of Sligoe or *Leabhar Lecane*,) of the Family of St. *Facharus* first bishop of Ross, we find no less than 27 bishops, his successors in it. But this practice must be resolved into the established customs of the country, and not any spirit of licentiousness. In a kingdom where all places of trust and honour were hereditary in families, dignitaries in church, as well as state, could not think of transferring those honours to others, which were the proofs of their dignity and blood; and provided by their election, the Sees were worthily filled, they could



could not see how the church or religion could suffer. In the earlier ages of the Irish church, this custom subsisted, and religion flourished no where more ; at the time in question, it remained, and church discipline was in vigour.

But to return : This expeditious and unmolested conversion of an entire kingdom, without confusion or bloodshed, (the sure sign of an enlightened people) has made the enemies of our antient glory form conclusions, very opposite to the natural inductions, from such facts. Thus, Cambrensis reproaches our ancestors, as the only people in the world who did not cement the church of Christ with blood. “ All the saints of this country (he says) are confessors, but no martyr, which can scarce be paralleled, by any other christian nation. There has not been found those who would cement the foundations of the rising church with blood.” Then playing on the words of the Psalmist, he exclaims, “ *Non fuit, qui faceret hoc bonum : Non fuit usque ad unum !*”\*

The more wise, learned and polite a nation is like individuals the less restraint, prejudice or oppression on account of Religion will be found ; and wherever these prevail, we may rest assured, that there barbarity, ignorance and bigotry exercise their full sway, be the state protestant, or popish. Our ancestors, humane and polished, admitted of no persecution for conscience sake : The power of judging of the human heart, they left to the sole judge of it, the Almighty ; and Loagaire, tho’ an idolater, as he found in the new religion no tenets dangerous to the state, did not oppose it. Like the modern Chinese, they suffered them, peaceably to preach their doctrine, and instruct their pupils, in polite arts, as well as religion ;  
and

\* Topography. Hib. Distinct. 3. cap. 29.



and the sensible repartee of Maurice arch-bishop of Cashel, to Cambrensis, who upbraided him that in the great list he had of Irish saints, he could not find one martyr, ought not to be forgotten. “ It is true, replied the dignitary, our country boasts of numbers of holy men, and scholars, who have enlightened not only Ireland, but all Europe; but we have ever held piety and learning in too much reverence, to injure, much less destroy the promoters of either. Perhaps now sir, added he, that your master holds the monarchy in his hands, we shall be enabled to add martyrs to our catalogue of saints.” This alluded to Henry’s having caused Thomas a Becket, to be murdered at the foot of the altar, in the church of Canterbury.

The distinguished figure which Ireland made in letters after the introduction of christianity, is a confirmation of its eminence before that period, and illustrates our pretensions to the prime seat of Druidism: and the acknowledged zeal of our christian missionaries in foreign parts, strongly supports the belief of the diligence of their heathen ancestors in similar pursuits. In fact, the new religion, was only a new mean by which a people learned and pious exercised the charity of instructing; and the more convinced they were of the truth of the new doctrine, the stronger their impulses, and the greater they thought the necessity of preaching it to nations involved in error thro’ the mistaken piety of their Druid ancestors. The wars which from the sixth to the eleventh century, desolated most of the continent of Europe, did not intimidate these men. In the midst of rapine and murder, they endeavoured to sow the seeds of piety and peace. In the fifth century, St. Cathaldus, bishop of Raheny, from a spirit of devotion, visited



visited the holy land. In his passage thro' Italy, he stopped in the city of Tarentum, then abandoned to idolatry, and by his piety and example brought back the people to a sense of christianity and devotion. The Tarentines erected a silver statue of this saint, and declared him the patron of their city. His life has been written by many hands, but particularly by two brothers, both Tarentines. Bartholemew Moronus wrote his Life in prose, and his brother Bonaventura in verse, which begins thus :

*Oceani divum Hesperii, Phæbique cadentis  
Immortale Decus, nulli pietate secundum  
Priscæ Phalantæi celebrant, quem Jura Senatus  
Externisque dolet mitti, Glacialis Iberne  
Musæ refer. Liceatque mihi si debita posco,  
Florentem Juvenem, patriis educere tectis,  
Ut Solymos fines, sacri & monumenta sepulchri  
Cernat, &c.*

Tarentum was not the only city Cathaldus reformed; it appears from this work, that he preached in many others, and that at Geneva, on the Lake Lemman, he was declared their bishop, and a professor in science. About the same time flourished our famous Sedulius the elder, whose erudition and exquisite taste for poetry, has been so much celebrated. He visited all parts of Italy and Asia, and dedicated a work to the Emperor Theodosius then reigning. Trithemius bestows on him the highest encomiums \*. St. Fridolin, of royal blood, about the latter end of this century, embraced a monastic life, and having visited France Germany and Swisserland, founded many religious houses, as Colgan, Ware, Ward, &c. testify.

Soon

\* Usher Primord. p. 762. Ward, Colgan, &c.



Soon after this, Columba, converted the Pictish nation, of which he was declared the apostle. Columbanus, a man of very great erudition, quitted Ireland, and travelled thro' Britain and Gaul, and was honourably received by Sigibert King of Burgundy. He founded the noble abbey of Luxieu, and was the first who introduced the monastic life in France. Invited by Aigilulph King of the Lombards, he also founded the abbey of Boia in the Milanese, where he died, November 21, 615. The abbey of St. Gall, near the Lake of Constance, was so called from St. Gall an Irishman, and its first founder, in the year 629. The Abbot to this day, is a prince of the Empire, and the impress of his Coin is a Bear, to commemorate a story, that when St. Gall first visited this place, a bear became so tractable as to follow him for seven years. St. Kilian, another Irishman, was sent by Conon the pope to convert the Franconians; and in the old martyrologies, he is stiled, apostle of Franconia. Albuin an Irish man converted the Thuringians, a people of upper Saxony; and is called by Arnold Wion, apostle of Thuringia. Our famous Virgilius, visited the court of France, and was graciously received by King Pepin, who sent him to Otilo Duke of Bavaria, and he was soon after, made bishop of Saltsburgh; where in the same year (767) he founded the cathedral, which he dedicated to St. Rupert. His learning was exceedingly extensive; but his name has been in later times highly celebrated for his attempts to introduce a true knowledge of astronomy, and for asserting the antipodes. St. Furse, a noble Irishman, prompted by the zeal, and encouraged by the success of his countrymen, visited England, and was received with particular marks of honour by Sigibert, King of the East Saxons. From his court he went to France, and was presented to Clovis the 2d; he then retired to Peronne, which place declared him its



Patron ; and his feast is there celebrated on the 16th of January. Our great Rumoldus was Arch-bishop and Apostle of Mechlin. In a word, Irish divines and Irish scholars, were sought for by all the neighbouring nations. The venerable Bede, every where, bears evidence to this truth. In the third book and fifth chapter of his Ecclesiastical History of Britain we are told, that Oswald King of Northumberland applied to the Irish nation for an able bishop, to instruct his subjects in Christianity ; and, in compliance with his request, they sent him one, who finding the people rude and intractable, soon returned. The Irish who were strongly inclined to reclaim this people, then fixed on Bishop Aidanus, whose mild and gentle behaviour was more likely to soften the manners of these barbarous heathens. His success was adequate to their expectations ; he soon established a religious house, brought many instructors from Ireland, and introduced a reformation, which Bede acknowledges in the strongest terms. Not only Northumberland but all the Saxons and Angles were converted to Christianity, and instructed in letters by these holy men and their successors.

In a manuscript chronicle of the Lives of Saints\*, Ireland is described to be, “ An island fruitful in her soil, but more  
 “ renowned for her holy men ; of whom Italy boasts her Columbanus, Germany her St. Gall, Mechlin her Rumoldus,  
 “ and Teutonia her Kilian.” When Charlemagne, who was called the Solomon of his time, founded, about the year 792, the universities of Paris and Pavia, Clement and John Scot, both Irishmen were appointed Regents and Directors of them. The first superintended that of Paris, the other that of Italy ; and Fleury, in the 52d book of his Ecclesiastical History, commends Charles

\* Ward's Dissert. Histor. p. 94.



Charles the Bald, for re-establishing letters on the continent, by procuring men of Science from all parts, and particularly from Ireland. Amongst the last was the famous John Scotus, surnamed Erigena, whose knowledge in the learned languages, in divinity, and metaphysical disquisitions, excited universal admiration. Antissidorus, as I find him quoted by Cambden, bestows the highest encomiums on our literati. "What shall I say (says he) to Ireland? Almost the whole nation despising the dangers of the sea, resort to our coasts with a numerous train of Philosophers; of whom the most learned injoin themselves a voluntary banishment, to put themselves into the service of our most wise Solomon." In the latter end of the 13th century, John Duns Scotus and William Halloran, alias William of Ocham, both Irishmen and great opponents, taught in the university of Oxford. The fame of Scotus became so great over all Europe, that English and Scotch, as well as Irishmen, claim as their countryman the *subtile Doctor*; but the learned *Wading*, in his Life of this able schoolman, prefixed to his works, has, beyond the reach of contradiction, proved him an Irishman. Cambden himself, whose prejudices against our country were so great, that the learned ô Flaherty passed the following censure on him,

*Perlustras Anglos oculis Cambdene duobus;*

*Uno oculo Scotos: Cæcus Hibernigenis.*

bears clear evidence of the antient state of letters in Ireland. Allemand\* confesses, "that it was enough to be an Irishman, or even to have studied in Ireland, to become the

B b 2

"founder

\* *Histoire Monastique d'Irlande.*



“founder of some religious seminary in any part of Europe.” Even Doctor Mac Pheron, in his dissertations, acknowledges, that Arts and Sciences were in the highest perfection in Ireland, when all other parts of Europe were clouded with ignorance and barbarity. I have the more insisted on these facts, as learned foreigners, (for whom this work is intended, as well as for natives) will by these means be the more convinced, that the antient laws and customs of Europe receive a fuller illustration by recurring to the History and Language of Ireland, than to those of any other nation.

Almost every thing bore evidence of the taste of the people. Even the names of places and lands were imposed for particular reasons, and vocabularies were kept, explanatory of them. When surnames came into general use over Europe, those assumed by the Irish seem to have more dignity and meaning than those taken up by the neighbouring nations. A few instances will justify this assertion. O, UI, or MAC, which signify *the son of*, are prefixed to all Milesian surnames of men, according to the old Adage,

*Per Mac, atque O, tu veros cognoscis Hibernos:  
His duobus demptis, nullus Hibernus adest.*

The descendants of Brien Boru, took the name of ô Brien; these of Neill the Great, surnamed of the Nine Hostages, took the name of ô Neill; the ô Donnells took their name from Donnell the Monarch, a descendant of Connor Gulban, the chief of that princely line; the ô Callahans, from the renowned Calachan King of Munster, the ô Kenedys from Kenedie, his heir, who projected the grand attack against the Danes. The ô Falvies from Falvie (the *White*), and admiral of the Munster fleet



fleet in this expedition; the ô Connors from Conchubhar; the Mac Mahons from Mahon King of Munster, &c. the Mac Giolla Phadraig, or Fitzpatricks of Ossory took this name to commemorate the release of Scanlan their chief by St. Columba, when confined by Hugh the Monarch; Mac Giolla Phadraig, *the son of the servant or follower of Patrick*: the ô Haedha's, or Hayes, from the famous St. Aidanus, Apostle of Northumberland; the ô Moel-Kierans from St. Kieranus, &c. the ô Siedhuil, from the great poet Sedulius, the ô Firghil from the celebrated Virgilius assertor of the antipodes, the ô Hallorans from Alluran sur-named *Teagnaidh*, or the wise, regent of the school of Clonard, and a writer of the Life of St. Patrick; the Mac Liaghs, or *sons of the physician*, were so called from their hereditary profession, as were the ô Hickies, on the same account, from *Iche, a balsam*, &c. &c. Besides, St. Patrick, who is the great Apostle of Ireland, not only every province, but every principal family, had a particular patron. St. Collumba was looked upon as the guardian of the ô Neills, Seadhna was invoked by the ô Briens; St. Caoimhgin was implored by the ô Toolles and ô Byrnes; Fiontanus by the ô Moores, &c. &c. St. Ailbe was the Patron Saint of Munster, St. Bridget of Leinster, &c.

C H A P.



## C H A P. VIII.

*Affinity between the Irish language and the English. Mr. Lhuid's system examined and refuted. Dr. ó Brien's rejected. The true cause of this resemblance assigned. Illustrated by a variety of examples.*

THAT there is a great affinity between the Irish, Welsh, and English languages in many particulars, that learned antiquarian Mr. Lhuid, in several parts of his *Archæologia*, particularly in the preface to his *Welsh Dictionary*, demonstrates; and in order to account for this, he forms an hypothesis, which he acknowledges to have no foundation in history. He supposes the Irish nation formerly consisted of two different colonies, Gathelians and Scots. The Gathelians, he conjectures, were the original Britons, who insensibly giving way to different invaders, were at length obliged to take refuge in Ireland; and thus he accounts for the great number of Irish words found in the Welsh and English; and why numbers of places in Britain still retain Irish names. The Scots he acknowledges were a Spanish colony. These premises laid down, he supposes the Gathelians were the antient Gauls, who spoke the Teutonic, and to prove it, gives a list of Irish and English words of the same correspondence; But lest the reader might imagine, that the Irish borrowed these words from the English, he adds, “ We have no room to suppose the Irish borrowed these words “ from the English, because they are extant in old manuscripts, “ before the union of the two nations. We see then (he proceeds) “ how necessary the Irish language is, to those who shall under- “ take to write of the Antiquities of the isle of Britain; and “ by reading the first Section of this book it will be also evident, “ that



“that it is impossible to be a complete master of the antient  
 “British, without a competent knowledge of the Irish.” But as  
 the antient names of places in Britain are therefore found to be  
 neither radical Gomerick nor English, but real Irish ones, he  
 supposes the Gathelians of Ireland to have been the Aborigines  
 of Britain; and though their successors there retained the names  
 they found, yet the Gathelians carried their own language to  
 Ireland, by which he means to account for the fact; he has  
 strengthened his hypothesis, by finding some affinity between  
 the words Gatheli and Celtæ, the first of which he supposes to  
 have been a corruption of the second. The most learned Dr.  
 John ô Brien, titular bishop of Cloyne, in his English Irish  
 Dictionary, lately published, astonished at the great light which  
 the Irish language throws on the antient Celtic, and unable  
 otherwise to explain why our language should become so ex-  
 tremely extensive, has adopted this system also. But each of  
 these gentlemen in their order.

Nothing can be fuller than the evidences of all our writers,  
 that Gathelians, Scots and Milesians, were synonymous terms  
 for the Irish or Spanish colony. They tell us, they were called  
 Gathelians, from Gathelus, the son of Niulus; Scots, from  
 Scota, daughter to Pharoah-Cingris, and mother to Gathelus;  
 but to me it seems more likely, that they took this last name  
 to commemorate their Scythian original. Hence, in the native  
 Irish we are called *Cuine Scuit*; and in King Alfred’s translations  
 of Bede and Orosius into the Saxon, he calls the Irish *Scuitten*,  
 and the country *Scuit-land*. The name of Milesians, which we  
 are most known by, was taken from Milesius the Spaniard, and  
 father of our first invaders. They were sometimes called Golla-  
 vids, from Gollamh, another appellation of Milesius, and Feni-  
 ans,



ans, from Fenius the famous inventor of letters \*. Some of these names are so explained in a poem, wrote in the ninth century †, beginning thus, *Canam bunadhas na Ngaidheal, Canam bunadhas na Ngaidheal*: “Let us rehearse the origin of the “Irish;” and thus he assigns the reasons for these different appellations.

*Feni o Fhenius adbearta: brigh gan dochta.*

*Gaidhel o Gaidheal glas gharta: Scuit o Scota.*

*Feni o Fhenius adbearta: brigh gan dochta,*

*Gaidhel o Gaidheal glas gharta: Scuit o Scota.*

“It is clear the Irish were called *Fenians* from Fenius, *Gathelians* from Gathelus, and Scots from Scota.”

So remote is the word Gathel with us from Celtæ, or Gaul, that by the word Gall, or Gallde, we express a foreigner, in opposition to Gaidhiol, which strictly signifies an Irishman. Hence it is, that an History of the Danish War, written some centuries past, bears this title, *Cogadh Gaidhel, re Gallabh*, or, the Wars between the Irish and foreigners; and that the two towns which compose the city of Limerick, still retain the names of *Baile Gall*, the Foreigners’ or English Town, and *Baile Gaidhe!*, the Irish Town. Even St. Bernard in his Life of St. Malachy, introduces a critic who censures the Arch-bishop for building an oratory at Benchor, in the following words, “*O bone vir, quid tibi visum est, nostris banc inducere* “*regionibus novitatem: Scoti sumus, non Galli;*” and Mac Murrough, King of Leinster, was called *Murough nan Gall*, or Maurice of the strangers. Add to all this, that Lhuid forms his distinctions from conjecture, and from not being otherwise

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\* Ogygia, p. 349.

† V. Gabhalca Eirion.



able to account for the great dependance of the British languages on the antient Irish; whereas we shall, from positive history, clear up this affair. The learned Dr. ô Brien\* as I have already observed, has adopted this system also, in opposition to the records of his native country; and has gone further than Mr. Lhuid. For whereas this last owns that he has no proof but conjecture for what he advances; the bishop admits these conjectures as clear proofs, and thinks the stories of Gathelus, Pharaoh, Scota, &c. related in our annals, to be the mere inventions of our early Christians, as the Irish could have no notion of the plains of Sennar, of Pharaoh or of Moses, but through them. The better to support this opinion, he affirms, that Fiach, one of St. Patrick's earliest disciples, broached this system, and he places him earlier than the author of the *Beabbar Gabhala*, or Book of Conquests. It is not my business to ask a Christian Bishop, why he should charge with Imposture the first founders of the Church of Ireland. But it may, without petulance, be demanded, since it is admitted that the Irish were a lettered nation long before Christianity, and the care of their annals exceeded that of all other nations, would Patrick's disciples, in the very infancy of Christianity attempt to impose, or could they have imposed on so well informed a people, and in points they were most anxious about? If these first Christians were able so speedily to overturn the History of Ireland previous to their own day, be it what it might, and to substitute their own reveries in its place, why have they not painted the Druids and their doctrines, in a most detestable light? represented them, as they have on the continent, as offering human sacrifices, &c? for this, it should seem would have better answered the cause of Christianity, if it

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was

\* Preface to his Irish Dictionary: Remarks on the Letter A, &c.



was necessary to support it by fraud and imposition? But to support properly this hypothesis, Doctor ô Brien should have informed us by what means Strabo, Herodotus, Diodorus, Cæsar, &c. were prevailed upon to join in the conspiracy with the early Christians and disciples of Patrick for their collateral evidences of the truth of our annals are much fuller than what he draws from the account of Pharaoh and the plains of Sennar.

One would be apt to conclude, that most of our eminent modern antiquarians took more pains to involve us in Pyrrhonism than to advance the cause of truth; and that their enquiries were intended rather to perplex than elucidate. Why should the inquirers into antient languages be the subverters of antient history? Are we, because we find the most generally received technical terms in arts and sciences, of Greek or Arabic derivation, to reject the histories of all the nations of Europe where they are used, and in their place to admit the reveries of Philologers? The Irish appear to have been to all the Celtic nations around what the Greeks have been to the Romans, and what both have been to us moderns. Viewed in this light, these systems will vanish, whilst the merits of the works of Mr. Lhuid and Dr. ô Brien, must be universally acknowledged; and indeed in every thing but his Historical Hypothesis, this last gentleman deserves the highest applause from his country.

We have, in the first part of this work, I think, clearly proved that the Druidism of Britain and Gaul came from Ireland; and this will, in some degree, account for the acquaintance of those nations with our language, without either their or our histories being prejudiced by this affinity. The Leabhar Gabhala, the Psalter of Caishel, and all our most authentic records agree, that *Briotan the Bald*, many centuries before Christ, led a colony from hence to Britain, and that from him the country took



took its name. This surely must be admitted as a more credible account than the romantic tale of a Brutus; and the simple derivation of Britain from this adventurer, as much more natural than the far-fetched ones of moderns, who have ransacked, not only the Latin and Greek, but even the Syriac and Phœnician, for its derivation. This vain search into foreign languages for the meaning of words which should be sought for at home, Mr. Cambden justly censures. Hereby too, we find why the most antient places of Britain retain their Irish names, without any imaginary system of population repugnant to truth or history. But if this is not thought sufficiently convincing, we shall call in to our assistance the most respectable of the antient English writers, to shew how the Saxon and English tongues became so replete with Irish roots, without supposing our Gatheli were the antient Celtæ, or our language a branch of the Teutonic.

The venerable Bede tells us, \* that Oswald afterwards King of Northumberland, fled in a former reign, with many of his followers to Ireland, where they were hospitably received and instructed in the Christian religion. On his return, A. C. 634, desirous to reclaim his heathen subjects, he requested from the Irish nation a learned bishop, by whose preaching and example his people might be converted; and they, in compliance with his request, sent Aidanus, a bishop of most exemplary learning piety and meekness. He further tells us, that this holy man, being ignorant of the Saxon tongue, the King himself, who was a perfect master of the *Scotish* tongue, became interpreter between the bishop and his people whenever he preached. He adds, for a long time after numbers flocked from Ireland to instruct these people; not only men, but women and children

\* Histor. Ecclesiast. Britan. lib. 2. cap. 3.



were trained up by them. That Aidan preached in Irish, Bede affirms, and that his subordinate missionaries did so, we can hardly doubt. From the following fact, we must even presume that their successors constantly did the same; for in the reign of Oswin, A. C. 664, when a synod was called to determine the time of celebrating Easter, he tells us \* that there appeared to support the celebration of this feast, according to the Irish church, Oswin the King, Colman the Irish bishop of Lindisfaren, all the Monks of this house, St. Hilda the Abbess, Ceadda the bishop of the West Saxons, and all who had received ordination from thence. But the Queen, the King's son, Agilbertus Bishop of Paris, who had been long in Ireland for the study of divinity, Romanus an Irish priest, but who was for a long time at Rome, were for observing Easter at the time appointed by the Roman Church. In this dispute it appears that the Irish spoke in their mother tongue, because he tells us, that Ceadda, that holy bishop was the faithful interpreter on both sides. We also find by him that Oswin as well as Oswald, was educated in Ireland, and were perfect masters of the Scottish tongue. At the breaking up of this council, we are informed that Colman returned to Ireland, and Tuda, educated and consecrated by the Scots, succeeded him in this bishoprick, and his place was afterwards filled up by Eata, another Irishman. In another place † we are told that numbers of young gentlemen left England to study among the Scots in Ireland; all of whom these hospitable people cheerfully and gladly entertained. And the places where these foundations were lay'd, yet point out their original intent, as *Graig na Mbreatanach, Sliabh na Mbreatanach, Balla na Mbreatanach, &c.* In lib. iv. cap.

\* Lib. 3. cap. 23.

† Cap. 27.



cap. 4. of said work, it appears that on St. Colman's quitting England, besides many Scots, he brought to Ireland thirty English, educated at Lindisfaren, for whom he founded a monastery in a little island in the Shannon, called Inis-Bo-finde; but he afterwards removed the English to another Monastery in Mayo, which was greatly enlarged; and which, he says, in his own days was filled with holy and virtuous Monks from England. In the days of St. Cormoc and Adamnanus the number of English Monks were no less than one hundred, as Usher notes; and to this day it is called in Irish, Mayo of the Saxons.

Bede says \*, that Diuma was Bishop and Apostle of the Mercians, and Ceallach another Scot, was his successor; next to him was Trumher, who, though of English descent was instructed and educated by the Scots of Ireland. To the conversion of the South Saxons came Dieul, with five or six brethren, who built a small Monastery in a place called Bosanhan, which was surrounded by woods and the sea†. St. Fursey, he tells us, of the blood-royal of Ireland, dedicated himself to a monastic life, and converted the East English. The great Adamnanus ‡ was Ambassador to Alfred; and during his stay in England, published an History of the Holy Land, which he dedicated to that prince. There it was that he reconciled himself to the Roman manner of celebrating Easter, and greatly contributed to bring over his countrymen from their opinion in this point. Here our venerable writer, in a kind of transport, praises God, for that the Irish who first instructed his countrymen in Christianity, were now, in return, convinced by them, that their time of keeping the feast of Easter was wrong. In the days of Alfred, surnamed the Great, four schools were founded at Oxford, and John Scotus was invited to the court of Charles the Bald to be his preceptor; and

\* Lib. 3. cap. 24.

† Lib. 4. cap. 13.

‡ Lib. 5. cap. 16.



and after this he was appointed professor of geometry and astronomy at Oxford \*.

Cambden † says, that to Glastenbury, the oldest monastery in England, learned men from all parts, and holy-men from Ireland in particular repaired, to instruct the youth in religion and letters. Malmſbury in Wiltſhire, originally Inglebore, was ſo called from Maildolph a learned Scot of Ireland, who here erected a great ſchool and monastery. Bede calls it, Maildulphi-Urbs, and by contraction it has been ſince called Malmſbury. A'dhelm of great abilities, and as Cambden obſerves, the firſt Saxon that ever wrote in Latin, or introduced Latin verſe among his country-men, was one of his pupils. Bede calls him Abbot of Malmſbury, and that he was afterwards a biſhop ; he highly extols his poetry, and compares him in this way, to *Sedulius*. Had there been the leaſt foundation for the Reveries of Mr. Lhuid, and Dr. ô Brien, would not Bede or other early writers have taken notice of them ? But there is no ſuch thing. The names of places and things, and the connection between the Irifh language and Engliſh, are more ſatisfactorily accounted for. The princes of Britain, their nobility and men of letters, were here educated. Here they enlarged the bounds of their barren tongue. Here they firſt learned the uſe of letters, and adopted our character ; and hither they muſt repair, to explain the antient names of places, and to learn the radices of very many of their words.

Befides the name of Britain, which I think, we have already accounted for, we find the country called alſo Albion ; and Scotland which was confeſſedly peopled from Ireland, has yet among us no other name. That part of Scotland, where the

Irifh

\* Rapin, &c.

† Account of Somerſetſhire.



Irish first made good their landing, they called *Cean-tir*, or the Head-land, and the country round about, *Aird-Geal* or the Hills of the Irish. And these names they yet retain: Albion, from *Ail*, a Rock, and *Ban* white, which it may have obtained from its rocky appearance, as well about Dover, as towards the North. Hence Kent, *Cean-tir*, or the Head-land; and that this was its original name, I think may well be presumed from its capital, being to this day called Canterbury, or the Head-land-city. But if instead of our derivation of Albion, we suppose it so called from *Aile*, or *Eile* another, and *Banba*, an old name for Ireland, contracted into *Alban*, or another Ireland, it will still afford greater satisfaction, than that sought for from foreign languages. The Thames called by Cæsar *Tamesis*, we derive from *Tamb*, pleasant, and *Visge*, water; London from *Long* a ship, and *Dion* a fortress, which is surely less forced, than to suppose Malmesbury so called, from our famous Maildolph, as Bede and Camden admit without scruple. Chester and its county lying so near Dublin, we may well suppose, so called, from *Cios*, tribute, and *Uir*, or *Tir*, ground, as here they collected tribute from the adjoining parts; for our histories are clear, as well as the British, that frequent irruptions and invasions from Ireland were made. Cæsar tells us, when he was crossing the Thames, that Cassivellanus, a British captain opposed his passage, and had large billets of wood sunk at the opposite shore, to render it more difficult. It has been always customary with the Irish, to give their princes or great men, some epithet expressive of their great excellency; thus one was called *Reacht-mbar*, or the Legislator, another *Begagloch*, or the Dauntless, a third *Nia-Geallach*, or of the Nine Hostages. Now if we suppose Cassivellanus, one of these Irish captains, who came to assist the Britains, as they afterwards did the Picts against the Romans, lest the

next



next attempt should be on themselves, we shall find this name explained. *Cassil*, is Irish for a fortress, *Bile*, a tree or trunk of wood, and *Aw*, a river! Our language moreover reflects honour, on the taste of the antient Saxons, of which I shall offer, a striking example. In all nations of the world, knights have been held in the greatest reverence; and we see kings themselves deemed knighthood a new accession of honour. The very name is expressive of something great; and yet if we consult our lexicographers, we find the word Knight, deduced from a German root, that signifies, a servant or slave! What an abominable idea of chivalry, and of the taste of the old Saxons! But the fault is in the moderns, who ignorant, or unwilling to allow any merit to the Irish nation, would rather recur any where, than where they ought, for the explanation of words. The word Knight is taken from the Irish *Niagha*, a knight, and which word implies also, INTREPIDITY. Had it been from the Germans, they would rather have called them Ritters, which is the German name: Nor shall I scruple to derive the German Ritter, from the Irish *Ridaire*, a Knight; because I find the word used in manuscripts earlier than the days of Patrick, or than the use of letters in Germany. Most of the terms of poetry we also find taken from us; as Rhime from *Rhan*, a verse; a *Lay*, which is positive Irish for an ode or poem, and spelled *Laoi* to sing, &c. the word *Cash* is supposed to be taken from the French *Cassette*; but I think the Irish *Ciosh*, money, tribute, to come nearer; and this conjecture becomes more probable from the very early use of coin here, as will appear in the next chapter, and from the Saxon penny, being derived from us, which was a contribution paid annually to the See of Ardmagh, from the Days of Patrick, and afterwards, by cardinal Papiron transferred to Rome. We have even some reasons to presume, that



that the antient Celtic laws *here*, took their rise ; this much at least is certain, that the antient titles of tenures, are as Dr. ô Brien observes, found to be radical Irish. Thus, the word *Allodium*, which denotes the most antient and most noble of tenures, exactly corresponds with our *Allod*, old, antient ; *Fearan-Allod*, antient property. *Feudal* property, is that tenure by which lands are held from some chief, or Allodial proprietor, under certain conditions ; and the manner of taking possession, was by having some of the ground dug up. Now *Fod* is Irish for a clod of earth. *Soccage*, in Latin *Soccagium*, was a third species of tenure, by which the vassal was obliged to supply his lord with corn ; as by the second, we should suppose that military service only was expected. The word in Irish, signifies a Plow-share. These sort of tenures seem not to have taken their rise in Europe ; for Diodorus Siculus, lib. 1. tells us, that the Egyptians as a proof that the people of Argos, of Athens, and of a city called Afty were their descendants, alledged, that the second order among them was those to whom the lands were given, to the end that they should be ready with arms to defend the country ; for in Egypt the proprietors of lands, are obliged to furnish soldiers at their own expence. Here follow other instances, of the dependance of the English tongue on our language, and of its utility to British lexicographers. The leading words in the following examples are English ; but it is proper to inform the critical enquirer, that I have not in some instances adhered to the Irish Orthography, where the pronounciation was the same in both languages ; nor in others to the expression, where the spelling seemed the same.



| English.                            | Irish.                         | English.                  | Irish.                             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                                     |                                | <b>C</b>                  |                                    |
| Aid                                 | <i>Eid, subsidie</i>           | A colliery                | <i>Choler, a mine</i>              |
| All                                 | <i>Uille</i>                   | To covet                  | <i>Cuivet, fraud</i>               |
| Apple                               | <i>Abhal</i>                   | Cost                      | <i>Costos</i>                      |
| Ancessor                            | <i>Sinsir</i>                  | Craggy                    | <i>Crrach</i>                      |
| At                                  | <i>Ait, a place</i>            | A creek                   | <i>Criche, a country</i>           |
|                                     |                                | Cunning                   | <i>Canne, an over-reacher</i>      |
|                                     |                                | <b>D</b>                  |                                    |
| A band                              | <i>Buian</i>                   | Dark                      | <i>Dorcha</i>                      |
| To baul                             | <i>Beal, the mouth</i>         | A den                     | <i>Dein, deep</i>                  |
| A bar                               | <i>Barna, a gap</i>            | Drew                      | <i>Druicht</i>                     |
| A Bark                              | <i>Barca</i>                   | To deal                   | <i>Diol, to sell</i>               |
| Bay                                 | <i>Buiz, yellow</i>            | To die                    | <i>Die</i>                         |
| A bear                              | <i>Beher</i>                   | A die or co- } <i>Dab</i> |                                    |
| A border {                          | <i>Bara, the summit of any</i> | lour, }                   |                                    |
|                                     | <i>thing,</i>                  | Delight                   | <i>Duil</i>                        |
| Bounds                              | <i>Bon, the bottom or end</i>  | To dive                   | <i>Duv, black</i>                  |
| To breathe                          | <i>Batha, life</i>             | Dirt                      | <i>Dirteal, a sink</i>             |
| Brisk                               | <i>Brosto, to hasten</i>       | To drag                   | <i>Dragam, to fight or dispute</i> |
| To brag                             | <i>Breug, alie</i>             | A dolt                    | <i>Dall, a blind-man</i>           |
| To bruise                           | <i>Brise, break</i>            | Drink                     | <i>Deoch</i>                       |
| A brier                             | <i>Briar, a prickle</i>        | A drop                    | <i>Deor</i>                        |
| A broc or } <i>Broc</i>             |                                | <b>E</b>                  |                                    |
| badger, }                           |                                | Even                      | <i>Aciven, pleasant</i>            |
| A buck                              | <i>Puc</i>                     | Earth                     | <i>Uir</i>                         |
|                                     |                                | <b>F</b>                  |                                    |
| Cash                                | <i>Cios</i>                    | To fall                   | <i>Faill, a precipice</i>          |
| To carouse                          | <i>Craoise, excess</i>         | A fault                   | <i>Feall, deceit</i>               |
| Clay                                | <i>Cre</i>                     | A father                  | <i>Ather</i>                       |
| A chair                             | <i>Cahir</i>                   | A fellow                  | <i>Fielloch</i>                    |
| To clash                            | <i>Glus, the ear</i>           | To fear                   | <i>Fare, take care</i>             |
| To cleave } <i>Gliove, a sword.</i> |                                | A finger                  | <i>Veare</i>                       |
| or divide, }                        |                                | Flesh                     | <i>Fcoil</i>                       |
| Cloaths                             | <i>Culaidh</i>                 | A floor                   | <i>Larr</i>                        |
| A clock                             | <i>Clog, a bell</i>            | To foam                   | <i>Fuaim, noise</i>                |

A forrest



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| English.                           | Irish.                            | English.    | Irish.                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| F                                  |                                   | L           |                              |
| A forest                           | <i>Fasach, a wilderness</i>       | To lag      | <i>Log, weak</i>             |
| Foul                               | <i>Fuail, Urine</i>               | A lance     | <i>Lan, a sword</i>          |
| Fun                                | <i>Fonn, mirth</i>                | A lawn      | <i>Cluan, a plain</i>        |
| G                                  |                                   | A lad       | <i>Ladir, strong</i>         |
| To gad                             | <i>Goid, theft</i>                | A lake      | <i>Louch</i>                 |
| Gaffer a }<br>country- }<br>man, } | <i>Scaffire</i>                   | A lanthorn  | <i>Lochran</i>               |
| Gospel                             | <i>Soisgel</i>                    | Law         | <i>Dlie</i>                  |
| A gale                             | <i>Gail, vapor</i>                | A lawyer    | <i>Dliedoir</i>              |
| A gaff                             | <i>Gaf, an hook</i>               | To laugh    | <i>Leive, folly</i>          |
| A grain                            | <i>Gran, corn</i>                 | Lazy        | <i>Laisce</i>                |
| A grange }<br>or farm, }           | <i>Grainseach, ground to till</i> | A leech     | <i>Leis, a medecine</i>      |
| A Grip                             | <i>Grime, an hold</i>             | Lead        | <i>Luaidhe</i>               |
| A glen                             | <i>Glean, a valley</i>            | To lurk     | <i>Lurg, a search</i>        |
| A groan                            | <i>Gearan</i>                     | M           |                              |
| A guild                            | <i>Gaoil, affinity</i>            | A maid      | <i>Maiden</i>                |
| H                                  |                                   | A male      | <i>Mala, a bag</i>           |
| An haha                            | <i>Aba, a ford</i>                | Meat        | <i>Mart</i>                  |
| Height                             | <i>Hein</i>                       | The mind    | <i>Mion, inclination</i>     |
| An hag                             | <i>Huaig, a grove</i>             | To mince    | <i>Min, fine, tender</i>     |
| Hark                               | <i>A harc, an horn</i>            | A mill      | <i>Muilen</i>                |
| Harvest                            | <i>Harver, corn</i>               | To mess     | <i>Meis, a plate or dish</i> |
| An herd                            | <i>Tread, a flock</i>             | To morrow   | <i>Marach</i>                |
| An hill                            | <i>Tulla</i>                      | A moan      | <i>Mofna</i>                 |
| An hillock                         | <i>Tailieg</i>                    | Mocking     | <i>Mogach</i>                |
| Hate                               | <i>Fuaith</i>                     | A murtherer | <i>Mairthoir</i>             |
| To hie                             | <i>Hie, to fly or run</i>         | N           |                              |
| Hist                               | <i>Eist</i>                       | Naked       | <i>Nochta</i>                |
| I                                  |                                   | O           |                              |
| Ill                                | <i>Olc</i>                        | Old         | <i>Ollad</i>                 |
| Iron                               | <i>Iron</i>                       | An oven     | <i>Uvan</i>                  |
| Island                             | <i>Oislean</i>                    | P           |                              |
| To ken                             | <i>Keam, I see</i>                | A pool      | <i>Poll, a hole</i>          |
|                                    |                                   | A pit       | <i>Pit</i>                   |
|                                    |                                   | R           |                              |
|                                    |                                   | A rate      | <i>Rachta, a law</i>         |



| English.   | Irish.                           | English.   | Irish.                           |
|------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| R          |                                  | S          |                                  |
| To reach   | <i>Reacha, to go on</i>          | The soul   | <i>Suil, expectations, hope</i>  |
| A reed     | <i>Readan</i>                    | A stream   | <i>Streamh</i>                   |
| A rein     | <i>Srian, a bridle</i>           | To steer   | <i>Stuir, a rudder</i>           |
| S          |                                  | Summer     | <i>Seambra</i>                   |
| A saddle   | <i>Sadal</i>                     | T          |                                  |
| To score   | <i>Core</i>                      | Thick      | <i>Tuigh</i>                     |
| To shock   | <i>Sioc, ice</i>                 | Thin       | <i>Thani</i>                     |
| To slay    | <i>Sloy, an army</i>             | To thrive  | <i>Tariv, profit</i>             |
| To smear   | <i>Smara, grease</i>             | A throng   | <i>Druinge</i>                   |
| To smite   | <i>Smachta, to correct</i>       | Tinder     | <i>Tuine, fire</i>               |
| A ship     | <i>Sgib</i>                      | Tired      | <i>Toirseach</i>                 |
| A shell    | <i>Sluggan</i>                   | A trade    | <i>Carde</i>                     |
| A sluggard | <i>Slugaire</i>                  | A trapes   | <i>Striopach, an whore</i>       |
| A slave    | <i>Slavra, a chain</i>           | W          |                                  |
| Smug       | <i>Smeig, the chin</i>           | To weal    | <i>Uaillim, to roar, or howl</i> |
| To skulk { | <i>Sculloge, an obscure, but</i> | To whistle | <i>Fideal</i>                    |
|            | <i>generous man,</i>             | A Wound    | <i>Gunt, &amp;c.</i>             |
| Snow       | <i>Sneacht</i>                   |            |                                  |

## CHAP. IX.

*Cruel Policy of the English. Boate's natural History censured. Early foreign evidence of the Minerals of Ireland supported by its antient History. Remarkable early accounts of the Metals about Killarny, confirmed by modern facts. Remote relations of its Gems, the abundance of copper, Gold, &c. confirmed. Objections to our antient Coinage considered, and removed. Translation of an Irish Mortgage on Lands, passed, A. C. 1250.*

THE very prejudiced accounts of Ireland and Irish-men, exhibited by English and Scottish writers, have certainly been as great a loss to letters and to Britain, as to Ireland. Had the



the English, better informed and more humane, instead of making Ireland a slaughter-house for near 500 years, by constantly stirring up her sons to war against each other, granted them the laws of Britain, who freely acknowledged Henry for their *Ard-Righ* ; and made her the ally, instead of the enemy of Britain, that greatness and power, which they have now attained thro' her means, they would long since have reached. But thro' an unexampled spirit of absurd oppression and rapacity, while they endeavoured every where to destroy the antient legislation of the Irish, they not only neglected, but refused to establish, any other in its place, insomuch that at length the killing of a *Merus Hibernicus*, became no crime! In such a state of carnage, no wonder if the Irish looked upon their oppressors as monsters ; that a perpetual war was kept up between them ; and that they concealed as much as they could their knowledge of the country, their antiquities, and their letters, from a people who eagerly sought for, only to destroy them. Thus Gerard Boate\* tells us, “ All the mines which are at  
 “ this day found out in Ireland, have been discovered by the  
 “ new English, that is, such of them as came here in, and  
 “ since the days of Queen Elizabeth, and these he tells us, are  
 “ Iron, Lead and Silver. As to the Irish themselves (he says)  
 “ *being one of the most barbarous nations of the whole earth*, they  
 “ have been, *at all times*, so far from seeking out any; that even  
 “ in these last years, and since the English have begun to disco-  
 “ ver some, none of them all, great or small, have applied them-  
 “ selves to, or furthered that business.” In the next section, he thinks mines of Gold are in Ireland ; and he mentions a drachm of

pure

\* Natural History of Ireland, cap. 16. sect. 11.



pure gold being got in a rivulet in the county of Tyrone, from which he presumes that the adjacent mountains are replete with this metal. In Cap. 18, he mentions a Silver mine, in the county of Antrim, so very rich that every 30 pounds of ore yielded one of pure silver. This candid writer was state physician to the common-wealth justices of Ireland; and was too well acquainted with the sentiments of his masters to lose any opportunity of insulting a nation, so remarkably attached to Monarchy.

Let us now see, how far doctor Boate's censure is supported by truth and history. Stanihurst who wrote a century earlier, and no very warm Irish-man, tells us, that Ireland was then known to be rich in mines of different metals; and Adrianus the Dutchman, still earlier thus celebrates them,

*Stannique fodinas,*

*Et puri argenti venas. —————*

Cambrensis himself bears testimony to our mines\*; and Donatus bishop of Fesicoli, who wrote about 1100 years ago, shews that Ireland was even then highly renowned on the same account,

*Insula dives opum, gemmarum, vestis & auri.*

From these foreign evidences, let us now recur to the accurate pages of the Irish History. In the reign of Tighernmas, who flourished about 1000 years before Christ, we are told that the  
first

\* Topograph. Hibern. Dist. 3. cap. 10.



first gold-mine found in Ireland, was discovered near the banks of the Liffy: and our annalists have been minute enough to tell us, that *Juachadban* of Cualane, in the county of Wicklow, was the principal conductor of these works\*, whose knowledge in metals and colours, they have not neglected to mention. In more than a century after we find that targets of pure silver were fabricated, and distributed to the bravest of the soldiery; and in the reign of Muincamhuin, who founded the order of the Golden Collar, (so called from each knight wearing a collar of gold hung round his neck by a chain of the same metal) helmets were made with the neck and fore-pieces of pure gold. The handles of the swords of our antient knight, were made of pure gold, and the blades of a mixt brass, numbers of which have been and are daily discovered in bogs and other recesses. It appears among the hostages delivered to the Emperors of Ireland by the provinces, as well foreign as domestic, that those of *Orgial* were particularly distinguished from the rest, by having their shackles of pure gold, and the very word signifies the Golden Hostage. Part of the *Boirimbe-Laighen*, or tax on the kingdom of Leinster, and regularly paid into the monarch's treasury, for near 400 years, was 6000 ounces of pure silver. These facts it should seem are sufficient proofs of the great riches of antient Ireland, and her superior knowledge and industry to the modern. But if her own history will not be allowed as evidence in her favour, without modern collateral proofs, we are even abundantly furnished with these.

Mr. ô Flaherty †, from Nenius an author of the 9th century, and from old manuscripts, gives an account of the antiently supposed wonders of Ireland, some of which have been found true, others

\* Keating p. 1. ô Flaherty, p. 195, Grat. Lucius, &c. † Ogygia p. 220.



others false. Among others we find the following account of mines about Louch-Lene, or Killarney in the county of Kerry,

*Mamonice stagnum Lochlenius undique Zonis*

*Quatuor ambitur: prior est ex ære; secunda*

*Plumbea; de rigido conflatur tertia ferro:*

*Quarto renidenti pallescet linea Stanno.*

We also find, that in said lake, large quantities of pearls have been found.

It is not above thirty years since a very rich copper mine was discovered on the border of this lake, and worked with very great profit to the proprietors for many years; but what is greatly to our purpose, is, that on pushing on their works, they found shafts had been regularly sunk, and implements of mining were found. These works were ignorantly imputed to the Danes, who, it appears, had very inconsiderable settlements here, and who, it must be confessed, seem to have been little qualified for such undertakings. As to the lead mine it is an uncontroverted fact, that about fifty years ago, an English company worked one at Castle Lyons, on the side of the Lake; and many years after the same works were resumed under the inspection of one Longstaff, from which they extracted large quantities of silver. Though the tin mine has not been yet found, nor, I suppose, searched for, yet Smith \* confesses to have found near the lake an ore which contained tin; and as for the iron mines, the proofs that they were largely carried on here are many, and at this day one is worked near Mucrofs. A. C. 1094, we read of an elegant present of Kerry pearls, from Gilbert Bishop of Limerick, to Anselm Arch-bishop of Canterbury †. At this day pearls are frequently found in the

\* Nat. History county of Kerry, p. 125.

† Epistol. Hibern. Syl. p. 81, &c.



the lake; nor can it be denied but the finest amethysts, emeralds, and other precious stones, and the hardest are found in this country; and the common Kerry stone nearly approaches the diamond in lustre and hardness. Yet it is not above fifty years since such have been discovered; though we read, that our early princes and nobles wore them in their ears and on their cloaths; and that the Bishop of Fesicoli has mentioned these among the other productions of Ireland! In opening of many other mines, old shafts have been discovered, and implements of mining found, particularly in a rich lead one, on the estate of Thomas Westrop, Esq; in this County, and bordering on the Shannon. In working the lead mines of Knocaderry, since called silver mines, in the county of Tipperary, in the beginning of the last century, shafts were seen, and every other proof of its being worked centuries earlier. The rich copper mines in the county of Wicklow, and these later ones in the county of Tipperary, are still further proofs of the great plenty of this metal formerly; and will explain why the sharp edges of the blades of our antient swords, &c. were of a mixt brass; and how the people of Leinster were enabled to give six thousand copper cauldrons to the Monarch's tax-gatherers, every second year, being a part of their famous tribute, the cause of so much bloodshed in Ireland.

When the Spaniards in Queen Elizabeth's days, landed at Smerwic bay, in the county of Kerry, on erecting a fort near it, from the many pieces of gold they found here they called it Fort de l'or; and some years ago some country people in trenching potatoes near it, found several corselets of pure gold. Mr. Smith \* supposes this to be part of the treasures sent from Spain,

E e

in

\* History of Kerry, p. 186.



in these days ; but is it probable that gold corselets were sent to relieve a distressed people, who only wanted powder and ball, and which they fought for at an immense expence? Besides, Sir George Carew, then president of Munster, and an indisputable authority tells us \* that these treasures were in Money, safely landed by Mac Eagan, Apostolic Vicar, and by him distributed to the Irish chiefs ; nay he is even minute enough to tell us, each person's share. But numbers of these, as well as handles of swords, and gold of a particular colour and hardness, made for the purpose of lodging the poll-axes of our antient *Marc-Sloigh*, or cavalry, have been frequently found. Of these corselets alone, I have seen above twenty, and purchased one, the gold of which was so ductile as to roll up, like paper. These likewise prove the reality of our *Niagha-Nasc*, or Knights of the Golden Collar, as well as the superior knowledge of our ancestors in the natural history of their country. They shew the care taken to advance nothing but what was strictly true, in our antient history ; and at the same time, point out to the public, the great loss the learned world as well as this kingdom has sustained by the destruction of so many of our antient annals, and the necessity of attending more diligently to what remain. Even our old odes and ballads, should not be too slightly regarded. The Bishop of London, in his edition of Cambden, p. 1411, tells us, that—" The Bishop of Derry being one day at dinner, " an Irish harper came in, and sung an old ode to the harp, the " substance of which was, that in such a place, pointing to the " very spot, near Bally-shannon, a man of gigantic figure lay " buried ; and that over his breast and back were plates of " pure gold, and on his fingers rings of the same ; the place

" was

\* Pacat. Hibern. p. 306.



“ was so minutely described, that two of the company were  
 “ tempted to examine into it, and did accordingly find two thin  
 “ pieces of pure gold,” a figure of one of which, Mr. Harris  
 gives. The great plenty of gold in antient Ireland cannot be  
 contested. We have seen that part of the furniture of Tara was of  
 pure gold, as was most of the church plate through the kingdom :  
 even the bells for the altars were of gold, or of silver inlaid  
 with gold, and ornamented with precious stones, many of which  
 existed in the last century, as the learned Colgan witnesses ; \*  
 and we yet call them Muilleán-oir. Nay this luxury extended  
 to private life ; thus, the *ô Cowbig's*, a family of the county of  
 Cork, are, in a very antient poem, distinguished from their  
 neighbours, the *ô Discoll's*, and *ô Flain's*, by the epithet of  
*ô Cobhtaicc, na N'ard-Ccorn oir*, or *ô Cowbig* of the lofty gold  
 drinking cup. Should any doubt yet remain of the wealth of  
 antient Ireland, the Airigid-Sron, or Nose money, being an  
 ounce of gold paid annually by the head of every family, under  
 the Danish power to these tyrants, may, surely, remove it.

Though the early use of coin in Ireland is asserted by our  
 antient writers, yet I find it much questioned by the moderns.  
 So early as the year of the world 3480, we read that Eadna  
 the red, erected a mint at Airgid-ros, on the Shure † for  
 the coinage of silver ; and here it was that some centuries more  
 remote, silver shields were fabricated. The very name of this  
 place, denotes the uses it was converted to, *airgid* being Irish  
 for silver, and *rhos*, knowledge ; as *Cluan-oir-Allaid*, in the  
 county of Limerick, seems to have taken its name from its  
 being a place employed in *refining gold*. In later days we read,  
 that our Mint was removed to *Cluan Mac Nois* ; and that no  
 E c 2 doubt

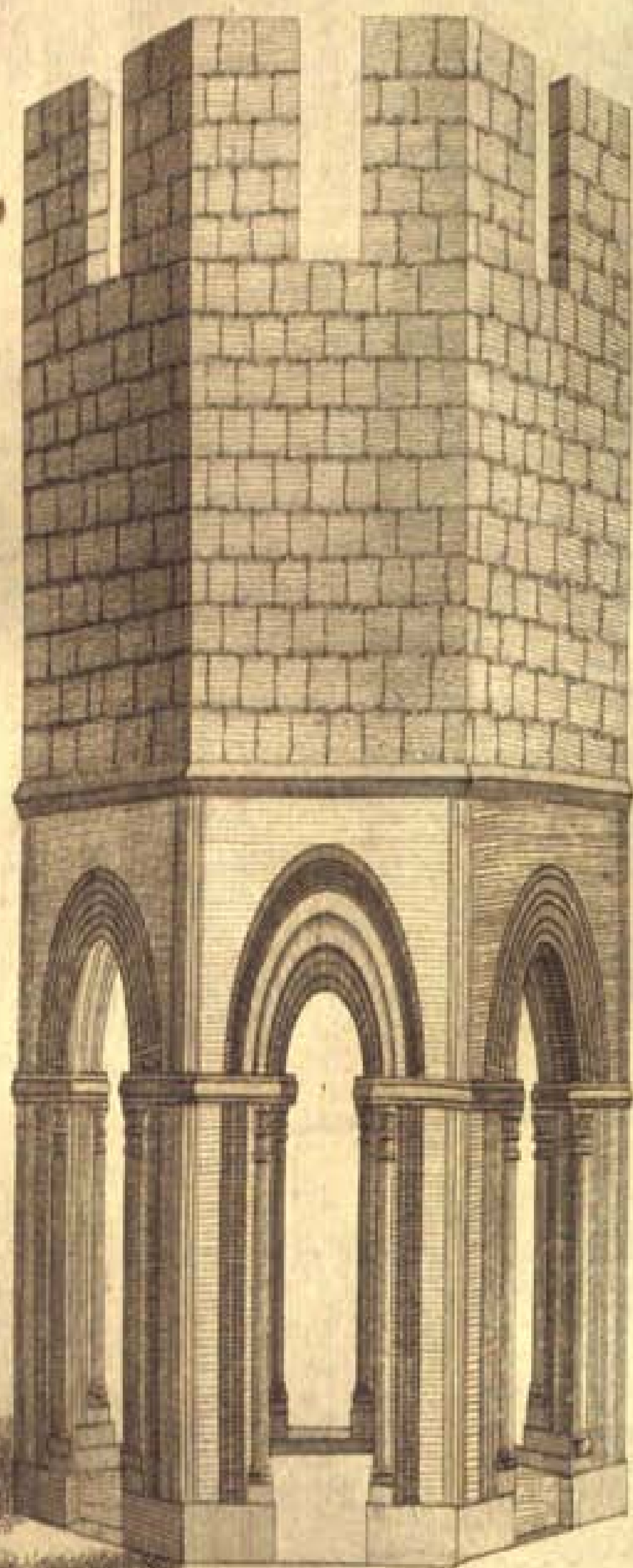
\* Aët. Sanctör. Hibern, p. 149.

† Ogygia, p. 249. Keating, Grat. Lac. Ward, &c.

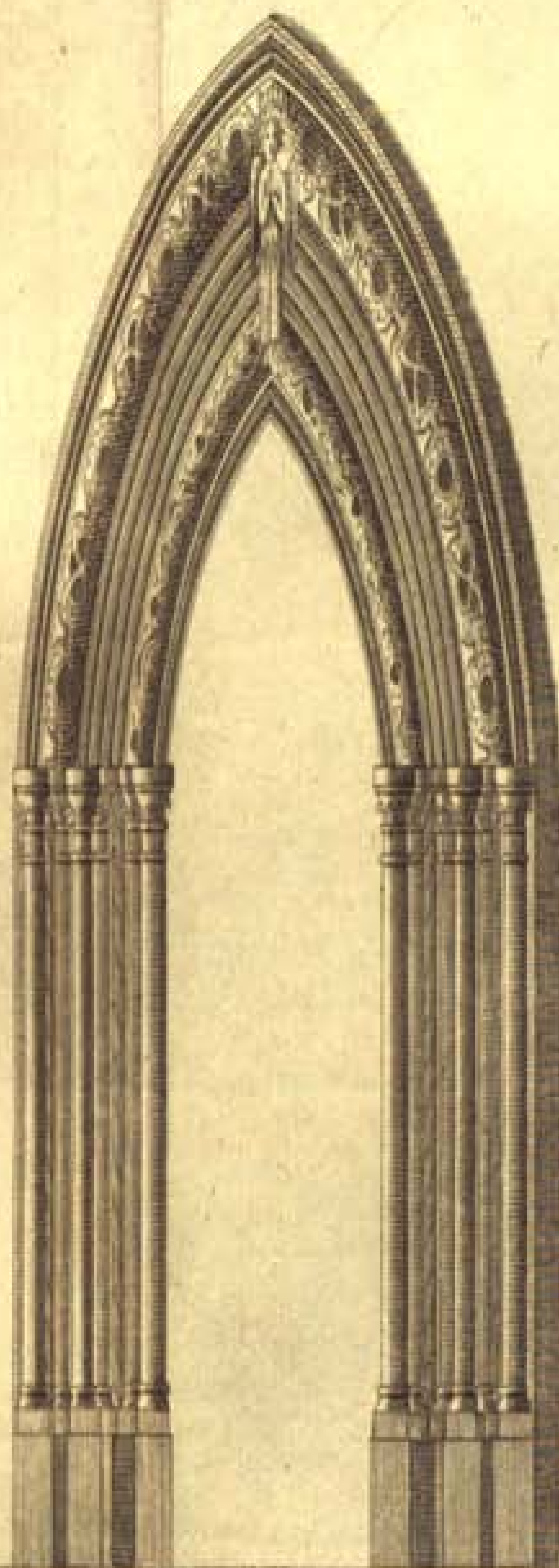


doubt should remain of our coinage, we are told, that in the days of Druidism, the head of every family paid annually to the King of Munster a *scrubal*, (a three-penny piece) as an acknowledgment for his having given to the public the domain on which the temple *Tlachta* was built, in which the fire of Samhuin was preserved. This was paid in at Cashel, so called from this tribute, *Cios*, signifying contribution, and *oll*, a fortress. In 1074, Lanfranc, Bishop of Canterbury, in a letter to Tireldach, the Monarch, censures the Irish dignitaries, for conferring holy orders for money. By Mathew Paris we find, that in the days of King John he sent the Bishop of Norwich as justiciary of the English pale, "who caused the money of the country to be stamped according to the weight of English money, and ordered that both the farthing and half-penny should be struck round," which order must appear extremely absurd, if they had not circulating cash before. True it is, as Mr. Harris observes, that where mention is made in our annals, of offerings of gold, or silver, the weight, not the value, is noticed; and from this he judges, our money was the pure metal, not ascertained in value by impressions, as in other nations. Thus, in the will of St. Cormoc, King, and Arch-bishop, and author of the famous Book of Munster, or Psalter of Cashel, deceased A. C. 913, we read amongst other bequests, of the following, "To the abbey of Aird-Finan, an ounce of gold, an ounce of silver, an horse and arms. To the church of Lismore, a gold and silver chalice, with silk vestments. To the church of Cashel four ounces of gold, five of silver, a chalice of gold and one of silver. To Emly three ounces of gold, and a mass-book. To Glean-da-Loch, an ounce of gold, an ounce of silver, an horse and arms, with a silk vestment. To the church





1



2

Fig. 1 An Octagonal Building, part of the Abbey of  
Melesfont. See Wright's Louisiana.

Fig. 2 Gothic Door into the Chapel of the Abbey  
of Melesfont.



Fig. 1

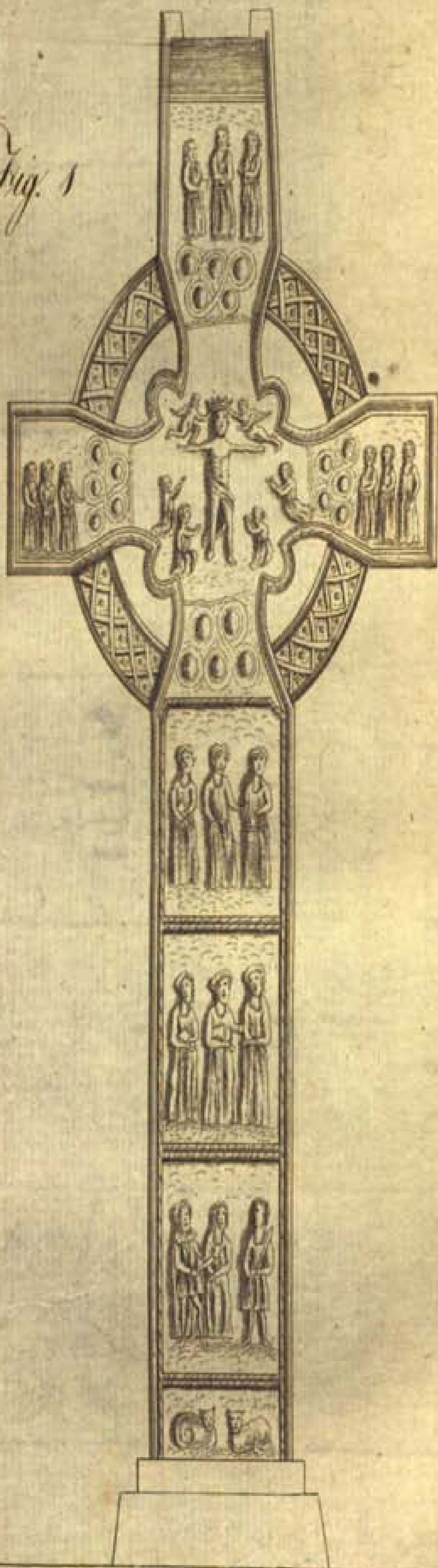


Fig. 2

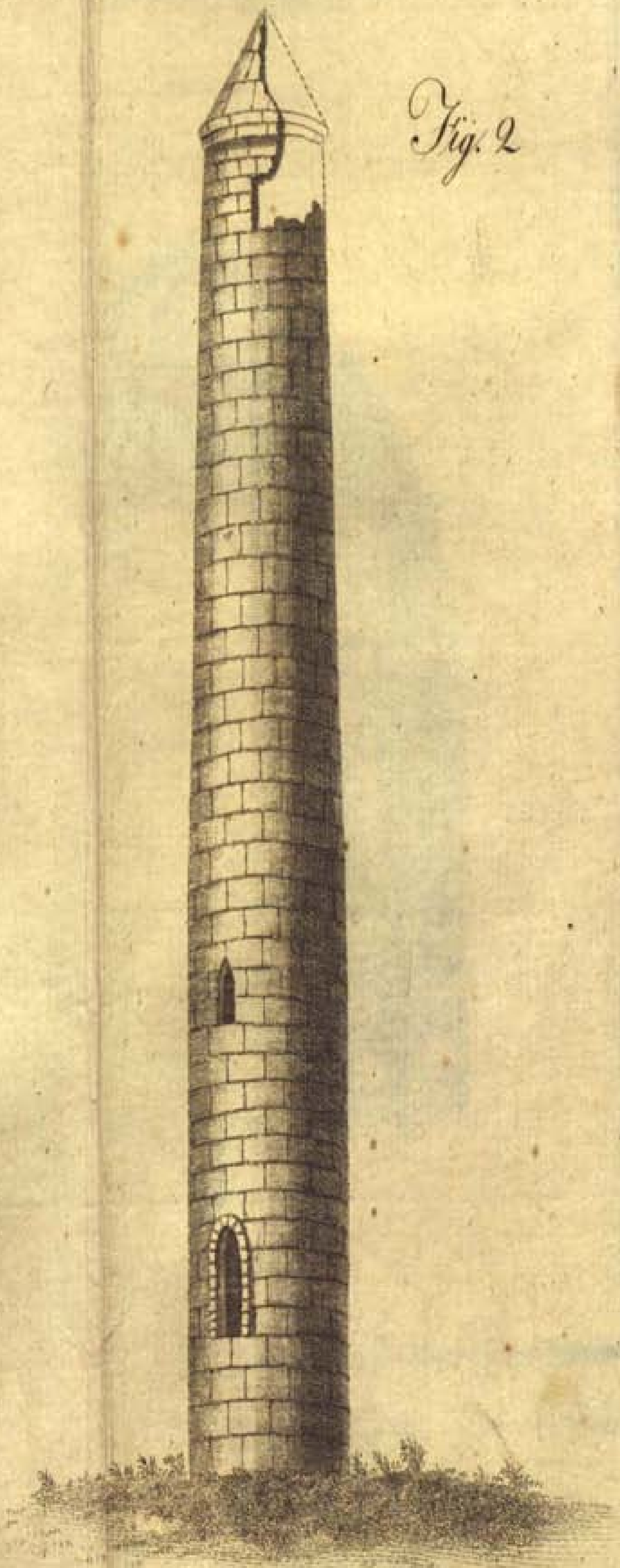


Fig. 1 St. Boyne's Cross near Drogheda. there is an Irish Inscription on its Base, for which see Phil. Transact. abrid. Vol. V. Pt. 2. Page 57. ~ Fig. 2 A Round Tower or Anchorite retreat adjoin<sup>g</sup> St. Boyne's Cross.



“ church of Ardmach twenty-four ounces of gold, and of silver.  
 “ To Inis-Catha, or Scatterry, three ounces of gold ; and to  
 “ Mungred college, near Limerick, three ounces of gold, with  
 “ a silk vestment, and his benediction.” In the Ulster annals,  
 under the year 1004, we read, that Brien made a journey to  
 Ardmach, and there made an offering, on the altar of St. Pa-  
 trick, of twenty ounces of pure gold. We are also told, that  
 Tireldach the Monarch, in 1152, received as ransom from  
 ô Brien, King of North Munster, sixty ounces of gold, sixty  
 gold bracelets, and a very large gold cup, called by way of pre-  
 eminence, *the cup of Brien Boru*. These annals further tell us,  
 that in 1157, on the dedication of the church of Mellefont,  
 Malachy the Monarch, presented sixty ounces of gold on  
 the altar ; ô Carrol the founder, sixty ounces of gold, and  
 Devorgilla, the wife of ô Rorke, as many. Tireldach the  
 Monarch bequeathed to the churches of Cluan Mac Noife,  
 five hundred and forty ounces of pure gold, and here he erected  
 likewise a mint for coinage. But though these accounts seem to  
 justify Mr. Harris’s suspicions, yet more closely viewed, they will  
 not be found to affect the credit of our faithful annals. In  
 China to this day, though they have a very great circulation  
 of cash, yet its value is estimated by its weight ; for “ they re-  
 “ duce it to what form they please, without arms, order, or  
 “ ornament ; they clip it into pieces ; and it is only by weight,  
 “ *not by the Emperor’s mark*, that they fix its value ; yet  
 “ every current piece has a mark on it.” So, in Ireland,  
 we must suppose, that the Monarch’s, or Provincial Prince’s  
 head gave it the sanction of coin, tho’ its weight alone ascer-  
 tained its value ; and this seems to account for King John’s di-  
 recting the coin, in the pale, to be rounded. Add to this, that  
 in



in 1639, a large quantity of Irish coins were found in the county of Wicklow, many of which fell into the hands of Sir James Ware, who has given figures of them, as Harris and Simon have done after him; besides, in a very old conveyance, the translation of which closes this chapter, coined silver is expressly mentioned, as well as *bons*, or four-pence pieces; and in a parliament held at Trim, in 1448, ô Riely's money is prohibited to pass in the pale.

Saxo-Grammaticus acquaints us, that the Danes, under their leaders Hacco and Starchater, invaded Ireland, attacked and defeated the Irish army, and killed Hugelet their King. That they found in the treasury in Dublin, such profusion of money “that every man had as much as he could wish, and they had “little occasion to quarrel about a division of the booty, “as each man had as much as he was able to carry with “him.” But because no such prince as Hugelet is found in the list of our kings, Mr. Harris rejects the whole; though Saxo, and after him Bartholin, might well mistake the name of the Monarch; and as we find the fact confirmed by our own writers, we think it should have greater weight. For in the reign of Niall, surnamed *Glun-dubb*, or the Black-knee'd, A. C. 953, we read that the Danes, led by Sitric, and the sons of Jomhair, landed near Dublin, attacked the Monarch, who, after a most bloody battle fell, with most of the Princes of Leinster and Ulster, and took Dublin sword in hand, which they plundered. Among the slain was Hugh Mac Eachagan, King of Ulster, which name a Dane might mistake for Hugelet, as it seems the Irish did Sitric for Starchater; thus the fact is reasonably established, though the names are mistaken on both sides.

I shall



I shall close this chapter, with the LITERAL translation of an Irish deed of conveyance of a mortgage on lands, in the county of Clare in 1251. The original is in the hands of Mr. Nicholas Mac Inerhiny merchant of this city, in whose family it has been preserved ; and the translation was made by Mr. Thovry a gentleman eminently skilled in the history and language of his country, as was his deceased brother and most of his predecessors. The Deed is written on a Slip of fine Vellum ; and on a margin down its left side, is an Aperture, through which a slip of parchment runs, and to which it is tied. On this slip are the names of the witnesses, and at its extremity, it would appear a seal was fixed. Both original and translation were long in my possession. It begins thus,

“ In the name of God,

“ **T**HIS is the agreement of the sons of John Mac David  
 “ Cregan, *viz.* Darby and young John, relative to  
 “ a mortgage they have, from the heirs of Dennis Mac Evoy.  
 “ They assign to John Mac Ea (“ Mac Namara”) and his heirs,  
 “ their right of pasturage for 13 milch-cows and strippers, on  
 “ the lands of Leacan, and on half the lands of Corcan-Cluy,  
 “ together with its domain, commonage, and other appurte-  
 “ nances ; and the said John Mac Ea gave the said Darby  
 “ Cregan one sow on condition of getting quiet possession of  
 “ said lands. Nor shall it be in the power of Darby or any per-  
 “ son for him, to redeem said lands, without the consent of  
 “ John himself, and that redemption to be on the feast of St.  
 “ John the Baptist, in any one year, after the first year. Said  
 “ Darby doth also assign to said John Mac Ea, his title to Lis-  
 “ Broc, and one half of Smith Island, at whatever time he  
 “ redeems



“ redeems this mortgage ; nor shall any other person have power  
 “ to mortgage it, for any other sum.

“ The witnesses to this contract are, God in the first place ;  
 “ and Cornelius Nealan, Con Mac Shane, Dennis Mac Teige  
 “ Mac Shane, Ruan Mac Teige Mac Shane, and Cornelius Mac  
 “ Clanchy.

“ Moreover the said John Mac Ea, hath paid unto Mortough  
 “ Confadin, 20 ounces of refined Gold, to release the mortgage  
 “ he had, on young John's (Cregan) inheritance in the lands of  
 “ Tulla-Varga : To say, three months liberty of plowing yearly,  
 “ in that part, called Tulla-porein, one day and an half ditto  
 “ in Corleacan, half the lay ground of Smith's Island, and two  
 “ thirds of its pasturage, liberty to build an house, with bog  
 “ and commonage, &c. nor shall it be in the power of any  
 “ person to redeem said lands, from John Mac Ea, but young  
 “ John himself ; and the payment thereof to be made in *coined*  
 “ *silver*, or dry stock ; and the said John Mac Ea shall possess all  
 “ said lands, an entire year, after such payment. Said lands to  
 “ pay two *Bons* (Eight-pence) crown rent, and a reserved rent,  
 “ of one ounce of refined gold, and two pennies to young John  
 “ himself, and two bons, or groats, to Darby Mac Shane his  
 “ brother, besides an ounce of refined gold given him for joyn-  
 “ ing in this Deed. Another demand said John Mac Ea has on  
 “ said lands—one speckled stripper he gave last Christmasts, for  
 “ getting possession of the premisses.

“ The witnesses are, God in the first place, and Connor  
 “ Nealan, and Con Mac Shane; the two sons of Teige Mac  
 “ Shane Mac Mahon, to wit, Donough and John, and Cornelius  
 “ Mac Clanchy.

“ I Thomas



“ I Thomas Mac Clanchy of Cluan Mac Diarmada, wrote  
 “ this, at Tulla-Varga, on the eve of St. Martin, in the year of  
 “ our Lord, 1251.”

To explain why this Deed is signed, as written by Thomas Mac Clanchy, it is proper to inform the public, that the Mac Clanchys were the hereditary juridical tribe of North Munster : From them were the judges, lawyers and notary publics appointed ; and no deed, bargain, or sale, could be valid, without the signature of the proper officer of the family in each department.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

F f

A N



"I Thomas Mac Clanchy of Clan Mac Dinmada, wrote  
 "this, at Tulla-Varga, on the eve of St. Martin, in the year of  
 "our Lord, 1241."

To explain why this Deed is signed, as written by Thomas  
 Mac Clanchy, it is proper to inform the public, that the Mac  
 Clanchys were the hereditary judicial tribe of North Munster:  
 from them were the judges, lawyers and notary publics ap-  
 pointed; and no deed, bargain, or sale, could be valid, with-  
 out the signature of the proper officer of the family in each

## END OF THE SECOND PART.



INTRODUCTION  
TO THE STUDY OF THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES

OF  
IRELAND.

PART THE THIRD.  
CHAPTER I.

*Condition of the antient Irish, and the effects which Christianity produced. Remarkable anecdotes of two synods. Absurdity of supposing them conquered by the few foreigners brought over by Mac Murrough King of Leinster. Their general character, and a view of the state of Ireland for a century preceding the Restoration of the King of Leinster. Cause of the expulsion of the latter, and the means used to favour his return. His peace with the Monarch. Characters and dispositions of the other princes. Aspires to the monarchy, lays Dublin under contributions, and sends for Strongbow.*

HITHERTO we have seen the Irish, a brave, a powerful and a learned nation ; extending their arms, as well as their arts, over the neighbouring nations, and acquiring glory before the Romans themselves had yet a name ! When these conquerors had subdued almost the whole world, Ireland alone, the *Virgin Island*, remained secure and unmolested ! her gallant



sons scorning the Roman name, did not tamely wait their attacking them at home. They fought them in Britain, Gaul and Italy, and by their prowess *there*, convinced them what kind of reception they were likely to meet with, should they dare to face their own coasts. They united with the Germans, the Gauls, and all the sons of Liberty; and by this union was the Roman power, at length totally annihilated.

The reception of Christianity was a mortal blow to the greatness of Ireland. This new religion introduced a kind of doctrine before unknown to the people. Instead of those elevated notions of military glory, of intrepidity, and independence, so much cherished by their ancestors, they were *now* taught patience, humility, and meekness. Steady in acting up to whatever they held to be the truth, the Irish adhered to the letter of the law, and early began to reduce its tenets to practice. The first instance we have of it, is, in their remitting the usual tribute paid by North-Britain, through the intercession of St. Columba, and declaring the *Dal-Riuda* a free people. Hence also it is, that we afterwards find their spirit turned into a new channel; and the sons and grandsons of princes and heroes become school-masters and priests! Instead of seeking glory and immortality in foreign lands, at the head of warlike bands, they now became contented humbly to court them at the head of Priests and philosophers. But this martial spirit, though depressed, could not be totally subdued; and for above two hundred years, they never ceased warring with the Danes, though perpetually pouring in new troops, till they totally expelled them the kingdom.

The influence of these Christian Principles was highly conspicuous after the restoration of Murrough. It is a curious anecdote, and greatly illustrates the national character of the Irish.

Astonished



Astonished at the barbarous excesses committed by this prince, and his foreign associates, in the slaughter of the citizens of Waterford, the treacherous capture and carnage of the people of Dublin, the desolations of Ossory, Wicklow, Fingal, Breffni, Meath, &c. the Irish clergy assembled in council at Ardmagh in 1171, to enquire into the cause of this heavy judgment fallen on the kingdom, and to endeavour to avert the anger of Heaven. After much grave deliberation, it was concluded, that the purchasing from the English their children and relations for slaves, was what offended the Almighty; and they hoped, by abolishing this custom, that all these misfortunes would cease. Had these reverend dignitaries but once reflected, that if it was sinful in the Irish to buy these exposed wretches, it must be infinitely more so in their savage parents to countenance such traffic: a traffic more shocking than what is now carrying on, on the Guinea coasts, where the people sell, not their relations and children, but the captives they make in war. This kind of commerce, for which their own Cambrensis, and a cotemporary writer, upbraid them, it appears was very extensive for centuries before; since Bede assures us, that in the decline of the sixth century, it was from a public sale of English pagan slaves at Rome, that Gregory the then Pope took the hint of sending Augustin the Monk to Britain. Some remains of this custom may yet be traced in England; where at numbers of fairs, large droves of *bipedes* of all ages and both sexes are collected, to be hired to different parts. The abolishing this trade, and the restoring all the captives in the kingdom, was however far from lessening the calamity complained of; but this anecdote proves that the clergy sincerely believed every principle of the doctrine they taught, and it must remain a *perpetual confutation* of the charges brought against this kingdom,



in Pope Adrian's famous bull of donation, whether real or spurious; since the clergy of the nation, who must be best acquainted with the vices and dispositions of their flocks, could find no greater crimes to charge on the people as the cause of this supposed judgment from Heaven; and as such concluded, that it was in vain, as well as sinful, by temporal force, to oppose the decrees of the supreme! Hoveden and Hollingshead, &c. mention a synod of the Irish clergy, held at Cashel, after this, the principal object of which was, to gain them over to the English interest, though the pretended purpose was to reform the Irish church. This will appear more clearly from the reforms made there. 1st, To contract no marriage with their near relations. 2d, To catechise the infants before they were baptised. 3d, To pay their tythes *duly*. 4th, That all church lands should be exempt from *temporal* jurisdictions. 5th, That church-men should be exempt from contributing to amercements for any crimes, committed by their relations. 6th, That wills should be made in the presence of credible witnesses. 7th, That the funerals of the dead be solemnly performed. And, 8th, That since it was the will of God to deliver them up to the government of the English, they should agree with them in all church discipline. I leave the reader from this to judge of the great reformation wanted in Ireland, and the necessity for it; if establishing *spiritual* tyranny, may be called reformation.

The greatest nations have had their periods of glory; and it must be confessed that the Irish preserved theirs longer than any other we read of, since their constitution remained pure and un sullied for above two thousand years! To read the accounts of the revolution which first wounded, and in process of time destroyed the Irish Monarchy, one would imagine, that the kingdom



kingdom was, as it were, in an instant, swallowed up by an handful of Normans. And could the whole nation, at once, forget every principle of virtue, of intrepidity, but above all, of love to their country, for which their ancestors through ages, were famed? The descent from virtue to vice, in an individual, is but gradual: in a nation it must be the work of time. *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*, is an old and acknowledged adage. But before we attempt fully to explain the nature of the Norman invasion, *so often treated of, and yet so little understood*, we shall give a general character of the antient Irish, supported by the History of their country, and from which their descendants at this day have very little deviated.

That innate bravery, for which the antient Irish have been so distinguished, is yet too well supported to require enlarging on. We have a thousand words to express heroism, we have scarce one for cowardice. It seemed an exotic, in the days of antiquity; nor is it known in modern times; and the Irish troops, both abroad and at home at this day rank amongst the first soldiers of Europe. But what added lustre to this *native* valour, was the extreme candor, openness and simplicity of the people. Not even to gratify that insatiable thirst for power, the source of such devastations, do we often read of indirect, or dishonourable means used. Heralds were sent to denounce fair open war, and the place and time of action were previously settled. If any unforeseen accident disappointed either party, as to the number of troops, &c. notice was sent to his opponent, and a further day was required, and generally granted. Superior valour only could secure the laurel; and the chiefs of the defeated party, scarce ever survived their disgrace. But this was not the work of their own hand, or of some cowardly slave, as was often the case with the antient Romans: The enemies' swords



swords only could put a stop to their career. When *Eogainmore* at the battle of Lena, pierced by a thousand wounds, was raised up on the shield of his enemies. “Lay down the body of the King of Munster, says Gaul Mac Morni, the monarch’s general, for he died as an hero should die.” In point of hospitality, they exceeded all the nations of antiquity. Their extreme love, their reverence for the fine arts, particularly for music and poetry, cannot be too much admired; and in no nation of the world, but Ireland, could science be said to flourish amidst the horrors and devastations of war. How sacred and how revered impartial justice was in Ireland, need not here be insisted on. Even a constant intestine war of 400 years, nourished and supported by different English deputies, could not erase these exalted Principles; and *Finglas*, chief baron of the exchequer \* in the days of Henry the 8th, says, “That the English statutes passed in Ireland, are not observed eight-days, after passing them; whereas those laws and statutes made by the Irish on their hills, they keep firm and stable, *without breaking them for any favour or reward.*” Sir John Davis attorney general, in the days of James the I. had a better opportunity of knowing the Irish, as he was the first English justice, who ventured on circuits, out of the pale. He tells us †, “There is no nation under the sun, that love equal and indifferent justice, better than the Irish; or will rest better satisfied with the execution thereof, although it be *against themselves.*” this honourable evidence of an enemy, and at the conclusion of a most bloody 15 years war, must give an high Idea of Milesian rectitude; and Cook treating of the laws of Ireland, has these

remark-

\* Baron Finglas’s Breviate of Ireland.

† Davis’s History of Ireland.



remarkable words \*. “ For I have been informed by many of  
 “ them that have had judicial places there, *and partly of mine*  
 “ *own knowledge*, that there is no nation of the Christian world,  
 “ that are greater lovers of justice than they are; which virtue  
 “ must of necessity be accompanied by many others.”

A reverence for their country, and an attachment to her anti-  
 ent customs were no where more conspicuous. *Far from the*  
*depravity, degeneracy and ingratitude of their successors*, the beau-  
 ties of Ireland, the fertility of her soil, the temperature of the  
 clime, and the numbers of heroes and legislators she produced,  
 were inexhaustible themes for the senachies and bards: hence  
 besides her acknowledged names, the variety of poetical appella-  
 tions she received; as, *Inis Alga*, the Noble Island, *Inis na*  
*Riagh*, the Island of Kings, *Inis na Maoimb*, *Eire-oghe*, Virgin,  
 or Unconquered Ireland, *Eire Arde*, Lofty Ireland, &c. In  
 point of friendship no people were more constant and sincere. But  
 with all these elevated virtues, the Danish wars shook the foun-  
 dation of the Irish constitution. The perpetual conflicts be-  
 tween the two people, and the interruption to the general course  
 of the laws, gave liberty to the provincial kings and feudatory  
 lords, to assume a power injurious to the Monarchy. Hence it  
 is, as Mr. ô Connor † observes, that we often read of provin-  
 cial assemblies, being opposed to the *Fies Tambrach*, or great  
 national meeting; and Brien Boru, in the eleventh century, tho’  
 as great a prince as any nation produced, and who, Dr. War-  
 ner ‡ thinks superior to Cæsar or Alexander, by his death, laid  
 the foundation for the entire ruin of a structure, which flourished  
 with vigour for near 3000 years! For though his intruding on  
 the Monarchy, contrary to justice, produced a great event,  
 G g namely

\* Cooke’s Institutes, chap. 76.

† Dissertations on the History of Ireland.

‡ History of Ireland, vol. 2.



namely, the total destruction of the Danes, yet by his fall, and that of his gallant son *Morrrough*, and grandson *Turlough*, at the battle of *Clontarrif*,—the power of his people became greatly weakened, and his example justified other provincials in their attempts on the Monarchy. Had he survived that glorious day, he, and he only, seemed capable of restoring the constitution of his country to its pristine vigour. After the death of Malachy, *Donough*, *Turlough*, and *Murtough*, were rather Kings of *Leth Modha*, or the Southern half of Ireland, (according to the partition treaty made in the second century, between *Con* the Monarch, and *Eogain* the Great, King of Munster) than Monarchs of the kingdom, and of course were obeyed by their own factions only. The first care of Tireldach ô Connor, King of Conaught, and who also intruded on the Monarchy, or at least was acknowledged as Monarch by a considerable part of the kingdom, was to invade the two Munsters by sea and land, in order to destroy that power he so much dreaded; nor was his son *Roderic*, the last of our Monarchs, owned as such by the whole nation. In fact the rage of feudatory power and independency which then distracted Europe, was at its full height in Ireland. Every prince acted according as caprice or inclination led him; nor was there found one of sufficient power and capacity, to break through these cabals, and restore the convulsed constitution to any state of order and quiet.

Such in miniature was the state of Ireland for above a century before the expulsion of Mac Murrough, King of Leinster, when, what laid Troy in ashes, and lost Mark-Antony the world, robbed Ireland of her glory, and independency! The Princess of *Breffni* had long conceived a passion for the King of Leinster, and took the opportunity whilst her lord was on a pil-



a pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Purgatory, to acquaint him with her desires of eloping, and wishing him not to let slip so favourable a time. At the head of a party of horse he carried her off; and to save appearances, though she wished for nothing more, she made a feigned resistance, as if contrary to her inclinations. ô Rourke, on his return, applies to the Monarch for redress of so open, so unprecedented an act of violence: for, as we have often before observed, purity of blood was one of the fundamentals of the constitution; and offering violence to woman, so early as the reign of Ollamh-Foldha, was declared death, out of the power of the monarch to pardon. Though broke into parties on every other occasion, yet the whole kingdom took fire at this act of perfidy; and Mac Murrough, unable to oppose the storm that hung over him, and to preserve his country from ruin, by the advice of his best friends, fled the kingdom, and repaired to Henry II. then in France, for protection.

This prince, engaged in continental wars, did not chuse to add to his embarrassments by provoking so powerful a kingdom as Ireland, in the cause of this exile. He therefore dismissed him with great show of friendship, and with letters to his ministers in England, granting permission to such of his subjects as chose to become adventurers in the cause of the king of Leinster, to depart the kingdom. About the latter end of the year 1168, Diarmod, gained the port of Bristol, and soon entered into treaty with some English noblemen, particularly with Richard Earl of Chepstow, to whom he promised his only daughter in marriage, with the reversion of his kingdom on their heirs. To Robert Fitz-Stephens, and Maurice Fitz Gerald, he promised the city of Wexford, and the



country adjoining; and to their friends and followers, mighty things. This negociation ended, he returned privately home, exhorted his subjects and friends to be ready against the next spring, when he assured them they should be powerfully supported from abroad. In May, 1169, Fitz Stephens and Fitz Maurice landed on the Wexford coast, with 30 knights, 60 esquires, and 300 foot soldiers, and Diarmod, who lay concealed at Ferns, immediately joined them, at the head of 500 Cavaliers, and a good body of infantry. Their united forces on a review, were found to be 3000 effective men. Circumstanced as the king of Leinster was, activity and expedition were all he had to hope for; and he accordingly laid direct siege to the town of Wexford. The burghers unprepared, surrendered the town to its lawful prince, on conditions. Here the allies found every necessary they stood in need of, and from thence without loss of time, fell on the people of Ossory. These, who scarce heard of their enemy, 'till in the very heart of their country, were obliged to submit to the victors, and become tributaries to the king of Leinster, after the loss of two bloody battles, in which numbers fell on both sides. These successes, especially against the Ossorians, his mortal enemies, gave great reputation to the king's arms, as well as encrease to his power; and the kingdom became alarmed at it. A national assembly was convened, and it was unanimously agreed to expel for ever Mac Murrough the Kingdom. The provinces sent in their quota of men, and at the head of a powerful army, Roderick invaded Leinster. Diarmod, unable to oppose so powerful an army, divided his troops into small parties, which he threw into woods and fastnesses, in order to protract the war, until he should hear from his foreign allies; but the monarch aware of his intentions, and intending to suppress this insurrection before it came to a greater height, directed



rected his troops to march off in detached parties, and attack the enemy without loss of time, wherever they found them. Had this resolution been as vigorously executed, as it was wisely resolved on, this war would have been soon terminated; and Roderic, if his abilities had been equal to his power, might, by the accession of the rich kingdom of Leinster, have been able to subdue the Hydra of the faction, and add the proper weight and dignity to the monarchy, and of course to the constitution. But Fate decreed it otherwise! the clergy of Leinster, foreseeing the general destruction of their country, from the manœuvres intended, in a body waited on the monarch, and prostrating themselves before him, besought him to have pity on their country, and stop the further effusion of Christian blood. Thro' their intercession he commenced a truce, and at length granted peace to the king of Leinster, on very advantageous terms; for by it he was reinstated in his dominions, and that in as ample a manner as they had been enjoyed by any of his predecessors, he engaging to dismiss his foreigners, and to pay to ô Rourke, an hundred ounces of gold for the injury he had received; and for the faithful performance of these conditions, he put into the monarch's hands his natural son, Art na Ngial, or Art of the Hostages, and six of the principal of his nobility.

Peace thus restored, the monarch dismissed his troops; but Fitz Stephens and Fitz Gerald seeing nothing but ruin await them by this agreement, did all they could to oppose it. In doubtful cases the historian must form his opinion of causes from effects and circumstances. It was thus the great historian *Davila*, in the civil wars of France, reasoned; and it is known that from it secrets were acknowledged to be discovered which two or three only were entrusted with. When *Bourbon* in an advanced age, had this author's works read to him, he expressed his astonishment



ment at his knowledge of some things, scarcely known to any but himself. The king of Leinster had certainly a great love for these foreigners : for this attachment, he was nick-named Murrough na n Gall, or, Murrough of the Strangers ; and the princely munificence with which he rewarded their service, proves it. On the face of affairs it is clear that they must have exerted all their influence, and the event proves that they did, to prevent a cordial reconciliation. Besides, this prince, who was certainly of an enterprising genius, and had as few scruples as to the means of aggrandizing himself, as any other, antient or modern, saw with surprise the success attending his arms. To the suddenness and unexpectedness of his attacks, and the bravery of his aliens, he attributed his re-establishment in his dominions ; and he probably flattered himself, by similar means, he might disable his enemies from like attempts for the future. Irascible, vindictive, and insincere, he suspected others of those passions, he so sensibly felt himself. He knew too well the dispositions of the Irish princes, to think that on any other occasion, but what gave rise to *his Expulsion*, the monarch would be so powerfully supported as he then was. The princes of Munster could not forget with what violence his father tore the monarchy from their family : they yet felt the effects of his sanguinary eruptions, and, no doubt, wished for an opportunity of revenge. The northern Hy Niall race, who for centuries governed the kingdom with so much dignity, had been long deprived of this charge, and seemed to interest themselves but little in these latter revolutions. The country too had been invaded, and over-run by Tireldach, father of the reigning emperor. Besides, many Princes of his house of distinguished lustre, were monarchs of Ireland, as Cathiremore, Ugain-more, &c. and he could  
not



not forget, that Labhra, surnamed *Loingseach*, or of the Navies, one of his predecessors, like him expelled the kingdom, returned triumphant, subdued his enemies, and became supreme monarch. Certain it is, that he now aspired to the monarchy in a time of profound peace; that he sent for Maurice Fitz Gerald to Wales, who soon landed with 10 knights, 30 gentlemen, and 100 soldiers, and by express informed Strongbow of his intentions, requiring his immediate assistance. Dr. Warner\*, on what authority I know not, says, that Mac-Murrough offered his daughter to either Fitz Stephens, or Fitz Gerald; but one of these must have been certainly married, if not both, as they were brothers-in-law. Besides the forces they brought were too small to entitle them to so great an honour. It appears from ô Regan's tract, who was principal secretary to this prince, that he had solemnly sworn to earl Richard, to give to him his daughter in marriage, whenever he landed in Ireland with proper assistance: the same writer also affirms, that after *Mac-Murrough's* second irruption into Ossory, so elated was he with his successes, and such discontent did he give the English, that Maurice de Prenderghast, with 200 of his English, quitted his service, and some time after joined his enemy the king of Ossory. If then Mac-Murrough made no such offer, when they were at the head of 390 English, and his affairs in the most desperate condition, it must appear improbable, if not absurd, after summoning his own nobility and people to join him, as ô Regan observes, and punishing the refractory of them, as ô Toole, &c. and after the defection of more than half of the English, and the death of many others, to suppose he would consent to such an alliance!

But

\* History of Ireland, vol. ii. p. 256.



But to return ; Diarmod, with this small body of English, of which it appears Fitz Stephens detained many to build a fort near Wexford, and a gallant army of select Irish troops, regardless of the peace lately concluded, and of his hostages, marched towards Dublin, and the more effectually to distress the citizens, consumed the corn, and set fire to all the adjacent country. They, unprepared, and terrified at so unexpected a visit, by large presents, and heavy contributions, so softened the heart of the prince, that he received their submissions for the present. Here it is, that Dr. Keating, Dr. Warner, &c. place Mac-Murrough's first resolution of aspiring to the monarchy, because here he began to unmask his designs ; but his behaviour from the beginning of his misfortunes to this day, shewed too much of conduct and resolution, to suppose a step of this kind to be so capriciously or hastily taken. The moment he broke the peace, he intended to pursue this point. The winter of 1168, he spent in private negotiations, as the events declare, and to strengthen his forces, as he did that of 1168, to prepare his subjects and friends for the first English invasion ; and we accordingly find that early in the spring of 1170, Raymond le Gros, and William Fitz Gerald landed at the head of 10 knights, and some infantry, sent by Strongbow to reconnoitre the country, and inform him if the king of Leinster's affairs were in so prosperous a way as he represented. In consequence of their report, he himself at the head of 200 knights and 1000 gallant soldiers, landed in the port of Waterford, in the middle of August of the same year, and immediately sent an express to the king of Leinster, who impatiently waited this event, and directly joined him, with a select body of forces, previously prepared. The revolution in question, was in itself  
very



very extraordinary, and in its consequences, very fatal to this kingdom. Tho' the early writers on this subject, agree pretty exactly as to facts, yet are not the times precisely ascertained, and the inductions from them, have been most monstrously strained. The dignity and honour of this *Imperial Kingdom*, as well as of the present race of Irish, require a fuller and clearer investigation of this matter; and what shall be found defective in me, on this head, I trust the candour and learning of so able an advocate as Dr. Leland, will more than sufficiently supply.

## C H A P. II.

*The taking of Waterford, and the marriage of the Princess of Leinster. March of the army to Dublin, and the real number of English in it. Taken by Treachery. The monarch raises a large army to retake it. Strongbow made king of Leinster, and supported by that people. True cause of the dispersion of the Imperial army. This revolution no proof of a foreign conquest.*

THE same spirit and alacrity which hitherto animated the king of Leinster, did not desert him here. His forces were before the city of Waterford, considerable for its riches, and very conveniently situated for future supplies. The garrison was com-

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posed.



posed of Burghers, better acquainted with commerce than war, and its acquisition, seemed no hard task, especially at so unexpected a time. In a council of war it was determined, not to lose time by a regular siege, as every thing depended on expedition, but to make a general assault directly, which was accordingly done. The inhabitants made a better defence than could be expected, yet were they at length obliged to yield to the superior fortune of the king of Leinster, and intrepidity of the earl of Pembroke and his valiant associates. The town was taken by storm: a dreadful carnage of the citizens ensued; and their wealth became the property of the rapacious soldiery. To acquit himself of the solemn vow he had made to earl Richard, Mac Murrough sent directly to his palace of Ferns, for Aoife the princess of Leinster, whom he married to this peer, with great pomp and splendor, in the presence of most of his general officers, and of his court. But the same ambitious and active spirit which animated the father, seemed transfused into the son-in-law. Scarce was the marriage solemnized, before the remainder of the concerted operations, were put into execution. The whole army had orders to march directly to Dublin. The contributions he had raised there a little before, now served to put his troops in motion, and to stimulate his avarice. Its acquisition was now to him of the last consequence. Dublin, from the earliest period of our history, has been celebrated for its magnificence, its riches, the bravery of its inhabitants, and their great skill in war; and, if in the beginning of the second century, a fierce and bloody war began merely to determine whose property the duties on the exports and imports of that city *alone*, were, we must not be



be surprised after the taking of Wexford and Waterford, if the possession of it seemed of the last consequence now. *ô* Regan tells us, that to oppose his passage, the monarch raised an army of 30000 men, but that they durst not attack him. As these crossed the mountains of Gandelach, we should rather suppose (and Holinshead says so) that they gave the monarch the slip; and this seems confirmed by *ô* Connor's dismissing his troops immediately after. The order of the march, my author says, was thus: Miles de Cogan, with a regiment of 700 strong, and Daniel *ô* Cavenagh, with his 1000 Irish, led the van; the king of Leinster, with 1000 followers, and Raymond le Gros with his Regiment of 800 English, commanded the centre; and the rere was composed of 3000 English, and a battalion of Irish. Here the reader must observe very great inaccuracy in my author. We are not clear whether *Cogan's* regiment was Irish or English. By his mentioning *ô* Cavenagh's 1000 Irish, one would be apt to think they were English; but as he particularly mentions the English, in the centre and rere, we will suppose his men were Irish, formed and disciplined by himself; still the number of foreigners will be found to exceed the truth. The whole number of English, landed in Ireland to this time, by his confession, and that of all other writers, was not full 1800. Of this number he tells us, 18 were killed in attempting the storm of Wexford. On *Dermod's* first attack, upon the lines of the prince of Ossory, which he forced, we find the fight lasted from morning to night, "with great slaughter on either side." Here a number of English must certainly fall; and on their retreat, the *Ossorians* made several furious attacks upon them: So violent were they, that, but for the bravery and prudence of Mau-



rice Prenderghast, their whole army must have been destroyed. As it was, king *Diarmod* halted not, till he reached Lechlin; and next day, the sick and wounded, were provided with physicians and surgeons, sent from his capital of Ferns. In their next invasion of *Offory*, the attack of the enemies trenches lasted three days; and on the fourth were they taken, by the bravery of the English: So that if we suppose, besides the 18 killed at Wexford, 50 to have perished in the invasion of *Offory*, and 20 more English on the retreat, to which we will add 20, on forcing the trenches, in their second invasion, which trenches were manned by the flower of the *Offorian* troops, and the honour of which he attributes solely to the English, our calculations must be allowed to be very moderate. In this case, the number of English slain, must be 108, which deducted from 390, the whole number at that time in the kingdom, will leave alive but 282.

Of this number, Prenderghast marched off with 200, immediately after this second incursion into *Offory*, disobliged by the king of Leinster, and soon after listed under the banner of the prince of *Offory*. Thus, of 300 English, who were to conquer the kingdom of Ireland, 82 only, remained with the conqueror, and 200 joined a petty prince, and but an inconsiderable enemy, opposed to the king of Leinster! When Raymond le Gros landed his troops near Waterford, we find them attacked by the neighbouring people. We are told he sallied from a small entrenchment hastily thrown up, to meet them, and a most bloody skirmish followed, in which, however, the English were victorious. The city of Waterford was soon after taken by storm, after a stout defence of the burghers. *ô* Regan says, by Strongbow, and his English only: if so, the loss on their part must be greater. However, all others agree, that *Diarmod* and his



his troops joined him before this attack; and reason, circumstances, and fact, seem to confirm it. We see Strongbow would not trust to vague reports: he sent his most intimate friends, with a few troops, before him, to have the most exact information of the affairs of Ireland. Would a man so circumspect, attempt a landing himself, without consulting and agreeing with the king of Leinster, as to the time and place? Would he, dared he, who came as an auxiliary, as a foldier of fortune, totally depending on Mac Murrough, with his handful of troops, attack such a city as Waterford, without this prince's permission, without his participation? the very supposition is absurd! So that of all the English who landed in Ireland, it appears, that more than 1000 could not possibly be under the command of Mac Murrough and Strongbow, on their march to Dublin. How then account for the 3800 mentioned by ô Regan? The English officers recruited their regiments with Irishmen; so that they still passed for English, though unjustly. Besides, it appears, that the brunt of the war hitherto fell upon the Irish; for, as the king of Leinster's greatest confidence was in his few English, he spared them as much as he could. Hence it was, that the van of their army, and their forlorn hope, were constantly headed by Daniel ô Cavenagh, and the Irish.

ô Regan himself was sent by Diarmod, to summons the city of Dublin to surrender. The citizens conjure Laurence ô Toole their archbishop, to wait on this prince, to offer him any terms, provided he would withdraw his troops from before their walls; and for the faithful performance of whatever conditions he was pleased to impose, 30 of the most considerable citizens were to be put into his hands. Whilst the negociation was carrying on, the citizens off their guard, made little shew on the Walls; which being perceived by Miles de Cogan, quartered





tered opposite another part of the town, suddenly, and without any directions from his chiefs, he sallied forth, scaled the walls, and entered the town, putting to the sword all he met without regard to age, sex, or condition! the streets were dyed, and the channels ran with the blood of its slaughtered inhabitants, as is pathetically set forth in the life of their archbishop; and though ô Regan declares, this base act of treachery and cruelty was unknown to Mac Murrough, yet we may easily see how acceptable it was to this bloody and perfidious prince, and his son-in-law, by their appointing the very execrable wretch *Cogan*, governor of the city, and they themselves entering it in triumph the same day, Sept. 21, 1170. Immediately after this they invaded the country of the much-injured ô Rourke, which they laid waste, and put to the sword its innocent inhabitants. In short, so rapid was the success, and so great the cruelty of this merciless tyrant, and his foreign associates, that their very name struck terror through the kingdom. Since the expulsion of the Danes, such scenes of villainy had not been perpetrated, as by these lawless barbarians! Churches, and religious houses, were plundered and burnt; rapes, murders, and every other infernal act of oppression and cruelty, were the amusements of these monsters in human shapes, as Stanihurst, Keating, &c. have observed.

Roderic ô Connor became too late sensible of the errors he had committed; first, in not crushing Diarmod, when in his power; secondly, in not earlier and more vigorously opposing his infraction of treaties. Yet even still he seemed not to get rid of his infatuation, or carelessness. Relying, I suppose, on the pledges he had in his hands, (and the event seems to justify the conjecture) he concluded he could at any time bring the king of Leinster to reason. He therefore, contented himself with



commanding Mac Murrough by his ambassadors, immediately to cease further hostilities, to disband his troops, discharge his foreign bands, and return to the letter of the treaty, otherwise he would cut off his son's head, put him under the ban of the empire, and again expel him the kingdom. But alas! how far could nature plead in the breast of a tyrant, who had long steeled himself against the feelings of humanity. The loss of his son seemed the least of his fears: he had gone too far to recede: *the die had been long since cast*; and making any kind of peace, but with sword in hand, he knew would be his destruction. He therefore boldly bids the monarch defiance; declares his intentions of assuming the sovereignty of the kingdom, of sending for more foreign troops, and of repaying an hundred fold, any violence offered to his son, or the nobility in his train.

The monarch raised a mighty army, with intent to besiege Dublin. ô Regan says it consisted of 60,000 men, headed by Roderic in person, who had under him the kings of Munster and Ulster, and Murtough ô Cinsellagh. He also informs us, that Mac Murrough died at Ferns, this winter; and it would seem from him, that the siege of Dublin was commenced the same year, and after this prince's death. All this however could not be effected in the time, nor cannot be reconciled to the time of Henry's proclamation, and landing in Ireland. Strongbow took Waterford about the 24th of August. His marriage, his settling the march of the army for Dublin, and their crossing the mountains, in order to avoid coming to blows with the monarch's troops, must take up a good deal of time; and yet we are surprised at the expedition with which all was effected; since Dublin became the prey of these conquerors, by the 21st of September following. The troops must certainly have taken some repose here, after so fatiguing a march; and



when we consider the length of way from this to Breffni, and the lateness of the season, we must conclude, that this expedition ended the campaign, and a most successful one it certainly was. Mac Murrough, therefore spent the holy-days at his palace of Ferns, as Strongbow did his, at Waterford; and we think, with Keating, and others, did not die till the May following. This attempt to clear up those unsettled periods, in so interesting a point of history, must be useful to future writers, and will more fully explain the nature of the extraordinary revolution that followed. In the spring of 1171, then, it must be, that ô Connor sent his mandate to Mac Murrough, and then also it was, that he prepared for the Campaign. In May, Mac Murrough died; and bad as he was, it would have been certainly better for for the kingdom, that he had lived to dethrone ô Connor, or died in exile. Transferring the monarchy, from one of the royal houses to another, was what often happened in Ireland; and though the state, by these revolutions, became at the time a little convulsed; yet the constitution in general continued the same, and the property of the subject was no way altered. The death of this prince must have been a happy circumstance to a monarch who knew how to make a proper use of it; but this seemed not the case of ô Connor. With a little firmness and some generalship, he might have become as great and as absolute a prince, as Ireland had seen, but these were qualifications he seemed much to want. However, the preparations for the siege of Dublin were great. Besides a potent army, we find a fleet appointed to block it up by sea, and Roderic seemed now sure of seizing his whole prey. We have already observed, that *Strongbow* was declared *Righ-Dambna*, or presumptive heir to the crown of Leinster,



fter, at his marriage; and we must conclude, that so good a statesman took care to have himself immediately proclaimed king, and to have his title recognized. This, and this only, can account for the adherence of the people of Leinster to him, at this perilous time, such as Donald ô Cavenagh, and his people; the ô Byrnes, ô Garvies, Mac Gelies, (I suppose Fitz Patrics) some branches of the ô Cinsellaghs, &c. and for the alliance between ô Brien, who was married to a sister of his wife's, and him. Accordingly, when ô Connor laid siege to Dublin, Strongbow, apprehensive of the fidelity of his new subjects, sent him word by St. Laurence ô Toole, that he was ready to hold his kingdom of Leinster, under him, do homage for it, and as our writer expresses it, "*be his man.*" But this proposal was rejected with great disdain; and nothing less than resigning Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford, with all his strong holds and castles, relinquishing his claim to the kingdom of Leinster, and departing the kingdom, with all his followers, would content the monarch. As a key to these proposals, I must observe, that he still held *Art*, the base son of Dermod in his hands, and most probably intended the crown of Leinster for him, as nothing is more certain than, that the kingdom would never consent to have it held by any but its own princes. For it was an improvement unknown to antient legislators, to involve an innocent posterity, in the crimes of their guilty parents. Be this as it may, the desperate state of their affairs, required desperate remedies, and these they with great intrepidity used. Finding all proposals for peace rejected, they in a close collected body, suddenly sallied forth, attacked the monarch's troops, who, surprized, made little resistance, and killed 150 of them with the loss of but one man. That a body of but 600,

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should



should attack an army of 60000, seems very improbable; but that these should be put to a total rout, by the loss of 150 of this number only I am sure nobody will believe. Dr. Warner expressly says of it, "That it appears so very absurd and romantic, as not to be credited." Some mistake, he says, must certainly be made in the numbers: let us therefore endeavour to throw some light upon this affair. The monarch's troops were composed of the provincials. He could not assemble them, according to the constitution, without a national decree of the estates, against some prince (much like the present states of Germany) put under the ban of the empire. This, we see, was the case of Diarmod, the spring of this year, and the army was raised to enforce the decree against him. It would seem, by Strongbow's proposal and offers of submission, who was now king of Leinster, that the end for which this army was raised, was accomplished; that the Irish princes did not agree in sentiments about the proposed submission; that the king of Munster supported the interest of his brother-in-law with warmth, since we find immediately after this, they united together to attack the people of Ossory; that in the diversity of opinions, the army broke up in disorder, and marched home to their different countries. If this be granted, which I think, must be the fact, we may well suppose, that the besieged sallied forth, to distress the re-re, particularly of the monarch's *own forces*. But to suppose that this *Sortie* was made by 600 men only, must be absurd. He says, they made no use of the Irish, but of ô Cavenagh, Mac Gely, and ô Garvie, which must certainly be understood of the Irish under their commands only, and these must be considerable, since ô Cavenagh alone generally marched at the head of 1000 of his men. Were we, indeed, to suppose Strong-

bow,



bow, like another Cortez, at the head of 600 veterans, with fire-arms and artillery, attacking in their trenches, 60000 effeminate and unarmed Indians, such a story as the above might seem, at least, plausible; but when they had to contend with a nation, as skilful and intrepid as themselves, it is a tale altogether incredible.

Such revolutions as the present, had happened in Ireland before. Labra Loingseach, of the royal line of Leinster, who was obliged to fly the kingdom, about three centuries before Christ, landed at Wexford, at the head of 2200 Gauls. Here he was joined by large parties of people, and through a chain of successes, at length reached the monarchy; yet no one looked upon this as a Gaulish conquest! In the first century, *Tuathal*, exiled, remained long in Scotland, and was at length recalled, and restored by the people, unaided by foreign force. In the latter end of the second century Eogain-more, king of Munster, was exiled by Con the Monarch. He applied to the king of Spain, for assistance, whose daughter he married; and with about 4000 Spaniards, headed by her brother, he landed in Kerry; and supported by his own subjects, compelled the monarch to that famous partition treaty, to this day known by the name of *Leath Modha*, and *Leath Cuin*. Yet we never heard that the Spaniards claimed the southern part of Ireland, as a conquest of theirs. In the reign of Art the son of this Con fled the kingdom; and by the aid of some foreigners, Britains, Picts, and Gauls, headed by the gallant prince of Britain, he overcame the monarch in a bloody battle, and by his death obtained the empire of the whole Island. All, or most of these aliens, no doubt, got ample possessions in the kingdom, and soon became incor-



porated with the great mass: and such would have been the case of the present Normans, but for the ticklish situation of their affairs, and the superior policy of Henry II. as we shall shew in the next chapter. But to suppose, and to assert, as most English writers have, and after them many foreigners, that the above invasion was a complete conquest of Ireland, is as ridiculous in itself, as it is injurious to the posterity of those gallant adventurers, and to the whole Irish nation. In the long and bloody contentions between the houses of York and Lancaster, did any Britain, did any foreigner ever affirm, that when the exiled chiefs returned at the head of an handful of soldiers of fortune, of different nations, to support their claims, that these soldiers conquered England? When Prince Charles Edward Stuart, landed in Scotland in 1745, followed by some officers, and about 400 volunteers from the Irish brigade; would any one say, that his fighting three general battles, in two of which he was victorious, and penetrating into the heart of England, were the acts of this handful of *Veterans* only? As the streamlet in the waters of a great river, these petty adventurers could scarcely be distinguished from the people of the country; and whilst they had the same object in view, and acted on the same principles, they should not.

An attention to dates, in accounts so confused and unsettled as the present, is very material. Mac Murrough we see, died in May, 1171. After his death, the siege of Dublin was formed, and by the preparations by land and sea, must have taken up a good deal of time. After the raising this siege, we find Strongbow attacked in his march to Wexford, by ô Ryan and his people. Upon his arrival there, the inhabitants



bitants fled, and confined themselves in the monastery of Beg-Eiri, on a small island near Wexford, and built by St. Ibarus, before the arrival of Patric. *Here* we find he received ambassadors from his brother the king of Munster, to join him in an invasion of Ossory. This ended, he retired to his palace of Ferns, where he remained for some time settling the police of his kingdom, and rewarding his friends and his followers, as ô Cavenagh, ô Cinsellach, &c. As all these successive manœuvres must have taken a good deal of time, we may conclude, that they closed the year 1171.

C H A P. III.

*Henry II. avails himself of the intestine commotions in Ireland. Sends for the king of Leinster, invades the kingdom, and is acknowledged as monarch by a considerable party. Real power of an Irish monarch. Proofs that his election could be no pretence to a conquest. The new Irish governed by the laws of the land. Policy used by the English to disunite the kingdom, and its fatal effects.*

**W**E have seen Mac Murrough return to Ireland in 1168; we have seen the bloody campaigns of 1169, 70, and 71, without a single mention of the king of England. Hitherto he would not, he durst not (notwithstanding the pretended bull of Adrian IV.) interfere in the disputes of a nation, accustomed to give, but NEVER to receive laws from any other. But the moment he found Mac Murrough dead, and Strongbow in peaceable possession of the crown of Leinster, penetrating and politic, he saw at once all the advantages he could derive from this event, and took the proper measures to secure them. From the times of the Danish invasion,



invasion, the cities of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick were kind of hanse-towns, governed by their own magistrates, garrisoned by their burghers, and paying only certain duties and rents to the crown. The late king of Leinster secured them, as his conquest, and as such they were held by the present. I take it for granted, that Henry first applied to Strongbow for the possession of some, if not all these places, that he would support him upon all future occasions; and that Strongbow, who neither loved, nor was beloved by this prince, relying on his own power, the faithfulness of his followers, and his close alliances, especially with the king of Munster, rejected his proposals. Some event like this must have happened, or it will be otherwise impossible to account for Henry's proclamation, forbidding his subjects, of what degree or quality soever, going to Ireland; interdicting even ships, on any account to enter the Irish ports, and requiring all English in that country, on pain of confiscation of their estates and death to return home directly. By this means, he knew *Strongbow* was in his power, and that he must either perish or come into his measures. His title was but precarious, and his subjects probably not well reconciled to be governed by a foreigner. By the laws of Ireland, the male line always succeeded, and Roderic had young Art yet in his hands. Thus circumstanced, the new king of Leinster resolved on the only expedient left him, which was, to offer implicit obedience to Henry, and to this purpose sent Raymond to make submission in his name, and to remain as an hostage for his fidelity. But Henry, too politic, could not be so put off. He sent back his general to let his master know, that if he did not in person repair to him, he should feel the whole force



force of his resentment. In the power of an imperious prince he had no alternative. Strongbow obeyed: he waited on the king at Pembroke, and was received with marks of high displeasure. To sooth Henry, I suppose he here first started the notion of his attempting the whole kingdom of Ireland, which from the great divisions and jealousies amongst themselves, seemed no hard matter. Thus determined, secured of one province by the possession of its prince, and probably assured of another, by their hatred to the reigning monarch, Henry, at the head of 500 knights, 4000 soldiers, and a gallant train of nobles, landed at Waterford the latter end of October, 1172, and was immediately put into possession of the city by Strongbow, who there in the presence of the army, did homage to Henry for his kingdom of Leinster; that is, paid him the same homage he offered to Roderic, and which the provincial kings constantly did to the reigning monarchs of Ireland. Here we see Henry at the head of a potent army, supported by one entire province, ready to fall upon the rest; and these, instead of uniting in the common cause of their country, suffering private revenge to get the better of public virtue. The princes of Munster more incensed against Roderic, than displeased at Henry's invasion, set an example of submission to the rest of their countrymen; and the successors of the expellers of the Danes, were the first to bend their neck, to an English yoke! The king of South-Munster, *here*, did him homage for his country, as did soon after, the king of North-Munster, at Cashell. He also received the submission of the Ossorians, and in Dublin, of the nobility of Leinster. The Monarch, tho' still at the head of a powerful army, saw it impossible to oppose the  
torrent.



torrent. *He*, and *Henry*, had an interview on the banks of the Shannon, where, though nothing was finally concluded, yet it gave rise to a peace, soon after made at Windsor by the archbishop of Dublin, his chancellor, the archbishop of Tuam, and others on his side, with Henry's ministers; whilst the great and powerful kingdom of Ulster seemed totally unconcerned at this most astonishing revolution!

Here we see Henry acknowledged monarch of Ireland by three fourths of the nation. But it now becomes material to know what was this power. The monarch who was chosen from the provincial kings, was very much circumscribed in point of power. Though in his regal capacity, he might make peace or war, at the *will* of his own country, yet not in his monarchial. He could not make war, he could not raise troops, except upon invasions, or public calamities; nor even then without the participation of the great estates of the kingdom, legally convened. The tributes paid by the different provinces to the monarchs, were every where known, so that there was no fear of exactions; and these were so moderate, that tho' by them he was made respectable, yet he was never too formidable for the people. The province of Meath, the Domain of the monarch's, by the Danish wars, had long been wrested from them, and formed a kind of a fifth province. Such were the powers legally allowed to the Irish emperors, and no more did Henry pretend to. It is true, he reclaimed the province of Meath, unlawfully usurped from the monarchy, and the government of it he conferred on Hugh de Lacy.

Sir John Davis gives as one reason why Ireland was never subdued, Henry's not causing the laws of England to be received here. This would look like conquest indeed; and who-  
ever



ever will take the trouble of examining into the character of this prince, will find few more ambitious or any less solicitous, as to the means of gratifying this passion. It was a monstrous acquisition, without striking a single blow, the power he had already usurped. Had he attempted more, in all human probability he would have forfeited the whole. Even Strongbow and his people would be the first to oppose him; since we see this last prince exercise every act of royalty as well whilst Henry was in the kingdom, as when he departed. Whilst the latter resided in Dublin, Strongbow kept his court at Kildare: he bestowed tracts of land, entire counties, and large cities on his favourites: he made peace and war, formed his alliances, punished, as well as rewarded, persons of the first rank; which if not evident signs of royalty, it will be hard to determine what are. Besides these marks of regal state, preserved and exercised by Strongbow, we find the same continued to his family: the princess Isabella, his daughter, by Eava, queen of Leinster, being afterwards married to William Marshall, had, from king John, a confirmation of all the power and authority derived to her from her blood, and her sons were so many feudatory princes of Leinster.

Thus it appears to demonstration, that all the power that Henry or his successors could pretend to over Ireland, *even supposing the monarchy hereditary*, which we see under the native princes was not the case, was no more than that which the laws of the kingdom prescribed. And here I cannot suppress my astonishment, at the vague manner in which Sir Richard Bolton, Mr. D'Arcy, Mr. Molyneaux, Dr. Lucas, Mr. F——, and many other zealous advocates for the honour and independence of their country, reason on this subject. These gentlemen, without ever enquiring into the antient con-



stitution of Ireland, the nature of the king of Leinster's restoration, or the succession; what real title Henry or his successors assumed, or pretended to, over the kingdom, immediately fall to the proofs of its independency, by acts of parliament, which, though passed from time to time, and supposing them to have had their full force, were confined to three or four counties only: and how little they were attended to, even here, Patrick Finglass, who was baron of the exchequer 350 years after the first invasion, witnesses; when he tells us, that the laws so enacted were not observed *even eight days after passing*. How shall we account for this? By the laws of Ireland, honours were hereditary in families. As the provincial kings owed a certain obedience to the emperors, the great lords in their counties held their lands under certain tenures; the farmers and landholders paid their taxes in certain proportions; and the known and acknowledged laws of the land determined all property; of which the *Brehons*, or judges, were so tenacious, that as the above Baron Finglass declares, they would not break through them for any favour or reward. These laws Strongbow observed. Thus, in 1173, we find he gave his sister to Sir Robert de Quiney, and made him constable of Leinster, and invested him with the banner of the same, which Robert was afterwards killed in battle by ô Dempsey. Raymond le Gros afterwards requested her of this prince in marriage, with the constableship and banner of Leinster, during the minority of her daughter Quiney, or till she was disposed of to some gentleman, worthy so great a charge; which surely proves the honour hereditary. John de Clahul he made marshal of Leinster, &c. All the officers under Strongbow had, in like manner, their posts, hereditarily, under certain restrictions.

These



These princes exercised, as Sir John Davis, in James I.'s reign, observes, *Haut & bas justice*; they made peace and war; created barons and knights; kept courts for civil and criminal causes, and for the receipt of their hereditary revenues, in their different territories. They went further: agreed to be governed by the antient laws of the land; changed their foreign, and took Irish names. Thus the chiefs of the Geraldines of Munster and Leinster took the name of Mac Thomas; these of Kerry, Mac Morrice; the White Knight, Mac Gibbon. Of the Bourkes of Connaught, the Clanrickard family were called, Mac William Eichter; and these of Mayo, Mac William Ouchter; the collateral branches, other names; as Mac Hobert, Mac Walter, Mac David, &c. The Nangles called themselves Mac Costello; the Berminghams, Mac Pheoris; the Butlers, Mac Pierce; the Barrets, Mac Phadins; the Barrys, Mac Adam; the Condons, Mac Moige; the Dexters, Mac Jordan; the Poers, Mac Shere; the Stapleton's, Mac Gall-duff; the Freins, Mac Rinki; the Fitz-Simmons's, Mac Reider, &c. In short, they adopted all the laws and customs of their country; and, as some English writers express it, became *more Irish, than the mere Irish themselves!*

Strongbow leaving no heirs male, and the Irish not being able to agree amongst themselves about the election of a monarch, capable of redressing the great abuses in the state, (though it appears that a proposal to this purpose was made to the successor of Roderic, by the princes of the kingdom, and would probably have been rigorously carried into execution, but for the sudden death of this king soon after the conferences were opened) the Irish of the pale, acknowledged a kind of subjection to the king of England; but this was only as monarch of the kingdom, since his title in



no shape interfered with their feudatory powers. Certain it is, that his representatives, or chief justices did now and then assemble parliaments, and enact laws, which we see were broken through as soon as made, as the justices wanted the power to enforce them. They saw no method then left to tamper in Irish affairs, but by endeavouring to break that union which subsisted betwixt the new and old Irish. The different governors therefore flattered these great chiefs; recalled to their memories their English ancestry; and it is more than probable, that to these caresses they added threats; that they could only hope to preserve themselves in Ireland, by absolutely depending on England; and that if once this union became dissolved, they must expect to be expelled the kingdom by the Aborigines, who looked upon them as usurpers. Though the experience of the different adventurers, who, like them, had formerly invaded the kingdom and enjoyed their acquisitions peaceably, should have convinced them to the contrary. Be this as it may, this early coalition, by these or some other means, became gradually lessened. Their first attempts were, to make the new Irish reject the dress of their country, and follow the English mode; then to resume the names of their ancestors. The Irish in the pale, were next obliged to take English names, as, the Shenachs were called Fox; the Mac Gabhan's, Smith; the Geales, White; the Brannachs, Welsh; the Faltachs, Wall, &c. Laws were enacted, as in England; but we see, still subject to the controul of the very chiefs that made them. To make the breach still wider, Irish coins were prohibited to pass in the English pale, as was the case with ô Reily's money, forbidden by a parliament held at Trim. The animosities between the two people being thus encreased,



to compleat the ruin of this unhappy kingdom, an act passed, which humanity should tremble at the recital of; and which was too well observed to render its authenticity doubtful, since we find it in force so early as the days of Edward I. By this infernal act, murder, robbery, and every kind of violence, got the sanction of law; an Englishman of the pale, who killed a Merus Hibernicus, had but to appear in court, prove the deceased of pure Irish blood, and he was at once acquitted of any crime! But lest the whole nation should become alarmed, and still more to distract and divide them, this law did not include all the Irish in the proscription. The \* ô Briens, the ô Cavenaghs, the ô Neals, the ô Connors, and ô Mea Laughlins of Meath were excepted: Such as claimed these names, might pretend to, and sometimes did obtain redress. By these means, like the Jews in Canaan, they plundered with impunity the poor defenceless bordering Irish, and were often recriminated on by them. Yet, notwithstanding this blood-thirsty policy, we find the interest of the kings of England, very little advanced in the pale; since it appears, by Sir Richard Edgcombe's journal, so late as the year 1488, that when he wanted lord Kildare, and the nobles of the pale, to subject their estates to forfeiture, in case they opposed Henry VII. and his successors, they absolutely refused this clause, though willing to take an oath of fealty; *declaring in plain words*, that rather than submit to it, "they would become *Irish*, every of them."

This Act was such an encouragement to fraud, rapine, and murder, that as a check upon any kind of intercourse with, or confidence in the English, the Irish had a proverb; and most of their remarkable sayings they reduced to verse.

No

\* Davis's History of Ireland.



Na din common re fear Galda : ma nir, ni fairde dhuit :  
Beidh choidhe ar tidh do mbealta : common an fhir Ghalda riot.

Na Din common re fear Galda : ma nir, ni fairde dhuit :  
Beidh choidhe ar tidh do mbealta : common an fhir Ghalda riot.

In English thus :

“ Form no connections with an Englishman. If you do, you’ll  
“ surely repent ; for he is ever on the watch to deceive.”

The state of the kingdom, by this cool unexampled policy, is most affectingly described in the king of Ulster’s letter to John XXII. then pope \*. “ Your predecessor (he cries) Adrian  
“ IV. who was by birth an Englishman, instead of punishing  
“ Henry for invading the rights of the church, and the mur-  
“ ther of the archbishop of Canterbury, has delivered up our  
“ nation as a prey to his countrymen, or indeed rather to  
“ monsters, whose cruelties are unparalleled. More subtle than  
“ foxes, they surprize and destroy us, &c. &c.” But there is one part of this letter, which accounts more for the want of union amongst the Irish, than if whole volumes had been written on the subject. Every one knows their great attachment to the cause of religion, and what they have suffered on this account. It appears *here* to have had too great a weight. “ During the course of so many centuries (continues the prince) our sovereigns jealous of their glory, never  
“ would suffer their independence to be called in question.  
“ Invaded more than once by foreign powers, they wanted  
“ neither courage to attack, nor force to repel their enemies,  
“ and give freedom to their country. But that spirit which  
“ they opposed to force, they would not to the simple decree of Adrian, your predecessor.”

Even

\* Scoto-Chron. vol. iii. p. 908, &c.



Even the Elizabethian wars seemed directed by the same spirit of devastation as the former ones; and we have *Carew's* own evidence, who was then president of Munster, to prove it\*. This commander blushed not to own, that he employed ✕ assassins to murder three Irish chiefs, whom he could not subdue. He received the private submission of Nangle, upon conditions that he would pistol John Fitz Thomas of Desmond, in his fortress of Lough-Ghuir (by whom he was highly trusted) and after this, under pretence of relating the misfortune to the earl his brother, to murder him also. But just as the villain was about to execute his bloody deed, he was discovered by Mr. Coppinger, who struck the pistol out of his hand, and tho' well mounted, seized him, and he was next day executed. Carew entered into treaty with Ó Connor, to seize the earl of Desmond; and afterwards compelled the White Knight to give up this chief of his race and blood! He fined and confined Geoffry Galway, mayor of Limerick, for refusing to give up a soldier to be tried by military laws, who was detected of theft in that city; and this fine was no less a sum than four hundred pounds! None of the Irish gentry were to enter Cork, but such as he received into his protection; and when these appeared, they were seized and confined as traitors! Yet one of the Mac Carthies ventured to Cork, without any protection, but what 5000 head of cattle could procure him, and him the *president* pronounced, an inoffensive man! The very letters of the Irish chiefs, to foreign princes, which he intercepted and published, in the work before us, describe most feelingly the iniquities of these times; and it would have been much more to his honour, and that of the English ministry, had they never appeared,

\* Pacat. Hibern.



at least without refutation. As they now stand, they are so many records of facts. *Desmond's* letter (who was himself of English blood) to the king of Spain, runs thus: "I humbly salute your imperial majesty, giving your highness to understand, the great misery and violent order wherewith we are of long time oppressed by the English nation. Their government is such, as Pharaoh *himself* never used; for they content not themselves with all temporal superiority, but by cruelty desire our blood, and perpetual destruction, to blot out the whole remembrance of our posterity. *ó Sullivan Beare's* letter to this prince, is equally affecting; and in that to the earl of Carença, he requests, either speedy relief, or the speedy sending a ship to receive him, his wife and children, to save them from the hands of these most merciless enemies, making choice rather to forsake my antient inheritance, friends, followers, and goods, *than any way trust to their most graceless pardon and promise!*"

## C H A P. IV.

*English pretences to a conquest, more minutely examined and refuted. Irish countries governed by their own princes and laws. The pretended attainder of ó Neal, examined and exposed. The accepting of English laws no proof of foreign dominion. The laws, for above 400 years, never extended beyond the pale. When agreed to be received by the entire kingdom, and on what conditions. True reasons why they had been, for so long a period, confined to the pale only, and from this, many abstruse points in this period of Irish history investigated.*

**B**UT as the clearing up of this affair is of the last consequence to the honour and dignity of this antient imperial kingdom, and to the present succeeding Irish; and as no

one



one has *hitherto* considered this affair in the proper light, in which it ought to be considered, I shall be as clear and explicit on it, as the nature of this work will permit.

The arts used by the English ministry to divide this nation, by prevailing on the new Irish, to form a system of laws, and adopt a policy subversive of the independency of their native country, must have greatly weakened it. Instead of one powerful kingdom, which they ought to have been, they became two distinct nations, inhabiting the same land. The laws after the English *modus* were *solely* confined to what was called the pale; and this district comprehended the counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, and Uriel, only. Except these and the cities of Dublin, Waterford, Cork and Limerick, the rest of the kingdom acknowledged no laws but the antient ones of their country, from the origin of the Irish monarchy, to the days of James I. inclusive. This is partly confirmed by Sir James Davis\*: “Tho’  
 “ a prince assume the title of sovereign of an entire coun-  
 “ try, (as our kings did of all Ireland) yet if there be *two thirds*  
 “ of that country, wherein he cannot punish treason, murder,  
 “ or theft; if the jurisdiction of his ordinary courts of justice,  
 “ doth not extend to these parts; if he have no certain reve-  
 “ nues, no escheats or forfeitures, I cannot say, that such a  
 “ country is conquered.” So little pretences had they to conquest, that, when Sir William Windfore, in the 47th of Edward III. was sent to Ireland, and that 203 years after the first invasion, and who, as Davis notes, spent more time in the service than any Englishman then living, yet did he himself confess, “ that he could never have access, to understand, or know  
 “ their countries.” Nay even in the kingdom of Leinster, where the power of the English was greatest, we may judge in

\* Davis’s History of Ireland, p. 9.



what a limited state it was, by Richard the second's famous invasion. This, which happened in 1399, in which no less than 4000 men at arms, and 30,000 archers were employed to reduce Mac Murrough, (who my copy of this expedition calls king of Ireland, but who in fact was but king of Leinster, or rather those parts of it where the Irish collected together, adhered to the antient constitution of their country, and opposed the inroads of their rapacious neighbours,) produced no other effect than the submissions of Mac Murrough, ô Morra, ô Cinfellagh, ô Nolan, &c. to this prince, as monarch of Ireland, without these chiefs relinquishing their feudatory rights in their different countries. Above a century after, when the state in Dublin requested of M'Guire permission to send a sheriff into his country, he consented, " provided they would fix his *Erie*, so that if he happened to be slain, by any of his subjects, he should know how much money was to be raised on the country."

In 1560, ô Neal, who, rejecting the title of earl, accepted by his father, was, as his predecessors, crowned king of Ulster, and waged war against Elizabeth; by the earnest entreaties of lord Kildare, as Cambden notes \*, was prevailed upon to lay down his arms, and make peace with this princess. In 1562, our author tells us †, he made a visit to London, agreeable to a promise he made the preceding year, and appeared at court, with " his guard of Galloglach's, bare-headed, armed with axes, " their hair flowing in locks on their shoulders, on which were " yellow surplices died in saffron, with long sleeves, short coats, " and thrum jackets, at which strange sight the people were " much surprised." Here we are told, he made his submission to the queen. But what was this submission? just such as the kings of England formerly made to the kings of France, for their

\* Annal. rerum Anglic. & Hibern. Regn. Eliz. p. 62. † Ibid. p. 78, &c.



their dutchies of Aquitaine and Normandy; and such as every provincial Irish prince paid to his monarch! Did this submission imply an acknowledgment of the force of English legislation, or Irish acts of parliament? most assuredly it did *not*; and even Camden, the impolite Camden himself, furnishes the proofs. For on the English council's asking this prince, by what law he pretended to exclude Hugh, the son of his brother Matthew, from the succession? he *sternly* answered, "that he was base-born, and by the laws of his country, was incapable of government." As to the tender which his father *Con* made, to *Henry VIII.* it could not bind or affect him, as any concessions he might make, could be in force during his own life only; nor could even these be deemed legal, unless having the sanction of the governors and people, by whom he was elected. As to himself, he was by all laws, human and divine, by the voice of the people, and by the law of succession or *tanestrie*, proclaimed ô Neale; nor did he assume greater power in his dominions, than what his ancestors from remote antiquity enjoyed. Will any sensible man after this, say, that the Irish acknowledged any power in the laws of England to bind them? Is not this the language of a prince, scorning any restraints, but what the antient laws of his own country imposed? What can be made of the answer which lord Kildare, and the nobility and gentry of the pale, made 1488, to Sir Richard Edgcombe's demand, from *Henry VII.* "that they would become Irish, every of them?" Is not this as much as to say, "we will reject these laws, which we have hitherto agreed to be ruled by, and adopt those of the kingdom?"

I shall not however pretend to conceal from my reader, that this prince after his death, was attainted by the parliament of the pale, and his dominions, being the fifth part of Ireland,



confiscated to the crown. This indeed would seem like the punishment due to a rebel. I have read this curious act over and over, and find in it something very extraordinary. As Elizabeth like her father, was known to be of a mild, gentle disposition, and like him to have a tender conscience, these flimsy courtiers of the pale, to reconcile this act to her known justice, set forth that her ancestors, kings of England, from the most remote antiquity, had a claim to this kingdom; and that her assuming the dominion over Ulster was only dispossessing usurpers, such as the ô Neals were, as they could prove from books wrote in Irish, Latin, and English. Every sensible examiner, will naturally ask, if ô Neal was really a rebel, where was the necessity to bring in all these proofs, to justify this measure? If a subject, surely his appearing in arms against his sovereign was in itself reason enough to attain him. Are the attainders of lord Kildare, in Henry VIIIth's time, and Baltinglass in Elizabeth's time thus worded? But though this act proclaims the indisputable right to the possession of ô Neal's territories; yet it would seem, as if all the proofs they advanced, though so well authenticated, were totally unknown to the Irish nation; otherwise it will be impossible to reconcile the following part of it to sense; "and forasmuch as the name of ô Neal in the judgments of the uncivil people of this realm, doth carry in itself so great a sovereignty, as they suppose, that all the lords and people of Ulster, should rather live in servitude to that name, than in subjection to the crown of England. Be it therefore," &c. Thus was the name of ô Neal, with the power and dignity of the race, forever annihilated; and a prince acknowledged and obeyed as such during his life time; who constantly boasted that he never made peace with Elizabeth, but at her own request; after his death, treated with all the indignity due to a rebel. But a princess, who



who could put to death a queen, who only came to seek an asylum in her country, from the rage of her own factious subjects, may well be excused for a slip of this kind. And had this famous act the force to deface and degrade the race of ð Neal? Just as much as if it had been thundered out against an emperor of Indostan, or a Sophi of Persia! *Tireloch Linoch* succeeded *Shane* in the kingdom of Ulster; and a fifteen years bloody war waged against this princess, and which ceased not till her death, proves what little power the parliament of the pale, or the English nation, had over this province, and how little their acts were known, or considered by them.

If it any time the Irish accepted of the English laws, as it is clear to me they never did, yet could it no more imply a conquest, than the present empress of Russia's receiving into her new code of laws, English statutes, would, the acquisition of Prussia. Hear Cooke upon Lyttleton, p. 141. "It was ordained and  
 " enacted, that Ireland should be governed by the laws of Eng-  
 " land, which of many of the Irishmen, according to their  
 " own desire, was joyfully accepted and obeyed; and of many  
 " of the same, was soon after *absolutely* rejected, preferring their  
 " Brehon law, before the just and honourable one of England."  
 Indeed the antient Irish, accustomed to a perfect legislation, from the remotest antiquity, no doubt conceived an hearty detestation, for a system of laws, which the very framers of "scarce ob-  
 " served eight days after passing," as baron Finglass declares! But that no doubt may remain, as to this matter, let the acts themselves declare their force and extent. At a parliament held at Trim, ann. 25. Hen. 6. cap. 4. it is enacted, "That where-  
 " as there is no difference in dress between the English mar-  
 " chers, and Irish enemies; for the future no man shall be  
 " taken for an Englishman, who has not his upper lip shaven;  
 and



“ and if any shall be found amongst the English, contrary there-  
 “ to, then will it be lawful to seize him, and his goods, as an  
 “ Irish enemy.” Cap. 5. “ If any Irish be received as the king’s  
 “ subject, and that he transgress the law, then may he be seized,  
 “ and his goods and chattels, as if he never had been a liege  
 “ man.” Ann. 5. Edw. 4th. it is enacted, that “ every Irish-  
 “ man that dwells amongst the Englishmen in the counties of  
 “ Dublin, Meath, Uriel, and Kildare, shall dress like English-  
 “ men, and take English names.” Cap. 6. “ Whereas foreign  
 “ vessels do fish on the coasts of the king’s Irish enemies, by  
 “ which they are greatly strengthened in their harness, armour,  
 “ and other necessaries, besides large tributes of money, given  
 “ by every of said ships,” &c. Amongst the many acts passed  
 at Drogheda in the so much talked of administration of Sir Ed-  
 ward Poinings, and that after that famous one, by which it was  
 forbidden to hold a parliament *here*, till the acts were certified  
 into England, cap. 8. in which the statutes of Kilkenny are con-  
 firmed, it is observed, that this act does not bind “ these who  
 “ will, that every subject shall ride in a saddle, and these that  
 “ speak the language of the Irish.” Cap. 13. enacts, that “ who-  
 “ ever stir up the Irishrie or Englishrie to make war against the  
 “ king or his lieutenant, be guilty of treason.” Cap. 17. for-  
 bids the making peace or war with the Irish enemies, without  
 permission of the governor. In the 28th of Henry VIII. cap.  
 11. is a statute forbidding the king’s subjects, for the future,  
 to pay any kind of tribute to his Irish enemies, for protect-  
 ing their towns, &c. Cap. 15. directs the use of the English  
 dress, language, &c. and is particularly confined to the pale.  
 In the 33d of Henry VIII. cap. 4. is an act too remark-  
 able to be passed by, called the act of consanguinity, the pre-  
 amble to which is as follows: “ Whereas the king’s obeysant  
 “ subjects



“ subjects of this land, either by consanguinity or affinity,  
 “ which is universally spread betwixt them, by reason, *that*  
 “ *they are inhabited in so small a compass, or circuit, and re-*  
 “ strained by estatute to marry with the *Irish Nation*,” &c. In  
 the 3d of Philip and Mary, is an act to turn waste grounds,  
*i. e.* towns and villages, not acknowledging English legislation,  
 into *Shire* grounds. In the 11th of Elizabeth, cap. 9. is such  
 another, with this preamble: “ Whereas sundry outrages are  
 “ committed in *countries, territories, cantreds, towns and vil-*  
 “ *lages, of this land, not being shire ground, the lord chancel-*  
 “ *lor or keeper of the seals, shall be empowered to form them*  
 “ *into shire land.*”

In all the acts passed to the reign of James I. inclusive, we  
 constantly meet the expressions of English rebels, to such of the  
 new Irish as adhered to the antient laws of their country, and  
 Irish enemies to the Aborigines; words which distinguish in  
 the clearest manner, that all these statutes regarded a little colony  
 pent up in a little corner of the kingdom only and no others.  
 As well might it be said, that an ordinance of the states of  
 Genoa or Florence bound all Italy, as that any of these acts  
 bound the Irish nation! But who were the enemies of this little  
 colony? not all the Irish, but the borderers. These were the  
 ô Byrnes and ô Tooles, who frequently struck terror into the  
 city of Dublin itself. They were the ô Cavenaghs, the ô Moores,  
 the ô Cinsellaghs, the ô Connors, ô Dempseys, ô Ferrals,  
 ô M'Laughlins, ô Maddens, Mac Geoghegans, Mac Coghlan,  
 &c. So late as Philip and Mary, was the countries of Leix,  
 Offaly, &c. taken from the ô Moores and ô Connors, made  
 shire ground, and in honour of them called the King and Queen's  
 Counties; and yet in the succeeding reign, the antient proprie-  
 tors repossessed themselves of their estates. About the same time  
 Annaly,



Annaly, taken from the ô Ferrals, was erected into a county, and called the county of Longford, and Meath was divided into two counties. But when James I. succeeded to the throne, then, and not before, did all the Irish agree to be governed by the English modus, and then, for the first time, were these laws universally received. To explain why this alteration took place, which the power of England could not, for near 500 years preceding this, effect, our readers must be informed, that Scotland being originally a colony from Ireland, and her princes descended from the royal line of *Milesius*, the closest friendship constantly subsisted between the two countries. In 1315, the Irish princes, not able to agree amongst themselves, whom they should elect to the monarchy, to restore peace and dignity to their country, resolved to invite Edward Bruce, brother to the king of Scots, to Ireland; who was accordingly proclaimed monarch, by a very considerable party, and some of the new Irish, particularly the Lacys, &c. were suspected to have engaged deeply in this cause; and others of them gave hostages for their fidelity. During the reign of Elizabeth, James was in secret alliance with ô Neal and the other Irish chiefs; and on his succession to the English crown, was joyfully acknowledged monarch of Ireland, by the antient as well as later natives. If any one doubts this account, let him consult Sir John Davis's works, then attorney-general: let him peruse the first and fifth acts of that reign; and cap. vi. anno 10 & 11 Caroli primi. From hence it is, that the Irish have suffered so much for that race; and that they with pleasure see, in his present majesty, all the amiable qualities, for which the great house of Cashel were formerly so renowned.

Whilst I am engaged in this interesting enquiry, it would be unfair in me to pass unnoticed, what has been positively affirmed.

That



That king John divided Munster and Leinster into twelve counties. Be it so; though every one knows that Leinster alone contains so many. But will this be deemed sufficient proof, that these two kingdoms received the laws of England so early? If Strongbow accepted them not, as we know they were not even pretended to be obtruded on him, he having given up the cities of Dublin, with the adjacent country, and all the ports of Leinster to king Henry, for a peaceable possession of the remainder, as is particularly expressed in that famous act of attainder against ô Neal, why should we suppose the kings of the two Munsters more passive and obsequious to Henry, than the king of Leinster? They saw the monarchy wrested from them by the superior power of the late king of Connaught. They hated that house much for this; but much more for the devastations committed on their country. It was no great merit in them, every one who knows the human mind will agree, to consent to transfer the monarchy, which they could no longer hope to possess, from a line they detested to another. The annals of all countries are full of the melancholy effects which ambition or revenge inspire; and to go no farther than Spain, its history affords a most striking proof thereof, in the case of count Julian; who, unable any other way to gratify his revenge for the violence committed on his daughter by Roderic, the king, in 713, called in the Saracens to his assistance, who conquered almost the entire kingdom, and kept its inhabitants in miserable subjection for 700 years. But though these princes readily gave up to Henry, their pretensions to a state they could not hope to enjoy, yet we cannot suppose them such fots, as peaceably to resign to him a power they were actually possessed of. Accepting of the laws of England, was totally annihilating their own jurisdiction; besides, the Irish monarchs were appointed, as the guardians, not the perverters, of the constitution. Henry



was too politic a prince even to pretend to such innovations, notwithstanding what English writers have advanced. It would not be the way to ingratiate himself with a nation, so attached to their antient customs, so jealous of their liberties as the Irish were, to introduce amongst them at once, new laws and new customs. But if they became obedient to England so early, why does every fact in the subsequent period, to the days of James I. flatly contradict it? Even so late as 1599, does not Sir George Carew himself bear testimony to the deposing of Daniel, and the electing of Florence Mac Carthy, “to the stile, title, and authority of Mac Carthy,” or king of South Munster\*.

I have already said, because history has affirmed, and facts prove it, that neither the king of Leinster, nor the other princes of Ireland, paid any other submission to Henry, than what the antient constitution of the kingdom required from the provincial kings, to the monarch. To whom were the English who followed the fortunes of the late, as well as present king of Leinster attached, and by whom rewarded? By Mac Murrough, and his son Strongbow. Did not the last, as king of Leinster, make *De Quiney*, constable of Leinster; which honour, by his daughter's marrying Philip de Prenderghast, descended to him according to the Irish modus? Was not de Clahul, appointed by him hereditary marshal of Leinster, another antient honour? Did he not bestow immense tracts of land on others of his friends; and I suppose ô Moore preserved his rank of hereditary treasurer? What then did Henry bestow, and what had he to bestow on his own favourites and followers? ô Regan, principal secretary to the king of Leinster, in his fragment, and the records of parliament justify the truth of his narration, tells us, that as soon as the former got possession of Waterford,

\* *Pacata Hibernia*, p. 20.



ford, he made Robert Fitz Bernard governor; and when Strongbow delivered up to him the city of Dublin, he gave the command of it to Hugh de Lacy. He also bestowed on the said Hugh, the government of Meath; and to William Fitz Aldeme he gave Wexford. Had he any other acquisitions in Ireland? not a foot; and how he came by these is briefly thus. By agreement with Strongbow, he was to get into his hands, the cities of Waterford, Dublin, and Wexford, with certain cantreds of land adjacent to Dublin, for supporting him against all enemies in his new kingdom; and as monarch of Ireland, he claimed the territory of Meath, a fifth province, taken at a very early period from the other four, to add a greater lustre to the monarchy. This, by the confusions occasioned by the Danish wars, was erected into an independent principality, by the ô Mac Laughlins, sometimes monarchs of Ireland, and now reclaimed by Henry.

Thus we see clearly, why the laws of parliament borrowed from the English *modus*, were constantly confined to the pale, to the days of James I. This little territory, as I have often observed, comprehended the city and counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, and part of Uriel, taken from the antient proprietors, and by marriage devolving on the crown. I am sensible, that all this account will appear very new and very singular to people who, shamefully neglecting the history and antiquities of their native country, know much less of the nature of the revolution in question, though so necessary to be known by them, than if it had happened in Japan or Cochin-China. It does not appear that the king of Leinster had occasion for the assistance of Henry to support him in his kingdom; but history is positive that Henry required aid from him, to carry on his wars in France. And this aid came so seasonably, and proved so useful, that as



an acknowledgment for it, ô Regan tells us, he restored to that prince the cities of Waterford, Dublin, and Wexford; and after this period, in his wars with the king of Scots, the same writer tells us, that “ The knights of Ireland put themselves as volunteers into the king’s army, and by their aid, the king of Scots and earl of Leicester were in battle defeated and taken prisoners.” By this it appears, that Strongbow was in every point of Irish legislation, by marriage with Mac Murrough’s daughter, by being declared Righ-Damhna or presumptive heir to the crown, and by being acknowledged, and enjoying all the powers of royalty after his father’s death, king of Leinster in as ample a manner as any of his predecessors. He dying without issue male, the crown of Leinster devolved on his daughter Eva; and her children were so many feudatory princes of Leinster. But as, according to the Irish law of *Tanistrie* or succession, a female could not rule, the family of Mac Murrough put in their claim to the crown of Leinster, which was the source of much blood-shed, and great divisions, for centuries. From this simple narration, supported by irrefragable facts, the difficulties and inconsistencies attending the accounts of this revolution and its consequences, will disappear. Strongbow’s enjoying the crown of Leinster, can no more be offered as a proof of the weakness and pusillanimity of the Irish nation in former days, than the prince of Orange with his Dutch troops, invading and reaching to the crown of Great-Britain, in the last century, can the power of England in his time. Great Dutch families were then founded in Britain, as were great English ones, formerly, in Ireland; and I believe the British nation would be as little obliged to any one, who now asserted that this Batavian prince conquered Britain, as they were then with Dr. Burnet, who affirmed the same; and I am confident, let both



revolutions be examined with the most critical nicety, that every impartial enquirer will judge the pretences to a conquest of Ireland still weaker. Strongbow's peaceable succession will also explain why these great Irish families, of British origin, who by alliances and other means, acquired ample territories in Ireland, never attempted to introduce English laws into them, nay, rejected and despised them. The investigator of Irish annals will be no longer surpris'd, when he shall read, so late as queen Elizabeth's days, that the sons of Mac William, earl of Clanrickard, put to the sword the people of Athenry, merely because they attempted to introduce English customs there; or that the chiefs of them enjoyed petty sovereignties, made peace and war, created knights, held courts of justice, exacted duties, and rais'd troops, at pleasure. It is very true, that many of these lords attended and presid'd at parliaments held in the pale; but will any one say, that they for themselves, or for their own people, paid any regard to these laws when they oppos'd their interest or inclination? Every period of our latter history, proves they did not. Henry VII. endeavour'd to make the great Lords of English Origin, more dependent on the English Constitution; to which purpose, and the more effectually to secure him from any future enterprises of the pretender *Simmell*, he sent Sir Richard Edgecombe to Ireland, to endeavour to make them subject themselves to a forfeiture of estate and life, in case they joined the pseudo prince, which they absolutely refused. In this voyage of Sir Richard, we find he never attempted to call on the Milesian chiefs; and the list of those who swore fealty to England at this time, proves the narrow limits of the English constitution to the greatest certainty. He received the allegiance of the people of Kinsale, Waterford, Dublin, and the pale, and no others. Amongst



mongst the acts of Sir Edward Poynings is one, by which it is forbid to have great ordnance in any fortrefs or strong hold, without licence from the deputy; and a second, prohibiting the making peace or war, without the chief governor's permission. Yet within the pale, they not only did keep ordnance after this, but the bloody battle of Knocto in Connaught was fought on account of a private dispute, between lord Kildare and Mac William, or Bourke, in which some thousands fell. And 30 years after this desperate engagement, does not baron Finglass assign as one reason, for the small extent and weakness of the English interest in Ireland, "the not observing any law passed in the pale, eight days after its enacting!"

It will appear then, to the greatest certainty, that the pale comprehending Meath, and the city and county of Dublin, &c. were lands of the crown; lands which the kings of England as monarchs of Ireland, claimed and enjoyed, and in which they could establish what legislation they pleased; and that the other parts had little concern or connection with them, but what the new Irish had, who united with, or deserted them at pleasure. After these facts, so well established, will any one *hereafter* presume to mention Poyning's famous statute as an act binding the kingdom of Ireland, when its power never extended beyond a narrow district, not an eight part of the country? Could it bind people who were not the objects of it when it passed, who neither knew of it, nor acknowledged its force? Could territories, which were not shire ground, nor had sheriffs in them, even to return members to serve in parliament for above a century *after*, be represented in this *puisne* assembly? In the days of Philip and Mary, three new counties were formed, and sheriffs, coroners, &c. appointed, *viz.* the King  
and



and Queen's counties, and the county of Longford, besides the dividing of Meath into two. These, it is demonstrable, could never have been represented in any preceding parliaments; and yet they were the borders of the pale! In 1584, the *unreformed* (so stiled) parts of Ulster were erected into counties, and sheriffs and coroners named for each. These were, 1st, Armagh; 2d, Monaghan; 3d, Tyrone; 4th, Coleraine; 5th, Donegal; 6th, Fermanagh; and 7th, Cavan: and in 1605, was Wicklow, bordering on Dublin, made shire ground. No body sure will be hardy enough to affirm, that these counties sent members to represent them in the pale, or that the laws after the English modus, were known or obeyed in them. Cambden will prove for me, they did not; and Sir John Davis will be my witness, that judges of assize never entered them, 'till after the accession of James I. and when they did, he will also declare, that they THEN found them, *a polished people, eminently amenable to law and justice.*

C H A P. V.

*Political distinctions, particularly ruinous to Ireland. M. Voltaire's censures on this nation examined, and confuted. The more severe ones of Mr. Hume considered, as well as his intemperance, and dissingenuity. Visible remains of the antient state of letters yet preserved.*

THE very sensible remark which Mrs. Mac Auley, treating of Irish affairs\*, makes, is too important to be here passed by. "The two factions (says she) of Papist and Protestant, more intent on thwarting each other, *than in maintaining*

\* History of England, vol. ii. p. 173.



“ *taining their mutual rights*, were an easy prey to the views  
 “ of the ministry.” In the days of popery this unhappy dis-  
 union was founded on principles of policy: after the reforma-  
 tion, religion was made the pretence. It is demonstrable, that  
 it was their interest to keep up this spirit of political and reli-  
 gious rage, since by dividing, they the more triumphantly go-  
 verned. It is a just observation on the British constitution, that  
 it can only flourish by opposition. It is this that makes them  
 great and powerful. Zealous to preserve public applause, the  
 party in power are always careful to support public credit, and  
 to keep trade and commerce, in the most flourishing condi-  
 tion. The party in opposition carefully watch their motions;  
 and any unpopular measure, is immediately echoed through the  
 kingdom. The national business is, by these means, sedulously  
 attended to, and all acts of foul oppression on either side re-  
 ligiously avoided. But from a retrospection of Irish affairs, for  
 near 600 years past, it becomes evident, that different interests  
 have been always the ruin of this kingdom; and that by a  
 firm coalition of Irishmen, *only*, can it again become respect-  
 able.

These untoward divisions, and the solicitude of each party to  
 blacken the other, have unhappily made our country appear in  
 the eyes of Europe, very differently from what it deserves; and  
 scarce a writer, even of modern date, from the great Voltaire,  
 down to Mr. Hume, who does not think he may with im-  
 puny, publish any misrepresentation of Ireland, how scanda-  
 lous and false soever. Thus Voltaire, with the greatest cool-  
 ness, tells us\*, “ Some nations seem formed for subjection to  
 “ others. The English always had a superiority over the Irish, in  
 “ genius, as well as arms and riches; nor has Ireland ever  
 “ been

\* *Siecle de Louis XIV. T. 1.*



“ been able to shake off the yoke, *since she was first subdued by*  
 “ *an English baron !*” But in this, as well as other instances,  
 it will appear that M. de Voltaire took his accounts from ill-  
 informed, if not prejudiced, writers. That the English were  
 not their superiors in genius, in remote times, must I think  
 be admitted from the face of this work ; that they have not  
 been so in later times, men of less erudition than M. de  
 Voltaire know. What nation can boast a man of more uni-  
 versal knowledge and learning than our great primate *Usher* ?  
 What man entered more deeply into the subtleties of the  
 schools, and metaphysical disquisitions, than *Scotus* ? One can  
 scarce tell, which to admire most in *Wading*, the extensiveness of  
 his genius, the love for his country, or his great humility ! Who  
 has rendered greater service to philosophy in general, to che-  
 mistry in particular, than the great *Robert Boyle*, descended from  
 the *o* *Boyles* of *Ulster* ? *Lombard*, *Routh*, *Ward*, &c. were  
 excellent antiquarians, as well as profound scholars ; and the  
 abilities of Mr. *o* *Flaherty*, as an historian, and of Mr. *Lynch*,  
 as a refuter of *Cambrensis*, &c. should not be forgot. Sir *James*  
*Ware*’s character is too well established to require enlarging on ;  
 and perhaps a brighter genius than the late bishop *Berkley*,  
 has not appeared. How would the literary splendor of queen  
*Anne*’s reign be diminished but for the names of *Swift*, *Congreve*,  
*Steele*, *Parnel*, *Farquhar*, &c. The late Dr. *o* *Brien*’s Irish X  
 dictionary displays an amazing fund of erudition ; and besides  
 his great knowledge in the learned languages, he wrote the  
 French and Italian as well as English, with great correctness. I  
 could mention many illustrious persons, now alive, who would do  
 honour to any nation, but suppress them lest I should offend.  
 In a word, let such foreign writers as the present one, strip  
 their English Biographical Dictionaries of all Irish and Scotch  
 names,



names, let them consider the numbers, and the advantages of each country, and they may possibly discover that brightness of genius, extent of knowledge, and the love of letters, neither have been, nor are at this day, more particularly the characteristics of England than of this its sister kingdom. Ignorance of a country is no excuse for misrepresentation in any writer: It is unpardonable in such a one as M. de Voltaire.

This author seems no better acquainted with Irish history, when he asserts, that the Irish, though they distinguished themselves abroad, “always behaved shamefully at home.” He was not informed of their bloody conflicts with the Danes, and the ruin of that people under *Malachy I.* He read not of the wars of *Cealachan Casbell*, with new bands of these foreigners, and of the famous engagement off Dundalk. He did not recollect, that, when after this epocha, by the swarms of those people, invited hither by the fertility of the soil, and riches of the country, the kingdom seemed quite oppressed, a thousand gallant Mamonians, of the *Dal-Cassian* race, took the generous resolution of rousing up their countrymen, or of perishing together, in the attempt. These troops, on account of the closeness of their ranks, their firmness in battle, and never retreating, were called *Lambglas-Dalgais*, or hand-lock’d champions! What shall I say of the battle of Clotariff, so well known in history? But without going so far back, he seems to forget the nature of the wars of Ireland, connected with his history. He should have recollected, that at the battle of Aughrim, 15000 Irish, ill-paid, and worse cloathed, fought with 25000 men, highly appointed, and the flower of all Europe; composed of *English, Dutch, Flemings* and *Danes*, vying with each other. That after a most bloody fight of some hours, these began to shrink on every side; and would have received  
a most



a most complete overthrow, but for the treachery of the commander of the Irish horse, and the death of their general, killed by a random shot.

At the first siege of Limerick, a small party of Irish, headed by the gallant *Sarsfield*, cut off a considerable body of these aliens, near Cullen, and destroyed all the cannon, and ammunition, intended for the expediting this work; and in this enterprize it is difficult to determine which to admire most, the wisdom of the planning, or the intrepidity with which it was executed. Soon after this, when a breach was made in the walls 40 feet wide, which the English, with their accustomed bravery mounted, and poured into the city, the Irish rallied in the centre of the Irish-town; in their turn attacked the enemy, beat them back to the dismantled walls, and from thence to the Fossé. They did not stop here: they pursued them to their camp with great slaughter; and though they did not set fire to the English hospital, where the wounded, unable to fly, were perishing in the flames, yet it is a known fact, that they partly prevented the effects of this unnatural order, by quenching the fire, and saving numbers of these half-expiring wretches. The censure which king William passed on his troops, after this defeat, is too glorious for the Irish to be here omitted: “*Had* “*I (said he) but the handful of men who defended this city, and* “*that you were all shut up in it, I would take it in spite of* “*you.*” M. de Voltaire makes but a poor atonement to this injured nation, when he rapidly tells us, “that they behaved well abroad.” He knew that their valour abroad was such, that in many capital defeats of the French armies they alone remained conquerors. Witness the battle of the *Woods*, where Clare’s regiment alone cut to pieces one of two battalions, so that none but the colonel (Gore) and a very few survived the action.



tion. Whilst the whole army were complimenting the great Marlborough, on this signal victory, he alone appeared melancholy and dejected. *I wish*, said a young colonel, *that my regiment had been on that service. I wish they had*, answered this officer coolly, *for then I should be at the head of 1500 brave fellows, and you not have ten.* The affair of Cremona, were there no other instance, one should think would secure them immortality in France, were gratitude the characteristic of the French nation; and the remark of a senator, in the British house of commons the winter following, shews how sensibly the high allies felt the check. “Two Irish regiments, said he, have done at Cremona more real injury to the high allies, than the fee-simple of all their forfeited estates is worth!” If charges against individuals require strong proofs, how much more necessary then, where the glory of a whole nation is at stake.

But of all the historians that have treated of Irish affairs, Mr. Hume is the one we lie under the greatest obligations to. Others of his countrymen, as we shall shew, have for centuries endeavoured to injure us; but they seemed to have some regard to the judgment of their readers, and their own characters, by offering the best historical proofs they had. This gentleman, scorning the confined paths of his predecessors, has at once nobly bounded over all the fences of history, truth, decency, and common sense, and at one dash of a pen, represented us as the most nefarious and abandoned of the human race! \* “The Irish (says this writer) from the beginning of time, had been buried in the most profound barbarism and ignorance; and as they were never conquered, nor even invaded by the Romans, from whom all the western world derived

\* Life of Henry II.



“ derived its civility, they continued still in the most rude  
 “ state of society, and were distinguished only by those  
 “ vices, to which human nature, not tamed by education,  
 “ nor restrained by laws, is ever subject :”—he goes on—“ the  
 “ usual title of each petty sovereign was the murder of his  
 “ predecessor : courage and force, though exercised in the com-  
 “ mission of crimes, were more honoured than any pacific  
 “ virtue ; and the most simple arts of life, *even tillage and*  
 “ *agriculture were almost totally unknown to them.*” He tells  
 us, “ that the incursions of the Danes and Normans, which had  
 “ spread barbarism in other parts of Europe, *tended rather to*  
 “ *improve the Irish ; and the only towns which were to be*  
 “ *found in the island, had been planted along the coasts by the*  
 “ *free-booters of Norway and Denmark.*”

As this outrageous setting off is a mere rhetorical flourish without the least foundation in history, I shall pass it over unnoticed ; but as the remainder of his performance, seems to have some little allusion to record, I shall pay some attention to it, though in truth it be scarcely worthy confutation.

If, as *Tully* assures us, “ History be the witness of times  
 “ past, the light of truth, the life of memory, the guide of  
 “ life, and herald of antiquity,” we shall find Mr. Hume, in his accounts of Ireland, rather a writer of romance, than of history : he tells us, that the Irish were converted by the English ; an assertion most remotely distant from truth, as we have already shewn in the course of this work ; and so careless and inaccurate is he, that in his relation of the first cause of calling in the Normans, or English, he even mistakes the names of the principal parties. Thus, he tells us, that the lady carried off by the king of Leinster, was wife to ô Rourke, king of Meath, and called Omach ; whereas her real name

was



was Dearbhorguil, the daughter of Mac Floin, king of Meath, and married to the prince of Breffni. From the general character he had given of the nation, we must not be surprised at his remark on this adventure. “ This exploit (says he) “ *tho’ usual among the Irish*, and esteemed a proof of gallantry “ and spirit, provoked the husband.” We have already so fully shewn that purity of blood was one of the first national objects in Ireland, and of violence offered to woman being punishable by death, that we only introduce this curious quotation, to shew how proper a master Mr. Hume is of the history of a country, he has so grossly insulted. His account of the English Invasion, and its consequences are in the true stile of romance. He tells us, that the first English adventurers, “ completely armed, *a thing al- “ most unknown in Ireland*, struck a great terror into the barbarous inhabitants, and seemed to menace them with *some “ great revolution !*” Is not this in the true Quixotian stile ? But all writers, foreign and domestic, remark the fondness the Irish had at all times for arms ; and *Solinus*, in other respects as little in love with our ancestors as Mr. Hume, expressly says, “ that the Irish placed their greatest pride in “ the beauty and splendor of their arms.” Besides, the reader cannot have forgotten that the helmets and breast-plates of our nobility were inlaid with gold, and their shields of pure silver, from the earliest times. The junction of *Fitz Stephens* with *Prendergast* and *Fitz Gerald*, this writer proceeds, “ composed “ a force which nothing in Ireland was able to withstand ! “ *Roderic the chief monarch of Ireland, was defeated in battle, “ the prince of Ossory was obliged to submit, and Diarmod “ aspired to the sole dominion of the island !*” What says my old friend *Farnabius*, on such occasions ?



*A sonitu vocis, Onomatopoeia fingit.*

*Bombalio, Clangor, Stridor, Tarantara, murmur.*

This powerful kingdom, which had so bravely and successfully expelled the Danes; the part of a province of which *only*, supported a 15 years bloody war, against the power of Elizabeth, aided by a strong party of the natives; which, though divided into many different and opposite factions in the days of Charles I. kept up a fair and stout war against the Parliamentarians, for above eight years; which in the time of James II. though opposed by a very great party in the North, insurrections in the South, and a mighty army from England, headed by king William in person, yet carried on a gallant war, and fought two general engagements in the compass of a year, against the bravest troops in the world; was unable to resist 600 foreigners, (the number produced from this junction) which Mr. Hume blushes not to affirm, “composed a force that “nothing in Ireland was able to withstand!”

Some works the matter may recommend, though the style be indifferent; and in others, the language and manners, tho’ destitute of interesting materials, may soften the asperity of critical censure; even glaring falsehoods lessen not the merit of polite language. Thus Quintilian speaking of *Clitarchus*, a Greek historian, remarks, *Clitarchi probatur ingenium, fidei infamatur*, “whilst we admire the style of Clitarchus, as a “writer, we detest his want of truth, as an historian.” In relating Irish affairs it would seem that even this talent had forsaken Mr. Hume. “The exiled king of Leinster (says he) “being assured of assistance, returned privately to his own “state; and lurking in the monastery of Ferns, which he had “founded,” he adds in a parenthesis too! “*for this russian*  
also



*also was the founder of monasteries!*—Had Mr. Hume been conversant in Irish history he would have learned from it more politeness and good manners. For though our ancestors had much more reason to detest the memory of this prince than he, yet, in our annals, the severest appellation he goes by, is, Murrough na NGall, or Murrough of the Strangers, on account of his fondness for them. Even the Dane, though a most cruel, perfidious, and barbarous enemy, we find no harsher names for than Lochlonnach, which may be rendered into English, either a *Ship Champion*, or powerful by sea, and Fear-muire, or Sea-man. Which should be deemed most barbarous, the antient Irish, who treated even their mortal enemies with manly decency, or the modern historian, who divests himself of decorum, truth, and common sense, let the reader judge!

Mr. Hume begins his account of the Elizabethian war, in the following *clear*, and *sensible* manner. “Though the *dominion* of the English over Ireland, had been *established* above four centuries, *it may be safely affirmed*, that their *authority* had been *hitherto but nominal*.” He thus proceeds, in this chapter, which opens with so much perspicuity; “as the brutality and ignorance of the Irish were extreme, they were sunk below the reach of that curiosity, and love of novelty, by which every other people had been seized, at the beginning of that century, and which had engaged them in innovations, and religious disputes, with which they were still so violently agitated.” Tho’ Mr. Hume might despise the account of Irish writers of this century, though delivered by so respectable a name as Sir James Ware; and though he might not see, or even hear of Mr. Harris’s edition of that valuable work in two volumes folio, yet had he

taken



taken the trouble to consult Wood \*, and other British antiquarians, he might have saved himself the confusion of being here again detected in the most barefaced falsehoods. For at this particular period, so very attentive were the natives to the literary reputation of their country, that many of them began to refute the amazing falsehoods and plagiarisms of Pictish writers, and to reclaim the numbers of lettered and pious Irish, whom the former had attempted to make Denizens of Pictavia! I shall conclude this chapter with one observation, to prove unquestionably how highly letters were cultivated *here, even in those days of anarchy*: The best schools then in the kingdom were in the most retired parts of it, where strangers had least access; and to this day as good classical scholars are found in the counties of Limerick, Clare, Kerry, and most parts of Connaught, as in any part of Europe; insomuch that the very common people in many places, speak correct Latin, nor is Greek unknown to them. To this point, Mr. Smith † observes, “ It is well known, that classical reading, extends “ itself, *even to a fault*, amongst the lower and poorer kind “ of people in this country; *many* of whom have greater knowledge in this way than some of the *better sort* in other places.” And in another place he observes, “ that Greek is also taught, in “ some of the mountainous parts of this country;” and it is worth notice, that where these schools are in greatest repute, the people have the least communication with the adjacent plains, and speak but the native Irish.

\* Athen. Oxon. &c.

† History of Kerry.



## C H A P. VI.

*Remarks on Mr. Hume's account of the civil war of Ireland. Character of the Irish nation before and after the breaking out of this war. Why it has been misrepresented. Irish exculpated, by the most public acts, from the very pretences to the charges of the massacres and murders. The real authors of these out-rages singled out. Present state and character of the common Irish. Lord Clarendon's severe remarks considered and exposed. Unexampled cruelties exercised on the Irish, and lord Clarendon again censured. The Scotch the real source of all the calamities of these unhappy times. Their prudent manner of carrying on the war in England and Ireland, to the selling of the king.*

THE picture of the war of 1641, as drawn by Mr. Hume, is so extremely horrid, that were he in earnest, we must certainly believe that he has viewed mankind thro' a medium equally false and degrading. But the man who could boldly assert that the corsairs of Denmark and Norway who spread desolation over every part of Europe, rather improved and polished the Irish, should be allowed a *charte blanche*: let us amuse ourselves with the elegant disclaimer, if we cannot be instructed by the sober historian. Almost totally ignorant of Irish history, yet unwilling to appear so, what remained for Mr. Hume but to inflame the passions since he could not convince the judgment? And where is the wonder if in the darkness of ignorance, his imagination, like Falstaff's, should have multiplied his enemies?

As this war was the act of the whole Irish nation, and as the most foul and bloody deeds have been charged home  
on



on the kingdom, I shall lay down a few incontestable facts, by which my readers may form some judgment of the nature of this charge. But I shall first present the reader with a few slight sketches, of the character of our countrymen, as delivered by foreigners. We have seen them involved in a cruel Danish war of above 200 years; and though the constitution was materially affected by it, yet the principles of the people were not. The English wars, though in too many instances, *wars against humanity*, could not debauch the morals of the Irish; for say the writers of the former \* “they [the “English] scarce observed the very laws enacted by themselves eight days after passing, yet could the Irish by no favour “or affection be prevailed upon to break through theirs.” Here we see, so late as the reign of Henry VIII. English evidence of the obedience of the Irish to sound legislation. In the wars of Elizabeth, while their enemies scrupled little as to the mode of offence, yet were the Irish unimpeached of any base or dishonourable retaliation. In the next reign, Sir John Davis declares, “that no nation love equal and impartial justice better than the Irish.” Lord Coke, at the very period in question, affirms, from his own knowledge, that “there is no nation “in the Christian world, that are greater lovers of justice; which “virtue he adds, must necessarily be accompanied by many “others.” At the conclusion of Cromwell’s wars, they were influenced by the same heroic principles: they followed the fortunes of the fugitive Charles; formed themselves into regiments, transferrable from the French to the Spanish service, as suited the interests of this inglorious exile; and from the colonel to the common soldier, they cheerfully and voluntarily gave up

\* Baron Finglafs’s Breviate of Ireland.



half their pay, to his support. In the last wars of Ireland, their bravery and generosity remained unfulfilled\*. Such of them as thought they could not in honour and conscience swear allegiance to king William, chose rather to lose their ample fortunes, and embrace a voluntary exile, than to act the base part of temporizers; and those who remained at home, in all subsequent troubles that have agitated our sister countries, have not even been suspected of treasonable practices! From that period to this day, we have seen them in the most distinguished employments; places of the highest trust, in almost every state, as well in the field as the cabinet, have been committed to their charge; and all Europe proclaims their bravery, their honour, their fidelity, and their justice! Such are the people who have been represented as the most cruel and sanguinary of mankind, and *that too, at one particular time only!* But by whom have they been thus painted? By English writers, who, of all others, could do it with the worst grace, when the reader is reminded, that this very nation for near 400 years preceding the period we are now speaking of, gave murder, robbery, and theft, the sanction of law in Ireland! And by Scotch historians, whose countrymen were the real source of all those evil and bloody actions, that disgraced this kingdom in the 17th century!

But how shall we account for the accumulated charges laid on the Irish, for murders and massacres in the war of 1641, *and in*

\* At the first siege of Limerick, when the English entered the town through a breach they had made, they were gallantly beat back, even to their camp, by the Irish. In this confusion the hospital of the English by some means took fire; on this occasion the Irish shewed their generosity to be equal to their bravery, by doing their utmost to preserve from the flames their enemies.



*this war only?* The truth is, without descending to particular and disagreeable proofs, that the æra in question was an age of fanaticism, of hypocrisy, and of dark and bloody doings, and those men who, after bringing their prince to the block \*, offered to restore Sir Phelim ô Neal to his honours and estate, as well as to save a life justly forfeited by his cruelty, provided he would accuse the late king as been the source of all the disturbances in Ireland, would stick at nothing to promote their interest, or palliate their own unequalled barbarities. That they were deeply concerned, to misrepresent this kingdom, needs no proof; but we may reasonably believe that were the Irish capable of *even imagining* half the barbarities then laid to their charge, they would be at this day as free a nation as any in Europe. *Throw dirt, and some of it will stick*, is a political maxim which even the upper ranks in society have sometimes adopted; and surely there is nothing in the origin, the education, or the principles of the anti-royalists of the last century, that should lead us to believe them incapable of employing it on a useful occasion.

It is far from my intention or inclination to justify any kind of outrage against a lawful authority; but surely those gentlemen who, *from principle*, defend the measures taken by the English and Scotch, in taking up arms against their lawful sovereign, should not censure the Irish for endeavouring to preserve their liberties from the invasions of the English parliament. No one looks on oppression for religious principles in a more detestable light than I; and, upon reflection, it must appear astonishing, that the professors of a doctrine which inculcates the most humiliating and passive principles, should  
be

\* Dean Kerr's affidavit in Nelson's Collections.



be the foremost to maintain it by means the least justifiable. But surely the clergy and laity of England and Scotland, who solemnly swore “to the *extirpation* of popery and prelacy “in the three kingdoms, *without respect of persons*, lest they “might partake in their sins, and thereby be in danger to “partake of their plagues\*,” should be the last to condemn the people of Ireland for rising in defence of their religion. These last were certainly more justifiable in defending their old opinions, than the reformers in forcing new tenets on them.

That the Irish coalition was not intended for the base and abominable purposes of extermination in cold blood, as their enemies have affirmed, is demonstrable. After all the measures for the intended insurrection were settled, a general meeting of the Irish chiefs was held at the abbey of Multifarnan in the county of Westmeath, in the beginning of October, 1641, to determine what should be done with their enemies. After many debates, it was unanimously resolved *carefully to avoid the spilling of cold blood*, and to send all their captives, wherever taken, to Dublin, from thence to be shipped off for England, never to return on pain of death. This is recorded by Peter Welsh, a living witness†, and too much the creature of the marquis of Ormond to be suspected of partiality to this party. Temple‡ mentions this meeting, but pretends ignorance of its intent. Dr. Jones, who was their prisoner about this period, in his *examination*, declares the object of it, as I have related; and the same is admitted by Dr. Warner§, who further observes, that though the intentions of the insurgents on this head were

not

\* Solemn League and Covenant. † Irish Remonstrance. ‡ History of the Irish Rebellion. § History of the Civil Wars of Ireland.



not even publickly known; yet from the prisoners being from every quarter sent under escortes to Dublin, it must be admitted. At a provincial synod of the clergy of Ulster, summoned immediately after the breaking out of this war, as well as at a national council assembled at Kilkenny in the year 1642, excommunication was publickly denounced against all Catholics, who should from *private revenge, hatred, or desire of plunder* enter into this war, but particularly against all robbers or murderers. To the proclamation of the Irish chiefs from *Newry*, of the 4th of Nov. 1641, they annex a mandate of the king's, authorizing them to make war on his English and Irish enemies; and though this commission from the king was afterwards known to be forged, yet was it the grand cement of the Irish league. Many years after, Mac Carthy, lord of Muskerry, publickly acknowledged to lord Orrery, "that were it not for this contrivance, they would never have been able to keep their people together."

From these incontrovertible facts, it is demonstrable, 1st, That the Irish never harboured the base and cowardly thought of destroying their enemies in cold blood; 2d, That the public acts of their clergy, expressed their detestation of such foul practices; and 3d, That the people were drawn into this war from a full persuasion that they had royal authority to justify their proceedings. That much blood was spilt on this unhappy occasion, is but too true; but what I contend for is, that it was not the act nor by the consent of the *Irish league*. Whilst Sir Phelim ô Neal, Colonel Mac Guire, and their men committed many cruel outrages in the counties of Down and Antrim, ô Reily publickly protected the Protestants in the county of Cavan, as did the ô Ferrals, in the county of Longford.



Longford. In July 1642, when Owen Roe ô Neal superseded Sir Phelim in the command of the Ulster army, his first act was causing the houses of the murderers to be burnt and their persons sought for. He publicly censured the cruelty of Sir Phelim, and declared that rather than not punish these wretches, he would join the very English themselves! Even many of the outrages committed by his people, Sir Phelim, at his execution, publicly disclaimed; declaring them to be done contrary to his orders. It would be hard to doubt his sincerity at this time of trial, especially when he more than once rejected the offer of life and fortune at the very *tree*, rather than accuse his sovereign of being the author of this war. All the chief Irish commanders constantly and publicly disclaimed all orders for outrage or murder, and frequently punished their men when convicted of such crimes. The Irish chiefs in 1642, and again in 1643, when these affairs were fresh in the minds of the public\*, addressed the king to call a parliament to have a severe enquiry made into all murders and massacres committed on both sides, to that day. The same application was made to Charles II. and why their enemies declined the challenge let every reader conjecture.

The reader will see, that I have not denied, but that cruel murders were committed in the counties of Down and Antrim, in the infancy of this war. Dr. Warner says †, “ It “ is plain that some murders, *though probably not very many*, “ considering the nature of the insurrection, and the end “ intended, were committed in the first week.” Let the names of the perpetrators of such villainies be transmitted to posterity

\* Borlace's History of the Irish Rebellion and Appendix.

† Irish Civil Wars, vol. i. p. 82.



rity with the infamy they deserve, but let not the reputation of an entire kingdom suffer through the baseness of two or three great and bad men; of a people perhaps the least formed for such abominable crimes, in the world! It has been also asserted, that the league in question was against the English name and nation. Yet we see in the very first Irish proclamation, English Catholics as well as Irish, invited to join in this cause. In the then votes of the English commons, we read of English Catholics of quality being confined for saying there was no safety for their persons but in Ireland. We know many resorted to them, as lord Castle-haven, colonel Touchet, and others, who were promoted to great commands in the Irish army; and that the warmest friendship and confidence subsisted between them. Envoys from the principal courts of Europe, as well as the earl of Glamorgan, on behalf of king Charles, and cardinal Rinuccini from the Pope, attended on the supreme council of Kilkenny, which surely proves they were far from being the barbarians they were afterwards represented. If they had committed the crimes charged on them, how were they so wonderfully concealed from these envoys and ambassadors, nay from all the world at that time, Borlase, Temple, Clarendon, and their emissaries excepted\*? Base and cruel acts are the characteristics of a cowardly disposition: No one will accuse the Irish of cowardice.

\* Could we suppose Louis XIV. would be guarantee of the peace of 1648, on behalf of the Irish, if he looked upon them as the murderers their enemies have represented them? Would he, after the restoration, by his ambassador Ruvigny, require an adherence to this peace; and afterwards with his own hand write to Charles II. on this head, if he thought them a culpable people? In this letter he affirms That the only subjects who held out longest, and suffered most in the cause of royalty, were this brave and generous people.



If ever the very common Irish might be said to be in a state of barbarity, it should certainly be *at this day*. When a wretched peasant pays from four to five and six pounds annually for his acre of ground, the sole support of a miserable progeny, and earns but seven, oftener five or six, pence for his days labour, the reader may form some distant idea of his wretchedness! Yet in these distressful circumstances, I ask the most sanguine *domestic* enemy to the glory of his country, if the behaviour of the common people betrays any marks of ferocity, or of cruelty, to countenance this heavy charge on their predecessors? With more native good sense than falls to the share of any commonalty I know, they have joined a softness of manners, a humanity and generosity, which strongly prove the polished state of this kingdom in *former days*. Go to an Irish peasant's cot, he receives you with looks of satisfaction: the best chair, and the warmest part of the fire are allotted to you. The poor wife, with cheerfulness, lays her potatoes, her milk, and if she has them, her butter and eggs before you; nor can you gratify them more, than by partaking of their homely fare. Have you lost your road, one of the family will go a mile or two to put you right. If a poor stranger sickens amongst them, the neighbourhood visit and assist him: and if he dies, it is a constant point with them, to attend his funeral; and they bewail his loss thro' a sense of commiseration that he has none of his own friends to do his remains that sad office. If this hospitality and politeness be evidences of a barbarous people, then, and then only shall I admit the Irish to be most remarkably so; and if a partiality and fondness for strangers, which have ever distinguished the nation, be proofs of a sanguinary disposition, no doubt the Irish are highly so.

It



It has long been a rule in state policy to misrepresent and throw out the severest invectives against a people intended to be highly injured or destroyed. Thus, notwithstanding the high character given by Bede and all the early foreign writers of the Irish nation, of the *Insula Sanctorum*, we find all British writers, with a very few exceptions, from Cambrensis an author of the 12th century, to the present day, represent them as a most cruel and barbarous people; and of course deserving the many acts of oppression and injustice exercised against them. Such was the treatment of the gallant Irish in the last century. It was not enough that numbers of them were deprived of their lives and properties, by the severest of proscriptions, but their names must be transmitted to posterity with the most horrid infamy! To do this, Borlase and Temple employed their nefarious pens; and we must blush for the want of candour in lord Clarendon \* when he tells us, “ That there is not an account in history of any nation, the Jews only excepted, that were reduced to more complete misery than the Irish at this time;” especially, when he immediately after adds, “ and all this was the more extraordinary, in that it was without the pity of any, *all the world looking on them as deserving the fate they underwent!*” A French gentleman frequently applies the word *world* to denote his own acquaintance; and if by this expression of, *all the world*, his lordship means the Puritans and Republicans of England and Scotland with the pretended friends of royalty, who insinuated themselves into the favour of the two Charles’s, the more effectually to betray them to their enemies, we shall admit the justness of his remark; but if he means *all the world*, in the fuller sense of the words, truth obliges us here

\* History of the Rebellion, vol. iii. p. 330.



to differ from this noble historian. They were pitied by all the real loyalists of England, many of whom fought by their sides, and some employed their pens in their defence. Their virtues and bravery were revered by the duke of Lorrain, one of the wisest and gallantest princes then in Europe; who interested himself so far in the cause, as to engage to supply them with arms and money, and even head them in person. Did lord Clarendon forget this famous negociation, or was it in detestation of those *native* and *incorruptible* virtues, which men of *middling honour* behold with pain; or to palliate the lengths he went in their ruin after their restoration, that he thus covertly brands them? That the French nation highly esteemed them, we know, by their monarch being guarantee of the famous peace of 1648, and by his exerting all his influence, after the restoration, to prevail on Charles, to adhere to the articles of this peace. Could lord Clarendon be unacquainted with the support which the Irish troops abroad, afforded to his *deluded prince*, and the respect they gained him on the continent? Or had he forgot his own confession, that Charles he had no consequence\*, no weight, but what he derived from those very Irish! It was through them, and for the sake of gaining them over to the Spanish service, that the Spaniards *could be at all prevailed upon* to enter into any kind of treaty with Charles. When they had been before in that service, through his influence they quitted it for the French; and it was the regaining troops of their known bravery and fidelity, that now made the Spaniards sign the treaty of 1657. Of all the regiments after the surrender of Conde, Mac Carthie's alone refused entering into the service of Spain, till their colonel got his dismissal from

\* History of the Rebellion, vol. iii. p. 334---348, &c.



from France. Cardinal Richlieu did every thing to persuade him from taking this step; and finding neither promises of promotion nor entreaties could divert his intent, at length absolutely refused parting with the regiment, though he accepted the colonel's commission. His corps nevertheless followed their countrymen, and behaved with their usual intrepidity. Are these proofs of a nation contemned, *unpitied by all the world*? Or was this part of the revenge lord Clarendon had resolved upon, for *the honest indignation they expressed* when the chancellor of the exchequer was much more than suspected of betraying the secrets of his prince? The remark which a Spanish grandee publickly made on the late *Chevalier*, might with much more propriety be applied to his exiled uncle. "Were it not (said he) for the gallantry and intrepidity every where displayed, by the Irish troops, we should scarce know that such a character existed!"

Having, I think, fairly vindicated the Irish, as a nation, from the horrid crimes of murder and massacre, by laying them on the few who committed them, who acknowledged them, and who suffered for them; charity obliges me *to hope*, that the unexampled bloody reprisals of their enemies, proceeded not from any cruelty peculiar to the English nation, but from the vindictive spirit of a few. But be this as it may, most certain it is, that their troops pursued the most bloody and cruel measures that history can furnish. What excesses the Irish committed, we see were contrary to the orders of their chiefs; their inhuman adversaries acted by positive order from above. Entire countries were laid waste, and men, women, and children, without distinction, butchered by a merciless soldiery! So cool were these men in the trade of murder, that



that when sometimes reprehended for their infernal sporting with the miseries of dying infants, they used gravely to answer, *That nits would be lice.* Do their writers deny, can they deny, any of these charges? Have they not gloried in the scenes of desolation, which they every where exhibited? and has not lord Clarendon himself told us, “That except  
 “the Jews, no nation was ever reduced to the wretchedness of  
 “the Irish, and in this state, they were *unpitied by all the world!*” Dr. Warner sensibly remarks \*, “The Protestants would take  
 “it very ill, (and very justly) if the barbarities of Sir Charles  
 “Coote and Sir Frederick Hamilton, were imputed to their  
 “religion; why then should they charge those, of which Sir  
 “Phelim ô Neal and others were guilty on the principles of the  
 “Romish church, which hath disclaimed them?”

Lord Clarendon in his account of the restoration, tells us, that, “The Irish who would now have been glad to have  
 “redeemed their past miscarriages and madness, by doing service for the king, were under as severe captivity, and complete misery, *as the worst of their actions had deserved,* and  
 “indeed as they were capable of undergoing.” Would not one be tempted from this curious paragraph to think that the Irish were the constant enemies of the two Charles’s? Yet Charles I. tells us †, “Preposterous rigours, well grounded  
 “discontents, apprehensions of greater injuries, continual oppressions, want of natural liberty, fears of utter extirpation,  
 “and downright despair,” made the Irish take up arms! and when they did draw the sword, they framed an oath to be taken by all officers, civil and military, acting under them, to bear true allegiance to Charles and his successors, as kings of Ireland. Charles II. whose word one should think

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\* Civil Wars of Ireland, vol. ii. p. 203.

† Icon Basilic.



we ought to take, as soon as his chancellor's, in his first speech from the throne, when a sense of gratitude was yet warm in him, thus expresses himself: "I need say nothing of Ireland, and that they alone shall not be without the benefit of my mercy: they have shown much affection to me abroad; and you will have a care of my honour, and what I have promised to them." In Louis XIVth's letter, dated Sept. 7, 1660, addressed and delivered to Charles by his ambassador Ruvigny, in behalf of the Irish, he expressly affirms, "that, in the almost general defection of all his subjects, the Irish alone stood firm and unshaken in his interest."

The ideas excited by our ruling passions are ofteneft present to us. Lord Clarendon, besides his personal aversion to the Irish, could not forget that he had a *principal* hand in the famous act of settlement. It is not the injured, but the person who injures, that never forgives. His inclination and interest, as well as character, made it necessary to throw the Irish into the most unfavourable point of view, in direct opposition to history and facts; and he has represented them, not as they really were, but as they should have been, to justify the great lengths he went to ruin them.

But on whom should all the unhappy wars which desolated Ireland, disgraced Britain, and dishonoured humanity, be charged? On Scotland certainly! There was the foundation of them laid; there were they nurtured, and there they ripened to bloody maturity! Had there been no Scotch insurrection, we should not have heard of rebellion in England, or civil war in Ireland! the very massacres in Ireland should be attributed to them; for the first instance of *cool, premeditated extermination*, was furnished by the Scots in and about Carrickfergus. The insurgents appeared in arms the 23d of October, and the persons



sons and properties of the Scotch, in the counties of Down and Antrim, were by proclamation of the Irish chiefs under pain of death, protected from all outrage; nevertheless a party of the Scotch landed in the isle of Magee, where there was never the least disturbance, in the beginning of the following month, in the night, and put to death man, woman, and child, of the innocent inhabitants! The Irish writers of those days affirm that the number exceeded 3000; Mr. Harris, Dr. Warner, &c. contend that they were not above 300. Whether the murdered were 300 or 3000, changes not the nature of the crime, and every one must acknowledge, that they who could kill 300 people in cold blood, would not probably desist through humanity.

Mr. Hume tells us, “so great was the hatred of the Irish to every thing that was English, that they not only murdered the poor defenceless people, but fired their houses, burnt their furniture, and destroyed their very cattle, that nothing belonging to them should remain in the kingdom!” It must be owned, that altho’ none shewed themselves more forward to spill the blood of the Irish than the countrymen of this historian, yet they did not carry their malice to the same extremity. However criminal the Irish appeared in their eyes, and though by their *covenant* they were obliged to *extirpate Popery and Prelacy*, yet upon reflection they concluded their goods and chattels not culpable. Whilst they destroyed the people, they rifled their goods, and sent off the cattle in large droves to Scotland. The war they carried on there, was rather that of plunderers and robbers, than of disciplined troops. Nay, to such an height did they carry their rapacity, that the chief justices in those days, iniquitous as they were, began to apprehend an universal scarcity, from these *Caledonian*



*nian Tartars.* Dr. Warner \* tells us, that Monroe, in his return to Carrig-fergus, wasted the country, and with other effects carried off 4000 head of cattle; but the night before they were to be divided between the English and Scots, they were conveyed away, to the great discontent of the English, “who began to mutiny, and *never after cared to march with such a band of thieves.*” After this they marched into the county of Antrim, where they drove off 5000 head of cattle; and when lord Antrim invited *Monroe* to his castle where he was sumptuously entertained, and offered to unite with him to preserve the peace of this county, the return the latter made his noble host was, to seize on his cattle, and make himself a prisoner! “*In short, (says Dr. Warner) the Scotch general had as little honour as the banditti he commanded.*”

Whilst the cause of liberty prompted the English, and the Irish armed in defence of their religion and their country, the Scotch, parsimonious and prudent, whatever their pretences might be, shewed clearly that lucre alone was their *primum mobile*. Though they promised the reversion of wonderful places in heaven, to such as would take the *covenant*, yet the moment the English parliament swore to its maintenance, they refused to march to their assistance till they received one hundred thousand pounds, besides three hundred thousand pounds voted to them before this, as well as twenty-five thousand pounds a month, during their stay in England. Even to their selling the king, whom, through Montreuil the French ambassador, they invited to their camp as to a *sure asylum*, they plainly shewed that *avarice* was their predominant passion. Charles, their lawful sovereign, descended from an illustrious line of kings, instead of the protection which *honour*, *allegiance*,

\* Civil Wars of Ireland, vol. i. p. 198.



*allegiance*, and *public faith* demanded, they gave up to his relentless enemies; not for religion, not for liberty, or even revenge; but for base, sordid lucre! the sum of four hundred thousand pounds was the price of *royal blood*, half of which was paid in hand, and of this reward for treason the general and the common soldier, equally partook! Whilst all Europe execrated so atrocious an act, men of wit were not wanting to express their particular detestations; and with one of the many epigrams on this foul deed, I shall close this chapter.

*Quis neget Iscarii Scotum de Germinè Judæ?*

*Hic Christum domini vendidit, ille Deum!*

*Vendidit ut Christum Judas, sic Scotia regem:*

*Ille, suum dominum vendidit, illa, suum!*

## CHAP. VII.

*A sketch of the first and succeeding inhabitants of Britain and Caledonia. The Irish migrations thither, and when they became a considerable people there. Source of North British pretences to an ideal antiquity in Britain. Insincerity of their writers, particularly of Dempster, Sibbald, and Mac Kenzie.*

FROM the *Gabbalcha Eirion*, or *Conquests of Ireland*, the *Psalter of Cashel*, and many other most respectable pieces of Irish antiquity, we are told, that Breotan, the son of Fergus Leath-dhearg, led a colony into the northern parts of Britain, which his posterity possessed for some centuries. On the landing of the Picts in Scotland, the antient inhabitants advanced more southward to make room for these new-comers, and from their great ancestor Breotan, was their latter residence afterwards named. The Picts took possession of their new settle-

ment



ment under their leader *Cathluan*, the son of Gud, and from whom it would seem that it took the name of Caledon, latinized Caledonia. For Cathluan is in Irish pronounced *Cabluan*, and Don signifies a family, or posterity; hence Caledon, or the posterity of *Cabluan*; as the Irish are called Scots, from *Scota*, and Milesians, from *Milesius*, and their posterity in North-Britain, *Dal-Rieuda*, or the posterity of *Rieuda*, from their first leader. We are further told, that to perpetuate an alliance formed between the Irish and these Picts, and to be an eternal record of the dependance of these last on the Irish, they requested of them new wives, on whose posterity only, all their acquisitions were to devolve. This account of the Picts is confirmed word for word by the venerable Bede, who flourished in the beginning of the eighth century, when the Pictish empire still subsisted, and who was himself a close neighbour to their territory, living in his monastery at Weymouth, near Durham. He particularly takes notice of the preference given to the female line, amongst the Picts, which, as he observes, is continued to this day. He tells us also, that *after* the Britains and Picts, the Scots of Ireland, inhabited Britain also\*.

The Irish, who had long beheld the Roman conquests in Germany and Gaul with a discontented eye, as soon as ever they heard of Cæsar's invasion of Britain, became highly alarmed. From the names of the captains who were the principal opposers of the Roman general, being demonstrably Irish, we should be led to think, that they then held a superiority over Britain, as they most assuredly did over Scotland. But however this be, they early stirred up their allies the Picts, and sent troops from time to time to harass the invaders; and

Qq 2

\* Hist. Eccles. Britan. cap. 1.



the subsequent Roman writers sufficiently point out the Scots as a foreign nation, pouring their troops into Britain, to oppose their arms\*. In these early days, Britain was to Ireland, what Flanders has been to all Europe in later times, a theatre of glory! Hither the gallant youth of our country repaired, when nothing worthy offered at home, and in conjunction with the Picts, and sometimes the Saxons, successively attacked the Britons and Romans; and so vigorous were their attacks, that those conquerors of almost all the rest of the world, were at length forced to seek for protection behind immense mounds of earth and stone; and finally in a retreat! *Cucullin*, *Connal*, *Cearnach*, &c. have been famous for their exploits in Britain; so have *Fione Mac Cumbal*, and his grandson *Oscar*; and our annals mentions a violent dispute ending in blood, on a division of the booty gained by *Fione*, in one of these excursions. In these frequent visits to Britain, numbers of Irish, from many obvious causes, necessarily remained behind. But they remained without any considerable head, 'till about the beginning of the third century, when Cairbre, or Eochaid Rieda, made a solid settlement in the northern parts of Scotland, and from whom their posterity, as the venerable Bede witnesses, to this day are called, Dal-Ricudini. This colony gradually increased; and all the exiles, and such as became obnoxious at home, were there received with open arms, as *Mac Con*, the *Collas*, &c. The Picts themselves at length became alarmed at the power and vicinity of these people, and were determined in the fourth century, to expel them the country as too dangerous allies. The latter applied to *Niall* the Irish Monarch, who with a mighty army invaded Scotland, as all  
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\* Ammian. Marcellin. Claud. &c.



our annals testify, and as Cambrensis witnesses \*, and compelled the Picts to a peaceable partition of the country, by which *Cantire, Ardgile, &c.* were the portion of the Irish colonists. He also directed, that *this new country* should be called, from the mother one, Scotia; and as an acknowledgement of its independence, Scotia Minor. This also is confirmed by Bede, who observes, “ that Ireland is properly the “ country of the Scots, issuing out from which, they have also “ inhabited Britain, being before possessed by the Picts †.” Even Hume seems to assert the same; for in a note upon his history of England ‡, we find the following words; “ It is certain, that in very antient language, Scotland means “ only the country north of the Firths of Clyde and Forth. “ I shall not make a parade of literature to prove it, *because “ I do not find that the point is disputed by the Scots themselves.*” In a word, a sovereignty was insensibly formed in the northern parts of Scotland, which gradually extending, at length in the ninth century, under Keneth Mac Alpin, totally crushed the Pictish empire, so as scarce to leave any remains of the people or language; which the Archdeacon of Huntingdon || pathetically deplores, as a proof of the transitoriness of human greatness. The annihilation of the Pictish government at this time, is thus recorded by Fordon:

*Primus in Albanis fertur regnasse Kenethus,  
Filius Alpini, praelia multa gerens,  
Expulsis Pictis, regnavit is octo bis annis.*

Engaged in defending their acquisitions from the inroads of the Britains and Saxons, the Danes, &c. the successors of Keneth, had little

\* Topogr. Hib. Dist. 3. cap. 16.

† Vol. ii. p. 258.

‡ Hist. Eccles. Brit. cap. 1.

|| Hist. lib. 1. fol. 171.



little time to cultivate letters; nay, so totally ignorant were they, that whilst they retained the language of their ancestors, which is yet preserved in the Highlands and the isles, they lost the very letter itself; so that in later times, when science became more fashionable they were obliged to adopt that of their neighbours the English. And to this day, an Albanian Scot cannot read his language in its native type, but in the Roman letter, as some gentlemen of the country, have acknowledged to me, and as from experience I know.

It is with nations as with individuals: the moment they become powerful and opulent, they seek to stamp some degree of eminence on their characters. Whilst the one seeks for arms and a pedigree in the Herald's office, the other searches into remote antiquity for a name. The English had formed pretensions of a very high antiquity for their country; and looked upon the novices of the British monarchy with contempt. Edward I. to support his assumed superiority over Scotland, with some appearance of justice, from Jeoffry of Monmouth, sets forth, that Britain, which was so called from Brutus the Trojan, was divided between his three sons. From Laegrus the eldest was his division called Laegria, now England: Camber's partition took the name of Cambria; and from Albanctus, was Albany called. From this he affirmed, that both Wales and Scotland were but appendages or fiefs to the English crown. In 1301 his ministers delivered a petition in great form to Pope Boniface VIII. in which his right of superiority is thus supported; but the nobility of Scotland, not to be behind hand with Edward in point of antiquity, address a letter to the above pontiff, in which they set forth that their monarchy was established in Britain many ages before Christianity. That Eric the son of Gathelus, came from  
Ireland



Ireland to Albany, and there founded a monarchy which continued uninterrupted to that time; and that to commemorate these two names, their first conquest, was called from them, Argathel, or Ere-Gathel, now Ardgyle\*. The Scots, who seemed mightily pleased with this their imaginary antiquity in Britain, complained greatly of Edward's destroying all their annals in his invasions of their country, by which they were left greatly in the dark in many particulars. Mr. Hume thinks this loss (if any such there was) of very little consequence to Scotland, or to the public; and I am clear, that if any records had been preserved, (as it is not improbable but there might, by the early Irish monks of Ionia) they could be of no use to the Scotch upon that occasion, because they would be as unintelligible to them as Arabic. Nor can a stronger or more convincing proof be offered of a total suspension of historic records, for at least a considerable time before the æra in question, than their entire ignorance of the very character of their language! This will appear still more evident from what their memorials to Boniface, as well as to his successor John XXII. assert, compared with what their later writers affirm. In these memorials, as we have seen, they set forth that Erc, or Eric, was the son of Gathelus and Scota, contemporary with Moses, and first king of Scotland; whereas Scota was not the wife, but the mother of Gathelus, and his son was named Esru, not Erc. Nor was it for many generations after, that the sons of *Milesius*, not Gathelus, invaded Ireland, from whence they confess their Erc, or Eric, came. At the time in question it would seem

\* That even in Spirituals, the English should pretend to no superiority over them, they assure this Pope's successor John, that Christianity was established in North Britain by St. Andrew himself, one of the twelve apostles, and brother to St. Peter!



seem that they were sensible that they imposed on the Pope and the public. Their last defence was presented at Rome in 1320, and soon after they sent John Fordon, a Scotch priest, to Ireland, to collect materials for an history of Scotland, of which their own country was totally destitute and to prove for them as respectable an antiquity in Britain, as their interest and vanity required. The ground-work collected, it is certain that he began writing it before the year 1341, for he mentions that year in the work as a present one. The reader will from this perceive, how close it comes to the year 1320; and he will be the more convinced of the truth of what I have advanced, from the wide difference between his æra of the Scottish monarchy and the above. For whereas the first makes their antiquity in Britain coeval with *Moses*, this last writer fixes it, at about 330 years before Christ. A great falling off truly!

Had they rested *here*, things might have remained so, and their ideal British antiquity have been undisputed. But this would not do. As they assumed an early dominion in England, as Scots, they began to claim those heroes and saints of Ireland, whose bravery and piety have been so revered over Europe, as Scots of North-Britain, not of Ireland. We may judge of the barefacedness of their falsehoods and piracies, from the uncommon severity with which their writers have been treated by the literati of Europe. The great antiquarian, Leland, expressly says of Boethius's *Scotorum Historia*, that its falsehoods are so many, and so glaring, as scarcely to be enumerated.

*Hæctoris historici, tot quot mendacia scripsit,*

*Si vis ut numerem, lector amice tibi;*

*Me jubeas etiam fluctus numerare marinos,*

*Et liquidi stellas enumerare poli!*

And



And our great and pious archbishop Usher, after tracing Thomas Dempster through every winding and subterfuge of lowest evasion, and exposing his impositions to all Europe, concludes his tale with assuring us, that so much is he to be suspected, that we should believe nothing that he advances, without ocular demonstration; “*Tam suspectæ fidei hominem illum fuisse*”  
 “*comperimus, & toties tesseram fregisse, ut oculatos nos esse oportet*”  
 “*& nisi quod videmus, nihil ab eo acceptum credere;*”  
 and, to complete his infamy, his name has been transmitted to posterity, with the honourable epithet of Hagiokleptas, or Saint Stealer.

Neither ashamed nor intimidated at the palpable refutations of Caledonian vanity, and from pens so respectable as Loyde, Stillingfleet, Usher, Ward, Routh, Colgan, &c. their successors with inflexible obstinacy, have pursued the same point of antiquity and with as much composure as if what their predecessors advanced, were admitted as acknowledged facts! Thus *Sibbald*, a Pictish physician, treading in the steps of *Fordon*, *Boetius*, *Dempster*, &c. and finding that Scotia and Hibernia were by the early, as well as by the writers of the middle ages, used indiscriminately for the same nation, has boldly asserted in his *Treatise on the Trbule of the Antients*, that by the word Scotia, North-Britain in general was known; but that the names Hibernia and Ierne were peculiar to the country about Strathern, not to Ireland! Thus he translates the line in Claudian—*Scotorum Cumulus flevit glacialis Ierne*:

“ Icy Strathern bemoaned huge heaps of Scots!”

“ for, (says he) did the poet mean Ireland, he would not call it *Glacialis Ierne*; and as we find in the Martyrology

R r

“ a *Sanctus*



“ a *Sanctus Beanus, Episcopus Abrædoniæ*, and no Irish writer  
 “ ever pretended, that Aberdeen was in Ireland, it is mani-  
 “ fest that by Hibernia, they understood Scotland.” How-  
 ever the learned Ward \* shews it to have been the city of  
 Down, to which the word Aber, which signifies stagnant water,  
 was formerly affixed. But let us for once admit no such  
 place in Ireland; would it not be more prudent to suppose  
 the Italian mistook in the name of this See, than from it  
 to transfer the name of our country to another? Besides,  
 this will never support his assertion, that the antient Hiber-  
 nia meant Strathern. For this last is in Perthshire; whereas  
 Aberdeen is the capital of the shire of that name. But how  
 will he reconcile this to the evidences of all antiquity? Cæsar  
 describes Hibernia as a large island, exactly situated as we  
 find modern Ireland at this day; and Dr. Sibbald assures us,  
 it is but a part of Perthshire, not even near the sea. Ta-  
 citus tells us it is a noble island, where trade is infinitely  
 more extensive than in Britain; yet our modern Doctor  
 avers, that it is a poor wretched place, without trade or  
 property! Even *Claudian* himself must manifestly insult both  
 his patron and *Stilichon*, and the whole Roman people, when  
 he makes the Picts and Saxons, two acknowledged distinct na-  
 tions, unite with the Scots, (whom he makes the most confi-  
 derable of the three) to attack the Britons and Romans; whereas  
 so far from being a separate people, they were but an inconfide-  
 rable portion of the very Picts themselves! Thus he introduces  
 Britain.

*Me quoque vicinis pereuntem gentibus inquit,*

*Munivit Stilicho, Totum quum Scotus Hibernem*

*Movit;*

\* De Patriâ S. Rumoldi, p. 379.



*Movit; & infesto spumavit remige Thetis!*  
*Illius effectum curis, ne bella timerem*  
*Scotica, nec Pictorum tremorem, ne littore toto*  
*Prospicerem dubiis venturum Saxona ventis.*

Sir George Mac Kenzie in his *Defence of the Stuart line*, deems it a kind of lese-majesty, even to controvert the antiquity of the Scottish monarchy. His warmth so far gets the better of his judgment, that he scarce descends to, argue with common temper; and seems astonished, that the Bishop of St. Asaph, should raise the least doubt of an affair, which he judges the honour of his country so deeply interested in. But to overlook every thing else, let us for once admit, what he so strenuously contends for, and what many men of eminence in letters, and particularly his countryman *Innes* denies, namely, that there really existed such writers as a *Verimundus* and *Cornelius Hibernicus*; that they were not the creation of *Hector Boetius*, but authors of the eleventh century; for he does not pretend that his country afforded earlier historians; will their bare affirmations be sufficient to establish a race of kings in Albany for fifteen centuries before their time? Was it by intuition they found this out, or by oral tradition, for they had no annals to direct them? He tells us by tradition; for at the crowning, as well as the interment of their princes, it was usual to recite their pedigrees! Thus tradition, which he will by no means admit, and but for a few centuries, in points of religion, becomes orthodox doctrine when it serves to establish his historical hypothesis. Can there be stronger evidence of a total suspension of records, and letters in North-Britain, next to the proofs already given? The truth of the matter is, (and Mr.



Innes asserts the same) that the Albanian Scots, constantly engaged in wars, attended little to the cultivation of letters, or preservation of records, till Edward the First's dangerous assertions pointed out to them the necessity of both. We may judge how extremely ill informed they were of the history of their mother country at this time, when they brought a colony of Scots from Ireland, some centuries before they even arrived there! We have seen Fordon, their first *real* historian, by what he had learned in Ireland, in so short a time as twenty years after this epocha, cut, at one flap, above one thousand years from their pretended antiquity. This wild hypothesis, molded into some form by Fordon, was still further improved by Boetius, John Major, Buchanan, &c. and had Professor *Dempster* preserved any degree of modesty in his ecclesiastical history, might have still preserved some little shadow of credit; but his rapacity in at once *alienating* all the holy and lettered men of Ireland, raised the indignation of the kingdom, and brought on those inquiries, so injurious to Caledonian annalists and historians.

I had prepared myself, in the rough copies of this work, to be much more full on all the points which I have here but slightly touched; but considering that this had been already sufficiently done to my hands, by writers of the first eminence; reflecting also that Mr. Innes, in his *Critical Enquiry, &c.* has fairly demonstrated the impostures of his countrymen on this head; and seeing the whole totally rejected by the present writers of Scotland; I thought it too uninteresting to the public to be further mentioned.

C H A P.



## C H A P. VIII.

*The Scotch the only nation in Europe which goes retrograde to the evidence of their history. A system of history founded on spurious poems, and condemned. A second attempt in another style. The preface to this new performance examined. The first and second dissertations of Dr. Mac Pheron considered, and an history of America sketched out in the Caledonian taste. The third, fourth, and fifth of these dissertations analysed, and Dr. Mac Pheron's disingenuity proved. Further proofs of this, as well of the truth of Irish history displayed in the examen of the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth dissertations.*

**I**T must no doubt appear very extraordinary, whilst the English, who for bravery and manly virtues, are equal to any nation; for power and riches, at this day, superior to most; have long since given up their pretensions to a remote antiquity which they could not well prove; and are content to be the descendants of Britons, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, as history shews; whilst France, Germany, &c. adhere to the same faithful evidences; that Scotch writers alone should oppose the truth of history, and for the sake of singularity, advance tenets as opposite to truth as light is to darkness; nay, advance them contrary to the general sense of the people! Thus Maitland tells us\*, that the Albanian Scots, yet call themselves *Cinnael Scuit*, and *Trial Scuil*, and and their language *Scuit-Bheala*; and I am assured, that the Highland Scots still glory in their Milesian ancestry,

\* History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 149.



Their true history is very antient, and to them very honourable. Their ancestors, the Picts, settled in North-Britain soon after the establishment of the Milesian monarchy in Ireland; but then they were tributaries to the Irish. Ay, there's the rub! The Irish are no longer that great and powerful people, who by arms and letters, gave laws to the neighbouring states. Oppressed, and unhappily divided, they have themselves scarce the skeleton of a constitution left; and a *Scot*, like all modern friends, is too polite to adhere to or even recollect an old acquaintance, so much out at the elbows. The Irish called them *Cablun-don*, or the posterity of Cahluan, from which name the Romans took their Caledonia; and as the Latins, from the painting of their bodies, surnamed the Picts, the Irish for the same reason called them Cruithnigh. The Scottish empire, forming in the third, was founded in Albany in the beginning of the sixth century; and so powerful did it become, by recruits from the mother country, that in the ninth it overthrew the Pictish monarchy, and established its dominion over the entire kingdom. Is not this an honourable evidence of power and bravery, and of the royal trunk, from whence they branched? Would not any other people glory in such an ancestry? The reader has already seen the absurdities their writers have fallen into, by attempting to support a ridiculous British antiquity, they had no pretensions to; and he has also seen them since universally relinquishing all claim to it. He will now behold a new system of history, much more contemptible and ridiculous than the former, because opposite to every evidence of antiquity.

Some years ago different detached pieces, were published in London under the title of *Fragments* of Highland-Poetry; the stile and manner of which were universally admired. The public



public were promised more correct pieces from the same quarter; and the real designs of the whole began soon to appear. The Scotch saw it in vain to hope to establish an high antiquity in Britain, whilst Irish history bore any credit, or whilst any of the nations cultivated its antient language. That time seemed now arrived. The nobility and gentry of Ireland, since the revolution, from a policy unexampled in any other polite nation, seemed totally to despise the history and language of their country; and to look upon every insult offered to both, with as much *soporific insensibility* as if they had not the least connection with either. What little remains of credit were allowed to our neglected annals, the fabricators of these poems, intended to annihilate, and on their ruin establish a new historical hypothesis, more favourable to Scotland.

From them it would seem (contrary to what all their former writers advanced) that the Picts and Scots were really one people, not distinct nations. That they were the Aborigines of Britain, but insensibly giving way to different invaders, they retired more northward; that here growing more numerous and powerful, they sent colonies from time to time to Ireland, which at length by their assistance, made a complete conquest of the country. To stamp the greater degree of credit on these precious poems, soon after appeared, *A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian*, the main design of which was to prove their great antiquity and genuineness; and this was followed by public declarations of different Pictish gentry, affirming their remembering the recital of different parts of this great work, by highland bards. So great pains taken to establish the credit of these poems could not be for nothing; nor were any ever in more need of such aid. To make generals, heroes, and poets, of Irish descent, citizens  
of



of Pictavia; to synchronize warriors who flourished at very different periods, such as Cucullin, Conall Cearnach, &c. of the first century, with Fingal, or Fionn Mac Cumhal, who lived in the third; and to unite all these in a war against the Danes, who were not even heard of in Europe till the ninth; demanded all the finesse imaginable! But that these poems should be the basis of a new system of Scotch and Irish history, required more faith than seems to come to the share of the present age. Were all the annals of Ireland totally lost, (and more pains has been taken to effect this, than to preserve them) and her antient history quite forgot, yet still would such absurdities gain no credit; for with them must the most respectable of old English, and even Roman writers, perish before a fabric could be raised on so *baseless a foundation*. Under the auspices of Lord Bute, and countenanced by the nobility and gentry of Scotland, were these poems ushered into the world with a curious dissertation, and notes replete with the greatest degree of asperity on the Irish nation. The late Dr. Warner, to whom we are indebted for an history of Ireland, first took up the pen in support of this defenceless nation; and from the bare appearance of them shewed the impositions and designs aimed at. I too in two different letters, published in Wilson's Dublin Magazine, endeavoured to recall to my countrymen some memory of their consequence and dignity; and in the *Journal des Sçavans*, for May, June, &c. 1764, a fuller elucidation was thrown on this subject. But it is to my much esteemed friend, Mr. O'Connor, that the public are indebted for a complete refutation and detection of James Mac Pherson. Whilst he was preparing his dissertations on Irish history for the press, I frequently



quently importuned him to attempt something in this way; representing to him, when these little trifling fugitive pieces, would be totally forgot, these poems might be again trumped up, with new splendor; wherein it might be observed, that if there had been the least doubt of their authenticity, the Irish nation would not have remained totally silent on that head, and the rather, as at such a period, there might not perhaps be found in the kingdom one man sufficiently master of the subject to retort on them. *Dolus an virtus, quis in hoste requirat?*

Poems of 1500 years, preserved by oral tradition *only*, being found unequal to the great design of subverting Irish history, it was agreed in the great council of the *Pictish Scalds*, to try what plain prose, general scepticism, and plausible conjectures might produce. Accordingly, in 1757, there appeared in London, Critical Dissertations on the Origin, Antiquities, &c. of the antient Caledonians and their posterity, the Picts, British, and Irish Scots. By John Mac Pherson, D. D.

In the preface we are informed, that the author, considering the great mass of fiction which all the nations of Europe present as their antient history, resolved to animadvert on some of them, and accordingly began with the history of his native country. Though says he “the Scots have as just pretensions to high antiquity as any nation in Europe, yet *their origin is peculiarly involved in darkness.*” He tells us, when monkish learning, religious virtues and ascetic austerities flourished in Ireland, and amongst the Saxons, his countrymen were almost totally illiterate. That at this season the Irish, availing themselves of their superiority, broached those fables of their being the progenitors of the British Scots, and which system Bede out of his great veneration for the country adopted!



Here is an hopeful hypothesis, and the axe applied to the root of Irish history. But without involving Bede in the same charge, these men knew nothing would avail. His credit alone was sufficient to blast all their hopes. The Irish then at a time when arts and letters, and a most unexampled piety and charity, rendered their names illustrious over all Europe, made all these virtues a cloak; for what? why for claiming the honour of being the predecessors of a people *rude, obscure*, and illiterate, pent up in a corner of North-Britain! Bede too, whose erudition, piety and truth have immortalized his name and writings, is made a party to this bill. But where did Mac Pherson find that the Scottish history was at this time broached in Ireland? not from Bede; nothing like it escaped his pen! Not from the Irish; for no traces of it can be found in their writings! Not in Pictish records; for he tells us they were at this time quite illiterate! Where then shall we look for it? Certainly in his own imagination alone, where, however, we shall discover many more novelties equally extraordinary in the course of this enquiry! He proceeds to tell us, that, before the total desertion of Britain by the Romans, the Caledonians were divided into two distinct nations, the Deucaledones and Vecturiones; and by these he understands the people who a short time after were known by the names of Picts and Scots. Where are the proofs of this? Ammianus Marcellinus \* tells us indeed that about this time the Picts were divided into Dicalidonæ and Vecturiones; but that *the Scots and Attacati were ranging about the country*. Claudian too, notes the different nations which then wasted the Roman provinces of Britain.

—————*maduerunt Saxone fuso*

*Orcades, incaluit Pictorum sanguine Thule*

*Scotorum cumulus flevit glacialis Ierne.*

Prosper

\* Lib. 27 and 28.



Prosper Tyro tells us, that Maximus routed the Scots and Picts, as they made an incursion into Britain; and Eumenes in his panegyric on Constantine Cæsar, the father of Constantine the great, mentions the Scots and Picts, as the constant enemies of Britain. When Alaric the Goth threatened Rome itself, and the Romans recalled their troops from their most remote conquests, Claudian de Bello Gethico informs us that

*Venit & extremis legio prætenta Britannis*  
*Quæ Scoto dat fræna truci, ferroque notatas.*  
*Perlegit exanimis Pictis moriente figuras.*

Thus, not only Bede, but Roman evidences are clear against the very groundwork of this strange system, of making the Scots and Picts one nation. The Doctor however pursues his scheme thus: “the Heathen Danes having driven numbers of Saxon ecclesiastics into North-Britain, they there first introduced the custom of recording events in monkish chronicles; and upon the authority of Bede, they all adopted the system that the Scots were of Irish extraction.” If then the Scots 1000, or 1100 years ago believed themselves the posterity of the Irish, and have continued to believe so till these twenty or thirty years past, what figure did Dr. Mac Pherson cast to render him so much more knowing in times past, than the living witnesses? But, unfortunately at the *very time* he fixes for the Scots being instructed in history by the Saxon ecclesiastics, the latter were so extremely ignorant, that *Asser* in his life of Alfred, surnamed the great, and the most learned of the Saxon race, tells us, “that from the Hum-ber to the Thames, there was not a priest that understood the liturgy in the mother-tongue; and that from the Thames to the sea, there was not one to translate the easiest piece of Latin!” To Bede’s great friendship to the Irish, this writer



now adds his prejudice to the Scots; “for (says he) the northern Scots, not yielding to the decrees of Rome about the celebration of Easter, Tonsure, &c. he justly detested; but Ireland being then esteemed the Island of Saints, and the Catholic faith being there in its utmost purity, the decisions from Peter’s chair were received with the most profound submission.”

Were ever such palpable mistakes published in an enlightened age? The truth of the matter is, and Bede himself is clear in it; the church of Ireland then opposed its tenets to those of Rome. The archbishops of Armagh were kind of patriarchs of the adjacent isles, as well as primates of Ireland. From them the Picts and Scots, as well as the Britains and Saxons, took the time of celebrating of Easter, and the Eastern form of Tonsure. St. Colman, the Irish bishop of Lindisfarren, in 664, with most of his clergy, and many English, quitted Northumberland, rather than submit to the decisions of a synod, held at that time there, in which it was agreed to reject the Irish, and adhere to the Roman ordinances. Bede, whilst he extols the piety, humility and charity of *Colman*, as well as his predecessors, *Aidan* and *Finanus*, yet censures them freely for their obstinacy, in adhering so firmly to the customs of their ancestors, in opposition to the see of Rome; nor was it till his own days that the Irish, convinced by *Adamanus*, admitted of the Romish alteration. He even praises God, for that the English, who were principally converted and instructed in the faith of Christ by Irishmen, now in their turn, convinced them of their error in the time of celebrating Easter\*. Nay, so far were the Irish from receiving the decrees of St. Peter’s chair, with the most profound

\* Lib. 5. Cap. 16.



found submission, as this writer asserts, that till the days of Henry II. or very near them, Rome had little to do with this hierarchy. Synods and general councils were summoned at the will of the monarch only; and we hardly read of a nuncio or resident from Rome here, till the beginning of the twelfth century. In electing their bishops and archbishops, they adhered to the antient customs of their country, not to the decisions of Rome; and St. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, in the 12th century, as we have elsewhere observed, freely censures the Irish, for making episcopal dignities hereditary in families, instead of submitting to the customs of the universal church. The historian *Rapin*, better informed, or more candid than Mac Pheron, in his reign of Henry II. reciting *Adrian* the Fourth's famous bull of donation, judges, that the censures on the church of Ireland, proceeded more from its adherence to the antient canons of the country, and not acknowledging the claims of Rome, than from any relaxation in point of piety and virtue.

Dr. Mac Pheron's alteration of Gildas, by which the sense is entirely altered, is very remarkable, "*Revertuntur ergo impudentes Grassatores Hiberni domus, post non multum temporis reversioni.*" But our Caledonian reads, "*Revertuntur ergo impudentes Grassatores Hibernas domus.*" Thus instead of the Irish retiring home, with an intent of soon returning, which is Gildas's meaning, by this transposition, it would seem, that the invaders only went to their winter retreats! For, says he, in summer they lived on the mountains and forests with their cattle, but in winter they searched for more comfortable habitations. Ridiculous! Whoever imagined the fruitful plains of England, or happy climate of Ireland, less comfortable for a winter's retreat, than the dreary wastes and snow-covered hills of Caledonia? At the same time he does not dispute



dispute the propriety of the epithet *impudentes*, when joined to *Hiberni*. Here his wit is as low and impotent as his forgery is barefaced and unjustifiable; and the candid reader will best judge to whom with greater propriety, the adjective *impudentes* should be applied; to thoughtless young Irishmen who too often ruin their fortune and constitutions in England, or reverend Scotch Presbyters who coolly and deliberately sit down to obtrude on the public, under the specious pretences of critical enquiries into history, the most glaring impositions? But after all this, he adds, “If the British Scots had any national tradition of their own, which contradicted the holy antiquaries of Ireland, Bede, from a pious aversion to heretics, totally rejected them!” It is not my business to defend one of the earliest writers, and greatest ornaments to the English nation, from these ungenerous insinuations of Dr. Mac Pherson; but if the British Scots had not these national traditions at the time he mentions, how came he, at this day, to attempt overturning the evidences of so many respectable writers, by a bare *ipse dixit*?

He tells us, Mr. ô Connor, in order to support the tottering antiquity of his country, has crowded the bottom of his pages with the authorities of Keating, ô Flaherty, and Buchanan. At least then he admits, that Mr. ô Connor had too much respect for his readers, and for his own reputation, to advance facts of remote times, without stronger evidences than his single testimony; but can Dr. Mac Pherson say as much for himself, or his colleague James? He accuses this gentleman with treating the author of *Fingal* with much severity; but this he judges was intended, “to draw an answer from him in order to give the greater importance to Mr. ô Connor’s work.” An honour it seems Dr. Mac Pherson will not



not deign “to adversaries who use low scurrillity, in the place  
“of argument and dispassionate disquisition.” Every one that  
knows this gentleman, will confess that he seems the least  
formed for low scurrility, or intemperate rage. In the disser-  
tation in question, he has, with the greatest precision demon-  
strated the impositions intended on the public, by the poems  
of Fingal. If in the course of this enquiry, it became evi-  
dent that they were a modern fabrication, to serve the cause  
of imposition, who has Mr. Mac Pherson to blame for the  
charges brought so home against him? If a sharper is detected,  
or an insolent coward chastised, what gentleman feels the in-  
dignity? If a Leland, a Lind, a Stanihurst, &c. detect the im-  
positions of a Boetius; or an Usher, a Ward, a Routh, or a  
Wading, the plagiarisms of a Dempster, &c. is the republic  
of letters wounded through their sides? But enough of this  
curious preface: proceed we now to the performance itself.

The first dissertation is intended to point out the fallacy,  
or at best the uncertainty of the pretensions of most Euro-  
pean nations, to a remote antiquity. This is granted; but  
how can it affect the antiquities of Ireland? Because the Ger-  
mans, Gauls, and Britains, have no annals beyond a certain  
period, does it follow, that the Roman and Greek records are  
impositions? Does it follow, from some nobility and gentry  
being of a modern date, that the houses of Claneboy, of  
Thomond, and of Kildare, are to lie in obscurity? The  
Irish antiquities are too well established, to be effected by such  
general premises.

The second dissertation supposes, the world peopled from Asia;  
that thence one colony pressed upon another, till he fixes the Ca-  
ledonians in North-Britain, and from thence he peoples Ireland.  
Had we no records to oppose to such a system, would not the  
world,



world, for many reasons, be excusable in doubting on this head? But as we have the most authentic ones, what judgment will the reader form of this gentleman's modesty, who authoritatively requires our belief of it? What philosopher of modern date would presume to oppose a darling hypothesis, to the evidences of nature and experience? Should not a modern historian then blush? at least his readers ought for him, for obtruding systematic reveries in the teeth of antient records? We shall propose an historical scheme in the modern taste, by which the dangers of such innovations will appear more fully; and for argument sake suppose in some future age, England by her intestine commotions, reduced to her primitive obscurity, and America become the centre of power and riches. Thus would some future American Mac Pherson argue:

“ As population must come from the east, all parts of the  
 “ globe must have received their inhabitants from this great  
 “ reservoir, in proportion to their contiguity only. How ab-  
 “ surd then to suppose that this great continent of Ame-  
 “ rica was peopled from Britain, so remote from us, and  
 “ so obscure? Our vicinity to Asia clearly points out our  
 “ ancestry. In the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries these  
 “ islanders were a powerful people; they reformed the esta-  
 “ blished religion of their country, and of course its history;  
 “ and as many people from hence repaired thither for learn-  
 “ ing, and to be instructed in the new religion, the absurd  
 “ doctrine of our being a British colony, was then first  
 “ broached. It is true, the same language being com-  
 “ mon to both, gives some appearance of reason to the tale;  
 “ for a tale it certainly is. The same lying legends that ad-  
 “ vanced this system, so injurious to our *high* antiquity,  
 “ formally



“ formally tell us also, that this country received its name from  
 “ one Americus Vesputius, who was supposed, in 1497, to have  
 “ first discovered it, in a voyage from Europe. How absurd !  
 “ Our ancestors were called *Americans*, from their being at all  
 “ times ready to spill their blood in defence of their country ;  
 “ from *Aqua sanguis*, and *‘Pew fundo* ; and this single deriva-  
 “ tion is of more real consequence towards investigating our  
 “ antient history, than all the tales invented by British and  
 “ American monks. They also tell us, that the Aborigines of  
 “ this country were called Indians, and had a language and  
 “ laws of their own ; and that we in process of time, destroyed  
 “ these people by frequent aids from the mother-country.  
 “ A tale evidently designed to confirm the notion of our de-  
 “ pendency on these people, and obligations to them. But  
 “ tho’ this, like the rest, was swallowed down by our credulous  
 “ ancestors, who *having no records of their own*, never suspected  
 “ the deception of these designing Britains, yet has this no better  
 “ foundation than their other dreams. As our progenitors were  
 “ called Americans, from their bravery, so were they also called  
 “ Indians, from *Ινδιον*, as they formerly supplied Europe  
 “ with the spices of the east. But if they were a distinct  
 “ nation from the Americans, why should there not be some  
 “ remains of their language to prove it ? Rejecting all these  
 “ tales, the truth of the matter is briefly this : In very re-  
 “ mote times, our country being over-stocked with inhabi-  
 “ tants (I shall not fix on the precise æra, but I hope some  
 “ future historian, more enlightened than I, may) sent co-  
 “ lonies to Britain ; and these by degrees, and constant sup-  
 “ plies from hence, not only fixed an empire there, but also  
 “ brought all the adjacent countries under their dominion.  
 “ Thus these ungrateful and degenerate issue of the great



“continent of America, reward our tendernefs to them, in  
 “giving them exiftence and power!”

Ridiculous as this fcheme of hiftory is, yet it is not fo ab-  
 furd or more fabulous than the prefent Caledonian adoption!

In Mac Pherson’s third difsertation he means to prove, that  
 the Picts were the descendants of the Caledonians. I go fur-  
 ther: I believe they were but different names, for the fame  
 people; and I have pointed out the reason why they were fo  
 called in this and the laft chapter. But what are his induc-  
 tions from the premisses? he boldly demands at what time  
 were they fo exhausted, or fo degenerate, as to yield up their  
 country, their freedom, and their reputation, to a colony, or  
 even an army of Scandinavian rovers, who fo manfully op-  
 pofed the Roman encroachments? Softly, dear Doctor, we muft  
 firft underftand one another, that the public may compre-  
 hend both. If you mean by Scandinavian rovers, the Picts,  
 as you furely do, I agree with you, that they were no  
 upftart nation; but furely you do not fuppofe thefe the co-  
 lony who made a fettlement in North-Britain, in the third  
 century. I muft again fet you right; and I am forry, for  
 the honour of letters and humanity, that fo much chicane  
 fhould be found in any gentleman, much lefs in a church-  
 man. The colony who made a fettlement in the northern  
 parts of Caledonia in the third century, was not a Scandina-  
 vian, but an Irish one; was not compofed of the enemies, but the  
 conftant friends and allies of the Picts. Thefe as I have al-  
 ready obferved, were fettled there many centuries before Chrift.

The fourth difsertation treats of the Pictifh monarchy. In  
 this, he highly cenfures his countryman Innes, for making  
 a Pictifh monarchy in Caledonia, in oppofition to the Scot-  
 tifh one fabricated by Fordon, and which John Major, Boe-  
 tius,



tius, Buchanan, &c. were at such pains to support. To ridicule the Irish account of the Picts, exactly copied by Bede, in his first chapter, and by all British and Scotch subsequent writers, he gravely asks, when the Picts requested wives from the Irish, Where was the necessity for their submitting, and afterwards for making it an irrevocable rule of their legislation, to make the issue by these Irish ladies only, capable of inheritance. Why an oath became necessary in this case, says he, when they had no other women, he leaves to the senachies of Ireland to determine. No doubt but he imagined he made a fine discovery, when he hit upon this witty conceit! But I would ask the advocates of this system, if they ever yet heard of a colony of people seeking new habitations, who did not bring with them their wives and children? Let us suppose them ever so insidious and deceitful, we should hardly think them so abandoned as to desert their progeny. In the speech of their chief, to the Irish princes, on their landing and begging their protection, we find the following: “ We shall not entertain you with whining tales of our misfortunes; these we will leave our children to record.” In these early days, no doubt but polygamy was common; and these people requesting new wives from the Irish, was only the better to secure their protection. Did not the Milesians themselves bring their wives along with them, and why not the Picts? Besides, there was something more humiliating and mortifying in their constant preference of their issue by the Irish, than at first sight appears. For by it, in all future times, had a Pict issue by a British, and again by an Irish woman, the children of the latter *only* could claim the inheritance, in exclusion to all others; and this is the reason why Bede tells us, that this law subsisted even in his days. Hence



it appears, that it could not be from a particular aversion to Caledonian heretics, that Bede was so just to the Irish. Motives very different from what seem to actuate Dr. Mac Pherson prompted this honest and venerable writer: a regard to truth, and an high veneration for the power, the humanity and benevolence of this illustrious nation, made him happy in rendering them the justice they so well merited from his country. If, says Mac Pherson, tradition without the help of letters, could preserve the names of 70 Pictish kings, as Innes has affirmed, what could hinder the Irish from preserving by the same oral tradition, the names of all the monarchs and provincial kings who reigned there to the time of Loagaire? Would not the reader from this interrogatory, suppose that the Irish did not preserve such a catalogue; and yet every one the least conversant in our history, knows that the names and reigns of these different princes are handed down to us (but not by oral tradition alone) with a surprising minuteness!

In his fifth dissertation, on the Pictish language, not able to get over Bede's positive assertion, "that the gospel was in his days preached through Britain in five different tongues, the Saxon, British, Pictish, Scotch, and Roman," he insinuates that this holy man had great satisfaction in thinking that the number of languages spoken in Britain, exactly corresponded with the number of books in which the Mosaic laws were written; and that therefore to introduce a parallel so edifying, he might too hastily believe these languages to be really different. To justify this assumption, he observes that Bede was not a thorough judge of the Scottish, in the few specimens he has given. For instance, he explains *Alcluth*, or Dumbarton, into the rock above Clyde, and Dal-Reudini, into the portion of Rieuda. But if the  
vene-



venerable Bede, and the author of the *Archæologia* were wrong in these translations, why has not Dr. Mac Pherson set us right? I know not what *ail* signifies in modern erse; but in classical Irish it signifies a rock, and this is justified by the antient names of places, as Ail, or Elphin, the White Rock, Cashel, the Rock of Tribute, &c. and Dal, signifies a lot or portion, as well as the posterity of eminent men; as the *Dal-Araidhe*, Dal-Ceas, Dal-Fiatach, &c. noted tribes in Ireland. But the Doctor explains Alcluith into Dumbarton. How is a writer to be pitied, who enjoins himself the task of tracing and pointing out the meanders and subterfuges of an author so insincere, so evasive as the present? The name of Dunbarton was not given to this city for more than a century later than Bede's time! It was about the year 855 and in the reign of Donald Mac Kenneth, that at the solicitation of the remains of the vanquished Picts, the princes of Britain over-ran Scotland, and on a peace, Ail-Cluith was marked as the British bounds, and was *then* called Dun-Briton, or the British Fortification. “It is unnecessary  
 “ (says he) to dispute with vehemence this pious writer's account of the *then* languages of Britain. If a modern author should assert, that the gospel is now preached in five  
 “ different tongues in Britain, in the *Welsh*, in *Gaelic*, in *French*,  
 “ in the *English* of *Middlesex*, and *Scotch* of *Buchan*, no reasonable objection could be made to the propriety of such  
 “ an insertion, however true it may be, that the two last  
 “ languages are in substance the same,” &c. But will this sort of ratiocination explain away the sense of Bede, and prove that the Scotch and Pictish were essentially the same? Would a modern author say, because there are two or three French churches in London, that the French were a distinct nation inhabiting Britain, as Bede does of the Scots? If the Scots and  
 Picts



Picts were really one people, and that there was no more difference in their languages, than there is between the English at present spoke on both sides the Tweed; and that a fifth tongue was necessary to make the number correspond with the Pentateuch, could he not easily have mentioned the Cornish, a language not even yet extinct in Britain? Bede lived when the Picts were yet a powerful nation, and more so than the Scots: he lived in their neighbourhood, and spoke from his own knowledge. And yet modern writers start up, to explain away the meaning of one of the most respectable of our antient historians! Where will certainty of any times preceding us begin, if such reveries be deemed just grounds for doubting? But whatever the Pictish tongue was, that it essentially differed from the Scotch or Irish, the following anecdote proves. In 834, when Alpin, king of Scots, was taken prisoner by the Picts, they cut off his head, and placed it on a pole in one of the highest towers of Cambletown; but certain Scots highly resenting the indignity offered to their deceased prince, and having knowledge of the Pictish tongue, under the disguise of merchants, entered the town, stole away the head by night, and honourably interred it, as you will find in Boetius, Hollingshead, &c.

The sixth dissertation shews an idle parade of Roman evidences, that the Scots were early in Britain, and of course early residents there. A point so often handled, and so often and solidly refuted that were it any other writer than the present, that trumped up so exploded a doctrine, we should be surprised; yet after all, he owns, “ that it has been confidently  
 “ affirmed that the Scots were adventurers from Ireland, by  
 “ many able writers; and it has been the general belief of many  
 “ nations, that the Scots of Britain were from Ireland. But  
 “ the



“ the bare authority of a thousand learned men is not equal to  
 “ *one solid argument*, nor the belief of several great nations more,  
 “ in many instances than popular error.” But where are we  
 to look for this solid argument, that should be of more weight  
 than the authority of nations and writers? It will be found in  
 dissertation the seventh. This he begins with a striking mis-  
 representation, “ That the Irish were unacquainted with letters,  
 till the arrival of St. Patrick.” To shew however his extreme  
 candour, he gives an account of the different colonies who landed  
 in Ireland, to the arrival of Milesius, the better to make the  
 relation of this last appear more improbable. That the accounts  
 of migrations to Ireland before the flood, and of some sub-  
 sequent ones, are at best more than doubtful we admit; and yet  
 it is this circumstance that stamps the greater degree of credit on  
 our Milesian senachies. When they landed in Ireland, they no  
 doubt greatly boasted their high antiquity; and the old natives  
 it is probable, not to be behind hand with them, gave to them-  
 selves as remote an ancestry as they could. But however this may  
 have been, it is evident the Milesian senachies meant no imposi-  
 tion on the public; because they gave the relations from age to  
 age, exactly as they found them. Even to the Druid stories of  
 the enchantments and spells used by the *Tuatha de Danans*, to  
 prevent the Milesians making good a second landing, &c. their  
 Christian successors, have faithfully transmitted to us. From the  
 earliest writers to the present times, the story is simply and in-  
 variably the same, which shews no impositions could be even  
 meant. The great Camden, a much better antiquarian, and I  
 am sure a man of no less integrity than our author, after examin-  
 ing the Irish records with a scrupulous exactness, concludes,  
 “ that they draw their history from a most profound antiquity,  
 “ and that the records of every other country, compared to  
 “ theirs,



“theirs, are *but of yesterday!*” No body could suspect Mr. Cambden of partiality to the Irish nation, the reverse appears thro’ his writings; and this confession was the result of conviction, not of bias. But admitting the accounts of Ireland previous to the Milesian settlement improbable, how can they invalidate the truth of their subsequent records? It is evident they could gain nothing by admitting earlier populations of the country they took possession of. The stories, such as they were, they handed down, not upon their own credit, but on that of their predecessors.

It may be asked, says my author, whether we have any better evidence for believing the story of the Milesian colony, than that of the Partholanians, Nimedians &c. It may—and it may as easily be answered, that we have, and the strongest evidences; for proofs of which, the reader is referred to the first part of this introduction. But says Dr. Mac Pherson, how came the acquaintance between Gathelus and Moses, between the Nimedians and Magog, Japhet and Noah? It is therefore evident, says he, that the Irish annals were framed some time after the books of Moses were known in Ireland. But granting this, for argument sake, which we otherwise by no means allow, how will the agreement between the Irish records and the books of the old law, prove that the Caledonian Scots were not an Irish colony? for this is the great end which all his arguments tend to.

Were the Doctor a good casuist, he would rather bring the coincidence of these records with the scripture account of time, as collateral proofs of the truth of holy writ, could the latter be supposed to stand in need of such proofs? but I will ask him, how came our *Fennius*, so exactly to agree with the great inventor of letters? How came our *Niulus*, the son-in-law of Pharaoh, so exactly



exactly to correspond with the famous *Niulus*, from whom the great river of Egypt took its name? How came the Egyptian exiles, who first polished Greece, to appear to be the very Scythian colony who afterwards conquered Ireland? How came the Spanish traditions and annals to bear testimony to their sojournment there? How came Portugal to assume its name, from being the last land the Milesians touched at, in their way to Ireland? Portugal, *quasi Portna n Gael*, or the Harbour of the Gathelians; for *Port* is a pure Celtic word, from which the Latin *Portus* comes. How came accounts of the Druids, by antient Greek and Roman writers, to seem inconsistent with truth, without the evidences of Irish history? No doubt the Irish antiquarians, in the very extremity of the globe, consulted Greek, Egyptian, Spanish and Roman records, before they formed their system of antiquity, as well as the Hebrew ones; or how account for the amazing correspondence in point of time and facts? But Innes, says my author, has *totally destroyed* all the Irish pretences to antient erudition or letters. One more, knowing, or more modest, would have given the credit of this, had it been really so, to Bollandus the Jesuit; not to Innes; but it has been so fully refuted by writers, and the proofs in the present work to the contrary are so clear, that we shall not tire our readers with the recapitulation. If, says Dr. Mac Pherson, Ireland had been the seat of learning, and mother of the sciences, long before Christianity, why has Strabo, Mela, and Solinus, given such unfavourable accounts of them? This question may be properly answered by another: Why did Cambrensis, who resided two years in the country, give the account of them he has, and which every one now acknowledges to be false? How came all subsequent writers to pursue the same



path? In a word, how came Abercromby, Hume, James Mac Pherson, and the present Doctor, to publish the most scandalous falsehoods and misrepresentations of this country? What Strabo, &c. wrote through ignorance, these modest gentlemen with their eyes open, against every proof, with the most undisguised premeditated malice, have published! He pursues his interrogatories: If Ireland was the grand emporium of the North in the first century; that her princes and armies fought against *Agricola* in Caledonia; and that the Picts were in the closest alliance with the Irish, how came they to be unacquainted with letters till the third and fourth centuries? How came Dr. Mac Pherson to know, that they were in an uncultivated state, till that time? Their giving the preference and right of succession to the issue of their Irish wives, in exclusion to the issue of any other women, and which was faithfully adhered to, even to the days of the venerable Bede, *alone*, proves they must have kept records, and an history. But because British and Gaulish writers are totally silent, and have not earlier traces of antiquity than the writings of Cæsar, does it follow that their ancestors, before this period, were illiterate? Though it has been supposed so, yet to me it seems an evident falsehood. Does not Cæsar describe their religion and mysteries, slightly sketch out their systems of government, and positively assure us, that in all transactions, public or private, religious ones only excepted, they constantly *used a character not unlike the Greek one*? Is not this a proof which even Dr. Mac Pherson himself can hardly evade, that the neighbouring nations were not in so uncultivated a state in these early days as their own writers have asserted? And does not the correspondence of our history, in civil and religious matters,

with



with the accounts of Cæsar, plainly point out the great reservoir from which they drew their knowledge? But says our persevering Doctor, Sir James Ware thinks the accounts of Ireland, before the reception of Christianity, at best but uncertain, and therefore begins his with *Loagaire*, cotemporary with Patrick. He thinks also that this apostle first introduced letters amongst us, and affirms, that the Psalter of Cashel was one of our earliest histories. Sir James, though a laborious writer, was certainly no judge of his native language; and it is clear, from this assertion, did not sufficiently inform himself of the antient records of this country; since nothing is more certain, than that our annals are of a much earlier date. Besides, in his account of the writers of Ireland, he gives instances of very early Irish writers; and I will ask Dr. Mac Pherson, how he will reconcile this relation of our ignorance in letters, to what his countryman Sir George Mac Kenzie asserts, namely, his being in possession of an Irish MS. wrote by *Cairbre Liffecare*, Monarch of Ireland, and who flourished 200 years before St. Patrick? Hence it is evident that our antiquities are neither subverted, nor ruined, as he confidently affirms, whatever may be the fate of his writings or his credit.

The eighth dissertation aims to prove, that the Irish were a colony from Caledonia. To waste my time, or tire the patience of my reader, with confuting such a writer as the present, on this subject, who have already in the last chapter of the second part, so fully answered the objections of really candid writers, would be highly condemnable. His ninth explains why the Caledonians were called Picts and Scots. Rejecting therein the relations of all ages, that they were so called, to distinguish two different nations, he tells us, that the colony about



Ardgyle, were called by their neighbours, *Scots*, as it were little, contemptible on account of the narrowness of their territory; and they in return gave these the epithet of *Pictich*, which signifies thieves or plunderers. It is not my business to defend the antient Picts from so odious an explanation of the name imposed on their ancestors; but certain it is that the Highlanders, as well as their progenitors the Irish, knew them by the name of Cruithinigh only; which word exactly corresponds with the Latin *Picti*, on account of their painting their bodies like the antient Britains. In his tenth dissertation, he observes, that the name *Albanich*, given to the Highlanders and their country, proves that they were not an Irish colony; for then, says he, their Latin name would be Hiberni, and their Irish one Erinich. Let us analyse this hopeful argument. Jamaica, St. Kitt's, Antigua, Philadelphia, &c. some future colonist may say, could never have been peopled from Britain; for then they would have called themselves Englishmen, and their country Britain! What a sagacious dissertator? the whole country was originally called *Albin*, from the Irish Ail, a rock, and Ban, white; and notwithstanding the barefaced and shameless assertions of the two Mac Phersons, an Highlander still calls himself *Gaelig Albenich*, or an Irishman of Albany, to distinguish himself from a *Gael*, or native Irishman; and the low-lands, he calls *Tuatha na Cruithnithe*, or the country of the Picts. Besides, why have antient writers called these Scots, *Scoti Albinenses*; and does not a Caledonian write himself in Latin, *Scoto-Britannicus*? Is it not demonstrable that it is to distinguish himself as a branch from some original Scots; and where shall we look for these, but in Ireland?

I have now gone through the painful task I had enjoined myself, of examining these dissertations which seemed to lean  
hardest



hardest on our Irish antiquities. Never I believe did man take more pains, or display more reading, and to a worse purpose than Dr. Mac Pherson! The reader, who has gone through this long and disagreeable chapter, will himself conceive more than I can point out. Whether the present race of *Caledonians* will think themselves or their country insulted, by the unfavourable light which the two Mac Phersons have thrown their ancestry into, is to me indifferent; I publicly complain of the constant abuse, poured out by Caledonian writers, for centuries against my country. I do not confine this charge to their historians; this malignity is perceptible in Pictish writers of every denomination; and one of the reasons is obvious. By throwing our annals and nation into contempt, they hope to rear up a system of Caledonian antiquities on their ruin. But never were they further from attaining this end, which they have so perseveringly pursued for ages, than at present. Their insolence has at length roused up our countrymen from their lethargy; the *AMOR PATRIÆ* *once more* begins to glow in the hearts of Irishmen: the nobility and gentry think their antient annals worth exploring and preserving; and it is to be hoped in a little time that the history and antiquities of Ireland will be established on a basis too stable for such adversaries, and throw the so much wanted light it is capable of, on the antient state of the Celtic nations of Europe.

F I N I S.



...on our Irish antiquaries. I never before did meet with  
more pains of display more research and more industry  
than in this book and dissertation. I have therefore  
received more than I can point out. I have therefore  
I observed, will find themselves of their country antiquaries.  
in the same and the light which the two Irish writers have  
thrown on our Irish antiquaries; it is an antidote to the  
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# A P P E N D I X:

C O N T A I N I N G,

## A N I M A D V E R S I O N S

O N A L A T E W O R K, E N T I T L E D,

“ AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF  
“ GREAT-BRITAIN AND IRELAND: BY  
“ JAMES MAC PHERSON, ESQ.”



A P P E N D I X :

C O N T A I N I N G

A N I M A D V E R S I O N S

ON A LATE WORK, ENTITLED

“AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF  
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# A P P E N D I X:

C O N T A I N I N G,

## A N I M A D V E R S I O N S, &c.

*Importance of Irish history. Scope and design of Mr. Mac Pheron's work. His proofs of Ireland's being a Caledonian colony, examined and confuted. Ignorant attempt from the affinity between the words Gaël and Gaul to make the Irish a colony from Gaul, exposed. Other contradictions and absurdities in pursuing the same scheme. His defence of the characters given by Strabo, Mela, and Solinus examined. Pretences to want of literature in the antient Irish censured, with samples of Innes, and Mac Pheron's critical knowledge of the Irish language. That the Irish imposed an imaginary antiquity on their neighbours refuted, and their Spanish origin defended. Remarks on Criomthan and Galgacus on Tacitus; and on the dangerous passage from Ireland to Scotland. Mr. Mac Pheron's disingenuity and want of candour, with further proofs of his ignorance of the Irish language. His account of the Celtic Elisium examined; and their real one pointed out.*

**F**ROM a careful perusal and candid reflection on what has been advanced in the preceding introduction, I flatter myself that every impartial reader, of what country or principles soever, will confess, that no nation of Europe brings clearer proofs of a most remote antiquity than Ireland; and that the light which her history and language are capable of throwing on the



antient laws and customs of the adjoining countries, should make them be more carefully attended to by future historians and antiquarians. Every *disingenuous* attempt therefore to invalidate this history is a wound to letters in general, to the study of antiquities in particular. The reader has already seen many such, fully exposed in the course of the present work; but whilst the last part of it was in the press, there was published in London, “An introduction to the history of Great-Britain and Ireland, by James Mac Pherson.” From the title of this work, and the former attempts of the author of *Fingal* and *Temora*, my readers might perhaps expect, if not a new system, at least more specious or solid objections to Irish history than had yet been offered. To enable them to judge in this matter, is the intent of the following observations.

Like all candidates for public interest, or public fame, Mr. Mac Pherson sets out with the strongest assurances of *capacity* and *candour*. In his preface he tells us, “He has studied to be clear in disquisition, concise in observation, JUST in inference. An enemy to fiction himself, he imposes none on the world. His work is formed on the general result of the information which the writers of Greece and Rome have transmitted from all quarters; and his system, if not satisfactory, is at least new.” In the preliminary reflections, p. 5. he is careful to inform his reader, “That he travels back into antiquity, with some advantages, which others have not possessed.” It remains now to put Mr. Mac Pherson’s pretensions to *strict impartiality*, to *novelty*, and to *superior capacity*, to the proof.

The general scope of his work is to shew that at a very early period, emigrants from Gaul invaded Britain, and by degrees spread over the country. New colonies pouring in, constrained the more antient possessors to look out for fresh quarters. From Britain



Britain they stretched to Caledonia, and from thence were wafted to Ireland. The reader, who we may suppose already master of the subject, if from nothing else, from the perusal of chapter the 9th of part the second, and the two last chapters of the third part of our *Introduction*, will find nothing of novelty in this. It was proposed in Elizabeth's days, by Cambden, strengthened by Lhuid, and proclaimed by many Caledonian writers prior to our present one : So much for *the novelty of Mr. Mac Pberſon's ſystem*. But as Irish history is an insurmountable obstacle to the Caledonian ambition, of appearing the Aborogines of Britain, and of course that the Welsh, the Saxons, &c. were but intruders on their possessions, he thus begins his attack on it, p. 52 : “ There is not a fact concerning any nation, beyond the  
 “ pale of the Roman empire, better established by the testimony  
 “ of writers of *unquestionable authority*, than the British extrac-  
 “ tion of the Irish.” — “ The antients, with one voice, agreed  
 “ to give to Ireland the appellation of a British Island. Ptolemy  
 “ calls it the lesser Britain, and Strabo calls its inhabitants Bri-  
 “ tons.” Diodorus affirms the same ; and Tacitus declares,  
 “ that the nature and manners of the Irish did not in the days of  
 “ Domitian differ much from those of the Britains.” The cool and dispassionate reader will perceive that in this passage his proofs fall *very far short* of the positiveness of his assertion. The argument among the early Greek and Roman writers, as I have elsewhere observed \*, in calling Britain and Ireland the *British Isles*, makes as much for Ireland's peopling Britain, as for the reverse. It is plain they supposed them one people, from their contiguity, and we see Irish history confirms in some degree the assertion, by pointing out the particular periods when emigrants went from hence to Britain ; and if they were both called British Isles, where the im-

X x 2

propriety

\* Introduction, p. 22.



propriety of calling the natives Britains, or how does it become from thence *unquestionable*, that Ireland was peopled from Britain? These writers then, we see, do not warrant Mr. Mac Pherson's positive assertion of the British extraction of the Irish; but then p. 53, he brings Irish proofs of it. "The most romantic abettors of the fabulous system of Irish antiquities, *durst* not deny a fact so well ascertained from every quarter. They acknowledged on the authority of the Hibernian senachies, that British colonies, a short time after the universal deluge, transmigrated into Ireland from North-Britain." I deny every word advanced in the preceding paragraph, and call upon this "*enemy to imposition*," to point out one *antient* Irish writer, who has said, that early emigrants came *here*, not only from the North, but from any part of Britain. The book of conquests, the annals of Giolla-Caoimhin of Cion-fhaola, the Psalter of Cashel, &c. positively assert the contrary. But even common sense, were there no record, must incline to a contrary belief; for had Britain been the mother-country, she would not probably have been so soon subdued by the Romans. On their retreat, she would not have been obliged to beg aid from the Saxons; she would not so easily afterwards have been conquered by them, nor, subsequent to this, by the Dane and Norman. And it is from the union of these different people that she has since become so redoubtable. In the days of Domitian, when the Romans penetrated to the very centre of Scotland; when their fleets sailed round its coasts, they *durst* not invade Ireland. On the contrary, they built forts, and raised entrenchments in those parts of Scotland most open to the landings of the Irish. Will any one say, after the reduction of most parts of Scotland, that Ireland was not an object worthy their arms? We have even reasons to think



think from this famous expedition of Julius Agricola, that the Roman people were made to believe that the country was formed into a Roman province, else what can the

————— *Arma quid ultra*  
*Littora Juvernæ promovimus?*

of Juvenal mean? Besides its fertility, and internal riches, its proximity to France and Spain; but above all its extensive foreign trade witnessed by Tacitus, were sufficient inducements to the rapacious Romans to pant for its possession.

“ The name of Gael, (p. 54.) still retained by the old Irish,  
“ sufficiently demonstrates that they derive their blood from  
“ these Gael, or Gauls, who in an after period were distin-  
“ guished in Britain by the name of Caledonians. The wild-  
“ est enthusiasts in Hibernian antiquities, never once assert-  
“ ed, that the Caledonians, or their posterity the Picts, were  
“ of Irish extract. In vain has Mr. Connor, in his wild and  
“ incoherent tales lately published, concerning the antient  
“ Irish, observed, that the word Gael should be spelled Gad-  
“ hel, since the *dh* are quiescent.” And is Mr. Mac Pher-  
son so extremely ignorant of the Irish language; or can he so  
totally divest himself of candour, as to affirm that the word  
Gael, even in his own spelling, and Gaul, are words of the  
same import? Ask any Irishman, whether of Ireland or Albany  
(for the British Scots, call themselves Irishmen of Albany, in  
their native language, even to this day) what is the mean-  
ing of the words Gael and Gaul? He will tell you at once,  
that the first signifies an Irishman, and the second a foreigner!  
Never were the meaning of two words better, nor longer ascer-  
tained in any language, as will fully appear by a perusal of chap.



8. part 2. of the preceding work. This indeed is an admirable specimen of *the superior advantages*, which Mr. Mac Pherfon *travels back into antiquity with?* as to his derivation of Erin, it is too contemptible to be noticed.

Having thus, according to his own mode, demolished the out-works of Irish antiquities, he next proceeds to undermine the fortress itself, p. 58. “The fabricators of Irish history found  
“that an early knowledge of letters, in their country, was ab-  
“solutely necessary to gain credit to the system which they so  
“much wished to establish. Ireland was therefore made the seat  
“of polite literature, many ages before Greece rose out of igno-  
“rance and barbarity. To remove this support from the anti-  
“quities of the Irish, is, to destroy at once *that whole fabric of*  
“*fiction*, which they possess for their antient history.” P. 60.  
“The annals of Ireland are full of the progress of civility, and  
“the encouragement given to polite learning in that country,  
“many ages before any other nation of Europe extricated itself  
“from the shades of ignorance and barbarity. But these annals  
“deserve little credit, on a matter of such high antiquity. The  
“Psalter of Cashel, the oldest record of the Irish transactions,  
“was written in the latter end of the tenth century, more than  
“2000 years after their pretended importation of letters into  
“Ireland.” Had Mr. Mac Pherfon consulted even foreign writers, he might have saved himself the confusion of a further detection of falsehood in these passages; since the learned Lhuid, in his *Archæologia*, Dr. Nicholson, in his *Irish Historical Library*, and Dr. Warner, in his late *History of Ireland*, clearly prove that we have still annals of a much earlier date. But to this point, hear Mr. Mac Pherfon himself. P. 139, “the fable of the Hi-  
“bernian extraction of the British Scots, seems to have been fa-  
“bricated in Ireland, long before the bards thought of bringing  
“a colony



“ a colony from Spain into that country. Bede, in the seventh age,  
 “ had received intelligence of the first of these stories; but his pla-  
 “ cing it in a period beyond the reach of tradition, has thrown abso-  
 “ lute discredit on the whole.” So that, according to our histo-  
 rian, tho’ the Psalter of Cashel is the oldest Irish record, yet he  
 confesses that Bede, 300 years earlier, had the same account  
 from Irish senachies. Thus he owns we had antiquarians in the  
 sixth and seventh ages, and yet we had no annals till the tenth !  
 How then did these annalists employ themselves, for they  
 were a distinct body from the Bards ? Our writer tells us,  
 p. 140. “ When monkish learning flourished in Ireland,  
 “ the Scots of Britain were diverted from cultivating letters,  
 “ &c. the monks of Ireland (as it was manifest to the whole  
 “ world, that both the Scottish nations were originally the  
 “ same people) obtruded that system of the origin of the Cale-  
 “ donian Scots, *which has been for many ages almost universally*  
 “ *received.*” P. 142, and 143, he shews that the Irish mission-  
 aries propagated the notion of the Hibernian extraction of the  
 Scots among the latter, to make their own reception the more  
 favourable. Thus Ireland flourished in letters from the fifth  
 century, and *then* trumpeted to the neighbouring nations, their  
 high antiquity ; and yet had no records earlier than the lat-  
 ter end of the tenth age, and at a time when the kingdom was,  
 and had been for an hundred years preceding, in a state of  
 war and carnage with the Danes ! Again, p. 139, “ the let-  
 “ ters which St. Patrick introduced into Ireland, *were not em-*  
 “ *ployed in recording historical transactions, for some centuries pos-*  
 “ *terior to that period.*” What commentator can possibly recon-  
 cile so many contradictions ! Is this keeping to his assurances in  
 the preface to the work before us, “ that, he has studied to be  
 “ clear in disquisition, concise in observation, just in inference ?”

Did



Did the Irish, whilst they converted the Picts, who were a great nation, make use of their power to impose a Milesian extraction on them? Did they attempt this deception on the Saxons, whom they instructed in religion and letters, on the Gauls, Germans, and other nations of Europe? No! but on a little obscure colony pent up in a corner of the Highlands, speaking the same language as themselves even to this day, and having the same laws, customs, and even names of the parent country!

“The only credible accounts of the manners of the old Irish,” says our author, “must be derived from the writers of Rome.” What then are to become of the epic poems of Fingal and Temora, with the elaborate dissertations, and critical and historical notes, which have been ushered into the world with such eclat? After Mr. Blair’s lectures on the beauties, sentiment, and imagery of them; after a pompous publication of a critical dissertation on the Poems of *Ossian* the son of *Fingal*; and the public affidavits, or if you will, attestations of many Northern gentlemen, affirming the authenticity and antiquity of these precious *fragments*, which were to throw a greater light on the antiquities of Ireland, than all the legends of their own Bards united. Are these also to be thrown into the grand mass of Irish fiction? they surely are; and Mr. Mac Pherson, in p. 150. assigns the true reason: “For in the present state of the argument,” says he, “there is no need of Ossian’s assistance. “The fabric we have raised, needs no collateral proof!” Is it to the unseasonable enquiries of Mr. ô Connor, or the repentance of Mr. Mac Pherson, that we are indebted for this confession? But to proceed:

“The only credible accounts of the manners of the old  
 “Irish, must be derived from the writers of Rome; and these  
 “do not go beyond the commencement of the Christian  
 æra,



“æra, which is at least 1000 years posterior to the period af-  
 “sign’d by the Irish, for the introduction of learning amongst  
 “their ancestors.” Would not one suppose, from this curious  
 paragraph, that Roman historians wrote professedly of Ireland and  
 its affairs, and began their accounts at the time in question?  
 Yet no such thing! Cæsar, the first Roman who treats of Britain,  
 (lib. 5. cap. 13.) just mentions its vicinity, situation, and ex-  
 tent, compared to the latter; and Tacitus, who wrote a century  
 later, tells us, it was then a commercial country, and more frequent-  
 ed by foreign merchants than Britain, but that the manners of the  
 two people, as well as their customs, were nearly similar. The  
 first wrote from his knowledge of Britain, and from his informa-  
 tions there; the other from the reports of his father-in-law,  
 Agricola, and from his enquiries from an Irish prince then in  
 Rome. Had the Roman arms penetrated earlier into Britain,  
 Ireland would probably have been sooner noticed by them; as it  
 is, we see the two earliest and best informed of all the Roman  
 writers, have given us very little information, concerning them.  
 But then, says Mr. Mac Pherson, have not subsequent Roman  
 writers described them as the most nefarious and abandoned of  
 the human race? Does not Strabo, Diodorus, Pomponius Mela,  
 Solinus, &c. relate such tales of them as are shocking to huma-  
 nity? that they are inhospitable, devoid of humanity, ignorant  
 of right and wrong, and destitute of every social virtue? that  
 they are devourers of human flesh, even of their deceased parents,  
 commit incest, and the most infernal crimes? “In vain,”  
 says he, p. 63. “has it been said, that the writers, whose au-  
 “thority we have cited, were ill-informed concerning the man-  
 “ners of the Irish, and that barbarity in which their country  
 “was antiently involved. The Britons, who, according to



“ *Strabo*, resorted to Rome, could not have been ignorant of  
“ the state of Ireland. From these Britons we may conclude,  
“ that both *Strabo* and *Mela* derived their information concern-  
“ ing the *Hibernians*; and in the days of *Tacitus*, the ports of  
“ Ireland were so well known, that the celebrated writer could  
“ not be ignorant of the real character of its inhabitants.” And  
has *Tacitus* declared them the Barbarians, that posterior Roman  
writers have described them to be? Can trade and commerce  
flourish in a country of cannibals, of monsters, ignorant of right  
and wrong, unacquainted with public justice, and devoid of pri-  
vate virtue? Surely no! And yet *Tacitus* assures us, it was in his  
days considerable for its trade. But may I not ask Mr. Mac  
Pherson, whether there might not be a possibility that these Bri-  
tish emigrants (even supposing them acquainted with the customs  
and manners of our ancestors, and that these writers did really  
apply to them for information) misrepresented facts, and  
reported things the reverse of truth? From the connecti-  
ons between England and Ireland for 600 years past, one  
should suppose them well informed of the laws and customs of  
our country; and sure no one will affirm that their writers have  
done justice to the Irish nation! But if from these straggling  
Britons the Romans received intelligence so incontrovertible, we  
must suppose it to be from the same *unerring* source that they de-  
rived the information that the country was bleak and inhospitable;  
that it had neither fruit nor trees in it; that in the little islands  
adjacent, the winter nights continued a month; and that so  
barren was the soil, that it produced no kind of vegetable; for  
all this they have also alledged! Say, “ *Enemy to fiction*,” how  
reconcile their extreme ignorance of the very climate and soil of  
Ireland, to their perfect knowledge of its inhabitants?

Cambden,



Cambden, whose prejudices against Ireland as a Briton, were heightened by the long war and gallant opposition which the Ulster Irish gave to the mandates of his virgin mistress; whilst in his history he retailed these calumnies of Strabo, Mela, and Solinus, yet had too great a regard to his character as a scholar and a gentleman, to attempt supporting them. He barely remarks that there was no respectable authority to think them well founded, "*Horum commemoramus, dignos fide testes, non habemus.*" But to proceed: p. 64. "The general national character of the Irish being thus ascertained, we find it absolutely inconsistent with learning, and that civility, which is the invariable companion of literature." To prove this, he calls in Ware, Bollandus, and Innes, as evidences of the total ignorance of letters in Ireland, till the arrival of St. Patrick. I have already given such proofs to the contrary, that it may be thought unnecessary to notice the present objections; but as truth becomes brighter by opposition, he shall even here be put to the trial. Bollandus, on consulting the early writers of the life of St. Patrick, having found, that during his mission, he consecrated 365 bishops, and gave to them as many alphabets, ignorantly concluded that the Irish were illiterate before this period. But though the fact is acknowledged, the inference from it is far from true. The Irish letter was in an order and structure peculiar to itself. The Roman liturgy, every one knows, must be celebrated in the Latin tongue: To do this, the priest must learn the alphabet before he could pretend to read, much less study the language. The duty of each bishop was to distribute copies amongst his suffragans; just as it happened lately in *China*, where the Jesuits were obliged to form an alphabet for their converts; and I myself remember some



years ago, Chinese students at the college of Louis le Grande. Thus Bollandus's assertion founded on an ignorance of Irish history, falls to the ground; nor will Innes's appear to be better supported, since the proofs he offers, if they prove any thing, it must be his ignorance of the Irish language. He tells us the Irish have no words to express the word *letter*, to *read*, to *write*, &c. but mere Latin, a manifest proof from whence they imported letters. But here Mr. Innes's ignorance becomes glaring; as the radical Irish for a letter is *fiadhb*, because wrote originally on bark; for a book, *cion*; hence *Cion-drom-sneachtá*, the name of a very antient MS. for knowledge, *ealadba*; for science, *creat*; history, *fennachas*; philosophy, *phileacht*; geometry, *cuimbasat*; poetry, *dan*, &c.\* Mr. Mac Pherson too, to shew that "he travels back into antiquity with advantages that others have not," comes in with new proofs. He attacks the learned ô Flaherty for calling the bark tablets of the antient Irish, *taibhlefilea*; since, he says, "if not derived from the English, it is certainly from the Latin, *tabula*. Had the credulous antiquarian used the Irish, *clar*, he might have avoided a circumstance that bears hard on his system." That *clar* may, in modern Erse signify a table, I shall not deny; but that it does not, in classical Irish, is what I affirm. It strictly signifies a flat board, and from this becomes an auxiliary substantive, as *clar-eadan*, the fore-head, or flat part of the face; *clar-deadbarnan*, an extended palm, &c. The castle of Clare over the Fergus, took its name from a movable bridge of planks over it; and from that, not from an Earl of Clare, was the county called. And

\* Was Innes knowing in the language, he could not forget that the Irish word *litir*, strictly signifies a kind of oratory, or an elevated prose stile, peculiar to antiquarians; hence the axiom amongst Irish senachies in doubtful cases, *laoi no litir Coitighuay*, "a poem, or an oration proves."



since Perron, &c. have demonstrated that the Romans took the names of the days of the week, as well as very many others from the Celtæ, why not suppose the word table taken from the same quarter, especially as we find it used in Ireland before the Romans, as a nation, were in being?

“The arbitrary order,” he proceeds, p. 67, “in which the Irish of the middle ages, placed their alphabet, and the fanciful appellations they gave them, prove only that the Hibernian senachies formed a *very early* design to deceive the world, on the article of their antiquities.” What! writers in the middle ages to form a very early design! for shame, Mr. Mac Pherson. But what proofs do you offer, that in the middle ages the Irish changed the form of their alphabet, and gave fanciful appellations to its letters; for this, I suppose, is the meaning of your paragraph? None! I suppose the evidences already exhibited of your candour and knowledge, were judged sufficient to establish this as an axiom; yet sceptics may be inclined to doubt it. We have seen from the dawn of Christianity Ireland crowded with Literati from all parts of Europe. It is acknowledged by our worthy historian, as well as by his good friend the honest Doctor. How then, in the name of folly and nonsense, could the Irish think to change the form of their alphabet, and give new names to their letters, without the knowledge of these foreigners, hundreds of whom lived and died in the kingdom? But what was this dreadful crime of deception? Why that the Caledonian Scots were an Irish colony! But to proceed: “The perfect identity,” says he, “observable in the form of the letters in Ireland, and on the continent, prior to the invention of printing, must destroy any pretences to an early knowledge among us.” I will put the argument to a short issue: Will

Mr.



Mr. Mac Pherfon affirm, that the old letter in Ireland, and the antient Roman were the same? If they were not, as we certainly know, it becomes demonstrable that the Irish had an alphabet different from St. Patrick's. Let us pass over, his ridiculous arguments, till we arrive at p. 70. Here we see in the margin, the mark of his decisive proof against the pretended literature of the old Irish? "If," says he, "the Milesian settlement was effected  
 " in Ireland one thousand years before Christ, it ought naturally  
 " to follow, that the British Scots derived their blood from these of  
 " Ireland. If so, they must carry to Caledonia that learning and  
 " civility which made so great a progress in the mother-country;  
 " but nothing is more certain, than that the British Scots were an  
 " illiterate people, and involved in barbarism, even after St. Patrick's mission. Therefore, either the British Scots, did not  
 " derive their origin from Ireland, or else the Irish had no knowledge of letters when they transmigrated from their country."

His induction is far from being so conclusive as he imagines; and as there is *no foul hunting a fox*, suppose some future sceptic of our colonies might take it into his head to argue thus against the mother-country; for, as they have already begun to fight, why not to write against her. "If the English were, in the 16th,  
 " 17th, and 18th ages, a great, a potent, and a lettered nation,  
 " and that these islands were then peopled from thence, it must  
 " follow, that they must have brought with them, part of  
 " that politeness and letters, for which the mother-country  
 " was so famed; but it is certain that they were the most  
 " savage and brutal crew that ever disgraced any country. They  
 " lived by rapine and plunder: they united in bands without  
 " commission from the parent-country, and made most cruel depredations on the Spanish main: nothing could exceed their  
 " rapa-



“ rapacity, but their dissoluteness; therefore these people came  
 “ not from Britain, or the Britains were not the people that  
 “ history has represented them.” But when the reader  
 should be instructed, that the first colonists, and many of their  
 successors, were the outcasts of Britain; that they were fellows  
 of infamous characters, and profligate lives, and were banished  
 thither for their crimes, what would become of the objection.  
 This, we are sure, was the case in our colonies, and this  
 history tells us, was the case with respect to Scotland\*. The  
 seditious, the proscribed, the abandoned, were sent thither long  
 before a regular settlement was made. Here the three Collas,  
 Mac Con, and other enemies to the state, were confined: and  
 what greater punishment on this side the grave could have been  
 inflicted? But after Cairbre Riada had formed there a well  
 regulated colony, we know that letters were cultivated in the  
 Highlands, and the isle of Hay became so celebrated, for learn-  
 ing, even before the days of the venerable Bede, that many Irish  
 monks repaired from thence to Britain. Scottish writers are loud  
 in their accounts of the libraries there. Mac Kenzie acknow-  
 ledges to have got from thence an Irish MS. written some centuries  
 before Christ. Lhuid, in the 5th vol. Phil. Transf. p. 58. gives  
 us Irish inscriptions found on the tombs of two early Scottish  
 princes; and Martin, in his account of Scotland, if I forget not,  
 for I depend on my memory, mentions a very antient translation  
 of Aristotle in this island. But the ignorance of the Scotch,  
 which, in p. 70. serves as a decisive proof against Irish antiqui-

\* It would be high injustice not to except from this charge those gentlemen, who in the  
 days of the two Charles's, retired to America for the enjoyment of their religious and  
 civil liberties, as well as other families of character; nor does the author use the allu-  
 sion from any other motive, than that of exposing so specious and designing a writer.



ties, in p. 140. is assigned to its right cause. Let us hear it.  
 “ When monkish learning flourished in Ireland, the Scots of  
 “ Britain, by an uninterrupted series of hostilities with the Bri-  
 “ tons, Picts, and Saxons, were diverted from cultivating let-  
 “ ters, which alone could enable them to look back into their  
 “ antiquities, or transmit any memory of their actions to poste-  
 “ rity.”

The Irish then, robbed of their pretensions to letters, had no means of preserving their exploits, but by the rhimes of their bards; “ but,” proceeds he, “ a dull narrative of facts in verse  
 “ could never take hold of the human mind, in a degree suffi-  
 “ cient to transmit a knowledge of events, by oral tradition,  
 “ through any considerable length of time.” But whilst in this assertion he opposes the general voice of antiquity, he should not forget that he injures his own precious *Fragments of high-land poetry* by it. There he tells us, that they were preserved by tradition, and the exploits of a single hero only, for 1500 years; here, nothing so improper to preserve a memory of past events! I must again repeat it, “ that an *historian* has need of  
 “ a good memory;” and the present work, almost every where verifies my assertion. Whilst in p. 76. he remarks the impropriety of verse to commemorate past events, in p. 199. he assures us, that, “ the moral character of our ancestors owed more to the  
 “ composition of the Bard, than the precept of the Druid. That  
 “ elevation of soul which the first inspired, was more favoura-  
 “ ble to virtue than the cold dictates of the latter.” In another place we are told, “ that the songs of the Bard outstripped the  
 “ philosophy of the Druid.”

Having shewn the Irish to be the most savage of mankind, without arts or letters, he now proceeds to annihilate their pretended Spanish origin, and begins as usual with his strongest argument;



gument; that (p. 77.) “ It would appear as improbable that the  
 “ Spaniards could transport themselves into England before the  
 “ Christian æra, as it is impossible to believe that any memory  
 “ of that event, had it actually happened, could have been pre-  
 “ served by tradition, to the introduction of letters by St. Pa-  
 “ trick.” Why impossible, Mr. Mac Pherson? You have been  
 allowed to publish regular epic poems, preserved by oral tradi-  
 tion in the Highlands, for 1500 years; why not then permit the  
 Irish a possibility of preserving theirs for 4 or 500, in the same  
 manner, seeing you allow them no other means? “ It is idle,”  
 he continues, p. 80. “ to listen to the tales of the Bards, Anna-  
 “ lists, and Antiquarians of Ireland; they have been heard out,  
 “ and confuted.” Diodorus says, they were Britains from Gaul,  
 and Strabo gives no hint of the settlement of the Spaniards in  
 that island. “ Mela, who was himself a Spaniard, had he  
 “ known, that after all the efforts of Augustus in person, or by  
 “ his lieutenants, the Cantabri collected a body of men, com-  
 “ mitted themselves to the ocean, and seized upon Ireland;  
 “ from a natural partiality for his countrymen, he would have  
 “ treated the Irish with more decency and respect.” “ Orosius,”  
 says he, “ and a Spaniard, tho’ he mentions the Irish, yet takes  
 “ no notice from whence they came, and whilst he treats of the  
 “ Cantabric war, he omits a circumstance which might have done  
 “ his countrymen high honour; namely, that rather than submit  
 “ to the lieutenants of Augustus, they braved the dangers of the  
 “ seas, and made a solid settlement in Ireland. Florus too, and a  
 “ Spaniard also, would not forget so glorious an instance of the  
 “ love of liberty.” Would not the reader suppose, from all these  
 fine *presumptive* proofs, and this parade of learning, that the  
 Irish annalists affirmed that their ancestors invaded Ireland about  
 the dawn of Christianity; yet this event they fixed at some cen-



turies before the Roman name was heard of in Europe ! Had he read Lhuid's Archæologia, with a desire of information, or visited Biscay and Galicia, he would not speak so decisively against the affinity in language and customs between the old Irish and Spaniards ; nor would he assert as he does, p. 86. “ that there is less affinity between the Irish and Biscayan, than between the English and language of the Eastern Tartars !” whilst in p. 257. he tells us, “ It is even *demonstrable*, that the Italian, *Spanish*, and especially the modern French, owe their origin, to *speak in a confined sense*, more to the antient Celtic, than to the Latin, *which was itself*, in part, a *dialect of that language*.” Let not the reader, however, frown at these falsities, incongruities, and absurdities, in Mr. Mac Pherson ; they are involuntary slips, for “ he *studied* to be clear in disquisition, concise in observation, just in inference, an enemy to fiction himself, he imposes “ NONE on the world.”

P. 92. “ The Scots of both the British isles were formerly peculiarly attached to the absurd tales, with which their Bards had covered their origin. Many still retain the *unmanly credulity*, which has been the reproach of their ancestors ;” for these Mr. Mac Pherson writes not, “ he has taken up arms against fiction and romance, and he will not lay them down, till the whole are subdued !” Bravo ! But let us examine what this unmanly credulity is ? Why, that the Scots of Britain were an Irish colony, who in the 3d age made a settlement in North Britain, and in the ninth made a complete conquest of the country. It must certainly appear a fiction, to suppose, that these people should be so hardy as to venture to cross an arm of the sea in sight of their own country, and engage in a voyage of three or four hours ! Though he confesses, p. 93. that both countries were peopled many ages before Christ ; “ Yet,” says he, “ had  
“ an



“ an hundred Hibernian colonies, with a royal Milesian at the  
 “ head of each, transmigrated into North Britain, before the  
 “ Roman arms penetrated into Caledonia, they must, *without a*  
 “ *revelation from heaven*, be involved in eternal oblivion ! It is as  
 “ ridiculous to assert, as it would be downright anility to believe,  
 “ that Caledonia received an Irish colony, before Tacitus wrote  
 “ the life of Agricola.” Where the necessity of a revelation  
 from heaven to find out this unfortunate migration ? Might it  
 not be as probable as the preservation of Mr. Mac Pherson’s own  
 poems, unless they were really *revealed* to him ? and as the Irish  
 were a maritime state in the days of Agricola, the relation can-  
 not appear quite so incredible. Besides, Mr. Mac Pherson can-  
 not point out any Irish writer, who has said that the Irish sent  
 colonies to North Britain before the days of Tacitus ; that period  
 they have fixt at near 200 years subsequent to it. We pass by  
 his five ridiculous arguments against the ability of the Irish, to  
 oppose the Romans in Britain, to come to his proofs of the *im-*  
*probability* and *impossibility* of such events. “ Criomthan,” says  
 he, “ held the reins of government in Ireland, when Agricola  
 “ carried the Roman arms into Caledonia. He transported an  
 “ army into North Britain, and after the departure of Agricola,  
 “ he returned to Ireland laden with spoils. Tacitus was ex-  
 “ tremely unjust to the happy valour of Criomthan. The illus-  
 “ trious Criomthan, the supreme monarch of Ireland, was, it  
 “ seems, inferior in command, in birth and valour, to the head  
 “ of the Caledonian confederacy. Tacitus expressly says, that  
 “ Galgacus was superior in these respects to all the leaders of  
 “ that army.” The conquest of *Franche-Comte*, and the inva-  
 sion of Holland, though in both cases Louis XIV. accompanied  
 his troops, yet *Condé* and *Turenne* are the generals to whom his-  
 torians have ascribed the different manœuvres of that campaign ;  
 and



and altho' Louis XV. was at the battle of Fontenoy, yet no writer has ascribed the merit of that action to him. "*Marshal Saxe will*  
*ever be allowed superior in all respects to all the leaders of that*  
*army.*" Galgacus being declared the greatest commander, does not make Irish troops being in that army *improbable*. Besides, we have great reason to believe, and from that very speech, it may be presumed, that Galgacus was himself an Hibernian. Our histories are very clear that Criomthan, surnamed *Niadbhar*, or the Intrepid, made successful invasions into Britain and Gaul; and Cormac, called Gealta Gaoth, grandfather to Cathire-more, was a general of great abilities in his days, whom a Roman writer, might well latinize into Galgacus. Again, the chief commander of this army, might be so called by way of pre-eminence, Galgacus, from Gael, an Irishman, and Gaisce, a Champion or General. Now it may not unreasonably be concluded from the whole that this Galgacus was an Irishman; or if the reader thinks this too great a concession, that the Irish auxiliaries were at least put under his command. Would any writer hereafter be so absurd as to assert, because Marlborough commanded the allies in queen Anne's days, that all these troops were English? Irish writers are positive, that Criomthan often invaded Gaul and Britain; and no contemporary foreign ones contradict the assertion; might not this be effected by his generals, as well as by himself in person? Or if this will not be granted, is not the commander of an army always considered as the first person in it, even tho' persons of higher blood and rank be in it: Thus the *improbability* and *impossibility* of the fact, like all Mr. Mac Pherson's other improbabilities and impossibilities, are of no weight. "It is, upon  
 "the whole," concludes our author, "demonstrable, that no  
 "part of Caledonia was possessed by an Hibernian colony, in the  
 "days of Agricola." And who affirms that it was? No Irish  
 writer,



writer, that I know of; but they have all been unanimous, that the country was subject to, and depending on Ireland. His objections to the Irish account of the Picts, I have fully refuted, in the remarks on his namesake the Doctor's works; to which I shall add, that though he objects to the Irish not calling them Caledonians, yet the reader cannot have forgot, that we have derived the very name from the Irish; "but Dathy," says he, p. 103. "though placed beyond Christianity in Ireland, derives his name from David the son of Jesse, *which of itself proves,* that the exploits of Dathy were of the *figmenta posteriorum seculorum* of Ware." It is astonishing what lengths the prejudices of this writer lead him. David was a name unknown in Ireland till after the reception of Christianity; and as in the language there is no *v*, and that *b* placed after *d*, produces this sound; the name has been always spelled *Dabhid*, now let the reader judge of the affinity between Dathy, an Heathen Irish name, and Dabhid, a Christian, or Jewish one.

"If the Picts," says he, p. 105. "were so feeble, that a band of Irish adventurers could tear from them one third of their dominions, how came they so frequently to provoke the Roman legions?" Has any writers advanced, that they did tear from them any of their dominions? They came as the friends and allies of the Picts; and, as Bede expresses it, "by force or friendship procured those possessions, which they held in his days." While the Picts saw the Romans their sworn enemies, sound policy pointed out to them, not at the same time to provoke the Irish; but when they got rid of the first, we see they successfully attacked the Irish settlement, which in the end proved their own ruin. He thinks it hard to conceive, how a number of people, sufficient to inhabit the Highlands, could be transported in the curraghs, or boats, then in use; though he has told



told us, repeatedly, that Tacitus remarked the flourishing state of commerce here in those early days. “ In these wretched  
 “ vessels, it is true, an irregular communication was kept up  
 “ between both islands, but the navigation was dangerous, and  
 “ performed only in the days of summer;” and to prove it he gives us a note from Solinus, a writer of the third century. Would not one be tempted to think, that this voyage was as unusual and dangerous, as that attempted by captain Ellis, for a North-west passage into the South seas; and that the authors who have treated of it, were even more scarce, since he is obliged to call in to his assistance a writer of the third age to prove, what he knows in his conscience, and what almost every man in the three kingdoms knows, *i. e.* that this voyage is made at all times, and in all seasons, with the greatest safety? “ If poverty,” pursues our historian, “ or their being over-  
 “ stocked with numbers, compelled the inhabitants of the  
 “ Route, in the county of Antrim, to go in quest of foreign  
 “ settlements, they ought, in common prudence, to have tried  
 “ their fortune in the Southern divisions of their own country,  
 “ and not in the sterile mountains of Caledonia.” But if the Northern and the poorest parts of Ireland were thus overstocked, should not Mr. Mac Pheron, in common prudence, suppose the Southern to be more so. The truth is, the Southern parts of Ireland were thickly inhabited, and the ancestors of these very emigrants had marched Northwards in order to extend themselves; and from thence invaded Scotland! But our author’s argument would be as decisive in some centuries, against the English and French having made settlements in Hudson’s bay, Canada, Newfoundland, &c. The reader, I am persuaded, will think it unnecessary to pursue Mr. Mac Pheron’s system any further. He has been  
 hitherto



hitherto candidly examined: his own words have been quoted; and his hypothesis fairly confuted. When the first warm feelings of generous indignation, against so impudent and malevolent a writer, subside, the humane and benevolent must behold with pity, a man blest with bright parts, considerable erudition, and the happy talent of communicating agreeably, apply himself to the wretched business of calumny and imposition! Some years ago, the reader must remember his base attacks on this country; the poems which he then assured his readers, were of more consequence to investigate the antiquities of Ireland, than the works of all her own writers united, become *here* inadmissible; “! for,” says he, p. 150. “in the  
 “present state of the argument there is no need of his (*Ossian's*)  
 “assistance. The fabric we have raised needs no collateral  
 “proofs.” But he published *Fingal* and *Temora* as the *only authentic monuments* of the invalidity of Irish history, and here they become totally useless! It would appear almost incredible, were not the proofs so full before us, that any person could so far divest himself of every pretence to truth and decency! His astonishing malice and hatred to this nation, get the better of every other consideration! Whilst his design, through this whole performance, seems to be to prove the Irish a Caledonian colony, he takes every opportunity of representing them as the most nefarious of the human species. To effect this, he first robs them of arts, letters, and civilization; and then calls in Strabo, Mela, Solinus, &c. to represent them as worse than dæmons in human shape, which he attempts to strengthen with the most specious arguments. Let us now see how he applies these principles to his countrymen. “*Vice*,” says he, p. 108. “*is*  
 “*not natural to man*: he derives it from those fictitious wants,  
 “which grow with the progress of society. Before property  
 “becomes



“ becomes the means of procuring sensual pleasure, civil restraints  
 “ are superfluous, and *morality* itself an unnecessary study! The  
 “ contempt which the Celtic nations shewed for death, is a proof  
 “ that they were not anxious about the possession of the conve-  
 “ niencies of life; and that circumstance shut up the great chan-  
 “ nel of corruption, which pollutes the mind in an advanced  
 “ stage of civility.” P. 190. “ Our ancestors were hospitable  
 “ beyond example! To receive the stranger with cheerfulness,  
 “ to lodge him in their best apartments, to treat them with their  
 “ greatest delicacies, was a law which custom had rendered in-  
 “ violable and *universal*.” Yet he tells us, that the Irish were  
 the most inhospitable of mankind! P. 200. “ The British and  
 “ *Irish* Scots had their Fear-Laor, or Hymnist who reduced  
 “ the tenets of their religion to verse. Their senachies, who  
 “ comprehended the fabulous history of their ancestors in a kind  
 “ of unpoetical stanza, and the Fer-Dan, who sung the praises  
 “ of their warriors.” What use these bards made of their in-  
 fluence on the people, he tells us, p. 201. “ The compositions  
 “ of the bards inculcated the purest morals on their countrymen,  
 “ and comprehended in their songs, *all those virtues which render*  
 “ *mankind truly great and deservedly renowned!*” But the reader  
 cannot forget, that he has assured us, that the Irish were igno-  
 rant of right and wrong, that they were Cannibals, &c. Again,  
 p. 236. “ The Celto-Scythians are represented by the antients,  
 “ as the most just and equitable of men: the stranger, the tra-  
 “ veller, and the merchant, were secure in their persons and  
 “ properties, not by the severity of legal punishment, *but from*  
 “ *the natural propensity of the people to justice!*” “ Nor is it  
 “ from the antients only,” proceeds our author, “ we are to  
 “ derive our information; the opinions of our forefathers *ought*  
 “ to be traced amongst their posterity: possessed of this *channel*  
 to



“ to a knowledge of the character of the antient Celtæ, we may  
 “ perhaps be able to advance something new upon the subject.”  
 But has he not told us, p. 139. and 140. that the first use the  
 Irish missionaries made of their influence over their Caledonian  
 converts was to inculcate the notion of their being an Irish colony;  
 that Bede in the seventh century believed the same; “ and that  
 “ it has been for *many ages* universally received! Again, p. 92.  
 many still retain that unmanly credulity! With what face then  
 can he call tradition to his assistance, seeing that in all ages, even  
 to this day, it is against his hypothesis?

But though we have rejected Mr. Mac Pheron as an historian,  
 we are not, nevertheless, precluded from shewing his insufficiency  
 in those parts of knowledge, which he tells us, “ enabled  
 “ him to travel back into antiquity with more advantages than  
 “ others have done.” He says that the Fer-laoi was confined to  
 religion, the senachie to history, in a kind of unpoetical stanza,  
 and the Fer-dan, to celebrate heroes in war. We find, however,  
 that the *Laoi* was chiefly appropriated to elegiac verse; for tho’  
*Caoine* was the kind of rhyme in which the loss of the Deceased  
 was deplored, yet the *Laoi* was a recital of his virtues, bra-  
 very, and hospitality, after interment; hence the old saying,  
 do pimeadh a laoi 7 a leacht (do rinead a laoi agus a leacht) “ they  
 “ raised his monument and recited his apotheosis.” The senachie  
 did not pursue history, in a kind of unpoetical stanza: it was  
 either prose or verse, and often both, in the same page; so that  
 in remote and doubtful cases, when the antiquarian could pro-  
 duce his authorities from antient MSS. either in prose or verse,  
 the proof was judged sufficient; hence, laoi no coirigheár, “ a  
 “ poem or declamation is a proof.” Of the species of verse  
 called the *Dan*, alone, there are no less than seven kinds, and  
 each appropriated to its particular use; and it is plain that Mr.



Mac Pherson knew very little of the Irish language, much less of its poetry, or he would not assert as he does, p. 248. "that the Gael of North-Britain and Ireland, in some measure retain the *unimproved* language of their ancestors." Were an Irish prosody translated, perhaps it would demonstrate to the curious how highly and judiciously the Irish language has been improved.

His account of the Celtic paradise is of a piece with the rest. "Their heaven," says he, (p. 180.) "lay surrounded with tempest in the Western ocean;" and then in a note he adds, *Flath-Innis*, or Noble Island, is the *only* name in the Gaelic language for the Heaven of the Christians. How capable of translating Irish poems, or Irish tales! Heaven is called by us, *Neamh* (*neamh*) as well as *Flaitheamnas*: the first is a primitive word, and the other a compound; but not from *Flath-Innis* as he ignorantly asserts; but from *Flaitheas*, sovereignty, rule, and *uas*, above; and from this comes the word *Flambnaidbe*, a priest. The Heathen Irish, like all other polite nations of antiquity, had their elisium, or happy retreat for the souls of the just. All the Greek and Roman writers are full of theirs; and *Toland*, with great strength of reasoning, in his *Dissertations on the Druids*, seems to prove Ireland that happy country alluded to. Whilst Mr. Mac Pherson pretends to give his reader the translation of an Highland *traditionary* tale of his *Flath-Innis*, it is clear, by his margin being stuffed with notes and explanations from antient Greek and Roman writers, from whence he took it. Compare it with the accounts of Diodorus Siculus, of Homer, Virgil, Lucian, &c. and you will plainly see, that Ossian, the son of Fingal, the magician of the isle of *Skerr*, and honest James Mac Pherson, are one and the same person. I will, however, give the reader a sketch of the Irish elisium,

but



but not from tradition. There are yet preserved copies of a very antient Irish MS. entitled, *Algallam na Seanmnohe*, or Dialogues of the Antients, a large and noble collection of which, in a thick volume in quarto, on vellum, were some years ago in the hands of Eagan ô Rahilly, an Irish antiquarian, since deceased, and are still somewhere in the counties of Limerick or Kerry, altho' I have not been able to come at them. In one of these we are told, that *Offine Mac Fion*, (but not *Offian*) who flourished in the third century, seated on the banks of the Shannon, adoring the author of nature in the contemplation of his works, was suddenly hurried away to *tiſſ na nóg*e (the country of youth) or *imſ na mbeo* (the island of immortals) which he describes with all the vivacity that fancy, aided by the sight of so lovely a country as Ireland, could assist the bard with. He remained here for some days, as he thought, and on his return was greatly surprised to find no vestige of his house, or of his acquaintance. In vain did he seek after his father *Fion*, and his *Fionne-Eirion*; in vain found the *bua bhat*, or well known military clarion, to collect those intrepid warriors. Long since had these heroes been cut off in battle; long had his father ceased to live! Instead of a gallant race of mortals, which he had left behind, he found a puiſne and degenerate people, scarce speaking the same language. In a word, it appeared, that instead of a few days, he had remained near two centuries in this mansion of the Blessed. He lived, says the tale, to the days of St. Patrick, and related to this apostle, after his conversion, these and many other wonders.

Mr. Mac Pherson assures his reader, that he has taken up arms against Irish history, and he will not lay them down, till the whole is subdued. He certainly has; but hitherto with much more profit than honour to himself or his employers. It only remains now to see, what new form this Proteus will take, to



to make good his promise; but be it as it may, he may rest assured, it shall not pass unexamined. The subject becomes more interesting: the history and language of Ireland are the only means now left to arrive at any tolerable degree of knowledge of the antient laws and customs of the Celtæ. Many proofs of this are interspersed through this work; and if the subject meets with the attention which the author flatters himself it deserves, much more can be produced.



S E C O N D  
A P P E N D I X,  
CONTAINING SOME  
R E M A R K S  
ON A LATE PUBLICATION OF  
SIR JOHN DALRYMPLE's:

IN WHICH

*His accounts of the rise, progress, and continuance of the last Irish war are examined, and censured. True motives which determined the two parties of Irish to commence the war. Why the Catholic Irish continued it, notwithstanding the great offers of king William. The conduct of the latter vindicated, and his great abilities, as a statesman, demonstrated. Uncommon hardships suffered by the Irish in the prosecution of the war, and why they so often rejected the peace offered by king William. The battle of Aughrim. Last siege of Limerick. Nature of the partizan war explained, and the country vindicated from the aspersions of this writer. Conclusion.*

SIR John Dalrymple has very lately favoured the public with Memoirs of Great-Britain and Ireland, during the reigns of Charles and James II. The stile of the work is nervous and strong, the matter curious and interesting, and his remarks and reflections, in most instances, judicious and clear. He has introduced much new matter, illustrated many obscure points in these two reigns of turbulence and faction, and in general seems to aim at the character of an impartial historian. Though

B b b

of



of whiggish descent, and of course no admirer of the enemies of the *Revolution*, yet is he minute in his account of, and he does great justice to the generous attempts of lord Dundee in favour of the exiled *James*. “Some persons,” says he, “have complained  
 “to me that I speak too favourably of king James; but tho’ I  
 “would draw my sword against his family, *I would not do injustice*  
 “*to any of their characters.*” Expressions worthy a man of honour, and an historian! His love for the glory of his country so far gets the better of *narrow party-prejudice*, that he gives a very curious and affecting relation of the noble behaviour, valour and sufferings of 150 of *Dundee’s* officers, who followed the fortunes of *James* to France.

But whilst I do justice to the national spirit of Sir John Dalrymple, I cannot neglect the occasion he has given me to manifest the same in behalf of my own country; yet I freely own, that I think the mistakes he has fallen into, with respect to Ireland, are not of *his*, but of Mr. *Hume’s* creating: for this gentleman had the perusal of the MS. and Sir John expressly tells us, in his preface, that, “Mr. Hume corrected some *erroneous views* I had taken; appearing more anxious about my  
 “literary reputation, than I myself.” And as Mr. Hume had already treated this country with uncommon indecency, we must not be surprised that he should go any lengths to suppress accounts which might reflect on his own works. The revolution of 1688, may now be considered (in an historical light) with the same disinterested curiosity, as that of Henry the VIIth, or of a more remote day. Whatever political principles might have formerly divided these three kingdoms, the remains of them can *now* be scarcely traced. All parties, from experience agree, that a limited monarchy, is the basis of liberty; and I am greatly  
 deceived,



deceived, should a trial be made, if *all* would not unite to oppose any attempts towards arbitrary power.

Almost all the writers who have treated of this extraordinary Revolution, from Pere D'Orleans and Dr. Burnet, down to the present times, seem unanimous in concealing, or at least, in lessening as much as possible any merit the Irish might pretend to claim for the part they acted. In exposing their motives and behaviour in their true light, I shall do as much honour to the political capacity, and to the memory of king William, as I shall render but common Justice to my countrymen. May it have the good fortune to open the eyes and extend the thoughts of politicians on both sides the water!

Whether it was a love of liberty, a dread of Popery, a hatred to monarchy, or a thorough dislike to the house of Stuart, that united so many persons in England and Scotland, and of such very opposite principles, so early as the reign of Charles II. to enter into secret treaties and combinations with the Prince of Orange, is a subject I mean not to discuss. But whatever well-founded charges they might make against Charles, or his successor, of extension of prerogative and of oppression, it is certain the Irish had no causes of complaint, at least against the latter. The same reasons, therefore, which the Revolutionists offered, in justification of the expulsion of this prince, were the fullest vindications of the Irish for adhering to his cause. It is manifest, that if he had not violated his coronation oath, and assumed a *dispensing* power in England, which the laws denied, there could be no pretences for taking up arms against him; and as he made no such attempts in Ireland, they could have no colour whatever for deserting him. At this time of distress and trouble then, when betrayed by one part of his subjects, and abandoned by another, the bulk of this nation stood firm to his interest; not but that there were, *even*



here, a few temporizers; and very soon after the flight of James from England, *Tyrconnel* sent his kinsman, Hamilton, to London, to manage a private treaty with the Prince and Princess of Orange. But the attachment of the people to the cause of his antagonist, rendered these intrigues fruitless, and from disappointment young *Temple*, who had entered deeply into them, made away with himself.

Sir John Dalrymple gives a very different turn to the motives that animated the two parties of Irish to range themselves under different banners in this war. He tells us that “*anonymous reports of massacres, the gigantic size of the recruits raised by Tyrconnel, &c.*” \* first animated the Protestants of Ulster to take up arms against James; “but that when the people of Londonderry heard of the fate of lord Mountjoy,” who was clapt into the Bastile in Paris, when they “saw new Popish regiments raising every where; and understood that most of the commissions were given to officers *who agreed to ask no pay for their men; a declaration that their subsistence was to arise from the misery of their opponents;* the parties of Protestant and Papist declared anew and openly their mutual jealousies †.” This whole paragraph is certainly as disingenuous, as the inference, he draws from it, is *cruel and ill-founded*. If the English Protestants, by the zeal and bigotry of this ill-fated prince, were justified in taking up arms against him, were not the Irish Protestants, who felt as sensibly the strong hand of oppression, at least equally so? Where then the necessity of making *so humiliating* an apology for their resistance, especially when it had not the least foundation in truth, if not to fix a stigma on the Catholic Irish? But besides the attacks on their civil and religious liberties, which the Irish Protestants equally felt

\* Dalrymple's Memoirs, p. 263, 4, 5, 6, Dublin edit.

† Ibid. p. 268.

with



with their English neighbours, they had effects still more alarming to apprehend from the continuance of James's dominion, *the loss of part, if not the whole of their estates*; and we see, that their fears were but too well grounded, by the repeal of the famous act of settlement. They entered then as early, and much more spiritedly, into the interest of the Prince and Princess of Orange, than the English. That the reader should have no doubt of this, I shall, from the preamble to the act of forfeiture, one of the acts of James's Irish parliament, passed at this very time, demonstrate, that the Irish Protestants were as early, and much more exposed to the consequences of this war, than the English. It runs thus: "Whereas upon the general defection  
" of your majesty's subjects in England, *several* of your ma-  
" jesty's subjects have deserted this kingdom, and repaired into  
" your majesty's kingdom of England, and elsewhere, thereby  
" endeavouring to weaken your majesty's interest *here*, and shew-  
" ing an apparent diffidence of your majesty's protection; *most*  
" *part of which persons* have actually *taken up arms*, under the  
" natural usurper in England, and divers others of your majesty's  
" subjects *became rebels and traitors*, within this your realm."  
It must be confessed that the English shew much more spirit in forming than in executing plots. Though they crouded in shoals to Holland, and formed associations in almost every shire in England, yet as soon as the prince landed, they were extremely backward to appear publickly in his cause; and he was obliged to deal very roundly with them, before he could rouse them to a sense of themselves. In short, he sent them word, that if they did not repair to his standard within a certain time, he would quit England, and send a list of the names and qualities of the conspirators to the king. Such was not the case in Ireland; and the Protestants, though not a twentieth part of the kingdom, were:



were as little acquainted with temporizing as the Papists. Far from being intimidated with the power and numbers of their enemies, they very early proclaimed war. Thus much, with regard to Sir John's account of the Protestant part of the Irish war.

As to the Catholics, they were equally spirited and determined in the cause they espoused: The finances of the nation were very low. The utmost their parliament could do, was to grant the king 20,000 l. *per* month, beside as much more raised by his proclamation: sums very inadequate to the work of forcing a king upon Britain! But what the abilities of the \* nation as a collective body could not do, the spirit and zeal of particulars effected. The nobility raised regiments, private gentlemen troops and companies, which they supported, and paid out of their own finances. Such were the regiments of Sir Donnel ô Neil, Cormoc ô Neil, Felix ô Neil, Brien ô Neil, Gordon ô Neil, Ma Guire, Ma Gennis, M'Mahon, M'Donnel, ô Reily, Clare, ô Donnel, Fitz-Gerald, ô Morra, Galmoy, Nugent, Luttrell, &c. But instead of living on their enemies, as our author *most unjustly* insinuates, the most exact discipline was observed by them; and whilst he tells us, (P. ii. p. 174.) that, "the Germans, French, and Danes, of the English army, declared, *without scruple*, that they looked upon themselves as in an enemy's country, and that they were too numerous to be punished," it is a fact well remembered, that at the second siege of Limerick, an Irish soldier was executed opposite the Old Bear in the Irish-town, for only taking from a poor woman a roll of bread, value an halfpenny!

\* It may not be amiss to inform the reader, that the upper house of this parliament consisted of 7 earls, 9 viscounts, 4 Protestant bishops, and 15 barons, besides Sir Alexander Pilton, high chancellor; and that in the lower house were representatives for 28 out of 32 counties of the kingdom, as well as for all the cities and boroughs within them.

After



After giving so unfavourable an account of the Irish war on both sides, Sir John proceeds to account for its continuance with even greater insincerity. He says, that “despair united the Irish; and hence,” says he, (P. ii. p. 172.) “they continued the war during the summer, after James had seemed to relinquish it; and hence the Irish officers opposed that peace which Tyrconnel pressed upon them, being apprehensive that they should fall a sacrifice to it.” Again, (p. 173.) “Berwick returned to France without orders, and left the command of the army to Sarsfield, who became popular amongst his countrymen, on account of the defeat he had given the king’s attempts upon Limerick; but who having been himself forfeited, found his interest and revenge, as a *rebel*, united to his glory as a general, in the prosecution of this war.” Had the great lord *Lucan* now lived, how would he have spurned at a name so injurious to his glory! Sir John Dalrymple has bestowed on the Irish an epithet, which could with no propriety be applied to them. If a nation, acting under a legitimate prince, as such governing *de jure* & *de facto*, and supported by the national representatives legally convened, may be branded with the name of Rebels, I know of no people in Europe, who may not with as much propriety be thus stigmatized by licentious writers, though acting under commission of their lawful sovereign.

But let us examine into what the conditions of that peace offered the Irish by Tyrconnel, were, and to which “*the Irish officers were apprehensive of falling a sacrifice.*” After the battle of the Boyne, and the desertion of Ireland by James, king William proposed to the Irish, upon submitting to his authority, 1st, The possession of all their estates, as they stood before this war. 2d. The free exercise of their religion. 3d. The capacity of filling all civil employments in the state; and 4th, for the security of



of these and many other articles, they were to have half the garrisons of the kingdom put into their hands. The candid reader will from this judge, whether it was *despair* or *honour* that induced these generals and officers, civil and military, and the bulk of the nation to reject offers so great and advantageous! After the first siege of Limerick, offers still more favourable, were proposed and rejected. Let us hear what Sir John himself says on this head\*, “Before the king,” says he, “returned to Scotland, to take upon him the command of the army, he had given orders to Ginkle in Ireland, *to make an end of the war at any rate*; and for that purpose had furnished his army completely with recruits, and every kind of military provision, and sent him an *unlimited pardon* for all who would ask the benefit of it.” From this the public may judge, what share *despair* had in determining the Irish to protract the war. It is true, he tells us, Ginkle published it not till after the battle of Aughrim, tho’ printed in the Gazette the May preceding this battle! and the reasons he assigns for this conduct, are, that the Irish might see it was not through fear of them these concessions were then offered. But if it was not published before this battle, why was it proclaimed at all? Were the Irish more formidable after the loss of two general engagements, and the capture of almost all their strong holds, than before? or was it out of affection to them, that Ginkle then condescended to offer these terms? This general was a Dutchman, a soldier of fortune, who had no attachment but to the prince he served. His army was mostly composed of foreigners, allured to this war from the hopes of confiscation and plunder; and our author tells us, that they acted *as if in an enemy’s country*; conditional peace then, must be extremely disagreeable to them.

\* Memoirs, p. 192.



The truth of the matter is this: King William, after the retreat from the Boyne, offered the Irish high terms of peace. He repeated them, after the decisive battle of Aughrim, through *Tyrconnel*, at Limerick, when they had scarce any hopes left. At a general council held there to consider of the terms, after much opposition, they were finally rejected by a large majority; the principals of which were, the earls of Lucan and Kilmallock, viscounts Galmoy and Fermoy, Baron Purcel, general ô Neal, Sir Theobald Butler, the colonels ô Carrol, ô Shaghnessy, ô Connel, Cusack, Dillon, Browne, &c. Fame and constant tradition have it, that Tyrconnel was to be continued lord lieutenant by king William, in case this peace succeeded; and that he was tried, condemned to death, and privately executed in this city, for high treason, by the Irish. Certain it is, that he died the fourth of August, 1691, and was interred in the cathedral of Limerick.

After this, will any one affirm, that *despair united the Irish*, to prolong the war? Will Sir John Dalrymple say, that they found it their interest to pursue it as being mostly soldiers of fortune, when it is an *incontrovertible fact*, that the estates *voluntarily forfeited by them*, after this war, amounted to 1600792 acres, the yearly value of which, at that time, when land was not a 20th part so dear as at present, was estimated by the commons of England, at 211623*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* *sterl.*? And at the second siege of Limerick, when Ginkle had the address to surround the town on both sides the Shannon, and thereby cut off all their communication; by that famous capitulation, the Irish were, 1st, To enjoy the exercise of their religion in as ample a manner, as in the days of Charles II. 2dly, All officers, civil and military, acting by commission from king James, to be restored to their estates on taking the oath of allegiance to king William. 3dly, The nobility and gentry, willing to come under the terms of this



capitulation, to have the liberty of wearing swords, riding in furniture, and carrying a gun. 4thly, All persons rejecting these terms, to have leave to transport themselves, their jewels and effects to whatever country they pleased. Such of the military as chose to retire to France, to be allowed to carry with them their money and goods; and Ginkle engaged on behalf of the king, to supply them with seventy ships, each of 200 tons burthen. Nay, so little appearance is there of despair in the conduct of these men that they conditioned for the few English and Scotch, who fought under their banners. In the 4th of the military articles of this capitulation, it is expressly stipulated, “ that  
 “ all English and Scotch officers who now serve in Ireland, shall  
 “ be included in this capitulation, as well for the security of  
 “ their estates and goods in England and Scotland (if they are  
 “ willing to remain here) as for their freely passing into France,  
 “ or any other country, to serve.”

This capitulation made a great noise, and loud were the complaints in England and Ireland, against William, for such monstrous concessions to the Irish. It is but too true, that the parties so complaining, acted upon principles much narrower than this prince, and that in this instance, were there none other, he shewed himself as consummate a statesman as any the age produced. All English writers, whether from prejudice or ignorance, have constantly viewed this war and its consequences, in lights very different from what both merited. We shall exhibit them in their true colours. The prince of Orange, on his first landing in Britain, found his English partizans much cooler in his cause than he expected. He knew his antagonist had a very powerful party both in England and Scotland, ready on every occasion, to undermine that government, which they wanted spirit and courage publicly to oppose; and he could not think  
 himself



himself firmly fixt on the throne, whilst any part of the monarchy was in confusion. By finishing the Irish war, he at once put an end to any solid hopes of his dastardly enemies. Besides, whilst the sword was unsheathed at home, he could not hope to bring the mighty projects he had formed to humble France, to any tolerable bearing. He knew how well the Britons would acquit themselves when led against a common enemy; but he feared them, when fighting, subject against subject, and brother against brother. It was on this account that he placed little confidence in them in the Irish war; and that his greatest reliance was on his foreign troops, and foreign generals. By terminating this war, he brought 40,000 fresh troops over to the grand alliance; and had he gained over the Irish, as he hoped, above 30,000 more! The contracted and narrow-sighted politicians, who endeavoured to counteract this capitulation, and who afterwards effectually did so, will not surely deny, but that such an acquisition must soon have terminated that war, in which so many millions were afterwards expended. Every period of history from that time even to this day, proves it. The mischiefs the Irish did the allies in Italy, Germany, and Flanders, after the conclusion of their domestic war, are too well known. At Cremona, Spireback, Villettri, Fontenoy, Lawfeldt, the consequences of their conduct will not readily be forgotten. And indeed it is plain, that had the last war in Ireland been considered in its true light, and in its consequences, and had proper means been used to bring over the Irish troops, as king William intended, it would have been of the highest consequence to Britain. The great Mr. PITT, now lord Chatham, scorning the confined principles of modern politics, knew how to make the Highlanders of the greatest service to his country; and the very people who drew their swords against George II.



contributed much to the conquest of Canada, *under George III.* Whilst it appears by the registers of the War-office of France, that from the year 1691, to the year 1745, inclusive, 450,000 Irish, enlisted under the banners of France!

But to return: The Irish chiefs, though deserted by their prince, by the duke of Berwick and the few French troops, tho' confined to one-fourth, and that the poorest province of the kingdom, and reduced to the greatest straits for money and arms, yet confidently affirmed, "*that they would find all these resources in their own virtues and courage.*" The present age would think it almost incredible, that any nation could with such uncommon firmness, suffer all the miseries of war and distress the Irish did on this occasion, when they might, *at any hour*, exchange them for the blessings of peace and affluence, if the facts were not so well known. For the sake of posterity we shall relate a few of them. The current cash being found insufficient to answer the exigencies of the state, shillings, half-crowns and crowns of brass were coined, and by proclamation were to pass as current coin, till such time as the settled condition of the kingdom would enable the state to repay it with real specie. A certain number of each of these was issued from the treasury monthly, with the month impressed on each piece, an entry made on each parcel, and it was declared a capital offence to counterfeit them. With these were the military paid, and though of no real value out of the Irish quarters, yet on *the public faith*, did the people cheerfully take, and give value for them. From this the public may see what must have been the sufferings of such Irish prisoners, as were taken from time to time by the enemy, for want of sterling money: yet all this they bore up against; and tho' many of them were almost naked, and all wanted many of the conveniences of life, yet under all these hardships they were unshaken  
and



and incorruptible, notwithstanding various stratagems devised to disunite them! By this expedient also, the landlords received no rents, at least the payments made, were of no real value. They then sent their wool, their hides, their tallow, and butter to France, to barter for powder, ball, and arms. Notwithstanding this distress, they knew king William wished for peace as much as they; and the more solicitous he was for it, the more obstinate were they in refusing it. They were promised by their emissaries, that insurrections would break out every day in different parts of Britain; they hoped, and were promised succours from France; and they well knew, from the heart-burnings in their sister kingdom, that the least turn of fortune in their favour, might at once overbalance all their misfortunes. Though greatly distressed they were not dispirited by their repeated defeats; a firmness that shews their courage to have been the result of principle. Their behaviour on this occasion was similar to what happened in the year 1650. It is a curious anecdote, and my authority is a manuscript account of those times, wrote by the learned Dr. ô Kennedy, a gentleman of the county of Limerick, and judge of the admiralty to James II. He there tells us, that when the Irish were reduced to the lowest ebb, they were offered most advantageous terms by the Parliamentarians, which by the advice of the most sensible part of the nation, as well religious as others, they were determined to accept of, and the rather as they thought they were in honour exempt from any further connection with Charles II. who by proclamation, after his arrival in Scotland, had annulled the peace of 1648. Nevertheless at a general assembly of the Irish chiefs at Loughrea, in Nov. 1650, upon letters being produced from this prince, assuring them that what he had done, was through compulsion, and that their now making terms with the Parliamentarians, would totally



totally defeat the success of his intended invasion of England, the majority of this assembly were *mad enough* to break off all further connections with the parliament agents, though without resource in case Charles should prove unsuccessful. Dr. Warner severely censures the Irish, particularly the clergy, for proposing any terms for their own safety, without the king's interests being particularly included. As an Englishman, and one totally unconcerned about the event, the reflection may pass; but from an Irishman it should appear highly absurd. Did not the English themselves totally abandon his family, and yet by it, they became a greater nation; whereas by the most *absurd* and *romantic honour* and *attachment* to it, the Irish were ruined. *If public safety be the first law*, the *clergy* and *laity* who pressed this peace on the assembly and on the nation, acted as honest patriots and upright men; and all the misfortunes that afterwards beset the nation, should be charged on the then *Deputy* and his creatures.

At the battle of Aughrim, Sir John Dalrymple tells us, that the priests ran up and down amongst the ranks, swearing some on the sacrament, encouraging others, and promising eternity to all, who should gallantly acquit themselves to their country that day. Does he mean this by way of apology for the intrepidity of the Irish, or to lessen the applause they were so well intitled to on that fatal day? Have they required more persuasions to fight the battles of foreign princes, than the native troops; or are they the only soldiers in the world who require spiritual comfort on the day of trial? I never thought piety was a reproach to soldiers; and it was, perhaps, the enthusiasm of Oliver's troops, that made them so victorious. This battle was certainly a bloody and decisive one. The stake was great, the Irish knew the value of it, and though very inferior to their enemies in numbers and appointments, and chagrined by repeated



peated losses, yet it must be owned, that they fought it well. Accidents which human wisdom could not foresee more than the superior courage of their flushed opponents, snatched from them that victory which already began to declare in their favour ! Their bones yet lie scattered over the plains of Aughrim ; but let that justice be done to their memories, which a brave and generous enemy never refuses.

Sir John has hinted, that the regiments raised by the Irish, were to be supported at the expence of their antagonists ; no proofs of this assertion, however, follow ; but at the second siege of Limerick we are told, “ that Ginkle directed his attacks on the Irish town, in hopes by setting it on fire in different places, to get the inhabitants to betray it, or oblige the garrison to give it up. But the soldiers *drove the inhabitants from the town*, and when the houses were on fire, *broke into them for plunder, instead of extinguishing the flames !* Ginkle therefore removed his batteries to a station opposite the English town.” Surprising that the very reasons which should determine him to adhere to his first resolution, would make him so suddenly alter it ! But it unluckily happens that this transaction comes too near our own times to be easily credited. This siege our fathers have remembered, and so remarkable an instance of outrage on the one part, and want of policy on the other, could not be forgot. The truth of the matter was this : On the night of the 2d of Sept. 1691, Ginkle had 300 bombshells thrown into the town. The fire began at eight in the evening, and continued the whole night with horrid noise and some execution. Lest this new species of attack should intimidate the inhabitants, and the infection be caught by the military, notice was given next day by beat of drum, that such citizens and families as chose it, might quit the town and carry



carry off what effects belonged to them, which many of them embraced; some going to Ennis, and many of them forming a little camp in the north liberties, constantly called by the old inhabitants, to this day, the *cowardly camp*. Ginkle pursued his attacks from the S. W. part of the liberties, for some days longer, to the great damage of the city; and though frequently set on fire in many places, yet it was as soon extinguished by the troops within, *but without the least injury whatever being done the inhabitants!* Finding this ineffectual, he changed his batteries, and the whole force of his fire was directed against Baal's-bridge, the adjacent Dominican convent, and St. Francis's abbey. But tho' the city was almost an heap of ruins, the besieged still seemed more determined than ever; and it was then the opinion of most people, as well in England as in Ireland, that the English would at length be compelled to raise the siege, as they were the year before. However, by bribing some fishermen, a passage was pointed out, by which a large body of English troops crossed over to the north side of the Shannon, and after a stout resistance, obliged the Irish, who were here surprised, to retire towards the city; and out of 500 men of which this little camp was composed, 40 only saved their lives, by retiring to an old mill, where they defended themselves gallantly till terms were offered them.

Our author gives a most miserable account of the partizan part of the Irish war, "The chief disorder," says he, (p. 174.) "came from the lowest class of the nation, called raparees." We must, however, remind our readers, that he has already acknowledged—that the very regulars amongst their opponents treated the people as if in an enemy's country, though called in as auxiliaries, to one party; *and that they were too numerous to be punished!* Having thus fixed the miseries of the nation on its own people, he proceeds to account for their cruelty in the  
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following curious philosophical manner. “The genius of a nation,” proceeds he, “*often depends* upon the food with which they are nourished. The potatoe plant, upon which most of the common people of Ireland at that time subsisted, *whilst it encreased population, debased the character of the nation!*” Whether the potatoe plant was introduced for the sake of the reflection, or the reflection gave rise to the potatoe plant, the suggestion is alike ridiculous and indefensible; and I am so far ready to do this learned gentleman justice, as to believe that, upon no other occasion but *that of rendering Ireland contemptible*, would he make use of arguments so strongly connected with *materialism*. It however happens, unluckily for the *observation*, that the potatoe plant is no more the food of the Irish, than it is of the English and Scotch. It is the root itself that is cultivated, and becomes a considerable part of the diet of the poor through the three kingdoms. The plant, as any botanist could have told him, is rather deleterious than nutritive, and I never heard of its being converted to other uses, than when dried for fuel, or to cover the cots of some of the poor. Sir John Dalrymple should have first proved the *national debased character* of the Irish; but I suppose he judged his friend Mr. Hume had already done this to his hand. But this is a *national cause*; and we plainly see, that neither birth, parts, or fortune, preclude people from entering *deeply* into it!

A slight attention to the causes and effects of the partizan war in Ireland will serve to remove the illiberal and unphilosophical impression of a *national debased character*.—Civil wars are generally carried on with more fierceness and inhumanity than those of nation against nation. After the defeat at the Boyne, numbers of the Ulster Irish quitted their country; some through affection to the cause of their leaders, and many



more through dread of the victors. These could only hope for safety within the precincts of the Irish quarters; they were too numerous to be employed in the army, and most of them carried with them their wives and children. Their miseries often obliged them to prey alike upon friend and foe; but at length some of the most daring of them formed themselves into kind of independant companies, whose subsistence arose chiefly from depredations committed on the enemy. We have seen in our own times, France and Germany employ companies, and even raise regiments of *Free Booters*, who subsisted by plunder only, and yet the national characters of these people were *not debased thereby*. It was not choice, but pure necessity, that drove the Irish to this extreme. I have heard antient people, who were witnesses of the calamities of those days affirm, that they remembered vast numbers of these poor Ulster Irish, men, women, and children, to have no other beds but the ridges of potatoe-gardens, and little other covering than the canopy of heaven: they dispersed themselves over the counties of Limerick, Clare, and Kerry; and the hardness of the times at length shut up all bowels of humanity, so that most of them perished by the sword, cold, or famine.

We have already shewn the singular attachment of the *expatriated Irish*, in Cromwell's days, to the fortunes of the ungenerous and ungrateful Charles. The reader has seen them remove from the Spanish to the French service, and, *e contrà*, not as it suited their own, but this voluptuous prince's interest; and he cannot forget, that half the pay of these troops was received in his coffers. After the conclusion of the last wars, the number of Irish troops who consigned themselves to voluntary banishment, exceeded 19,000, beside the brigade of Mount Cashel, consisting of three regiments, each composed of two battalions, sent



to France in May, 1690, in exchange for seven French battalions, then sent to Ireland. Though these troops had the highest offers from Ginkle to engage in the English service, and though they were greatly tempted by other powers who knew their value, yet through a most romantic notion of honour, they were immoveable in the interest of Louis XIV. who afforded an asylum to their own exiled prince. By agreement with the commissaries on the part of France before they quitted Ireland, they were to be put on high pay; nevertheless on reforming them at *Rennes*, after their arrival in France, in consideration of the pension allowed to James by Louis, and of the low finances of France, they agreed to be put on French pay, by which means their allowance was diminished 50,000 livres a month. James was so struck at this uncommon instance of generosity in men who had *now* nothing but their miserable pay to support them, that by an instrument under his hand, he charged this arrear of their pay, as a debt upon himself and his posterity.

Such is the true picture, and such the distinguished behaviour of the Irish nation in the last Irish wars, though Sir John Dalrymple is not ashamed to tell the *public* that “the subsistence of  
“their troops was to arise from the miseries of their opponents,  
“and that the continuance of the war was the effects of de-  
“spair!” Happily all the distractions and distinctions of those days are long since forgot. If the present race of Irish now and then reflect upon these unhappy times, it is with concern and astonishment, to think that any set of rational beings could be capable of acting parts so romantic, so enthusiastic, as their ancestors did, and for a family highly unworthy their regards or attachment. They have not, they now cannot have any other interest in view than the general one of their country;



try ; and they only wish to be put upon such a footing, as may more effectually enable them to promote it.

I shall now conclude this most laborious work with a few observations submitted to the consideration of my countrymen. What avails it that the Irish are *brave*, to a *proverb* ; *hospitable* beyond example ; inviolable in friendship ; for *genius*, *learning*, and *intellectual capacity*, at least equal to any nation in Europe ; if they are still to be painted as a disgrace to Christendom, as a dishonour to the human race ? examine the epitomes of geography, published in every nation, and in every language of Europe, and you will find the Irish described as the reservoirs of human turpitude ! Impotent are the attempts, vain the endeavours of the few *individuals*, who have from time to time *generously devoted* themselves to the defence of their country, when *unaided*, *unsupported* by the *national voice*. This it is, that has given confidence and effrontery to a Scotch Secretary in our own times, to pour out against Ireland the most illiberal and indecent abuses that ever were thrown out against any nation ; it has emboldened a reverend doctor of the same nation, under the specious title of *Dissertations on the History of Scotland*, to publish *a work*, calculated for no other purposes but to subvert and ridicule Irish history. Even an Highland bard steps forth to prove from history, that we are the very dregs of human depravity ; and, that the aid of no rank should be wanting in the business of calumny, a Scotch baronet brings up the rear, by attempting to account philosophically for this uncommon degradation of human nature !

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