





A HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

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A

HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

Civil and Ecclesiastical

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE
DEATH OF DAVID I., 1153

BY

DUNCAN KEITH

Volume First

CIVIL



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PREFACE.

THE object of the author in bringing this work before the public is to present in a popular form the history and state of the people of Scotland during a period little known to any but students of archæology. Modern historians, with the exception of Dr Skene, have passed lightly over it, stating what is true enough, that there are no reliable facts to chronicle. But there is a growing love for the investigation of the mythological and legendary history of peoples other than the Hebrew, Greek and Roman, a feeling that present enigmas may be solved, and present duties enforced by such an investigation. The study of the mythology and legends of the peoples named, forms an integral part of the education even of the young: why should we neglect our own ancestors, the Celt and the Teuton? The boy is father to the man—if at the present day we receive with reverence or rapture the childish records of the great names in Literature and Art, why should we not treasure up all that remains of the forefathers who gave us the rude outline of our present institutions in Church and State?

While making free use of modern works, the author has taken his facts entirely from the earliest authorities, and has based his inferences on these facts and on these alone. He trusts that his readers will treat his work as an honest attempt to bring before them an important period in our National History, little known and less thought of.

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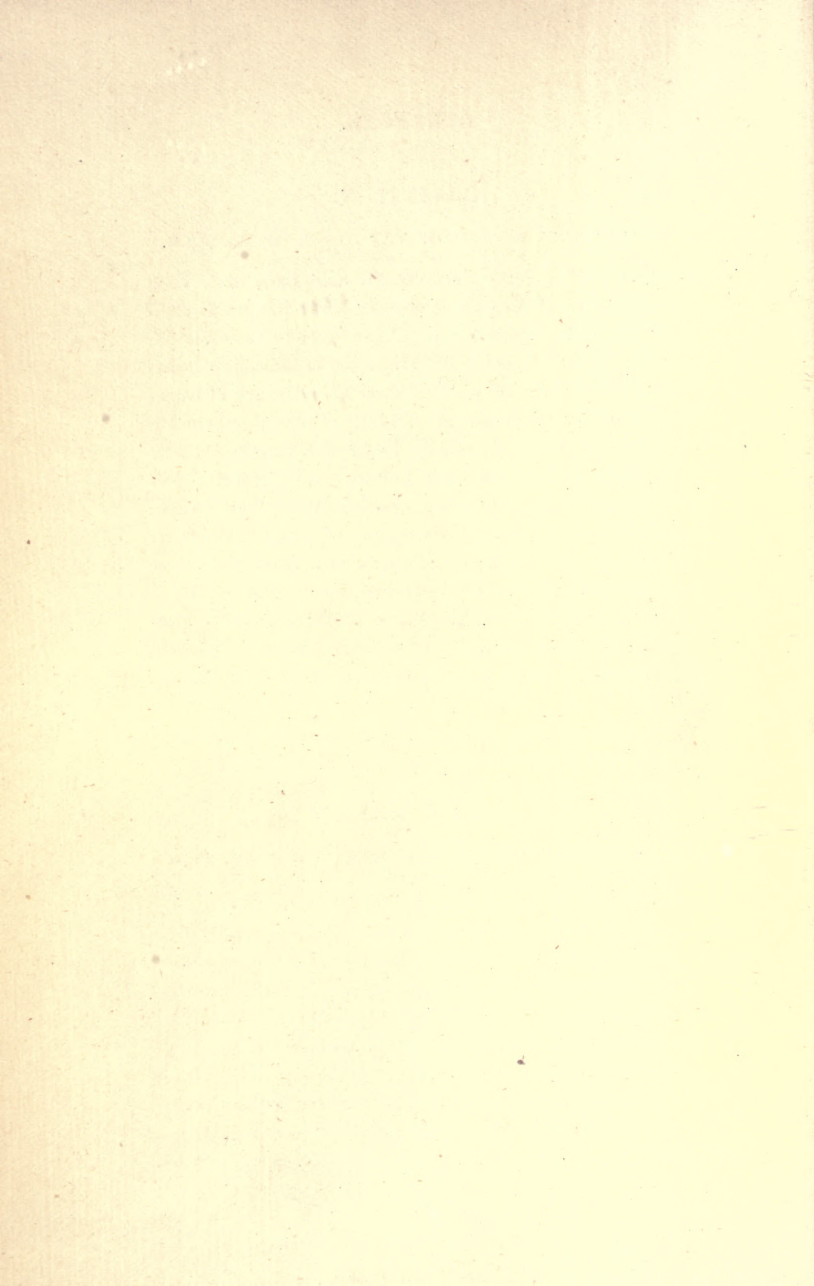
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CIVIL HISTORY

CHAPTER I.

THE ROMAN PERIOD.

Early Notices of Britain—Discovered by the Romans—Invasion of Cæsar—Conquests of Agricola—Hadrian and the Roman Wall—Campaign of Severus—Constantius Chlorus—Constantine and his Successors—Condition of the Inhabitants—Invasion of Northern Tribes and Saxons—Repelled by Theodosius—Province of Valentia—Renewed Invasions—Britain abandoned by the Romans—Probable state of Civilisation.

It is as near as may be an ascertained historical fact, that the Phœnicians, from their colonies on the west coast of Spain, were the first to discover the British Isles. There is no mention of them, however, in the scant literature preserved, the early colonisers of the world, the prototypes of the Anglo-Saxon, with their usual astuteness, probably kept the knowledge to themselves. Herodotus is very sceptical of the existence of these isles: 'Nor do I know of any islands called the Cassiterides (Tin Islands), whence the tin comes which we use.'¹ These islands were known to the Carthaginians; one of whom, Himilco, in the middle of the fourth century, B.C. 362, 350, left an account of his voyage to the north-west coasts of Europe, which was extant in the fourth century of our era, and from which Festus Avienus, a writer of that period, drew his information. In this writer's poetical description of the world he gives the following graphic account of the British Isles, in which our readers will at once recognise the coracle, the well known boat used by the early Britons and the Scots: 'Beneath this promontory (Cape Finisterre) spreads the vast Cæstrymnian gulph, in which rise out of the sea the islands Cæstrymnides, scattered with wide intervals, rich in metal of tin and lead. The people are proud, clever and active, and all engaged in incessant cares of commerce. They furrow the wide rough strait, and

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¹ Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. ii. p. 503.

A.D. — the ocean abounding in sea monsters, with a new species of boat. For they know not how to frame keels with pine or maple, as others use, nor to construct their curved backs with fir; but, strange to tell, they always equip their vessels with skins joined together, and often traverse the salt sea in a hide of leather. It is two days' sail hence to the Sacred Island, as the ancients called it, which spreads a wide space of turf in the midst of the waters, and is inhabited by the Hibernian people. Near to this again is the broad island of Albion.¹ From this and the voyage of Pytheas the Massilian Aristotle, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny, derived their knowledge of Britain. But it was very scanty, and what is told us is highly tinged with the marvels of all early travels.

Publius L. Crassus, who conquered the north-west of Spain about 100 B.C., was the first who showed the Romans the way to the Cassiterides and Britain, and from that time commercial intercourse was carried on with the continent.

But though the name of Albion was known to the ancients, and a trade in tin carried on between the Scilly Islands and the coast of Cornwall with Gaul and Spain, nothing definite was known of the British Isles and their inhabitants until the invasion of Julius Cæsar, B.C. 55.

Cæsar was successful in his two campaigns, but made no attempt, as in Gaul, to preserve his conquest. As usual, he gives a description of the country and its inhabitants. He does full justice to the valour of the Britons; he tells of the custom of staining their bodies with woad, and of their use of chariots in battle. The people of the coast he considered immigrants from Belgium, and that they were more civilised than those living in the interior, who clothed themselves in the skins of beasts, and subsisted entirely on their cattle and animals slain in hunting. He also makes a statement which has been much controverted—that a family of a dozen or so had their wives in common.

¹ Kenrick's Phœnicia, pp. 217, 218.

During the period of the struggle for the possession of the empire of Rome, Britain was left to itself, and it was not till the reign of Claudian, A.D. 43, that its conquest was attempted and in part effected. During the intervening period little, we may say nothing, is known; it is extremely probable that there would be an active immigration from Belgic Gaul; and as in all the succeeding immigrations, the strangers would take the lion's share, and push the original settlers into the less favoured parts of the island.

The southern portion of Britain, on the west to the Solway, and on the east to the Tweed, or perhaps the Forth, was conquered by the Roman arms, under a succession of able generals, by the time that Julius Agricola, in A.D. 78, arrived and assumed the civil and military command. The narrative of the government and campaigns of Agricola has been told us by the greatest of Roman, perhaps of ancient, historians. The two modern historians of Scotland, Burton and Skene, differ as to its value. Mr Burton thinks that there is a good deal of the panegyric in it, everything subservient to its hero. He evidently shares Pinkerton's opinion: 'Tacitus is the eagle of history, and keeps such a sublime tract, that particulars often escape his notice.' Mr Skene, however, has no such misgivings, and places the highest value on the life of Agricola. It is, however, as Mr Burton himself observes, 'the only distinct account of the wars of the Romans in Scotland, though they long struggled for the annexation of the country, and were, perhaps, for 300 years in occupation of its soil.'¹

Agricola on his arrival subdued North Wales, which was the only part of south Britain which defied the imperial arms. The Roman governor then turned his attention to the internal administration of the province; by his wise and just reforms, combined with the institu-

¹ Burton's History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 7, ed. 1876. The incidents related by Hector Boece are the products of his own imagination, and, though flattering to our national vanity, are of no historical value.

A.D. 70.

tion of municipal privileges, and a more equitable adjustment of the taxes, he gained the confidence of the Britons, and established the Roman power on the basis of justice and moderation.

In the following year Agricola determined to bring into subjection the northern tribes, who had either preserved their independence or had not come into contact with the Roman power.

The district forming now the northern counties of England, and the south of Scotland to the Firths of Forth and Clyde, was inhabited by a warlike nation called Brigantes, in which we may include the tribes named by Roman authors, the Selgovæ, whose territories were Dumfries-shire and part of Kirkcudbright; the Novantæ, Wigtownshire and part of Ayrshire; the Damnonii, the north of Ayrshire, Renfrew, Lanark, Linlithgow, and Stirling; the Otadeni, the Lothians, Berwickshire, Peebles, and Northumberland. The Brigantes certainly included also in their number the most warlike of the Britons of the south who refused to submit to the Roman arms, and sullenly retired to the north. In later times they are termed Mæatæ, or middle Britons, and though afterwards their country was incorporated into a province of the empire, they were never thoroughly Romanised, and were the first to throw off the Roman power. This tribe, or confederacy of tribes, had resisted hitherto the Roman arms, in many cases successfully, and, though conquered in battle, owned a very precarious allegiance to the imperial power. Pinkerton proves to his entire satisfaction that the Brigantes were of Gothic extraction, and that the kindred Saxons who, in a few centuries, peopled¹ their country, were of kindred blood, and spoke a kindred language.

Agricola, in the second year of his administration, determined to break the power of this formidable antagonist, and to annex the district. In this he was successful. In a single campaign, by the force or terror of his arms, the Brigantes were subdued and their country incorporated into the Roman system, thus bringing the

¹ Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. 1. p. 30, ed. 1789.

whole of the north of England and the south of Scotland, to the estuaries of the Forth and Clyde, under the imperial sway. A. D. 78-85.

Always bent on the conciliation and civilization of his subjects, Agricola spared no efforts for their improvement, and within the space of two years, his biographer tells us, he had introduced among the natives the Roman dress, manners, and literature; he had initiated the building of temples, of courts of justice, and of baths; their dwellings were improved, and they were fast becoming luxurious and voluptuous Romans. Mr Burton cynically observes, 'all within the space of two years, a rather brief period for so great an achievement.'¹

The further north the Romans advanced, the natural obstacles were greater, and as they found in many cases insurmountable. The conquest of the level portion of England was comparatively easy, but the whole of Scotland was, to some extent, as difficult as the mountain fastnesses of Wales and Cumberland, whither the unsubdued Britons had retired. The Romans later on felt the full force of these natural obstacles, and fixed as a boundary to the empire the line between the Tyne and the Solway Firth, where the island is contracted to a space of about seventy miles. But the Cheviot hills have furnished a natural boundary which, in after times, became the march between England and Scotland; the enemy could only enter Scotland by the level route on either side of these hills, and they, in any case, were a next to impregnable refuge.

Agricola, in his first northern campaign, had found the tribes who disputed his conquest much the same on both sides of the Cheviots, the resistance that of brave warriors, the natural obstacles great, but not insuperable. But when he arrived at another portion of Britain where the Firths of Forth and Clyde penetrate far into the

¹ For the credit of Tacitus we give the following quotation: 'Martial, Ovid, and Propertius speak of their works as being known all the world over; that young and old, women and girls, in Rome and in the provinces, in Britain, and in Gaul, read their verses.'—Curwen's History of Booksellers, p. 11.

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interior, and the neck of land is contracted to a distance of thirty-five miles, he found a different country and a different people. Their prowess he and his successors were yet to feel; but the vast mountain ranges to the west and north would at once be seen from the Roman encampment. This country the Romans termed Caledonia; but from what native word (if any) they derived it, it is now impossible to say. The term is not to be found in the chronicles earlier than the days of Bœce; the name of the country in the writings of that time is *Albu, Alba, Alban, Albin*.

Before entering on the sketch of Agricola's campaigns, it will be necessary shortly to describe the physical features of the country which successfully defied the imperial arms.

Of these features the great mountain chains dominate all others, and give a character to the country; more even than what is termed the Lowlands of Scotland in its southern part, do the northern Lowlands stand out distinct.

North of the natural boundary we have referred to, commencing near Dumbarton, rises the great mountain chain which, running due north, terminates at the Ord of Caithness. It is termed in Bede, Adamnan, and other early writers, the *Dorsum Britanniaë* (or back-bone of Britain) and *Drumalban*. It separated the kingdoms of Dalriada from Pictland, and is now the boundary of Ayrshire and the western Highlands. From Fort-William at the west, rises a shorter but more elevated range, which extends right across the country to the German Ocean near Aberdeen. At its centre and western termination rise the two highest mountains in Scotland. This range is termed the *Month*, and was the boundary between the southern and the northern Picts.

There are thus four divisions in the north of Scotland divided by these barriers, two western and two eastern, two southern and two northern,—the division on the west at Ben Nevis, on the east at Aberdeen.

The eastern divisions are watered by two great rivers and their tributaries, the Spey to the north and the Tay

to the south. From the barrier of the Month from whence these rivers flow on either side, proceed also smaller ranges of mountains, which only terminate as the rivers approach the sea. These ranges have been loosely termed the Grampians, and they present the appearance, and to all intents and purposes the reality, of a continuous mountain range, and form a barrier which in later times was called the Highland line. The western division is intersected by the well-known lochs which add so much to the picturesque scenery of this part of the Highlands; the mountains rise precipitately from the very edge of the shore, and leave little space for cultivation and the means of existence for a sparse population, contrasting most unfavourably with the rich plains on the eastern division. This country the Roman general determined to bring under the imperial sway, and in the language of his biographer, 'Agricola in his next campaign, A.D. 80, ravaged the territories of new nations as far as the estuary of the river Tay.'

A.D. 78-85.

The ground thus rapidly gained was secured by forts, of which remains have been identified. The route, so far as we can judge by these remains and those of Roman camps, was through Dumfries, Lanark, and Stirling-shires, crossing the Forth at Stirling, thence by the passes of the Ochils through Stratherne to Perth. The Roman commander, after leaving garrisons in his out-posts, now determined to construct a line of forts across the neck of land between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, from Borrowstounness to Old Kilpatrick. This operation occupied the fourth summer. The fifth was spent in reconnaissances, and in endeavouring to discover the strength of the northern tribes. Mr Skene is of opinion that he 'crossed the Firth of Clyde with a small body of troops in one vessel, and penetrated through the hostile district of Cowal and Kintyre, till he saw the western ocean, with the coast running due north, presenting in the interior one mass of inaccessible mountains; the five islands of the Hebrides, and the blue shores of Ireland rising above the western horizon.'¹

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 47, 48. See also note.

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Meanwhile alarming reports were pouring in at headquarters of the movements of the Caledonians, and that a great confederacy was being organised for the purpose of driving out the invaders. Agricola determined, instead of waiting the attack behind his line of fortifications, to assume the offensive, and assail the enemy in his own savage fastnesses. The campaign he arranged as an attack by land and sea, the fleet and army combining their operations. The land forces were conveyed across the Firth of Forth, and accompanied by the naval armament, which crept along the coast, the peninsula of Fife was taken possession of, and the combined forces rendezvoused on the east bank of the Tay near Perth, at a place called Grassy Mounts, where an entrenched camp was formed. This had barely been completed when a fierce assault was made by the Caledonians on the outlying forts; and so alarming was the progress of the enemy, that many of his officers advised Agricola to abandon the territory gained, and fall back on the line of fortifications between the Forth and Clyde. The Roman general, however, was not the man to listen to timid counsels; he pursued his offensive movement, and advanced in three divisions northward, probably in a parallel line with the river Tay. While on the march, the weakest of these divisions, the ninth legion, was surprised by a night attack, which was at first successful; the Caledonians fought their way into the sacred precincts of the Roman camp, but the legionaries, undismayed, made a stubborn resistance, and made known to the commander-in-chief their desperate position. As day dawned Agricola brought up reinforcements from the other divisions, and after a gallant struggle, the northern warriors were completely routed, and driven pell-mell out of the camp to the friendly refuge of the forests and marshes. Tacitus seems to say that had not the country possessed these formidable obstacles in the way of pursuit, the war would then and there have been brought to a close.

The invaders, now as much elated as formerly they were cast down, with shouts demanded a further advance

into the enemy's country. Both parties made their preparations for the decisive struggle, the Romans eager for the fray, the Caledonians dauntless and determined in their resistance. A.D. 78-85.

The sixth and last campaign in Scotland (Caledonia) was eminently successful, and the narrative is graphically told in the pages of Tacitus; the desperate resistance of the brave defenders of their country is as graphically told by Bœce, and the patriotic Scotsman makes the heroic leader of the Caledonians contest the palm of eloquence as well as valour with Agricola,—‘The Scots leader delivered an address that rivalled, if it did not excel, the most brilliant efforts of classic oratory.’ Agricola led his army northward, and at a place called by the Roman historian Mount Grampius,¹ a decisive battle was fought, in which the Caledonians, under their leader Galgacus, were utterly defeated, ten thousand of the barbarians were slain, while the Roman loss is said to have been only three hundred and forty. On the morrow after the battle no enemy was to be seen :

‘It seem'd as if their mother earth,
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.’

Caledonia was annexed to the Roman empire. We have not attempted to fix the locality of these two famous battles. The criticism on the name Mount Grampius is too severe and learned for ordinary readers. Mr Burton, with the example of Mr Jonathan Oldbuck's unfortunate purchase of the prætorium² before him, does not attempt to give the site of the last decisive engagement. General Roy and George Chalmers make it at Ardoch; Gordon (the Antiquary's friend) at Dealgan Ross near Comrie; another favourable *theory* is at Urie in Kincardineshire; the latest authority, Mr Skene, at the peninsula formed by the junction of the Isla and the Tay, where are the remains of a strong and massive vallum called Cleaven Dyke, extending from the one river to the other, with a small Roman fort at one end, and enclosing a large

¹ For locality of Grampius see Burton's *Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 15-18.

² Scott's *Antiquary*, chap. ii.

A. D. 78-87.

triangular space capable of containing Agricola's whole troops, guarded by the rampart in front and by a river on each side. Before the rampart a plain of some size extends to the foot of the Blair Hill, or the Mount of Battle, the lowest of a succession of elevations which rise from the plain till they attain the full height of the great mountain range of the so-called Grampians, and on the heights above the plain are the remains of a large native encampment called Buzzard Dykes, capable of containing upwards of 30,000 men.¹ After the battle Agricola with his army retired, and made no vigorous attempt to preserve his conquests. Perhaps Bœce was not so far wrong; the Caledonians were scotched, but not *kilt*. After taking hostages from a tribe called the Horestii, he withdrew the Roman forces to an encampment south of the line of forts situated between the Firths of Forth and Clyde. The fleet was instructed to proceed along the coast till it made the circuit of the island. This was safely accomplished, and it returned to its station in the Firth of Forth, after having passed and taken possession (nominally) of the Orcades or Orkneys in the name of the emperor.

It is useless to speculate on the results which might have followed had Agricola continued his vigorous administration. In the next year, A. D. 87, he was recalled by the jealous tyrant Domitian, and the fruit of his labours lost to Scotland. He is said to have contemplated the conquest of Ireland, which he supposed could have been effected with one legion and a few auxiliaries, so small was his opinion of the valour of the warriors of Erin. These escaped, fortunately or unfortunately, the yoke and the civilising influence of the imperial power, and were left to the congenial pursuit of fighting among themselves.

The successor of Agricola retained his command for but a short period, when he was put to death by the orders of Domitian. The conquered tribes threw off their allegiance, and in a short period the Roman province of Britain was reduced to the same limits as when Agricola assumed his government.

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 53, 54.

Nothing definite is known of this period, A.D. 87-117, the year of the accession of the emperor Hadrian. Reports of the incursions of the barbarians and of their successes induced the emperor to visit Britain in person, A.D. 120. That the whole of the south of Scotland and the border counties of England had renounced their allegiance is evident from the fact that this eminently sagacious ruler, who was more anxious to preserve than extend the frontiers of the empire, at once withdrew the boundary line further south. Hadrian constructed his wall of defence from the Solway to the Tyne, from personal observation, considering this the safest limit to the imperial rule. It is a matter of dispute whether the whole was constructed under his reign, though it was certainly commenced by him. The wall, upwards of seventy miles in length, was a most formidable barrier, comprising a stone wall and fosse to the north, to the south an earthen mound with another ditch covered by two earthen ramparts; at intervals of a Roman mile were towers, while in addition there were fortresses or castles for the accommodation of the troops and military stores. The work was of the most enduring material, and constructed with a skill and care which seems to defy the lapse of ages. It was carried over the most rugged heights, o'er moor and fen, through forests and across rivers. The builders seemed to court material obstacles, if they would but add to the strength of the position.¹

After the death of Hadrian, A.D. 138, his successor, Antoninus Pius, despatched Lollius Urbicus to quell the incursions of the Brigantes, who had again made repeated forays into the Roman province. Unhappily for the fame of the imperial officer, he had no Tacitus to chronicle his exploits; all that we know of his expedition is contained in a few lines in a life, or rather panegyric, of the emperor Antoninus, by Julius Capitolinus, 'Nam et Britannos per Lollium Urbicum Legatum vicit, alio

¹ For a succinct though short account, see Burton's *Scotland*, chap. i.; for an exhaustive and elaborate detail, Bruce's *Roman Wall*.

A. D. 192-210. *muro cespitio submiotis Barbaris ducto.*' The construction of the great Roman wall and military way between the Firths of Forth and Clyde on the lines of Agricola's rampart, is the surest testimony to the military skill and engineering talents of that able officer, the proof that his work was well done, the Brigantes defeated, and their country recovered to the empire. The line of defence was the best possible to curb the inroads of the fierce tribes of the north. 'Many critical battles were fought close to it, and it became proverbial as a check on the inroads of the northern people, by the old expression, "the Forth bridles the wild Highlandman."¹

Until the year A. D. 181 there is nothing chronicled; there would be the usual predatory incursions, but not so serious as to disturb the peace of the province. In that year, however, the Caledonians made a formidable irruption; they broke through the rampart, killed a Roman commander, and devastated the adjacent territory. The emperor Commodus, alarmed at the peril in which Britain (now evidently an important province) was placed, despatched Marcellus Ulpius, an able officer, who speedily repelled the barbarians and restored order.

At the decease of Commodus, A. D. 192, Clodius Albinus was governor of Britain, and after the death of the two puppets of the pretorian guards, who sate for a short time on the throne of the Cæsars, he determined to enter the lists with Severus, and make a struggle for the imperial power. Severus, who had been proclaimed emperor at Rome, respected the talents and feared the power of Albinus, more particularly when he had yet a competitor (Niger) in the east to subdue. He temporised, and associated Albinus with him in the government, and caused him to be proclaimed Cæsar by the senate. But the stern and able African only waited his time. Niger was no more, and his fellow-competitor was doomed to the same fate. He still kept up the show of friendship, and despatched messengers to convey the honours of the senate and the emperor, and at the same time assassinate the unsuspecting recipient. The plot was discovered, and Albinus, at the

¹ Burton's Scotland, vol. i. p. 34.

head of a powerful army, in which the flower of the youth of Britain formed no unimportant part, crossed into Gaul, there to contest the empire of the world with his formidable antagonist. 'The battle of Lyons, where one hundred and fifty thousand Romans were engaged, was fatal to Albinus. The valour of the British army maintained indeed a sharp and doubtful contest with the hardy discipline of the Illyrian legions. The fame and person of Severus appeared, during a few moments, irrecoverably lost, till that warlike prince rallied his fainting troops and led them on to a decisive victory.'¹ As was but natural, on the withdrawal of the greater portion of the military force from Britain, the native tribes rose up in arms, and the governor, Vivius Lupus, who had been appointed on the death of Albinus, was forced to make peace with the Mæatæ on what to a Roman were dishonourable terms. Even this peace or truce was badly kept; the northern portion of the province was overrun and ravaged in every part, and repeated messages were sent to the emperor for assistance. In A.D. 208, Severus, notwithstanding his advanced age and his gout, determined to proceed to Britain in person, and settle matters there in true Roman fashion—thorough conquest; if necessary, extirpation. Carried on a litter, he was transported to our shores, accompanied by his two sons, his court, and a large army. On his arrival he lost no time; at the head of an overwhelming force of legionaries and auxiliaries he passed the walls of Hadrian and Antoninus, and entered Caledonia by much the same route as Agricola. The emperor is said to have fought no battle, so great was the terror of his arms; but the enemy hung about him, and by their attacks, by fatigue and exposure, fifty thousand Romans were lost in the campaign. The results were that he passed through Stratherne to the Tay, from there by Aberdeen to the shores of the Moray Firth, overcoming all resistance by making roads, building bridges, and levelling forests, preparing the country for military occupation. The emperor, having thus far advanced, returned through the heart of the Highlands.

¹ Gibbon's Rome, vol. i. p. 152. Ed. Bohn.

A. D. 210-287. After having taken hostages, and established forts in the territory south of the Tay, he repassed the walls and returned to York, where he shortly after died. His end was embittered by the wild ambition and black passions of his son Caracalla, and also by the failure of his schemes of conquest in Britain; the Caledonians and Mæatæ were in open revolt, and had the life of Severus been prolonged, his next war would have been one of extermination.

The two sons of the deceased emperor were more anxious to get back to Rome than to pursue the ambitious conquests of their father; a peace was hastily arranged, and the Caledonii and Mæatæ were left to themselves. The name Mæatæ is now first mentioned by the historian Dio; who those people were is a matter of question. Father Innes, in his critical essay, a work of no mean authority, evidently takes them for the Britons dwelling between the two walls, 'Midland Britons.' Mr Skene, on the other hand, is of a very different opinion: that the Mæatæ were a nation living close to the northern side of the wall of Antoninus, and that the name is Celtic, *probably* the word for a plain, Maes-Magh. Notwithstanding his convincing argument, the view taken by the older author seems the most natural, and explains the incursions of two different tribes in a much more satisfactory manner. Why should Dio have given two names to people whose appearance and mode of fighting were identically the same, who previously went under the name of Caledonii, and after this time Picti? The territory from Hadrian's wall to some distance to the north of the wall of Antoninus, was debateable land; the tribes to the north and south of the latter would naturally assist each other against the enemy. The most likely supposition is, that it was a new term for the Brigantes, who were now confined between the two walls, and had doubtless received accessions from the tribes further north.¹

Much information had now been obtained respecting Scotland by the Romans; they had come in contact both

¹ Innes' Critical Essay, p. 36-38; ed. 1879. Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 80-88. Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. i. p. 41.

in war and negotiation with the principal tribes, and had explored the greater portion of the country; we naturally look for some real knowledge, something tangible, but the historian of this period, Dio, furnishes very little. 'They have no settled towns or villages, but live in tents a wandering life; they do not cultivate the ground, but subsist on the produce of the chase and the wild fruits of the earth; they do not even take advantage of the fish, at hand in inexhaustible numbers. They fight in chariots drawn by small but swift horses; their arms are a shield, a dagger, and a short spear, with a hollow brazen knob or rattle, which they shake to terrify their enemies. They have a community of wives; the children are reared as the joint offspring of each small community.' The origin of the name Picti, which now supersedes the former designation, is also given; they paint or tattoo their bodies, and fight naked for the purpose of adding terror to their arms by their fierce appearance. It would add much to the mysterious origin of this people had the chronicler told us whether they went about in the same picturesque manner during winter, or when not on the war-path.

The Roman fleet, we have seen, after the conquest of Agricola, circumnavigated the island, and discovered the Orkneys, even sighting the ever-shifting Thule; from the observations made then and subsequently, Ptolemy constructed his geography and map of North Britain, which is wonderfully accurate considering his information. The map has been often published, and apart from the extraordinary error of turning the coast north of the Firth of Clyde east instead of north, is pretty correctly sketched from the Itunæ Æstuarium (the Solway Firth) along the west coast to the northernmost point, including the Ebudæ, and many of the lochs round the coast to the river Vedra (Wear), including the Moray Firth to the estuaries of the Tay and the Forth. The mountain ranges are not traced, but in the east centre of his map is placed the Caledonia Sylvia.

From the death of Severus until A.D. 287, nothing is known of Britain. At that time Carausius, who was commander of the Roman fleet in the channel, rebelled

A. D. 210-237. against the Emperor Maximinian, seized on Britain, and established himself there as an independent monarch. Carausius ruled the island with courage and ability, and defended the frontiers from the incursions of the northern tribes. 'He invited from the continent a great number of skilful artists; and displayed, in a variety of coins that are still extant, his taste and opulence. His fleets rode triumphant in the channel, commanded the mouths of the Seine and the Rhine, ravaged the coasts of the ocean, and diffused beyond the columns of Hercules the terror of his name. Under his command Britain, destined in a future age to obtain the empire of the sea, already assumed its natural and respectable station of a maritime power.'¹

Unfortunately, perhaps, for our country, the first British monarch, after a reign of eight years, was assassinated by his minister Allectus, who assumed the government of the island. He did not possess the talents of Carausius, and enjoyed the fruits of his crime for the short period of two years.

Constantius Chlorus resolved to restore Britain to the empire, and having caused transports to be constructed, his lieutenant passed safely the British fleet, landed on the shores of Kent, and in one decisive battle, in which the usurper was slain, the province was restored to the imperial sway. The Emperor followed in the footsteps of his general, and when he landed on the English shores, he was welcomed by the plaudits of obedient subjects. Constantius, first Cæsar, and latterly, after the abdication of Diocletian, emperor of the West, was a man of eminent military talent, and of the most amiable character; and under his administration, the same prosperity which had distinguished the last two reigns continued. Britain was his favourite residence, and most of his time was spent there; he chastised the tribes who were a standing menace to the northern frontier, and gave peace and law to the provincials. Constantius ended his life, A. D. 306, at York, in the arms of his son Constantine, who, on his decease, was at once saluted Imperator by the army.

The first Christian emperor did not long remain in

¹ Gibbon's Rome, vol. i. p. 430.

Britain ; but there must have been a succession of capable governors, for the next fifty years of history is a blank. From the expedition of Severus to A.D. 360, Britain enjoyed comparative peace and order ; and notwithstanding the woful stories of the martyrs under the reign of Diocletian, at no period of its early history were the inhabitants of the island so prosperous and happy. The commercial resources of the country were developed ; the land was cultivated, and cargoes of grain shipped to the continent. No longer an expensive incumbrance, it was an important source of revenue, and the loss of it under the two usurpers was severely felt.

The Roman dominions at this time comprised four provinces, instead of the original division of Upper and Lower Britain ; but the most useful division to the general reader, and the one which gives the most natural idea of the administration is that given by Innes : ' But the most general division of the Britains in the Roman times was into provincials and extra-provincials. The first were those of the south, who became subject to the Roman empire, were governed by its laws, reduced into provinces, and civilised according to the Roman polity and manners. The extra-provincials were those of the north, who never submitted to the Roman yoke, but preserved their liberty, and continued to live under their own ancient customs, and were therefore called barbarous by the Romans. These were particularly the inhabitants of Caledonia on the north sides of the Firths of Clyde and Forth. There was a third sort of Britains that dwelt between these two, and inhabited the countries betwixt the southern wall in Northumberland and the northern at the friths. These were sometimes at liberty, sometimes subject to the Romans, and other times overrun by the northern inhabitants of Britain, according as the Romans were strong in the island, and as the limits of the empire were advanced to the northern wall or confined to the southern ; and therefore I shall call these countries betwixt the walls the Debateable Lands, and the people Midland Britains.' ¹

¹ Critical Essay, p. 26.

A.D. 287-360.

The inhabitants of our island to the Firths of Forth and Clyde had now been wholly or partially under Roman law and government for nigh 300 years—a very long period in the history of a nation—and we naturally look for some results. The conclusion, as to be seen from their subsequent history, is imperative—that they were unfit or unworthy of civilisation. Cæsar does ample justice to their warlike qualities, and their descendants to this day are never weary of repeating the story. But at this time, to use Mr Burton's words: 'Through the mists which conceal from us the details of events, we can yet see the large fact that the Romanised Britons were a debased and feeble people.'¹ The same author says, 'Races moulded by the influence of others generally are so.' But this simply proves the feebleness of the races so moulded. The Anglo-Saxons in England and Scotland were largely moulded by the Normans, but this did not emasculate their character; the Saxon absorbed the Norman. The Britons, had they not been a feeble race, should have absorbed the Roman, taking all that was worth out of him. Individually, bravery and aptitude for military service were not wanting, for the armies of Rome were largely recruited from the youth of Britain, and the military adventurers who made Britain a stepping-stone to the empire of the west, drew from it their best and bravest troops. But the people, as a whole, were, to use a Scotch word, *thowless*; they could not defend themselves; their energies were confined to piteous wails for help; they had been Romanised in all but courage and self-respect; they were now in readiness to be Teutonised or extirpated. Roman law needs no praise; Roman administration was essentially vicious; a central autocracy in state or church, supported by trained battalions of soldiers and tax-gatherers, lay or clerical, must always enfeeble, and, in the end, demoralise a nation. Imperial Rome civilised, denationalised, and then demoralised the people under her sway. Her successor, Papal Rome, Christianised, denationalised, and demoralised in the same manner, though not to the

¹ Burton's Scotland, vol. i. p. 43.

same extent, for she had hardier races to do with. The Teuton, with his good sword, in the fourth and fifth centuries, shivered the fabric of Rome temporal. He has been hardly so successful in his assault on Rome spiritual. The conflict commenced in the sixteenth century, still continues, but the issue is not doubtful. Latin fraud and Celtic ignorance, miscalled devotion, have had their day. A.D. 360-410.

The Britons, so long accustomed to peace, in A.D. 360 were now rudely disturbed, and were filled with consternation by the invasion of the northern tribes, now known under the distinctive name of Picts. The Roman chronicler states that they consisted of two nations, the Dicaledons and the Vecturions, and that they were accompanied by the Attacotti, a warlike people, and the Scoti, a new nation from Ierne or Ireland. The name of Saxons is also frequently mentioned; they had already made piratical excursions on the coast, and even made settlements pretty far inland; but now their attacks were more widespread and daring. The danger seemed to be greatest from the attacks of the Picts and their allies, for the former had taken possession of the territory between the walls, while the Scoti had conquered part of West Wales. The Emperor Julian, hard pressed for troops to defend the vital parts of the empire, could furnish no effectual assistance, but sent an officer who was enabled to check further encroachments. Unhappily he was but a short time in command before he was recalled on suspicion of treasonable designs, and the barbarians were at once in active hostility. Four years later, A.D. 364, the confederated nations became more daring: the Saxons ravaged the south coast; the Scoti penetrated through the mountains of Wales far into the heart of the country; the extent of the conquests of the Picts and Attacotti in the north was still more alarming. The Emperor Valentinian, thoroughly alive to the imminent danger of Britain, and loth to lose a province so important and invaluable, despatched Theodosius, the elder (father of the emperor), the most able general of his day, with a numerous army of veterans.

Theodosius landed at Richborough, defeated several

A. D. 360-410. parties of the invading Saxons, and marched upon London, which seems to have been occupied or threatened by the marauders. For a short time he made this city his head-quarters, till he received further reinforcements. In two campaigns, the brave and skilful warrior cleared the Roman province of the invaders, drove the Picts into their mountain fastnesses, and restored the fortified lines of defence. He concluded his operations by recovering the territory between the walls, and perpetuated the memory of the deed by naming the province Valentia after his august master. The imperial rule, however, was fast coming to an end; the successful issue of Theodosius' campaigns seems to have had little or no effect; within forty years the Romans finally abandoned the island.

The central authority was weakened both from distance, and the example of Carausius and Allectus setting up an independent monarchy. A succession of governors or prefects seized the reins of power and defied the imperial authority. Had they contented themselves with their insular kingdom, they might have done so with impunity, and established a powerful state. But their ambition prompted them to grasp the empire of the western diocese at the least—Gaul, Spain, and Britain. Maximus, the first of these usurpers, was successful in repelling the Picts and Scots; but with the best and bravest of the youth of Britain he left our shores to find, not a throne, but a grave. After a chequered career on the continent, he was defeated and slain at Aquileia, A. D. 388. Gildas thus pathetically describes the state of the country at this period: 'After this, Britain is left deprived of all her soldiery and armed bands, of her cruel governors, and of the flower of her youth who went with Maximus, but never again returned; and utterly ignorant as she was of war, groaned in amazement for many years under the cruelty of two foreign nations—the Scots from the north-west and the Picts from the north.'¹ The story of the Britons is further told: 'The Britons, impatient at the assaults of the Scots and Picts, their hostilities and dreadful oppressions, send ambas-

¹ Gildas, Bohn's Antiquarian. Lib. p. 305.

sadors to Rome with letters, entreating in piteous terms the assistance of an armed band to protect them, and offering loyal and ready submission to the authority of Rome, if they would only expel the invading foes. A legion is immediately sent, forgetting their past rebellion, and provided sufficiently with arms. When they had crossed over the sea and landed, they came at once to close conflict with their cruel enemies, and slew great numbers of them. All of them were driven behind the borders, and the humiliated natives rescued from the bloody slavery which awaited them.'¹ The wall, probably that of Hadrian, was repaired, and the Romans advised the natives to man it with a proper force. 'The Roman legion had no sooner returned home in joy and triumph than their former foes, like hungry and ravening wolves, rushing with greedy jaws upon the fold which is left without a shepherd, and wafted, both by the strength of oarsmen and the blowing wind, break through the boundaries, and spread slaughter on every side, and, like mowers cutting down the ripe corn, they cut up, tread under foot, and overrun the whole country.'²

Stilicho, the minister of the emperor, unwilling to give up Britain without a struggle, in answer to the piteous complaints of the distressed provincials, in A.D. 406 sent a powerful force of three legions, who speedily cleared the country of the invaders, and to the frontier of the Firths of Forth and Clyde the province was garrisoned by the former complement of Roman troops. The ambition of Constantine, the Roman governor, who required all the available military force of Britain to support his claims to the empire of the West, left the island again defenceless against its fierce invaders. He, like his predecessors, crossed the channel, and after a brilliant career, and being acknowledged emperor of Britain and Gaul, surrendered to the Roman general Constantius, who had cut off any hope of a successful defence of his capital Arles. His confidence in the sacred promise of his conqueror was misplaced. 'The Roman general indeed refused to sully his laurels with the blood of Constantine, but the

¹ Gildas, Bohn's Antiquarian. Lib. p. 305. ² *Ibid.*

A.D. 360-410. abdicated emperor and his son Julian were sent under a strong guard into Italy, and before they reached the palace of Ravenna they met the ministers of death.'¹ The usurpation and its consequence, the withdrawal of the troops, were fatal to the Roman power in Britain; no legionaries ever again trod her shores; the Picts, Scots, and Saxons had their will of the island. 'The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea throws us back on the barbarians, thus two modes of death await us, we are either slain or drowned.'

In A.D. 410 Honorius sent letters to the cities of Britain acknowledging their independence, and telling them they must no longer look to Rome for protection or armed assistance. The empire in Britain was no more.

What stage of civilisation was reached in Britain at this period, when the Roman government ceased, is difficult indeed to say; within a very few years it was lost, and the native Britons were as barbarous as the invading foreigners. One form peculiar to Roman occupation of a country seems to have survived—the municipalities. When the Romans conquered a state, they did it thoroughly; they incorporated it with the parent state; the institutions were similar, but of course subservient to the central authority. The institution of a senate or curia to govern a city dates from the time of the republic, and was continued under the emperors. There were six grades of these incorporations, of which the municipium was the highest, and this distinction was granted to York and Verulam. Whether the senate was chosen by the citizens, or appointed by the governor, is not known,—very likely the former, for a powerful despotism is always anxious to preserve the *forms* of liberty. We do not know the rank possessed by Lundunum or Augusta, but its senate surrendered it to Theodosius, and its importance is proved by the fact of his making it the basis of his operations. But there are many towns in England, two only in Scotland, whose names end with *chester* or *castra*, the Roman *castrum* dim *castellum*, a fortress with a town around it, having a corporation inferior

¹ Gibbon's Rome, vol. iii. p. 463,

in rank to the municipium, but possessing similar privileges, just like our *populous places*, with their commissioners, performing the same duties and elected in the same manner, as the august complement of councillors, bailies and provosts who represent the burghs. These institutions undoubtedly subsisted and formed a centre of government of some kind, and so suited were they to the political genius of the Anglo-Saxon, that he at once adopted them.

But our history is with Britain on the Scotch side of the border; there we find only two names ending in *chester*, one in Roxburgh beside the great north road, and another near Falkirk. The province of Valentia possesses Roman remains, but neither archæology nor history can point out stations likely to have attained the rank of municipalities. Mr Wilson pointedly shows the futility of searching for evidence of civilisation in Scotland during the Roman period. 'To English archæologists the Anglo-Roman period is one of the greatest importance; for the Romans conquered and colonised their country, taught its inhabitants their religion, sepulchral rites, arts and laws, and, after occupying the soil for centuries, left them a totally different people than they had found them.'¹ After illustrating this he proceeds: 'The history of the Scoto-Roman invasion is altogether different from this. It is a mere episode, which might be altogether omitted without very greatly marring the integrity and completeness of the national annals. It was, for the most part, little more than a temporary military occupation of a few fenced stations among hostile tribes.'²

The remains of Roman stations apart from military camps are to be found only in the province of Valentia, chiefly on the southern shores of the Firth of Forth, about the centre of Agricola's wall, and in Eskdale and Annandale, sparingly in other parts.³ Edinburgh was a

¹ Wilson's Archæology of Scotland, p. 363.

² *Ibid.* p. 364.

³ No notice need be taken of the province of Vespasiana, extending from the Spey to the Moray Firth, with Inverness as its Roman capital, nor of Novantium Chersonesus, the Rhinns of Galloway, with the cities there; the work in which this information may be found, 'Richard of Cirencester on the State of Britain,' is now found to be a palpable forgery of the eighteenth century.

A.D. 410.

Roman station, though the remains found are not numerous. Inveresk, on the other hand, was an important town; the remains of villas, with their hypocausti, flue-tiles; pottery, and other traces of Italian luxury, have been found at various times in its neighbourhood. A few miles to the west, along the coast, is the little fishing village of Cramond, which is believed to occupy the site of the principal Roman seaport in North Britain. Camelon near Falkirk, and Birrens in Eskdale, were also colonies of some importance. Candida Casa, mentioned by Bede, may have been a Roman station, or a name given to a town of the Selgovæ. These, and probably a few other localities, seem to be the only places where there had been a population of Romanized Britons and Romans, and we are next to warranted in saying that the population consisted chiefly of the imperial staff, civil and military, with their families and dependents. The remains north of the wall are of the most enduring character, but entirely military,—camps, roads and bridges; no permanent settlement seems to have been attempted.

The remains of Roman sculpture in Scotland are thirty to forty in number, of various degrees of merit. Among them may be noticed two elaborate and nearly complete columns or stones, found apart and at different periods. They commemorate the services of the second legion in the construction of the wall of Antoninus. But the most remarkable and interesting architectural relic of the Roman occupation in Scotland is Arthur's urn or oven, on the banks of the Carron near Falkirk. It is mentioned by Nennius: 'He (the emperor Carausius) built also a round house of polished stones on the banks of the river Carun; he likewise erected a triumphal arch, in which he inscribed his own name in memory of his victory.' Its particulars have been preserved in glowing language by the zeal of our antiquaries. It was a perfect dome of fine hewn stones, no cement being used, twenty-two feet in height by twenty-eight feet in diameter, according to antiquaries of the eighteenth century 'a fac-simile of the

¹ Six Old English Chronicles, p. 393, ed. Bohn.

famous Pantheon of Rome ;' according to Mr Wilson, a 'little sacellum or stone bee-hive. For what purpose it was intended no one can say—temple, mausoleum, or monument simply of the glory of the raiser? Unfortunately the stones of this relic were used for building purposes, but the sacrilegious despoiler, Sir Michael Bruce, has been handed down to the execration of succeeding ages by Sir John Clerk. 'He has pulled it down and made use of all the stones for a mill-dam, and yet without any intention of preserving his fame to posterity, as the destroyer of the temple of Diana had. No other motive had this Gothic knight, but to procure as many stones as he could have purchased in his own quarries for five shillings! . . . We all curse him with bell, book, and candle.'¹

The remains of art and of articles for domestic or personal use are entirely exotic—importations! There are no kilns, as in England, for the manufacture of pottery. What have been found are of foreign manufacture—glass vessels, cooking utensils chiefly of bronze, Samian and other ware, personal ornaments, coins, etc. The Romans seem to have erected for themselves substantial and comfortable dwellings; but there are no remains of the fine tessellated pavements so common in the south of Britain. Whether the hypocausts or stoves found were used for the heating of baths, is doubted by Mr Burton in opposition to the general belief. 'The great difference in climate between Italy and Scotland was a matter that had to be provided for; and certainly a moderate heat, radiating from the floor, would be a not disagreeable way of warming a room, while it would admit of the freshening of the air above to any desired extent.'²

The Romans introduced also their religion; altars and votive slabs were not uncommon. Mr Wilson gives an account, with illustrations, of six altars erected in the neighbourhood of Birrens by the Tungrian cohorts, who formed a part of the first Roman legion which entered Scotland.

¹ Wilson's *Archæology*, p. 371.

² Burton's *Scotland*, vol. i. p. 55; see also note and p. 54.

A. D. 410.
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Nor was medicine unrepresented. At Tranent parish church, in East Lothian, was lately discovered a medicine stamp. 'It was found in a quantity of debris, broken tiles and brick dust, which may not improbably have once formed the residence and laboratory of Lucius Vallatinus, the Roman oculist, whose name the curious relic supplies.'¹ Whether the Christian religion was introduced into Scotland by the Romans, is a topic which will afterwards be more fully treated. There is every reason to believe that previous to the time of Constantine, there were many Christians in the imperial forces, and that centurions, like Cornelius and Hedley Vicars, would not be rare. Men like these would have their influence on the native population with whom they came in contact, and through them the good seed of the word may have been sown. But history shows us that armies carry the vices, not the virtues and religion of a country, and the armies of Christian Rome were certainly as vicious as those of Pagan Rome. Conversion of the midland Britons and Picts would be little in their thoughts. Besides, the *principles* of Christianity, particularly in its early stage, were diametrically opposed to the *practice* of warlike missionaries, even if they were to be found in the ranks of the legionaries who occupied Scotland. Warlike Christianity was still undeveloped. The missions of St Ninian, St Kentigern, and others, rest on so shallow a foundation, and their results were so transient, that we are forced to the conclusion that all the Christianity of Scotland sprang from St Columba and the family at Iona.

A belief in the civilisation which is claimed for the Britons of Strathclyde, and for the poetical genius which animated Taliessen and the other Cymric poets who are said to have flourished in the sixth century, requires a faith which is possessed only by Celtic enthusiasts.

¹ Wilson's Archæology, p. 400.

CHAPTER II.

LEGENDARY HISTORY.

Legendary History—Origin of Races from Philology—Bede—Nennius—Geoffrey of Monmouth—Origin of the Britons—Origin of the Picts from Philology—Legendary Origin of the Scots—Accounts of Bede—Chronicles of Picts and Scots, Fordun, etc.

WE have, following the footsteps of modern writers who have treated on Scottish history, commenced our sketch with the account of the Roman conquest and occupation.

The older annalists and historians took a different method. Geoffrey of Monmouth begins his history at the close of the Trojan war ; Fordun with the three sons of Noah ; Wintoun goes back to the first progenitor of our race. Unfortunately, at the present day, we have not the faith in their histories which previous generations had, and consign all their genealogies, and most of their statements, to the limbo of myth and legend.

Yet anyone who wishes to know the history of his country cannot altogether ignore these, if it were but to know what our ancestors believed. Besides, there is always a basis of truth in myth and legend, and, in default of anything else, they have proved not altogether untrustworthy guides to the ethnology and movements of early races. For both reasons, in subsequent pages we have given what may appear trivial and silly narratives, but which are not so when taken in their true sense, and estimated at their real value.

Previous to the Celtic wave which spread over Europe from the east, and reached the British isles, archæological research has shown us that the population was of the Iberian or Basque type ; we need not say that it was of a lower type in physical formation and in civilisation to the Celtic. The people were ignorant of the use of metals, and their remains found in the long burrows and chambered galleries, have been referred to the neolithic age.

At the period of the Roman invasion this race, or races, were far from extinct. The community of wives referred to as subsisting among the Britons and Caledonians may have been a remnant of a former state of society. It is neither Celtic nor Teutonic, but indicates a polyandry known among less advanced peoples. The settlers may have fallen into a custom which did not long continue; its survival among the Picts may help to explain the peculiar succession in that monarchy, which was vested in the mother. A legend accounting for the custom is given by Bede, and others will be given subsequently, showing that polyandry had then not even historical existence, and another reason had to be found for the peculiarity.

Tacitus, in his account of the war with the Silures in the southwest of Britain, describes them as resembling the Iberians. The rest of the inhabitants of the island, with the exception of the Caledonians, who seemed to him a different people, he states to be of a similar race to the Gauls.

It would, however, be unsafe from this to conclude that all the Britons (with the exception of the Caledonii) at this time were Celtic. As early as the time of Julius Cæsar, there was a Belgic Gaul, whose inhabitants were Teutonic, and it is not at all improbable, that these had crossed the channel, and that there would be already in the island a mixture of *the* race which was to absorb the others.

Yet there can be no doubt that the island of Britain, to the estuaries of the Forth and Clyde, for some time previous to the Roman invasion, and for centuries after, was inhabited by a Celtic-speaking population—that they were the great majority, and the ruling class.

The origin of nations can be traced in several ways, —by mythology, legend, history, or by the philosophical deductions of philology.

The Celts of the British isles, Cymri and Gadheli, have no mythology, while their legends and traditions constitute their history, and are mostly the fervid imaginations of the age in which they were composed. None

of them approach to contemporary history. The classical historians on whom dependence can be placed, tell us very little of the nations whom they term barbarians. Their languages had no interest to the Greek and Roman. When their deities are mentioned, it is often under the names of those of the narrator; peculiarities in appearance, manners, and customs are but sparingly noticed by historians other than Herodotus and Tacitus.

The results of the study of language give us the only satisfactory though meagre history of the migration of peoples. Professor Max Müller thus gives shortly, but incisively, the history and destiny of the Celtic race: 'The Celts seem to have been the first of the Aryans to arrive in Europe; but the pressure of subsequent migrations, particularly Teutonic tribes, has driven them towards the westernmost parts, and latterly from Ireland across the Atlantic. At present the only remaining dialects are the Cymric and the Gadhelic. The Cymric comprises the *Welsh*, the *Cornish* lately extinct, and the *Armorican* of Brittany. The Gadhelic comprises the *Irish*, the *Gaelic* of the west coast of Scotland, and the dialect of the *Isle of Man*. Although these dialects are still spoken, the Celts themselves can no longer be considered an independent nation, like the Germans or Slavs. In former times, however, they not only enjoyed political autonomy, but asserted it successfully against Germans and Romans. Gaul, Belgium, and Britain were Celtic dominions, and the north of Italy was chiefly inhabited by them. At the time of Herodotus we find Celts in Spain; and Switzerland, the Tyrol, and the country south of the Danube, have once been the seats of Celtic tribes. But after repeated inroads into the regions of civilisation, familiarising Latin and Greek authors with the names of their kings, they disappear from the east of Europe. Brennus is supposed to mean king, the Welsh *brennin*. A Brennus conquered Rome (B.C. 390); another Brennus threatened Delphi (B.C. 280), and about the same time a Celtic colony settled in Asia, founded Galatia, where the language spoken at the time of St Jerome was still that of the Gauls. Celtic words

may be found in German, Slavonic, and even in Latin, but only as foreign terms, and their amount is much smaller than commonly supposed. A far larger number of Latin and German words have found their way into the modern Celtic dialects, and these have frequently been mistaken by Celtic enthusiasts for original words, from which German and Latin might, in their turn, be derived.¹ The broad historical fact disclosed is, that Europe was colonised by a succession of races from the storehouse of nations in Central Asia, the language of all the Indo-Germanic.

The Celtic, one of the families of this language, was a spoken and recognised language in ancient times; but whether it attained to the rank of a written one, previous to the tenth century, is very uncertain. The original writings have been lost, if they ever existed, and the manuscripts are acknowledged to be transcripts; whether they are true copies is a matter of *faith*.²

Bede's statement in his time is: 'This island at present, following the number of the books in which the divine law was written, contains five nations—the English, Britons, Scots, Picts, and Latins—each in its own particular dialect cultivating the sublime study of divine truth. The Latin tongue is, by the study of the scriptures, become common to all the rest.'³

The latter portion seems to show that the Bible was only known in Latin, and from the fact of all the early writings being in that language, that it was the sole medium of literature.

The father of English history gives probably the best statement of the ancient traditions respecting the origin of the different races in the island. Subsequent writers, with livelier fancy, have but amplified these. The author of the Saxon Chronicle borrows from Bede, in almost his own words. The origin of the Britons is given very shortly. 'At first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and

¹ Science of Language, vol. i. pp. 185-6.

² See Burton's Scotland, p. 172, note.

³ Bede's Ecc. History, p. 6, ed. Bohn.

who, coming over into Britain, as is reported, from Armórica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof.'¹

The first account of the origin of the Britons given by Nennius is substantially that of Geoffrey's; but the second, which professes to be 'another account learned from the ancient books of our ancestors,' is neither better nor worse than the ethnological theories which have obtained credence until within a very short period previous to the present day. The historian says, after the deluge Japhet extended his borders into Europe; rather inconsistently he states that Alanus, the eighteenth in descent from Japhet, was the first man that dwelt in Europe; he had three sons; from the oldest of these, Hisicion, sprang four sons—Francus, Romanus, Alamanus, and Brutus—the eponymi of the Franks, the Latins, the Germans, and the Britons. In the same manner the other tribes in Europe known to the historian are traced to the remaining sons of Alanus, Armenon and Neugio.²

But the history which, from its first appearance in the twelfth century until near the close of the eighteenth, was reckoned the standard history of the Britons, was that of Geoffrey of Monmouth. The writer who, in A.D. 1252, was raised to the bishopric of St Asaph, professes to give a translation of a history drawn from native sources. Though its historical value is gone, it has furnished materials from which our great vernacular poets have constructed their noblest works of fiction and romance.

The story is the same as that of other chroniclers—that the Britons owed their origin to the distinguished hero of the Trojan war, the pious Æneas. He, as is well known, after having escaped from the wiles of the artful, but tender-hearted Dido, landed in Italy, where he founded a more illustrious kingdom than that of his sire. He was, like most of the heroes in Celtic story—fortunate in his marriage, for he obtained the hand of Lavinia, the daughter of Latinus, the king of Italy. Æneas was succeeded by his son Ascanius, who built

¹ Bede's Ecc. History, p. 6.

² Six Old English Chronicles, p. 391.

the city of Alba on the Tiber, and begat a son named Sylvius, who, in pursuit of a private amour, took to wife a niece of Lavinia's. The damsel conceived, and according to ancient custom, Ascanius consulted his magicians as to the sex and fortunes of the unborn child. The wise men knew their business, and were at no loss for an answer, like their brethren of Egypt and Chaldea; they predicted that the child should be a boy, should kill his father and mother, and after travelling over many countries in banishment, should at last arrive at the highest pitch of glory—all of which, in due time, came to pass, and is vouched for in classic story.

The mother died in child-birth, and the boy, who was named Brutus, when fifteen years of age was so unfortunate as accidentally to kill his father while they were hunting; the first part of the prediction was fulfilled; the rest was to follow. Brutus was banished from Italy by his grandfather, and sought a refuge in Greece, where he found cousins descended from Helenus, the brother of his great-grandfather. He was well received by his friends, and his military talents gained him the command of their forces in a struggle which they determined to make against the Greeks, who had made them captive, and still held them in subjection.

Brutus was of course victorious; he defeated the forces of the Greeks, and took their King Pandarus prisoner. Instead of taking the possessions of his captive, the young hero took his daughter Ignoge, and with his companions left Greece in three hundred and twenty-four ships, furnished by the father of the bride, which he plentifully supplied with all kinds of provisions, and gave in addition a present of gold and silver to each man, according to his condition.

The fleet set sail, and after various stirring adventures touched at a desert island, where, in a dream, the goddess Diana appeared to Brutus, and in poetical language told him to seek an island beyond the Gallic bounds, surrounded by the western sea, and there found a new Troy.

The adventurers set sail, and reached the mouth of the Loire, and in spite of the dream of their leader, at-

tempted a settlement in Gaul. They ravaged Aquitainia; but, notwithstanding prodigies of valour (one young hero killing six hundred men with his own hand) the Trojans had to retire to their ships. It was not on account of a defeat sustained that this movement was made; on the contrary a great victory had been gained; but the founder of the British empire was a prudent man, and had not the rashness and daring common to heroes. 'Brutus though in joy for this great success was yet afflicted to observe the number of his forces daily lessened, while that of the enemy increased more and more. He was in suspense for some time, whether he had better continue the war or not, but at last he determined to return to his ships while the greater part of his followers was yet safe and hitherto victorious, and to go in quest of the island which the goddess had told him of. So, without further delay, with the consent of his company, he repaired to the fleet, and loading it with the riches and spoils he had taken, set sail with a fair wind towards the promised island, and arrived on the coast of Totness.'¹

The island was then called Albion, and was inhabited by none but a few giants, who were quickly despatched, except in Cornwall, where they survived to a comparatively late date. Brutus called the country after his own name, and the language, which was then Trojan or rough Greek, was called British.

After surveying different parts of his kingdom, the monarch fixed on the banks of the Thames as a site for his capital, and built there a city which he called New Troy, corrupted into Trinovantum, and afterwards known as Kaer Lud, the city of Lud—London.

Brutus reigned, after his arrival, twenty-four years, leaving the island to his three sons, Locrin, Albanact, and Kamber. Locrin possessed the middle part, called afterwards from his name Loegria; Kamber had Wales, named after him Kambria; while Albanact, the younger brother, possessed the country he called Albania, now Scotland.²

We spare our readers more of this fabulous narrative,

¹ Six Old English Chronicles, p. 106. ² *Ibid.* p. 109.

which for so long was considered genuine history. The monarchs of the race from Lear and Cordelia to Arthur and Guinevere belong to the region of romance, historically dead but a few years ago, now resuscitated to live for ever in the pages of the 'Idylls of the King.' The statement relating to the division of the island of Britain is evidently a crude attempt to trace three distinct peoples from the one common ancestor. This derivation of Alban from the son of Brutus is also given in the 'Metrical Prophecy,' a composition of the twelfth century,

'Ex Albanacto, trinepote potentis Enee
Dicitur Albania,'¹

in almost the same words as Geoffrey's, in the Welsh 'Bruts' of the same date, and in the 'Description of Scotland,' also of a similar date. 'Legimus in historiis et in cronicis antiquorum Britonum, et in gestis et annalibus antiquis Scottorum et Pictorum, quod illa regio, que nunc corrupte vocatur Scotia, Antiquitus appellabatur Albania ab Albanecto juniore filio Bruti primi regis Britannorum majoris Britannie.'²

Having thus indicated the origin of the Cymri or Britons who at one time formed the greater part of the population of England and Lowland Scotland, and glanced at their legendary history, the next part of our subject is naturally the origin and race of the Caledonii or Picts. It is unnecessary to say that the quasi-historical accounts of the chroniclers, previously quoted, give us no clue to this, it merely shows an attempt to explain why the term Albania or Alban was given to Pictland, or Scotland.

In entering on the subject it is necessary to bear in mind that the Cymri, the Picts and the Scots were not the only peoples in Scotland after the Romans denuded Britain of troops, and that by the time we find the kingdoms of Pictland, Dalriada, and Strathclyde or Cumbria, in existence, the Teutonic settlers known as such formed no unimportant part.

It is not at all improbable that colonists of this race settled at much earlier periods than those mentioned in

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 117.

² *Ibid.* p. 135.

the Saxon Chronicle and other records. At the time of Julius Cæsar, and even earlier, swarms of Germans were pressing westward, and had penetrated into Gaul. When, the tribes known under the name of Saxons settled in lower Germany is unknown, but the traditions of the Scandinavians point to a fixed time, B.C. 40, when the historical or legendary Odin led his people from the Caucasus and founded the Scandinavian empire of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. From the earliest known records, historical and mythical, the Saxons and Scandinavians were bold and reckless seamen, possessed of large vessels, in which they fearlessly braved the wild seas of the German Ocean, and navigated the recesses of the Baltic and the fiords of Norway. The strong probability is, that they were no sooner settled in their new homes than they set forth in search of others, and that many would find their way across to the island of Britain. The conclusion of Pinkerton, that the great nation in the north, the Brigantes, was Teutonic, may not be far from the truth.

In any case, by the year A.D. 600, a heathen population, speaking a Teutonic language, was in possession of the greater portion of Lowland Scotland, and also the level portion north of the Firth of Forth. The most ardent Gadhelic scholar can give no proof when that language was spoken in these districts.

Whether this Teutonic element met with a kindred race in the Picts, or slowly absorbed an alien one so entirely as to show no trace in language, person, or character, it is now for us to inquire.

To those who have even looked into the discussions on the subject, the line will at once start to their lips,

‘Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.’

Yet the subject is important; it involves the question, whether Scotchmen are of the race which has produced poets, historians, and philosophers worthy to rank with the illustrious dead of Greece and Rome, and whose language and literature are world-wide? Or are they of that race which for centuries has not been able to pre-

serve an independent existence, whose scanty literature is unintelligible to any one but a Celt, and even then useless, whose language is a sickly plant, which droops and dies away from its own soil? Are Scotchmen of the Gadhelic branch of the Celtic family, which to the present day has defied civilization, and has been ever famed for its lawlessness and barbarity? It is a matter of little importance indeed in a history of the English people, the investigation of the origin and race of the inhabitants of England previous to the Anglo-Saxon conquest. The district of Britain termed England, exclusive of Wales, was not only conquered by the Teutonic tribes who invaded it, but the original population was either massacred, made serfs of, or driven into the mountain fastnesses, where to this day it has preserved its nationality. No one has ever attempted to impose the name, the laws, the literature, the language, the dress of the subject race on the English. For a short period Celtic Christianity found a home in the northern portion of the country; the home was not congenial, and was soon abandoned. With Scotland it is altogether different, the very name suggests an untruth, it is not the land of the Scots, as England is the land of the Angles. The Scots were Celts, their country was Ireland, they spoke the language of their country, the Gadhelic; for some time they were a vassal state to the parent one. The Christianity in its character and organisation was peculiarly Celtic, and after the enthusiasm of its first teachers had died out, we shall endeavour to show, was inimical to church and state. It successfully, from the seventh to the eleventh century, smothered alike civilization and piety. 'Tribal quarrels and ecclesiastical controversies became inextricably confounded, and the clergy, robbed of all spiritual influence, contributed no element save that of disorder to the state.'¹ The district now called Scotland, with the exception, as in England, of the mountain fastnesses, is inhabited by a Teutonic people, speaking the tongue and displaying all the characteristics, mentally and bodily, of the race. The civilization and literature are peculiarly

¹ Green's Short History of the English People, p. 28.

that of the Teuton, the religion is of the same advanced type. The sacredness of the marriage tie and of the family relationship, the proud independence of the individual, are as characteristic of the misnamed Scotchman as they are of the German portrayed by the pen of Tacitus. Scotland's hero king was a Norman knight, her best king an accomplished Anglo-Saxon scholar. On the other hand, till within a few generations the language and person of the race who imposed the name of Scots, were regarded with mingled fear and contempt. The same race was the chief source from which the supporters of arbitrary power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries drew their supplies of men, who were ignorant enough to support the faithless race of tyrants who traded on the name of loyalty and trampled on liberty.

Nothing that a Scotsman can be proud of is Celtic: a pseudo-halo of glory has been thrown over the Highlanders since the great Chatham turned them from caterans into soldiers. But the style of warfare of the Highland regiments is not that of their ancestors. The dogged determination, which more than the fierce onslaught, has gained them their well-won laurels, was not *in* them till they became English soldiers, though disguised in a Celtic garb. Besides, it is a question whether, except at the first formation of these regiments, one-fifth part of the men composing them were Gaels, or ever spoke a word of Gaelic.

Before proceeding further, it may be as well to say that the names Pictland and Picts are arbitrary terms, given first by Roman authors and by later chroniclers. Albion is the usual name given to the kingdom whose territory varied in extent, till the present boundaries of England and Scotland were settled. The people known to the Romans as Picts, comprised two, perhaps three, principal tribes—the Decaledones, the Vecturiones, and the Mæatæ—*i.e.*, those north of the Month, those south of this boundary to the northern wall, and those adjacent to the wall, and extending to the district known as Manann, and further south to the confines of Northumbria. The term Picts simply means people who paint

or tattoo their bodies, and the term Cruithnigh applied to the Picts of Ireland, is said by Celtic scholars to mean the same thing, the eponymus of the race of the first king is Cruithne or Cruithnechan.

This king is said to have come across from Ireland and conquered the country—

‘ The Cruithnigh took it afterwards
After coming from the plain of Erin
Seventy noble kings of them
Possessed the Cruithnian plain.’¹

This simply appears to mean a tradition of a Celtic migration from Ireland, and accounts for a Gaelic-speaking people other than the Scots in Dalriada; every chronicle or poem is Scoto-Irish, its object (unintentionally, perhaps) to exalt the Gael.

Neither tradition or philology, we think, can successfully impugn the statement, that in historic times the people in Scotland who speak a Teutonic language now spoke it then; it was not evolved from a mixture of Cymric, Gadhelic, and Anglo-Saxon. Gaelic stubbornly resists Lowland Scotch at the present, preferring a mincing English, and is not likely that it was more yielding in those early days. That there was a Celtic or Gadhelic population in what is termed the country of the Picts is, we may say, certain. It also possessed at this period a higher civilisation of a kind to be noted afterwards, and thus became a power in church and state. So far did this extend, that a Dalriadic Scot was raised to the throne, a rather uncommon circumstance, for the Teutons were more in the habit of giving rulers to the Celts than accepting them. But after all it need not surprise us. Kingship is an institution which transcends all ordinary ideas; a connection by marriage, or a do no better, has been often the passport to a crown. The history of the United Kingdom has shown us that the physical, mental, and moral qualifications of a monarch are secondary considerations. The Gadhelic language on and after the accession of Kenneth MacAlpine would be the language of the court. If the nation possessed laws or literature

¹ Duan Albanach, Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 58.

in Gadhelic, both have been lost—the solitary authentic document remaining, ‘The Pictish Chronicle,’ is written in Latin. Another, however, written in Gadhelic, claims authenticity and an early date—‘The Duan Albanach.’ An eminent Celtic scholar states that it is ‘said to have been sung by the royal seanachaidh or genealogist at the coronation of Malcolm Ceanmor in 1057, and that its historical statements have much to entitle them to respect.’¹ A more eminent Celtic scholar is of opinion ‘that it is the work of Gillacæmhin, the Irish translator of Nennius.’² It may have been recited in the interesting manner stated, but it was not the composition of Malcolm’s high officer of state. It contains the Irish form of the traditions of Alban. The philological argument as to the race of the Picts is built on nothing, as there are no remains of the dialect from which Lowland Scots was evolved (five contested words indeed are supposed to survive, of really no value in an investigation). The proof lies entirely in the names of places, mountains, rivers, etc. That these prove a Cymric origin was held by Camden, George Chalmers, and Innes. Pinkerton, victoriously against all comers, proves the names to be Teutonic, but candidly admits the problem insoluble. Burton inclines to this opinion, but humourously declines to enter into the controversy. Mr Skene, Professor Rhys, and we suppose all Celtic scholars, prove as trenchantly, but more courteously than Pinkerton, that the Picts were Gadheli. In opposition to this latter view we may place the arguments of Dr Jamieson in his introduction to his Scottish Dictionary. Any one who values Lowland Scotch, and the literature which it enshrines, will be very loth to believe it a dialect produced by the intercourse of Angles and Saxons with Gaels, at a comparatively late period in history. It is next to incredible to suppose that the Anglo-Saxon and Norman settlers who accompanied the gentle Queen Margaret, in the course of a few years, introduced and spread a language in a Celtic-speaking population, when

¹ M’Lauchlan’s *Early Scottish Church*, p. 141.

² *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, preface, p. xxxvii.

we consider that up to this day a similar introduction has successfully been resisted. 'Can it be supposed, then, without directly contradicting universal experience, that a few Saxons, who were not conquerors but refugees, could give language to the nation that afforded them protection? Has any change similar to this, taken place among the Welsh, who are viewed as the same people with the Picts, notwithstanding their intercourse with the English, during several centuries, since the cessation of national hostilities? Have the Celts of Ireland renounced their language, in compliment to the English of the *Pale*, as they have been called, who, in proportion, were certainly far more numerous than the Saxons, belonging to the court of Canmore? Few nations have been more tenacious of the customs and language of their ancestors than the Celtic inhabitants of Scotland. We know how little progress has been made for more than half a century past, in diffusing the English tongue through the Highlands; although not only the arm of power has been employed to dissolve the feudal attachments, but the aid of learning and religion has been called in. The young are indeed taught to read English, but often they read without understanding, and still prefer speaking Gaelic. Had the Saxon found its way into Scotland in the manner supposed, it would necessarily have been superinduced on the Gaelic. This has always been the case when one language prevailed over another; unless the people, who spoke the original language, were either completely or nearly exterminated. Thus was the Norman gradually incorporated with the Saxon, as the Frankish had been with the Latinized Celtic of France. But the number of Gaelic words to be found in what is called the Broad Scots, bears a very small proportion to the body of the language.'

But in addition, Lowland Scotch is Teutonic, but is not English. It certainly shares with its kinsman many identical words, but these have been gained by centuries of intercourse, just as many purely Scotch words have been naturalised in England: the language is a dialect of the Scandinavian branch of the Teutonic family.

¹ Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary, dissertation, p. 21.

On the supposition that the Picts spoke a Scandinavian dialect, the language spoken in the south of Scotland is at once satisfactorily accounted for. It cannot be denied, that previous to the time of Ida, the people called Picts made successful forays into England even, and settled as far south as Berwick. What more natural than that two branches of the Teutonic class—the Scandinavian and the low German—should coalesce and form a language, which to this day preserves a marked resemblance, nay, affinity to its parents, eschewing carefully all Celtic words, Cymric and Gadhelic alike?

The same may be said of the Lowlands to the north of the Forth. Danes and Norwegians, along with Angles and Saxons, found a home there. They met with a kindred race and language, and a similar result followed. By way of contrast to this, where the Danes and Norwegians conquered and formed a kingdom in the Western Isles, they found a Gaelic-speaking people, and like their kinsmen, the Normans in France and England, adopted the language of their subjects.

The whole of Dr Jamieson's elaborate proof may not be satisfactory, but his second argument seems based on the soundest principles of analogy, viz., 'that the northern parts of Scotland were immediately peopled from the north of Europe by a Gothic (Teutonic) race, otherwise no satisfactory account can be given of the introduction of the vulgar language.'¹ Further discussion would be fruitless, and though Mr Skene says² that Burton's History of the early period of Scottish History possesses neither completeness nor accuracy, yet most people will think that the notice in his work on the great Pictish controversy is both piquant and philosophical.³

There remains now to give the legendary or historical account of the origin of the Picts, and in passing we may say that it favours the view we have taken. So accomplished an advocate of the Celtic (Gadhelic) origin as Mr Skene, says: 'The argument for the Pictish being a

¹ Jamieson's Dictionary, vol. i. p. 20.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 21.

³ Burton's Scotland, vol. i. pp. 188-201.

Teutonic language is mainly historic, and is at first sight very plausible.'

To call any of the chronicles history is absurd : there is no history till the time of Adamnan and Bede ; even the statements of events previous to the time of King Brude are simply a true account of current traditions.

Bede's short but succinct statement contains probably all that is really known, but as every Scotchman is bound to know the origin of the people whose name he bears, still more should he know—something of the people whose name he *should* bear. Whatever historical value these chronicles have, they certainly show that a kingdom or confederacy, presided over by hereditary rulers, existed from some time previous to the Christian era, until the ninth century. That it was known as the kingdom of the Picts, and embraced the whole of Scotland north of the Forth to the Orkneys, with the exception of Argyleshire and the adjacent isles, after this district had been colonised by the Dalriadic Scots.¹ There is also shown that a kindred people had settled in the north of Ireland, with whom they had a close connection.

The ancestry is quite equal to the Scotch, as Innes shows : 'For those Irish authors who assert the antiquity of their own country and monarchy in the Milesian line, maintain also that of the Pictish, the one and the other being equally attested, as they assure us, by all those ancient books on which the credit of their own remote antiquities is grounded, *Psaltair Cashell*, etc., all which agree, according to the most learned of their modern writers, that the Pictish monarchy in North Britain began at the time of their King Herimon, son to Milesius, whom they place in the eleventh or twelfth, and some of them in the thirteenth century before the birth of Christ, and that the Picts had seventy kings of their own nation from Cathluan (so the Irish call the first king of the Picts) to Constantine, who reigned about the end of the eighth age, about whose time it is probable the Irish received this account of the Pictish monarchy whilst it

¹ In later years a large portion of Lowland Scotland was added.

subsisted yet in splendour.¹ The Pictish chronicle derives Picts and Scots alike from Albania in Asia, and after recounting sundry wanderings of the race says:— ‘Cruithne, the son of Cinge, the father of the Picts, inhabiting this island, reigned one hundred years.’² He left seven sons with Celtic names; five of them Mr Skene identifies as names of provinces in the country; the list is continued with apparently no interregnum to the accession of Kenneth MacAlpin, but it is simply a chronicle; no events are narrated. The eponymus of the race is Cruithne, who acquires the Orkneys, and from these takes possession of the northern part of Britain, and divides the land into seven portions, which he gives to his sons; from thence some of them went to France, and founded a city which they named Pictavia (Poitiers); driven from their settlement they sailed for Erin, but on landing were inhospitably sent to rejoin their brethren in Alban.³

Another tradition is, that the Cruithneach came from the land of Thraeia. Six brothers of them came first; they passed across the Roman territory into France, and built a city there, viz. Pictavia, *a pictis*, from their arms. On the death of the sixth brother they put to sea, and took possession of a part of Ireland. By assistance given to the King of Leinster, the Picts, under ‘Gub and his son Cathluan, acquired great power in Erin, until Herimon drove them out, and gave them wives of the men who had been drowned along with Donn.’⁴

Cathluan, as in all the traditions, sailed and colonised Scotland, but in consideration of getting the wives (the number varies from twelve to three hundred), ‘Cruithnechan swore by heaven and by earth, and the sun and the moon, by the dew and the elements, by the sea and the land, that the regal succession among them for ever should be on the mother’s side.’⁵

This peculiarity in the Pictish succession is accounted for in other traditions; in the following the Irish ladies get the credit of it—

¹ Innes’ Essay, p. 73.

² Chronicle of the Picts and Scots, p. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 30, 31.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 23-25.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 45.

‘ Three hundred women were given
To them, they were agreeable,
But they were most cunning
Each woman with her brother.

‘ There were oaths imposed on them
By the stars, by the earth,
That from the nobility of the mother
Should always be the right to the sovereignty.’¹

We give in conclusion Bede’s account, which probably embraces all that was really known of the legendary origin of the nation.

‘ When they (the Britons), beginning at the south, had made themselves masters of the greatest part of the island, it happened that the nation of the Picts from Scythia, as is reported, putting to sea in a few long ships, were driven by the winds beyond the shores of Britain, and arrived on the northern coasts of Ireland, where finding the nation of the Scots, they begged to be allowed to settle among them, but could not succeed in obtaining their request. . . . The Picts, as has been said, arriving in this island by sea, desired to have a place granted them in which they might settle. The Scots answered that the island could not contain them both, “but we can give you good advice,” said they, “what to do;” we know there is another island, not far from ours to the eastward, which we often see at a distance when the days are clear. If you will go thither you will obtain settlements; or, if they should oppose you, you shall have our assistance. The Picts accordingly sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts thereof, for the Britons were possessed of the southern. Now the Picts had no wives, and asked them of the Scots, who would not consent to grant them upon any other terms than that when any difficulty should arise, they should choose a king from the female royal race rather than from the male; which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day.’²

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, pp. 39, 40.

² Bede’s Eccl. History, p. 6.

CHAPTER III.

ORIGIN OF THE TERM SCOT.

Origin of the term Scot ; not mentioned earlier than A.D. 360 ; originally applied to Inhabitants of Ireland, and Colonists from there—Scots Celts not Teutons—Origin and History of the Scots—Buchanan's Remarks—Fordun's Account—Irish Account—Historical Value of these Accounts—Early Condition of Ireland—Political Organisation of Ireland—Carried to Scotland—Colony of Dalriada in Scotland—Civilisation of the Scots—Danish Invasions—Disastrous Consequences—Civilisation of the Scots Christian—Reflections on its Character.

'MANY etymologies have been given of the word *Scot*. All the more ancient writers concur in representing it as the same with Scyth or Scythian, an opinion which prevailed to the present century. Of the late, Dr M'Pherson supposes Scuit or Scot to signify a *small body* of men ; Mr Whitaker, *wanderers* or refugees. Others more plausibly derive it from *Coit*, a wood, or from *Schut*, a boat or small vessel, as Ireland abounded with woods, and the Scots attacked Britain in such vessels. Others from *Scattun*, to shoot.'¹ The patriotic and legendary etymology is that the name is derived from *Scota*, the daughter of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, the wife of Milesius, King of Spain, the founder and ancestor of the nation who conquered Ireland and established a dynasty whose rule expired only at the period of the English conquest. Mr Burton says, 'All that can be said of the term Scot or Scotus is, that the Roman writers fell upon it in some way, and it became their name for the inhabitants of Ireland, and the colonies which had migrated from Ireland to Scotland. Neither the word itself, nor anything from which it has been obviously Latinised, is found in the old Celtic writers about Ireland.'² The name Scot

¹ Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. ii. p. 44.

² Burton's Scotland, vol. i. p. 203.

is not mentioned in the writings of any author earlier than Ammianus Marcellinus, A.D. 360. They are described as a fierce and warlike people, who, proceeding from Ireland in concert with the Picts, or on their own account, made incursions into the Roman province of Britain.

The name of Scotia, for centuries after, given to Ireland, was not then applied, nor were the inhabitants, previous to this time, known by the name of Scots. All ancient authors who notice Ireland—Cæsar, Diodorus, Strabo, Ptolemy, and Tacitus—call its people *Hyberni*, and the island Hybernia, Ierne, or Britannia Minor.

This points to the conclusion that the race called Scoti were a late immigration, certainly not previous to the Christian era.

Whether the race was Celtic or Teutonic has been a matter of dispute. If the term Scot could be proved to be derived from Scythia, no further argument would be needed, for at the period when the term came into use Scythia meant Scandinavia. Pinkerton takes this view of the origin of the Scots, and further attempts to prove the race Teutonic by a statement which, to say the least, is questionable: 'The Celts of Gaul and of Britain were easily subdued by the Romans, and gave them no further disturbance. The Scots of Ireland were ever making incursions into the Roman provinces, a conduct not all according with the Celtic character.'¹ This, we need not say, is not a fair reading of history; Mr Pinkerton must have forgot the sack of Rome and the Galatian colony.

But there are two arguments against the Teutonic, and in favour of the Celtic, origin of the Scots.

First, that the traditions and legends of both Irish and Scottish writers represent the Scoti as coming from Spain and landing in the south of Ireland, as Celts speaking the Gadhelic language, the same as the people they conquered.

Second, that the Scots of Ireland and Scotland have always spoken, and have handed down to posterity, a

¹ Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. ii. p. 45.

purely Celtic language and literature, in this, as in their personal appearance and manners, in marked contrast to the Teutonic inhabitants of Great Britain. The parallel of the Normans losing their language and religion in France is not applicable here. When Rollo and his followers gained a kingdom there, the Celtic element was nigh to absorbed in the Latin ; the Romaic language, now known as the French, was in course of formation ; the Normans adopted the language and religion of their vassals, but took none of their habits and customs. They struck out a new course, utterly un-Celtic, in literature, architecture, war, and politics.

The Scots, on the other hand, from the time that we first hear of them to the present day, display all that is Celtic in manners, customs, language, and literature. If they are of Teutonic descent they have never shown the distinguishing characteristics of that race.

The history of the Scots can, then, only commence at A.D. 360, and all previous to this (and indeed most of it for many centuries later) can only be treated as fables existing in the imagination of the compilers. But the Scots of Ireland and Scotland stand alone among all races in their early literature ; it is not only different, but different in kind. There is no blending of myth and legend, no admixture of gods and men, no melting, by insensible degrees, of the hero into the demi-god ; their golden age is of the earth, earthy ; their contests are those of savage chiefs at the head of savage kerne. The powers of nature are not individualised, and legends, which in their origin were but the vivid portrayal of natural phenomena, made to assume the form of poetical narrative. It is the strongest proof of the late origin of these fabulous histories that, to a certain extent, they are but travesties of the Biblical narratives ; that the persons who composed them were ignorant of all but the monkish literature of the dark ages, and reckoned this the limit of human knowledge.

The absence of all mythology and mythological tales in Gadhelic literature, as distinctly proves, that the Irish previous to the introduction of Christianity, were in the

lowest stage of religious culture, the absence of all nature myths is in striking contrast to all other races, the Indian, the Persian, the Phœnician, the Greek, the Teutonic. It is quite a sufficient answer to the theories proposed by Irish historians, of early intercourse with the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, that Gadhelic literature is absolutely destitute of myth. It may be said that Christianity destroyed all that was pagan, but this is utterly against historical fact; the new religion, after its first fervour was spent, readily adopted much of the mythology it came in contact with; even Protestant literature carefully gathers up and uses for sacred purposes, the nature myths of a bygone faith. Baal and Herakles, Zeus and Apollon, Odin and Baldur, are of the race of the immortals.

Two accounts are given of the origin of the Scot: one from the Scotch, the other from the Irish side; they both agree in giving a high antiquity to the settlement in Ireland, but differ as to the time when a kingdom was established in Scotland. The chronicles of the Scotch historians—of Fordun, Wyntoun, Bœce, and Buchanan vary little among themselves in the account of the period previous to the reign of Fergus, son of Erc, A.D. 498-501. How little of historical worth is in them is pithily put by Buchanan himself. He first proves that the oldest British author Gildas knew nothing of the origin or early history of the Scots, and that any information must have been got from the bards or sennachies. But this desperate refuge he is careful to take away also; he 'tells us plainly that it were ridiculous to expect any certainty of history from them; and for a proof of it, he gives us this description of them: that the bards were altogether ignorant of letters, and left no record of ancient transactions behind them; that the sennachies were maintained in every clan, on purpose to chant out by heart rhymes composed in the praises of their patrons, having no learning at all, and their subsistence depending on their flattering great men, no credit could be given to them.'¹

¹ Innes' Critical Essay, p. 211.

Fordun's account (which may be taken as the germ of the others) is, that Gaythelos, the son of Niolaus, king of Greece, was driven out by his father from his native country, and fled to Egypt about the time of the Exodus of the children of Israel. On his arrival there, being distinguished by his courage and daring, and being of royal birth, he received the hand of Scota, the daughter of Pharaoh, and from her his posterity derived their name.

Gaythelos disapproved of the oppression of the chosen race, and with his people was not involved in the catastrophe at the Red Sea. After this disastrous occurrence the Egyptians, irritated rather than subdued, drove the sympathisers with the Hebrews, out of the country.

Gaythelos left, and after forty years wandering by sea and land, arrived in Spain, and acquired a settlement there. Differing here from the Irish accounts, who represent the race of Scota as victorious in all their enterprises, and as having established a powerful monarchy in Spain, Fordun represents the fugitives as struggling for existence. Gaythelos on landing gained a victory over the natives, and having fortified himself, 'he built by degrees a very strong town, by name Brigancia, in the middle of which he erected a tower of exceeding height, surrounded by a deep ditch, which is still to be seen.'¹

But he seems to have despaired of his fortunes in Spain, and 'since he was unacceptable to the inhabitants, looking forth one clear day from Brigancia, and seeing land far out at sea, arms some active and warlike youths, and directs them to explore it in three boats; and they commit themselves to the high seas.'² The island of Ireland was reached, explored, and the party returned and made a favourable report to the king, who was at the time seized with his last illness. He, with his dying breath, exhorted his sons gratefully to accept the gift the gods offered them, to go without delay to the island prepared for them, where they should be able to live noble and free.

The sons obeyed the injunctions of the dying mon-

¹ Fordun's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 12, ed. 1872.

² *Ibid.* p. 13.

arch; prepared a fleet, and under the command of Hyber, the heir and successor of Gaythelos, sailed and took possession of Ireland, which was then untenanted, though some authors say that like Britain there were a few giants. From this prince the country was called Hybernia, though the legend of St Brandan says that he named it Scotia, after his mother.

Hyber did not carry out his father's instructions, but returned to Spain, where he and his successor exercised a very precarious sovereignty.

'At length the supreme authority came to a man equally energetic and industrious, that is, King Mycelius Espayn, one of whose ancestors had won for himself and his tribe, with their liberty, a place of abode; free, indeed, but too small for tribes so strong in numbers.'¹

This prince sent his three sons to Ireland with a numerous army, and easily obtained possession of the country. Hermonius, the eldest, returned to Spain, while his two brothers with their tribes remained in the island; but of their history there, the chronicler leaves us in ignorance.

The final settlement of the Scots is then given. Smonbret (Simon Breac) was, though not the eldest, the best beloved of a king of the Scots in Spain. This monarch sent his favourite son with 'an army to Ireland, and gave him a marble chair, sculptured in very antique workmanship by a careful artist, whereon were wont to sit the Scottish kings of Spain: whence it was diligently preserved in their territory as the anchor of the national existence.'² Simon Breac subdued Ireland, fixed his royal seat at Themor (Tara), and there in the most honoured spot in the kingdom he placed the chair, in which he and his successors were invested with the insignia of royalty.

From Ireland the Scots spread themselves first into some isles of Britain: that of Rothsay was so-called from Rothay or Rothsay, who was one of the earliest immigrants. Others came gradually over, and in 330 B.C., Fergus, son of Ferchar or Feradac, made himself the first king of the Scots in Britain.

¹ Fordun's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 18.

² *Ibid.* p. 23.

The historians mentioned give the names of the monarchs of this kingdom from the founder to Fergus, son of Erc, whom they make the second of that name. Fordun makes the period of his accession A.D. 403, about a hundred years earlier than the true historical date. Nothing but the genealogy of these kings has been given; but those who believe in the antiquity of the race can study their features in the gallery in Holyrood.

The Scottish account, therefore, claims for the Scots in Alban a thoroughly independent existence, having no connection with Ireland beyond consanguinity.

The influence of the absurd pride of race, tracing back their descent in endless genealogies, was fostered by the bards or poets, and to them in their origin we are indebted for those fabulous accounts, and as every petty chief kept at least one of those idle parasites who earned his living by flattering his patron, the mass of imposture grew and was put into shape. The character of the bards or sennachies is very bad, even in the Irish records where they occupy the most distinguished position, three times they were voted a nuisance, and were in danger of banishment. Their influence existed to the time of father Innes, who gives what even then was a laughable illustration of Celtic genealogy: 'There was in our time a Scottish gentleman of ancient family (Urquhart of Cromarty) who took a fancy to draw up his pedigree from age to age, up to Adam and Noah, and caused it to be printed by the title of Pantochronocanon, or pedigree of the name of Urquhart of Cromarty, from the creation of the world until the present year of Christ 1652.'¹ The antiquity of the Scottish race and monarchy became a part of the national creed, and fanned the flame of patriotism during the war of independence. Its rise and influence is thus admirably put by Innes, who, in his *Critical Essay*, was the first to dissipate these fabulous narratives, and place early Scottish history in its true light: 'And if an emulation not to be behind in the antiquity of monarchy with the kings of

¹ Innes' *Essay*, p. 288.

England, particularly with King Edward I., who valued himself upon a succession of kings in the British race down from Brutus, Locrinus, etc., contributed not a little, to raise in the Scots, in the beginning of the fourteenth age, the first notions of ancient kings of the Scottish line, before the times of the incarnation, it is very likely that the like emulation with the Picts, or a view not to be inferior to them, in so honourable a privilege, as that of an ancient establishment or ancient possession, gave occasion to the Scottish bards about the seventh age to advance the antiquity of the settlement of the Scots in Britain beyond the time of the incarnation. That this emulation or vieing with the Picti contributed to it, is the more likely, that, the Scots at last, after they became masters of the Pictish kingdom, caused this emulation so far as to pretend to have been established in Britain as early as, or even before, the Picts themselves.¹

The Irish account of the settlement of the Scoti or Milesians in Ireland, is the most wonderful production in literature; for details of it we refer our readers to Appendix. According to it Ireland was peopled before the Deluge. One survived this dread calamity, and lived on to the time of St Patrick, by whom he was converted to Christianity. In return the antediluvian imparted to the saint a knowledge of the historical events during the intervening period. St Patrick was thus able to supplement and correct the ancient chronicles of the nation, which at his time were collected and revised by a select committee of the notables, of which he was a member.

After the deluge, the island was colonised by three different peoples, the Partholians, the Firbolgs, and the Tuath de Danans. The Milesians in the meantime, after having played a conspicuous part in the history of Egypt, two of their leaders, Niul and Milesius, having been honoured with the hand of princesses bearing the name of Scota, settled in Spain and founded there a powerful kingdom: 'But haunted, however, in the midst of their glory by the remembrance of a prophecy, which

¹ Innes' Essay, p. 292.

had declared that an island in the western sea was to be their ultimate place of rest, the two sons of their great leader Milesius, at length fitted out a grand martial expedition, and set sail in thirty ships from the coast of Galicia for Ireland. According to the bardic chronology, thirteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, but according to Nennius, Ængus and others, near five centuries later, this "lettered and martial colony" (to use the language of one of its most zealous champions) arrived, under the command of the sons of Milesius, on the Irish coast; and having effected a landing at Inbher Sceine, the present Bantry Bay, on Thursday, the first of May A.M. 2934, achieved that great and memorable victory over the Tuatha-de-Danaan, which secured to them and their princely descendants, for more than two thousand years, the supreme dominion over all Ireland.'¹

This 'lettered and martial' colony possessed leaders who built palaces and reared fortresses; they had statesmen who administered wise and equitable laws; bards who composed true history in immortal verse; musicians who, in the power of appealing to the emotional nature, have never been surpassed; heroes who fought with a bravery and ferocity unknown to other countries and races. The only drawback to this picture is the continual occurrence in the annals, of battles and massacres, and the significant fact that few of the kings died a natural death, the succession was always open to the member of the royal family who was powerful enough to seize it by force. The manner is thus given by two Irish historians: 'Lugdadh Luagny, the son of king Inatmar,' says O'Flaherty, 'cut Bresal's throat, and got the crown.' 'His reign,' says O'Halloran of another monarch, 'lasted but five years, when the sword of his successor cut his way through him to the Irish throne.'²

No mention is made in the Irish annals of the colonisation of the western part of Scotland until the middle of the third century, when Cairbre Riada is said to have led over a party from Dalriada in Ulster. That

¹ Moore's History of Ireland, vol. i. p. 79. ² *Ibid.* p. 113, note.

there was frequent and friendly communication is extremely probable, but no permanent settlement in force is mentioned until the period formerly stated, A.D. 498. The little kingdom founded at this time by Fergus the son of Erc, was closely connected with, and tributary to Ireland. It will thus be seen that the legendary accounts of the two countries give a high antiquity to the Scoto-Milesian race; the Scotch get back only the length of the Exodus, the Irish a few centuries earlier. The two accounts differ in the date of the settlement in Scotland, and some trifling particulars. The Scotch, on quite as good a foundation as the Irish, made their kingdom a venerable one, but they lacked the imaginative faculties to fill in the details. There is no reason why they should not have had monarchs as illustrious as Achy, Ollamh Fodhla, Hugony the Great, or Feidlim the Legislator.

It must be apparent from these accounts that little or nothing can be gathered as to the period when the Scots conquered Ireland, and as little of the character of the same people, who colonised Argyllshire at the end of the fifth century; they tell us more of the character of the people who, a few centuries later, were the model taken by the poet historians and annalists; the histories are but a reproduction of a present state of society.

The condition of Ireland previous to the introduction of Christianity has been given by authors other than bards and annalists, and a high antiquity claimed for its history and civilisation. Moore is of opinion that the Phœnicians and Carthaginians had stations there, and established not only their commerce but their religion. Pinkerton sarcastically observes, that as the Irish had only hides to sell, so enterprising traders would hardly go so far for that commodity. A more decisive argument against the notion is, that Kenrick, the historian of Phœnicia, is of opinion that the Phœnicians had no stations in the British isles; that they may have called at the Scilly islands for cargoes of tin, but that this was the only intercourse. Moore's idea that Ireland was a

kind of Samothrace, where the Cabiric and other mysteries were practised and taught, is so exquisitely improbable that it hardly requires refutation; wherever the Phœnicians carried their commerce, they carried their religion, but they left traces of it; and when the smallest vestige of it is to be found in anything Irish, it will be time enough to enter into the validity of the claim. How Festus Avienus gave the name of 'Sacred Island' for Hibernia, it is impossible to say. Kenrick states that it is not from the narrative of Himilco, the Carthaginian; probably from the same source and for as satisfactory reasons as the 'Islands of the Blest,' because it was veiled in obscurity and nothing known.

The population of Ireland has remained so essentially Celtic, and all through its history has presented the elements of that race, that it is difficult to believe that there has been much admixture of other races on the original population of a lower type, which in the lapse of centuries has not become extinct. The Firbolgs seem, from the name, to have been immigrants from Belgic Gaul, and the Tuath de Danans from the north of Europe, but they must soon have become Celticised, for they left no trace of their Teutonic origin. In the absence of all proof, it may be said that some centuries previous to the Christian era, Ireland was colonised by a Celtic race from Britain, Gaul and the north of Spain, the last to arrive being the Scoti, who by their marked energy of character became the ruling class.

The political organisation of Ireland was that of other Celtic races, and was carried to Dalriada and Alban by the Scots; its character gave the tone to society in Scotland until the accession of Malcolm Canmore, A.D. 1057, and may be shortly indicated.

In early times two points have been established as existing: first, that there was no private property in land, it belonged to the community; second, that the social unit was not the individual or family, but the community or tribe. At this time the relations between the sexes were loose, and the sanction of marriage was unknown. The Teutonic races soon advanced to the family rela-

tionship, the individual being the groundwork of all society, and in this present a marked contrast to the most cultivated nation of antiquity, whose most gifted author makes, in his Utopia, all subservient to the state—the community.

That this primeval state was that of the Celtic population of Great Britain and Ireland previous to the Roman period is verified by the classical authors, and also from the peculiar succession in the Pictish monarchy, indicating a period when the succession by female descent was considered the more certain link. It is curious and important to note that this custom is said to have been imposed on the Picts by the Scots ladies.

This early state of the tribe soon became modified by internal changes, as well as by external influences, perhaps before the introduction of Christianity. But in Ireland there was no Roman influence at work, and it is extremely probable that the first civilising force was the Christian church, which indeed adapted itself to the tribal system. Whatever were the lax relations between the sexes, they would be condemned, and the sanction of marriage enforced when it could be done without danger to the welfare of the church; ¹ the old right of succession through the mother would be retained only in exceptional cases, where the parties possessed rank or influence. The members of the tribe were divided into two classes—the freemen and the serfs; the former were again divided into the chiefs or leaders and their descendants, and those who had not attained to this rank. The Ri, or King, who was at the head of the tribe, held his position by election, but also as one of the descendants in hereditary right from the common ancestor, the Eponymus of the race. He was both king and judge, though he might appoint, and generally did appoint, an official who exercised the judicial functions. The succession lay in the family, not in the individual; and from a first necessity of having the best man at the head of affairs, the one supposed to be most capable was elected King. So anxious

¹ Charlemagne was permitted to keep a harem.

was the tribe never to be without a head, that another member of the family was elected Tannist or successor to the King in the event of his death (as it turned out, an admirable method for shortening the lives of the reigning monarchs). The Christian church adopted this primitive method in their government; the abbot or head of the monastery was always chosen from a particular family, and exercised all the functions of the Ri, or King. The King at first had no separate possessions of lands, but latterly they were assigned for his maintenance, and also for that of the church. The territory belonging to a tribe was called Tuath, the tribe itself Ciniol, as implying a race of men sprung from a common ancestor. Ireland in early times was divided into numerous tribes, each under its Ri, Tannist, and inferior chiefs, and these were united into a federation under an Ardri or high-king as occasion required. But latterly three or seven Tuaths formed a Mortuath, over whom presided a Ri-mortuath. Again, several of these mortuaths formed a province called in Irish, 'Cuadh or a fifth,' *i.e.* the five provinces, Meath, Leinster, Munster, Connaught, and Ulster, each ruled over by a provincial king. Over all was the Ardri or monarch of all Ireland, the succession to which was regulated in the same system as that of the inferior kings. 'The tie which bound these communities together was the same which linked the smaller chiefs to their dependants—a gift or subsidy in kind, or personal service from the inferior to the superior.'

A peculiar feature in the election of the Ardri was, that while he was chosen from the most powerful branch of the royal house, to balance matters, his Tannist or successor was chosen from the branch next in power and influence. Whatever may have been the merits of this form of government, it would be difficult to find one better adapted to promote internal jealousies and dissensions; there must have been many 'uneasy heads' in those halcyon days, when kings were plenty, and successors, like Prince Henry, were waiting to try the effects of how a crown would become them. Unfortunately all history is little more than a chronicle of wars and fight-

ings, and the history of Ireland is peculiarly so; but it must be evident that no form of government could be better adapted to engender strife and retard civilisation. Every petty chief was a Ri who prided himself on the purity and length of his pedigree; his immediate followers looked up to him and to him alone, and obeyed his commands above all others; interest or danger only impelled the humbler Ri to ally himself with one of a larger following, or the Ardri himself. To say that any code of laws could have been agreed on, much less enforced, is an absurdity. Nothing but the introduction of foreign masters, stern but just, could give peace and civilisation to the Celtic race. It has found them in Scotland and Wales, and though the friction has been severe and prolonged, the issue is what we have stated. In Ireland, from many causes, the same result has not followed, yet the worst scenes of violence and crime under the rule of the Saxon are out-paralleled in the 'Annals of Ireland' before a foreign foe set foot on her shores, and no surer way to perpetuate her history of strife and dissension would be, than to leave the descendants of the 'lettered and martial colony' to govern the island.

'The Scottish kingdom of Dalriada, even at the time of St Columba, was confined within very narrow limits, and could hardly claim a higher position than that of a Mortuath, as we find that it consisted of three tribes, termed in the tract "Of the History of the Men of Alban" the three powerfuls in Dalriada. There were the Cinel Gabran, the Cinel Angus, and the Cinel Loarn, who traced their descent from the three sons of Eochaidh—Fergus, Angus, and Loarn—who led the colony from Irish Dalriada. The Cinel Gabran occupied Kintyre in its old extent, including Knapdale, the district of Cowall, and the islands, that is, of Bute and Arran, and consisted of 560 houses. The Cinel Angusa possessed Isla and Jura, and consisted of 430 houses. The Cinel Loarn possessed the extensive district of that name, extending from Loch Leven to the point of Ashnish, and part of the opposite coast of Morven, and consisted of 420 houses.'¹ The

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. iii. p. 213.

districts thus occupied by these tribes surrounded an inner region, consisting of the two districts of Lochaw and Ardskeodnish. It bore the name of Airgialla, and was subject to Dalriada, furnishing its quota to the armed muster of the nation, which is stated as 1500 men.¹

From this source was developed the clan system, which, to all intents and purposes was a subdivision of the tribe. It proved to be in Scotland what it must have been in Ireland, a formidable obstacle to the exercise of any central authority. Each chieftain was the real head of his circle or following, and to whom alone they owed obedience. In what is known as the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, till within a very late period, the power of the crown was more nominal than real; the Celtic organization remained intact and successfully defied law and culture.

Having indicated the political organization of the Dalriadic colony, we must look again to Scotia (Ireland) for the state of civilisation to which it had attained. It is evident from the statement of Tacitus that Agricola, in A.D. 87, thought a single legion and its auxiliaries sufficient for the conquest of Ireland, and that the arms and prowess of its warriors were not reckoned of much account. That the inhabitants at a later period were in the lowest state of barbarism, some have inferred from a passage in the writings of St Jerome. The holy man states that 'when a little boy in Gaul he saw the Scots, a people from Britain, eating human flesh, and though they were surrounded by swine, cattle, and sheep, yet would they cut off the buttocks of the herdsmen or the breasts of women, and eat them as special luxuries.' How the Gauls allowed the Scots to prey upon their herdsmen and women it is not easy to fathom, and how the little boy (who would be toothsome) escaped, is a still greater mystery. All that the story shows is, that in the opinion of St Jerome and the Romans of the time, the Scots were regarded as a barbarous people, in the lowest stage of civilisation. There is reason to suppose, however, that the Scots came among a people who had

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, pp. 308, 14.

attained to a higher state of civilisation than themselves, and that their Egyptian experiences, and their intercourse with the Phœnicians in Spain, had not raised them to a level with the people in Hybernia, whom they found on their arrival there. The legends point to this when they tell of the Nemedians employing 'skilled master builders' in the construction of their palaces, of the Tuath de Danaans in their splendid residences, surrounded by enchanted guards, of their skill in metal work, and even in medicine and surgery. The conquest of the country by the Milesians reads, like that of Mexico, where the invaders are startled by the presence of a civilisation, a luxury and a magnificence, differing in kind but rivalling, in many cases excelling, their own. The Milesians, like the Spaniards, were made of sterner stuff than the race they dispossessed of their country, but the result in both cases has not been essentially different. The one civilisation neutralised the other, and apart from the hideous ritual of the Mexican war god, it is a question whether the Aztec of the sixteenth century was not a better man than the half-breed of the nineteenth. If we knew as much of Ireland previous to the invasion of the Scoti as we do of Mexico, perhaps the feeling in many minds would be the same, that the pious peasant of the west of Ireland, who goes to mass before he shoots his landlord, is no improvement on his pagan ancestor.

Nothing certain is known of Ireland during the pagan period; there are no remains which can truly be identified, Christian art and literature pervade all. We know, however, that at the time of St Columba buildings were constructed of wood and wattles, boats of covered hides, and great excellence had been attained in the construction of these, but the probability is, that no further advance had been made in house and naval architecture. The vestiges of ancient fire worship and of Druidical rites and ceremonies will not bear either historical or archæological criticism.

The only remains of writing are what Mr Burton calls, 'scratchings on stones,' but what Celtic experts term, 'inscriptions in the Ogham character.' These are supposed,

by those who believe in them, to be the secret writings in which the Druids concealed their mysteries, corresponding indeed to the Scandinavian runes. Whether the Druids had any mysteries to conceal, is very doubtful, and whether there have been found any Druidical remains in Ireland or Scotland is as doubtful, but until something is made out of the Ogham inscriptions, approaching in value and interest to what has been taken from the northern runes, a very slight value must be put on them. The Ogham writing must be very mysterious indeed when only the skill of experts of the nineteenth century has been able to decypher it. Saemund Sigfussen in the twelfth, and Snorri Storlassan in the thirteenth century, were able to make something of the Runic rhymes, and from them to give us the wondrous mythology of the Eddas, and the key has never been lost; may we hope now that the key to the Irish runes has been found, that the results will be as productive.

The classical writers tell us nothing of Ireland, but that some kind of traffic was carried on between it and Britain and Gaul, and that there were some stations on the coast which might be dignified with the name of seaports. They also give the names of certain tribes, which names have furnished a fruitful source of profitless inquiry.

The earliest description of the country which may be called historical, is given by Bede:—

‘Ireland in breadth, and for wholesomeness and serenity of climate, far surpasses Britain, for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days; no man makes hay in the summer for winter’s provision, or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there; for though often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of air reaches them they die. On the contrary, almost all the things in the island are good against poison. In short we have known that when some persons have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that were brought from Ireland, being put into water and given them to drink, have immediately expelled the spreading

poison and assuaged the swelling. The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is there any want of wines, fish or fowl, and it is remarkable for deer and goats.¹

This statement is corroborated by Giraldus Cambrensis, five hundred years later, but having visited the island he corrects the older author in some points. The non-existence of poisonous reptiles must be taken as a historical fact, but Giraldus says, 'It seems a flattering fiction, that St Patrick and the other saints of that country cleared the island of all pestiferous animals; but history asserts, with more probability, that from the earliest ages, and long before it was favoured with the light of revealed truth, this was one of the things which never existed here, from some natural deficiency in the produce of the island.'² Bede, he says, is in error in his statements as to the serenity of the atmosphere and the cultivation of the vine. The humidity of the air of Ireland is well known, and Giraldus give us true history when he says, 'vines it never possessed, nor any cultivators of them. Still foreign commerce supplies it with wine in such plenty that the growth of vines and their natural production is scarcely felt. Poitou, out of its superabundance, exports vast quantities of wine to Ireland, which willingly gives in return its ox-hides and the skins of cattle and wild beasts.'³ The same author's account of the cultivation of the soil is wonderfully like that of the present day. 'The tillage land is exuberantly rich, the fields yielding large crops of corn, and herds of cattle are fed on the mountains, but the island is more productive in pasture than in corn, in grass than in grain.'⁴

But the statements of Giraldus, the Norman priest, are undoubtedly coloured by prejudice; besides, no account of the Irish people after the Danish invasion can be a fair statement of what they probably were before that disastrous time. Ireland, of all countries, seems never to have improved under foreign influence; the Danes and Norwegians perpetrated many cruelties in

¹ Bede's Ecclesiastical History, p. 7.

² Giraldus Cambrensis, p. 48, ed. Bohn.

³ *Ibid.* p. 20.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 21.

England and Scotland, both countries gained in the long run by visitations which at the time seemed like the pestilence, a judgment sent from heaven. In Ireland it was different; the two races never coalesced, each kept the lower qualities of its nature, the Danes were driven out, but not before they had destroyed most of the Christianity and civilization of the people.

The invaders spread ruin and desolation everywhere; plunder was their object, the church, so far from being an object of respect, was the grand quarry of the heathen. As is well known, it had become a wealthy and powerful corporation, absorbing much of the wealth and land of the country; it numbered amongst its ministers and officials the highest in rank; an abbot was as powerful as a king. Naturally learning and culture centered in the clergy; it was composed of all who had a taste for letters and leisure, and the number of monks, bishops, and saints would stagger belief, were we not to take into account the advantages peculiar to the early Irish church. Ecclesiastics mixed freely in secular affairs; they were not denied the privilege of fighting, and with their followers were simply the educated portion of the nation, and the best paid.

There is little doubt that all this was broken up by the Danes; the shrines were plundered, the altars cast down, the priests slain with the sword, the darkness and cruelty of the dark ages settled there as nowhere else, civilisation and culture fled, nothing was left but what Montalambert says have been the two great passions of the Irish, 'war and religion,' passions which have acted and reacted on each other to such an extent that it is difficult to say which has been the greatest curse to that unhappy country. But previous to the eighth century the state of Ireland was very different to what it has been since. Christianity and, to all intents and purposes, letters were introduced centuries earlier than in Britain, and, in addition, Ireland was free to develop all that could result from either. From the time of the last immigration of the Scoti to the end of the eighth century, no foreign foe set foot on her shores; while Great Britain,

from Alcluith to the isle of Thanet was the scene of deadly conflict, the native population struggling fiercely but vainly for existence. Ireland was indeed the sacred isle, the refuge of the religion and learning of Europe; there was not even a disputed succession, the power of the Hy-Nial family was supreme.

There is no doubt that religion and learning did progress; fighting there was, and plenty of it, but we must think that a good deal of this was confined to the last immigrants, the Scots. Though the standing army or militia talked of by the legendary historians is an absurdity, yet there is great reason to suppose that the kings and chieftains would have a large following of their own lineage, and that the most of the internecine strife would be done by them; then, as now, fighting would be reckoned the most honourable employment. The peasantry, however, would tend their cattle and sow their crops in spite of the constant hostilities going on about them.

The character, then, of the Scots who settled in Dalriada must be taken, not from the Irish, whom we know now after centuries of degradation, religious and secular; an enigma in which is presented the anomaly of a people writhing under any foreign interference in secular affairs, and meekly bowing the neck in religious matters to the most despotic of foreign despots; but from a people whose kings and warriors, whose saints and priests, owned no superior out of the sacred isle.

The civilisation of the Scots in Ireland and Scotland previous to the northern inroads, was derived chiefly from Christianity, the remains found in both countries cannot be satisfactorily traced to the period when the countries were pagan. What this civilisation was is an obscure subject, and archæology alone can throw any light on it. The traits which may be gleaned from the legendary chronicles and lives of saints are faint indeed, the former tell of battles fought, the latter of miracles performed.

The labours of Scotch and Irish antiquaries have brought to light many interesting remains, which pieced

together with legend and hagiography, may give us some idea of the Scot from the sixth to the ninth century.

The Scots of Dalriada were a brave, high-spirited race, lithe and active, with small hands and feet, what we consider a mark of high breeding, and in striking contrast to the Teutonic type, coarse but masculine. The position of woman was undoubtedly high; the remains of monuments, and the legends of female rulers and saints, amply corroborate this.

Their skill as metal workers was immeasurably superior to what it is at the present day.¹ The gold, silver, and ivory ornaments for the person, the swords and dirks, and other weapons, would do no discredit to the workshops of Birmingham and Sheffield. 'In Islay is still shown the spot where stood the forge of its once celebrated smiths, and the rocks from whence the iron was dug which they fabricated into the renowned Lann-Ila or Islay blades.'²

They were far from destitute of art, the sculptured stones of Scotland and Ireland are, in many ways, wonderful specimens of this, and are so remarkable that they have engaged the attention of the best art critics here and on the continent. They have been much struck with the beauty and variety of the geometric patterns, and with the precision and firmness with which each design is carried out to its ultimate conclusion. Passing from these formulas, they expand with a sort of floral freedom, dealing in the arrangement of branches, leaves, flowers and clusters, indicating not only technical skill but high imaginative faculties. There can also be traced a higher development in the bindings of ancient Irish psalters, and in the illumination of the MS. themselves, the features and specialities of the sculptured stones being distinctly apparent. Yet in all there was little of art proper, no command over perspective anatomy, the distribution of light and shade, or the transcript of natural colours, the human figure is always out of drawing.

The dwellings were rude, and we have no remains of

¹ Wilson's *Archæology of Scotland*, pp. 232-3.

² *Ibid.* p. 407.

what can be called architecture: churches even were not built of stone but of wattles. Bede says, 'that bishop Finan, ordained and sent by the Scots, A.D. 652, to the See of Lindisfarne, built a church there, 'nevertheless, after the manner of the Scots, he made it, not of stone, but of hewn oak, and covered it with reeds.'¹ There must have been skill and beauty in the structure, for it is spoken of with every mark of respect.

Mr Burton's remarks on the position of the Scots of Ireland and Dalriada almost exhaust the subject.

It was a comparatively high standard of civilisation, higher than that of the other inhabitants of the British isles: 'It was as yet a waxing civilisation, bringing with it continual increase of political influence. It was naturally enhanced by the insufficiency of the Britons to retain their Roman civilisation, and their consequent lapse into barbarism. We are accustomed to speak of the Roman civilisation, of the Norman, which took it up and adapted it to the habits of Christian Europe, and of the later Saxon civilisation, the highest of all. But all associations of recent times are so inconsistent with the notion of deriving civilisation from the Celts of Ireland, as to bring it into the region of the paradoxical. We have no conspicuous memorials of such a social condition, such as the great buildings left by the Romans and the Normans. Celtic civilisation took another and subtler, perhaps a feebler shape. It came out emphatically in dress and decoration.' Among relics of this civilisation are numerous exquisite and expensive ornaments for the person, and those found in later times belong in so preponderating a portion to Scotland, as to point to the centre of fashion whence they radiated as being there. 'There seems to have been a good deal of what may be called elegant luxury; the great folks, lay or ecclesiastic, had their carriages and their yachts. Especially the shrines, the ecclesiastical vestments, and all the decorations devoted to religion, were rich and beautiful.' This civilisation was acknowledged with respect, and even the patriotic Bede traces one of the greatest contributions

¹ Bede's Ecclesiastical History, p. 153.

towards their civilisation which the Saxons received directly to choose. There is indeed reason to suppose that the Picts, instead of mourning their independence, felt their position raised by counting the Dalriadic sovereigns as their own too. The historian sums up by saying, 'There are symptoms that this civilisation had a completeness about it which is perhaps inconsistent with progress. It resembled that of some oriental countries which, when undisturbed by others, have remained long stationary. There appears to have been much form and etiquette, what it is usual now to call conventionalism. There was a rigid principle of nepotism, all ranks, powers, and emoluments dwelling in a limited number of families. No new blood seems to have been admitted into the castes that predominated in church or state.'¹ All this civilisation existed amidst not a semi but a profound barbarism, as at the present day the education of the upper class is but tinsel, the dress the absorbing passion of the lower. The character of the first is admirably drawn by Sir Walter Scott in his picture of Fergus M'Ivor—an accomplished French courtier, *suave a la mode*, a squire of dames, and able to hum a chanson, but underlying all, as Edward Waverley soon found, the savage Vich Ian Vohr—a captain of banditti. The unadulterated modern descendant of the Scots is well represented in an exhibition peculiarly his own, '*The best dressed Highlandman at his own expense*;' the profound ignorance and latent savageness are skillfully concealed by a pride and self-conceit which, *saying* nothing, invite you to look at the spectacle before you.

¹ Burton's History of Scotland, vol. i. pp. 294-298.

CHAPTER IV.

NARRATIVE—FIFTH TO SIXTH CENTURY.

Narrative—Obscurity of the History of the Period—Worthlessness of Contemporary Authors—Gildas and Nennius—Bede the sole Authority—Irruption of Picts on withdrawal of the Imperial Forces—Struggle in Valentia—Picts, Saxons—Angles—Christianity and Heathendom—Arthurian Epic—Ida the Flame-bearer—Strathclyde—Bernicia—The British Kingdom in Scotland—Rhydderch Hael—Struggles with the Angles—Annexed to Scotia A.D. 945.

A.D. 411-449. HAVING thus indicated the origin and state of the inhabitants of Scotland at the period of the collapse of the Roman power, gathered from the quasi-historical and legendary sources quoted, we return to the narrative of events from the beginning of the fifth century.

The darkness which envelops the history of Britain during the fifth and sixth centuries is intense, and cannot be better expressed than in the words of the historian of the Roman empire: 'Since Britain was already separated from the Roman empire, I might, without reproach, decline a story familiar to the most illiterate, and obscure to the most learned, of my readers. The Saxons, who excelled in the use of the oar or the battle-axe, were ignorant of the art which could alone perpetuate the fame of their exploits: the provincials, relapsing into barbarism, neglected to describe the ruin of their country; and the doubtful tradition was almost extinguished before the missionaries of Rome restored the light of science and Christianity.'¹ Our guides are Bede's Ecclesiastical History, and the fragments of Gildas and Nennius.

Bede was born A.D. 673-677, and died A.D. 735. He was the first great English scholar, and, in the words of Mr Green, 'Baeda was at once the founder of medieval history and the first English historian, his scanty memoranda of this period are of incalculable value, and all that we

¹ Gibbon's Rome, vol. iv. p. 212.

really do know of the seventh and the early part of the eighth century, is from his history.' Gildas lived nearer the times we narrate. It is next to certain he was a native Briton, and that his epistle or history was written about A.D. 560. Mr Stevenson, the editor of his works, in his preface says : ' We are unable to speak with certainty as to his parentage, his country, or even his name, the period when he lived, or the works of which he was the author.' His writings should find more readers than they do, being eminently suited for admirers of the past, and detractors of the present, for the greater portion consist of jeremiads over the sins of his people : ' drunkenness, luxury, licentiousness, confused estimate of right and wrong, Arian heresy, etc., and he, like most clerics *in every age*, looked with reverence and respect to the past—"the old paths." '

A.D. 411-449.

Nennius was a Briton also, but who he was, and when he lived, is about as uncertain as the previous author : the conjectures vary from the middle of the eighth to the same period in the tenth century. We cannot agree with Gibbon's contempt for 'the ecclesiastical tales of the venerable Bede,' but sympathise in his opinion of 'the declamation of Gildas, and the fragments or fables of Nennius.'

No information can be obtained from Roman writers. The island of Britain, for so many years an integral part of the kingdom, was cut off from all connection with Rome, civilisation, and even Christianity. Up to this time despatches, many of them taking the shape of memoirs and itineraries, would be continually reaching the government, and savants and historians would and did make use of them. But even if it had not been so, British oysters and pearls would have been the chief commodities which would have passed. Learning and literature had given place in Rome to luxury, frivolity, and asceticism, which, coupled with savage ferocity, formed the normal state of society in Italy for centuries to come. How little is known in the civilised east is shown from the following extract :—'One hundred and fifty years after the reign of Honorius, the gravest historian of the

A.D. 411-449. times (Procopius) describes the wonders of a remote isle, whose eastern and western parts are divided by an antique wall, the boundary of life and death, or more properly of truth and fiction. The east is a fair country, inhabited by a civilised people: the air is healthy, the waters are pure and plentiful, and the earth yields her regular and fruitful increase. In the west, beyond the wall, the air is infectious and mortal; the ground is covered with serpents, and this dreary solitude is the region of departed spirits, who are transported from the opposite shores in substantial boats, and by living rowers. Some families of fishermen, the subjects of the Franks, are excused from tribute in consideration of the mysterious office which is performed by these Charons of the ocean. Each in his turn is summoned, at the hour of midnight, to hear the voices, and even the names of the ghosts! He is sensible of their weight, and he feels himself impelled by an unknown but irresistible power.¹ Such, the historian says, is Brittia possessed by three nations, the Frisians, the Angles, and the Britons. The ignorance was reciprocated. Bede was intimate with the Greek and Latin classical writers, but copies must have been scarce, as St Cadoc had to perform a miracle to recover his copy of Virgil. By the time of King Alfred the works of the great authors of antiquity were unknown, he, with his great love for learning had to take what he could get, 'The Consolations of Boethius,' 'The Pastorals of Pope Gregory,' 'the History of Orosius.' The works of the classic authors, which must have been common enough in Britain, got lost with the Latin tongue, which was preserved as a sacred language. The teaching of the early church encouraged no learning which was not useful for salvation.

When the dim light of history breaks again about A.D. 550, we find the disposition of the inhabitants to be: The native Britons or Cymri occupied territory from Lands-end to Alcluyd including Cornwall, to Devon, the breadth rather less than the half of England and Lowland Scotland; the remainder of the southern and eastern

¹ Gibbon's Rome, vol. iv. p. 230.

coast was occupied by the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles. A.D. 449-537.
 The Scots, a people from Ireland, had colonised Argyllshire and the western isles. The remainder of Scotland formed the great and venerable kingdom of the Picts.

After A.D. 411 the Roman government had more than enough to do to defend the empire from the assaults of Goth, Hun, and Vandal. Numerous requests were sent from Britain for assistance. The last, in 446, was made to Ætius, a powerful Roman citizen, in the following terms: 'To Ætius, now consul for the third time, the groans of the Britons;' and again a little further thus: 'The barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea throws us back on the barbarians; thus two modes of death await us, we are either slain or drowned.' The Roman consul could do nothing for them, and according to Gildas, famine or despair gave them courage, and 'they overthrew their enemies who had for so many years been living in their country.'

We do not attempt an account of the Saxon conquest. In A.D. 449 Vortigern called in the assistance of the Saxons who, with Hengist and Horsa, landed, and in spite of their determined opposition, forced the Britons, within the next hundred years, into the limits we have described.

But we have anticipated matters in order to keep the history of North Britain distinct. The first consequence of the withdrawal of the imperial troops was the usual irruption of the Scots and Picts. If not on a more formidable scale, it had a more successful issue, for the Picts penetrated as far south as Stamford, and we have every reason to believe made settlements and fraternised with the Saxons, and more particularly with the Angles, both of whom were on the same errand as themselves. The only trace of their occupation identified, is the district called Lodonea or Lothian, comprehending not only the Lothians but the counties of Roxburgh and Berwick. The name Pentland, corrupted from Petland or Pictland, has preserved a record of the settlement. From what we can see it is evident they became a homogeneous people with the Teutonic settlers, from whom indeed they differed

A.D. 449-537.

but slightly in race, language, and religion. The name Picts was also applied to the inhabitants of Galloway. Whether they were a colony from the northern Picts in Scotland, or from the Cruithne in Ireland, or were simply the Novantæ mentioned by Ptolemy, we cannot pretend to say, there are authorities for all. Pinkerton calls them a colony of Scots from Ireland of a later date than their Dalriadic brethren. They were probably Gaelic Celts, as the Irish language was spoken to the borders of Carrick at a comparatively late period. Notwithstanding their early reception of the Christian faith from St Ninian, and their long connection with the kingdom of the Angles and the diocese of York, they were the last inhabitants of Lowland Scotland to throw off their barbarism. At the battle of the Standard they are termed the wild Picts of Galloway; and, like the other unarmed and undisciplined kerne who composed a large portion of King David's motley force, were slaughtered like sheep by the Norman mail-clad chivalry. Innes, however, gives them the high distinction of being the ancestors of the Stuart line of kings. He says that many of the leading Picts dissatisfied with the accession of the Scot Kenneth to the Pictish kingdom, retired into Galloway, and that Alan, son to Walter, proprietor in Galwellan (Galloway), is the true ancestor of the Stuart kings.¹

The Roman province of Valentia being left defenceless, the government fell naturally to the Romanised Britons who were in a manner associated with the imperial officers. There seems to have been a family which assumed the kingly power, and the seat of government was established at Alcluyd, the modern Dumbarton, and from which the state for some time derived its name. The sway over Valentia must have lasted for a very short time; the Picts were at the heels of the Roman soldiery, while the Saxons were advancing from the south, and the Angles no doubt were making incursions in their long keels from their native shores, and settling where they landed. The struggle all through the island was a

¹ See Innes' Critical Essay, pp. 104-5.

long and severe one ; the Britons could not or would not, like the Gauls and the Italians, make peace and coalesce with their fierce foes. The Saxons found England and Lowland Scotland, Celtic and Christian, after the conquest, with the exception of Cumbria and Wales, it was Teutonic and heathen. It is impossible that the whole population could have been massacred or driven into the fastnesses of Wales and the wilds of the southwest of Scotland ; like the Picts, who readily amalgamated, a considerable portion of the population would be reduced to servitude or overlordship, and gradually be lost in the more vigorous race. A.D. 537-573.

The war between the two nations is immortalised in the Arthurian Epic ; whether there were one or a dozen of Arthurs, whether he or they were native chiefs, or of Roman descent like Ambrosius Aurelius we do not venture to say. Professor Rhys, in his work on Celtic Britain, gives an eminently fair and sensible view of the contest from which was developed the Arthurian myth. A struggle for existence had taken place, not without heroic deeds and temporary success of the conquered race. The achievements of many warriors became centred in one : ‘ Arthur became the ideal champion of the race, and when that race became Christian he must needs don the armour of a Christian general, leading the Brythons to war against the pagan invaders, whether Picts or Germans. The fortunes of the Brythons were his concern, and their wars were his wars, so that great battles were believed to have been fought under his command ; nay, he was related to have with his own hand slain in each a marvellous number of foes.’¹ His deeds belong to the whole race whether, in Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, England or Scotland, ‘ Arthur belongs to them all, wherever Celts have spoken a Brythonic language from the Morbihan to the Caledonian forest.’² The historical ground for the existence of the British hero might be taken from Nennius, and the following extract seems to guide to the conclusion of Mr Rhys, that victories in so many quarters of the island were gained by different leaders. ‘ Then

¹ Rhys’ Celtic Britain, pp. 231-2.

² *Ibid.* p. 233.

A. D. 537-573. — it was that the magnanimous Arthur, with all the kings and military force of Britain, fought against the Saxons. The first battle in which he was engaged was at the mouth of the river Gleni (the Glen in the northern part of Northumberland). The second, third, fourth, and fifth on the Duglas or Dubglas (the little river Dunglas which forms the southern boundary of Lothian, or according to Whittaker, the Duglas near Wigan). The sixth on the river Bassas (not a river but the Bass Rock; others think it intended for the river Lusas in Hampshire). The seventh in the wood Celidon (the forest of Englewood extending from Penrith to Carlisle). The eighth near Gurnion Castle (variously supposed to be in Cornwall, Binchester in Durham, most probably at a Roman station near Yarmouth). The ninth was at the city of Legion, which is called Cair Lion (Exeter). The tenth on the banks of the river Trat Treuroit (the Brue in Somerset or the Ribble in Lancashire). The eleventh was on the mountain Breguoin (Cadbury, Somersetshire). The last was a most severe contest, when Arthur penetrated to the hill of Badon (Bath). In this engagement nine hundred and forty fell by his hand alone; no one but the Lord afforded him assistance.¹

There is, however, a different reading of this fragment of history given by Mr Skene in his 'Four Books of Wales,' and though he is the only historian who takes the same view, his knowledge of Celtic literature and acquaintance with early records, may have given him the true key to the exploits of the Arthur whom most writers relegate to the region of myth or fable. From the *Historia Brittanorum* ascribed to Nennius, some additional fragments printed in the chronicles of the Picts and Scots, and from the Welsh poems, he has constructed a campaign or campaigns carried on in Lowland Scotland and the Lennox by *the* veritable Arthur. The battle of Badon Hill, erroneously supposed by previous writers to have taken place at Bath, by a careful criticism is proved to have been fought at Linlithgow. The contest which, Mr Green says, was with the 'West Saxons, and was fol-

¹ Six Old English Chronicles, pp. 408-9.

lowed by a general pause in the English advance,' was not with them at all but with the Picts allied with the Saxons, who, it seems, long before Ida had landed in Northumbria, had made settlements under Octa, son, and Ebissa, nephew to Hengest. They are said to have been in possession of the district now represented by Dumbarton and Stirling, and perhaps more extensive territory. The great chief determined to wrest this valuable portion of the country, and also that seized by the Picts, leaving, we suppose, the defence of England to less redoubtable champions. He advanced by the west through friendly territory to the Glen, a small stream which falls into the Irvine in Ayrshire, where his first battle was fought. Advancing northward, passing Dumbarton, which must have been then in friendly hands, for so skilful a general would not have left so strong a fortress in his rear, he defeated the enemy in four battles on the Upper and Lower Douglas, streams which fall into Lochlomond. Proceeding eastward, on the banks of the Carron at Dunipace, another engagement took place. The seventh and eighth were fought in the south of Scotland in or about Selkirk. Dumbarton must have been taken by the enemy or fallen from its allegiance, for the ninth battle was fought there, and the fortress recovered. The northern part seems to have been the hardest to conquer, for the tenth was at Stirling, the eleventh at Edinburgh, and the twelfth at Linlithgow. These districts, wrested from the Picts and Saxons, he divided among three British chiefs: one of them, Llew, who was invested with Lothiana, is a well-known personage, no other than Loth, the cruel father of Thenew, the mother of St Kentigern. It seems bad policy for the Christian hero to have thus promoted a man who, if not then, was soon a pagan or half pagan. His son Medraut proved ungrateful to the man who had raised his father to a throne, for he was the commander of the combined force in which the Britons were defeated at the battle of Camlan, A.D. 537, and in which both leaders perished. Mr Skene observes, 'It is surprising that historians should have endeavoured to place this battle in the south.' It

A. D. 537-573. took place on the banks of the Carron near Falkirk, and the mysterious

‘Island valley of Avilion,
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any dew,
Nor ever wind blows loudly,’

must be sought in the vicinity of Camelon and the site of Arthur's Oon.

That the Arthurian romance had its origin in traditions of the contest in Britain between British Christians and heathen invaders, may be taken for granted. That there really was a historical Arthur is more difficult of proof. He is unknown to Bede and the Saxon Chronicle; and if his exploits took place in the north, it seems strange indeed that the author of the Ecclesiastical History of England, himself a north countryman, should have been ignorant of them, or should have omitted such important events.

There are two inferences to be drawn, if Mr Skene has unearthed the true Arthur and the sites of his twelve battles. Either the great romance has been founded on twelve petty skirmishes, with an enemy easily repelled in former times by trained troops, or the best and bravest of the Cymri had been driven northward, and in Lowland Scotland and the borders of the Highland line, struggled for the possession of a new home. The issue shows also that the Picts and their allies had profited by defeat, for the Cymri are said to have adopted Roman discipline and tactics in their campaigns; numerous allusions are made to these in the poems of the bards.

The traditions of the Arthurian and succeeding contests were preserved in the poems of Aneurin and Taliessin, writers of the sixth century. These poems show the authors to have been men, not only of high poetical genius, but also to have been orthodox Christians and classical scholars. This learning and culture could only have been the remains of Roman teaching, inherited culture from cultured forefathers.

Valentia, as a whole for some time, and afterwards that portion of it which formed the kingdom of Cumbria,

was thus the last refuge of Roman civilisation and Christianity. The poetry and its kindred associations must have had the strongest root, for St Kentigern had to *convert* the most of the inhabitants of the district, and after his death they relapsed; the poetical literature lived, for, according to Mr Skene, 'a large proportion of the historical poems of Wales are, in point of fact, the literature of the Cymric inhabitants of Cumbria before that kingdom was subjugated by the Saxon king in 946.'¹ After this period it seems these poems found their way to Wales, and form part of the Welsh literature, of which they form a distinct portion, easily to be distinguished in matter, language, and style from the modern portion which sprung into being when the Welsh came into contact with the Normans.²

If the battle of Camlan, A.D. 537, can be accepted as a fact in history, it is evident, that even in the Cymri of the province of Valentia, the Roman civilisation and Christianity were fast dying out. Mordred, Modred, or Medraut, the son of that 'vir semipaganus' Llew or Loth, headed a formidable portion of the relapsed Britons, and, with the assistance of his Pictish and Saxon allies, on the fatal field of the battle mentioned, crushed the Christian hosts headed by their redoubtable champion. Medraut or Morken, as he is called by Joceline in his biography of St Kentigern, must have held sway over a large territory, his father's dominions were Lodoniana, but he is represented in the life of the saint as holding his court near Glasgow. In A.D. 547 a more formidable enemy than any hitherto encountered, invaded the territory of the northern Britons, and an attack was made in force, of the Teutonic tribe, which was to give a name to the country and its language. The Saxon Chronicle thus states the event, 'A.D. 547—This year Ida began to reign, from whom arose the royal race of Northumbria, and he reigned twelve years, and built Bamborough, which was at first enclosed by a hedge and afterwards by a wall.'³

¹ Skene's Four Books of Wales, vol. i. p. 242.

² See Warton's English Poetry, vol. i. pp. 141-2.

³ Saxon Chronicle, Bohn's ed., p. 312.

A.D. 537-573. The terrible Ida, who in bardic story bears the ominous title of the 'Flamebearer,' with 'his men of fifty keels' rapidly overran the country from the Humber to the Forth, and the district which was the principal seat of the Roman government, civil and military, became the heathen kingdom of Bernicia.

It is extremely probable that the resistance to the arms of the invader was chiefly from the Britons; the Picts, who had colonised the country, owed as yet no allegiance to a king on the northern side, and being a people kindred in race, language, and religion with the Angles, a mutual feeling would unite them under the banner of such a distinguished leader against the Britons, Christians, and Romans. The strife was ever between Christianity and paganism, culture and barbarism.

Though the Bernician dynasty was firmly established in the lifetime of Ida, yet the contest was very severe, and the native Cymric authors represent Ida as slain in battle 'by Owen of Reged, the son of Urien, the favourite hero of the bards, and a warrior from whom many a laurel has been stolen to adorn the chaplet of the fabulous Arthur.'¹ Urien is said to have arrested the advance of the sons of Ida, and his exploits and that of other heroes have been sung by the bards, but, in the moment of victory, the bravest champion of his race was slain by 'Llovan of the accursed hand;' the loss to the Britons was irreparable, the Angles recovered their ascendancy and consolidated their conquests.

Probably at this time the British kingdom of Strathclyde had its origin, existing previously as a confederacy of tribes, occasionally acting in concert under a leader, as danger or circumstances gave occasion.

But in A.D. 573, fourteen years after the death of Ida, a king of Strathclyde appears who has been generally accepted as an historical personage, Rydderch, the friend and patron of St Kentigern. His kingdom comprised the western portion of the Lowlands of Scotland and Cumberland on the English side of the border.

Before narrating the events of his reign, we may in-

¹ Robertson's *Scotland under her early Kings*, vol. i. p. 4.

dicare the state of parties in what we may still call for convenience, Valentia. A.D. 573-603.

The territory of the King of Bernicia, consisting of the middle and eastern lowlands to the Firth of Forth, was termed Saxonia by old chroniclers, and was inhabited by a mixed population of Angles, Picts, Saxons, Cymri, and other races. The Picts had been either thoroughly subdued or were in close amity with the Anglic settlers; they had apostatised from the Christian faith if they ever had embraced it, and were, as we have stated, homogeneous with their rulers in manners and religion. On the other hand the Britons were not at one among themselves, there was a Christian and a heathen party. The latter flung off Christianity as a badge of slavery to the Roman influence, and fostered by the bards, made a successful appeal to the national feelings. Medraut, the successful opponent of Arthur, was of this party, and 'vir nequissimus et sceleratissimus,' for he despised St Kentigern's preaching, and even kicked the holy man. The other party was composed of those who adhered to the Christian religion, and in some degree to the Roman culture, and in the new monarch they found an able and victorious leader. A conflict was inevitable, and in A.D. 573, the year of King Rederech's accession, a battle was fought at Ardderyd (Arthuret), on the west bank of the river Esk, eight miles north of Carlisle, where the hosts of heathenness were scattered before the arms of the Christians. What was the composition of the defeated army, commanded by Guendolin, is uncertain, probably the Picts and Angles would form part of it, but there is no mention made of the assistance of the King of Bernicia. The power of the King of Cumbria was firmly established, and with it the profession of the Christian religion. The Christianity of King Rederech was sincere; one of his first acts was to prevail on St Kentigern to return from Wales and to take up his abode with him. If we are to believe Jocelyn, the biographer of the saint, the Cumbrian monarch was a devoted son of the church, a pattern to all rulers, a worthy predecessor of the pious David, Prince of Cumbria and King

A.D. 573-603.

of Scotland. Rederech, who is better known as Rhydderch Hael (the bountiful), by his own talents and by the friendship of SS. Kentigern and Columba, had a prosperous reign, and died peacefully in his bed, in accordance with the prophecy of St Columba,¹ a rather uncommon circumstance for kings in those days.

In the same year Aidan, king of the Scots, with the combined forces of his own country and Cumbria, invaded Bernicia, to measure his strength with the king of the Angles. At a place called by Bede, Degsastan, identified as Dawstane in Lidderdale, a decisive battle was fought A.D. 603, in which the army of Aidan was annihilated, and the power of Bernicia enormously increased. Bede says, 'he (Ethelfrid, king of the Northumbrians) conquered more territories from the Britons, either making them tributary or driving the inhabitants clean out, and planting English in their places, than any other king or tribune,' after the battle of Degsastan. 'From that time no king of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the English to this day.'²

The history of the British kingdom in Scotland forms no important part of it, and though anticipating the course of events we shall shortly trace its narrative to its close.

After the death of Rhydderch another branch succeeded to the throne, and from this or some other cause the Britons and Dalriadic Scots ceased to be on friendly terms. In a hostile encounter between the forces of the two nations at Strathcarron, on the river Carron, the Scots were defeated and their king slain, A.D. 642. It would almost seem that the pagan party had now the

¹ 'Prophecy of the blessed man regarding King Roderic Son of Tothal, who reigned on the Rock of Cluath (Alcluith) or Dumbar-ton.' 'This same king being on friendly terms with the holy man, sent a messenger to ask him "whether he would be killed by his enemies or not." The saint replied, "he shall never be delivered into the hands of his enemies, he will die at home on his own pillow." And the prophecy of the saint regarding King Roderic was fully accomplished; for, according to his word, he died quietly in his own house.'—Reeves' Adamnan, p. 15, ed. 1874.

² Bede's Ecclesiastical History, p. 61, ed. Bohn's Lib.

upper hand, for we find the Britons in alliance with the terrible heathen Penda, king of the Mercians, who had so long been a thorn to Northumbria and Christianity. Oswy, the king of Bernicia, was in the end successful in defeating his savage and perfidious enemy, A.D. 654, he and thirty royal commanders being among the slain. The Cumbrian allies of Mercia shared its fate; Oswy overran the country, and for thirty years it was a part of Bernicia.

The defeat of Ecgfrid in A.D. 685 released the Britons from the rule of the Angles; but the latter still kept possession of the Pictish territory of Galloway, and the district from the Derwent in Cumberland to the Solway Firth, with Carlisle as its capital, which had lately been bestowed to the See of Lindisfarne. It is likely also the northern shores of the Solway to Dumfries would be occupied, otherwise the Angles would have been entirely cut off from Galloway. The British kingdom, now much curtailed, is hardly mentioned for long in the scanty annals of the time, but it again appears in A.D. 872, under the name of Strathclyde. With varying fortunes, in conflicts with the Scots and Picts, the Angles and the Danes, the little kingdom survived under its native princes until A.D. 908, when, on the death of Donald, the last of the family claiming descent from the Romanised Britons, the succession passed amicably to Donald, brother to Constantine, king of Alban.

The monarchs of this race seem to have enlarged their territory to something like the old limits, from the Clyde to the Derwent, and to have been in close alliance with the kingdom of Alban. But coming into contact with the power of Northumbria proved, as on former occasions, its ruin. The Danes of Ireland at that time made many fierce onslaughts on the English kingdom, and their route was uniformly by Cumbria. Eadmund, the king of Northumbria, having expelled these marauders, determined to block their way for the future, and punish their abettors. In A.D. 945 he ravaged the country, and thinking it better to have only one power to do with on his northern frontier, he granted it to Malcolm king of the Scots.

A. D.
945-1157.

Cumbria thus became subject to the Scottish throne, the district south of the Solway held on a very loose tenure, until A.D. 1157, when Malcolm IV. surrendered any claims to Northumberland and Cumberland. The district of Galloway preserved a kind of independence until the termination of the war of the Succession, the rule of Northumbria nominal but slight. It preserved its barbarism and also its special laws to a very late period, the privileges of the Galwegians are mentioned in the *Regiam Majestatem*. The Celtic nature and barbarism are long extinct, but to this day it is the least frequented portion of Lowland Scotland, though there is no fairer or more romantic scenery to be found. It is the birth-place of the Christianity of our country, as it was also the refuge and home of the piety and patriotism of apostate Scotland in a later age.

CHAPTER V.

PICTLAND.

Pictland—History unknown previous to A.D. 565—Brude—War with Bernicia—Continuous struggle in Northumbria, Mercia, Deira, Penda, Cædwalla—Oswald King of Bernicia—Battle of Denisesburn—Cædwalla slain—Oswald slain by Penda—Penda slain by Oswy—Triumph of Christianity—Pictland—Brude—Invasion by Egfrid King of Bernicia, his Defeat and Death—Angles lose their hold of Southern Scotland—Naitan—Religious Controversies—Dalriada, Aidan, Columba, Dommall Breac—Battle of Moyra—Anarchy in Dalriada—Attack by Aengus—Dissolution of the Kingdom—Northumbria acquires most of Strathclyde—Kingdom of Fortrenn—Danish Invasions—Kenneth MacAlpine.

THE history of Pictland, previous to the time of St A. D. 36c-556. Columba A.D. 565, is practically unknown. The account of the campaigns of Agricola against the Caledonians tell us nothing; the accounts of the expeditions against the Picts in later ages tell us little. All that can be said is, that there existed a confederacy of two powerful tribes known under the name of Dicaledons and Vecturions, *i.e.* Northern and Southern Picts, who, when danger assailed them, were under the command of a single chieftain. Their arms and mode of fighting were of the rudest and most primitive kind; their manners, customs, and mode of life were of the same character.

Yet withal they inspired respect in their powerful assailants; their military tactics were far from contemptible, their attack was formidable, their retreat skilful and courageous. In later days they were not slow to pick up the arts of peace and war, and it is not improbable that by the time they appear in history, under the reign of Brude, they were no longer the naked painted savages of A.D. 360, when they acquired their name, but had made some progress in the arts and civilisation.

The Picts, not to be behind their neighbours, had a

A. D. 360-356. list of kings from a respectable antiquity, though their portraits have unfortunately not been preserved like those of the Scots. The first on the list is the eponymus of the race Cruithne, who, according to the legendary writers, commenced his reign somewhere about three hundred years before the Christian era. Mr Skene, with much probability, in his preface to 'Chronicles of the Picts and Scots,' fixes a year between A. D. 442 and 476 for the commencement of the Pictish monarchy, a much more probable time than the remote date previously mentioned.

The peculiar mode of succession to the Pictish throne need not further be noticed, after all that has been written on the subject. Pinkerton's remarks contain the gist of all that is really known; why the custom existed, or how it originated, will probably remain an unsolved question: 'Among the Piks, he of the royal race, who was strong, valiant, and wise, would be chosen; but when two candidates of equal worth appeared, and the balance was doubtful, he was chosen who, descending of the royal race by the female line, was thought to have a surer claim to royal blood than him who descended by the male line. Of this rule of elective succession, Beda thus instructs us, "that when any difficulty should arise, they should *choose* (eligerent) a king from the female royal race rather than from the male, which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Piks to this day."¹ Of the number of royal race we may judge from the charter of Ungust II., published by Sibbald in his account of Fife, where no less than twelve witnesses are given, all sons of different fathers, with this addition: "All these witnesses are born of the ROYAL RACE."

The distinguishing names of the monarchs which, in many cases, are supposed to indicate the names of particular districts, furnish merely a topic for fruitless speculation.

At this time the Pictish territory proper consisted of all Scotland north of the wall, with the exception of Dalriada; there was a sort of debateable ground immediately to the south of this, in the district called Manann,

¹ Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. i. p. 261.

struggled for by Picts, Angles, Britons, and Scots; further south were numerous colonies subject to and friendly with the Angles, but not averse to revolt and a connection with the parent country. A.D. 556-585.

According to the Pictish Chronicle and the corroboratory evidence in Adamnan's *Life of St Columba*, and Bede's *History*, Bridei, son of Mailcu, ascended the throne in A.D. 556, and reigned thirty years. In the eighth year of his reign, A.D. 565, he was baptised by St Columba.¹ Nothing whatever except his relations with the apostle of his country is known. He is represented as holding his court, attended by Druids and other high functionaries, at his capital, situated 'at some distance, but not far from the river Ness.'² Dr Reeves, whose critical judgment is beyond question, fixes the site on Craig Phadrack, situate about two miles S.W. of Inverness across the river, a natural eminence of considerable height and well defined, commanding a most beautiful and extensive prospect, having a large tract of Ross-shire on the north, Inverness on the east, Beaulu on the west, and Loch Ness on the south.² Brude seems to have been on friendly terms with his neighbours. It is a question whether Iona was a grant from the king of the Picts or the king of the Scots, probably from both, and the saint to whom it was granted preserved friendly relations between the two states. Even the savage inhabitants of Orkney were on good terms with the Pictish king. Columba received from him letters which ensured a welcome to the missionary Cormac when he visited these distant shores.

It would be interesting to know how the kings of Pictland regarded the conquests of Ida and his successors, whether they were on friendly terms, or whether they suspiciously watched the rising power which in a short time was to menace the independence of their country. Though nominally converted to Christianity, the Picts gave no assistance to the Christian Cymri in their contests with the heathen; as a nation they seem

¹ *Chronicles of Picts and Scots*, p. 7.

² *Reeves' Adamnan*, p. 277. Ed. 1874.

A.D. 596-523. to have kept aloof from the fierce strife which raged in the south; their kinsmen in these localities were, however, willing subjects to the Angles, and auxiliaries in their conflicts.

A series of events changed the aspect of affairs, and brought Pictland into contact with Bernicia. In A.D. 606 Aedilfrid, king of that country, succeeded in dethroning the youthful Aedwin, king of Deira, thus adding this province to his own kingdom. Aedilfrid was a very powerful prince, and not only extended but consolidated the rule of Bernicia on the north to the shores of the Firth of Forth. But in the year A.D. 617 Aedwin, after eleven years of wandering, seeking shelter as kings have done since, enlisted the sympathies of Redwald, king of the east Angles. With his assistance he succeeded in defeating his successful rival in a battle on the banks of the river Irlae, a tributary of the Trent, the issue of which was the possession not only of his patrimony, but of Bernicia.

The sons of Aedilfrid (who perished in the action), with many of the young nobles who clung to the losing side, took refuge with the Picts and Scots. Eanfrid the elder found a protector in the king of the Picts, while the younger Oswald sought an asylum in Iona, where he was hospitably received, and, according to Bede, 'was instructed in the faith of Christ, and received the grace of baptism.'

Though it was through the instrumentality of Oswald that Bernicia received the Christianity preached by the missionaries of the Celtic church, yet the successful opponent of his family received, with his people, the same message from Paulinus, a missionary of the Roman church. The success was nominally great, but the words of Bede soon proved to be true: 'Though he laboured long in the word, the god of this world blinded the minds of them that believed not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them.'¹ Within a few years king and people were pagans. Aedwin was eminently successful; he is classed by Bede

¹ Bede, p. 84.

as one of the seven kings who possessed the greater part of Britain to the Firths of Forth and Clyde.¹ He is generally supposed to have been the founder of Edinburgh (Aedwinsburgh), and though from its commanding position it was a fortress in earlier times, yet to him it owes its name and subsequent position as the capital and the stronghold of Lowland Scotland. A.D. 623-642.

Within six years after his conversion to the Christian faith Aedwin was slain and his army annihilated in a battle at Hatfield in Yorkshire, by the combined forces of Caedwalla, king of the Britons, and Penda, king of Mercia. The consequences were most disastrous to the new faith and to Northumbria. 'Penda, with all the nation of the Mercians, was an idolater, and a stranger to the name of Christ; but Caedwalla, though he bore the name and professed himself a Christian, was so barbarous in his disposition and behaviour that he neither spared the female sex nor the innocent age of children, but with savage cruelty put them to tormenting deaths, ravaging all their country for a long time, and resolving to cut off all the race of the English within the borders of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion, which had newly taken root among them, it being to this day the custom of the Britons not to pay any respect to the faith and religion of the English, nor to correspond with them any more than pagans.'²

In the confusion consequent to these events, Osric, the son of an uncle of Aedwin, was made king of Deira, while Eanfrid, who had fled for refuge to the king of the Picts, regained the throne of Bernicia. But 'both these kings, as soon as they obtained the government of their earthly kingdom, renounced and lost the faith of the heavenly kingdom, and again delivered themselves up to be defiled by the abominations of their former idols.' This was probably done to gain the favour of Penda, through whose connivance they probably gained their position.

The conversion raised the ire of Caedwalla, king of the Britons, who indeed hardly required a ground of

¹ Bede, p. 76.

² *Ibid.* pp. 106-7.

A. D. 623 642. quarrel, for the savage or patriotic monarch (there are always two lights in which a great hero may be viewed) had resolved on the extirpation of the Angles, be they Christians or pagans. Caedwalla first slew Osric, with all his forces, then having overrun Northumbria, he at length brought to the same end Eanfrid, who unadvisedly came to him with only twelve chosen soldiers to sue for peace.

Though the British Christian hero was a principal actor in these dreadful scenes, there is but little doubt that the real struggle was between heathendom and Christianity; the parties had changed sides, the Britons forgetting the very peculiar Christianity they possessed, joined the ranks of the pagans against the very men who, not so long ago, strove to extinguish their Christianity. The faith in Odin and Valhalla died hard, and the struggle was still to continue. In the person of Oswald, the exiled son of Aedilfrid, the new faith regained an ascendancy which was never totally lost.

From the scanty information we possess, we must consider Oswald not only of a pious and amiable disposition, but an energetic commander and able administrator. Bede says, 'He brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, viz., the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the English. When raised to that height of dominion, wonderful to relate, he always continued humble, affable, and generous to the poor and strangers.'¹

This accomplished prince, in his sanctuary at Iona, determined to wrest from the spoilers the kingdom of his fathers. At the head of a force raised probably from the northern portion of Bernicia, and, we should suppose, accompanied by men of action as well as men of prayer from his friends in Dalriada, 'he advanced with an army, small indeed in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ, and the impious commander of the Britons was slain, though he had most numerous forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand, at a place in the English tongue called Denisesburn, that is, Denis's Brook.'²

¹ Bede, p. 118.

² *Ibid.* p. 109.

The historian does not give the name of the commander, A. D. 642-67c. as on other occasions, which is somewhat strange. 'It is therefore not impossible that the impious commander of Bede may not have been Caedwalla himself, and that there may be some truth in the account given in the Welsh Bruts, that the Caedwalla who slew Aedwin survived for many years after.'¹ The miraculous part of this engagement and the conversion of the Northumbrians by the Celtic missionaries form part of another portion of this work, and will there be told.

But the end of the able and pious monarch was not to be peace, nor was Christianity to triumph in his dominions without further tribulation and suffering. After a reign of nine years 'Oswald was killed in a great battle by the same pagan nation and pagan king of the Mercians who had slain his predecessor Aedwin, at a place called in the English tongue Maserfield, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, on the fifth day of the month of August, A. D. 642.'²

The venerable chronicler, with fond affection, but we should say with strong assurance of faith, thus continues the narrative: 'Oswald being translated to the heavenly kingdom, his brother Oswy succeeded him on the throne of his earthly kingdom, and held it twenty-eight years with much trouble, being harassed by the pagan king Penda, and by the pagan nation of the Mercians that had slain his brother.'³ Having embraced the cross, king and people had to bear it. Penda seems to have held Deira and Bernicia in his iron grasp; the whole country from the Humber to the Forth was at the mercy of the savage and perfidious warrior. Oswy seems to have taken refuge in the northern part of his dominions, almost within the borders of the Perthshire Highlands, whither he was pursued by his relentless foe, who numbered among his allies all the native British princes, including the king of Strathclyde. Oswy despairing of further resistance, attempted to pacify the enemy by gifts; but these were scornfully rejected, and only the

¹ Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. p. 246.

² Bede, p. 123.

³ *Ibid.* p. 131.

A. D. 642-67c. last extremity was left to the baited monarch. Like his sainted brother he cast his burthen on the God whose faith he had embraced. 'If the pagan will not accept of our gifts let us offer them to Him that will—the Lord our God.' He vowed that if he should come off victorious, he would dedicate his daughter to the Lord in holy virginity, and give twelve farms to build monasteries. A small army was raised, strong in the favour of heaven and confident in their leader. By a series of skilful manœuvres the army of Penda was surprised, and though the pagans numbered three to one, the soldiers of the cross were victorious at every point. Penda and, with him, thirty royal commanders were among the slain; the hosts of heathendom were scattered to the winds. According to most writers this battle took place near Leeds. Mr Skene, with much plausibility, fixes the site on the banks of the river Avon, at Manuel near Falkirk. The argument in favour of this is, that Penda had invaded and occupied Bernicia on the Scottish side, and that it is very unlikely that he could have so far retired as to Loidis (Leeds) in Deira, and there been surprised by Oswy.¹ The additional proof from the names of localities, and the narrative in the 'Historia Brittonum,' we do not give.² In this defeat perished the last great enemy of the cross. Penda was the last of the Teuton invaders who clung to the faith of his forefathers, and despised the cowed missionaries of the gospel of peace, whose converts 'he saw not doing the works of the faith they had received.' With a 'certain grand sincerity of nature,' it seemed to him that Odin and Thor were the gods for times like his, Valhalla the goal for one whose life had been spent in the breaking of spears.

For thirty years after there was a profound peace; the Christian religion made extensive conquests, and revived where it had previously taken root; it is to be hoped that civilisation and the practice of its precepts increased in an equal ratio. The power of Oswy and Northumbria was enormously increased. Deira and

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 253-6.

² Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 13.

Bernicia extending to the Firth of Tay, were integral parts of the kingdom, while an overlordship was claimed and exercised in England over the Mercians, in Scotland over the Britons, Picts and Scots. After his struggle with Penda, the king of the Angles was engaged in a protracted and bitter contest, not with carnal but spiritual weapons. The important controversy respecting Easter and the tonsure, which agitated priest and layman in every part where the Columban church held sway, will be subsequently told. It was terminated at the Synod of Whitby, A.D. 664, and the distracted monarch and his people had their consciences set at rest on this vital subject.

On the decease of Oswy, A.D. 670, he was succeeded by his son Ecgfrid, under whom Northumbria attained its zenith of power, and whose fate it was to lose all in the attempt to grasp distant territory hardly worth the conquest.

Such a lengthened notice of Northumbrian affairs may seem foreign to a history of Scotland, but the connection at this period was very close. All Lowland Scotland was either incorporated into or dependent on Bernicia; the eastern portion was thoroughly Anglicised, and indeed the whole territory of the southern Picts was rapidly becoming so also. Manners and religion united them when heathen; the same tie now subsisted, for both were nominally Christian; missionaries followed in the wake of occupation (for it can hardly be called conquest), and a bishop was seated at his See at Abercorn.

Returning to the affairs of Pictland, it will be remembered that Eanfrid, the son of Aedilfrid, was a refugee at the Pictish court; there he was fortunate to secure the hand of a princess of the royal race; by her he had issue a son named Talorcan, who succeeded in right of his mother to the Pictish throne. It is therefore probable that Oswy, the first of the Bernician monarchs who encroached on the territory of the Picts, as cousin and heir claimed on the decease of Talorcan the kingdom, and as kings usually do, enforced his claim by the sword. The Picts naturally resisted the claim as contrary to their laws; and in order to put Oswy in a thoroughly false

A. D. 670-685. position, and to raise to the throne the true successor of Talorcan, they deposed Drust, the king they had chosen, and elected Bridei, the son of Bile by a daughter of Talorcan, to the vacant seat. Bile was of the royal house of Alclyde, so we have the curious spectacle within a few years of an Angle and a Briton seated on the Pictish throne, and the last-named contesting it, not with a Pict but an Angle. In Brude the nation found a brave and skilful leader, and from him may really be dated the existence of Pictland as a state—danger and peril welded it into one. On the accession of Ecgfrid an abortive attempt was made by the southern Picts to throw off the allegiance to Northumbria, which was sternly suppressed. In the meantime Brude fearing the power of his formidable rival, withdrew to the north, raised troops, and gradually felt his way farther south. In concert with a Dalriadic chief of the Cinel Loarn, he was successful in taking Dunaadd and Dunduirn. The first was the principal seat of the Scots; the latter was a fortress which crowned an eminence at the east end of Loch Earn, and was the principal stronghold of the district of Fortrenn. It shows how extended was the grasp of the king of Northumbria, when we find him in possession of what may be called the capitals of the Picts and Scots. These successes roused Ecgfrid to action, and he determined on the course which proved fatal to him.

Both Picts and Scots seem to have irritated the temper of Ecgfrid, by their attempts to preserve the independence of their country, and the expedition to Ireland in 684 can only be accounted for on the supposition that he wished to punish the abettors of his rebellious subjects, and paralyse further assistance. 'In the year of our Lord's incarnation, A.D. 684, Ecgfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending Beort, his general, with an army into Ireland, miserably wasted that harmless nation, which had always been most friendly to the English; insomuch that in their hostile rage they spared not even the churches or monasteries.'¹ The expedition, and the manner in which it was conducted, did not find favour

¹ Bede, p. 223.

with priests, nobles, or people; they abhorred the useless carnage and the sacrilege which accompanied it. When the expedition against the Picts was resolved on, a sense of coming evil weighed on the minds of all, his friends, and particularly Cuthbert of blessed memory, implored the infuriated monarch to pause, but all in vain. In the year after the Irish raid Ecgfrid led a gallant army, victorious in many a field, to defeat and nigh to annihilation. Passing northwards till he came nigh to the Sidlaw Hills on the borders of Forfarshire, he there met with the forces of the Picts. Bede, in his simple way, is the best narrator: 'The enemy made show as if they fled, and the king was drawn into the straits of inaccessible mountains, and slain with the greatest part of his forces, on the 20th of May, in the fortieth year of his age and the fifteenth of his reign.' The site of the battle is variously named Nechtan's Mere, Duin Nechtain, and Dunnichen. The latter is still a known locality. 'There was a lake, now drained, called the Mire of Dunnichen, where the battle was fought, and has left its record in the numerous stone coffins which have been found in the neighbourhood.'¹

The defeat of the Angles caused the collapse of their power in Scotland. Mr Burton says that 'the frontier of the Forth was abandoned, and the kingdom of Northumbria taking its limits at the Tweed, fore-shadowed the boundary line between the England and Scotland of later times.' This is undoubtedly an exaggeration; all that was really lost was the territory north of the Forth, which had been annexed by Oswy, the previous boundaries were retained nominally, and Bede says that Ecgfrid's successor, Alfrid, 'nobly retrieved the ruined state of the kingdom, though within narrower bounds.' But the sway over the Scottish portion of the kingdom was relaxed, and the tendency was to relations with the Picts rather than the Angles. As soon as a stable monarchy was established in that country, their kings found no difficulty in annexing this portion of Bernicia. In addition to the loss of Pictish territory, the Scots re-

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 266.

A. D. 67c-68g. covered their lands and liberty, while the territory wrung from the Britons of Strathclyde, with the exception of Galloway, was again recovered by that nation.

The consequences in religious matters were, that Trumwine, the missionary bishop who had established his See, in all probability at Abercorn near to Queensferry, at once withdrew with his staff of devoted labourers. The Picts lost the services of that learned and noble Church which shed such a lustre over the north of England and the borders, a Church which produced Bede, the father of English history, and Caedmon, the earliest vernacular poet of our country. The ultimate results to religion and culture were disastrous ; great national victories are not unmixed benefits ; in many cases they separate, for centuries, nations whose interests are identical, and throw them into a groove fatal to their best interests. In this case it was so ; had the Angles and their monarchs bided their time, similarity in everything would have amalgamated their nation and the Picts ; marriage with the royal race readily granted would have sealed the union. But the ill-judged policy of Oswy and Ecgfrid forestalled all this, the tie was severed, and the Picts were forced into the arms of the Scots, who though small in number had their powerful church organisation, and were forward in the civilisation of the times, in politics and in military skill. It may, however, occur to our minds, that really after all it was a matter of very little consequence whether a people in so rude a state of society as the Picts received their culture and religion from Celt or Saxon. But if we have carried our readers with us in our estimate of the two races, it will not appear so. The Angles, though rude and barbarous, had in them the seeds of a civilisation and literature, which even yet seems but in the vigour of youth ; they had cast aside the Celtic Church, enthusiastic and pious, but bearing in it the seeds of disorder and dissolution ; in accepting the Roman system they had entered into the brotherhood of nations. Nearly four centuries elapsed before the Picts accepted the boon lost by the rude wooing of Nechtan's Mere, centuries of deepest darkness, unillumin-

ated by a single ray to show that religion and culture were alive. In the person of Queen Margaret, the gentle Saxon Queen of Malcolm Canmore, Scotland was once more united to civilisation and religion, such as the Teuton could impart. The progress made in the next two centuries may be a gauge of what might have been attained during the preceding four, had the same influences been at work. A.D. 67c-68s

Seven years after the battle of Nechtan's Mere, Brude, son of Bile, died, his body was carried to Iona and interred there with every mark of respect, showing that he was on friendly terms with the Abbot of Hy, the real head of the Scots.

For the long period of forty-six years peace was maintained between the four nations, with the exception of internal conflicts, inseparable from such a state of society, and a few battles between the Scots and the Britons of Strathclyde. The influence of the Columban Church, and with it that of the Dalriadic Scots, progressed, and at this time most of its foundations were made, many laymen also as well as clerics would, we imagine, find their way over the frontier of Drumalban.

But in A.D. 710 a check was given to the influence of the Columban Church and clergy. Naitan or Nectan, the reigning monarch, was troubled with scruples of conscience as to the orthodoxy of that church on the great Easter and tonsure question, which had so agitated Northumbria during the reign of Oswy. He seems also to have been dissatisfied with the churches made of wattles peculiar to the early Scottish Church on both sides of the channel. Nectan, we should think, much to the chagrin of his spiritual guides at home, applied to Ceolfrid, the venerable Abbot of Jarrow, for advice and information on the ghostly subject, and also for architects who could build a church in the Roman manner. Both were courteously sent, advice and architects. The King called an assembly of his notables, and laid before them the letter of Ceolfrid; the arguments in it convinced King and notables. It was solemnly decreed that the Pictish Church should conform to the English (Roman) in the

A. D. 685-710. time as to the observance of Easter, and the cut of the tonsure. The king naively declared, 'I knew indeed before, that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully know the reason for observing of this time that I seem convinced that I knew little of it before.'¹ Mr Skene is of opinion that the scene of this, the first act in the Erastianism which has agitated the minds of Scotchmen ever since, was enacted at Scone, which had then become, as it was afterwards, the principal seat of the kingdom,² and where its monarchs were crowned, seated on the coronation stone, until its removal by Edward I. The history of this wonderful relic has been noticed previously, that it existed at a very early period, and still exists, are facts, though how and when it found its way to Scone, and who was the first monarch who was crowned on it are unfathomable mysteries still unsolved.

A. D. 717. The Columban clergy, like their brethren in later times, refused to conform to the royal decree, whether they took the high grounds so dear to Scotchmen of a later date, that it was an Erastian invasion of the rights of the church, or simply that the king had taken a wrong view, one in which they could not and would not concur, are of course unknown to us, but they were true to their principles.

Finding them obdurate, Nectan in A. D. 717, expelled them from their charges, and banished them the kingdom. Their places had to be filled by clergy of that part of the Scotch (Irish) Church who had conformed to Rome, or those of the Anglican Church who were willing to venture so far north. The king seems to have found no difficulty in filling the places of the dispossessed Nonconformists, and the labours of the new occupants were rewarded in the way peculiar to the times, men left their civil functions and entered into the sacred order. This may be inferred from the fact of Nectan resigning his crown and becoming a cleric, he would not want companions and imitators.

A. D. 724-844. From this time A. D. 724, until the accession of Kenneth MacAlpin the narrative is so confused that the

¹ Bede, p. 289.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 279-83.

author of this work candidly confesses that any account he can give will probably make confusion more confounded, and that Mr Burton has shown his good sense when he confines his notice of this period to a paragraph of a few lines. But having already entered the labyrinth, he is of opinion that he cannot make matters worse in the attempt to give something like a connected narrative.

The history of the Dalriadic Scots now forms an integral portion of the Pictish monarchy, with whom they were constantly in contact. Previous to the time of Brude, son of Bile, the Scots had little or no political connection with the Picts, their alliances and quarrels were with the Britons of Strathclyde and their kinsmen in Ireland. Yet the silent influence of their higher civilisation and religion would have its effect, and many of their number would doubtless find their way over the frontier of Drumalban, leavening the minds of the Picts. But from the time when both were united in the death struggle with Northumbria, their political status was recognised, and the intercourse, lay and clerical, was of the most cordial description. Again a change took place, and from the time of the expulsion of the Columban clergy until the time when they were restored, the relations were constrained. But a footing had been gained, and in the numerous contests as to the succession of the Pictish kings, they were always engaged on one side or other. For more than a century, Northern and Southern Picts, Scots, and latterly Danes, are inextricably blended, so much so indeed, that we are inclined to think that Scotland was like Israel in the days of the Judges: 'In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes.'

From this chaos arose something approaching to a settled government. The Scots, we have said, had a share in every dispute, married (evidently a very easy matter) into the royal race, and in the end gained the crown for one of themselves; their history in this respect is not unlike that of the Normans in England and Scotland. If we had the history of the time, we would find

A.D. 724-844. that the kings of Pictland, like Edward the Confessor, would have plenty of foreigners hanging about him, picking up the good things, in wives and lands.

A.D. 488-574. We have now to take up the narrative of this people from their arrival in Argyllshire.

As we have previously stated, the Scots, a people from Dalriada in Antrim, somewhere about the end of the fifth century, left the shores of Ireland and founded a colony on the western shores of Scotland. The colony consisted of three tribes, under the leadership of Loarn and Fergus, the two sons of the king of Irish Dalriada, the names of their tribes and the localities where they settled we have also stated. Loarn, the eldest, was the chief of the confederacy; nothing is known of him, but his younger brother Fergus seems to have succeeded to his position in A.D. 503, and he is reckoned the first Ri or King of Dalriada, who has a historical existence. It must be borne in mind that according to the legendary historians this monarch Fergus was the second of the name, and the fortieth in descent from Fergus I.¹ The Scots, so far as we know, encountered no opposition in making their settlement; and under their first four kings, they extended themselves over a considerable portion of territory, in what is now known as the Western Highlands, in fact, with all their efforts they never gained more.

But Brude, the King of Pictland (the first *historical* monarch of that name), alarmed at their acquisitions, or thinking them less formidable opponents than the Angles or Britons, drove them into Kintyre and slew their king. He was succeeded by Conall, the friend and kinsman of St Columba; and as the connection between Dalriada and Scotia (Ireland) was that of the child to the parent, it is not at all improbable that one of the objects of the missionary saint was to mediate in favour of the Dalriads. It is certain that his presence in Scotland was of the utmost importance to the Scots, and that from his time may be dated their influence on Pictland. We have seen that they were much further advanced in civilisation

¹ Innes' Essay, List of Scottish Kings.

than their neighbours, but the mere fact of being Christians, and of having among them men who could read and write, was sufficient of itself to command this influence. According to Bede, the island of Hy (Iona) was granted to Columba by the Pictish monarch, though Conall is said also to have made the gift, probably to keep up the fiction of possession, as many landless potentates have done since.

The mission of St Columba does not find a place here, but it may be stated, that in a way peculiar to himself and the Celtic apostles of the time, he forced welcome and recognition from the king of the Picts, and as long as the saint lived, his friends were the friends of Brude.

On the death of Conall, the suzerainty of the Abbot of Hy was at once apparent; according to the law of Tanistry, Eoganan was the rightful successor, but Columba, in accordance with instructions he had received from a higher power, preferred the youthful Aidan, whom he crowned with due solemnity A.D. 574.

Much of the success of Aidan was owing to the friendship and advice of Columba, who to the most enthusiastic devotion added an amount of worldly shrewdness seldom united in the same character. One of the saint's prophecies sounds remarkably like a homily delivered on the occasion of the king's coronation; and in it the reader will at once recognise the wisdom of the advice contained in it; the parent state would always prove a useful ally, quarrels with and conquests over it would be equally fruitless: 'Believe me unhesitatingly, O Aidan,' said he, 'none of thine enemies shall be able to resist thee, unless thou first act unjustly towards me and my successors. Wherefore direct thou thy children to commend to their children, their grandchildren and their posterity, not to let the sceptre pass out of their hands through evil counsels. For at whatever time they turn against me or my relatives who are in Hibernia, the scourge which I suffered on thy account from the angel, shall bring great disgrace upon them by the hand of God, and the hearts of men shall be turned away from them, and their foes

A.D. 438-574. shall be greatly strengthened against them. Now this prophecy hath been fulfilled in our own times, in the battle of Roth (Magh Rath, fought 637), in which Domnal Brecc, the grandson of Aidan, ravaged without the slightest provocation the territory of Domnall, the grandson of Ainmuireg. And from that day to this they have been trodden down by strangers—a fate which pierces the heart with sighs and grief.¹

Columba, naturally interested in the welfare of his and heaven's protegee, and also in that of his adopted country, was able, early in the reign of Aidan, to render king and country substantial service. Dalriada previous to this time was merely a colony, owing from Scotia (Ireland), and subject in every respect to the mother tribe; but the Abbot of Hy, through his personal influence and connection with Ireland, gained it the position of an independent kingdom.

A.D. 575. Along with Aidan, A.D. 575, he proceeded to Ireland to prosecute the claim to independence which the king demanded in form from the parent state in Antrim. St Columba was requested to adjudicate; unwilling to offend either party, he hit on what seems at once an ingenious yet simple device, fitted only for a very simple people. He declined the office, but laid it on a youth whom, there is little doubt, he had tutored: 'It is not I that shall give judgment, said he (Columba), but yonder youth, pointing to Colman MacComgellain. Colman then gave judgment, and the decision that he gave was: Their expeditions and hosting, to be with the men of Erin always, for hostings, always belong to the parent stock. Their tributes and gains and shipping to be with the men of Alba. And when one of the men of Erin or Alba should come from the east, the Dal Riada to entertain them, whether few or many, and the Dal Riada to convey them on if they require it.'²

A.D. 575. In other words, an offensive and defensive *alliance*, but no tribute or over-lordship was entered into. Aidan proved himself worthy of being the chosen of heaven and of heaven's vicegerent; he was grateful and obedient

¹ Reeves' Adamnan, pp. 81, 82. ² *Ibid.* notes, p. 265.

to his benefactor, and at the same time brave and enterprising. He extended his territories in all directions, encountering the Picts, the Britons of Strathclyde, and even the terrible Angles. He is said to have held possession of the district of Manann for some time, and one of his battles there forms the subject of a vision of St Columba. Though not averse to the aggrandisement of his kingdom at the expense of his fellow-Christians, Aidan at once and always ranked himself among the defenders of the Cross, and came to the assistance of the Britons in their conflicts with the heathen. He held the command of the combined forces of the western and Christian nations against the Angles on the fatal field of Degsastan, and was fortunate enough to escape with his life on that day of carnage.

A. D. 575.

Three years afterwards, A. D. 606, at the ripe age of eighty years, Aidan died peacefully on his bed, leaving his throne to his son Eocha Buidhe, whom St Columba had already named as his successor. Many years previous the venerable Abbot of Hy, with truly Papal assumption, but at the same time with a kindly and patriarchal simplicity, had called Aidan to his island home, that the succession to the throne might be arranged. The story is thus told by Adamnan: 'At another time, before the above-mentioned battle, the saint asked King Aidan about his successor to the crown. The king answered, that of his three sons, Artur, Eochoid Find, and Domingart, he knew not which should have the kingdom after him. Then at once the saint prophesied on this wise: "None of these three shall be king, for they shall fall in battle, slain by their enemies; but now, if thou hast any younger sons, let them come to me, and that one of them whom the Lord has chosen to be king will at once rush into my lap." When they were called in, Eochoid Buide, according to the word of the saint, advanced and rested in his bosom. Immediately the saint kissed him, and, giving him his blessing, said to his father, "This one shall survive and reign as king after thee, and his sons shall reign after him." And so were all these things fully accomplished afterwards in their

A. D. 606.

A.D. 606.

time, for Artur and Eochoid Find were not long after killed in the above mentioned battle of the Miathi; Domingart was also defeated and slain in battle in Saxonia, while Eochoid Buide succeeded his father on the throne.¹

Eochoid ascended the throne of Dalriada A.D. 606, and it is probable that the capital of the country then and afterwards was at Dunadd, a fortified hill, situate in the moss of Crinan. The records of his reign are very confused: he by conquest or marriage became king of the Picts of Galloway, and through this connection was involved in conflicts in the north of Ireland. The annals here are peculiarly perplexing; whether he took the side of the Scots or Cruithnigh (Picts) it is impossible to say, the first is the most probable, otherwise the prediction of Columba would have been there and then fulfilled; the connection with the Picts would lead to an opposite conclusion.

Eochoid passed to his grave in peace, and no event of importance is chronicled until A.D. 637, the seventh year of his son, Domnall Brecc, who seems to have been of a turbulent and warlike character, insensible to pacific counsels from St Columba or anybody else. Early in his reign, either on his own account or in conjunction with the Britons of Strathclyde, he made an attempt to wrest from the Angles the territory situated between the Avon and the Pentlands, but was defeated in a battle near Callander, and was compelled to retire.

A.D. 637.

Disappointed in this adventure against the formidable power of the Angles, and like most military heroes anxious for employment, Domnall Brecc, in the year previously mentioned, A.D. 637, impiously rushed upon his fate, and accepted the command of a force which was to sweep the Scots of the Hy-Nial family from Ireland. His army is said to have been composed of Scots, Picts, Strathclyde Britons, and even Angles; in short, the adventurous heroes of North Briton, formidable in numbers and equipment. The ostensible object of the expedition was to assist the Cruithnigh of Irish Dalriada, in a dis-

¹ Reeve's Adamnan, pp. 12, 13.

pute between them and the Scots of that country, the ulterior one, perhaps to reverse the position of the Scots a century ago, and to make Ireland a subject province. A great battle was fought at Magh Rath, now known as Moyra in county Down, in which the Cruithnigh, with their invading allies, were defeated with great slaughter. It is described as lasting seven days.¹ The Irish annals simply mention the fact. Geoffrey Keating calls it a terrible conflict.

A.D. 637

The consequences of this mad enterprise were fatal to Domnall Brecc and his country; the king himself, however, made his escape from the fatal field, and succeeded in reaching Dalriada. Shortly after his return he renewed his attempts on the territory of the Angles, but, as on former occasions, unsuccessfully. At last, one would think, tempted by fate, he provoked hostilities with the Britons of Strathclyde, the old and approved allies of himself and his family. In the fifteenth year of his reign, A.D. 642, he was slain by the king of the Britons in a battle fought in the upper valley of the river Carron, known afterwards as the forest of Strathcarron.

A.D. 642-736.

On the death of this warlike monarch Dalriada fell into a state of anarchy, the nation became demoralised, a prey to tribal quarrels and foreign invasion, thus was St Columba's prophecy fulfilled, 'the fate which pierces the heart with sighs and grief' had at length come. The little kingdom in the confused mass of nationalities struggling for existence was, to all intents and purposes, extinct, for though some chiefs claimed the title, and perhaps exercised the powers of king, there was no regular head for any length of time, or over anything like the limits of the former dominion. The true principle of Celtic government, so well shown by Mr E. W. Robertson,²—disintegration—was now at work without let or hindrance; the chief power was alternately wielded by the head of one of the three tribes, or even by less high and mighty chieftains. In the end the family of Kintyre

¹ See Burton's Scotland, vol. i. p. 291, and note.

² Robertson's Scotland under her Early Kings, vol. i. chap. ii.

A.D. 642-736. were fortunate enough in some way or other to grasp the crown of Dalriada and Pictland.

It were useless to detail the names of the different so-called kings during this period, the list, and the number of the years they reigned. Are they not to be found in the 'Chronicles of the Picts and Scots?'

The time of both kings and people seems to have been spent in the congenial pursuits of devotion and fighting, the two passions of the Gael in Ireland, immortalised by Montalembert, were reproduced in Scotland. Their wars were fierce and cruel; but kings and chiefs left their royal pomp and bloody broils to cleanse their souls in the cell of the anchorite. Unlike the devotees of the east and of medieval Europe, they did not altogether exclude worldly affairs, and not unfrequently returned to the arena of war and politics.

Up to the time of Ecgfrid the Scots were left to these pursuits all to themselves, no foreign enemy intruding, just like their Irish brethren; but the great monarch of the Angles, as we have seen, made them tributary, more probably annexed the most of their territory. The victory at Nectan's Mere gave freedom to Dalriada, and the Scots were participants in the peace which prevailed for so many years after. But they did not allow their arms to rust for lack of foreign foes; the strife between the Cinel Loarn and the Cinel Gahbran never intermitted, and numerous battles by land and sea are recorded in the Annals of Tighernac.

A.D. 736.

This state of things continued until A.D. 736, when Aengus, the Pictish king, made an attack in force on Dalriada, which he harried from one end to another. The rival tribes were driven to extremity, even to unity for the time being; so much so, that in despair they left their own soil, and burst on the plains of Manann, but only to be slaughtered there by the troops of Aengus, under the command of his brother Talorgan.

The history of the two kingdoms now marches together, or rather, the doings of the chiefs of Picts and Scots are inextricably mingled.

A.D. 737-761.

The victorious occupant of the throne of Pictland

and Dalriada had attained to this position after a pro- A.D. 731-761.
 longed internecine struggle, in which half-a-dozen or more phantom kings flit before us, slain in battle, bound in fetters, or thrust into the cell of the anchorite. Aengus MacFergus was firmly established in his position A.D. 731, and is said to have reigned thirty years, during which time he was constantly engaged in hostilities; bent on acquiring territory, his contests were with Scots, Angles, and Britons of Strathclyde, varied with a few battles between the Picts themselves on their own soil. Latterly, in alliance with Northumbria, in the early part of his reign, the relations were unfriendly, for in A.D. 740 Eadberct is said to have been occupied with his army against the Picts when his presence was urgently needed in Northumbria.¹ Aengus had, or was supposed to have, instigated the Picts of Lothian and Galloway to revolt; the first were probably supported by the Pictish power, but no record of any conflict is known. To punish or subdue the Picts of Galloway, Eadberct invited the Dalriadic Scots to occupy that district, which they did under their king Alpin, who, after a successful harrying of the province, was assassinated in the midst of his victorious army. 'The scene of his death must have been on the east side of Loch Ryan, where a stream falls into the loch, on the north side of which is the farm of Laight, and on this farm is a large upright pillar stone, to which the name of Laight Alpin, or the grave of Alpin, is given.'² Alpin would perhaps have been better at home, for the Annals of Ulster record, in the same year, 741, in short but pithy language, '741, Percussio Dalriatai la Aengus macFerguso.'

The kings of the Picts and the Northumbrians now managed to arrange matters, and not unlike their successors in modern times, the compact was for mutual spoliation. The two nations united, as in earlier times, for the purpose of crushing the Britons of Strathclyde. Several battles were fought, Alclyde taken, and the Britons thoroughly subdued. The net results to Northumbria were the acquisition of Ayrshire to their province

¹ Bede, p. 300. ² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 292.

A.D. 731-761. of Galloway, the overlordship over the nation ; in short the yoke of the Angles was again rivetted on the Cymric kingdom. What reward fell to Aengus we have been unable to discover. Tighernac records his death in 761 ; his reign seems to have been a brilliant and successful one ; no domestic troubles after he was firmly seated on his throne, except perhaps the record of a battle between the Picts themselves in 752 may indicate a collision between the two opposing elements, the northern and the southern tribes, and in which a rival may have contested his sway.

A.D. 761-780. Aengus was succeeded by his brother Bruide, who is termed by Tighernac king of Fortrenn, showing that the seat of government was now permanently transferred to that locality—in short, gravitating farther south. He reigned but two years, dying in 763, his successor being Ciniod, son of Wredech, whose rule extended to 755. In 768 a battle is recorded between his forces and those of Aedh, who seems to have been a Scot who attempted to revive the Dalriadic kingdom, and in which the Picts were probably victorious. The death of the Scot took place in 778 ; he seems to have created some stir in his time, as he is termed by Flann Mainistrech ‘the plunderer,’ and by the Albanic Duan ‘the high lord,’ though whether he was an Irish or Scotch Dalriad is uncertain. Ciniod kept on the same friendly terms with the Northumbrians as his predecessors ; he courteously received Alcred, the exiled monarch of the Angles, and though not in his time, yet in that of his successor, the reward came of a considerable cession of territory north of the Tweed. Alpin, who attained the throne in 775 and died in 780, is termed king of Saxonia.¹ Ciniod has the fame of being a pious man ; the fame extended to Northumbria, for Simeon of Durham, in recording his death says : ‘Cynoth, king of the Picts, was taken from the whirl of this polluted life.’

A.D. 780-839. The dimness and confusion of our history now reaches its climax ; in Pictland we have the names of various kings, but whether they exercised sway over the whole

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 358.

of Scotland north of the Firths, or were only monarchs of the district of Fortrenn, it is impossible to say. A.D. 780-839. The succession was invariably a disputed one, and claimants by the modern form of primogeniture entered the lists, adding another element to the already complicated mode. In this war of successions the Scots entered, and as there has never been wanting among their descendants a certain amount of ability, and an acute perception of the right way to get on, the chiefs of that time, not less acute, intermarried with Pictish princesses, and so became eligible claimants of the throne.

In the midst of these civil broils, and the consequent weakening of the central authority, a foreign element was introduced, the horrors of a barbarian invasion. In the Saxon Chronicle we have the significant entry, A.D. 787: 'In his (king Bertric) days first came three ships of Northmen out of Hæretha-land (Denmark).'¹ Since that time swarms of these fierce invaders had found their way to almost every part of Great Britain and Ireland, spreading ruin and desolation in their track. Pictland suffered severely; Dalriada still more; Iona was sacked; settlements made for convenient eyries, from which the adventurous sea-kings issued to plunder; communication with Ireland was cut off. Out of this chaos emerges, in A.D. 844, Kenneth MacAlpin, umquhil king of Dalriada, now king of that country and Pictland—Alban. The old chroniclers say that he conquered the Picts, in fact, extirpated them, so that no trace of the language even was left. The statement carries its own contradiction, and the details do not find a place in sober history. There is very little doubt but that Kenneth, a Scot by paternal descent, had claims on the Pictish throne through his mother's family; but whether he was peaceably elected, or gained his position by force, it is impossible to say. Mr Skene is of opinion that there was a strong party among the Picts who adhered to the Columban Church, and would be in favour of that competitor, who would restore it. Availing himself of this sympathy, and seizing the opportunity of the crushing defeat of the Picts of Fortrenn by

¹ Saxon Chronicle, p. 341.

A. D. 780-839

the Danes in A.D. 839, Kenneth in some way or other became the accepted of the nation and the founder of the kingdom of Scotland. If the restoration of the Columban Church was part of his programme, he certainly fulfilled this portion of it; the relics of the saint were transferred from Hy to Dunkeld, and its Abbot made the head of the Church in Alban.

CHAPTER VI.

NORSE INVASIONS.

Norse Invasions—Extent and Importance of these—High Character of the Religion, Intellect and Culture of the Teutons—Iceland and the Sagas—Scandinavia and the Vikings—the Vikings in Ireland—in Orkney and Shetland—Norsemen in Scotland—Extent and Influence of the Immigration—Narrative from Accession of Kenneth—Norse Invasions—Death of Kenneth—Donald, Constantin—Norse Invasions—Aed, Eocha, Gregory.

THE Danish, or more correctly speaking, the Norse invasions of Great Britain and Ireland, during the ninth and tenth centuries, form an integral, and in many ways the most important portion of the history of these countries. Indeed the Norse invasions are by no means the least important part of the history of every European country from the Pentland Firth to the Black Sea, and now fall to be noticed.

In the beginning of the fifth century the various Teutonic tribes poured forth from central Europe and overwhelmed the imperial power in Gaul, Italy, Spain, and Britain. There, they in part adopted the language, religion, and manners, of the Romans, and the Gothic rule in Italy and Spain contrasts not unfavourably with the best periods of the imperial sway.

In Gaul, after a brilliant and useful career, the Merovingian dynasty lapsed, only to be followed by one more famous; and under Charlemagne the empire of 'the fair-haired and blue-eyed Franks' extended between east and west from the Ebro to the Elbe or Vistula, between the north and south from the Duchy of Beneventum to the river Eyder, the perpetual boundary of Germany and Denmark.¹ The empire of Charlemagne had been fiercely assailed by the Allemanni, and as fiercely had they been driven back. In thirty campaigns the emperor

¹ Gibbon's Rome, vol. v. p. 411.

had forced them into the swamps of Denmark and the rugged fastnesses of Norway and Sweden. But the bold and daring spirit which had burned in the ancestors of Charlemagne, was the same which animated the kinsmen he had repelled; the tumultuous torrent of life and action cooped up inland found an outlet—the sea became the highway to fame and fortune. The great successor to the majesty of imperial Rome, wept when he saw the white sails of the Vikings covering the waters of the Mediterranean, the presage of the downfall of his empire, gained by carnage and maintained by terror.

Gibbon says, that the fiercest of the Saxon idolaters escaped to their brethren of the north. Had the gifted historian studied more carefully the sacred books of the Scandinavians, he would have said, that the truest and best of the Saxons preferred a faith suited to their lives, to that faith which tolerated the laxest morality and connived at the most unnatural crimes. The followers of Odin and Thor were not idolaters, they led purer lives than the followers of the 'white Christ';¹ the banner of the Cross covered deeds as atrocious as those executed under the flag on which was depicted the raven, the bird of Odin, 'fell god of slaughter.' The religion of Scandinavia was no unworthy antagonist of Christianity; chastity and truthfulness were integral parts of it; the sanctity of the marriage tie and the family relations, which are the truest safeguards of national life, are its products. Indeed Christianity, in conquering the religion of the Eddas, adopted much of its teaching; there have been few *meeke* men in church or state since that time. *Nemo me impune lacessit* has been more the practice of Christians than the pusillanimous conduct recommended in the gospel. War is still the most honourable calling, and the heart of the minister of the gospel of peace thrills, his voice trembles, when he illustrates Christian duties by the recital of some desperate deed at arms. The immediate and natural outcome of the blending of the faith of Odin and Christ was the militant bishop and the

¹ An epithet applied by the Northmen to our Saviour. Worsae's *The Danes and the Northmen*, p. 56.

Christian knight, the principal occupation of both—fighting.

We can hardly conclude that the different tribes of Teutons who in the fifth century invaded England, were actuated by a spirit similar to that of their kinsmen in the north. Heathendom we have seen, however, died hard there, and Penda was no unworthy representative of the believers in Odin and Valhalla. But there is little doubt that the Norsemen who swept the coasts and ravaged the shrines of Great Britain and Ireland in later days, were actuated by more than the desire for plunder; there *was* a religious feeling underlying this, such as actuated the soldiers of Islam. The stories told by their kinsmen who had fled from the tyranny of Charlemagne, would steel their hearts when prayers were made for mercy from men who numbered him among their saints. A saint, who caused four thousand Saxons to be beheaded in one day; whose laws were not less sanguinary than his arms; whose edicts pronounced the penalty of death on those who refused baptism or even ate flesh during Lent.

The people thus cooped up in the north of Europe were of the Scandinavian branch of the Teutonic family, and were probably the latest arrival from the primeval east. Their religion was chiefly a deification of the powers of nature, but there is also strong ground for supposing that their principal god Odin was no other than the chief who led them from the shores of the Euxine to the Baltic, and that they brought with them somewhat of the arts and culture known to exist there. Their barbarity has been taken for granted, chiefly through accounts by chroniclers who were little more advanced in civilisation than themselves, but who having embraced Christianity, thought all outside of its pale thieves and robbers. The same character was given to the chivalrous Saracens of Palestine and the accomplished Moors of Spain, and on much the same grounds. The Norsemen had indeed much that we now consider civilisation—their arms and accoutrements, the excellence of their ships, far surpassing in build and sea-worthiness those of antiquity, their use of coined money, and their combining commerce

with war—all prove them to have been no barbarians as we understand the word. But above all their intellectual life was stronger and fresher than that of the Latinised nations with whom they came in contact; the early and medieval church, while sowing the seed of ‘peace on earth and good-will towards men,’ did little to elevate the minds of its members, spiritual not intellectual life was its goal. This life of the intellect, without which spiritual life is but a trance, a state of coma, the Norsemen embodied in what are termed the Eddas and Sagas of the Icelandic literature; its origin, character, and importance we give in the words of Mr Worsae: ‘In Iceland, where a great number of the most powerful and shrewdest of the heathen of Norway sought, after the year A.D. 870, a refuge against spiritual and political oppression, and where they founded a republic which retained its independence for centuries, the Scandinavian spirit obtained a free field. Not only did the old bardic lays, and the remembrance of the deeds of former times, continue to live among the Icelandic people, but new bards arose in numbers, who, spreading themselves over the whole north of Europe, returned “with their breasts full of Sagas.” There also speedily arose in Iceland immediately after the Viking expeditions, and altogether independently of any external influence, an historical Saga literature in the old Scandinavian tongue, which, viewed by itself, is, from its simplicity and elevation, extremely remarkable, but which, when compared with the contemporary dry Latin monkish chronicles and annals in the rest of Europe, is truly astonishing. The Edda songs, the purely historical Sagas, the historical novels, and other peculiarly bold and original productions of the Icelandic literature, in an age when the European mind was singularly contracted, form, in the intellectual world, manifestations of the thorough individual freedom which stamped itself on the arms, endeavours, and whole life of the Northmen.’¹ Modern criticism seems to point to the conclusion, that the Jewish religion was systematised and spiritualised when the nation was exiled. The same

¹ Worsae’s *The Danes and Northmen*, p. 127.

seems to have been the case with the Scandinavian; in the *Völuspa* or prophecy of the Seeress it reached its highest spiritual manifestation; its closing strophes where 'a new world appears fair in verdant beauty, where only virtuous folk may dwell,' display an insight and a faith in the good, the true, and the beautiful, which has perhaps been equalled, never excelled.

The countries of Denmark and Norway at the present day do not afford the means of subsistence to a large population, still less would they do so in earlier ages, and we are apt to be incredulous as to the accounts of the numbers who swarmed from them in these times. But during several centuries Scandinavia was but the headquarters and the refuge of maritime adventurers, whose field was the world, who either settled where they conquered, or returned home with their plunder. For such men it was admirably suited, a refuge and shelter to the reapers of the sea; for several centuries the kings of Denmark were the most powerful monarchs of Europe, and by commerce, combined with what we would call piracy, the wealthiest. Both Danes and Norwegians bore the name of Vikings, *i.e.*, Isl. *Vikingr*, a sea rover, pirate, so-called from the Icelandic *Vik*, Danish *Vig*, a bay of the sea, or from *Vig*, battle, slaughter.

Denmark formed the seat of government when the rovers were united under one head, and then, as now, no better nursery for seamen could be found; split up into innumerable fissures by the waves of the German Ocean and the currents of the Baltic, the dwellers on it found the sea their only highway. But Norway was the true home of the Vikings, and no better base for their operations, no more secure refuge could be found. 'Norway stretches her broad and rocky bosom towards the ocean,' the wide waves of the Atlantic have split its western side into numberless gulphs, the well-known Fjords, which bear considerable resemblance to the sea lochs of Scotland, and some are of much greater extent. They seem designed by nature for harbours of defence, and could shelter the navies of the world, the entrances are in many cases narrow, thus affording an easy means

of defence, close into the wall of precipitous rock the depth of water in the smallest bay is sufficient for ships of any tonnage. What was wanted the Vikings found in abundance, timber, pitch and iron, cultivating his little patch of level ground was never thought of when the sea was open, and the harvest from it plenteous.

From an early period, even from the time of Cæsar, the inhabitants of the coast of the German Ocean were bold sailors and successful freebooters, and the imperial navy did not gain much renown in its conflicts with them; but from the end of the eighth, and during the ninth and tenth centuries, a new and vigorous life seems to have taken possession of the inhabitants of the countries bordering on the northern seas. The Norsemen poured forth in countless numbers from their secure and inaccessible eyries, and from the English Channel to the Bosphorus their white sails were seen. The storms of the Atlantic had no terrors for them; they discovered and colonised the Faroe Islands and Iceland; they were the first Europeans who set foot in Greenland, and in all probability in America.

The expedition of Rolfe, and his acquirement of the Dukedom of Normandy, is perhaps the most important event, looking to results, in modern history; the descendants of the fierce Vikings were in England and Scotland the initiators of that civilisation which has raised Great Britain, her colonies, and the United States, to their present position.

Another daring spirit from the same fount of heroes and statesmen wrested Sicily from the grasp of the Moslem, and founded a kingdom which for long was the most polished and learned in Christian Europe, the only representative of reason and culture, in opposition to faith and its ghostly concomitants, ignorance and credulity.

The expeditions of the Vikings to the British isles have each their separate interest, similar in many respects, the result seems to have been the same, an infusion of new energy, a quickening of national life in a population who, from various causes, was rapidly de-

teriorating in all the qualities which give strength and vitality to a community. These invasions were made by different adventurers nearly simultaneously, no portion of the country was secure where an arm of the sea or a navigable river afforded a means of ingress. The manner of their attack, and the terror which they inspired, can be best told in the words of Henry of Huntingdon, though, like other contemporary chroniclers, he does not do justice to the motives of the invaders, and exaggerates their cruelties. 'It was wonderful how, when the English kings were hastening to encounter them in the eastern districts, before they could fall in with the enemy's bands, a hurried messenger would arrive and say, "Sir king, whither are you marching? The heathens have disembarked from a countless fleet on the southern coast, and are ravaging the towns and villages, carrying fire and slaughter into every quarter." The same day another messenger would come running, and say, "Sir king, whither are you retreating? a formidable army has landed in the west of England, and if you do not quickly turn your face towards them, they will think you are fleeing, and follow in your rear with fire and sword." Again the same day, or on the morrow, another messenger would arrive, saying, "What place, O noble chiefs, are you making for? The Danes have made a descent in the north; already they have burnt your mansions, even now they are sweeping away your goods, they are tossing your young children raised on the points of their spears, your wives, some they have forcibly dishonoured, others they have carried off with them." Bewildered by such various tidings of bitter woe, both kings and people lost their vigour both of mind and body, and were utterly prostrated; so that even when they defeated the enemy, victory was not attended with its wonted triumphs, and supplied no confidence of safety for the future.'¹ Similar, though not so lively, are the reports of the Scotch (Irish) Chroniclers, as to the doings in Scotland and Ireland.

The Danish invasions, and in the end conquest of

¹ Henry of Huntingdon's Chronicle, pp. 147-9. Ed. Bohn.

England, does not form a part of our history, and needs but a passing notice. It was to some extent a repetition of the struggle between heathendom and Christianity, and in it, all established institutions were overturned. But the fierce conflict purified the combatants, and prepared England for the kindred race who were to be the latest formers of the English people. The Anglo-Saxons, even in the north, had deteriorated in many ways since the fifth and sixth centuries, they were no longer the energetic though fierce and barbarous colonists of that period. Explain it as we may, degeneracy and weakness were the first results of the conversion of barbarous nations previous to the Norse invasions, and nowhere more so than in England. The same authority we have just quoted proves the statement: 'The reason why the anger of God was inflamed against them (the English) with such fury was this. In the early days of the English Church religion flourished with so much lustre, that kings and queens, nobles and bishops, resigned their dignities and entered into the monastic life. But in process of time, all piety became extinct, so that no other nation equalled them for impiety and licentiousness, as especially appears in the history of the Northumbrian kings. This impiety was not only manifest in the royal annals, but extended to every rank and order of men. Nothing was held disgraceful except devotion, and innocence was the surest road to destruction.'¹ The Christianity of the time, when sincere, was one of asceticism, a man was either ascetic or lawless and profane, the ordinary business and cares of life were unworthy the attention of a religious man, to save his soul he must retire from a hateful and godless world. The stern realities of a heathen invasion put an end to this, and Alfred was the outcome, the noblest example of a truly pious man, yet a soldier, a statesman, and a laborious student. Retiring from the throne to a convent went out of fashion with kings and nobles, a pilgrimage to Rome quieted their consciences about as well, and enlarged their experiences at the same time.

¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 148.

But the Danes did more than rub out this ascetic form of Christianity, they introduced navigation and commerce, from their time may be dated the rise of the naval power of Great Britain. With the exception of the Angles of the north, the inhabitants of England, in the ninth century, were not a seafaring people; from the time of the long keels in which they arrived, no mention is made of ships, and how little the people knew of seamanship is shown by the feeble resistance offered to the Vikings. Britannia had then 'no bulwarks, no towers along the deep.' Even the big ships built by Alfred had to be manned by Frisians, and offered an ineffectual resistance to the invaders. The settlements made by the Danes and Norwegians gave to England and Scotland from the Isle of Thanet to the Orkneys, a race of sailors and fishermen, who have made Great Britain the mistress of the seas, and the carrier of the commerce of the world.

In addition, the Norsemen planted an independent class of freemen, who would not be browbeat by prince, lay or clerical, and who enforced their right in the making and administration of the law.¹ It is admitted that they brought to England the institution of the Thing, the assembly where they arranged their disputes and public affairs, and also trial by jury. It is a matter of dispute whether there were any legislative assemblies in the early English kingdoms, or whether trial by jury is a Saxon institution, but it is certain that the Danes exercised both in the five Danish counties called the Danelag, England owes her initiatory legislative to Alfred, but, at the sametime is under immense obligations to her Danish kings. All of them, particularly the great Canute, seem to have been excellent law-givers, his 'laws respecting the limitation of capital punishment, the right of every man to hunt on his own land, and others, evince a mildness and humanity scarcely to be expected in these rude times.'²

The Irish invasion, as has been previously noticed, produced no such results, though it would be far from

¹ See Worsae, *The Danes in England*, Lecture xiii. ² *Ibid.* p. 166.

the truth to say that it was an unmixed evil, the commerce which that country possesses owes its origin entirely to the Vikings, who settled there, and survived the slaughter of the most of their race.

The Danish and Norwegian incursions are voluminously told in the Irish Annals and in the 'Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill,' a comparatively modern version of an undoubtedly ancient original. The narrative is told after the manner of the Scandinavian Sagas, with poems and fragments of poems introduced into the prose narrative. The editor, Dr Todd, is of opinion that the 'literature of the Sagas was an imitation on the part of the Northmen of the historical tales and poems which they found in Ireland,' an opinion which will be shared by few who are not what Max Müller calls 'Celtic enthusiasts.' The Sagas bear few marks of this so-called original. The style of the 'Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill' is described by Dr Todd 'as inflated and bombastic.' Whatever may be the demerits of the Sagas their style is neither the one nor the other.

The conquests of the Vikings in Ireland were attended with much rapine and devastation, but we can hardly credit the monstrous atrocities detailed by the old chroniclers 'Jugalatio' 'Vastatio.' 'People were everywhere killed or maltreated: churches and convents plundered, burnt and desecrated. The number of the invaders, their arms and accoutrements, their valour were magnified, to add to the lustre of the heroic defenders of the Sacred Isle. The Scandinavian accounts, on the other hand, are much more prosaic, and according to Mr Worsae, are in general shorter than the Irish, and confine themselves merely to the relation of single events. With them the Irish expeditions were only a part, and a small part, of their schemes of conquest; Ireland is usually treated of incidentally, nay, almost accidentally.

The distinction between the Danes and Norwegians assumed greater proportions in their Scotch and Irish expeditions, or the Gael made a distinction where the

Saxon did not. The Vikings in Ireland are termed by the native writers the Dubhgaill and the Fingail, the black and the white strangers; the first are supposed to be the Danes, the other the fair-haired Norwegians, who are also termed Lochlanns, or people of the Lake land. By some the distinction is supposed to refer to the colour of the armour worn, and not to the complexion. That there were two different sets among the Vikings is certain, generally in alliance, they occasionally turned their arms against one another, showing the peculiar effects of a residence in Ireland, and an accommodation to the habits of a people with whom internecine war was the normal state of matters. The Northmen made extensive conquests in Ireland; the only misfortune was, that they were not numerous enough to absorb the native population, and that there was no territory further west into which it could be driven. The power of the Danes was chiefly of a naval and commercial character, and was never united under one head, they commenced by settling on the coast, and endeavoured by war or diplomacy to extend their possessions into the interior, but in many cases the territory called a kingdom consisted only of a town with an adjacent tract of land, such as might be called a township. The most considerable settlements were at Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork and Limerick; at Dublin a powerful state was formed, the sway of its monarchs extending to the Isle of Man and the southern portion of the western islands of Scotland. The kings of Dublin held also extensive territory in Ireland, and entered into matrimonial and other alliances with the native princes, the celebrated Gormflaith, termed the Messalina of Ireland, was the wife of Brian Boroimha, and the mother of Sitriyg, the king of the Ostmen in Dublin, who received in marriage a daughter of Brian's by a previous wife.

The battle of Clontarf, A.D. 1014, proved ruinous to Ostmen and Irishmen alike. Colgan, the author of the *Acta Sanctorum*, an author whose opinions even an Irishman will not controvert, thus remarks on it: 'In a great battle fought on the plains of Clontarf, near

Dublin, with very great slaughter on both sides, the strength of each was so irreparably weakened, that neither people has since been able, even to the present day, to recover its original strength and power. For there fell in that battle the principal chieftains and nobles, both of the Irish and Northmen, with the far famed king of Ireland, Brian Boroimha or Bowmocus, who, says Marianus Scotus, on Good Friday of Kal. Maii, was slain, his hands and mind intent on prayer to God.¹ Though, according to Irish Annalists, the battle resulted in a decided victory, it does not seem to have affected the power of the Norsemen to any great extent; they still retained possession of the seaports they had acquired, and for some time, the usual conflicts between them and the native tribes are recorded. But from this time heathendom was extinct, no fresh arrivals came from Scandinavia, and Christianity such as it was, became the profession of both of the contending parties. The Norsemen, it would seem, thought that their deities were beaten in the last conflict, for the issue of the battle of Clontarf was believed to be owing to the prayers of Brian, who before and during the fight, repeated the whole of the Psalter, one hundred and fifty collects, and the same number of Paternosters.² In any case, about twenty-five years later, Sigtryg, king of Dublin, and Donald his bishop, built the church of the Holy Trinity called also Christ's Church, and also the chapel of St Michael; about fifty years later the cathedral in Waterford, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was founded and erected by the Ostmen there.³ Mr Worsae gives the Norsemen the credit of being the first to introduce coined money into Ireland, a silver coin having been discovered which must have been struck in the ninth century, later on we have even the name of the Dublin coiner, Faeremin, who minted the extensive issue of king Sigtryg.⁴

¹ Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill, preface p. xxii.

² *Ibid.* p. 197.

³ Worsae's, the Danes in Ireland, p. 343.

⁴ *Ibid.* Section V.

The Ostmen remained a distinct body even after the Anglo-Norman occupation of the country; but unlike their Celtic brethren, they failed to preserve a distinct position in the face of the rapidly advancing nationality with whom they had so much in common. The remarks of the learned Dane from whose work we have quoted, on the importance of the Northmen to Ireland, are singularly suggestive; he gives a quotation from a distinguished repealer, Mr Holmes, who says, 'that it would have been no detriment to Ireland if the Danes had remained and settled there,' and concludes his sixth section in words pregnant and true. After having shown that the Norwegians opened up the way for peaceful connections between Ireland and the rest of Europe, he opposes the arguments of those who would say that they only facilitated the English conquest, the bane and curse of Ireland. 'It may possibly be said that the Norwegians in Ireland, by thus preparing the way for the Norman or English conquest, rendered a far greater service to England than to subjugated Ireland. But all the chronicles, it must be recollected, bear witness that the Irish were neither strong enough to govern their own country independently, nor capable of keeping pace with the advance of European civilisation by means of an active commerce. We have seen that even in later times the same baleful and sanguinary spirit of dissension which weakened Ireland in ancient days is yet scarcely extinct among the original Irish race. It is manifest, therefore, that Ireland, which would otherwise have been divided from the rest of Europe, and devastated by terrible intestine contentions, has been much benefited by being united to so great and powerful a country as England, which has both the ability and the will to promote the true welfare of the Irish people.'¹

The Shetland islands are but 200 miles from the coast of Norway, it was but natural then that the Vikings would touch at them in their adventurous voyages to the west. Thus we find to be the case, and that they made

¹ Worsae's *Norwegians in Ireland*, p. 352.

them a point from which they could take the Faroe Isles on the one side, the British Isles on the other. Sometime before the reign of Harald Harfraga, a footing had been obtained, and Rolfe, when banished by the relentless master of Scandinavia, retired thither, where he found numerous sympathisers who accompanied him to the banks of the Seine.

From these islands, the Vikings made their incursions into the mainland and islands of Scotland; in the latter they found sea lochs resembling their own fiords, secure refuges, where plunder was safe and wassail undisturbed. So successful were they, that by the beginning of the tenth century the Jarls of Orkney held sway over Shetland, the Orkneys, the Hebrides, and the counties of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Moray. The Danes and Norwegians were a menace to Scotland till the battle of Largs A.D. 1263. The Celto-Norwegian prince, the Lord of the Isles, was an independent potentate until 1411. The Orkneys and Shetland were provinces of Norway until A.D. 1449. The incursions and forays into Scotland as in Ireland, are said by the chroniclers to have been made by two different peoples, the Fingail and the Dubhgail, though many of the expeditions may have comprised both, the northern and western coasts, the Norwegians; the eastern south of the Moray Firth, the Danes. The atrocities of the Vikings do not loom so largely in Scottish as in English and Irish history, perhaps on account of the paucity of native writers to chronicle, or that there were fewer shrines and mansions to plunder. Another reason may be, that the arrival of the Norsemen added but another element to the disorganised state of Scotland at the time; from what can be gathered of its history during the latter half of the eighth and most of the ninth century, it was a time of chaotic fighting, the two divisions of northern and southern Picts, striving for the supremacy, and assisted in the strife by sympathisers from Dalriada, Strathclyde and Saxonia, the Vikings make their appearance, and add but little to the mad imbroglio. Though Hy was devastated and the family

slain or expelled, though Dunkeld was plundered and other shrines violated, yet there does not seem in the accounts the same fierce strife between Christianity and paganism. The reason for this we trust to make apparent in the second part of this work—there was little or no Christianity to destroy. Kings, and perhaps a few notables turned monks, but except in the first burst of the enthusiastic Celtic Church, Christianity made no converts except among those who embraced the clerical life. Expelled from their western home the very brethren of Hy lost the distinguishing characteristics of ministers of religion except the material adjuncts; they lived by, but did not minister at the altar; the abbots became lay impropiators, the monks serviceable men at arms, or sturdy labourers. Mr Burton cynically but truly remarks—‘there are no Pictish saints.’

But the true reason why there was no friction, apart from the armed conflict, between the Picts and the Norsemen was, that it was but an influx of kinsmen, in greater force and numbers, than on previous occasions, and as in England, a harmonious people was the result, united in a detestation of everything Celtic. The Lowlanders, northern as well as southern, when the strife was over, commenced to be what they now are, hardy sailors and fishermen, agriculturalists and artisans, the Celts and Celtic ways, picturesque idleness enjoyed by theft from industry, were confined to the Highlands and Islands. How this state of things, which at present awakens such fond regret among people who should know better, was felt by Lowland Scotland at the time of the battle of Harlaw, A.D. 1411, is expressed in terms scathing but just by Mr Burton, the unprejudiced reader will cordially endorse his views. ‘It will be difficult to make those not familiar with the tone of feeling in Lowland Scotland at that time, believe that the defeat of Donald of the Isles was felt as a more memorable deliverance even than that of Bannockburn. What it was to be subject to England the country knew, and knowing did not like. But to be subdued by their savage

enemies of the mountains, opened to them sources of terror of unknown character and extent. Hence of the many men of mark and local rank, who fell on that field, the people of the northern Lowlands long retained affectionate recollection, and they particularly selected for this tribute the Provost of Aberdeen and Sir Alexander Irvine, whose domains almost touched the field of battle.¹ In another part of this work we have insisted on the Scandinavian origin of the inhabitants of the northern Lowlands, and that the most convincing proof of this is the similarity of their language. Mr Worsae holds the opinion that the Caledonians were exterminated or expelled from their ancient territory,² and that the language known as Lowland Scotch is entirely that of immigrants of Teutonic race. This is of course untenable, but it by no means invalidates the argument against the origin of the language, and his statements as to the similarity, command our favourable judgment. The learned scholar and antiquary says: 'To enumerate all the Scandinavian words in the English popular tongue would, from their quantity, be both a tedious and superfluous labour.' He then gives a selection of one hundred words, and in a foot note he says, 'many of these words are Scotch.'³ Again, speaking more particularly of the Norwegians in Scotland, after remarking on the similarity in appearance and character of the Southern Lowlanders to the Scandinavians, he says: 'According to a very common saying here, even the language of the Lowlands is so much like that of Scandinavia, that Lowland seamen wrecked on the coasts of Scotland and Norway, have been able to converse without difficulty in their mother tongue with the common people there. This is undoubtedly a great exaggeration; but this much is certain, that the popular language in the Lowlands contains a still greater number of Scandinavian words and phrases than even the dialect of the north of England.'³ All pointing to the conclusion that the

¹ Burton's History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 394.

² Worsae's Danes in Scotland, p. 197. *Ibid.* pp. 84-86.

³ Worsae's The Norwegians in Scotland, p. 201.

Norsemen instead of imposing a language, on a people speaking a different one, found in the Lowlands of Scotland, a people of the same race and speech as themselves. Thrusting aside all theories as to the origin of the Picts, and what their language was, Mr Burton incisively states the facts: 'We cannot say when it was that the first man of Teutonic northern race set foot in Scotland, and whether he found the land empty or inhabited by Celts. But we knew pretty well that from the fourth century to the tenth, this race spread over the land that is now Lowland Scotland, and that if they found Celts there, these were pressed westwards to join the community of their fellow Celts that had crossed over from Ireland.'

The influence of the Norsemen on the islands of Scotland is in marked contrast to that exercised on the mainland, and on England, showing at once the preponderance of the Celtic population, which absorbed the sparse Teutonic element. If the Vikings made any change in the Celtic life, it was evanescent. This was owing chiefly to the character of the country, possessing in itself few of the resources, without which civilisation is nigh to impossible. When the successful pirate had exhausted his victories, or had been driven back to his eyrie, he either fell into the habits of the people he had subjugated, or left for a more congenial home, few of the daring spirits who from there had carried the raven flag to the remotest parts of Britain, would remain when driven back, the flag but a winding-sheet for the baffled warrior. The Norsemen who remained were lost in the Celts in all save the physique, which a millennium of ignorance and idleness has failed to eradicate. The distinction between the two races is marked, and is particularly noticed by Mr Worsae, who was struck by the difference obviously between two races in the Island of Lewis. His remarks on the personal appearance of what he considered the Celtic population are not complimentary; but in a district called Ness, he found the men and women of a different complexion, taller and much handsomer. He almost fancied himself in Scandinavia,

if the Gaelic language and the wretched dwellings, where family and cattle occupy the same apartment, had not reminded him that he was in one of the districts where the Gael has been driven by the relentless force of Teutonic civilisation.¹

It may seem that we have exaggerated the importance and the beneficial effects of the Norse colonists and invaders, for there are comparatively few remains out of Orkney and Shetland that can be satisfactorily traced to them, their influence lay not on the surface. The Danes and Norwegians prepared the way for the Norman, who was to give to the country institutions, civil and sacred, capable of expansion to the wants of a people always advancing in civilisation and culture. Had the Celtic influence not received this check, the people of Lowland Scotland could never have become a homogeneous nation, united in weal or woe, native feuds, and disintegration the normal Celtic state, must have resulted. The people, lowered in all that could elevate them to the rank of an independent state, would have sunk deeper and deeper, till they became like their compatriots in Ireland, hewers of wood and drawers of water, to masters whom they alternately fawn on or throttle.

A.D. 845-860.

We now resume the tangled thread of our narrative, from the accession of Kenneth MacAlpin, and from the frequent notices of the Norse invasions, it will be seen that our digression is not superfluous.

The kingdom which had been won by Kenneth for himself and his family, consisted of that portion of Scotland north of the Forth to the barrier of the Month, or perhaps to the Spey; to the west of Drumalban it included the mainland of Argyllshire and the islands of Bute and Arran, the other islands had been seized and occupied by the Norwegians.

The materials from which our history is derived are either wholly or in part ecclesiastical, the chroniclers, as indeed ought to be expected, are clerics, the only bardic narrative is the Albanic Duan, which we have seen was

¹ Worsae's Norwegians in Scotland, p. 268.

not the composition of the picturesque individual who recited it. From the peculiar character of Celtic, indeed of all early Christianity, the affairs of the church are the absorbing topics, mundane matters are only alluded to in connection with that body, the prominent members of it, and the actions which militated against or favoured it, the condition of the people, physical and mental, can only be inferred. As will be seen in our second part, a large ecclesiastical and educational establishment was formed at Hy (Iona), from which issued devoted and learned men to preach and teach. But the best of them were ascetics or enthusiastic visionaries, whose aim was to keep *themselves* pure from the world and the fashion thereof, the remainder from the importance attached to the miserable Easter and tonsure controversy, seemingly attached more value to these fetichs than to education and culture. There were numerous cells, which might be called monasteries, but there is no evidence to show that the Celtic monks laboured at agriculture like the Benedictines, and that a population of peaceful workers clustered round their retreats. We hear only of about half a dozen towns, the principal are repeatedly sacked by the Danes; if there was a defence it is not recorded, the people had gained a knowledge of military tactics, and retained their daring courage, but they had not attained to the art of throwing up fortifications which could withstand the assault of a daring foe. The Christianity of three centuries had produced nought but men at arms and recluses. Kenneth's accession to the throne of Pictland is said to have been in 844, but according to the Pictish Chronicle the true date is 850. Previous to his name, there occur those of three kings who reigned six years, probably, though he may have assumed the nominal title of sovereignty, his right was disputed by those, who, one after another, were defeated and slain.

The first monarch of the new dynasty possessed qualities which gained him the title of 'the hardy,' qualities which were needed to gain and preserve his throne; the period imperiously required them. Previous to his

A.D. 845-860. time, only one year after the sacrilegious spoliation of Lindisfarne, in 794, the Annals of Innisfallen and the Annals of Ulster record an attack of the Norsemen on the Western Isles. 'Vastatio omnium insularum Britannia a gentibus.'¹ In 798 another invasion was made, and great spoil taken.

A.D. 794-839. In 802 Hy, evidently for the first time, attracted the notice of the spoilers, for in that year the monastery and buildings were burnt. In 806 the storm burst in fury on the brotherhood, 'the family of Hy, sixty-eight in number, were slain by the Gentiles.'² The solitude and apparent security, combined with the proximity to both Ireland and Scotland, were ruthlessly disturbed, and the Columban Church had to find a safer spot from which to conduct its affairs. A centre for the church convenient for both countries was no longer possible, jurisdiction in Scotland was fixed at Dunkeld, in Ireland at Cennanus in Meath, now Kells. It is still in connection with Hy that we have the next account of the ravages of the Norsemen. Though the supremacy was jointly transferred to the two seats in Scotland and Ireland previously mentioned, the establishment was still kept up, and the relics of St Columba, in part at any rate, were still in the hallowed spot. The relics or shrine of a saint or saints constituted a large portion of the wealth of a monastery, and were enclosed in costly caskets, richly adorned, those at Hy particularly so. Their sanctity was nought to the followers of Odin, and they naturally excited the cupidity of the Vikings. In 825 the Sacred Isle was visited, the occurrence is briefly described in the Annals of Ulster: 'A.D. 825, the martyrdom of Blaimec, son of Flann, by the Gentiles in Hi Columcille.' Dr Reeves gives an account of the death of the martyr, who was acting superior of the monastery at the time. 'Having become a monk Blaithmaic, "agmina multorum rexit veneranda virorum," he coveted the crown of martyrdom, and betook himself to the island Eo, whither the pagan Danes had already on more than one occasion come. Expecting their return he counselled the members of the

¹ 794, Annals of Ulster, 806. ² *Ibid.*

fraternity to save themselves by flight! Whereupon some departed, while others remained with him. The precious shrine containing St Columba's relics he deposited in the earth, and when on the arrival of the plunderers he refused to make known the place of its concealment, they slew both him and his companions,'¹ the holy treasures were saved, and subsequently transferred to Dunkeld.

No other notice of the Vikings is to be found until 839, when their actions form a vital part of the history of Scotland. Previous to this period the assaults had been made on the islands only, these, to the Isle of Man, were now under their dominion, but now an attack was made in force on the mainland. According to Mr Skene's interpretation of a passage from the 'Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill,' taken in connection with another from the 'Annals of Ulster,' the events thus took place: In the year mentioned three score and five ships came and plundered Dublin, thereafter they set sail, and proceeding northwards, invaded Scotland by way of Dalriada. Somewhere in the interior (Fortrenn) they inflicted a crushing defeat on the combined forces of the Picts and Dalriads, who—so disorganized was the state of the two nations—were looked upon as one people, and commanded by Eogannan, the son of Angus, a Dalriad.

This defeat, in which the king or commander was slain, seems to have completely crushed the Picts of Fortrenn, and left the reins of power open to any one who could grasp them. Kenneth MacAlpin, previously noticed, who seems to have ruled over the Dalriads for some years previous, was probably present at the battle, and so far from being down-hearted at the defeat, collected the scattered forces of both nations, and succeeded in slaying or expelling the invaders from a large portion of the territory they had gained. Such, at any rate, may be gathered from a rather vain glorious passage in the Chronicle of Huntingdon: 'Kynadius succeeded to

¹ Reeves' Columba, p. clxxiv.

A.D. 794-860. his father's kingdom; in the seventh year of his reign, while the Danish pirates occupied the Pictish shores, and had crushed the Picts who were defending themselves, with great slaughter, he (Kynadius) turned his arms against them, and having slain many, compelled them to flee. He reigned over the whole of Alban, which is now called Scotia, he was the first king of the Scots who ruled in it over the Scots.¹

A.D. 845-860. Kenneth's career, from his earliest days, was a stormy one; it is supposed that his father Alpin, at the head of a party of Scots, forced a settlement in Galloway, at the time when Dalriada was harried by Angus MacFergus. He thus succeeded to little more than the leadership of a band of outlaws. Favoured by the intestine divisions and consequent weakness of the Pictish kingdom, he by his own talents and courage conquered the southern portion of Dalriada, became the chief and resuscitator of the race, and in 850, as we have seen, became sole monarch of Pictland and Dalriada. The new king found himself surrounded by enemies on every side; the Britons burnt Dumblane, the Danes penetrated as far as Dunkeld and Cluny.² Kenneth bravely and successfully resisted these formidable foes; and as it is not improbable that the great Viking, Regner Lodbrok led the Danes, his ability and courage are unquestionable. He further proved his ability to maintain and extend the power of his kingdom by repeated invasions of Saxonia, and is said to have burnt Dunbar and Melrose. His life was spent in war; but there is one peaceful action recorded, he caused to be rebuilt the monastery and church of Dunkeld, within whose hallowed walls he placed all the relics of St Columba which could be obtained. In 869 Kenneth died at his palace at Forteviot, the victim of a disease (fistula) probably at that time little understood, and unskillfully treated.²

A.D. 860-77. He was succeeded by his brother Donald, who reigned four years; the only event recorded in his reign is, that at Forteviot the Gaedhill, with their king, con-

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 209.

² *Ibid.* p. 8.

firmed the laws of Edus, son of Eekdach. Like his brother he was not slain in battle, but died in his palace at Forteviot,¹ but according to another authority he met with the usual fate of kings in those days, and was slain at Scone. A.D. 860-77.

Donald's successor was another brother who bore the Pictish name of Constantine, and whose reign extended to fourteen years, 863-877, every moment of it spent in defending his kingdom from the attacks of the Danes and Norwegians.

Previous to the time of Harald Harfager attempts had been made to form into one kingdom the petty states of Scandinavia, each under the rule of its chief, these attempts were more or less unsuccessful until the reign of this monarch, who, dispossessed of their lands and expelled the country the chiefs who refused to submit to his sway; they were consequently thrown on the coasts of Britain and France, necessity urging them to spoil and plunder. They thus added to the number of adventurous spirits, who had already found their way there, and for the remainder of the ninth century the invaders were in greater force. Before 850 strangers of the 'royal race of Lochlann,' Norwegians, had established themselves in Ireland, but in 852 a fleet of Danes, Dubhgaill, appeared there to contest the supremacy with their kinsmen. A battle was fought in which the latter were victorious, 'the Black-Gentiles killed five thousand of the Fair-Gentiles at Snamh Ergda.'² A year later came Olave the White, 'son of the king of Lochlann (Norway), with a prodigious fleet, and he assumed the sovereignty of the Gaill of Erin.'³ Olave, not satisfied with his conquests in Ireland, at the head of a powerful force of the now united Danes and Norwegians invaded Scotland, and despite the efforts of its defenders spread devastation far and wide. Nothing, evidently, could withstand the furious onslaughts of the Norsemen; but Constantine bided his time, and in the

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 8.

² Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill, p. 19.

³ *Ibid.* p. 23.

A. D. 860-77. following year, when they were withdrawing with their booty, he attacked and defeated them with great loss, 'Olave himself being among the slain.'¹ The wish, however, had been father to the thought in the mind of the Pictish Chronicler, for Olave was not among the slain.

In 870 he, in concert with the Danes of Northumbria, under their chief Ivar, made the most formidable attack yet experienced, on the dominions of the king of Alban. Angles, Britons, Picts, and Scots were exposed to the fierce onslaught. Saxonia, Strathclyde, Galloway, Alban, were for the time overrun and ravaged by the Northmen. Alclyde was laid siege to by Olave and Ivar, but the strong natural position of the ancient Dun, resisted the unskilled efforts of headlong valour, and it did not surrender until after a blockade of four months. 'In this year 870 the king of Lochlann laid siege to Strathclyde in Britain, and they continued the siege for four months. At length, however, having wasted the people who were in it by hunger and thirst, having wonderfully drawn off the well they had within, they entered upon them. At first they carried off all the riches that were within it, and afterwards a great host of prisoners were brought into captivity.'² In the following year the territory gained was evacuated, only after impartially ravaging in their southward course the possessions of Angles, Britons, and Scots. The allies returned to Dublin with their spoil. '871, Amlæbh and Ivar came again to Athcliath from Alban with two hundred ships and great booty of men, Angles, Britons, and Picts, was led by them to Ireland in captivity.'³ Olave the White did not again trouble the inhabitants of Scotland; he is said shortly afterwards to have been slain in an obscure skirmish in Ireland. Ivar died in 873, 'after surviving his confederate for only a few months, thus relieving the Saxon and Scottish princes from the ablest and most ruthless of their foes.'⁴

There was, however, little rest for Constantine and his

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 8.

² *Ibid.* p. 405.

³ *Ibid.* p. 361.

⁴ Robertson's Early Kings, vol. i. p. 44; see also note.

kingdom, though the attack this time was on a part over which he held very little sway—the northern provinces and the Hebrides. Olave left a son named Thorstein, the issue of his marriage with Auda, a daughter of Caitill the Fair, a Viking who exercised the rule of an independent prince over the now mixed population of Scandinavians and Gaels in the Western Islands; the son proved himself a worthy scion from such parents. Thorstein sailed from Dublin northwards, and gathering accessions from the subjects of his grandfather, and the ever ready colonists of Orkney and Shetland, burst in overwhelming force on the northern provinces.¹ Thorstein was successful in his operations, the chiefs of the northern Picts were defeated, and in a short time he was master of their territory. The Sagas say he reigned over the counties of Caithness and Sutherland, and that the half of Scotland was subject to his sway. The victorious Viking here paused, arrested by the diplomacy of Constantine, for the same authorities say that he became reconciled to the king of the Scots. Mr Skene's remarks thoroughly explain the situation: 'It is hardly to be supposed that Constantine could have any real authority over these northern regions, or that the power of the kings of Kenneth MacAlpin's race could have, at this time, extended beyond the province of the southern Picts. He therefore probably merely permitted what he could not prevent, and indeed may have viewed a Norwegian conquest of the northern Picts as favourable to his cause, as the Danish defeat of the men of Fortrenn had been to his father.'² The difficulties of the Scottish monarch were also aggravated by a near to simultaneous invasion by the Danes of Northumbria, under Halfdene, who is

A.D. 860-77.

¹ Mr E. W. Robertson, in his account of this invasion, makes Sigurd, Earl of Orkney, the confederate of Thorstein, but Mr Skene separates the two invasions: 'These were the same districts which had been overrun by Thorstein the Red, and these Sagas confound the two invasions, and join Sigurd with Thorstein in their acquisition; but the inexorable logic of dates shows that the two invasions were different, and that the one was subsequent to the other.' See Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. p. 336, and note.

² Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. p. 327.

A. D. 860-77. said by Henry of Huntingdon to have 'made predatory excursions against the Picts,'¹ and by the Saxon Chronicle 875: 'And the army subdued the land, and oft-times spoiled the Picts, and the Strathclyde Britons.'² Constantine was speedily relieved from the Norse Viking. Thorstein did not live long to enjoy, and probably extend his kingdom; within the year which sufficed for conquest, the youthful hero was treacherously slain. The Landnabok says, 'He was betrayed by the Scots, and slain in battle.' The Annals of Ulster, 'per dolum occisus est.' The most of the Norwegians would retire with their plunder, and the country relapse into its former state, chiefs and people of a mixed race, many of the invaders settling and forming alliances with the occupants they had conquered.

Little respite was left to the baited monarch of Alban, whose reign presents a series of nought but contest for the possession of his kingdom, with one foe or another. In 877 a conflict again took place in Ireland between the Black and the White Gentiles, in which the latter were victorious. The Danes, the defeated party, left Ireland and invaded Scotland, by way of the Firth of Clyde; landing on its shores, they crossed over the country and entered the province of Fife. The Scots encountered the enemy at Dollar, but were defeated with great slaughter. Pursued by the Danes, Constantine made a last stand at a place called Inverdafatha (Inverdovet) in the parish of Forgan, when a more bloody defeat was inflicted, and the king himself slain. 'The Black Gentiles, after this, were driven out of Erin, and went to Alba, where they gained a battle over the men of Alba, in which were slain Constantine, son of Cinaeth, chief king of Alba, and a great multitude with him. It was then the earth burst open under the men of Alba.'³ Fordun and Wyntoun state that he was treacherously slain, after successfully repelling the enemy, and Mr Robertson, that 'tradition has hinted at a darker tale,

¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 154.

² Saxon Chronicle, p. 319.

³ Chronicles of the Gaedhill with the Gail, p. 232.

that after repelling with success the enemy's attack, he was captured by a party of the retreating Norsemen, and sacrificed by a lingering and cruel death—"the spread eagle,"—in the gloomy recesses of the Black Cave, near Crail.¹ The tradition is both patriotic and romantic, but irreconcilable with the facts, and indeed with the character of the Danes. A. D. 86c-77.

These decisive and bloody victories must have seriously weakened the power of the Scottish line of kings, though it is beyond question that they presented a bolder front to their fierce invaders, and displayed greater courage and aptitude of resource under defeat, than the kings of England and Ireland; had it been otherwise, a Danish line of kings might have been seated on the Scotch as well as on the English throne. The people also, as in later times, must have been true to the monarchs of their choice, they must have had the hearts and sympathies of their subjects; that sturdy independence which can brook no foreign interference, now first became the proud privilege of a Scotchman.

The ill-starred Constantine was succeeded by his brother Aed, 877, who reigned but one year, when he was slain by his own people,² or in a conflict with the northern Picts; from the events of the preceding reign, the last is the most probable.

On the death of Aed, 878, according to the Scotch law of Tanistry, Donald, the son of Constantine and grandson of Kenneth, was the rightful heir to the throne, but by the strict Pictish rule of female descent, the succession passed to Eocha, the son of Run, king of the Britons of Strathclyde, whose mother was a daughter of Kenneth MacAlpin. There was a conflict between the parties supporting each mode; and either by force of arms or compromise the Pictish party prevailed, and Eocha was raised to the throne. Like his competitor, Eocha was under age, and the wisdom of his supporters prompted them to associate with the youthful prince, as governor with equal rank and authority, a man of more A. D. 877-889.

¹ Robertson's Early Scottish Kings, vol. i. p. 48.

² Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 362.

A. D. 877-889. mature years and experience. The person thus appointed is variously named Ciricius, Cyric, Carus, Giric, Grig, and Gregory; he was probably of the race of the northern Picts, the Maormor of the district between the Dee and the Spey, and must be reckoned an intruder in the line of Kenneth MacAlpin. According to some accounts he slew Aed, the brother of Constantine, and to smooth matters with the people of Fortrenn, associated with him the young prince Eocha, giving him only the semblance of sovereignty. More recent verbal criticism has made Grig a Briton, a relation of Eocha, and the joint rule a family arrangement. Grig is a celebrated name in what is now reckoned fabulous Scottish history; but all that is really known of him does not confirm the name attributed to him of Gregory the Great. In 878, along with Eocha, he ascended the throne: 'in 889 Eocha, with his tutor, is expelled the kingdom.¹ Fordun and Wintoun give him a reign of eighteen years; and as Eocha disappears after a reign of eleven years, and Donald succeeds as the next king, Grig is, for the second time, joint-monarch, and is made to reign seven years more till 896, when he dies peacefully at Dunadeer, enshrined in the memory of his country. This account may be trustworthy; but the incidents of the period have been filled up chiefly from fancy. In the pages of the legendary historians Gregory is the legitimate successor of the last three pagan kings of Ireland, who extended their conquests not only over the British Isles, but into Gaul and Italy; in addition, he is gifted with a magnanimity far excelling that of Alexander and Scipio; he subdues kingdoms, but at once restores the defeated monarchs on the simple condition that they will henceforth rule with justice. Like his predecessor in the line of Dalriadic kings, Auchy, the friend and adviser of Charlemagne, he is the friend and patron of learning, and the benefactor of the church, which he frees from all the exactions to which it had been subjected. He is the Gregorius Magnus of George Buchanan, whose sketch of him awakens the enthusiasm of a mind like

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 9.

Mr Burton's.¹ Fordun says: 'When the ceremony of his coronation was over, he forthwith firmly established peace throughout all the ends of his kingdom; and granting full forgiveness to all who, he knew, had withstood him in battle, he brought them round to true friendship with him. Neither was he from the beginning of his reign neglectful of shrine worship; nay, he even, with the consent of the chiefs, granted the Church of God and churchmen their freedom forever. . . . For, until then, the church had been subject to servitude according to the custom of the Picts. Moreover, he brought the whole of Ireland, and nearly the whole of England, under his yoke.' The Danes and other foreigners are then subdued, their conquered subjects welcoming their deliverer. 'For they deemed it a more blissful lot, and more advantageous, willingly to be subject to the Scots who held the Catholic faith though they were their enemies, than unwillingly to unbelieving heathens. . . . But this glorious King Gregory, after a vigorous reign of eighteen years, all but a few months, closed the last of his days at Donedoure, and lies buried in the Island of Iona.'² Nothing approaching to this is found in the older annalists, the reign is barren of incidents, but there is reason to suppose that there is a small substratum of truth in the glowing account we have given. The very fact of no invasions being chronicled prove that Gregory presented a strong front to his enemies, and there is reason to suppose that he led an expedition into England. Simeon of Durham tells of an invasion of the Scots during the reign of Guthred, about 883, in which they advanced as far as Lindisfarne, which they plundered. To reach so far, Saxonia must have been harried, and the force defending it put to flight. The distracted state of Bernicia and Northumbria at this time, and the utter prostration of the Angles before the Danes, may have encouraged Gregory to undertake this foray; besides, it was the best defence of his own territory to carry the war into that of the enemy. On the

A.D. 877-889.

¹ Burton's Scotland, vol. i. p. 331.

² Fordun's Chronicle, vol. ii. pp. 150-152.

A. D. 877-889.

northern side of his dominions, his own connection would give him an influence, and the absence of a capable leader after the death of Thorstein, would naturally throw the Maormors into friendly alliance with one who, not so long ago, was one of themselves. It is generally supposed that his services to the Scottish Church have not been exaggerated, and that they have a historical foundation. From whatever motives, either from a desire to conciliate the Scottish clergy, or from others more praiseworthy, he freed the church from secular exactions and services which were demanded in those days from the clergy, not only by the Picts, but by the kings in England and Ireland. The boon was perhaps not an unmixed benefit; the spare time of the monks might have been as well spent in tilling the ground and defending it, as in any other duties they were likely to perform. But they were not ungrateful; it is to them Gregory owes his fame and reputation, which would otherwise have been confined to six lines in the Pictish Chronicle.

CHAPTER VII.

DONALD FIRST KING OF ALBAN.

Accession of Donald first King of Alban—Contest in the Northern Districts—Danish Invasion and Death of Donald—Constantine II.—Danish Invasion—Renovation of the Church—Cellach first Bishop of Alban—Civil Reforms—Strathclyde; Danish Invasions—Relations with England—Battle of Branenburg—Ode on the Victory of Athelstane—Eric of the Bloody Axe—Constantine retires from public life—Accession of Malcolm, son of Donald—Cession of Strathclyde to Alban—Eric, Gunhilde—Danes of Northumbria—Indulph—Cession of Edinburgh to Alban—Dubh's Accession—Cuilean disputes it—Is in the end successful—Kenneth II.—Cession of Lothian—Constantine—Kenneth—Malcolm II.—Alban now called Scotia—Malcolm attacks Bernicia—Makes affinity with the Earl of Orkney—Crinan Abbot of Dunkeld—Malcolm invades England—Cnut invades Scotia—English Claims—Death of Malcolm; his Character and Policy—A. D. 889-1034.

THE Scottish party, on the decease or expulsion of Eocha and Grig, who may be deemed intruders, were successful in placing Donald, the son of Constantine, and the heir according to Tanistry, on the throne, and from this time the succession became permanent in the heirs male of Kenneth MacAlpin. Previously the monarchs are named by the chroniclers Kings of the Picts, and their territory Cruithentuath or Pictaria; now they are designated Kings of Alban, and the country Alban or Albania.

Though not affecting to any extent the fortunes of the new king of Alban, for the fierce and bloody contest was fought out in the district to the north of the Spey, a series of incidents, in which the Norwegians were the actors, claim our notice. The islands of the Orkneys we have seen had, previous to this time, been colonised by many of the Norwegian nobles who had fled from the sway of Harold Harfraga, there they had for some time

A. D. 889-900.

A. D. 889-900. remained as independent Vikings, defied, and even menaced, the power of Norway. This induced Harald to send out an expedition, which was successful in subjugating, not only the northern but the western islands of Scotland. The Orkneys he bestowed as an earldom under the crown of Norway, to the family of Ragnvald Möre Jarl. Ragnvald preferred to remain in his native country, and, with the consent of his superior, bestowed it on his brother Sigurd some years after 883. Shortly after the accession of Donald, the Earl of Orkney invaded the north of Scotland, the chiefs there having probably thrown off their allegiance to the Danes after the death of Thorstein. Like his predecessor, Sigurd was successful in regaining the territory then acquired, and, like him, lost his life in the enterprise. The wild story which records his death, illustrates in vivid light the manner of the times, treacherous and savage. 'Malbride with the "buck tooth," a Scottish chief, arranged to meet for conference with Sigurd in a certain place, with forty men on each side, and there settle matters. Sigurd, suspecting treachery, caused eighty men to be mounted on forty horses. When the Scottish chief saw this he determined on battle, not conference, and courageously addressed his men: 'Let us be brave and kill each his man before we die.' Sigurd dismounted one half of his men, and then attacked the Scots both on foot and horseback. The unequal conflict did not last long; Malbride fell and all his men with him. In insolent bravado the savage Viking cut off the head of his fallen rival, and fastened it to his saddle-bow. Proceeding in triumph he struck his leg against the protruding tooth which gained Malbride his soubriquet. The wound seemed at first slight, but soon became swollen and painful, and in a short time fatal. The Sagas contain many similar stories, as indeed the names of the heroes indicate—'Hausaklyfur the skull-splitter,' Eric with the bloody axe, the latter appropriately mated with the atrocious Gunhilde who, with her daughter Ragnhilde, fanned the fierce passions of their savage spouses and associates. After the death of Sigurd the country in-

vaded relapsed into its former state, chiefs and people of mixed race owing no particular allegiance to anyone. A.D. 889-900

It is not likely that these contests, principally to the north of the Moray Firth, disturbed the peace of Alban; the powers of its kings were slight to the north of the Month, and indeed it might have been an advantage that the northern Picts were compelled to defend themselves, instead of making frays against their kinsmen of the south.

For a considerable period, considering the times, Alban suffered nothing from foreign invasion; but in the first year of the tenth century, the peace was broken, an invasion of the Danes of Ireland took place, and though the enemy was repulsed, King Donald was among the slain.

About the end of the ninth century a host of Danes, under the command of the descendants of Ivar, landed in Ireland, and for four years devastated the country far and wide. 'After this came the prodigious royal fleet of the children of Imhar to Ath Cliath, and the greater part of all Erin was plundered by them. . . . Four years after this the foreigners left Erin and went to Alba under Sitriuc, son of Imhar.'¹ The Danes were successful in overrunning the whole of the south of Alban, until they came in contact with the Scottish army under Donald at Dunottar. The battle was fiercely contested, neither party gaining much advantage over the other; the Scots claimed the victory, and the advance of their foes was arrested, but they had to deplore the loss of their king. His death is recorded in the Annals of Ulster as occurring in the year 900. It may be mentioned, that Mr E. W. Robertson places this invasion in the beginning of Donald's reign, that he was victorious, and lost his life in the town of Forres, where he was attempting to re-establish the royal authority over the revolted district of the north.

Constantine, the son of Aedh, cousin of the deceased monarch, was now raised to the throne, either according to the law of Tanistry, or because he was the most cap-

¹ Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gail, p. 29.

A. D. 900-940. able person among the heirs male. A capable man was needed in these perilous times, and Constantine, the second of the name, proved himself fit for the occasion; he governed the country for the long period of forty years, during which time the kingdom was consolidated and strengthened in a manner hitherto unknown. The new monarch was soon called to exercise his skill and bravery as a leader against the ubiquitous Danes. In 903 a formidable body of these, under the command of Ivar, a grandson of the famous Viking of that name, landed, and spreading themselves over the country, plundered Dunkeld, and laid waste the whole district of Fortrenn. For the space of a year their ravages were unchecked, but in 904 Constantine encountered his enemies somewhere in Stratherne, and gained a complete victory. Ivar was slain and his followers put to flight.¹ Religious feeling was strongly developed in the Scottish king, which he no doubt imparted to his followers, and we find it notably displayed in this battle. The following extract is really an important item in Scottish history: 'About the same time the Fortrenns and Lochlanns fought a battle. Bravely indeed the men of Alba fought this battle, for Columcille was aiding them; for they had prayed to him most fervently, because he was their apostle, and it was through him that they received the faith. One time, when Imhar Conung was a young man, he came to Alba, with three great battalions, to plunder it. The men of Alba, both lay and clerics, fasted and prayed till morning to God and Columcille; they made earnest entreaty to the Lord; they gave great alms of food and raiment to the churches and the poor, received the body of the Lord at the hands of their priests, and promised to do all kinds of good works, as their clergy would order them, and that their standard in going forth to any battle should be the crosier of Columcille. Therefore it is called the Cath-bhuaidh from that day to this. And this is a befitting name for it, for they have often gained victory in battle by it, as they did at that time, when they placed their hope in Columcille. They did

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, pp. 9-362.

the same on this occasion. The battle was bravely fought at once. The Albanians gained victory and triumph, killed many of the Lochlanns after their defeat, and their king was slain *on the occasion*, namely, Ottir, son of Jarngna. It was long after until either the Danes or Lochlanns attacked them, but they were at peace and harmony with them.'¹ A.D. 900-940

Freed by this providential interposition from these formidable enemies, Constantine lost no time in endeavouring to bring into union the discordant elements in his kingdom; and in accordance with the vows made by both king and people, the first good work attempted was the renovation of the church and the solemn renewal of its privileges. The Columban Church, outside of Iona, did little, and had but little opportunity to spread religion and education throughout the people of Scotland; the disturbed state of the country was such, that even the rites and ceremonies of the Church could with difficulty be dispensed. But ecclesiastical *privileges* could be preserved; exemption from tribute or service in time of war, conservation of lands, and other temporal benefits, were of the most extreme importance. No vital controversy, such as that which agitated the minds of king and people in the time of Nectan, troubled the ecclesiastical world at present; the Roman tonsure and time for observing Easter had been for years the orthodox mode. More important business imperiously required attention, and the manner of transacting it was perhaps the most important part, for in the council called to transact it, the King and Cellach the bishop appear on equal terms; the decrees issued are in their joint names: 'And in the sixth year Constantine the king and Cellach the bishop (of St Andrews) devoted themselves to guard the laws and discipline of the faith and rights of the church and the evangel on a footing of equality with the Scots.'² Bede's account of Nectan's council in the same place, the Mote Hill of Scone, makes no mention of bishops or even clerics, and the king gives no authority

¹ Reeves' Adamnan, p. xcix.

² Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 9.

A.D. 900-940. but his own. 'I do decree that . . . shall be received by all the clergy in my kingdom.'¹ No mention is made here of a primate, bishops, or superior clergy; the King judges for himself 'among his great men that sat about him,' and decrees accordingly.

The Scottish (Dalriadic) clergy, from the time of their founder St Columba, had great power, and it is more than probable possessed great privileges; they now, for the first time, became a power in the state, and got their Pictish brethren under their rule—for, I think, this must be the true meaning of equality with the Scots. The two churches were united under one head with equal privileges and exemptions; the primacy was transferred from Dunkeld to Kilrymont, and the bishop of St Andrews became metropolitan of Alban. Civil matters were not, however, neglected; and it is probable that in this reign, the kingdom was divided into seven provinces, governed in a primitive way, no doubt, but still governed, by a noble appointed by the crown, or accepted in virtue of some hereditary right. As has been previously stated, the earlier state of Pictland was that of a very loosely cemented conglomeration of tribes, presided over by a king as circumstances required, sometimes a chief of the northern, sometimes one of the southern Picts, holding that position. But gradually the latter formed really a homogeneous state, and the invasions of the Danes compressed it into a smaller but more compact body. Under the reign of Constantine the country is, for the first time in the Pictish chronicle, called Alban; it consisted of the territory between the Forth and the Spey, also the Dalriadic territory on the mainland, including the important islands of Bute and Arran and the peninsula of Kintyre.

Constantine is said to have divided Alban into seven provinces, viz., first, Fortrenn, embracing the greater part of Perthshire, the central part of the kingdom containing the capital, Scone, and the royal residence of Forteviot; the second, Athran, included the peninsula, of Fyfe, not only the modern county, but Clackmannan

¹ Bede, p. 289.

Kinross, and the Carse of Gowrie. The third province contained the counties of Forfar and Kincardine; the fourth Mar and Buchan, now known as the counties of Aberdeen and Banff; the fifth was that tract of country in Perth and Inverness which lies between the Spey and the mountains of Breadalbane (Athol); the sixth Moray and Ross (nominal only); the seventh Arregaithil (Argyllshire).¹ In the earlier description of the country given in the tract from which this is taken, Caithness is included; it was now part of the Jarldom of Orkney. Moray and Ross had been overrun by Thorstein and Sigurd, and though included in the kingdom of Alba, were ruled by chiefs in alliance by turns with the Scotch and Norwegian powers, but claiming the rank of independent princes. It is not a matter of certainty, that in these provinces, as in Ireland and Dalriada, were tribes presided over by hereditary chiefs, the Ri-tuath and the Ri-mortuath; but we find the Toisech, the head of a tribe—a small following, and the Maormor the chief of the province. Either from the lack of details, or more probably from the system not being so thoroughly organised as in Ireland, the names of even the Maormors are rarely mentioned. From the time of the Danish invasion, however, the Maormors seem to have gained power and influence. Macbeth, Maormor of Moray, became king of Scotland.

Constantine did not attempt to extend his authority over these inaccessible regions, but wisely kept on good terms with the chiefs, leaving them as barriers against the Norwegian power; his aim in life was to extend his boundaries to the south.

After the first incursions of the Picts into the southern Lowlands and England on the withdrawal of the Roman troops, they, as a nation, had kept within their own boundary. Bruide and Angus MacFergus had harried and conquered Dalriada, but no serious attempts are recorded to have been made on Saxonia or Strathclyde; the latter, indeed, had been left to the tender mercy of the Angles, who so long exercised a lordship over it.

¹ De Situ Albanie, Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 136.

A. D. 900-916.

But Northumbria had been long torn by intestine divisions, and this, accelerated by the Danish occupation, weakened its influence, and left Strathclyde open to the advances of the Scottish king. The Britons themselves were thoroughly disorganised by the departure of a considerable portion of the bravest and most high-spirited of the nation, who forced a passage through the ranks of their foes and joined their countrymen in Wales, and from whence they never returned. We have seen that they carried with them the poetry of the sixth century, and the glorious traditions of the race, and thus, weakened in numbers and national spirit, the Britons of Strathclyde were ready to put themselves under the protection of any power other than that of the hated Angles. The social condition of the Cumri must at this time have been very low: the See of St Kentigern lapsed on his decease; the Episcopate founded by St Ninian struggled for a century longer; the Christian religion was extinct; and the loss of the national traditions and literature completed the degradation: the time is well described as 'omnibus bonis exterminatio.'¹

It is supposed that Kenneth MacAlpin, in giving his daughter in marriage to the king of Strathclyde, had the hope that this might be a preparation for the annexation or union of the two kingdoms, and in the end his policy had the desired effect. Since his time the two courts had been on what are called *friendly terms* in politics; the stronger power ever intriguing without going to war, but continually gaining influence and partisans. In 908 Donald, king of the Britons of Strathclyde, died, the last in descent from the Romanised race of the Cumri; and so powerful was the interest of the king of Alban, that he had no difficulty in procuring the election of his brother Donald to the vacant throne. From this time a scion of the house of Kenneth MacAlpin was monarch of Strathclyde until it was formally incorporated with Scotland, 945.

Little time was left to Constantine for the peaceful pursuits of religion and diplomacy; another invasion of the Danes took place in 912 under the same redoubtable

¹ Life of SS. Kentigern and Ninian, p. xci.

leaders of the race of Ivar. Regnvald, the brother of A.D. 900-940. Sitriuc, who had slain the last king, in company with two other chiefs, with a strong force, entered the country in the usual manner and took Dumblane. The movements of the Danish chiefs seem rather erratic; there is no defeat in Alban chronicled, but the next notice we have of them is the record of a naval battle at the Isle of Man, between Regnvald and Barid, the son of Ottir, in which the latter is slain, 913. The victorious party, who were seemingly on their route to Ireland, pursued their way, landed, ravaged the country in the usual manner, and re-established the power of the Ostmen in Dublin and Waterford. Their further movements are thus told: The Annals of Ulster, 918, say, 'The Galls of Lochdacæch expelled from Erin, viz., Ranald, king of the Dugalls, and the two earls, Ottir and Gragabai, and afterwards they invade the people of Alba.' The Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill simply record, 'the foreigners left Ireland and went to Alba.' It is probable that Regnvald was not driven out of Ireland, but left it for the purpose of prosecuting his claims to the crown of Northumbria, now open to him as the heir of his kinsman, Halfdan, lately deceased. Through Scotland seems to have been the route chosen, and so formidable did the danger appear to the king of Alba, that he joined his forces to those of Eldred, lord of Bamborough and king of Bernicia, in the attempt to stem the torrent of remorseless foes. The rival forces joined issue, and a great battle was fought on a moor near the mouth of the river Tyne in East Lothian, Tyne-moor,¹ or at Corbridge-on-Tyne in Northumbria.² The battle is recorded in the Pictish Chronicle, and in that of Simeon of Durham, in the usual dry matter of fact style, but the Annals of Ulster depart from this, and give some lively details. 'The men of Alban, however, prepared to meet them (the Danes) with the assistance of the northern Saxons. The Gentiles divided themselves into four battalions. The first battalion under Gotbrith O'Ivor; the second under the two earls; the

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 347, and note 348.

² Robertson's Early Scottish Kings, vol. i. p. 59.

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third under the young lords; and a battalion under Ranald, in ambuscade, which, however, the men of Alban did not see. The three battalions which they saw were routed by the men of Alban, and there was great slaughter of the Gentiles round Ottir and Gragabai. Ranald, however, made an attack upon the men of Alban from behind, and slew many of them; but neither their King nor any of their Maormors fell by him.¹ The same sacred talisman used on a former occasion, the Crozier of St Columba, proved of signal service in the early part of this engagement, but either was not put into requisition against the rear attack, or failed to resist the fierce onslaught of Regnvald. The Scots claimed the victory, and as we have seen, neither King nor Maormor were among the slain, but the Northumbrian loss was severe, the Lord of Bamborough was slain, along with many of his followers and principal men. Night put an end to what seems an indecisive engagement, though all the advantages accrued to the Danes; the son of Ivar regained possession of his patrimony, the men of Alban retired with honour, which perhaps reconciled them to the loss of more substantial benefits. This battle was the termination of the long series of the invasions of the Norsemen; for more than a century the land had a respite from its restless foes, a few trifling forays on the coast alone testified their existence. The Danish power, which seemed likely to embrace Great Britain and Ireland in its grasp, and which, in the next century, did annex England to the crown of Denmark, seemed to suffer a collapse. Yet it was only in political ascendancy, there is every reason to believe, that the Scandinavian element increased day by day in the middle and eastern districts of England and Scotland, from the Wash to the Pentland Firth.

The subsequent events in Scottish history are intimately connected with those of England, and necessitate a slight digression. The Danish power in England, at the beginning of the century, extended over Northumbria and Bernicia, while the ancient kingdom of Penda was

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 363.

largely peopled by Danes, and though Alfred is said to have ruled over all England, this can only apply to his own kingdom of Wessex and an overlordship over the midland counties. His power and that of his lieutenant, Æthelred, was slight over Mercia. Æthelfleda, the lady of Mercia, the daughter of Alfred, on the decease of her husband Æthelred, succeeded him as an independent ruler, and proved the most formidable antagonist the Danes had yet experienced. Wise in council and energetic in action, she broke up the confederacy of the 'Boroughs,' each with its earl, who administered Danish law, and made them her liege subjects. On her death, 918, her brother Eadward, at once annexed her dominions, and became the real monarch of England south of the Humber. English historians say that he was arrested in his further conquests to the north, at Manchester, by deputations from the Danes of Northumberland, the Scots, and the Britons of Strathclyde, 'who chose him for father and lord.'¹ The language here bears the mark of feudal times, and except in the light of future claims made by the kings of England, would carry no further weight, than that the Danes, Scots, and Britons, dreading a contest, sued for peace. Mr Burton, whose judicial mind has given us, in his *History of Scotland*, perhaps the fairest and most unbiassed statement of the English claims on Scotland, thus comments on this, the first transaction on which the claims were founded: 'These brief memorials, which, in words, carry the supremacy of an English monarch over the north, would have been of no more moment than those which balance his renown in a Gregory the Great or other northern hero, had they stood by themselves. Later events, however, gave an opportunity to the more recent chroniclers to further a political cause by amplifying the brief notices of their predecessors, and putting them into the legal phraseology of their own day, for the purpose of showing when and how the earliest feudal homage was paid to the line of monarchs whose dominions and privileges were possessed by the house of Plantagenet in right of the great Con-

¹ Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 924.

A. D. 900-940. quest.¹ We are apt to wonder how, for ten centuries, we have fought with words and weapons over such arguments, when through all it can be perceived, that *strength* of body and mind was the only secure ground for feudal rights. It is only in later times that a parchment title gave possession of lands and rights. Sharing these liberally with those who have not, can alone secure their possession; the feudal chiefs in Great Britain have, to a small extent, acted on this principle, and they are still an established institution of the country, their brethren in France did not do so, and title, chief, manors, and rights are things of the past.

In the same year, 924, in which Eadward raised the power of Wessex to so high a pinnacle, he died, and was succeeded by his son Athelstan, under whom the Saxon kingdom in England attained its highest pitch of power and influence. In the year after his succession, on the death of Sitriuc, to whom he had given his sister in marriage, Athelstan summarily annexed the Danish kingdom of Northumbria. In the same year a general peace was concluded, described in the same glowing terms as the previous one, A. D. 926, 'and he ruled all the kings who were in this island: first, Howel, king of the West-Welsh; and Constantine, king of the Scots; and Owen, king of the Monmouth people; and Aldred, son of Eadulph of Bamborough, and they confirmed the peace by pledge and by oaths, at the place which is called Eamot, on the 4th, before the ides of July, and they renounced all idolatry, and after that submitted to him in peace.'² The Danes were yet hardened pagans, but it is too bad to speak of the pious followers of St Columba, St Cuthbert, and St David renouncing idolatry; yet the cool superiority is still carried out by the scribes of the metropolis, to their less favoured brethren of the north, who do not bask in the sunshine of the heads of church and state.

This overweening power seems to have seriously alarmed Constantine, the king of Alban, and he concluded that an alliance with the Danes of Northumbria

¹ Burton's History of Scotland, vol. i. pp. 332-334.

² Saxon Chronicle, p. 375.

would strengthen his forces in the event of a contest with his '*father and lord*,' which now seemed inevitable. With this view a marriage was arranged and consummated between his daughter and Olave, the son of the late Danish ruler of Northumbria, who was at the time (933) a refugee at the Scottish court. A. D. 900-940.

Athelstan at once took this for a declaration of war; and anticipating any measures which Constantine might take to regain Northumbria for his son-in-law, he assumed the offensive, and invaded Alban by sea and land. The Saxon Chronicle says, 'This year king Athelstan went to Scotland, as well with a land army as with a fleet, and ravaged a great part of it.' Henry of Huntingdon: 'He pillaged it (Scotland) at his will, and then returned in triumph.' Simeon of Durham: 'That with his army he penetrated as far as Kirriemuir in Forfarshire, and with his navy as far as Caithness, and in a great measure depopulated it.' Athelstan retired without any attempt to incorporate his conquests; but the parties who had suffered felt that it was but a question of time when the march of the Saxon kingdom on the north would be the Firths of Forth and Clyde, and that even the existence of Alban as an independent state was in danger. In 937 a league was formed to guard against this danger, between Constantine and the sons of Ivar; his son-in-law Olave, and his kinsman of the same name king of the Ostmen in Ireland; the Britons of Strathclyde and North Wales, prayed to be admitted to the league, and to join their forces to the army which was to contest the supremacy of the king of Wessex. All the children so lately impressed into the family circle most unfilially defied their '*father and lord*.'

The plan of the campaign was, that Constantine and his son-in-law should proceed with their contingent by sea, and enter Deira by the Humber; another portion of the Scottish forces, supported by the Britons of Strathclyde, were to advance by land into Northumbria; while the Danes of Dublin, their ranks swelled by the Welsh Britons, were to enter by the west. Athelstan, nothing dismayed, at once raised levies from all parts of his domains. His rule

A. D. 900-910. must have been acceptable even to his newly-conquered subjects, for he was supported by the Danes of Guthrum and other Vikings, whose valour formed no unimportant part in the impending contest. After some preliminary skirmishing, in which Olave repeated the role of king Alfred when he entered the enemy's camp in the disguise of a harper,¹ the armies met in the field of Brunnanburg.²

After a contest which lasted the entire day, the forces of Athelstan were completely victorious. The carnage seemed fearful even to the chroniclers of the times; five kings, seven jarls, a son of Constantine, and two brothers of Athelstan, were among the slain. Constantine and Olave were driven back to the refuge of their ships; the land force of the Scottish king and his allies retreated slowly and sorrowfully before the victors.

The battle, after all, was not productive of any great results, but the ode on it marks a period in Anglo-Saxon literature. Previous to it the scant literature, with the exception of the *Beowulph*, is Christian; and though gleams of poetic fancy, and the bold imagery of the skald are to be found, yet the main feature is the pious inanity common to monkish writings. In the 'Ode on the victory of Athelstan,' a departure is made from this; there are no scriptural allusions, no mention of the saints; it is as if Bragi had inspired the poet. The action is rapid and continuous; the imagery varied and striking; the tone that of a chivalrous admirer of bravery, either in friend or foe. The ode is inserted in, and was probably composed for the *Saxon Chronicle*. Warton's remark on it is that, 'As a whole, it is a noble poem, and stands alone in our literature.' There are many versions or translations of it; that given in prose by the author quoted, so thoroughly gives the spirit of the rough Saxon,

¹ The fact of Olave being able to enter the Saxon camp in this disguise, shows the partial adoption of Scandinavian manners; and the same reception is given, and the same respect paid, by the Anglo-Saxon as had been paid by the Dane, to the profession of the bard or skald.

² Mr Skene, with much probability, fixes the site of the battle at Oldborough, near to Knaresborough, in Yorkshire.

and at the same time best describes the battle, that we A. D. 500-940.
give it to our readers entire :

‘King Athelstan, the glory of leaders, the giver of gold chains to his nobles, and his brother Eadmund, both shining with the brightness of a long train of ancestors, struck (the adversary) in war at Brunenburgh, with the edge of the sword, they clove the wall of shields. The high banners fell. The earls of the departed Edward fell, for it was born within them, even from the loins of their kindred, to defend the treasures and the houses of their country, and their gifts, against the hatred of strangers. The nation of the Scots and the fatal inhabitants of ships fell. The hills resounded, and the armed men were covered with sweat. From the time the sun, the king of stars, the torch of the Eternal One, rose cheerful above the hills, till he returned to his habitation. There lay many of the northern men pierced with lances ; they lay wounded with their shields pierced through, and also the Scots, the hateful harvest of battle. The chosen bands of the West Saxons, going out to battle, pressed on the steps of the detested nations, and slew their flying rear with sharp and bloody swords. The soft effeminate men yielded up their spears. The Mercians did not fear or fly the rough game of the hand. There was no safety to them who fought the land with Anlaff, in the bosom of the ship to die in fight. Five youthful kings fell in the place of fight, slain with swords, and seven captains of Anlaff, with the innumerable army of Scottish mariners ; there the lord of the (Northern men) was chased, and their army, now made small, was driven to the prow of the ship. The ship sounded with the waves ; and the king, marching into the yellow sea, escaped alive. And so it was, the wise northern king Constantine, a veteran chief, returning by flight to his own army, bowed down in the camp, left his own son worn out with wounds in the place of slaughter ; in vain did he lament his earls, in vain his lost friends. Nor less did Anlaff, the yellow-haired leader, the battle axe of slaughter, a youth in war, but an old man in under-

A.D. 900-940. standing, boast himself a conqueror in fight, when the darts flew against Edward's earls, and their banners met. Then those northern soldiers covered with shame, the sad refuse of darts in the resounding whirlpool of Humber, departed in their ships with rudders, to seek through the deep the Irish city and their own land. While both the brothers, the king and Clito, lamenting even their own victory, together returned home, leaving behind them the flesh-devouring raven, the dark blue toad, greedy of slaughter, the black crow with horny bill, and the hoarse toad, the eagle a companion of battles, with the devouring kite, and that brindled savage beast the wolf of the wood, to be glutted with the white food of the slain. Never was so great a slaughter in this island since the Angles and Saxons, the fierce beginners of war coming hither from the east, and seeking Britain through the wide sea, overcame the Britons excelling in honour, and gained possession of their land.¹

The result of the battle shows the indomitable pluck of the defeated party. Constantine and his people saddened and disheartened, retraced their footsteps over the country they had advanced with such brilliant hopes, but their spirit was unbroken, and in the end the friends who had stood side by side with them in the fell strife, proved their friendship by becoming the barrier to the menacing power of the kings of Wessex. The Danes no more invaded Alban from the south, except in a peaceful manner, as refugees or friendly colonists, bringing with them their seamanship and kindred arts, receiving in return all that the Scots could give, the small remnant of Christianity left in the church of St Columba. From this time also the kings of Alban steadily received accessions of territory south of the firths, incorporating those regions which now form the southern counties of Scotland and in part the north of England; the Norman conquest alone prevented a further extension. Athelstan gained no new territory by his victory. Northumbria seemed to him so entirely Danish, that he despaired of

¹ Warton's *History of English Poetry*, vol. i. pp. 123-24, ed. 1871.

ruling it successfully, except through a king or jarl of that race. He had succeeded in dispossessing the house of Hy Ivar, with its powerful Irish connection, fortune threw in his way Eric, a Viking, of as distinguished an ancestry, whom he supposed would satisfy the Danes of Northumbria. Eric of the bloody axe, the son and successor of Harald Harfraga, had so alienated the affections of his subjects, that they dethroned him in favour of his half brother Hakon, and set him adrift to find another theatre on which to exercise those qualities which had gained him his sobriquet and lost him a throne. 'The divinity which doth hedge a king,' retains followers even though he be as cruel as a Domitian or as ungrateful as a Stewart. Eric left Norway with a considerable force, which was largely increased by the fierce Vikings of Orkney, whither he had first sailed. Thus re-inforced, he departed on a general plundering expedition. Sailing by the east coast of Scotland he ravaged it impartially. On arriving on the coast of Northumbria with a numerous fleet, either unwilling to hazard another conflict, or, more probably from the feeling previously mentioned, Athelstan welcomed the wandering pirate, and offered him a settlement in Northumbria if he would defend it against the Anlaffs, and be baptised. Eric readily consented, and with his followers were admitted into the pale of the Christian church, he himself took up his residence at York. Athelstan's life was a short one. After the battle which has immortalised his name, he died in 940, and was succeeded by his brother Eadmund, who had shared with him its glories.

The aged Constantine returned with his shattered forces, and for five years we are ignorant of his doings, he then, 942, worn out, as much by disappointment and care, as by the infirmities of advancing years, resigned the crown, and entered the peaceful calm of the cloister. 'Afterwards God did call him to the monastery on the brink of the waves. In the house of the apostle he came to death. Undeiled was the pilgrim.'¹ Ten years of life were spared to the aged monarch in his sacred

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots: 'The Prophecy of St Berchan,' p. 92.

A.D. 942-954. retreat, during which period it would seem that worldly cares were not entirely thrown aside, for some authorities say that in the attempt of his son-in-law to recover his kingdom, the recluse left his cell and led the Scots against the son of his dreaded foe-man. Strange anomaly in *Christian* writers, when patriotism clashes with the gospel of universal brotherhood, 'they (his countrymen) long recounted, with exultation and pride, how royally their veteran leader (the then Abbot of St Andrews) swept the patrimony of St Cuthbert.'¹ Whether Constantine re-entered the arena of war and politics or no, this may be inferred, that he took a lively interest in the affairs of his son-in-law, and instigated his successor to strike a blow in his favour. If details of the life in St Andrews had been preserved, we might have found that Constantine, like Charles V., would pay considerable attention to his equipage and his table, be greedy of news and tenacious of ceremony; like 'Charles, he was not master of that ignoble philosophy, which enabled Diocletian to turn with contentment from the cares of an empire to those of a cabbage garden.'²

Malcolm, the son of Donald, the predecessor of Constantine, was raised to the throne on its demission by the latter, 942, and his enterprising character may be gathered from the name given to him by St Berchan, 'Bodhbhdearg, dangerous red man.'³ Dreading the power of the king of Wessex, but like an enterprising monarch bent on acquisitions somewhere, Malcolm turned his arms against the tribes north of the Spey. He was successful in his operations, the forces of the men of Moray were put to flight, and their Maormor slain, but the solitary record in the Pictish Chronicle which tells us this, is all we know of the matter; the king would harry the country, retire with his army, and another Maormor would succeed.

Shortly after this, 945, Malcolm was fortunate enough to secure a most important addition to his kingdom, an

¹ Robertson's *Scotland under her Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 73.

² Prescott's *Philip II.*, vol. i. p. 23.

³ *Chronicles of Picts and Scots*, p. 93.

addition which was, in point of fact, the first permanent acquisition of territory to the south of Pictland. This acquisition, the kingdom of Strathclyde, from the Clyde to the Derwent, was granted to Malcolm by king Eadmund. 'This year, A.D. 945, king Eadmund ravaged all Cumberland, and granted it all to Malcolm, king of the Scots, on the condition that he should be his fellow-worker as well by sea as by land.' The circumstances which caused this grant require us again to take up Northumbrian history, and show that in one way or another the Danish power proved of great service to the rising power of Alban. A.D. 942-954

On the death of Athelstan, the Northumbrian Danes, true to the house of Ivar, expelled the monarch imposed on them. 'A.D. 941, this year the Northumbrians were false to their plighted troth, and chose Olave of Ireland to be their king.' Eric, who seems more an adept at acquiring a crown than in preserving one, does not appear to have offered much resistance, but departed with his usual retinue of roving pirates. Returning to his filibustering career, he, in the course of it, found himself in the Hebrides, from the throne of which he expelled a son of Regnvald Hy Ivar, and reigned in his stead. The hero of the bloody axe, either got tired of his island home, or his subjects got tired of him, for he turns up in Northumbria in 948, is expelled in the same year, restored in 952, and is finally ejected in 954.

Eric made no further attempts to regain the kingdom of Northumbria, but took up the life for which he was so admirably qualified. Where his headquarters were is uncertain, but his vocation is pretty clear: 'King Eric had many people about him, for he kept many Northmen who had come with him from the east, and also many of his friends had joined him from Norway. But as he had little land he went on a cruise every summer, and plundered in Shetland, the Sudreys, Iceland and Bretland, by which he gathered property.' His sons trode in the footsteps of their sire; they settled in Orkney, and their ravages form part of our subsequent narrative, their deeds of lust and bloodshed there form the darkest

A.D. 942-954. page in Norse history. It is not only in the pages of fiction that religious sentiment and romantic attachment are found in the most atrocious characters. Eric's title and life tell us what he was, a hero, only to desperadoes, nothing in his character could make him acceptable to those who wished to have some respite from war and orgie. Gunhild, his wife, who survived him, cherished the memory of her fierce lord, and in immortal verse followed his departed spirit. To her we owe nearly the oldest northern dirge, on which was modelled the 'death song of Hakon.'¹ 'After Eric's death, Gunhild (his wife) had a poem made on him, telling how Woden welcomed him to Walhall. Gundhild, Mother of Kings, to whom we owe this noble dirge, is a famous figure in northern tradition, she is drawn as a Jezebel or a Catherine of Medici, lustful, cruel, and greedy of power. The miseries of Norway under her son's rule may have coloured this picture.'²

On the expulsion of Eric, 941, the two Olaves, the king of Dublin and the son-in-law of Constantine, were chosen joint-kings of Northumbria; the first, named Olave Godfreyson, soon died (942), and his place seems to have been filled by Regnvald, son of Guthfrith. The surviving Olave, with characteristic courage, at once entered into hostilities with the king of Wessex. 'A.D. 943 Anlaf stormed Tamworth, and great carnage was on either hand; and the Danes had the victory, and much booty they led away with them.'³ They seem to have carried their conquests far into Mercia, for, in the same year, King Eadmund besieged King Anlaf and Archbishop Wolfstan in Liecester, and he would have taken them, were it not that they broke out by night from the tower.'³ This in some way or other brought matters to a favourable issue, for, in the same eventful year, peace was concluded between the two powers. 'And after that Anlaf acquired King Eadmund's friendship, and King Eadmund then received King Anlaf at baptism, and he royally

¹ Herbert's Icelandic Poetry, part v. pp. 109-114.

² Corpus Poetarum Boreale, vol. i., p. 259.

³ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 378.

gifted him. And that same year, after a good long time, he received King Regnvald at the bishop's hands.'¹ A significant entry follows: 'This year King Eadmund delivered Glastonbury to St Dunstan, where he afterwards became the first abbot.'¹ The hand of the first of the long line in the series of gifted priest-statesmen is certainly shown in the transaction. The peace was, however, short-lived, for in the next year hostilities were renewed, and the two Danish kings expelled.

A.D. 942-954.

Passing for the present the important transaction of the King of Wessex with the King of Alban, 945, we narrate the close of the Danish kingdom of Northumbria. In 946 Eadmund was assassinated, and was succeeded by his brother Eadred, who inherited the talents and valour of the family. In 947 the Danes pledged their allegiance to him. 'This year King Eadred came to Tadden's-cliff, and there Wolfstan, the Archbishop, and all the Northumbrian "Witan" plighted their troth to the king, and within a little while they belied it all, both pledge and also oaths.'² 'A.D. 948, this year King Eadred ravaged all Northumberland, because they had taken Eric to be their king; and then during the pillage, was the great minster burned at Ripon, that St Wilfrid built.'² In the course of this conflict the Danes inflicted a pretty severe loss ('they made great slaughter') on the rear of the Saxon forces. Eadred, exasperated by this, turned with the intention of making the severest reprisal: 'Then was the king so wroth that he would have marched his forces in again, and wholly destroyed the land.'³ Alarmed at the demonstration, 'the Northumbrians forsook Eric, and made compensation for the deed with King Eadred.'³ Next year (949) Olave was successful in gaining the suffrages of his countrymen in the north of England, and establishing his power there. There is no record of the conflict between him and the Saxon king; but there is every reason to believe that hostilities never intermitted. We find, in 952, 'King Eadred commanding Archbishop Wolfstan to be brought into the fortress at Jedburgh, because he had been oft accused to the king.'³ This

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 378. ² *Ibid.* p. 379. ³ *Ibid.* p. 374.

A.D. 942-954. indicates the possession, temporarily at anyrate, of a fort in Bernicia. Either bestead by the Saxon power, or forsaken by his fickle subjects, who in this year are said to have received Eric, Olave gave up the contest for the throne of Northumbria, and went to Ireland, where he became the king of the Ostmen in Dublin, and the head of the Danes in Ireland. After thirty years of incessant warfare, with no decisive result, he was defeated in 980 at the battle of Tara, with enormous loss. This disaster, in which the aged chief had to mourn the death of his son, so affected him, that the old Viking spirit fairly gave way, and he retired to the island of Hy: 'The battle of Teamhair (was gained) over the foreigners of Ath-cliath and of the islands, and over the sons of Amhlaeibh in particular, where many were slain, together with Ragnhall, son of Amhlaibh, heir to the sovereignty of the foreigners, and a dredful slaughter of the foreigners. . . . After this, Amhlaibh went across the sea and died at I-Coluim-Cille.'¹ Was it old age and defeat which produced the lack of faith in the gods of his youth, or had the carnage of his life sufficed, and the broken-hearted man turned to the faith of the gospel of peace.

After the expulsion of Eric, 954, the kingdom of Northumbria was nominally annexed to that of Wessex. 'Edmund obtained the kingdom of the Northumbrians,'² and it was divided into two earldoms.

The cession of Cumbria or Cumberland to Malcolm, and the terms on which it was granted, have provoked much criticism; even the extent of the district ceded. Without going further into the subject, it may be said that the most probable view is, that the whole of Strathclyde, from the Clyde to the Derwent, was the district which King Eadmund meant in the term used. The only contemporary authority for the transaction is that previously quoted from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The motives which led to the cession, if it was really a cession, are stated by Fordun, who is probably just as good an authority as any since: 'The Northumbrians, indeed,

¹ Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. p. 709.

² Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 379.

determined to call back Analaf from Ireland, and set him up as king again. When, therefore, this came to Eadmund's ears, being afraid that perchance the people of Cumbria would cleave to the Scots, as the Northumbrians had cleaved to Analaf, he preferred winning a friend in exchange for that country, to a cruel enemy's holding it, perhaps for ever, in spite of him. So, desirous of having King Malcolm's help against the Danes, and of conciliating his spirit into close sympathy with his own, he made over to him, for his oath of fealty, the whole of Cumbria in possession for ever.¹ Mr Green, with a true appreciation of the statesman-like views of St Dunstan, bent on augmenting the power of his king and through him the claims of the church, credits him with the whole of the arrangement of the northern frontier; the arrangement, though it might be futile, established a claim temporal and spiritual; the See of Canterbury claimed jurisdiction over York and Kilrymont. All that can be gathered from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is, that Eadmund, irritated at the facilities afforded to the Danes, in their invasions of Northumbria, by the Britons of Cumbria, determined to punish them, and, as far as he could, bar the way to future inroads. Investing himself with the overlordship so long exercised by the kings of Bernicia, and which he would reckon his by right of conquest, Eadmund transferred this, to Malcolm, on the conditions specified—friendly alliance, knowing perfectly well that the Scottish king had the hearts of a people whose allegiance he could not calculate on retaining. If our ancestors could but have seen, it was immaterial whether the country was held on oath of fealty to Eadmund or no; he had no right to the fief beyond that of conquest; his right could only be maintained by possession. How little the gift was appreciated, and how little the fealty was regarded, is shown from the circumstance, that in 949 either Malcolm in person, or his aged predecessor, supported Olave in his attack on Northumbria. Malcolm does not again appear in collision with Dane or Saxon; in 954 he met with the fate

¹ Fordun, vol. ii. p. 158.

A. D. 952-964. of his father, and in the same locality. He was slain by the men of Moerne at Fetteresso in the parish of Fordun, Kincardineshire. 'Nine years to his reign, traversing the borders, on the brink of Dun Fother, at last, will shout the Gael around his grave.'¹

According to the principle of alternate succession Indulph the son of Constantine succeeded, whose reign extended to eight years. Little is known of his times, but one important event stands out,—the surrender and evacuation of Dunedin or Edinburgh. This gave the Scots their first footing on the south side of the Forth, and the possession of a stronghold, which, so long the menace of the *Southron*, was to become their bulwark in retreat, their rallying point in attack, the heart of Scotland.

Though the bare fact of the evacuation of Edinburgh is all that is told in the Pictish Chronicle, yet this speaks of a successful career of war and diplomacy, it would certainly not be without a struggle, that the Angles would yield so important a stronghold, to what must now have been felt as a powerful and encroaching rival power. The reign of Indulph was disturbed by the incursions of the sons of Eric Blood-axe, who with their mother had made Orkney their head-quarters. Worthy sons of a worthy sire, they pursued his avocations assiduously, devoting the summer months (Sumarlidi) to piracy and rapine, the winter to the wild orgies which have made their name infamous. Fordun and the later chroniclers state that Indulph, 'at a place called Collyn' (Inverculen) was slain by a dart from one of their ships, while in excess of valour he, alone, pursued the flying enemy. The Pictish Chronicle makes no mention of this, and St Berchan expressly states that Indulph died at St Andrews after having successfully repelled the invaders. Mr Skene with much probability suggests that like his father Constantine, he retired to the monastery of Kilrymont, and resigned the throne to Dubh or Duff, the son of his predecessor Malcolm, who according to Tanistic usage

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, Prophecy of St Berchan, p. 93.

was the heir apparent. From the slight sketch we possess A.D. 962-971. of the reign of Indulph, there is ample grounds for the panegyric pronounced on him by St Berchan :

‘ No severance will he sever
Of Alban of ships of long territories ;
It is an addition to his kingdom he will take
From a foreign land by force.
Nine years and a half of bright fame
For him over Alban in the sovereignty.
In the house of the same pure apostle
He died, where died his father?’¹

Dubh’s accession, 962, does not seem to have given A.D. 962-971. satisfaction ; the intestine divisions which had gone to sleep now revived ; the wonder indeed is that every succession was not a disputed one. The sceptre had been but three years in the grasp of the reigning monarch, when the heart-burning took the form of open hostilities, and Cuilean the son of Indulph, who found supporters in the Abbot of Dunkeld and the Maormor of Athol, took the field against him. A battle between the forces of the two contending claimants was fought in Stratherne, in which Cuilean was defeated, and his two supporters slain. Two years later, 967, the tables were turned, Cuilean was victorious, Dubh fell in the action, and his rival obtained the crown.

Fordun gives so quaint an account of the reign of King Duff, that we transfer it to our pages : ‘ He was a man of dove-like simplicity towards those who loved quiet and peace ; but a cruel, terrible, and bloody avenger towards rebels, plunderers and thieves.’ Nothing is told of the contest with his rival : ‘ he passed the years of his reign at peace with foreign nations, though the inhabitants of the north of his kingdom were molested by plunderers of their own kin, whose wickedness he had before repeatedly quelled by the rigour of the law.’ In one of his expeditions to restore law and order, he happened to be at the town of Forres with only a small retinue, the most of his forces being sent to scour the

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 94.

A. D. 962-971 country. His small body-guard spent their time in games, plays, and feasting, never thinking of their precious charge. The wicked robbers (the rebels) taking advantage of their culpable carelessness, surprise the king in bed, seize him, drag him through their secret haunts, and slay him. 'They then put the body of the murdered king into a ditch under the shadow of a certain bridge near Kinloss, and covered it lightly with green turf without leaving any trace at all of blood. But the wonder was, that from that hour forwards, until it was found, no ray of sunlight gleamed within the whole kingdom, nay, as long as it lay hidden under the bridge, continual darkness miraculously shrouded the whole land, to the amazement of all. But as soon as the body was afterwards found, the sun shone forth more brightly, it seemed, than ever, to reveal the crime of the traitors.'¹ Mr Skene's explanation of the tradition, that the king escaped from the field of action, took refuge in the country beyond the Spey, and was there slain, is extremely probable; but his explanation of the miraculous part of the story is on a par with the rationalising theories which would rob us of all the incidents which give life to the history of the saints of the early and middle ages. 'An eclipse of the sun was visible at Kynloss on the 10th of July 967, which circumstance may have given rise to the tradition.'²

Cuilean's reign, 967-971, is comprehended in the record of his death 'Culen (son of) Illuilb, King of Alban, slain by the Britons in battle.'³ 'Culen and his brother Eocha were slain by the Britons.'⁴ How his death occurred is given by Fordun; the narrative is not improbable, mal-administration of some kind must have brought him into collision with the subjects of the territory lately acquired. 'Culen was useless and slack in the government of the kingdom; he cleaved to the paths of the young, being sore given to violating maids, and other unlawful deeds, an imitator of King Edwy, who bore a very bad

¹ Fordun, vol. ii. p. 161. ² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 367.

³ Annals of Ulster, A.D. 971.

⁴ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 10.

name with the clergy.¹ Among his other deeds of shame he violated the person of the lovely daughter of a chief named Radhard. On account of which he was shortly afterwards slain by the father, to the great joy of many and the grief of very few.² A.D. 967-971.

The brother of the deceased monarch Kenneth, the second of the name, was raised to the throne, 971, and his first act was to avenge his death, but according to the Pictish Chronicle he did not effect this without severe loss: 'The first soldiers of Kenneth were cut off with great loss in the Moss of Cornar.'³ The cession of Strathclyde seems as yet to have been only in name, for immediately after this Kenneth fortified the fords of the Forth to protect what was still considered the frontier of his dominions. In the same year he invaded Northumbria and harried the country as far as Stanmore, Cleveland, and the Pools of Deira.⁴ In the following year the invasion was repeated, and the Scots are reported to have carried off the son of a Saxon Prince, probably Eadulph, the earl placed over the northern division of Northumbria, extending from the Tees to the Firth of Forth. The next event chronicled in the reign of Kenneth II. is the establishment of a monastery or bishopric at Brechin; this we take to be the meaning of the entry in the Pictish Chronicle: 'This is he who gave the great city of Brechin to the Lord.'⁵ It is also the last sentence in the old document so frequently quoted, and which was probably compiled in Kenneth's reign. It must ever be the most trustworthy guide we possess from the time of the Dalriadic succession, and in the terseness of its statements contrasts most favourably with the English and Irish Chronicles

¹ Fordun says that the English king 'burst suddenly from the midst of a full assemble of nobles, and darted wantonly into his chamber to sink into the arms of a harlot.' The harlot was Edwy's espoused wife Elgiva, whom though within the degrees of affinity prohibited by the canon law, he had dared to marry against the wish of his master St Dunstan. Perhaps Culen was no worse than the unfortunate Edwy.

² Fordun, pp. 161-2. ³ Wyntoun's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 93.

⁴ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 10. ⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 3, 4, 5.

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of the same events, it is manifestly a state document, the church is only mentioned in connection with the state, miracles and saints were conspicuous by their absence. Another interesting circumstance is noted in the reign of Domnall, son of Eoain, who is still spoken of as King of the Britons, went on a pilgrimage to Rome. It would be interesting to know what the British prince thought of Roman society; there would certainly be more polish, and he would meet with plenty of magnificently attired ecclesiastics, but he could only bring home stories of deeds as atrocious as any perpetrated in Strathclyde. He by a year missed the opportunity of seeing Bonifazio Francone on the Papal throne, who had won his tiara by strangling his predecessor; he would hear of the infamous John XII., whose career of cruelty, lust, and incest was closed ten years before by the poignard of an injured husband. The postponement of the visit for a year was indeed a sad loss, for his eyes could not even feast on the sacred vessels of St Peter's, for Bonifazio had carried them off to Constantinople. The amount of faith which must have been in the pious pilgrims to the seat of the Prince of the Apostles, and which survived a visit, is one of the most incomprehensible problems in history; the wonder is, that instead of one solitary Luther, the atmosphere of Rome had not changed every earnest pilgrim into a proto-reformer.

Kenneth did not fail to encounter opposition from the rival branch of his family; it apparently slumbered or smouldered for six years, but came to a head in 977, when a conflict took place in which Olave, the son of Indulph, was slain.² The Scotch and Irish Chroniclers tell of no further events connected with England during the remainder of the long reign of Kenneth II.; but the English Chroniclers of a later date give circumstantial details of the cession of Lothian under an oath of fealty to King Aedgar. Wallingford indeed makes the Scottish king undertake a journey to London where, in the presence of men well instructed in the wisdom of their

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, Annals of Tighernac, p. 77.

² *Ibid.*

ancestors, he does homage to the King of England, and gives pledges for the territory of Lothian. Besides being evidently a repetition of the former transaction between Malcolm and Eadmund, couched in more advanced feudal terms to aid present claims, it is worthy of note that Kenneth was not in formal possession of any part of the country said to be ceded. The Saxon kings were yet only in name kings of England; they had very little power north of the Humber; though the Anglic and Danish kingdoms were nominally extinct, and in feudal language the kings of Wessex lords paramount, yet the territory was a debateable land, which eventually was divided between the two kingdoms of Scotland and England.

The Kings of Pictland had made night as formidable invasions into Bernicia as the Kings of Wessex, and neither of them had much control over the disputed territory until a much later period. The consolidation of it into England and Scotland was a matter of time, and the independent chiefs who exercised sway under the Earls of Northumbria and the Lords of Bernicia, were the parties to consult or subdue; they alone could give possession to either potentate, those next to the Saxon kingdom fell to it and became English, those next to Pictland fell to it and became Scotch. The similarity is striking at the present day, even in stolidity of character and religious feeling; Presbyterianism and the Scotch mode of observing Sunday do not find favour south of the Humber, still less south of the Tyne, north of that they do not seem so much a foreign element.

Though little is known of the events which occurred during the long reign of Kenneth II., and though he is not credited with having made any substantial additions to his kingdom, yet it is evident that he did much to consolidate it, and bring the independent chiefs under the control of the central power. In one of these attempts, so fatal to more than one of his ancestors, he lost his life. He was slain by the men of Moerne, near the foot of the Month (the Grampians), 995. Kenneth's death is attributed by Fordun to treachery, and forms the subject of a curious tale. The Scottish monarch

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had incurred the hatred of Finele, the daughter of the Earl of Angus, whose only son had been executed by his orders, whether for some breach of the law or other cause the chronicler 'knows not.'¹ Finele adopts what appears rather a childish stratagem, she constructs a trap which should cause the death of the king, and then with feminine wiles allures her victim to destruction. The trap was constructed in a little cottage nigh to the king's hunting seat, and where she was likely to meet him. 'The trap, such as had never before been seen, had attached to it on all sides, cross bows always kept bent by their several strings, and fitted with very sharp arrows; and in the middle thereof stood a statue fashioned like a boy, and cunningly attached to the cross-bows; so that if any one were to touch it and move it ever so little, the bow-strings of the cross-bows would suddenly give way, and the arrows would straightway be shot forth, and pierce him through.' Having thus completed the preparations for perpetrating the crime, the wretched woman, always presenting a cheerful countenance to the king, at length beguiled him by flattery and treacherous words. We need not detail the particulars, everything happened as the traitress had planned, the unsuspecting victim when desired touched the spring in the statue, the arrows were shot forth, and the king was slain. Finele and Kenneth were alone in the cottage, she hurriedly left it, and escaped pursuit. Like the courtiers of Eglon in Holy Writ, those of the king of the Scots tarried till they were ashamed, and then broke open the door only to find their murdered lord.' They raised a great outcry, and ran about in all directions looking for the guilty woman—but in vain; they found her not: and not knowing what to do, they consumed the town with fire, and reduced it to ashes. Then taking with them the king's blood-stained body, they shortly afterwards buried it with his father's in Iona, as was the custom with the kings.'² Kenneth II. seems to have been a favourite with the later historians of Scotland: there is no record in the older annals of any Danish

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, pp. 96, 174, 175, 289.

² Fordun's Chronicles, pp. 166, 167.

invasions, though certainly there must have been frequent A.D. 971-995.
 bickerings in the north with the Vikings of Orkney. Boece and Buchanan are therefore supposed by Mr Burton to have invented the story of the invasion which terminated so gloriously in the battle of Luncarty. It is a pity that the ancestor of the noble family of the Hays of Errol, who stemmed the tide of battle and led his countrymen to victory, should turn out to be but a creation of the vivid fancy of a patriot Scot; it is no slight distinction for a baron to be able to trace his descent to an ancestor who gained his living by the *plough*.¹

Kenneth's successor was Constantine, the son of his predecessor Cuilean (A.D. 995); his reign lasted but two years, when he was slain by Kenneth the son of Malcolm, 997. This must have been the issue of a disputed succession, as is indicated by Fordun, who says that Constantine usurped the throne, and that 'during his time things came to such a pass—massacres of the people and troubles of the clergy—that many thought the final overthrow of the kingdom was to happen.' The chief opponent of Constantine was a personage of the name of Kenneth, who is supposed to have been an illegitimate brother of the deceased monarch, and who is described as a 'soldier of renowned prowess.' A battle was fought in West Lothian or Perthshire (authorities differ), in which both leaders were killed.

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Kenneth, son of Dubh, was now raised to, or seized the vacant throne, though Fordun says it was his son Gryme who succeeded. The critical historians of our day make Gryme a title of Kenneth's, indicating strength and sternness of character. He is termed by St Berchan 'The Donn, or brown,' from strong, Duncath. During the reign of this king the death is recorded of Malcolm king of the Britons of Strathclyde, the last of their kings who held the title and partly the power of a reigning prince. Three years later the Saxon King of England, Aethelred, attempted to wrest Strathclyde from the Scottish king, who had probably taken formal possession A.D. 1000. 'In this year the king went into Cumbra-

¹ See Burton's Scotland, vol. i. pp. 358-9, and note.

A. D.
995-1004.

land and ravaged it well nigh all.'¹ Like many future invasions, ravaging was the sum total, not a foot of land was gained. St Berchan indeed implies that Kenneth made an effectual resistance, 'He will scatter hosts of the Saxons. After the day of battle he will possess.'² After a troubled but not inglorious reign of eight years and a half, Kenneth's career was cut short by a rival competitor of the royal house, Malcolm son of Kenneth II. The scene where the final struggle took place is laid in Monzievairst in Stratherne, and the men of Moerne who have played so important a part in previous internecine strife were the supporters of the victor.³

A. D.
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Malcolm II., when he ascended the throne in 1005, was nigh to fifty years of age, and had probably taken part in the stirring scenes previously noticed. He brought to the counsels of the nation not only experience gained in open fight and dark intrigue, but also a mind and person which endeared him to the hearts of his subjects. Such, at any rate, may be gathered from the eulogium passed on him by Fordun and St Berchan. The former says, 'In all knightly deeds, both mimic and in earnest, he was second in renown to hardly any one in the kingdom . . . Moreover, the common people who knew him to be endowed with many good qualities, and distinguished for his stalwart and shapely figure, began with one accord to extol his name and fame with praises, and declared even openly that he was more worthy of the kingship than the rest of men, seeing that he was the strongest.'⁴ St Berchan thus describes him—

'Afterwards shall possess high Alban
A warrior, fortunate praised of bards,
A wrathful heart which fights the battle
Whose name is the Forrannach (the oppressor or destroyer).

The men of the world were full of good of him,
Angels are prophesying of him,
Heavy warrior of a strong people,
A good king who will redden red spears.'⁵

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 335.

² Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 98. ³ *Ibid.* pp. 175, 289, 366.

⁴ Fordun, vol. ii. p. 172. ⁵ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 99.

Malcolm thus strengthened by the favour of the people, and supported by the most powerful of the chiefs, commenced his long reign of thirty years under the most favourable auspices, and notwithstanding some reverses consolidated his kingdom, extended its influence, and the last of the male descendants of Kenneth MacAlpin passed it on to his grandson, the ill-fated Duncan, under the historic name of Scotia. Mr Skene, whose authority on such points is undoubted, calls attention to the circumstance that Marianus Scotus in his chronicle uses the name Scotia not Alban: 'The kings of Alban occasionally appear as kings of the Scots, but this is the first instance in which the name of Scotia is applied in a territorial designation of their kingdom. Used by a contemporary writer, who was himself a native of Ireland, it is evident that the name of Scotia had now been transferred from Ireland, the proper Scotia of the previous centuries, and become adopted for the kingdom of the Scots in Britain in the reign of Malcolm, son of Kenneth, which ushers in the eleventh century, superseding the previous name of Alban.'¹ It by no means follows from this that the Dalriadic Scots formed the principal part of the population, or that their language had superseded the Pictish or even the Brythonic. It is much more probable that, like the Franks in Gaul who gave their name to that country, that the Gadhelic would be in a state of absorption into the Lowland Scotch, which in a short time was to appear as the language of Scotia. The king and court, with perhaps those shadowy personages the bards, might keep up the speech of the Scotia of the west, but the mass of the people, and the adventurers who intermarried with Pictish, Saxon, and Norse heiresses, would know little of the tongue in which Milesius wooed the fair daughter of Pharaoh on the banks of the Nile.

Malcolm's first enterprise was an attack on Bernicia, 1006; though it may seem unprovoked, yet it was perhaps the best way to preserve Cumbria and the other portions of the southern Lowlands now claimed by the Scottish crown, to anticipate the invasion of the Anglo-

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 398.

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Saxon power. In this his first campaign, the king of Scots was unsuccessful in an engagement near Durham with the Anglo-Saxon forces commanded by Uchtred, Earl of Northumbria, his army cut to pieces, and many of his nobles slain. '1006, Battle between the men of Alban and Saxony, the Albanich were overcome, and great slaughter made of their nobles.'¹ Such is the curt notice in the Annals of Ulster; it is amplified in other accounts, and as even *modern* English historians never lose an opportunity of expatiating on the barbarities of the Scots in their raids, it is worth noticing the gentle manners of the Anglo-Saxons on this occasion; the best translation or paraphrase of the words of Simeon of Durham are given by Mr E. W. Robertson: 'Severing from the bodies of the fallen Scots a sufficient number of the best-looking heads, Uchtred committed them to the charge of four women, each of whom was to receive a cow in payment for plating the hair, and arranging to the best advantage these grim relics of the foe, which were then placed on stakes at equal intervals around the walls of Durham, to answer the double purpose of striking terror into any future band of marauding Scots, and of recalling to the grateful townsmen the services of their brave deliverer.'²

Malcolm thus foiled in the attempt to defend or extend his southern frontier, turned his attention to the northern, but the rival potentates there, were about as formidable; the power of the Earl of Orkney and the Maormor of Ross and Moray was not easily shaken. Fordun speaks of numerous conflicts between the Scots and the Norwegians, but the contemporary accounts are silent on the subject. These districts demand our notice shortly; in the meantime we only state the events in which Malcolm appears as an actor. The king evidently thought that alliance with Orkney was preferable to war, for in 1008 he bestowed his daughter in marriage to Sigurd, Earl of Orkney, the issue of which was Thorfinn, who succeeded his father in his island domain, and received

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 366.

² Scotland under her Early Kings, vol. i. p. 93; Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. i. p. 357.

from Malcolm the counties of Caithness and Sutherland with the title of Earl. From default of male issue, and a desire to strengthen his connection outside of the royal house, Malcolm had already disposed of his elder daughter Beatrice to Crinan or Cronan, Abbot of Dunkeld, who seems from his position to have been one of the most powerful men in the kingdom, somewhat like the Bishop of Durham in later days, equally familiar with the mace and the crosier. He is termed by Fordun 'Athbane of Dul,' which the chronicler explains to signify 'superior of the Thanes, or their lord under the king,' consequently he is termed by Mr Skene, 'lay Abbot,' possessed only of the temporalities, but exercising none of the clerical functions. To John of Fordun a married abbot would be an abomination and a slur on his order, so he had to invent an office unknown in his time, but at the time a married, and a well-married priest, would be the rule not the exception. Most of the clergy were married, and their clerical duties sate very lightly on them, in comparison of the cares attending the advancement of themselves and those of their own household. St Columba insisted on celibacy, and called the wives of clerics by the opprobrious name of 'courtesan' (meretrix),¹ but his time was long past, and it is more than probable that the state of affairs in Scotia was no better than those in England, where the most moral of the clergy were married, and who thought, from the example of the celibates who visited them from Rome, that marriage was preferable to fornication. As late as 1123 Henry of Huntingdon tells of a cardinal who was sent to reform the clergy, and induce them to celibacy; the holy man, in a Synod at London, bitterly inveighed against clerical unchastity, and the same night was surprised in the arms of a courtesan. We need not repeat the words of the chronicler, 'the legate turned his steps homeward in confusion and dishonour.'² Neither marriage nor unchastity would have hurt Crinan's position as Abbot of Dunkeld; his morals would be no better and no worse than the Mormaors with whom he would rank in power and influence. Crinan

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Adamnan's Columba, p. 128.

² Henry of Huntingdon, p. 252.

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probably held his position by a hereditary right granted or enforced ; but this, so far from proving the position to have been that of a lay impropriator, simply shows that in Scotland had actually arisen an evil spoken of by Mr Lecky in his History of Morals, and which was only checked by Queen Margaret and her sons : ‘ Barbarian chieftains married at an early age, and, totally incapable of restraint, occupied the leading positions in the church, and gross irregularities speedily became general. . . . The evil acquired such magnitude, that a great feudal clergy, bequeathing the ecclesiastical benefices from father to son, appeared more than once likely to arise.’¹

In the meanwhile the state of affairs in England was such as to afford Malcolm an opportunity of wiping out the remembrance of his former defeat in Northumbria. The gallant young earl who had so gallantly repulsed the Scottish arms was no more, and his place was filled by his brother, a man of an entirely different stamp. Uchtred despairing of successful resistance to the Danish power so long as the contemptible Aethelred was the leader of the Anglo-Saxons, made his submission to Cnut. But by the order or permission of the Danish conqueror, he, along with fifty of his companions, were foully murdered while on their way to render homage to their new lord, 1016. The government in chief of Northumbria was bestowed on Eric, brother-in-law to Cnut ; but Eadulph, the brother of the late earl, was entrusted with the rule of the northern portion. Malcolm resolved to take advantage of these circumstances, and of the distracted state of England, not yet reconciled to the beneficent rule of Cnut the Great, and also of the incapacity of the man to whom was committed the defence of the northern frontier.

Earl Eadulph was a very different man from his brother, Simeon of Durham describes him as ‘ indolent and cowardly—*ignavus valde et timidus*,’ who surrendered Lothian to the Scots, fearing that they would avenge on himself personally the death of those whom his brother had killed. Defeat had perhaps a good deal to do with the ill name

¹ Lecky’s Morals, vol. ii. p. 349.

attached by the chronicler to Eadulf; he certainly did not succumb without a struggle, and that evidently a severe one. In 1018 Malcolm collected a powerful army, drawn from every portion of his dominions, and along with him marched at the head of his contingent Eugenius the Bald, the last sub-king of the Strathclyde Britons. The English force was encountered at Carham on the Tweed, two miles above Coldstream, and defeated with great slaughter, including an unusual number of the English nobility. Signs and wonders attended the event, a comet appeared for thirty nights to the people of Northumbria, a terrible presage of the calamities by which the province was to be desolated. In addition, the Bishop of Durham fell sick on hearing of the battle, and died in a few days. The See was vacant for three years.

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The results of the victory at Carham were most important. Lothian was *annexed*, and the frontier of Scotia advanced from the Forth to the Tweed; to say that it was *ceded* is absurd; it was gained at the point of the sword, and held in the same way. The great monarch who had now been but lately chosen King of England, had at this period sufficient work there, and for the time took no measures to retrieve the loss suffered by his lieutenant. In 1031, however, Cnut having plenty of leisure on his hands, his enemies subdued, and his qualms of conscience quieted by a pilgrimage to Rome, determined to settle matters on his northern frontier. According to the Saxon Chronicle, in the year mentioned, 'This year King Cnut went to Rome, and so soon as he came home, then went he into Scotland; and the King of the Scots, Malcolm II., submitted to him, and became his man, but that he held only a little while, and two other kings, Macbeth and Jehmar.'¹ This has been interpreted by the English Chroniclers, and in our own times by Mr Freeman, to mean that those kings acknowledged Cnut as their over-lord, did him homage, in short became his vassal. The facts of history do not bear out this view, or that the Danish or Saxon kings ever exercised an imperial sway over all the kings of Great Britain.

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 412.

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Mr Freeman's imperial theory is as untenable as that of the Irish and Scotch Chroniclers, who make Crimthan Mor, Niall Mor, and Dathi, Emperors of the British Isles and Gaul to boot, of Gregorius Maximus, who brings under his yoke the whole of Ireland and nearly the whole of England. A king of Bernicia, a king of Mercia, a king of Wessex, a king of Alban, made successful forays, spread ruin and slaughter, and after having received humble enough submission, returned home, the unfortunate victims cowed for the time being. Later chroniclers imparted their own ideas into their accounts, shaped the campaigns and arranged the terms and words of the submission.

The expression 'became his man,' has been held to mean that a feudal homage was paid, some authors contend for Cumbria and Lothian only, others, that the three kings became vassals for the whole of their domains. An unbiased historical criticism will carry no such meaning; the claim of a superior exacting homage from his acknowledged inferior is as baseless as the former ones we have noticed. A fair reading of the passage is that Cnut, unwilling to continue a conflict in England, was quite open to come to terms, viz. : that the boundary line of the King of Scotland should be the Tweed, and that he should make no further encroachments. Compliments and professions of friendship would be interchanged, and all would return satisfied with an arrangement which was to last as long as it suited. How the Mormaor of Ross and the Lord of Argyllshire were present, is inexplicable, they had nothing to fear from the power of England; if they were present at all it was likely the desire to be present at a pageant in which the greatest potentate of their time played a part. It is, however, very problematical whether the high personages, the kings mentioned, ever met at all, much more likely the treaty was made by deputy, and that the chronicler included all the powers north of the Tweed, as submitting to the power of the invincible King of England.

Malcolm, as successful in diplomacy as in the field, returned to his capital, and in three years was gathered to his fathers. Fordun says that he was slain by treach-

erous hands at Glamis, but this is quite inconsistent with the accounts given in the Annals of Ulster and by Marianus Scotus, and indeed with the absence of all intestine feuds during his reign. Mr E. W. Robertson, with much probability and acuteness gives us his opinion 'that Malcolm II. may be looked upon as the originator of that change through which the Scottish King ceasing gradually to migrate from one province to another, enhanced the dignity of personal attendance upon the sovereign, and assembled his nobility in his own "palace" of Scone.'¹ He is said by Fordun 'to have been so open-handed, or rather prodigal, that, while according to ancient custom, he held, as his own property, all the lands, districts, and provinces of the whole kingdom, he kept nothing thereof in his possession but the Moothill of Scone.'² Mr Robertson thus remarks: 'Lurking under this singular statement there are probably some grains of truth, thoroughly misunderstood by the chronicler; and, as in the partition of Scotland into Thanages, a tradition may be recognised of its ancient divisions into *Triocheds and Bailes*, or Baronies and Townlands—institutions of a character inseparable from the very existence of a *settled* community—so the reduction of the kingdom of Scotland as it then existed, to a mere direct dependence upon the royal authority, entailing land tax, *merchet*, and other Celtic mulcts, in quarters hitherto exempt from such exactions, seems to be shadowed out under the *feudal* grant of the whole kingdom, and the *feudal* return made by the gratitude of the Scottish King.'³ Previously the crown lands, that is the private property of the monarch, were administered by officers who accounted to him for the rents and dues collected, the remainder was held by chiefs who gave service when called on. Malcolm assimilated the tenure of the whole kingdom, making every one hold direct from the crown, on payment in some kind, the King was no longer the Ardri and his chiefs Ris, he was the Lord, and they were his vassals.

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1005-1034

¹ Scotland under her Early Kings, vol. i. p. 109.

² Fordun, vol. ii. p. 177.

³ Scotland under her Early Kings, vol. i. p. 107.

CHAPTER VIII.

NARRATIVE—DUNCAN.

Accession of Duncan—Unsuccessful Invasion of England—Orkney and Orcadian History—Turf Einar—Gunhild—Earl Sigurd—His Conquests—Grim and Helgi—Olaf Tryggvason conquers Orkney and imposes Christianity—Death of Sigurd—Thorfinn the Mighty—Arnor his Poet—King Duncan—Thorfinn—Macbeth—Death of Duncan and Accession of Macbeth—His Character and Death—Lulach, A.D. 1034-58.

A. D.
1034-1040.

IN Malcolm II. the male issue of the MacAlpin family became extinct, the surviving representative having been slain by his order in 1033, one year previous to his decease. 'The son of the son of Boete, son of Cinæd, slain by Malcolm, son of Cinæd.'¹ The way was thus left clear to the succession of the direct descendants of the deceased monarch, and Duncan, the son of the Abbot of Dunkeld, seems to have ascended the throne of his grandsire without a dissentient voice.

No event is chronicled in the reign of Duncan until 1038, when Aldred, who had succeeded his uncle as Earl of the northern division of Northumbria, invaded Strathclyde and devastated the whole country. The King of Scots seems to have tamely offered no resistance, and it was not till 1040 that he took retaliatory steps. In that year he advanced with a large army, and swept the northern border of England with fire and sword as far as Durham, which he laid siege to. The valour of the citizens offered a stubborn defence, and they not only arrested the victorious career of the invading army, but annihilated the army itself. Simeon of Durham credits the citizens of the small town with this great victory; but from the extent of the loss it is more than probable they were assisted by a relieving army. The chronicler says, the greater part of the cavalry were slain, a few escaping

¹ Annals of Ulster, Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 368.

by the speed of their horses, in the pursuit the slaughter of the main body was very great, and there was a repetition of the same inhuman spectacle, 'a garland of Scottish heads again adorned the battlements and market place of the Episcopal city.'

A.D.
1034-1040.

The character of Duncan, as depicted in history, is very unlike what Shakespeare puts into the mouth of his murderer—

' This Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet tongued.'

The contrary seems to be the fact, and that it was an unprovoked attack on the undoubted rights of his cousin, the Earl of Orkney and Caithness, which lost him his life and crown. Before we enter on these events, which are to be found only from Norwegian sources, it will not be out of place to take up the thread of Orcadian history at the death of Earl Sigurd, somewhere about the close of the ninth century.¹

A.D. 850-980.

The history of the Orkneys and Hebrides during the Norwegian occupation is little known, and we should say, as little appreciated, yet the light thrown upon it by the Sagas is sufficient to invest it with undying interest, there is a life-like and personal action unknown in that of England and Scotland. The short and fragmentary accounts given there, throw a light on the character of the race who quickened the sluggish life of European society, they were the true originators of the romance which enters so largely into the inner nature of the Teutonic inhabitants of Great Britain. The ballads of the two countries, 'which stir the heart like a trumpet,' are but reproductions of the lays which, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, were told round the wassail board of the Vikings, who in the shelter of their eyries, recounted their exploits from the burning plains of Syria to the savage shores of Labrador. Another feature of still greater importance may be added. The poetry of the old northern tongue has, until the publication of 'Corpus Poetic.

¹ Ante, p. 140.

A.D. 850-980.

um Boreale,'¹ been a sealed book, but by the labours of the two learned editors of this work, we have now a complete collection with English translation of the Eddic and Court poetry, from the earliest times to the thirteenth century, in which is depicted, the thoughts, life, and aspirations of this wonderful branch of the Teutonic family. The editor of this great work has shown the fallacy of ascribing this mass of literature to Iceland alone, and in an eloquent passage, too long for extract, he shows from the vocabulary of words used foreign to the Icelandic, from the conditions of life depicted in the poems, and above all from the composite fancies, half mythologic half Christian, which enter into the very soul of many of the lays, that Iceland could not have been the birth-place of all. To the question, 'Where were the poems composed?' he answers: 'Where but in the Western Isles.'² The action and reaction of the Danes and Norwegians on the inhabitants of England, we have seen was very great, and the centre from which it flowed was the Orkneys, there the daring and adventurous spirits held high carnival and planned new expeditions, at the court of the Earl of Orkney must have assembled men who, like Harold Hardrada, had served the savage Muscovite and the luxurious Byzantine, and preferred to spend their blood-won treasure, among kinsmen, to whom they could chant their tales in the old northern tongue. The imagination must fill up much of the picture, but there is here a canvass ready to be filled up, it is a pity that it has been left untouched by the masters of fiction. Finally, 'the Earls of Orkney were many of them poets, and we cannot but believe that many of the finest northern poems were composed in their domains.'³

On the death of Sigurd he was succeeded by his son Guthorm, who survived but for one year, and leaving no issue, the earldom was vacant. Hearing of this, Rognvald the mighty and wise, despatched his son Halladr, who, with the title of Earl bestowed by King Harald,

¹ *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, by Gudbrand Vigfusson and T. York Powell, 2 vols., Oxford 1883.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. lvi.-lxiv.

³ *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 180.

took possession of the islands. Halladr 'had a great army,' and seems to have met with no opposition; but he soon found he had most troublesome subjects (save the mark) to deal with. 'In autumn and spring the Vikings made promontory plunders, and hewed strand hewing (drove the cattle of the country down to the shore, and slaughtered them for victualling their ships).'¹ In the simple language of the Saga, 'Earl Halladr got weary of this, resigned the Earl's dignity, and received a farmer's right (contented himself with the rank of a farmer) and then went back to Norway.'² The old Jarl who had received the Orkneys as the weregild for the death of his son, bitterly reproached this degenerate scion for his pusillanimity, and said that the whole brood of his thrall wife were unworthy of their sire. Einar, a brother by the same mother, hitherto undistinguished, and held in little esteem,³ answered his angry sire with spirit: 'I have as little love to thee as thou hast shown to me; I have nothing to expect from you here, give me a chance and I shall soon rid you of my presence; give me but some aid and I will go west to the islands; of this be sure Norway shall see me no more.' The father grimly replied: 'I like well that thou comest not back; I have little hope that thy relatives will have honour of thee, for all thy maternal kindred is thrall born.' Einar got one long ship tolerably well-manned, and this proved quite sufficient for the successful issue of his enterprise. Turf Einar landed in Orkney, routed and subdued the Vikings, consolidated his power, and was readily acknowledged Earl. 'He became a great and wealthy chieftain. Einar may be considered the founder of the Earldom of Orkney, previous to his time it was more a rendezvous and victualling port for the roving Vikings, under him agriculture and commerce emerged and prospered, even the buccaneering and other expeditions were conducted according to rule and order. He is said to have been very hard featured,

¹ Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis Olaf Tryggvason Saga, p. 328.

² *Ibid.*

³ Halladr and Einar were sons by a female slave.

A.D. 850-980. ugly, but Mr Vigfusson describes him as 'a goodly husbandman, poet and peat-digger, who taught his Norsemen in the wood-lorn islands to dig and use turf fuel, his memory should be ever green in the islands he ruled so long ago.'¹ The despised bastard proved himself, not only the bold and successful adventurer, but also the wise and beneficent administrator, in addition he was destined to avenge the death of his father. The Saga says, 'the sons of King Harald Harfagre became men of great violence when they grew up.' None of them, with the exception of the foster son of Æthelstan, inherited the virtues of their sire, whatever he had that was base and cruel, was reproduced in them. 'They deprived of life, the kings, earls, or other rich men. One spring they, viz.: Haldan Haleggr and Guthrödr Liomi went with a great number of men northward to Maeri. They came on Earl Rognvald unawares, broke down the house above him, set fire to it, and burnt him within with sixty men.'

The atrocious deed, we need not say, was not executed with the sanction of Harald, but he had to make the best of it. Thorer, the son of the murdered earl, was put in possession of his father's estate, and received in marriage the king's daughter, the young princes were reconciled to their father, and spared to commit further outrages.

Guthrödr had occupied Earl Rognvald's estate for some time, but immediately after the outrage Haldan manned two long ships, and sailed westward. Arriving at the Orkneys, Einar was taken by surprise, could offer no resistance, and took to flight, but in the same autumn he returned at the head of his faithful followers, came upon 'Haldan unawares, and the result was, that the Earl took Haldan Hallegr's life, as is related in the Saga of the Earls of Orkney.' The conflict is sung by the victor himself in five powerful strophes, in which he justifies the deed as one of filial duty, even though it should arouse the wrath of 'the proud-hearted ruler.' Harald did not attempt to avenge the death of his son, but contented

¹ Corpus Poeticum Boreale, vol. ii. p. 181.

himself with a penalty of 'six merks in gold.' Einar offered to pay the money himself, but that in return, he should have all the allodial possessions in Orkney. 'The Bonde consented to this, and that the more readily, as all the poorer men had but small lands, while those who were wealthy, said they would redeem their allodial possessions when they pleased.' The money was paid, Harald retired, Earl Einar was left in peace, 'he governed Orkney a long time, and died of sickness,' probably about 936. A.D. 850-980.

Einar left three sons, two of whom followed the fortunes of Eric Blood-axe, and lost their lives in his service. The third, Thorfinn, the skull-cleaver, succeeded his father, and though he must have done something to have earned his ominous title, was a wise and peaceful ruler, cultivating pacific relations with his neighbours, so far as that was possible. He married Grelauga, daughter of Duncan, Mormaor of Caithness, and with her seems to have gained possession of that district, and brought it under Norwegian rule. The Saga says: 'Thorfinn was a long time Earl in Orkney. He was a great chieftain, and unfriendly to war, and died of sickness. His sons were five: Arnfin, Havard, Liotr, Skuli, and Lodver.'¹

Their rule was in marked contrast to that of their father, wild and reckless, fratricidal strife, murder, and lust, the striking, almost the only incidents. We have seen that there was a close connection with King Eric, and this was sealed by the marriage of Arnfin, the eldest son, to Ragnhild, the fair and ruthless daughter of the ferocious son of Harald Harfagra. Ragnhild inherited the qualities of mind and person of her mother Gunhild, who is celebrated in Norse story as being the most beautiful and treacherous of her kind. On the small scale of the Orkneys, were enacted the tragic dramas which have rendered the close of the Merovingian dynasty so infamous. Gunhild and Ragnhild were worthy successors to Fredegonde and Brunehaut. The society being pagan, did not reach such a depth of degradation in the far north as in the sunny south, and the ladies had

¹ Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis, p. 329.

A.D. 850-980. not the advantage of corresponding with a Pope and a saint.¹ Ragnhild soon got tired of her first husband, 'she contrived his death at Myrkhol in Katanes.' Her fatal charms immediately after gained the hand of the second brother, Havard, the prosperous, who took the earldom. Possession soon palled on the Norse Messalina, and at a banquet held in the hall of her husband, she cast the net round Einar, a nephew of the Earl. 'She said, that such a man was well suited to be a chief, and much more fit for the earldom than Havard his relation; and she said that that woman would be well married who had such a man. Einar requested her not to make such speeches, said that he was the noblest man in the island, and she quite well married.'² But he still listened to the wiles of the temptress, and once in her meshes, lust and ambition got the better of Einar, even the warnings of an acute and friendly soothsayer were of no avail, the charm worked, and Havard fell by the hands of his nephew. Relieved from her husband, Ragnhild had no wish to reward his slayer with her hand, the bait being offered by inuendo only. She was the first to exclaim against the atrocious deed, and as his widow to call for vengeance against the slayer of her murdered lord. She indignantly denied complicity in the crime, 'she said it was nothing but a lie that she had made any promise to Einar.' Such were the powers of the fell enchantress, that in the same way in which she had cajoled her former dupe, she induced another nephew of her husband's, of the same name, to avenge his death. He evidently did not trust the dame too much, Einar said, 'It is said, lady, that you sometimes speak other things than you harbour in your mind, but he who does this work will likely have that in return, that you shall keep the dominions in subjection to him, and along therewith, other things which will appear of no less importance.'³ Thus it appeared to Einar that the lady and the earldom were

¹ The Pope, St Gregory the Great, was an ardent flatterer of Brunehaut. See his very curious correspondence with her. Lecky's History of Morals, vol. ii. p. 251.

² Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis, pp. 330, 31. ³ *Ibid.* 332.

worth the risk of a conflict. 'Einar, the hard-chopped A.D. 850-980 attacked Einar the Besmearer, and killed him. But he was baulked of the fair body for whom he had ventured all, and also the Earldom. 'Ragnhild sent for Liotr, the third brother, and married him;' the earldom was as far away as ever; the Saga says, 'Liotr took the earldom and became a great chieftain.' Goaded no doubt by his savage and fickle helpmate, he did not allow Einar time to make much headway, but took the field at once; the Orkney men were faithful to the sons of Thorfinn, and in a short time Einar was slain. Skuli, the fourth son, now disputed the title of his elder brother; ingratiating himself with the Scottish King, Kenneth II., he was invested by the latter with the title of Earl of Caithness, and seems to have been favourably received by the mixed population there, and having raised an army, crossed the Pentland Firth with the determination to wrest the Orkneys from his brother. In this he was unsuccessful, and was driven back to the mainland pursued by the forces of the islands, and after a severe struggle defeated and slain. Caithness was again restored to the Norwegian power. But either on his own account, or with the connivance and assistance of the King of Scots, Malbride MacRory, the Earl or native chief of Moray, disputed the conquest. A battle was fought at Skidda Moor, in which, though the Scots greatly out-numbered the Orkney men (two to one), the latter were victorious. The victory was dearly bought with the life of the Earl of Orkney. 'Liotr advanced so boldly, that the Scots yielded before him, and the battle was short ere they fled who wished to save their life. But many were slain. Earl Liotr got the victory, but received such wounds as brought him to his end.'

The surviving brother was now unanimously acknowledged Earl of Orkney and its dependencies; no record of his acts has been preserved, the Sagas only say, 'he was a great chieftain, and died of sickness.' Previous to his accession he was married to Edna or Audur, daughter of Kiarval, an Irish King, by whom he had a son Sigurd, worthy of that name, so famed in Scandinavian story.

A. D. 850-980. His domestic relations must have been of the most cordial character, or he must have been less accessible than his brother to the charms of women, for we hear no more of the captivating Ragnhild. Beauty and charms possessed by women like her, outlast the bloom of youth, and are often most dangerous in the ripe maturity, we can hardly imagine that the fair temptress who had ensnared so many 'knights that were so great of hand,' would not make the attempt to bring another within her fatal embrace. We know not whether she spent the remainder of her years in abortive embroglios in Orkney, or joined her savage and reckless brethren, adding to the society which disgraced the annals and trampled on the liberties of Norway.

A. D. 980-1014. Sigurd, in A. D. 980, succeeded his father, and at once took up the commanding position which he retained through life. 'Sigurd became a rich earl and wide lauded. He kept with violence Katanes from the Scotch, and had every summer an army ready for service. He made war in the Sudreys, in Scotland and Ireland.'¹ Almost immediately on his accession, his right to Caithness was challenged by a chief named Finlay, who is termed a Scottish Earl. 'He was no doubt the Finlay, son of Ruaidhri, Mormaor of Moreb or Moray, whose death Tighernae records in the year 1020, and Magbiodr was probably the Maelbrigdi who is mentioned as his brother, and had been the previous Mormaor.'² This powerful and independent chief, the father of Macbeth, in somewhat of the spirit of a later chivalry, challenged the Earl of Orkney to maintain his cause at the sword's point.' Finlay marked out a battlefield to Earl Sigurd in Skidda Myre in Katanes, and fixed a day for the battle.'³ Like a dutiful son, he went to consult his surviving parent how he should meet the challenge. His mother was wise in many things (a magician), and brave as the bravest of her ancestors. Sigurd said the enemy numbered seven to one. She answered, I would long have

¹ Coll. de Rebus Alb. p. 333.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 375.

³ Coll. de Rebus, Alb. p. 330.

fostered thee in my wool-basket, if I had known that thou wouldst live for ever, and fortune decides as to a man's life and not circumstances. It is better to die with honour than live with dishonour.'¹ She offered him a magic standard which should ensure victory to him before whom it was carried, but death to the bearer. Sigurd was very sceptical as to all this, in fact, it is said he got angry with the words of his mother, he determined not to throw away the lives of himself and his men in an unequal contest, to risk his honour and wait for reinforcements. These had to be obtained at a sacrifice, the restoration to the Bonde of the allodial rights granted to Earl Einar. These were at once conceded, and the Orkney men loyally responded to the call of their lord, who soon found himself at the head of a force which warranted him in at once assuming the offensive. Finlay, strangely enough, seems to have been patiently waiting at Skida Myre, the appointed place of battle. Sigurd, in addition to his reinforcements, thought he would try the effects of the magic standard ; three different bearers were killed, but the Earl of Orkney was victorious, the Mormaor of Moray was defeated and driven back with great loss, the combination of magic with numbers and bravery having proved successful.²

The victory was followed up by vigorous and successful action, all the country north of the Spey was overrun and added to the domains of the Earl of Orkney. 'The Earl had these Rikis in Scotland, Ross and Moray, Sunderland and Dali,' the district last-named must mean the western portion of Scotland formerly called Dalriada, of which it seems a diminutive. This acquisition and his enterprising character brought Sigurd into collision with the rulers of these islands, the Hebrides or Sudreys. Soon after, or simultaneously with the colonisation of the Orkneys, they had been visited and taken possession of by the Vikings, the chiefs or kings were by turns Nor-

¹ Coll. de Rebus, Alb. p. 333.

² It was wrought with much manual art and exquisite elegance; it was made in the likeness of a raven, and when the wind blew on the standard it appeared as if the raven was hastening on its flight.

A. D.
980-1014.

wegians and Danes, owing allegiance and paying tribute alternately to the crown of Norway and the Danish power in Dublin. The population was composed of these elements, but the Celtic strain was still present, and in time absorbed the intrusive Teutonic. The Isle of Man was a disputed ground between the kings of Dublin and those of the Western Islands, and it is from an account of a contest between Sigurd and Godred, King of Man, that we are in possession of the details of his conquest of the Western Isles. Shortly before Finlay's invasion of Caithness, in 986, Godred in three ships made an attempt on the coast lands of Dalriada, which was successfully resisted; barbarities were retaliated, one hundred and forty of the Danes were hung, and the rest run through. Another party in the same year were more fortunate, Iona was plundered, the Abbot and fifteen of the brethren slain, probably in defence of their treasures. In the following year, 987, a battle was fought at the Isle of Man with Godred, in which the latter was defeated, and a thousand of the Danes slain; in the same year the sacrilegious slaughter at Iona was expiated by the butchery of three hundred and sixty of the perpetrators.¹ These bloody conflicts form perhaps part of the ordinary life of the parties engaged, but the succeeding ones gain interest from the foreign element introduced, and from the interesting details preserved in the Niala Saga, of which we give the outline.²

The narrative details the adventures of Grim and Helgi, the sons of Nial an Icelander, and incidentally we have the account of the war by which Earl Sigurd extended his rule over the western part of Scotland to Galloway and the Isle of Man. Grim and Helgi, with many brave companions, including Olaf Ketilson of Elda, and Bardi the White, set sail in the summer time on a voyage, the object of which is primarily commercial, when attacked, they describe themselves as merchants, they are driven far to the south by a strong north wind, 'and so great a darkness came over them,

¹ Annals of Ulster Annis, 986-7.

² Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis, pp. 334-8.

that they knew not which way they went ;' the voyage is long, and finding themselves in 'great shallows,' conclude they must be near land. Two nights later they see land on both sides, and a large breaker within the fiord, which Mr Skene identifies as Loch Broom, in the north-west of Ross-shire. The weather is now calm, but a new danger is at hand—they perceive a fleet of thirteen ships coming out to meet them, evidently with hostile intentions. They consult what is to be done in case of attack, but before any decision could be come to the fleet was upon them. Their enemies turn out to be two Scottish nobles from Caithness, relations of King Malcolm, who offer only the most degrading terms of surrender. 'We offer you two conditions,' says Griotgardr, 'that you go on land while we will take your money! the other is, that we will attack you, and kill every man whom we get.' The bravery of the leaders overcame the coward fears of the merchants, who thought to save their lives at the expense of their wares ; the last appeal of Bardi and Olaf was, what will they say in Iceland? they took to their arms and prepared to sell their lives dearly. The battle commenced, and in spite of the desperate valour displayed by the Icelanders, death or capture seemed inevitable, when a fleet of ten vessels is seen approaching. The contest is suspended while the strange fleet is seen rapidly approaching. 'They rowed fast, and directed their course thitherward. There was in them shield on shield, but in that vessel which went foremost, a man stood at the mast. He was in a silken jacket, and had a golden helmet, but the hair was both long and fair. This man had a gold-studded spear in his hand. He asked who have here such an equal play. The brilliant warrior was Kari Solmundson, the trusted lieutenant of Earl Sigurd. On being informed who were the actors in the fray, he at once joined his forces to those of his Icelandic kinsmen, and the tide of battle was at once turned. Snaekolfr met his death by the sword of Kari, Griotgardr fell by the spear of Helgi ; the fall of the leaders determined the fate of the action.' Along both boards the men (the Scotch) asked for quarter. They

A. D.
980-1014.

then gave quarter to all, but took all the money. After that they lay all the ships out under the islands.¹ Olaf fell in the early part of the engagement, but the two sons of Nial and Bardi accompanied Kari to Orkney, and were cordially welcomed by Earl Sigurd, who was only too glad to add to his retainers three such gallant warriors.

The services of his guests were soon called into requisition. Intelligence was received that the brother-in-law of Sigurd, Havard of Threswick had been slain, and the provinces in the mainland invaded by the two Scottish Earls, Hundi (the Abbot of Dunkeld) and Melsnati. Sigurd, with 'a vast army drawn from all the islands,' accompanied by Kari and the sons of Nial, landed in Caithness, and an engagement immediately took place at Dunggalsnip (Duncansness) between the Scotch and Norwegian forces. The latter were victorious, owing largely to the efforts of the two sons of Nial, who performed prodigies of valour, and retrieved the fortunes of the day; Earl Melsnati fell by the spear of Kari, and Hundi with his broken army was put to flight. The loss of the victors must have been severe, as the pursuit was at once arrested by the news of a formidable force advancing under the command of Earl Melkoff. A council of war was held, and it was deemed prudent to 'return and not fight against so great a mainland army.' Sigurd, who seems to have been as cautious as he was enterprising, returned to Orkney with his army, and 'there divided the booty.' The Earl made a great banquet to the heroes of the fight. 'At that banquet the Earl gave to Kari a good sword and a gold-studded spear, but to Helgi a golden ring and a tunic; but to Grim a shield and a sword. After that he made Grim and Helgi his courtiers, and thanked them for their prowess.'

The friends who had been thrown together at Loch Broom paused not in their adventurous and victorious career; the next summer they made war in many places, and were everywhere successful: 'Godred, King of Man, vanquished, and much money got.' After having passed the winter in Orkney, the brothers expressed a wish to

¹ Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis, p. 337.

visit Norway, to which Earl Sigurd courteously responded, and provided for them a good ship and valiant followers. Kari, loth to part with his companions-in-arms, comforts himself and them by saying that they would not be long separated, as he would follow them with the tribute due to Earl Hakon. Returning after twelve months residence in Norway, they, along with Kari, set forth on a kind of roving expedition, in which they harried all the Sudreys, landed in Kintyre, and carried off much plunder. Proceeding southward they made for the Isle of Man, again encountered Godred, defeated him, and slew his son Dungall. Returning from the scene of battle and spoil, they visited Earl Gilli (from his name evidently a Gael) at Colonsay, who accompanied them to the Orkneys. After being present at the nuptials of Gilli to Nereide, the sister of Earl Sigurd, the two valiant brothers leave for Iceland, and their names pass into oblivion. No Saga tells of their future life. We can hardly suppose that they settled down long to the quiet life of the Scandinavian Thule; but we look in vain for their names in the records of the stormy years that followed.

The conclusion of the war by which Sigurd obtained the possession of the Western Isles, which had for some time been subject to the Danish power in Dublin, is chronicled in the year 989. 'Gofraigh, son of Aralt, King of Inchegall, slain in Dalriata.'¹ The narrative thus given from Norse sources details a gap in Scottish history, and throws light on what were most undoubtedly more important parts of the country than we are apt to take them for, and quite as much advanced in civilisation as the domain proper of the King of Scots. It is evident that north of the Spey the mainland of Scotland was held by chiefs who only owned allegiance to the two great potentates, the King of Scots and the Earl of Orkney, as either had the power to enforce it. Whether until a much later period there was an Earl, King, or Lord of the Isles, it is impossible to say. Iona was evidently looked on as a possession of the Scottish crown, though exposed to continuous ravages from Vikings of every nationality; a

A. D.
980-1014.

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 365.

A. D.
980-1014.

Scottish fleet is in possession of the coast, and cruising at Loch Broom. The King of Man is termed Lord of the Isles. A Gaelic Earl is a chief, subject to and paying tribute to the Earl of Orkney. Scot, Dane, Gael, Norwegian, all seem to have had a share, and fight and plunder indiscriminately.

A. D. 997.

The next event in the history of Orkney is of supreme importance, and must have exercised a marked influence on the western and northern portions of Scotland. In 997 'Olaf Tryggvason returned from a western expedition with his army, and landed in Orkney. He took captive Earl Sigurd in Rorvik, lying there before him in one ship. King Olaf offered his life's redemption to the Earl, if he should receive the right faith and baptism, and become his man, and propagate Christianity throughout all Orkney. King Olave took as hostage his son Hundi; from thence Olaf went to Norway and became king there, and Hundi was with him some winters, and died there; but after that Earl Sigurd paid no allegiance to King Olave.'¹ Even during the short period of St Olaf's reign, we cannot but believe that Christianity made some progress in the islands of Orkney and Shetland, and also in the Hebrides or Sudrey, where it could not have entirely died out, and that the fierce enthusiasm of its warlike apostle, perhaps had some effect on the effete Celtic Church on the mainland. St Olaf was not the man to leave his life-work to die out for want of care, the infant church in the colonies would not languish for want of solicitude on his part. It will not be out of place to quote the glowing sketch given of him by a living author. 'Olaf Tryggvason (995-1000), the greatest of all the northern kings, his life is an epic of extraordinary interest. Coming out of the darkness, he reigns for five short years, during which he accomplishes his great design, the Christianising of Norway and all her colonies; and then in the height of his glory, with the halo of holiness and heroism undimmed on his head, he vanishes again. But his works do not perish with him. He had done his work, and though maybe his ideal of a great Christian

¹ Coll de Rebus, Alb. pp. 339-40.

empire of the Baltic was unfulfilled, he had, single-handed, wrought the deepest change that has ever affected Norway. His noble presence brightens the Sagas wherever it appears, like a ray of sunshine gleaming across the dark shadowy depths of a northern firth. All bear witness to the wonderful charm which his personality exercised over all that were near him, so that, like the holy King Lewis (who, however, falls far short of Olaf), he was felt to be an unearthly superhuman being by those who knew him. His singular beauty, his lofty stature, golden hair, and peerless skill in bodily feats, make him the typical Norseman of the old heroic times, a model king.¹ The same authority is inclined to think that the youthful Viking imbibed his Christianity from those of his own race who, in the north of England, were under the 'fresh impulse of that revival which manifested itself in such men as Odo, and Oswald, and Dunstan.'² Olaf was for some time in the Western Islands, where he seems to have married; his missionary zeal never slept, there he must have made converts, and it is not too much to expect that he met with kindred spirits, the fruit of the labours of those pious souls who, in the seventh century made sacred ground, the loneliest of the Hebrides. Certainly he laid the foundation of a faith which was never obliterated, and of which we hear of no relapses. In Olaf's reign, along with Norway, Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe Isles, Orkney became the See of a suffragan bishop. The fierce faith of Odin no longer existed in name, in practice it is far from extinct at the present day.

A. D. 997.

The death of Olaf relieved Sigurd from his obligations, and, as we have seen, he entered into relations of the most cordial character with the King of Scots, and received his daughter in marriage. In 1014 the eminently sagacious and hitherto fortunate Earl of Orkney, and master of the half of Scotland, joined the confederacy of Norsemen, who contested with the native kings the rule of Ireland, at the battle of Clontarf. Most of the Norse leaders perished in the action. Earl Sigurd

A. D. 1014.

¹ *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, vol. ii. p. 83. ² *Ibid.* p. 84.

A. D.
1014-1057.

was among the slain. He left issue, Thorfinn, Sumerlidi, Brusi, and Einar, the first the sole fruit of his Scottish connection, the other children by a previous marriage.

On the receipt of the disastrous news of the death of Sigurd, the family by the first marriage 'were made earls and divided the lands between them in thirds.' They do not seem to have laid claim to Caithness and Sutherland, leaving these to their younger brother as his inheritance through his mother. Very probably Malcolm at once occupied the country on behalf of his grandson. The late Earl of Orkney, previous to his setting out on his ill-starred expedition, had intrusted Thorfinn to the care of his relative the King of Scots, who showed a lively interest in his young charge, then but 'five winters old.' The rule of the brothers in Orkney did not last long. Sumerlidi was soon cut off by sickness. Einar, in spite of the remonstrances of Thorfinn, attached his lands to his own; but he made himself so obnoxious to the Bonde, that he was got quit of in some way or other. Brusi was a quiet peaceable man, and is said to have been clever and eloquent, he had no wish to contest the earldom with his young brother, but resigned in his favour and retired into private life.

Thorfinn the Mighty, the greatest of his race, is described 'as precocious in his education and in every improvement;' the grandfather acted loyally to the fatherless child, in every way from his infancy upwards 'he had great assistance from the King of Scots.' The Saga then gives his physique, character and early history. 'Now Thorfinn became a great chieftain, one of the largest men in point of stature, ugly of aspect, black-haired, sharp-featured, and somewhat tawny, and the most martial-looking man; he was a contentious man, and covetous both of money and dignity; victorious and clever in battle, and a bold attacker. He was then five winters old when Malcolm King of the Scots, his mother's father, gave him an earl's title and Caithness to rule over; but he was fourteen winters when he prepared maritime expeditions from his country, and

made war on the domains of other princes. So says
Arnold Jarla Skald.

A. D.
1014-1057.

'In the storm of the helmets
The prince reduced the edge of the sword
Before he was fifteen winters old
Boldly he went.
He considered himself mature
To protect the land,
And to attack others ;
None under the canopy of heaven
Is more bold than Einar's brother.'¹

From prudence or a more praiseworthy feeling, Thorfinn did not attempt to enforce his claim to the Orkneys by arms, but flushed his maiden steel in expeditions probably against the chiefs of the Sudreys and adjoining coasts. The Saga says that 'The King of Scots died when the brothers had reconciled themselves ;' but it is probable that some time previous to this Thorfinn was firmly established as Earl of Orkney and the islands, with the districts of Caithness and Sutherland.

¹ *Collectanea de Rebus Albinicis*, p. 340. Arnthor or Arnor the Skald referred to is stated in the *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, vol. ii. pp. 184-5, 'to have been the son of Earl Eric's poet. Like Sighvat, he combined poetry and trade.' His first patron was Rognwald the son of Brusi, afterwards Thorfinn, and whose relative he seems to have married. 'As a poet he was magniloquent as Marlowe in Tamburlaine, nor does he lack the true fire in his verses. His remains are considerable, scattered though Hulda and the Orkney Saga, and a few are also cited in Edda. Arnor is remarkable as the only court poet who quotes from the early poems citing Volospa in one line. Upon our theory his close connection with the west would account for this. Arnor's poems have been spared to a greater extent than any other man's save Sighat only. There is a magnificence and dash about them which no doubt won him many admirers, and his perfect form and rich metre pleased even the later critics, like Snorri and Olaf. The sea and the golden-headed galleys, marching like God's bright angels over the waves, the savage triumph over the 'roasted heathen,' the horrors of the Day of Doom (where he is inspired by Volospa), these are his themes, tricked out in glittering if somewhat borrowed sheen. The dirge on Thorfinn, his kinsman by marriage, shows feeling and loyalty that are to be admired.' Arnor is supposed 'to have kept house, and died in the Orkneys.' It would be interesting to know how he got on with the teachers of the new faith, which he must have nominally embraced.

A. D. 1040.

In Malcolm's time, there seems to have been friendly if not cordial relationship between the King of Scots and the rulers north of the Spey, the Mormaors of Ross and Moray, and the Earl of Orkney. The Mormaorate of Moravia had lapsed on the death of Sigurd to the Finleikr whom he had defeated, and under his successor, the celebrated Macbeth, it attained to a power hitherto unknown, owing to the talents of its ruler, the distracted state of Orkney, and the pacific tactics of Malcolm on his northern frontier. On his death relations became constrained, the attitude of the King of Scots was changed, and immediately after his unsuccessful campaign in England, Duncan appears as the aggressor, and the disturber of the harmony which had previously subsisted between the three potentates.

Before narrating the war between the two cousins, the King of Scots and the Earl of Orkney, it may be stated that the Sagas know nothing of Macbeth, and, on the other hand, the authorities who name Macbeth know nothing of the war with Earl Thorfinn and its results. It is only matter of surmise that Duncan was supported by the forces of the Mormaor of Moray in his conflict with the Earl of Orkney, and that on his defeat the unfortunate king was treacherously slain by Macbeth his general. The Sagas must tell their story before we place before our readers the short extracts which connect Macbeth with the death of Duncan.

In the Orkneyinga Saga the King of Scotland appears under the contemptuous name of Kali-Hundason, the son of Hundi, or the hound, this allusion to his paternal descent, next to certifying the fact that the Earl Hundi who waged war with Thorfinn's father was no other than Crinan, the warlike Abbot of Dunkeld, who, like the Bishop of Bayeux and Earl of Kent, was equally at home in the camp and the cloister. Kali-Hundason or Duncan, almost as soon as he grasped the reins of power, demanded tribute from the Earl of Orkney for the district of Caithness, contending that it was part of the territory of the Scottish crown, and that the grant of his predecessor was invalid. 'Now from this arose great

enmity, and the one made war upon the other.' The King of Scots must have been of a most sanguine or enterprising disposition, the attack on Northumbria and Caithness would seem to be nigh to simultaneous. While the king went south, he dispatched his sister's son Moddan, with an army to enforce his claims in the north, bestowing on him the earldom. 'Then Moddan rode down from Scotiand, and strengthened himself as to forces in Sudraland.' Thorfinn lost no time; he collected his forces in Caithness, and before his opponent could take active measures, was joined by an army from the islands commanded by Thorkell Fostri. The combined forces greatly out-numbered those of the Scotch Earl, who, recognising the disparity, retired without striking a blow. 'Thorfinn subjected to himself Sutherland and Ross, and made war far and wide in Scotland.' He then returned to Caithness and dismissed the contingent from the islands. 'Thorkell and the conscript forces returned home.' Moddan made the best of his way to Berwick, where he met his lord, who, retiring from his unsuccessful campaign in Northumbria, would not be in the best of humours.' King Kali got very wroth on hearing the issue of the campaign of his protegee, and the doleful accounts of the widespread ravages of the Earl of Orkney. He displayed, however, no want of spirit or aptitude of resource. The plan of the campaign was, that the King should embark with the flower of the army in eleven long ships, and make for the north of Caithness, while Moddan should proceed by land, and enter the country from the south. By this means Duncan thought to enclose the Earl of Orkney between the two armies, and by his fleet in the Pentland Firth prevent the reinforcements from the islands joining their friends on the mainland. Earl Thorfinn undoubtedly expected an attack, for after his success in the south he took up his residence in 'Caithness in Dungalsbae, and had five long ships, and frequently inspected his forces to see that they were well manned.' The plans of the King of Scots, however, were so energetically carried out, that his opponent was either surprised, or the time

A. D. 1040.

was too short to collect his scattered levies. Thorfinn in one ship saw the sails of the enemy, he was soon joined by his small fleet, and the usual council of war was held, and the usual conclusion come to—fight to the death. The odds were greatly in favour of the Scots in men and ships, and the contest was a long and a close one, but either the superior seamanship or desperate valour, or both, of the Norsemen, gained the day. Earl Thorfinn, like Nelson, led the fight, laid his ship alongside the King's, and boarded it; Duncan, after a gallant stand, was forced to flee, and only escaped by leaping into another ship and making off as best he could. 'The Scotch did not make much stand before the mast on the King's ship. Then Earl Thorfinn leapt up behind on the quarter-deck, and forward on the ship, and fought most valiantly, and when he saw that the King's crew was thinned, he exhorted his men to come on board; and when King Kali saw that, he desired them to cut the joining ropes, and be off with all the ships as quick as possible. Then Earl Thorfinn got boarding hooks on the King's ship. Then Thorfinn desired them to bring up the standard, and with it followed a great multitude of men. Then King Kali ran off his ship with such men as were still standing, but the greatest part were fallen on that ship. King Kali leapt into another ship, and desired them to lay hold on their oars. Then the Scotch fled, but Thorfinn pursued them.'

The Earl of Orkney was now joined by Thorkell Fostri with 'a great army' from the islands; the combined forces hotly pursued the Scottish fleet, which made for the coast of Norway. The Norse forces landed on the southern shores of the firth, and plundered at their will, collecting at the same time reinforcements for the impending conflict. In the meanwhile Earl Moddan, who had encountered no opposition, established himself in Caithness, and took up his headquarters at Thurso, where he expected to be joined by reinforcements from Ireland. Thorfinn determined not to leave this enemy in his rear, and took his measures with the skill of a consummate general. While he watched the movements

of the King of Scots, he detached Thorkell with a division of his army to surprise Moddan. The movement was executed with celerity and skill, everything went as it was planned. 'Thorkell went concealedly, for all the people in Caithness were true and faithful to him. There came no news of him before he arrived in Thurso at night, and broke down the house on Earl Moddan and brought fire to it.' The twice unfortunate Scottish Earl fell by the sword of the fierce Viking while he attempted to make his escape from the blazing pile. On the fall of Moddan, his army surrendered, but the narrative seems to show that a struggle was maintained for some time; 'a great number were killed, but quarter was given to some.' The victor did his work well and thoroughly, yet wasted no time, but promptly rejoined his chief, who warmly congratulated him on his prowess and generalship.

King Duncan now endeavoured to bring together the whole strength of his kingdom and his connection, in a final attempt to crush his warlike and powerful cousin. 'He drew an army together from the south of Scotland, from the west and from the east, and all the way from Satiri (Kintyre). Then there also came to meet him that force from Ireland, which Earl Moddan had sent for. He then sent far and wide to chieftains for assistance, and brought all this army against Earl Thorfinn.' The Earl of Orkney awaited the attack of this formidable host at Torfness or Burghead, and from the character of the man, the position would be skilfully chosen, and very likely fortifications thrown up. The Saga says that the Scotch were superior in numbers, but the result of the battle showed that this was more than made up by the prestige of success, and the daring gallantry of the Norsemen and their leader. Thorfinn first attacked the Irish division, which seems to have had the honour of leading off the contest. 'He had a gilt helmet on his head, and was girt with a sword, a spear in his hand, and he hewed and cut on both sides, he was the foremost of all his men.' The onslaught was so fierce that the Irish broke, and fled pell mell, 'they never got righted again.' Nothing daunted by the untoward defeat of his leading division,

A. D. 1040.

the King of Scots brought up the main body of his troops, and strove with desperate valour to turn the fortunes of the day. 'King Duncan had his standard borne forward,' and the Scots men-at-arms fought long and fiercely round the person of their prince, but the raven flag was borne victorious over the prostrate bodies of the Scots, perhaps over that of the King himself. 'There was a severe battle for a while, and the conclusion of it was, that the King fled, but some say he was slain.' Thorfinn followed up his victory with characteristic energy, 'he drove the fugitives all the way upon Scotland, and laid the land under him wherever he went all the way to Fife.' Thorfinn had left Thorkell with part of his army, and had pursued the flying enemy with the remainder, the smallness of his following seems to have encouraged the inhabitants of the districts which had submitted, to make a new effort to throw off the yoke. A surprise was attempted, but Thorfinn was not to be caught unprepared, the Scotch were again defeated with great loss, and the most savage reprisals were made for what was considered an act of treachery. The conduct of the Great Earl on this occasion is a lasting blot on his name, it is a piteous account given in the Saga, 'then the Earl's men went over hamlets and farms, and burnt everywhere so that not a cot remained. They killed such men as they found, but women and old men crept away into deserts and woods with howling and whining—some they whipt before them and made captives.'

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Before we return to the fate of Duncan, it may be as well to trace the further career of the Earl of Orkney. The Saga says: 'After this Earl Thorfinn went north along Scotland to his ships, and subdued the country wherever he went. Then he went north to Caithness, and resided there during the winter, but every summer after that he fitted out an expedition, and made war during the summer with his army.' He was the richest of all the Earls of Orkney, and possessed of nine earldoms in Scotland, the whole of the Sudreys and a large Riki in Ireland, in fact he left very little north of the Tay to the Mormaor of Moray, who succeeded Duncan as

King of Scotland. Thorfinn held his allegiance to Norway very lightly, but submitted to Olaf Haroldson, and acknowledged his suzerainty, giving him his nephew, Rognwald, the son of Brusi, as a hostage. Thorfinn's submission, however, was entirely nominal, he neither paid tribute nor gave assistance in hour of need to his liege lord. When Magnus had recovered the throne of his father, an attempt was made to bring the powerful vassal of Norway under its sway. Rognwald had been the foster brother of the King of Norway, had been with him at the battle of Sticklestad, where his father Olaf had been slain, and had shared the young prince's exile in Russia, he was now the willing agent to carry out the policy of his benefactor, and at the same time benefit himself. Rognwald was sent to the islands to share Thorfinn's power, as the liege man of the King of Norway. It was not to be expected that the mighty Earl would brook a rival, even though a near kinsman, a conflict took place at Redburgh (Rattasborough, east of Dunnett Head), in which Thorfinn was victorious and Rognwald driven back to Norway. The Earl's poet, Arnor, who was deeply attached to each of the combatants, gives a graphic account of the battle and of his own emotions.

'Battle of Redburgh, I am grieved to tell what happened. I know after men broke the peace between the earls (Rognwald and his brothers), the prince struck his awnings and put to sea, outside the Islands (Hebrides) . . . ice cold . . . (it was still winter). A dire fate was ruling when the earls fought of yore, their great feud brought many a man low that morning. My beloved patrons fought at Redburgh. I saw them both, my patrons, hewing down each others men in Pentland Firth. Very great was my sorrow. The sea was stained, the dark gore was dashed on to the fine strakes, the blood flew on to the rim of the shields (round the waist of the war galleys), the hull was splashed with all. The prince (Rognwald) would have won all the ancient land for himself (he lost far fewer men) if he, the scion of Endil (the sea-king) had had the help of the islanders (Hebrides people), the people betrayed the lord of the Shetlanders.

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Prayer, O true King of the Sun's awnings (heaven) help thou the gallant Rognwald.'¹

The aspirer to a share in the Earldom of Orkney made another attempt which was nearly successful, but in the end he fell into the hands of his uncle, by whose orders he was put to death, 1046. The Sagas give a reign of sixty or seventy years to Thorfinn, reckoning from his nominal accession when five years of age, his decease thus taking place in 1074 or 1084. Mr Skene, however, by a careful collection of events, is inclined to place his death in 1057; this view is not *contradicted* in the Sagas, and serves materially to explain the state of affairs in Scotland at that time.²

A. D. 1040.

To return to the fate of the King of Scotland, the Norwegian account seem to indicate that Duncan fell on the field of Burghead, or in the flight, but makes no mention of Macbeth in connection with the event. A contemporary chronicler, Marianus Scotus, informs us that 'in 1040 Donnchad, King of Scotia, was slain in autumn on the 14th of August (19 Kal. Sep.) by his general Macbethad, son of Finnloech, who succeeded him in the kingdom for seventeen years.'³ His death is also recorded in the Annals of Tighernac, but the hand of Macbeth does not appear, he is simply 'slain.'⁴ The Register of the Priory of St Andrews, a later authority, states that 'Donchath was killed by Macbeth.'⁵ From these statements, and from the fair inference that tradition has always some foundation in fact, it is next to certain that Macbeth was the perpetrator of the ruthless deed, to which his name is attached, and that the scene of the tragedy was the 'Smiths bothy,' Bothgouanan, near Elgin. How the Mormaor of Moray was instigated to the deed there is nothing to show; the conflict between the rival powers lay in his territory, and it is probable enough that he was at the head of his contingent in the army of the

¹ Corpus Poeticum Boreale, vol. ii. pp. 193, 194.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 412-13.

³ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 65.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 78.

⁵ Innes' Critical Essay, App., p. 424.

King of Scots, he could hardly have been neutral, why he turned against him can only be inferred. The allegiance of the Mormaor of Moray was divided between the Kings of Alban and the Earls of Orkney, as either had the power to enforce it, to turn to the side of the victor when resistance was hopeless, was but natural. But an additional motive to the slaughter of Duncan is easily supplied. Macbeth had a connection with the royal house by the female side, his wife was Gruoch, the daughter of Boete or Bode, son of Kenneth, whose son or grandson had been slain by Malcolm in 1032. Why not aspire to a throne under these circumstances, and as for the means, killing a rival was the rule, not the exception in such a case.

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There is of course another history of these events known wherever the English tongue is; the source from which the great dramatist derived his plot and character was the Chronicle of Hollinshead, and which we need not recount. It is more than likely that there was some slight foundation for Macbeth being looked upon as a regicide and a usurper, and his failure to establish a dynasty would help to strengthen the evil odour of his name, long possession of the crown establishes the *jus divinum*. It was not, however, till the fourteenth century that the legendary history with which we are so familiar took place. Fordun, the historian of that period, says indeed very little of King Machabeus previous to his accession; his account is, that Duncan was too easy-going a king, and that 'he was privily wounded to death by Machabeus, who was the head of a family which had murdered his grandfather and great grandfather;' a deplorable but far from unusual circumstance in the struggle for possession of the Scottish crown by rival branches of the royal house. In the next century Wyntoun must have collected and put into shape some of the floating legends, for he tells of the weird sisters appearing in a dream to the future monarch of Scotland, and predicting his rise. A little further on in his Cronykill the poet Prior of Lochleven gives an account of the birth of Macbeth, and credits him with an exalted pedigree. His

A. D. 1040. — mother had a liaison with a gallant who is described as

‘ Off bewté pleasand, and of heycht
Proportyownd wele in all measure
Off lym and lyth a fayre fygoure.’¹

The lady was not left in ignorance of the paternity of the fruit of affection, the father declared it in explicit enough terms, and like the weird sisters gave a forecast of the fate of his son.

‘ That he had gottyn on hyr a sone,
And he the dewill was that hym gat,
And bade hyr noucht fleyd to be off that,
Bot sayd that hyr sone suld be
A man off gret state and bownté,
And na man suld be borne off wyff
Off powere to rewe hym hys lyff.
And off that dede in taknyng,
He gave his lemman thare a ryng,
And bade hyr that scho suld kepe that welle,
And hald for his lue that jowele.
Efftyr that oft oysyd he,
Till cum till her in prewaté,
And tauld hyr mony thyngis to fall
Set trowyd thai suld noucht hawe bene all.’²

This and other material was sufficient for the fertile imagination of Bœce, who wrought it into his narrative copied by Hollinshed; it attracted the notice of the master-mind who has stamped the fiction with immortality.

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Withall there is no reason for any other supposition, but that Macbeth ascended the Scottish throne with no more stain on his character than any of his predecessors. He was looked on simply as one connected with the royal house who had been strong enough to oust another member of the family; his adherents were in sufficient force to support his claim, and the nation acquiesced without more ado.

The kingdom of the new monarch could by no means be so extensive as that of his predecessors. It is more than probable that Cumbria and Lothian remained faithful to the children of Duncan, or rather that they preserved a kind of semi-independence, acknowledging

¹ Wyntoun's Cronykil, vol. ii. p. 129.

² *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 130.

neither the Scotch or Danish (latterly the Anglo-Saxon) power, reserving their allegiance to either party. To the north Macbeth's territory was contracted, his own Mormaorate of Moray was in the possession of the Earl of Orkney, and though it is hardly probable that Thorfinn would actually incorporate with his own territory the districts of Buchan, Mar, Angus, and Mearns, yet the statement in the Sagas that he possessed these earldoms cannot be without foundation. Macbeth, however, was strong in the compact territory round Scone, which up to this time had been the seat of government and the heart of Scotia. Whether his kingdom was great or small, he appears in history as a powerful, wise, and even pious prince as piety went in those days, and found in his wife a worthy coadjutor. He is the first King of Scotland since the great Achaius (Auchy) who had relations with the continent; the details are wanting, but the fact rests on surer foundations than the letters which passed between the Dalriadic chief and the Emperor Charlemagne. That Macbeth was not the tyrant represented by the later chroniclers is certain, no contemporary writer speaks of him but with respect, and he appears in the 'Nomina Regum Scotorum et Pictorum' as the fortieth in the second list of kings, with no other remark than the usual one, 'he was killed by Malcolm, and buried in Iona.'¹ The account in the prophecy of St Berchan (whatever it may be worth) sounds very like a panegyric—

'Afterwards the red king will possess
The kingdom of high slope-faced Alban
After slaughter of Gael after slaughter of Galls,
The liberal king will possess Fortrenn.
The red one was fair, yellow, tall;
Pleasant was the youth to me.
Brimful was Alban east and west
During the reign of Dearg the fierce.'²

Veneration for the church and its ministers was then, and should perhaps yet, be considered a most essential element in all rulers worthy to guide the reins of government,

¹ Innes' Critical Essay, App. p. 424.

² Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 102.

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and who have the good of their subjects at heart, it has covered a multitude of shortcomings, and has changed the name of tyrant into saint. Macbeth and his Queen set the example so worthily followed by his successors, one of whom indeed was 'a sair saunt to the crown.' In the Register of the Priory of St Andrews, Macbeth and Gruoch, King and Queen of Scots, are chronicled as granting to the society the lands of Kyrkness from motives of piety and benefit of the prayers of the brethren. At a subsequent period the lands of Bolgyne are granted to the same society of Culdees, 'cum summa veneratione et devotione.'¹

No domestic trouble or foreign invasion (apart from those invented by later writers) disturbed the peace of Scotland until 1045, when Crinan, the Abbot of Dunkeld, headed an insurrection which was quelled by the death in battle of its leader and his principal supporters. The Annals of Tighernac, in a brief notice, would lead to the supposition that the struggle was a severe one. 'Battle between the Albanich on both sides, in which Crinan, Abbot of Dunkeld, was slain there, and many with him, viz., nine times twenty heroes.'² The reign of Macbeth, with this exception, was one of peace; and if we are to trust the tradition in the prophecy of St Berchan, one of unexampled fertility and prosperity; this must have been owing largely to the personal character of the monarch, but also to the intimate and friendly connection with Orkney, and the immunity from the attacks of the Southron. The latter was due to the fact that the children of Duncan were in early childhood at the death of their father, and the sympathising friends in England bided their time, besides Macbeth provoked no hostility, there is no record of any attempt on his part to extend his power south of the Forth.

Five years had now passed, 1050, since the power of the house of Athol had been broken by the defeat and death of the Abbot of Dunkeld, when we find contemporary writers stating that the two potentates who bore sway

¹ Chronicle of St Andrew, p. 114.

² Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 78.

over Scotland went to Rome. Marianus Scotus tells us that in this year Macbeth distributed money to the poor of Rome, and the Orkneying Saga that Thorfinn, Earl of Orkney, went to Rome 'and saw the Pope, from whom he obtained absolution of all his sins.' The mere statement that money from Scotland was distributed in Rome, would not be sufficient in itself to prove that its king made the donation in person; it however shows that relations were opened with the Papal court. Taking the two events from different sources, it is not at all improbable that the two friends made their pilgrimage together. Thorfinn had certainly plenty of sins to confess in the way of killing, and Macbeth's conscience may have been more tender than those of his predecessors, who never thought of absolution from the sin of putting a rival out of the way. Besides, pilgrimages of kings were fashionable in those days—something like making the 'Grand Tour'—and not only fashionable, but improving, foreign travel enlarges the area of ideas essentially insular. Cnut the Great had set an example of penitence, and had taken this fashionable and orthodox way of showing it to the world. Thorfinn and Macbeth ruled not over so large a territory as the illustrious Dane, but there are numerous points of resemblance; and the glowing words of Mr Freeman are not inapplicable to the Scottish princes: 'The throne of Cnut, established by devastating wars, by unrighteous executions, perhaps even by treacherous assassinations, was, when once established, emphatically the throne of righteousness and peace.'¹ Mr Burton's pungent observation, 'To hold that Macbeth was a mirror of sanctity in a graceless age, would not be among the most untenable of historical paradoxes.'² Not a whit more paradoxical than the graceful pose of the Danish conqueror as the penitent father, so pathetically told in the pages of the author previously quoted. If either the King of Scots or the Earl of Orkney paid a visit to the continent, it is evident that a state of affairs

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¹ Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. i. p. 479.

² Burton's *Scotland*, vol. i. p. 349; Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. i. p. 479-88.

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existed altogether new in Scotland ; a stable government administered by officials who could be entrusted with the reins of power, while the hand of the state was furth of the kingdom.

Four years of peace were yet to be left to Macbeth and his people. In 1054 this was rudely broken, and in the end the usurper, if so he can be called, had to succumb to the rightful heir, whose blood now flows in the veins of our beloved monarch. The late king, at his death, left two children, both in infancy, by the sister or cousin of Siward Earl of Northumberland, who was otherwise connected with the family of Athol, his aunt Aldgitha being married to Maldred, son of Crinan, Abbot of Dunkeld. The supposition that they found refuge with so powerful, and as it proved so sympathetic a relation is in itself extremely probable. Fordun says that Macbeth, on the death of Duncan, sought to slay his two sons, Malcolm and Donald, that they made resistance for two years, and then finding their cause hopeless, the first fled to Cumbria the second to the Isles.¹ Mr Skene does not attempt to fix their locale while children, but Mr E. W. Robertson treats as a fiction Fordun's account, and 'that they probably remained amongst their hereditary partisans in Atholl and the southern provinces.'² Whichever Donald was in youth, subsequent events would lead us to think that Malcolm found a refuge with his uncle Siward, that he learned the accomplishments of a stalwart knight, and if his literary education was neglected, he at least was taught the language in which to woo his Saxon wife. Siward in due time proved himself a supporter of the rights of his nephew, so soon as he was of an age to claim his inheritance.

Macbeth had been tacitly acknowledged King of Scotia by the Anglo-Saxon power, but as he had given no cause of offence on the borders, a pretext was needed before an invasion of his territory and his rights could be entered on. It was soon found ; in 1052 some of the Norman favourites of Edward the Confessor, who took

¹ Fordun, vol. ii. p. 180.

² Robertson's Early Kings, vol. i. p. 122, note.

such a hurried departure on the return of Earl Godwin, found their way north, and were hospitably received at the court of the King of Scotland. This naturally gave umbrage to the patriotic party in England, and gave a pretext for interference, but whether this was made the ground or no, in 1054 Earl Siward, in the interest of his nephew, invaded Scotland at the head of a formidable force, by sea and land. The army of the Earl was largely composed of the Housecarles of the King and the Earl, picked and tried soldiers, Danish and English, 'the terrible heroes' who loom so largely in the pages of Mr Freeman, prototypes of the 'Old Guard of Napoleon in their deeds of daring and in their fate.'¹ Macbeth, in addition to the united support of the people of Scotia, had in his ranks no unworthy antagonists to these redoubtable warriors; he was supported by the fierce Vikings of the north, under the command of Dolfinn, the son of the Earl of Orkney, and their kinsmen the Norman exiles, few in number but formidable in skill, courage and equipments. Siward advanced without opposition, crossing the Forth at Stirling, through Stratherne until he came somewhere near to Scone, where he would have the support of his fleet, which had entered the Firth of Tay.

The site of the battle is unknown, but it was probably in the vicinity of the capital, there, on 'the day of the Seven Sleepers,' 27th July 1054, the two armies met in conflict. The struggle was severe, and although the Saxon Chronicle, and all English writers since, claim the victory for Siward, yet the fair inference from the accounts seem to show that it was a drawn battle. Siward retired without placing his nephew on the throne of Scotland, but his cause was so far advanced that the young prince was acknowledged King of Lothian and Cumbria, districts over which Macbeth exercised no sway.

Nothing can be farther from historical fact than Mr Freeman's statement as to the result of the battle: 'The English victory was complete, but Macbeth himself escaped. Malcolm was, as King Eadward had com-

¹ Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. ii. p. 354.

A. D.
1040-57.

manded, proclaimed King of Scots, and a King of Scots who was put into possession of his crown by an invading English force, most undoubtedly held that crown as the service man of the English Basileus.¹ The author, in his next sentence, contradicts himself. 'It took, however, four years before Malcolm obtained full possession of his kingdom,'¹ and this possession was gained without help from England, so far as can be known from contemporary chroniclers. It is much more likely that Siward undertook the enterprise on his own account; what between devotion and hunting, interrupted by the broils of his turbulent earls with his Norman kinsfolk, the English Basileus was the most unlikely monarch of his race to assert his own dignity or assist an aspirant to a crown.²

The slaughter on both sides in this battle was very great; the strength of the King of Scots was irreparably weakened by the loss of three thousand of his bravest followers. Dolfinn, the son of his best friend the Earl of Orkney, was among the slain, and the whole of the Norman exiles, who repaid his hospitality with desperate but unavailing courage, are said to have been cut off to a man. The English army had to deplore the loss of fifteen hundred of their best troops, a large proportion of the 'Housecarles,' the *corps d'elite* were among the slain, the Earl's son Osbeorn and his sister's son Siward perished on the field. The plunder, unprecedented even in those days, in some measure atoned for this loss, it struck the minds of contemporary authors with more amazement than the carnage.

Siward, at that time the aged Earl of Northumberland, has formed the subject of fiction and even of art; he has been in both the embodiment of the Scandinavian hero, the child of Odin. When told of the death of his son, with great composure he inquired, 'Was his

¹ Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. ii. p. 365.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 410, note. Much turns on the assumption that Macbeth was a usurper, an assumption entirely gratuitous, if we are to take the statements of contemporary chroniclers as representing the views of the times when they wrote.

death wound received before or behind?' The messengers replied, 'Before.' Then said he, 'I greatly rejoice; no other death was fitting either for him or me.' The same chronicler depicts the scene of Siward's death a year later: 'The stout Earl Siward being seized with dysentery, perceived that his end was approaching, upon which he said, 'Shame on me that I did not die in one of the many battles I have fought, but am reserved to die with disgrace the death of a sick cow; at least put on my armour of proof, gird the sword by my side, place the helmet on my head, let me have my shield in my left hand, and my gold inlaid battle-axe in my right hand, that the bravest of soldiers may die in a soldier's garb.' Thus he spoke; and when armed according to his desire, he gave up the ghost.'¹

A. D.
1040-1057.

It is uncertain, or rather it is not stated, whether Malcolm accompanied his uncle, and was present at the battle in Perthshire; but he kept up his friendly relations with Northumberland, and on the death of Siward gained the friendship of his successor Tostig, the fierce and ill-fated son of Earl Godwin. Three years passed before Malcolm felt himself strong enough, supported as he was by the English Basileus and his cousin, to make another effort for the crown of his ancestors. Whether Macbeth was left in peace, or futile but harassing attempts were made on his territory, is not known. But in 1057 we are informed of the bare fact, that Malcolm invaded Alban, drove Macbeth and his forces across the barrier of the Mounth in Aberdeenshire, and on the 15th August, at Lumphanan, in Mar, defeated and slew him.² 'Malcolm, however, unexpectedly followed after him, at a quick pace, across the hills, and even as far as Lunfanan, and engaging there suddenly in a slight battle

¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 205.

² Macfinlaeg occidit in Augusto. Lulag successit et occiditur in Martio. Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 65.

Macbeth, son of Finlay, supreme King of Alban, slain by Malcolm, son of Duncan. Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 78.

Macbethad, son of Finlaech, Sovereign of Alban, slain by Malcolm, son of Duncan, in battle. Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 369.

A. D.
1040-1057.

with him, he slew him, with a few who stood their ground, on the 5th of December 1056.¹

The supporters of the slain monarch did not acquiesce in the defeat, but set upon his nephew Lulach, the son of the Maormor of Moray, whose claims to the crown through his mother, a grand-daughter of Boete, were identical with those of Macbeth.

A. D.
1057-1058.

The new king, for he is called so in contemporary writers, was a different man from his predecessor, he is described as 'Lulach fatuous—the simple,' he maintained an unavailing struggle for seven months, but on the 17th March 1058, he was slain at Essie, in Strathbogie, according to the Annals of Tighernac 'per dolum' by treachery, perhaps stratagem is meant.²

How Malcolm, a young and inexperienced leader, unaided, defeated the man who had successfully withstood the attack of the Earl of Northumberland, supported by the flower of the English and Danish troops, is difficult to fathom. That he was not supported in person by his English friends, is in the highest degree probable, their chroniclers would not have omitted the record of such an obligation, and their successors from Henry of Huntingdon to Mr Freeman would have made the most of it. The most probable reason is, that Malcolm found active partisans in the men of Athol, the followers of his ancestors, and the men of Moerne (Angus and Mearns), always ripe for revolt. As we have seen, it is not improbable that at this time Earl Thorfinn was no more, and that his strong hand being withdrawn, the eastern counties, from the Firth of Tay to the Moray Firth, would throw off their allegiance, and transfer it to Malcolm instead of Macbeth, the friend of their deceased superior. The Orkneying Saga says that after Earl Thorfinn's death 'many *Ríkis* which the Earl had subjected fell off, and their inhabitants sought the protection of those native chiefs who were territorially born to rule over them! so that the loss arising from the

¹ Fordun, vol. ii. p. 192.

² Chronicles of Picts and Scots, pp. 65, 78, 369.

death of Earl Thorfinn was quickly apparent.¹ The loss of the support of the Earl of Orkney, and the active hostility of those who were previously allies, alone gives a key to the easy victory over the man who, three years ago, presented so stout a front, but was now left to make what stand he could with little more than his own retainers.

A. D.
1057-1058.

¹ Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis, p. 346.

CHAPTER IX.

MALCOLM III.—CANMORE.

Malcolm III.—State of Society—Lineage and Character—Fixes his residence at Dunfermline—First Invasion of England—Norman Conquest of England—The Aetheling and his Sisters take refuge in Scotia—Disturbances in Northumbria—Malcolm invades England a second time—He meets Edgar Atheling and his Sisters—They visit Scotland—Malcolm is united in marriage to Margaret—Her character—Turgot's Life—William invades Scotia—Peace concluded at Abernethy—Terms of this considered—Prince Duncan returns with William—Edgar Aetheling—Reduction of Moray—Third invasion of England—Death of the Conqueror—Fourth invasion of England—William Rufus retaliates—Terms of Peace—Rufus annexes Cumberland and makes the Solway his frontier—Malcolm visits William Rufus—Returns and invades England for the last time—His defeat and death—His character—Death of Margaret.

A D.
1058-1093

THE reign of Malcolm Canmore marks a most important period in the history of Scotland; under him it emerges from the incubus of Celtic rule in Church and State, the institutions which culminated in feudalism and Roman Catholicism received from him their first impulse, institutions now effete and mischievous, were then, so far as we can see, preparations for the civilisation and culture of to-day. The Scotland over which he was called to rule was eminently Teutonic, what element there was in it of Gaelic or Brythonic was nigh to extinct. The Gaelic language may have been, and probably was, that of the court and the higher clergy, but the admixture of Danes and Saxons from the south, and of Norwegians from the north, even if they had not found a kindred race, would warrant us in the conclusion that the people and the language were then what they are now. Scotland had benefitted little indeed from its Dalriadic kings, Nectan and Angus Macfergus were more powerful, the first a more enlight-

ened monarch than any of the race. The polish, what we may call the civilisation of barbarism which characterised the Scots of the sixth and seventh centuries, was effectually rubbed out by the rough warfare with the Norsemen, there is nothing to indicate any advance in civilisation. The Church, as we shall endeavour to show in the second part of this history, had fallen still more from its pristine state, the elements of dissolution were in it, and from the time of Kenneth Macalpin, no longer in communion or sympathy with the Northumbrian church, it sunk deeper and deeper, so that all the clergy, from bishop and abbot to the lowly scoloc, might equally be termed 'lay.'

A. D.
1058-1093.

The first advance in religion and civilisation appears in the reign of Macbeth, his connection with Rome, and through the Norman refugees with the continent, gave Scotland a footing in Europe, she entered appearance in the brotherhood of nations.

Malcolm united within himself, so far as descent went, all that was required to combine the mixed elements in the population of the country he was called to rule over. In the female line he was the direct descendant of Kenneth MacAlpin, in the male he was the grandson of the powerful Abbot of Dunkeld, the head of the Athol family; his mother was the sister of the Danish Earl Siward of Northumbria; and as if to combine all the discordant elements in the island, he wedded first the widow of the Earl of Orkney, and afterwards the sister of the Aetheling, the heir to the throne of Alfred and Cerdic.

Malcolm III., surnamed Canmore, or the Great Head, succeeded to the throne 17th March 1057-8, and reigned till 13th November 1093, thirty-five years and eight months.¹ There is, however, no authentic account of his coronation or that of any King of Scotland until that of Malcolm IV., 1154. Mr Burton accepts Fordun's account, who says, 'Malcolm was set on the king's throne at Scone in the presence of the chiefs of the kingdom, and crowned 25th April 1057.'² The Rev. Dr M'Lauchlan gives us a

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 431, note.

² Fordun, vol. ii. p. 194.

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part of the ceremony, 'the Albanic Duan is said to have been sung by the royal seanachaid or genealogist, at the coronation of Malcolm Canmore in 1058.'¹ Solemnly crowned or no, Malcolm proved himself at once a man of courage and action; he certainly fulfilled the hopes of his people, he mirrored the age in which he lived, and at the same time largely influenced it. Exercising boundless hospitality, and bearing in his heart the highest chivalrous feelings, he sullied his fair fame and belied his own nature by savage reprisals, by cruel deeds on friend and foe. Loving learning in the person of his beloved Queen and her associates, he had no knowledge of letters, and could have made no effort to gain that knowledge from his earliest youth, spent either at the court of Siward or the sainted Edward. His religion, the religion of the age, perhaps the only religion then possible, was sincere, and Malcolm's conduct goes far to prove that devotion may be the child of ignorance; 'he kept the vigils of the night in constant prayer; he with the Queen washed the feet of poor persons, waited on them, and served them with food and drink.'² Little is known of the history of his time beyond the record of his forays into England, and his successes in the north, but there can be little doubt that the laws of the country, such as they were, would be equitably and firmly administered, his rule is that of a vigorous and successful monarch, strong in the confidence and support of his subjects, from the Spey to the Tweed. In person and personal valour Malcolm was the beau ideal of the Hero King of the age. Wintoun says,

'In the Crystyndome, I trow, than
Wes nocht in deid a bettyr man,
Na lyvand a bettyr Knycht
Na mare manly, stout, and wycht.'³

In addition he had the chivalrous gallantry which was so soon to form an important part in the civilisation of

¹ M'Lauchlan's Early Scottish Church, p. 143.

² Life of Margaret, ed. 1884, pp. 39, 61-93.

³ Wyntoun's Cronykil, vol. ii. p. 154.

Europe, as the following anecdote, reported by various chroniclers, amply testifies: 'Once upon a time it was reported to him that one of his greatest nobles had agreed with his enemies to slay him. Silence was enjoined on the informant, and the traitor was received at court with the pleasant countenance he and his followers had been used to. They were invited to join in a hunt, under some pretext the King withdrew the noble to a retired spot apart from the rest of the company. The King then charged the traitor with his guilt. 'Here we are,' said he, 'thou and I, man to man, with like weapons to protect us . . . Act like a man, not like a woman. Meet me as man to man, that thy treachery may seem to be free, at least, from meanness, for, disloyalty, it never can be free from.' The sequel may be imagined, the traitor was disarmed by other weapons than the sword. 'I promise,' said he, 'before God and His mother that for the future I shall be most faithful to thee against all men.' They returned to the party, nothing was said, and for the future Malcolm had no more faithful retainer.'¹ In all this Malcolm represents and mirrors his age in Scotland; it did not produce gallant knights (of the Froissart type), pious priests or learned clerks, so far as we know, but it gave birth to feelings which in a short time produced all these, by welcoming whatever influences or persons would further the cause of religion and culture.

Duncan, the father of the King of Scots, had for a long period of years been the viceroy of his grandsire in Lothian and Cumbria, and a portion of Malcolm's youth may likely have been spent there, he would be much better known to the inhabitants of these districts than to his subjects in the north, they would look upon him as their own king. Yet we do not find that he made any of the towns in these localities his favourite seats, perhaps the openness to invasion from the south, and the absence of anything approaching to fortified stations, with the exception of Alclyde and Edinburgh, may to some extent account for this. The most populous and important part of Scotland now, was then possessed of neither towns

¹ Fordun and Wyntoun.

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nor fortresses, at Melrose a few houses may have clustered round the monastery, and Berwick was already a seaport, but we hear of no others. Almost on the Highland line we hear of Falkirk, but the famous and wealthy cities in the mysterious district of Manaan, who furnished a ransom to the rapacious Penda, have all disappeared. On the other hand, to the north of the Forth, it is evident that towns and fortresses were not uncommon, that all the way to Caithness and Orkney they had sprung up, and that commercial intercourse, even with the continent, was brisk and lively.

Malcolm fixed his residence in Scotia proper, north of the Forth, and while Scone was the capital, Dunfermline was his favourite seat, and according to Fordun, its natural position amply justified the choice of the King. 'It was of itself most strongly fortified by nature, being begirt by very thick woods, and protected by steep crags. In the midst thereof was a fair plain, likewise protected by crags and streams; so that we might think that was the spot whereof it was said:—

'Scarce man or beast may tread its pathless wilds.'¹

The King of Scots, by his victory over Macbeth, had obtained armed possession over the country to the south of the Spey, and his connection with the Athol family would at once strengthen and preserve his power. But there remained the eastern districts, turbulent and dangerous to previous monarchs, now largely leavened we must consider by Scandinavian immigrants, this element and the friendship of Orkney, Malcolm gained, by an alliance with Ingioborg, the widow of the late Earl Thorfinn. The Maormor of Moray, in the confusion, seems to have regained his independence, and it was some years before it also was brought under the dominion of the Scottish crown.

In 1061 Malcolm commenced his life work, the extension and consolidation of his kingdom to the south; in that year his first invasion of England took place. Taking, one would say, a mean advantage of the absence

¹ Fordun's Chronicle, p. 202.

in Rome of Earl Tostig, 'his sworn friend and brother,' he ferociously ravaged Northumbria, and violated the 'peace of St Cuthbert in the island of Lindisfarne.'¹ What motive Malcolm had in this foray (for it was evidently no more) the chronicler gives no clue to, his statement is, like all the rest of the Scots invasions, highly coloured; in any case it did not mar the friendship of the two sworn brothers. Yet when we consider that this was the first of five different invasions, differing only in extent and ferociousness, it is evident that it was part of a settled policy on the part of the King of Scots. Malcolm was the first to appreciate the value of the district south of the firths, and his life's work was to extend in that direction, to carry fire and sword into the adjoining districts seemed to him and succeeding monarchs the best way to preserve what they had already. He also initiated the Scottish policy, always to take advantage of the weakness of her powerful sister. England's calamity was Scotland's opportunity. An admirable policy devised by and carried out for the benefit of kings and fighting men, it kept separate people speaking the same language and worshipping the same God, it preserved the proud independence in which a Scotchman is still wrapt, but whether this was worth the centuries of bloodshed and misery it entailed, might be questioned even by a patriot Scot who has studied the history of his country, and also the New Testament.

The history of the contest which terminated so gloriously for King Harold at Stamford Bridge, needs no further mention. But it is more than probable that Malcolm, though not in person, yet in men and ships, assisted Harald Hardrada and Tostig. The latter, driven out of Northumbria by the execration of his subjects, had vainly and foolishly struggled against his brother, and after making his name infamous by his ravages on the coasts of England had taken refuge in Scotland. From his shelter there the traitor joined Harald in his last campaign, both to find a warrior's grave, and prepare the way for the Norman Conqueror. Mr Freeman fails to see

¹ Simeon of Durham.

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what motive of sound policy could have induced Malcolm to have given assistance to Harald and Tostig.¹ The motive is not far from the surface, something might be picked up in the scramble, and England, north of the Humber, was as yet unappropriated.

The news of the fall of Harold, and the collapse of the Saxon power would, no doubt, agitate the minds of the King of Scots and his nobles, but there is no evidence to show that any assistance was given to the sons of Harold, or even to the northern earls in their vain attempt to place Edgar on the throne of his ancestors. On the authority of Ordericus Vitalis Mr Freeman says: 'That a powerful Scottish army was summoned for an English expedition. But either Malcolm lingered in his preparations, or else the whole movement had fallen through before his troops could be got together.'² If Malcolm failed in promptitude, it is the only instance recorded; it is much more probable the Norman chronicler took it for granted that the turbulent King of Scotland would not let such an opportunity slip, but which, after all he did. But in misfortune the King of Scotland showed the kindly and hospitable spirit so characteristic of him through life. Eadwine and Morkere made their peace with the conquerer, but Cospatric, taken with a patriotic fit which did not last long, sought a refuge in Scotland. With him went more distinguished exiles who did not repay benefits with ingratitude, the Aetheling Edgar, his mother Agatha, and his sisters Margaret and Christina. The company, a large one evidently, including the Sheriff Mærleswegen and many others of the best men in the north set sail and reached Dunfermline in safety.

All were received with genuine kindness, if we could believe that Malcolm was a Gael we should say with Highland hospitality, lands and honours were liberally bestowed, and many of the exiles cast in their lot with the Scottish King, and became the ancestors of the proudest names in the Scottish aristocracy.³ Malcolm

¹ Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. iii. p. 345.

² Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. iv. p. 186.

³ Compare Palgrave's England and Normandy, Hailes Annals, etc.

now met for the first time the woman who was to be the guiding star of his life, the lode star of all that was true and good in Scotland, loving wife and faithful partner of his fortunes, guide and counsellor alike to king and noble, priest and peasant. The lady with her relatives did not make a lengthened visit, but followed the fortunes of the wandering head of the house, but her charms made an impression on the heart of the King of Scots which was never effaced, and two years later Margaret yielded to his pressing suit, and they were united in marriage.¹

The vacant earldom of Northumbria was bestowed by William on Robert de Comines, one of the adventurous spirits from Flanders who had followed the fortunes of the Conqueror, but whose name in later times was to be peculiarly identified with Scottish history. Comines nominally took possession of his earldom, and proceeded to administer affairs with the insolence attributed to the intruders by contemporary chroniclers. Durham however still held out, and was yet a stronghold of Anglo-Saxon power, but by the help of the Bishop, the Normans were admitted within the walls, and the rude soldiery, encouraged by the Earl, inflicted on the citizens the outrages incidental to a place taken by storm. But Comines had miscalculated the spirit and strength of the Northumbrians, he had roused men who were soldiers, every man of them trained in the fierce northern feuds and forays. Next morning the gates were burst open, the city entered by an overwhelming force, and the Normans massacred, all save one solitary fugitive who survived to tell the tale. The Earl and his immediate followers made a brave but ineffectual stand in the Bishop's palace or castle; it was set fire to, and the defenders perished in the flames or by the sword. This blow was immediately followed up by the revolt of the citizens of York, who slew the commander of the garrison with many of his followers; the residue made good their way to the castle, which they held out for the Norman power. Northumberland was in a blaze, the Aetheling, Earl Cospatric, Earl Waltheof, the Sheriff Maerleswegen,

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¹ See page 228.

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and the patriot band of Anglo-Saxons returned at once to the scene of action, and put themselves at the head of the movement, which was to sweep the hated foreigner from the shores of Britain. William Malet, the commander of the garrison of the beleaguered fortress, conveyed at once intelligence to William of their desperate position, encompassed by the whole power of northern England, headed by the Aetheling in person. The Conqueror, alive to the danger, in person at once set out at the head of an overwhelming force, he 'came from the south with all his troops, and sacked the town, and slew many hundred persons. He also profaned St Peter's Minster, and all other places,¹ and the Aetheling went back to Scotland.'² William built another castle on the right bank of the Ouse, so as more effectually to control the mutinous citizens, and entrusted the command to William Fitzosbern, Earl of Hereford. The King having thus regained York, sent a force to capture Durham, but St Cuthbert interfered to preserve his own city, a great darkness fell upon them in the way, and they wandered whither they knew not, one whom they met informed them that this was done by St Cuthbert, who was ever the protector of his own city, the pious invaders when they heard this turned back.³ The supporters of the national movement seem to have held their ground, though dispersed for the while, and were soon enabled to take the field. In the autumn of the same year a Danish fleet, under the command of the three sons of the King of Denmark, and the Jarls Asbiörn and Thor-kell, appeared in the Humber, and landed there in the interest of the Aetheling. They were instantly joined by the national forces and the Aetheling. Headed by Waltheof, the son of the great Siward, Cospatric and the chief Thegns, who had joined the movement, they marched straight on York. It was at once attacked, taken by them, and three thousand of the defenders slain, a hundred of the chiefest by the hands of Waltheof, the

¹ Did not respect the right of sanctuary.

² Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 446.

³ Simeon of Durham, Hist. Eccl. Dun. iii. 15.

two castles levelled with the ground. The victors literally threw away all the advantages resulting from their success, the two badges of Norman servitude destroyed, the Northumbrian levies considering the work of liberation done, returned home, the Danes retired to their ships with their booty. The cause of Edgar was lost as soon as gained; his supporters had only incurred further store of vengeance at the hands of William. The loss was sufficient indeed to tax the power of the Conqueror, and it was only by a mixture of diplomacy, combined with military skill and valour, that he was able to exact the vengeance which he had sworn to inflict on the authors of the revolt and all concerned in it. The Danes, as we have seen, rejoined their fleet, and in their usual manner made incursions all along the coast, intent on plunder, in many cases penetrating well into the interior. While thus engaged, they were surprised by the cavalry of William, who carefully watched their movements, many of them cut down, and the remainder driven back to the refuge of their ships. This, the King of England seems to have thought, sufficient punishment for the invaders, who retired to the Humber. Negotiations were opened, and the curious bargain was made, that for a consideration in money, the Danes were not to assist the Northumbrian rebels, that they should leave the shores of England in spring, but in the meanwhile, they might do a little plundering on the coast, but not go far into the interior. The terms agreed on were badly kept on the part of the Danes, they did a good deal of plundering, and did not go away at the time agreed on.

But the bargain, ill-kept though it was, was sufficient for William's purpose; it isolated the northern chiefs and the Aetheling from their formidable allies. The Conqueror was now free to deal with Northumbria single-handed, and he determined to do so in a manner which would not require a repetition of the operation. He entered York seemingly without a struggle, the Northumbrian forces had melted like snow, or like a Highland army after a victory. William first took measures for

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the security of York, by leaving a large force to rebuild and occupy the castles, and form a garrison sufficient to overawe the turbulent people of the north. Mr Freeman, in words scathing but true, describes the sequel: 'And now came that fearful deed, half of policy, half of vengeance, which has stamped the name of William with infamy, and which forms a clearly marked stage in the downward course of his moral being.¹ He determined to make Northumbria a desert.' *Waste* is the term ominously affixed in Domesday to all the possessions of Edwin, Morkar, and the northern prelates, as well as to the lands of Waltheof and Cospatic, of Siward Beorn, and Merlesweyne; and a province once flourishing and prosperous became the haunt of beasts of prey, wild cattle, and outlaws.² The details are sickening, and are corroborated from the Saxon chronicler of the time to William of Malmesbury. The King superintended the work himself; all who resisted were mercilessly cut down, no quarter was given to men taken with arms in their hands; houses, corn, goods, and property of every kind were given to the flames, even the domestic animals were doomed to destruction by fire. For a generation the country between York and Durham, sixty miles, was a desert, men, women, and children died of hunger, the extremities resorted to in shipwreck were not uncommon. 'Others,' in the emphatic words of our old records, 'bowed their necks for meat in the evil days. They became slaves to any one who would feed them, sometimes, when happier days had come, to be set free by the charity of their masters.'³

This devastation did not extend beyond the Tyne, but the inhabitants of the district to the north of this boundary had soon little ground to congratulate themselves on their escape. In the spring of 1070, in fact, so soon almost as William's back was turned, Malcolm, the King of Scots, at the head of a large and well-appointed army, 'a countless multitude of Scots,' entered by Cum-

¹ Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. iv. p. 288.

² Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 134.

³ Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. 4, pp. 293-4.

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berland into Teesdale, which he devastated with fire and sword. He pursued his course into Cleveland, seized Holderness, and then turning sharply to the north, savagely overrun the territory of St Cuthbert. On a former occasion St John of Beverley had appeared in person to protect his church and lands, and the fierce Normans had retired appalled, but the prince of the apostles did not appear to preserve his church at Wearmouth, the burning of which Malcolm superintended in person. It is to be hoped for the memory of so pious a prince as the King of Scots that the Monk of Durham has exaggerated his statements, but he says, 'Malcolm burnt also other churches, with those who had taken shelter in them.' If Malcolm had for his object in this expedition ought but plunder, he was disappointed, he could be of no assistance to the Aetheling and his followers, who, we have seen, had given up the conflict, some fled to Flanders and elsewhere, others, among the rest Waltheof and Cospatric made their peace with William.

While Malcolm was engaged in this inhuman and sacrilegious work two incidents are reported to have taken place. The first, which coloured his whole life, we reserve until the issue of the campaign is told. The second was the receipt of news which seems to have goaded him to madness. Cospatric, who had repeatedly found a shelter at the Scottish court, who had been hospitably received, and whose interests formed a part of the object of this expedition, had lifted up the heel against his host and benefactor. Waltheof and Cospatric had made their peace with William as we have seen, and sworn fealty to him. The latter anxious to evince his loyalty in the service of his new lord, thought fit to show it by an attack on the dominions of his late host. Simeon says: 'Summoning bold auxiliaries he invaded and fiercely ravaged Cumberland. Having done this with fire and sword, he returned with great spoil, and with his allies he firmly established himself in the fortress of Bamborough, from which making frequent sallies he weakened his enemies.' The chronicler continues, 'He (Malcolm) having heard (while he still beheld the burning of the

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church of St Peter) of what Cospatric had done on his people, hardly able to contain himself for fury, ordered his men no longer to spare any of the English nation, but to hurl all to the earth or kill all, or carry them off captives under the yoke of perpetual servitude.¹ The account of the manner in which these orders were carried out is given by the same author; ² but it is to be hoped, for the credit of our common humanity, that it is exaggerated, in fact the character of Malcolm throws strong doubts on it; he was a man of strong passions, and likely enough to give free vent to these under provocation, but his was not the remorseless cruelty of a politician like his fellow-devastator William. In the first outbreak of his fury Malcolm and his followers may have perpetrated the cruelties mentioned by Simeon, but the usual fate of the vanquished in war, captivity in a foreign land would be the most of it. The multitude of captives was immense: 'Scotland was therefore full of English slaves, male and female, so that even to this day, I do not say no little village, but no house however small, can be found without one of them.' A fact which proves that the first part of the order of the Scotch King was but sparingly exercised. It is a piteous tale the devastations of the north of England by the two monarchs, and would lead us to curse all kings and conquerors. But some good came out of the dire calamity to Scotland, many Anglic refugees found their way there after the devastation of the southern part of Northumbria, infusing a welcome element into the population, even among Malcolm's captives there may have been some like the little Syrian maid who would bring new life to their masters in a foreign land.

The news of the treachery of Cospatric seems to have reached Malcolm simultaneously with, or immediately after the incident now to be told, an incident fraught

¹ Simeon of Durham de Gestis Rebus anno 1070.

² They tore the young children from the breasts of their mothers, threw them high into the air and received them on the points of their lances; the cruel Scottish beasts beheld as a sport the spectacle of this cruelty.—*Ibid.*

with momentous consequences to himself and his country. Mr Freeman pins his faith on Simeon of Durham; but with all due deference to the pious and patriotic monk, he seems in his detestation of the sacrilegious spoiler of the patrimony of St Cuthbert, to pile up the agony too much, when he describes the meeting of Malcolm with the Aetheling and his family: 'When riding on the borders of the river (Wear), beholding from an eminence the cruel deeds of his followers on the wretched English, and feasting his eyes on such a spectacle, it was told him (Malcolm) that Eadgar Aetheling with his sisters, beautiful girls of the royal blood, and many other rich persons, fugitives from their homes, lay out in their ships in that harbour.' Where the wandering prince had been for a couple of years it is hard to say, either in Flanders or with the Danish fleet; he now begged the protection of his former host. In singular contrast to the savage occupation in which he is said to have been engaged, Malcolm in person cordially welcomed the whole party, and assured them of a refuge in his dominions. They sailed towards the north, landed at Dunfermline, and were joined by the King of the Scots, so soon as he had finished his work in England.

Whether he now met Margaret for the first time, or was then betrothed or even married to her, is a matter involved in a maze of contradictory statements and dates. Eadgar and his retinue certainly visited Scotland, and were the guests of the king in 1068: the Saxon Chronicle, under the year 1067 (which Mr Skene, in a note, shows in reality was 1068) gives the following account, which Florence corroborates:¹—
 'This summer the child Eadgar with his mother Agatha, his sisters Margaret and Christina, Merlesweyne, and several good men went to Scotland under the protection of King Malcolm, who received them all. Then it was that King Malcolm desired to have Margaret to wife; but the child Eadgar and all his men refused for a long time, and she herself was unwilling, saying that she would have neither him nor any other person, if God would allow

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¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol i. p. 414.

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her to serve Him with her carnal heart in strict continence, during this short life. But the King urged her brother until he said yes; and indeed he did not dare to refuse, for they were now in Malcolm's kingdom, so that the marriage was now fulfilled, as God had foreordained, and it could not be otherwise, as He says in the gospel that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His foreshowing. The prescient Creator knew long before what He would do with her, namely, that she should increase the glory of God in this land, lead the King out of the wrong into the right path, bring him and his people to a better way, and suppress all the bad customs which the nation formerly followed. These things she afterwards accomplished. The King therefore married her though against her will, and was pleased with her manners, and thanked God who had given him such a wife, and being a prudent man he turned himself to God and forsook all impurity of conduct, as St Paul the apostle of the Gentiles says, '*Salvabitur vir,*' etc., which means in our language, 'Full oft the unbelieving husband is sanctified and healed through the believing wife, and so belike the wife through the believing husband.'¹ Mr Skene contends that this was the true date, and the true account of the marriage, and how it was brought about, and that Simeon's story, 'if it bears any foundation at all, appears to be misplaced, and the marriage which followed it had already taken place.'² Mr Freeman, on the other hand, in an elaborate note written before Mr Skene's work appeared, proves that the marriage did not take place earlier than the time narrated by Simeon, 1070; that it took two years to overcome the scruples of the fair devotee, and that she with her sister shared the perils by sea and land of her wandering brother.

Whether in 1068 or 1070 Malcolm *was* married to the English princess whose ancestry on the father's side went back to Woden, on the mother's to the imperial line who still claimed the empire of Rome. Whether

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, pp. 444, 445.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 422; Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. iv. p. 782.

Ingioborg was dead or divorced is a matter of dispute, the most probable opinion is that she did not long survive the birth of her son, who was named Duncan after his grandsire. We have the authority of the life of Margaret, by her confessor Turgot, that her marriage took place at Dunfermline, 'she built an eternal memorial of her name and devotion in the place where the nuptials had been held.' The match was a love match, if ever there was one, and attended with the happiest results; but it was also a sound political alliance, it at once placed the King of Scots in a position that he and his successors never lost; that of the peers of the crowned heads of Europe it was the first of those alliances which eventually united the island of Great Britain under one monarch. The two Saxon princesses seemed born with a deep religious nature, which took the form of the highest ideal Christianity of the age, yet both were conscious of their high position and its requirements, the younger followed the fortunes of her brother till all hope of his ever being advanced to the throne of England was lost, then only she renounced the world and its vanities, and became the stern abbess of a famed English monastery; her sister Margaret, at the call of duty, remained in the world, though not of the world, her life was pure and holy, her mission to bless and purify her husband and her adopted country. Much has been said of her unwillingness to marry Malcolm, and that it was not his earnest devotion, and vehement professions of love which overcame her scruples. But no maiden ever accepted suitor, and entered into the close relationship of marriage with greater cordiality, no truer wife could be found, no more wise or affectionate mother to his children, no better guide through life than the saintly woman to whom he had plighted his troth. Margaret's history is contained in her life by her confessor Turgot, Bishop of St Andrews,¹ it is a charming piece of biography, and tells all that we really know of her, while incidentally we gain the first

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¹ Life of St Margaret, Queen of Scotland, by Turgot, Bishop of St Andrews. Translated from the Latin by William Forbes-Leith, S.J. Edinburgh, 1884.

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real insight into Scottish life and manners. Religion, self-dedication and purification by penances and deeds of charity, from the evil nature she imagined was a part of herself, was the grand aim of Queen Margaret's life, and the story would almost tempt one to pin his faith to the debasing dogma with its miserable train of consequences. But in spite of this selfishness in the motive, more apparent than real, she wrought positive good and purified all she came in contact with, which in a person who believed herself so *very evil*, was *very wonderful*. The reforms in religious matters do not find a place here, we only allude to her influence on mundane affairs, in which she was the trusted counsellor of her husband. Her biographer describes her as engaged 'amidst the distractions of law suits, amidst the countless cares of state.'¹ She was far from unmindful of the position of her husband and herself, *theoretically* 'miserable sinners,' *practically* King and Queen; under her, the forms, ceremonies, extravagancies, which are *essential* to a well-conducted Court were introduced. 'The Queen on her side, herself a noble gem of royal race, much more enobled the splendour of her husband's kingly magnificence, and contributed no little glory and grace to the entire nobility of the realm and their retainers. It was due to her that the merchants who came by land and sea from various countries, brought along with them for sale different kinds of precious wares, which until then were unknown in Scotland. And it was at her instigation that the natives of Scotland purchased from these traders clothing of various colours,² with ornaments to wear, so that from this period, through her suggestion, new costumes of different fashions were adopted, the elegance of which made the wearers appear like a new race of beings. She also arranged that a higher class of attendants should wait upon the king, by a large body of whom he should be accompanied in

¹ Life, p. 37.

² Hence Lord Hailes conjectures that perhaps we owe to her the introduction of what we call Tartan. Rather hard on the Celt that a Saxon should have introduced the gaudy costume peculiarly his own. But perish the base inuendo, Margaret must have had quieter tastes.

great state whenever he either walked or rode abroad. This was carried out with such discipline that, wherever they came, none of them was suffered to take anything from any one, nor did they dare in any way to oppress or injure country people or the poor. Further, she added to the state of the royal palace, so that not only was it brightened by the many coloured apparel worn in it, but the whole dwelling blazed with gold and silver, since the vessels employed for serving the food and drink to the king, and the nobles of the realm, were of gold and silver, or at least were gilt and plated.¹ On her husband personally Margaret exercised a marked influence, softening his manners by precept and example: 'By the help of God she made him most attentive to the works of justice, mercy, almsgiving and other virtues.'² What time could be spared from state ceremony and the more congenial pursuit of fighting, was given to devotion, and though ignorant himself, he did not despise the learning of his wife. 'Although he could not read, he would turn over and examine books which she used, either for her devotions or her study; and whenever he heard her say that she was fonder of one of them than the others, this one he too used to look at with special affection, kissing it, and often taking it into his hands. Sometimes he sent for a worker in precious metals, whom he commanded to ornament that volume with gold and gems, and when the work was finished the King himself used to carry the volume to the Queen as a kind proof of his devotion.'³ But with all due respect to the holiness and learning of St Margaret, her conduct as a mother seems the crowning point in her character, so true is it that nature asserts her power, even under the unnatural forms which superstition, miscalled religion, strives to smother. 'Nor was she less careful about her children than she was about herself. She took all heed that they should be well brought up, and especially that they should be trained in virtue. Knowing that it is written, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son," she charged the governor who had the care of the nursery to curb the children, to scold them,

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¹ Life, pp. 40, 41.

² *Ibid.* p. 38.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 39, 40.

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and to whip them whenever they were naughty, as frolicsome childhood will often be. Thanks to their mother's religious care, her children surpassed in good behaviour many who were their elders; they were always affectionate and peaceable among themselves, and everywhere the younger paid due respect to the elder.¹ The next part of the paragraph tells us as to their behaviour at church, which should form a model to boys and girls in all time coming. The biography stripped of the exaggeration common to all such compositions, where the subject is a well-to-do saint, and the author a recipient of the bounty of the saint, gives as near as may be a true history of Queen Margaret, and the only account of Scottish life and character of the time. It shows the Queen a missionary in every sense of the word, a teacher, a civiliser, a humaniser of the Scottish King, his court and people. Her three younger sons showed how much they had benefitted by her piety and learning; to the Church, as we shall hereafter attempt to show, she was as life to the dead.

Malcolm had short time to enjoy the society of his bride, and to be initiated in the ceremonies of the Court and the Church, before he was brought into contact with the Norman power in England. The marriage of the King of Scots with a near heir to the English crown, to one with the clear title of hereditary right, was a menace to William's shadowy claim; in the event of the death of the Aetheling without issue, the children of the King of Scots would be looked upon by the patriotic party as the rightful heirs to the English throne. There can be no doubt that so astute a politician as William fully appreciated the grave consequences resulting from the marriage of Malcolm, and it needed not the devastation of Tynedale, to rouse the Conqueror to the necessity of punishing or curbing his neighbour, in any case to come to some arrangement. But there was more to call him to the north; three times had the King of Scots sheltered the Aetheling, he was even now at his court, and he had also given refuge and substantial help to all who refused to submit to the Norman power, to the mutinous earls

¹ Life, p. 33.

and chieftains north of the Humber, many of whom had settled and became liege subjects of the Scottish King. The King of England tarried only because his presence was imperiously required elsewhere, and the business was much too important to be transacted by deputy. But to suppose that the Conquerer had then England at his feet, and now had the leisure to make himself master of the island of Great Britain, and to enforce his claim as lord paramount over the King of Scots, the Maormor of Moray, the Jarl of Orkney and the rulers of the Sudreys, is almost too absurd to waste argument on, were it not boldly put forward by so great an authority as Mr Freeman.

In 1072 King William, at the head of an imposing force, invaded Scotland by land and sea, in much the same manner as Earl Siward had previously done. An account of the expedition is given in the extract from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and the fair inference from it seems to be, that neither party wished to push matters to extremities, and that terms were agreed on. 'A.D. 1072. This year King William led an army and a fleet against Scotland, and he stationed the ships along the coast, and crossed the Tweed with his army, but he found nothing to reward his pains. And King Malcolm came and treated with King William, and delivered hostages and became his liege-man; and King William returned home with his forces.'¹ Florence gives the name of the place where the Kings met—Abernethy, on the banks of the Tay, and this is likely enough to have been the case, as William's object would be to march at once on the capital, and there dictate his terms or enforce them by fire and sword. The reader may judge for himself from the words in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle what the terms were, his proclivities and nationality will influence to a large extent his decision. If he is an Englishman and believes in Mr Freeman's theory, that the Anglo-Saxon monarchs were, and considered themselves to be, Emperors of Great Britain, insular Charlemagnes, and that the Conquerer took up the role, he will endorse this view: 'The King of Scots came to Abernethy, and under

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¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 453.

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the shadow of the old Scottish tower, he became the man of the Conqueror, now, like the kings who had gone before him, not only King of the Angles and Saxons, but Lord of the whole Empire of the Isle of Albion. As the elder Malcolm had bowed to Cnut, so the younger Malcolm bowed to William. The vassal was received into the peace of his lord, and he gave hostages for his good faith, the young Donald, his son by the dead or forsaken Ingjorg being now one of them.¹ If, on the other hand, the reader is unbiassed by nationality or theory, he will consider Mr Burton's view as *the* fair and impartial statement of the transaction: 'A passage like this (what we have quoted from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) would of course be seized upon as an acknowledgment of feudal superiority; and in the later English Chronicles it was described in the proper feudal technicalities. Some patriotic Scotchmen have inferred from this that Malcolm, like several of his successors, did homage for lands south of the Border. I cannot concur in this, not believing that the grades and ceremonies of homage were then so far advanced as to admit of one of these complicated transactions. The general historical conditions seems more important, and they give us a transaction between two powerful monarchs—the one, it is true, with by far the greater and richer dominion, and greater power of aggression, but the other with greater resources of defence. If William could have achieved the actual subjugation of his neighbour's kingdom as a fief, we may depend on it that he would have carried out his authority so practically and fully that history never could have been in doubt of its existence, if he had achieved this, it could not have been said that in his march to Scotland his force 'found naught for which they were the better.'²

Nothing can add to the cogency of Mr Burton's remarks; but we may be permitted to call the attention of our readers to one fact transparent in the history of the two countries, so far as we have detailed it; that up to this time there was no England and no Scotland in the

¹ Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. iv. p. 517.

² Burton's Scotland, vol. i. p. 376.

modern sense of the words. Saxon, Angle, Pict, Scot, Dane had each capable monarchs, or even short dynasties who in their turn ravaged the territories of their neighbours, and were acknowledged victors in the strife. In the fond language of the different chroniclers they were represented as kings or emperors over all the districts they had overrun, but their empires were like houses of cards, continually toppling over, and being rebuilt, until the Normans in England under William and his successors, and Malcolm and his sons in Scotland, constructed edifices other than the previous frail structures, kingdoms which stood the lapse of ages. In addition, though it is difficult to exaggerate the talents and the accomplishments of the early Norman invaders, even though they may have had law as well as courage in their blood, it is hard to believe that a little more than a century should have converted pagan Vikings into accomplished legal practitioners. That they soon became so, is evident, but it seems to us that all claims and disputes of this nature were only when there were people to understand and appreciate them, law and legal subtleties as to titles to estates or kingdoms were introduced by the Normans, and it required their presence in both England and Scotland before they were even thought of.

William returned with Duncan the eldest son of Malcolm in his train, as one of the hostages that his father would keep the peace on the borders, and no longer afford shelter to the Aetheling and his adherents. This of course is only conjecture, but is extremely probable from the fact that Eadgar left the Scottish court and crossed over to Flanders previous to the invasion of the kingdom of his son-in-law.

Both conditions would very likely be solemnly sworn to; William had already made good use of the oath extorted from Harold, but if there was an oath in the case, it was not sworn on 'old bones and relics,' or we should have heard of it. It would sit, however, very lightly on the consciences of Malcolm, and his retainers, as similar oaths have since sate on the elastic consciences of kings and statesmen.

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William had, however, further work to do in his northern frontier, which, so far from extending to the Tweed, barely reached the Humber. Perceiving too late for his fame that devastation and alien rule would not make Northumbria loyal and serviceable to his cause, he deprived Cospatric of the earldom and bestowed it on Waltheof, the descendant of the hereditary Danish rulers, the son of Earl Siward by Elflæda, daughter of Earl Aldred. Cospatric fled to Scotland, and from thence to Flanders, where he abode but for a short time and returned to his former refuge. He was favourably received by the King of Scots, who must have been either a man of the most forgiving disposition, or a politician who sacrificed his natural causes of offence to the necessities of the State. Malcolm forgetting, wilfully or no, all old animosities, bestowed on the ravager of Cumberland, Dunbar and other lands in Lothian. Cospatric seems always to have fallen on his feet; he is alternately the friend of the King of England and the King of Scotland; subsequent to this his lands in Yorkshire were in part restored, and his sons' names appear in the local history of the north of England.¹

The Aetheling, we have seen, had thought it prudent to visit the court of Flanders, which at the time was a refuge for noble unfortunates of every nationality; but in 1074 he took advantage of the absence of the Conqueror in Normandy to pay a visit to Scotland. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells the history of the royal wanderer at this time, and the issue shows the sagacity and also the humanity of William, who, except in the heat of passion or from stern political necessity, never stooped to trample on a fallen foe. 'A. D. 1074: This year King William went over sea to Normandy, and child Eadgar came to Scotland from Flanders on St Grimbald's mass-day. King Malcolm and Margaret his sister received him there with much pomp. Also Philip King of France, sent him a letter inviting him to come, and offering to give him the castle of Montreuil as a place to annoy his enemies from. After this, King Malcolm and

¹ Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. iv. p. 524.

his sister Margaret gave great presents and much treasure to him and his men—skins adorned with purple, sable-skin, grey-skin, and ermine-skin, pelisses, mantles, gold and silver vessels, and escorted them out of his dominions with much ceremony. But evil befell them at sea; for they had hardly left the shore, when such rough weather came on, and the sea and the wind drove them with such force upon the land, that their ships went to pieces, and they saved their lives with much difficulty. They lost nearly all their riches, and some of their men were taken by the French; but the boldest of them escaped back to Scotland, some on foot and some mounted on wretched horses. King Malcolm advised Eadgar to send to King William beyond the sea, and request his friendship. Eadgar did so, and the King acceded to his request and sent to fetch him. Again King Malcolm and his sister made them handsome presents, and escorted them with honour out of their dominions. The Sheriff of York met him at Durham, and went all the way with him, ordering him to be provided with meat and fodder at all the castles which they came to, until they reached the king beyond the sea. There King William received him with much pomp, and he remained at the court, enjoying such privileges as the king granted him.’¹

The course of our narrative now carries us to the district north of the Spey. On the death of Lulach the short-lived successor of Macbeth, his son Maelsnectan, in the confusion of Scottish affairs, and the collapse of the Orcadian power, managed to secure the hereditary Maormorate of his ancestors. He seems to have reigned as an independent prince until 1078, when either from some umbrage given to the Scottish king, or from a natural desire on the part of the latter to extend his dominions, a rupture took place. Malcolm invaded Moray, and defeated the Maormor, who escaped with his life, but lost all; his domains were for the time incorporated with Scotland: ‘Also in this year King Malcolm won the mother of Malslaythe and all his best men and all his treasure, and his oxen and himself hardly escaped.’² He

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, pp. 453, 454. ² *Ibid.* p. 456.

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survived until 1085. 'Maelsnectan, son of Lulach, King of Moray, ended his life happily.'¹

The continued absence of William on the continent now emboldened his rival in the north to make another raid into Northumbria. Like his predecessors and successors, the King of Scots seems to have thought that, so far from the ancient kingdoms of Bernicia and Northumbria forming an integral portion of England, both were fair subjects of division. Scotia first extended its boundary to the Tweed and then strove for a further extension to the Tyne—in fact England north of the Humber was not unlike Scotland north of the Spey, so far as the power of the crown went. Malcolm conducted the expedition in person and in the usual savage way. 'A.D. 1079, this year, between the two festivals of St Mary, King Malcolm invaded England with a large army, and laid waste Northumberland as far as the Tyne; and he slew many hundred men, and carried home much money and treasure and many prisoners.'² William, though no doubt exasperated at the breach of the treaty between the two countries, so far as we can see without cause, did not immediately take measures to resent the injury. In 1080, however, he sent his eldest son Robert with a powerful army well found in every department, advisers lay and clerical were not omitted.³ The usual policy of the Scottish kings was followed, no opposition was made to the advance through the Lothians, which were devastated and pillaged; but this repayment of the treatment inflicted in Northumberland seems to have satisfied the English leader. Robert advanced as far as Falkirk and then retired, driven to this course by failure of supplies, the natural difficulties which now presented themselves, or the bold front shown by his adversary. At Monkchester a halt was made, and there, on the site of what is now Newcastle-on-Tyne, a strong fortress was erected as a barrier against the invaders from the north, and to protect the portion of

¹ Chronicles of Picts and Scots, p. 370.

² Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 456.

³ See Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. iv. p. 675; E. W. Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 142.

Northumbria south of the Tyne, thus leaving the unfortunate subjects of his father in the north open to the raids of the Scots, in fact virtually surrendering the country for the time.

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In 1085 Malcolm suffered a domestic calamity in the death of a son probably by his first marriage; in the Annals of Ulster for that year is recorded, 'Donald, son of Malcolm, King of Alban, ended his life unhappily (infelicitus).'¹

The years of the great Conqueror of England whose history we cannot altogether omit from our narrative, were now well nigh spent; the bright noon tide of his days was over, and the sunset was gloomy and lowering. In 1086 the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us of his last act of fiscal oppression. Before he left England for the last time he extorted immense sums from his subjects, upon every pretext he could find, whether just or otherwise.² Arrived in Normandy irritated and soured, he seems to have treated the Aetheling and his sister in so churlish a manner that they left his court: 'Then he went over to Normandy, and King Edward's kinsman Eadgar Aetheling left him because he received no great honour from him; may Almighty God give him glory hereafter. And the Aetheling's sister Christina went into the monastery of Romsey, and took the holy veil.'³ The year closed in England 'very disastrous and sorrowful,' God's judgments were abroad in the land, pestilence, famine, many consumed by the fire of heaven, things ever grew worse and worse with the people.³ In the autumn of the next year (August) 1087 William received his death-wound, while superintending the destruction of Mantes; in less than a month he was no more. The stern soul of the Conqueror relented on his death-bed, the generous aspirations so long a stranger to him re-asserted their sway, and he gave orders for the release of all state prisoners and hostages. Among these were Ulf the son of Harold, and Malcolm's eldest born Duncan; on both the honour of knighthood was conferred, and they were

¹ Chronicle of the Picts and Scots, p. 370.

² Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 459.

³ *Ibid.*

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free to depart, but the Scottish Prince elected to remain with his friend Robert the Earl of Normandy. Afterwards willingly or no he remained as a guest or hostage with William Rufus who succeeded his father in England.

Four years later 1091 Eadgar, who seems to have returned to the court of Rouen, was dispossessed of his estates in Normandy, and again sought refuge and assistance from his never failing friend the King of Scots. Malcolm nothing loth, at once espoused anew the cause of Eadgar, and invaded England in the usual way, but with no satisfactory results. The power of the new dynasty was tightening on the English people, even in the north, the Scottish King found no sympathisers, but a well organised resistance: 'Whilst King William was out of England, Malcolm, King of Scotland, invaded this country, and ravaged great part of it, till the good men to whom the keeping of the land was entrusted, sent their troops against him and drove him back,' William Rufus with all his faults, was a brave and skilful commander, and certainly not the man to suffer an invasion of his territories to pass unquestioned. He promptly left Normandy, landed in England, and took measures to retaliate on his ruthless neighbour who would not let well alone. The campaign and its results as told in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle can be our only real authority, all the later writers have undoubtedly copied from it, adding their own views highly coloured with national prejudice, and made to serve a purpose, the subordination of the crown of Scotland to England. Simeon and Florence indeed make Malcolm speak *feudal Latin*,¹ 'When King William heard this (the invasion previously mentioned) in Normandy he hastened to return, and his brother Earl Robert with him. And they called out a fleet and army, but almost all the ships were lost, a few days before Michaelmas, ere they reached Scotland. And the King and his brother proceeded with the army; and when King Malcolm heard that they sought to attack him he marched with his array out of Scotland into *Lothian in*

¹ E. W. Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 145, note.

England, and remained there. And when King William approached, Earl Robert and Eadgar Atheling mediated a peace between the kings on condition that King Malcolm should repair to our King, and become his vassal, and in all the like subjection as to his father before him; and this he confirmed by oath. And King William promised him all the lands and possessions that he held under his father. By this peace Eadgar Aetheling was reconciled to the King. And the kings separated in great friendship; but this lasted during a short time only. Earl Robert abode here with the King till Christmas drew near, and in this time he found little good faith as to the fulfilment of the treaty, and two days before the Feast, he took ship from the Isle of Wight and sailed to Normandy, and Eadgar Aetheling with him.¹ There are two phrases peculiarly deserving of notice in the foregoing, the first *Lothian in England* bearing on the question, Did Malcolm do homage for this as an English fief, preserving his rank as an independent prince, King of Scotia proper north of the Forth? Mr Burton, on the authority of the editor of the Rolls edition of the Chronicle translates the Saxon word 'Lothene,' Leeds, by which the difficulty is avoided, no claim being thus made that Lothian was considered as a part of England.² Mr Skene, however, scouts this interpretation, and apart from philological grounds is we apprehend right; the English army would very probably advance much further north than Leeds before they were confronted by the Scotch (it must be noted the English are represented as the attacking force). Mr Skene is therefore inclined to think that Malcolm gave way on this point, and acknowledged the supremacy of William over Lothian and became the King's man, but that homage for Scotia proper was neither asked or given.³ This however seems an evasion of the difficulty, and, in fact, surrenders the matter in dispute. The words in the chronicle fairly interpreted mean, that if Malcolm did homage at all he

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¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, pp. 467-8.

² Burton's Scotland, vol. i. p. 379, note.

³ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 429.

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did for all his domains, it was but a repetition of that given to the Conqueror.

We now call attention to another phrase used in the same document, 'that Malcolm should become the *vassal*.'¹ Malcolm II. 'becomes the man'² of Cnut. Malcolm Ceanmor 'the liege-man'³ of William I. the vassal of William II., there is an ascending scale in the assumed dependence, the *man* in 1031 became the *vassal* in 1091. The only fair view we can take of these transactions is that they were precisely alike, treaties of peace, each party retaining what they were in possession of. The nomenclature had changed and was changing; Lothian was no longer *Saxonia*, but was claimed as part of England in order to justify the new term *vassal*, by which English authorities chose to think Malcolm held it. The view which may be fairly taken is, that Rufus advanced into Scotland with his army, and was confronted by a force capable of disputing further progress; the Aetheling well-known to all concerned, and a personal friend of the brother of the King of England, acted the part of mediator, the two kings mutually respected each other's power; and neither cared to risk an engagement; a treaty was made on the footing of the *status quo*. The remarks of Mr Burton previously quoted are as applicable to William II. as to William I.⁴ The chroniclers who narrate the circumstances are English, and would naturally consider the King of England the stronger party, and the one who would dictate the terms of peace.

That the treaty was little more than a suspension of arms was soon shown, and also that when the Red Prince wished to annex a fief he did it thoroughly. Previous to this time the ancient kingdom of Strathclyde from the Clyde to the Derwent, was held, and looked on by the English monarchs as an appanage of the Scottish crown, the modern *county* of Cumberland had no existence. Rufus determined to square his frontier on the west, and advance it to the Solway, thus annexing what was considered at the time a part of Scotland, and a portion of

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 468.

² *Ibid.* p. 412.

³ *Ibid.* p. 453.

⁴ See ante, p. 234.

the fief of his so-called vassal. A.D. 1092—'This year King William went northward to Carlisle with a large army, and he repaired the city, and built the castle. And he drove out Dolfin, who had before governed that country; and having placed a garrison in the castle, he returned into the south, and sent a great number of rustic Englishmen thither, with their wives and cattle, that they might settle there and cultivate the land.'¹ The devastating nature of the warfare of the borders may be inferred from this notice, 'a fruitful land made barren,' if not *for* the wickedness of them that dwelt therein, certainly *by* the wickedness of them that passed through it. This was a flagrant violation of the treaty lately made, even if Malcolm had sworn homage, the lord had outraged the lands of his vassal. By the influence of the Aetheling probably, the King of Scots did not retaliate in the usual way with fire and sword, but attempted negotiations. These may have been kept open during the time when Rufus was sick nigh unto death, when he was going to reform his life and live cleanly, when he was very penitent, and if he was only spared what would he not be and what would he not do. He was spared, but he returned 'like the sow that was washed to its wallowing in the mire,' more truculent and unclean than ever. Yet hostile proceedings were averted, and through the good offices of the Aetheling a meeting between the two monarchs was arranged to take place at Gloucester, where Rufus had been laid up, was still sick, penitent, and pacific. Hostages for the personal safety of the King of Scots were sent, and Malcolm set out on his last journey to England, in a manner very different from his previous ones. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, our only genuine authority, must tell the story. '1093—This year, in Lent, King William was very sick at Gloucester, insomuch that he was universally reported to be dead; and he made many good promises in his illness; that he would lead his future life in righteousness—that the churches of God he would guard and free—and never more sell them for money—and that he would have all

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¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 468.

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just laws in his kingdom. And he gave the Archbishopric of Canterbury, which he had hitherto kept in his own hands, to Anselm, who was before this Abbat of Bec, and the Bishopric of Lincoln to his Chancellor Robert, and he granted lands to many monasteries; but afterwards when recovered, he took them back, and he neglected all the good laws that he had promised us. After this the King of Scotland sent desiring that the stipulated conditions might be performed; and King William summoned him to Gloucester, and sent hostages to him in Scotland, and afterwards Eadgar Aetheling and others met him, and brought him with much honour to the court. But when he came there, he could neither obtain a conference with our King, nor the performance of the conditions formerly promised him, and therefore they departed in great enmity; and King Malcolm returned home to Scotland, and as soon as he came thither, he assembled his troops and invaded England, ravaging the country with more fury than behoved him; and Robert, Earl of Northumberland, with his men, lay in wait for him, and slew him unawares. He was killed by Moræl of Bamborough, the Earl's steward, and King Malcolm's own God-father, 'Godsib,' his son Edward, who, had he lived, would have been King after his father was killed with him.¹ The chroniclers from Simeon to M. Paris add little or nothing to our information.

Margaret seems to have foreboded the worst issue to the enterprise, and Malcolm departed with her sad warnings ringing in his ears. They were too soon fulfilled; on the 13th November, a very short time after their parting, the King was killed on the banks of the Alne, near the town of Alnwick, and though the details are involved in obscurity, there can be little doubt that the bold and hitherto successful freebooter met his death and defeat by treachery.² Edward, his son and heir, was fatally wounded, and survived only to die a few days later on Scottish ground in the forest of Jedwood, known long as 'Edward's Isle.' The defeat terminated in a rout,

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, p. 408-9.

² E. W. Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 146, note.

part falling by the sword, those who escaped perishing in attempting to ford the river, more than usually swollen by the winter floods. None of Malcolm's faithful retainers were left to pay the last rites of sepulture to their lord; we cannot think it was abandoned, but in any case the body was found and interred. Two peasants found it on the field of battle, and placing it in a cart, conveyed it to Tynemouth, and there committed it to the ground. The filial piety of his son Alexander restored the body to Scottish soil, and the ashes of Malcolm were laid side by side with those of his faithful partner in Dunfermline.

Thus perished Malcolm Canmore in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, not with the shout of victory ringing in his ears; but his death was no inglorious one, he fell with his face to the foe, and, looking at his previous life, we cannot but think that it might be said of him, as of the gallant and unfortunate James, that in his death he was guarded by a rampart

‘Which the boldest dared not scale,
Every stone a Scottish body,
Every step a corse in mail.’¹

The belief in the foul character of the attack by which Malcolm lost his life gathered weight until the name of the noble family of Percy was associated with it. ‘King Malcolm coming into Northumberland besieged the said castell of Alwicke. And now when the keepers of the hold, were at point to have made surrender, a certaine *English* knight conceiving in his mind an hardie and dangerous interprize, mounted on a swift horse without armor or weapon, saving a speare in his hand, upon the point whereof he bare the keies of the castell, and so issued forth at the gates, riding directlie towards the *Scottish* campe. They that warded, mistrusting no harme, brought him with great noise and clamour into the king's tent; who, hearing the noise, came forth of his pavilion to understand what the matter ment. The *Englishman* herewith couched his staffe, as though it had beene to the end that the King might receive the keies which he had brought. And whilst all men's eies were earnest

¹ Ayton's Lays, p. 25.

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in beholding the keies, the *Englishman* ran the king through the left eie, and suddenlie dashing his spurs to his horse, escaped to the next wood out of all danger. The point of the speare entered so far into the king's head that immediatelie falling down amongst his men, he yielded up the ghost. This was the end of King Malcolme in the midst of his armie. It is said that King *William* changed the name of his adventurous knight, and called him Perseeie, for that he stroke King *Malcolme* so right in the eie, and in recompense of his service gave him certeine lands in Northumberland; of whom those *Pierces* are descended, which in our days have injoied the honourable title of Earls of Northumberland.'¹

St Columba, who gave life to, and nursed the infant colony from Dalriada, is the first Scot whom we can realise as a living breathing man, with the passions, faults, and virtues of his race. Until Malcolm III. no other Scot, king or priest, stands out as a real person—a man, not a name or a figment of the imagination. Celtic government and Celtic Christianity were introduced into Scotland by the first; the other took the first steps to initiate the movement by which both were eradicated. Viewed in this light the fierce and warlike monarch must be deemed no mean benefactor to his country and to civilisation and religion; however little he did personally, he originated what may be termed the *Scottish renaissance*. Malcolm's personal character we have previously sketched, and his life, we think, does not belie it. There is one point in it which he shares, with his great compeer the Bastard of Normandy; the morals of both were unstained by the laxity of the age, the conjugal relationships of both were of the happiest nature; in the case of Malcolm no cloud ever obscured the serene atmosphere of mutual love which surrounded him and his wife. The King of Scots made war like a ruthless savage, but it was the fashion of the age, and it was for long the fashion of the gallant and tender-hearted knights of both countries. The one blot on his escutcheon—the massacre in Northumbria on the receipt of the news of the treason of

¹ Hollinshead's *Scottish Chronicles*, vol. i. pp. 358-9, ed. 1805.

Cospatric—was ordered in the heat of passion, not as part of a cold-blooded policy like that pursued by his contemporary William. Malcolm was generous and forgiving in his disposition, hospitable to all and sundry; the generous weakness cost him his life, for Morel of Bamborough who dealt him his death-stroke was bound to him by the closest ties of friendship, hallowed by the sacred rites of the church. In our days we can hardly imagine a man of war and bloodshed a truly religious man, yet such are our anomalies in our ideas of religion, that from the time of Charlemagne and St Louis to Collingwood and Havelock, we perceive no incongruity. Why deny Malcolm the title to both characters? That Malcolm Canmore was respected by his subjects, and that he was looked on as a wise and fortunate ruler of the country, is evident from the testimony of St Berchan, who says—

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‘A King, the best who possessed Alban;
He was a King of kings fortunate;
He was the vigilant crusher of enemies.
No woman bore or will bring forth in the East
A King whose rule will be greater over Alban;
And there shall not be born for ever
One who had more fortune and greatness.’¹

During his reign the southern border, previously a shifting and undefined line, was fixed; the Tweed and the Solway became the limits of England. The only portions of Scotland not under his sway were Caithness and the Orkneys.

Margaret did not long survive her husband; in her life it is stated that previous to the last fatal expedition ‘she was attacked by an infirmity of unusual severity,’² from the bed of sickness from which she was never to rise, ‘as if foreseeing the future she was most urgent with the King not to go with the army.’² On the fourth day preceding her death, her foreboding became more confirmed, and she said to her confessor, ‘Perhaps on this very day such a heavy calamity may befall the realm of

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 103.

² Life, p. 72.

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Scotland as has not been for many ages past.'¹ On the fourth day from this the lamentable news of the death of his father and brother was conveyed to her by her son Edgar, when the saintly queen, wife, and mother, after one short agonising struggle, resigned herself to the will of heaven, and breathed out her pure and broken spirit. 'Her departure was so calm, so tranquil, that we conclude her soul passed to the land of eternal rest and peace. Her corpse was shrouded as became a queen, and we carried her to the Church of the Holy Trinity, which she had built. There, as she herself had directed, we committed it to the grave, opposite the altar and the venerable sign of the Holy Cross which she had erected. And thus her body at length rests in that place in which, when alive, she used to humble herself with vigils, prayers, and tears.'²

Malcolm and Margaret left issue six sons and two daughters. Edward, the eldest, perished with his father; Ethelred, who was created Abbot of Dunkeld, did not long survive his parents; Edmund retired to an English monastery, and became lost to the world; Edgar, Alexander, and David each in their turn sate on the Scottish throne; Matilda or Maud, became the wife of Henry I. of England; Mary, the younger, married Eustace, Count of Boulogne; their only child Matilda, married Count Stephen of Blois, afterwards King of England.

¹ Life, p. 73.

² *Ibid.* pp. 80, 81.

CHAPTER X.

CALAMITOUS EFFECTS OF THE DEATH OF MALCOLM.

Malcolm's Death a heavy Calamity—Donald Bane made King—His Title challenged—Duncan's short Reign—Is slain by the Scots—Donald Bane King a second time—His defeat and fate—Accession of Edgar son of Malcolm—Expedition of Magnus Barefoot—Character and Death of Edgar—Accession of Alexander—His Character—Northern Insurrection promptly quelled, Death of Alexander—David I. succeeds and re-unites Lothian and Cumbria—His Character—Introduces the Feudal system and written Charters—Northern Insurrection—Is quelled—Death of Henry I. and unfriendly relations with England—Prince Henry returns with King Stephen—but is soon recalled—David invades England—Battle of the Standard—Marriage of Prince Henry—His untimely Death—Death and Character of David I.—His Innovations or Creations.

THE death of Malcolm proved, as Queen Margaret had on her death-bed predicted, 'a heavy calamity such as had not been for many ages past.' The reforms in church and state and in the manners of the people were checked; for a quarter of a century Scotland was in a state of anarchy, the tone of society was lowered, from the prince to the peasant. There were in Scotland as at present the two races antagonistic to one another, the Gaelic and the Teutonic. But in the eleventh century the weaker race had for long possessed the ruling power in Church and State, it had the right of prescription; on the other hand, the Teutonic element was divided, each part had apparently separate interests, it was not yet welded into a harmonious whole. The mixed population originally Pictish, but that element now lost in the crowd of Norse and Saxon immigrants possessed the real power of determining the succession, and on what lines the sovereign was to rule, naturally enough they clung to the rule of the Gael which stretched so far back, the new influences

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1093-1097.

had not sufficient time to work, old fashions, freedom and anarchy were attractive. The Norwegian element and power which under Earl Thorfinn had influenced Scotland were neutralised; Magnus Barefoot had in the year of Malcolm's death added nominally, at least, the Orkneys and the Western Isles to the crown of Norway. The Saxon, or properly speaking, the English element, had not gathered the strength which in a short time overpowered the others, and made Scotland more English and Norman than England itself; Lothian and Cumbria might almost be looked on as a distinct nationality, whether the district was to become England or Scotland a matter of uncertainty. Indeed, had it not been for the unfortunate capture of William the Lion in 1174, it looked very like as if the frontier of Scotland was to be advanced to the Humber, the south of Scotland and the north of England were one in race and feeling. Taking the circumstances narrated into consideration, nothing appears more natural than the events which followed the death of Malcolm, 'And then the Scots chose Dufenal, the brother of Malcolm, for their King, and drove out all the English who had been with King Malcolm.'¹

Fordun, who is now accepted by experts as an authority, gives fuller details. According to him Queen Margaret, previous to her death, was with her young family in the castle of Maidens (Edinburgh), and her motions were evidently carefully observed by Donald Bane, the brother of the King, who now for the first time since his infancy turns up. Whether he was a help or a menace to his brother is unknown, but from his subsequent conduct he did not share in Malcolm's love for English men and English ways. Immediately on the news of the death of the King and Queen he attempted to gain possession of the royal family for a sinister purpose no doubt. 'Donald the Red invaded the kingdom at the head of a numerous band, and in hostilewise besieged the aforesaid castle, where he knew the King's rightful and lawful heirs were.' Edinburgh has always been 'strongly fortified by nature,' the castle was not thoroughly invested, the gates alone

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 469.

being guarded, so the remains of Queen Margaret, along with the children, were safely conveyed out by a postern on the western side, a providential mist, which sceptics of this age say is not uncommon now in the locality, miraculously shrouded the party, they embarked, crossed the Forth, and reached in safety the church of Dunfermline, where, as we have seen, the body of the saintly Queen was interred. Eadgar Aetheling shortly afterwards came to the rescue of the family in their by no means secure sanctuary, and safely conveyed all the members to the protection of 'his kinsmen and acquaintances in England.'¹

Donald, according to the law of Tanistry, was the rightful heir to the throne, and seems to have been at once accepted by the country north of the Firths, and we have no doubt would be joyfully welcomed by the *old* party, whose civil and religious rights and ceremonies had been outraged by the new-fangled notions of the late King and Queen. There has always been an old party in most countries, notably in Scotland, whose dearest feelings have been outraged by innovations. But there were too many claimants to the crown, too many conflicting interests at work, and in six months' time the title of the new monarch was challenged by Duncan, the son of his predecessor by his first wife. He, given as a hostage to the Conqueror in his early youth, had been a resident at the courts of Normandy and England, was a Norman knight, and readily enlisted the sympathies and obtained the assistance of William Rufus. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle gives an account of the enterprise against Donald: 'When Duncan, the son of King Malcolm, heard all this, for he was in King William's court, and had remained here from the time that his father gave him as a hostage to our King's father, he came to the King, and did such homage as the King required; and thus, with his consent, he departed for Scotland with the aid that he could muster, both English and French, and he deprived his kinsman Dufenal of the throne, and was received as King. But then some of the Scotch gathered

¹ Fordun's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 209.

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themselves together and slew nearly all his men, and he himself escaped with few others. They were afterwards reconciled on this condition, that Duncan should never more bring English or Frenchmen into that country.¹ It is probable enough that Duncan did homage to Rufus, though Fordun simply says he was 'backed up his help,' it is certain that the homage was not acquiesced in by the subjects of Duncan, the holocaust of the retainers of the over-lord is a convincing enough proof. The new monarch reigned but six months, but in that time he exercised the functions of one: 'There are two charters by him preserved; one is a grant by Duncan of the lands of Tiningham, and others in East Lothian to St Cuthbert, that is the church at Durham, in which he styles himself 'son of King Malcolm, and by hereditary right, King of Scotland. He appears also to have granted lands in Fife to the church at Dunfermline.'²

In 1094—'This year also the Scots conspired against their King Duncan, and slew him, and they afterwards took his uncle Dufenal a second time for their King; through whose instructions and instigations Duncan had been betrayed to his death.'³ Donald Bane seems to have been assisted by his nephew Eadmund, whose help he probably purchased by the offer of Lothian and Cumbria, which offer was accepted, and the result was their joint reign for three years. The men of Moerne, conspicuous in former times, were the instruments in the hands of Donald by whom the young prince, deprived of his southern friends, was ensnared and done to death, the Maormor or Earl, as he was called, of Moerne was the perpetrator the ruthless deed.⁴ Eadmund was undoubtedly accessory to the murder, subsequent events prove it, though the direct evidence is unsatisfactory and rests on the authority of William of Malmesbury, from whom Fordun copies when he says: 'Of the sons and

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 469.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 438.

³ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 471.

⁴ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 439; E. W. Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 158.

daughters of the King (Malcolm) and Margaret, Eadmund was the only one who fell away from goodness. Partaking of his uncle Donald's wickedness, he was privy to his brother Duncan's death, having, forsooth, bargained with his uncle for half of the kingdom.'¹

1097: We now find the Aetheling for once on the winning side, interfering in the Scotch succession, and repaying with interest the hospitality he had so generously and repeatedly received from his friend the late King of Scots. By his influence a large and well equipped force was organised in England for the purpose of placing on the throne of Scotland Edgar, the eldest of the trio of Scottish princes resident there. The terms on which assistance was granted by the King of England were in the current language of the time similar to those exacted from Duncan—homage to the English crown. Fordun gives the credit of the expedition to the young prince, and its success to the interposition of St Cuthbert, who favoured Edgar with an interview, while he hastened to the scene of conflict: 'While, therefore, young Edgar was hastening towards his native soil, and was in fear of the turbulence of his foes, St Cuthbert stood before him in the stillness of night and said, Fear not, my son! for God has been pleased to give thee the kingdom.'² He was commanded to take the saint's standard from his monastery at Durham, advance it against the foe, and fear not the result. The young man told the vision to his uncle, who, like a pious man, believed it, and, like a sensible man, turned it to good account. The holy standard was carried in the front, the battle skilfully and bravely fought, and 'by the favour of God and the merits of St Cuthbert, Edgar happily achieved a bloodless victory.'³ Eadmund was taken prisoner. His fate is thus described: 'But being taken and kept in fetters for ever, he sincerely repented, and when at death's door, he bade them bury him in his chains, confessing that he was worthily punished for the crime of fratricide.'⁴ Another milder version is, that he

A. D.
1093-1097.

¹ Fordun's Chronicle, vol. i. p. 213.

³ *Ibid.* p. 215.

² *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 214.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 213.

A. D.
1093-1097.

was permitted to assume the habit of a Cluniac monk—that he lived a life of extreme austerity, and became celebrated for his sanctity—that on his death-bed, still feeling the pangs of guilt, he desired to be buried in the manner stated above.

A. D.
1097-1107.

Donald Bane escaped from the field of battle, and after living a wandering life for two years, was taken prisoner, deprived of sight, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment at Roscolpie or Roscobie, in Forfarshire. A curious tale is told by Wyntoun how Donald, in after years, murdered a child of King David's named Henry. The child must have come to an untimely end, as another version of the story is given by Ordericus Vitalis, who makes the murderer an outcast priest.¹

Edgar by this victory, and the successful capture of his rivals, once more united the territory south of the Forth to the Scottish crown, and for nine years governed the kingdom so peacefully and successfully that, with the exception of the invasion of the Western Isles by Magnus Barefoot, there is absolutely nothing to chronicle. Though the invasion was fraught with important enough results to the portion of the country he overrun and devastated, it had no effect on what was then the kingdom of Scotland. The Western Isles could hardly be said to have been at any time under the sway of the Scottish crown, though the magnates there may have at times acknowledged it as superior. Edgar wisely enough left Magnus to pursue his schemes of conquest over a part of the country which was to him inaccessible and worthless.

The expedition of Magnus Barefoot in 1093 was but a prelude to the more formidable one of 1098. In the first he left things pretty much as he found them. Without disturbing the ruling powers, the sons of Earl Thorfinn in Orkney and Godred Crovan in the Isles, he contented himself with asserting his suzerainty. Godred was a powerful and enterprising prince, who from the Isle of Man, by the power of his fleet, was the acknowledged ruler from Dublin to Lewis. He did not venture on a

¹ Wyntoun's Chronicle, vol. ii. pp. 193-5; E. W. Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 160.

contest with the King of Norway in 1091, and was left in undisturbed possession of his dominions in 1095. He died of a pestilence in Islay,¹ and either from default of issue or some other cause, Magnus sent one of his nobles, named Ingemund, as his successor. He proved obnoxious to the Isles men, was not even acknowledged king by the chiefs, and at the Island of Lewis, his lodging was set fire to, and he and his company destroyed.² This act, coupled perhaps with the ambition to emulate the fame of Harald Harfager, determined the second expedition, which in numbers and equipment challenged comparison with any previous. The Orkneys were first visited, the two sons of the late Earl Paul and Erlend taken captive and sent to Norway, Sigurd the son of Magnus left as Jarl, with a council to advise him. The Sudreys were then plundered and devastated (a visitor now-a-days wonders how they could stand so much plundering, and how a desert could be devastated), all who offered resistance were put to the sword. But the people of the country fled to various places—some up to Scotland, or into the fiords or sea lochs; some southward to Satiri or Kintyre; some submitted to King Magnus, and received pardon.³ Iona alone escaped. On entering the door of the chapel, there the King suddenly drew back, and forbade any of his attendants to enter, at the same time orders were given to respect the property and persons of all on the island. It was generally supposed St Columba had appeared in person to the King and stayed his hand. Magnus pursued his conquering course, took possession of Man and then of Anglesea, afterwards returning to the Sudreys. He then came to terms with the King of Scots, who made the cheap cession to him of whatever rights he had over the Western Isles, and also the peninsula of Kintyre, which in these early days seems to have been a valuable and coveted territory, though Campbeltown and whisky were in the future. King Magnus is said to have been drawn

A.D.
1097-1107

¹ Annals of Four Masters, vol. ii. p. 951.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 441.

³ Coll. de Rebus Alb., p. 347.

A. D.
1097 1107.

across the isthmus at Tarbet in a ship with his hand on the tiller, and thus by a pleasant fiction made Kintyre an island. The King of Norway then returned home, but in 1102 he came back, got involved in a contest in the north of Ireland, and in the following year perished by cowardice or treachery on the part of his own people in an obscure skirmish there.¹ The fleet deprived of their leader made the best of its way to Norway. Sigurd, who had married an Irish princess, relinquished both her and his island kingdom, and returned with it. The Islands and the Orkneys at once threw off their allegiance; the Jarls of Orkney and the Lords of the Isles became independent princes, though in future conflicts, when it suited their purpose, they claimed protection as vassals of Norway.

Edgar seems to have inherited all the best qualities of his parents, and while not deficient in courage and manly accomplishments, he was of a gentle disposition, cultivating friendly relations with all who came in contact with him. Fordun says, 'King Eadgar was a sweet and amiable man, like his kinsman the holy King Edward in every way, using no harshness, no tyrannical or bitter treatment towards his subjects, but ruling and correcting them with the greatest charity, goodness, and loving kindness.'² He emulated the piety of his mother, and was not forgetful of the share St Cuthbert had in the issue of the battle which gained him a crown. 'He gave, granted, and confirmed to the monks of Durham, in perpetuity, his estate of Coldingham, with all the pertinents thereof. This princely man and bountiful king likewise heaped gift upon gift, for he gave and confirmed in possession to the Bishop of Durham and his successors the whole village of Berwick, with its appurtenances.'³

There can be little doubt that the authority of the King of Scots was largely strengthened by his close relations with England, and the influx of Saxons and Normans who accompanied him, or were drawn to his court, and became naturalised in Scotland. Edgar must

¹ Annals of Four Masters, vol. ii. p. 977.

² Fordun's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 216.

³ *Ibid.* p. 215.

have felt that they, with the inhabitants of Lothian, were his true support and bulwark against retrogression or relapse. The court was removed from Scone or Dunfermline, and 'Edina, Scotia's darling seat,' now first appears as the residence of the Scottish monarchs. Another circumstance which strengthened Edgar's power was the marriage, in 1100, of his sister, Matilda or Maud to Henry I., the youngest son of the Conqueror—a union fraught with the happiest results, cementing by the holiest and closest of relations the Normans and the Saxons, and maintaining, for a time at least, peace between England and Scotland. Edgar did not long enjoy the regards of his subjects; in 1107 he sank into an early grave, bequeathing the kingdom proper to his brother Alexander, and the territory south of the Forth, Lothian and Cumbria to David, who seems to have been endeared to him by the closest ties of love and respect

A. D.
1097-1107.

Alexander, the fifth son of Malcolm Canmore and Margaret, who now succeeded to the throne of Scotia, inherited the piety of his mother without her gentleness, with all the martial qualities of his father aggravated. His character is well-drawn by his contemporary Ailred, from whom John of Fordun evidently borrows when he says: 'Alexander, surnamed Fers (fierce), was a lettered and godly man; very humble and amiable towards the clerics and regulars, but terrible beyond measure to the rest of his subjects; a man of large heart, exerting himself in all things beyond his strength. He was most zealous in building churches, in searching for relics of saints, in providing and arranging priestly vestments and sacred books; most open-handed, even beyond his means, to all new comers, and so devoted to the poor that he seemed to delight in nothing so much as in supporting them, washing, nourishing, and clothing them. For following in his mother's footsteps, he vied with her in pious acts.'¹ These pious acts were so important, involving a contest with the English Metropolitans of York and Canterbury, that we reserve notice of them to the ecclesiastical portion of our work. Fanatically religious,

A. D.
1107-1124.

¹ Fordun's Chronicle, vol. ii. pp. 217-18.

A. D.
1107-1124.

the King of Scots was an accomplished knight, as is evident from his employment of cavalry in his northern expedition, and from the chivalrous or reckless way in which he exposed his own person; in fact he seems the type of the ideal Norman of the time, pious to credulity, brave to temerity. On his accession he was not more than half-pleased to resign so important a part of his dominions to his brother, and it was only the fear of the powerful auxiliaries the Earl of Huntingdon could bring to support the validity of the bequest, which extorted its recognition. Alexander so far stood on his right as to grant David the title of Earl only, but it will always be a matter of dispute, incapable of solution, whether he owed superiority for Lothian and Cumbria to the King of England or King of Scotland. Very probably both Henry and Alexander claimed the paramouncy; but David was a prudent man, a friend to both, and the claim would not come above board, he held sufficient rank in England as Earl of Northampton and Huntingdon, and at the court of Henry could easily waive his Scottish title.

Alexander in the early part of his reign was called on to curb the Celtic portion of his dominions. There can be little doubt that the infusion of Saxon, and particularly Norman ways in Church and State, the administration of high-handed justice would be distasteful to men as yet strangers to law. The men of Moray lately subdued, and the men of Moerne chronically rebellious, thought to bring matters back to their former state, practical independence, with perhaps a scion of the house of Moray as King. Their measures were taken with secrecy, and a large force took its way south in the hope of surprising Alexander, and repeating the regicides of former days. The King of Scots was at the time at Invergowrie, and fortunately received timely notice of the advance of the rebel force. So far from being taken by surprise, he, with his small but formidable band of mail-clad knights with their retainers, presented so bold a front, that his adversaries broke and fled. But Alexander was not the man to be content with this success, he fiercely pursued the

fugitives, who never paused in their flight until they reached the northern shores of the Moray Firth, where a stand was made with the intention of disputing the passage of the King and his army. The pursuit and its sequel are picturesquely told by Wyntoun :

A. D.
1107-1124.

‘ The Kyng wytht hys court symply
Folowyd on thame rycht fersly
Oure the Stockford into Ros.’¹

Though it was high tide when the ford was reached, Alexander, with his mounted chivalry, boldly swam the stream, charged the disorganised and affrighted Kerne, who offered little or no resistance, and fell an easy prey. No mercy was shown to the foe, and the refuge of the mountains and morasses was the alone shelter from the vengeful arm of Alexander, who by this exploit earned his title of the Fierce.

‘ The Kyng rad oure it in that tyde
And with his court apertly
On thame he chasyd, and cowardly
Hys fays turnyd the bak, and fled.
Efftyr thame he fast hym spede
Quhill he owre-tuok thame at the last
And tuk, and slwe thame, or he past
Owt off that land, that fewe he lefft
To tak on hand swylk purpos efft.
Fra that day hys lègys all
Oysid hym Alysandyr the Fers to call.’²

No other event of political importance apart from church affairs disturbed the reign of Alexander. In 1122 he lost his wife Sybylla, a natural daughter of King Henry, who died suddenly at Loch Tay: two years later he himself ‘paid the debt of nature at Strivelin (Stirling), in full health of body and faculties, on the 24th of April 1124, and being taken away from this life, gave up the ghost to heaven, and his body to the ground. He was buried in state at Dunfermline on the day of St Mark the evangelist, near his father, in front of the great altar, after having completed seventeen years and twenty-one days on the throne.’³

¹ Wyntoun’s Cronykill, vol. ii. p. 174. ² *Ibid.* vol. ii. pp. 174-5.

³ Fordun’s Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 221.

A D.
1124-1153.

On the death of Alexander, his brother David, the youngest son of Malcolm and Margaret, quietly took his place as King of Scotland. The district to the south of the Firths of Forth and Clyde was once more united to Scotia or Alban, and under his reign became, not a nominal but a real possession of the crown, and the barrier which in future ages preserved the independence of the country; the heart of Scotland. The Saxon Chronicle thus narrates the succession: 'After this, 1124, died Alexander King of Scotland, on the 9th, before the Kalends of May, and his brother David, then Earl of Northamptonshire, succeeded him, and held at the same time both the kingdom of Scotland and the English earldom.'¹

David had for long been an English Baron in high favour at the court of Henry his brother-in-law. William of Malmesbury, his contemporary, thus describes him as 'a youth more courtly than the rest (of Malcolm's sons), and who, polished from a boy, by intercourse and familiarity with us, had rubbed off all the rust of Scottish barbarism. Finally, when he obtained the kingdom, he released from the payment of taxes, for three years, all such of his countrymen as would pay more attention to their dwellings, dress more elegantly, and feed more nicely. No history has ever recorded three kings, and at the same time brothers, who were of equal sanctity, or savoured so much of their mother's piety; for, independently of their abstemiousness, their extensive charity, and their frequency in prayer, they so completely subdued the domestic vice of kings, that no report, even, prevailed, that any entered their bed except their legitimate wives, or that either of them had ever been guilty of any unlawful intercourse.'² David was united in marriage early in life to Matilda, the widow of Simon de St Liz, Earl of Northampton, and heiress of Waltheof, the great Earl of Northumberland. In addition to the lady's portion as the heiress of her husband and father, the Honor of Huntingdon was bestowed on the Scottish prince, the crown reserved only the Earldom of

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, p. 493.

² William of Malmesbury, pp. 434-35.

Northumberland out of Earl Waltheof's immense possessions. The union was a happy one, both during the long period spent at the English court, and as King and Queen of Scotland, Matilda was a worthy help-meet to her amiable spouse; the only issue was a son named Henry, born ten years previous to David's accession to the Scottish throne.

A.D.
1124-1153.

For seventeen years David had occupied the anomalous position of a Norman-English Baron, under feudal obligations to the King of England, and an independent prince ruling over a portion of Scotland. It was fortunate for all parties, that the friendliest feelings were preserved, and it says much for the three potentates, Alexander, Henry, and David, that the relations between the two, or truly speaking, the three countries, never became even strained. How much of David's time was spent at the English court we have no means of knowing, but it is next to certain, no small portion of it was devoted to his Scottish principality, it was welded into one harmonious whole, not even excepting the wild province of Galloway, which in need furnished, if not his most redoubtable, his noisiest warriors. Feudalism first obtained a footing here, he gathered around him the knights and barons from whom sprung the Norman chivalry of Scotland, and who introduced the usages, and manners of the system, which, with all its faults, was the first attempt at law and order since the fall of the Roman system.

Previous to this time 'charters were unknown;' a shake of the hand before a witness settled a common bargain, the thirstier southrons concluded such compacts with a drink,¹ whilst the delivery of a stick, a straw, or a clod of earth, in the presence of a greater number of witnesses apparently conveyed a more permanent grant of land, though length of occupancy alone conferred hereditary right.² David's charters are granted 'by his royal authority and power,' the bishops, earls, and barons

¹ A custom still surviving in the north as well as the south, as many of my readers may testify, and call to recollection the cost to purse and head.

² Robertson's Early Kings, vol. i. p. 249.

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formally confirm the deed, the clergy and people acquiesce, the charters of Alexander are granted with the assent and concurrence of the seven Earls or Mormaors of Scotland and the two Bishops, the witnesses, the few Saxons who formed the personal attendants of the King.¹ From the reign of David truly commences the history of the kingdom of Scotland; previous to his time North Britain was an agglomeration of peoples loosely cemented together, under the nominal sway of a Ri or King, according to his personal qualities or connections, with a large or a small territory. Gadhelic law in Church and State to any one not a Gael means the absence of what a Saxon considers Law, any one who studies the history of the Celt in independence, will endorse the statement. Justice may have been administered, and protection given, but the first was of the rudest kind, and as it suited the judge; the latter was determined by kinship only. David I. found his kingdom Celtic and lawless, he left it Teutonic and constitutional.

For six years David pursued his reforms in Church and State, without any material disturbance in any part of his dominions, but in 1130 a determined attempt was made by the northern magnates, to restore the ancient order of things, and to drive the Anglo-Norman ruler with his followers, furth of the kingdom of ancient Alban. Whether the inhabitants north of the Firths were chiefly Celts previous to this, is a hotly contested point; in a previous part of this work we have attempted to show that they were not, and that the Gaelic element was small. But from the time of the accession of Kenneth Macalpin, 844, there can be no doubt that the Gaelic language, manners and customs would be the *mode* among the ruling class and their retainers. The reforms in Church and State attempted to be carried out from the time of St Margaret and her sons, would be exceedingly distasteful to the *old party*, all interfered largely with the turbulence and licence so dear to the Celt, then, as in later times, perhaps even now, the district was ripe

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 459, where authorities are quoted.

for a revolt against any settled form of government with a strong executive. At the head of this movement was Angus, Mormaor or Earl of Moray, a lineal descendant of Macbeth, and his brother Malcolm. With a force of five thousand men, they descended into the lowlands, encountering no opposition until they came to Strathcathro in Fifeshire,¹ where they were met by Edward the Constable of Scotland, probably at the head of a body of mail clad knights, and totally defeated, with the loss of four-fifths of their number. Angus was among the slain, but Malcolm escaped to prolong an unavailing contest in another part of the country for four years; betrayed by his own followers, he was delivered up to the King, who confined him a close prisoner for life in the castle of Roxburgh.² The Constable followed up his victory with vigour and success, the Mormaorate or Earldom of Moray was forfeited to the crown, and portioned out in feudal fiefs to knights from England, or to natives on whose fidelity the King could rely.

In 1135 died King Henry I., and Great Britain, for so many years in a state of comparative peace, was at once plunged into anarchy. David naturally enough supported the cause of his niece Matilda, Empress of Germany, whom her father with his dying breath had named as his successor. In 1136 he invaded England to support her claim against Stephen, who had been crowned King of England, and to whom fealty had been sworn by the Baronage of the kingdom. The King of Scots advanced as far as Newcastle, the most of the

¹ Fordun, p. 224.

² Annals of Ulster, Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, pp. 170, 371. The narrative of the chroniclers of the insurrection in Moray is conflicting. I have followed Mr E. W. Robertson, but Dr Skene thinks that 'his usual sound judgment has deserted him on this occasion.' He, Dr Skene, considers Malcolm to have been a natural son of Alexander, who allied himself to the Thane of Moray, but leaves us in the dark whether he fell at Strathcathro or escaped. Mr Robertson, he says, has confounded the insurrection and person of a monk named Wymund with Malcolm. Dr Skene makes the date of this insurrection 1134-37, Mr Robertson near the close of King David's reign. See Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 460-64; Robertson's *Early Kings*, vol. i. pp. 189-91, 219-221.

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border fortresses having opened their gates to him. Here he was confronted by Stephen and his forces, but neither of the two monarchs cared at the time to push matters to extremity. Neither were prepared for a conflict, and terms of peace after a short preliminary negotiation were agreed on. William of Malmesbury best describes the campaign: 'King Stephen went into Northumberland, that he might have a conference with David, King of Scotland, who was said to entertain hostile sentiments towards him. From David he readily obtained what he wished; because, being softened by the natural gentleness of his manners, or by the approach of old age, he willingly embraced the tranquillity of peace, real or pretended.'¹ The terms were, that David refused to acknowledge Stephen as his feudal lord, but had no objections to his son Henry doing so; all the fortresses taken by the Scots, with the exception of Carlisle, were restored, and the combatants parted. At York Prince Henry performed homage for his fiefs in England, and departed south in the train of his feudal lord. Henry seems to have made a most favourable impression on Stephen, and either on account of this, or out of respect or fear of his father, while at court in London he assigned the place of honour on his right hand to his guest. This was resented by the proud Norman barons, the masters of 'good King Stephen,' they gave vent to fierce expressions of disapproval, and left the court in a body. Stephen had to put up with this insult to his guest; but David was neither so meek nor so gentle, he recalled his son, and though the latter was repeatedly summoned by his feudal lord to perform his obligations, he was not permitted by his father to do so.

A very short time elapsed before David determined to strike another blow in favour of his niece the Empress, and at the same time avenge the insult offered to his son. The absence of King Stephen in Normandy, and the distracted state of England, afforded an opportunity, which was too much for the saint, who was also a King and a politician, not altogether divested of the passions

¹ William of Malmesbury, p. 491.

appertaining to both. In 1138 he invaded England at the head of a force, for it could hardly be called an army, drawn from every part of his dominions, and composed of the most discordant elements. From Orkney, from the Western Isles, from Moravia, from Scotia proper, from Lodonea, from Cumbria, from the wilds of Gallo-way, a contingent was sent. But the real strength which had given him the victory in his contest with the Mormaor of Moray was wanting. The feudal force of English and Norman knights disciplined and armed was averse to the undertaking, all were half-hearted, and many renounced their allegiance and retired with their retainers. An incident occurred some time before the final contest, which shows the anomalous state of parties, and the close connection between the Norman rulers of both countries; it required near two centuries of internecine warfare to make the one English and the other Scotch. It grates against our proud national feeling of independence, but the candid mind almost regrets that some matrimonial arrangement was not effected, by which people identical in race, in feeling, and religion, should have been united under one head; it mattered little indeed to the Celt, in both countries he found alike a master in the Norman. Robert de Brus was a Norman noble who possessed vast estates in Yorkshire and Annandale, held respectively of his feudal lord in both countries. He had followed the fortunes of his friend the King of Scots, was his trusted retainer, and a supporter of his policy and measures in Scotland; in England he supported the claims of Stephen. In presence of David he arraigned his English policy, telling him plainly, that by it he alienated his best friends, the true supporters of his kingdom. Ailred, Abbot of Rivaux, makes him deliver a telling speech,¹ tersely condensed by Mr Burton. 'Bruce before renouncing his allegiance, cried shame on him for leading that ruffianly band of mixed savages against the gentle Norman chivalry who had ever befriended him.'² But other influences and other warriors were at work, Malise of Stratherne made

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¹ Fordun, vol. i. p. 445.

² Burton, vol. i. p. 437.

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his appeal like a patriotic savage, and was successful. 'Why,' said he, 'O King, should you trust to these Frenchmen, those mail-clad men, unarmed you shall find that I shall outstrip them on the field of fight.' The story of the invasion is so well told by Mr E. W. Robertson,¹ and so picturesquely depicted by Mr Burton,² that we can only refer our readers to these accounts.

David, at the head of the host we have described, plundering by the way, advanced into England as far as Northallerton in Yorkshire, where he was met by a small but compact body of knights and men-at-arms, commanded by the veteran Walter of Espec, and completely defeated. The engagement, known as the battle of the Standard, was fiercely contested, but the valour of Malise of Stratherne, and the wild Picts of Galloway, was unavailing, the solid mass of Norman chivalry again and again drove back the undisciplined charge of the northern braves. The King of Scots during the action showed courage and personal bravery of no mean order, and withdrew his broken and dispirited troops towards Carlisle, more like a baffled than a beaten general. He had a formidable force still in hand, and in order to give it some better occupation than plundering, laid siege to Werk Castle. Operations were in progress, when the Papal legate Alberic of Ostia, in the true spirit of a minister of the gospel of peace, attempted to mediate between the two potentates. A truce was agreed on, the garrison of Werk alone excepted, the horrors of a barbarian invasion mitigated. Werk surrendered to the Scots, after a gallant and desperate defence, and immediately thereafter, negotiations were opened, and by the friendly zeal of the Papal legate, peace was concluded much to the advantage of David. Carlisle was retained by the Scots. Prince Henry received the great earldom of Northumberland as a fief from the King of England, he reserving only the fortresses of Newcastle and Durham. In the same year the Scottish Prince was united in mar-

¹ Robertson's *Early Scottish Kings*, vol. i. pp. 194-209.

² Burton, vol. i. pp. 435-40.

riage to Ada, youngest daughter of the Earl of Warenne. He won golden opinions from all by his lavish munificence, courteous manner, and chivalrous bearing alike in mimic fight and tented field, the beau-ideal of a Norman knight.

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David and his son, in the mad imbroglia in England during the reign of Stephen, seem to have played their part well; the King did not involve his realm in war, the son preserved his fiefs. The remainder of King David's reign was peaceful; he maintained law and order in most parts of his realm in a manner unknown in the good old days. The northern and western portion, the last to acknowledge his authority, was the most troublesome, and, according to Mr W. E. Robertson and Mr Burton,¹ a monk of the name of Wimund, who represented himself as a son of the Mormaor of Moray, drew many of the wild spirits of these parts to him, and raised the standard of revolt against the royal authority. After a protracted contest, which we do not detail, the warrior monk and titular bishop was betrayed, deprived of sight, and cruelly maimed by his captors; afterwards he was confined a close prisoner for the remainder of his days.

While David's rule was thus extended and consolidated over the northern portion of Scotland, the district south of the Firths was peculiarly his care, and to it was added in reality, if not in name, a large portion of the north of England. Indeed all the country north of the Humber was held either by David himself or his son Henry; the distracted state of England during the reign of Stephen prevented any attempt to bring it under his authority. Pious and humble though the saintly king is represented by his biographers, his actions show him an acute diplomatist, thoroughly alive to the aggrandisement of his kin and country. His sanguine hopes, and natural pride in the success of his efforts, centered in his gallant son, were however doomed to disappointment. In 1152 Prince Henry, the heir-apparent to the throne, was suddenly cut off by an untimely death. From the elaborate and highly-coloured panegyrics on his virtues, it may be

¹ See *ante*, p. 263.

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gathered that he was in every way a son worthy of his sire, and that the blow which stunned Scotland—monarch and people alike—was no light one. Henry left issue—three sons, Malcolm and William, both of whom became Kings of Scotland, David, who for long enjoyed the Honor and title of Earl of Huntingdon, and three daughters, two of whom formed influential alliances; the youngest died unmarried during the reign of her brother Malcolm.

The aged and bereaved King so far roused himself from his deep grief as to take measures for the quiet succession of his young grandson, now eleven years of age; he arranged that in company with Duncan, Earl of Fife, the premier Earl of Scotland, Malcolm should make a tour through the kingdom, and be acknowledged the rightful heir to the Scottish throne. This being done, King David of Scotland, in the language of holy writ, 'gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people,' May 24th, 1153.

The death of David must have been sincerely mourned throughout not only Scotland but England, alike by peer and peasant; but he died in a ripe old age, and it can truly be said, that 'his works did follow him.' His name and character are not sufficiently appreciated by the most of historians; even his title of saint, and the tedious recital of his virtues and holiness by the Abbot of Rivaux¹ have dimmed the character of the man. There can be little doubt of the exalted nature of his piety; but a fair reading of his civil history, in its home and foreign relations, shows that he was much more than a saint. The most of the Lament must be gross panegyric; Earl David was a busy man, flitting between the court of Henry and his Scottish principality, King David was no less engaged in the multifarious affairs of state; he was his own general in his English wars. It is very difficult for a man in a high position in life to be an ascetic, though it is very easy for him to get the credit of being one. It will be seen that even St Kentigern relaxed his teetotal and vegetarian principles when he went

¹ Fordun, Book v. cap. 35-49.

to court; so it is no stretch of imagination to suppose that the Prince of Cumbria and the King of Scotland, while strictly attentive to religious duties when at leisure, mixed freely in the cares, the sports, the entertainments of his people. His mother, St Margaret, looked after even the dresses and ornaments of her ladies. Why should not the son follow her example? In short David was much more than a saint, he was a patriotic monarch, bent on extending the boundaries of his kingdom; the originator of law and order in his dominions; if there was any approach to religion and culture in his day, he was the author. The verdict of Mr E. W. Robertson must be endorsed: 'Of feudal and historical Scotland; of the Scotland which counts Edinburgh amongst her fairest cities, and Glasgow as well as Perth and Aberdeen; of the familiar Scotland of Bruce and of the Stewarts, David was unquestionably the creator. With the close of the eleventh century ancient Gaelic Alban gradually fades into the background, and before the middle of the twelfth, modern Scotland has already risen into existence.'¹

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A short notice of the innovations, or creations, of King David will now bring this part of our sketch of Early Scotland to a close. What he did, shows emphatically, what was not in existence before his time; incidentally, what Scotia, Alban, was, in the olden times.

Previous to the reign of Malcolm Canmore, the kingdom of Alban was more an agglomeration of independent peoples, presided over by the head of a family, than a consolidated state; the extent varied according to the energetic character of the king, or the weakness of his rivals. The anomaly was ever present, that the nominal head of the state was sprung from an intruding race, with none of the sympathies, and not even speaking the language of the large majority of his subjects. The Scotland of modern, of historic times was not in existence; south of the Forth and Clyde was Lothian and Cumbria, annexed indeed to the Scottish crown, but possessing in Lothian and possibly in Cumbria a thoroughly Anglo-

¹ Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. pp. 319, 320.

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Saxon character, while Galloway was more of an independent principality acknowledging allegiance and paying tribute as it suited. Northwards was Scotia proper, embracing the central and eastern districts to the Spey, and Moravia, loosely speaking, the remainder of the mainland; the Western Highlands and Islands were until long subsequent an independent power. Scotia proper included the seven earldoms often referred to, viz., Mar, Buchan and Angus, Fife, Atholl, Strathearn and Menteith, with Gowrie and Stormont; the Merns and some other districts were retained by the king, practically speaking it was his earldom and means of support. The earl was simply a new name for the Mormaor, who was the chosen leader and judge of the confederacy, and whose office and emoluments, like kings and earls of today, had by some inscrutable dispensation of providence become hereditary. Ignorant of Jewish or any other history, no divine right was thought of, originally the office was purely elective, every free member of the kindred possessing the right to choose his Senior, and at the same time his Tanist or successor. The tenure was the Gavel, which was a right of joint occupancy of the tribe land, the chief was the head of the freemen, neither position or land were personal or hereditary. Apart from the slaves or serfs, there were two classes, the freemen and the gentry; the latter were composed of the Mormaor and judge, their kindred, and the lesser chiefs who formed the Duine-uasal, they in later times became the gentry or freeholders of the district; the former were all who could prove their kindred to the gentry. There was thus an ascending scale, admirably adapted for a lawless and independent state of matters, combined with idleness for the few, and servile labour for the many, the freeman was kin to the Duine-uasal, he was equal in birth to the Og-tiernach or lesser lord, who was equal in birth to the Mormaor, who was in the same degree to the king. No settled form of law and order was possible; the ties of kindred influenced the decision of the judge, fighting was the only occupation worthy of a Duine-uasal, who with his retainers were separated from the agricultural, the

working population, by a wide, almost an impassable, barrier. He quartered his retainers and levied his rents from this class, the extent of the extortion was measured only by the ability of the victim to bear it.¹

As far as possible to remedy this state of affairs, David's first care was to increase the power of the Crown—the executive, to preserve peace and prevent private feuds, to punish thefts and misdemeanours, by officers holding their authority from and appointed by the crown. This he attempted to carry out by instituting the office of the Sheriff, *viccomes*, or royal deputy, who was entrusted with the task of collecting the crown-dues, and administering justice. In this he was only partially successful, in the outlying districts of ancient Moravia, in Argyll, Cantyre, and Cowal, the duties of the Sheriff had to be committed to the native chiefs; even in Fife he was unsuccessful. The modes of trial are interesting, but our limits forbid us entering into details. The principal object of the reforming king was *practically* to put an end to the private administration of justice, in most cases revenge and oppression, a uniform administration of the laws of the realm, to place all under the royal authority, and to give every man according to degree a fair trial by his equals. The trial by compurgation, by ordeal, and by wager of battle, were certainly rude attempts in this direction, but infinitely superior to what was in use, a higher tribunal than that of force was initiated.

Another innovation was the introduction of a written charter to attest the right to freehold property. Previously as we have seen, there was absolutely no right in land, the district, large or small, belonged collectively to the Mormaor or Thane and his kin; the agriculturist and the cattle-breeder had so many landlords, that he could not possibly have any security for his produce. In addition to the peculiarities in the law of Celtic inheritance, the absolute ignorance of letters prevented the use of written charters, while the consciousness of physical prowess tempted not only the Celt but the Frank and

¹ Robertson's Scotland, pp. 237, 247.

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the Saxon to despise their use. David was of another opinion, but had to adapt himself to the rude age in which he lived; he introduced written charters, and secure tenures, but in consideration of military or ecclesiastical services rendered. The idea that the land should be portioned out and secured to those who cultivate it, is even yet so thoroughly Utopian that we can hardly suppose the idea crossed the mind of the kindly and well-intentioned reformer. Montalembert has said, 'that war and religion have ever been the strongest passions of the Irish;' he might have included the inhabitants of Great Britain and the Continent from the time they embraced the Christian faith. Up to the time of the Reformation, the land, the dignities, most of the good things of this life were partitioned between their ministers. The soldier and the priest have got on remarkably well together, each supporting the craft of the other, and amid all the changes of religious thought and government they still continue fast friends, except perhaps in theory.

David, in his principality of Cumbria and Lothian, would have little or no difficulty in allocating lands among his Norman and English friends; the probability is, that there were no great chiefs there, corresponding to the Gaelic and Pictish Mormaors, or English Earls, if there were they do not appear in history. Besides the great Norman nobles who founded historic dynasties and who received the grant of territories corresponding to their rank, David instituted a holding by knight service, the possessors of it were the men who grew into the Lairds or Barons of a future age. The smallest of these holdings was half a plough land, fifty-two Scotch acres, which was held by free service to, and by charter from, the crown. When he became King of Scotland, the same system slightly modified, was introduced north of the Scot's Water. If we are to accept Fordun as an authority, King Malcolm, 1004-24, initiated a kind of feudal holding direct from the crown, he says, 'Of old, indeed, the kings were accustomed to grant their soldiers, in feu-farm, more or less of their own lands—a portion of any province or thanage; for at that time almost the whole kingdom was

divided into thanages.¹ Malcolm, in the picturesque manner depicted by the chronicler, granted lands to three classes; the lowest agricolæ, tillers of the ground, tenants at will, or in lease by the year; the next for ten or twenty years, or in life-rent, with remainder to one or two heirs, as to free and kindly tenants; the third knights, thanes, chiefs, who though few in number, held their land in perpetuity—not, however, so freely, but each of them paid a certain annual feu-duty to their lord the king.¹ As the cultivation, and cultivators of the ground existed only in Fordun's imagination, the first and second classes may, or ought to have existed previous to the time when the word feud or feudal came into being, but they would be thoroughly dependant on the higher class, few in number but strong in prescriptive right, and whose proper title is *miles*; besides the distracted state of the country during the eleventh century effectually nullified all legislation. If Malcolm divested himself of all 'but the moot-hill of the royal seat of Scone,' his household would be small and his table scanty, he would require most accomplished officers to collect his feu-duties.

David took advantage of these institutions, such as they were; the third class, the milites, were converted into the earls and barons of a future age, holding their lands by charter direct from the crown in virtue of military service to the king as their feudal superior. The second class may have been the holders of land by knight-service, as introduced further south; the holding was, however, smaller, one-half, or twenty-six Scotch acres, and originally gave no claim to freehold right. The claims of the last, the workers, the agricolæ, have still to be considered by the Reformed Parliament of Great Britain in the year of grace 1886!

But King David has even greater claims to the gratitude of the ages which succeeded him; he was the restorer of what little commerce and manufacture had been introduced into North Britain by the Romans. On the collapse of the imperial power, the different stations where a settled population had clustered, merchants and

¹ Fordun, vol. ii. p. 177.

² *Ibid.* p. 178.

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artizans, had been abandoned, and not a trace of station or population left. The Picts, the Gaels, the Angles, the Danes, all seem for long to have been essentially nomadic. 'An intramural population was an anomaly amongst the people of the north, and in their older codes no provision was made for a free proprietary dwelling in towns, land and land only, being connected with freedom and hereditary right.'¹ Under Pictish and Gaelic rule, there was absolutely no urban population in Scotland; at the capitals of Inverness, Abernethy, and Scone there would probably be a stationary following, sufficient to minister to the wants and luxuries of the court, while round the great monasteries there would be the same, with the addition of a few adventurous traders from England and the continent; but towns or burghs in the modern sense of the word, were unknown. From the accession of Malcolm Canmore, perhaps even from the time of Macbeth, who is said to have visited Rome, a stimulus may have been given to a settled life, as the names of Dunfermline, Stirling, Edinburgh, and Roxburgh appear in the chronicles. Margaret did much for her adopted country, but it was left to her youngest son to bring into existence the third estate, the workers, the producers, the distributors, which now in all civilised countries has taken the first position, and has ever been identified with liberty and culture. David took for his model what he was familiar with, and the best to be had, the Anglo-Norman burgh, with its feudal castle and its civic population, distinct and separate from the garrison. On the lines of these he constituted into royal burghs, holding direct from, and responsible only to the crown, Roxburgh, Berwick, Edinburgh, and Stirling. Each burgh was divided into four wards, presided over by a baillie, with the addition of the provost, who, with their officers or bedells, were annually chosen by the community of burghers. 'Every burgher was bound to possess at least one rood of land in the burgh, for which he paid fivepence yearly to the king, and to swear fealty to the sovereign, the magistrates, and the community of

¹ Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 293.

the burgh ;¹ he could be judged only by his peers, 'the good men and true of the community.' No burgh was complete without an hospital, no royal burgh without a castle. The first was a necessary appendage then and for long afterwards, where men did congregate, on account of the prevalence of leprosy, caused by unwholesome food—dried meat and fish ; above all by dirt and sordid dwellings. This disease, we need not say, was during the early and middle ages the scourge of Europe, and shows the miserable and uncleanly mode of living, and the debased state of the population ; the ages of faith were the ages of ignorance and disease. The castle was a still more important appendage, in the times in which the burghs were formed, to protect the burghers from wandering freebooters ; in later times, to protect and secure the royal authority from the assaults of the burghers. The fortress was under the charge of the Constable, an officer appointed by the crown, and in many cases this office became hereditary ; the burghers were compelled to take their turn on castleguard, as part of the service due for the tenure of their land, but gradually this was compounded for by a payment in money to the Constable, whose retainers undertook the duty. The castellan and the provost had separate jurisdictions ; if the former had a grievance against the burghers, he had to carry it to the Provost ; if the latter had one against any of the garrison, he carried it to the Constable. Rude and elementary though these regulations were, they were the germs from which sprung the present state of things, and were satisfactory enough to attract a crowd of settlers from England and the Continent, who introduced the commerce and manufactures, which have done quite as much for the well-being of the population of Scotland as the prowess of its fighting men, and the orthodoxy of its clergy.

King David's reforms were extended to his court, to the administration of justice through his dominions, and to the orderly collection of revenue. We do not enter into details, and have to apologise for the previous im-

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¹ Robertson's Scotland, vol. i. p. 299.

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perfect sketch borrowed from Mr E. W. Robertson, where the subject is thoroughly treated, both in the historical portion and in the appendix. The subject belongs to the history of modern Teutonic Scotland, and is introduced only by way of contrast to what the country was under Gaelic rule. In spite of the advantages derived from the introduction of Christianity in the sixth century or earlier, and the advent of teachers not altogether uncivilised, no progression was made in either Church or State. The inhabitants of Scotland were as barbarous and as ignorant, in the tenth century, as they were in the sixth, as lawless as the fierce hordes of painted savages, who threw themselves on the massed legions of Rome. They never advanced to the length of building edifices of stone; the *palaces* of their kings, their *monasteries*, and *schools of learning*, were constructed of wood and wattles. Their culture consisted of a knowledge of Latin by the clergy, which probably expired after the time of Adamnan; the dialect of the Scoti did not attain to the dignity of a written language; if it did, no remains are left but the 'Duan Albanach,' a composition of the eleventh century; within a few years after the death of David, the language was extinct, save in those parts where it is retained to this day. Nothing testifies more to the non-Celtic character of the greater part of the Scottish people, than the absence of the Celtic language, manners and character, when the light of history breaks in and legend fails. There was absolutely no education for the people, even for the upper classes; if Malcolm Canmore was able to read, the accomplishment must have been a rare one, as for writing the highest nobles for long afterwards affixed crosses as the signature to their deeds; most of them would feel with the Earl of Angus—

'Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine
Save Gawin, ne'er could pen a line.'¹

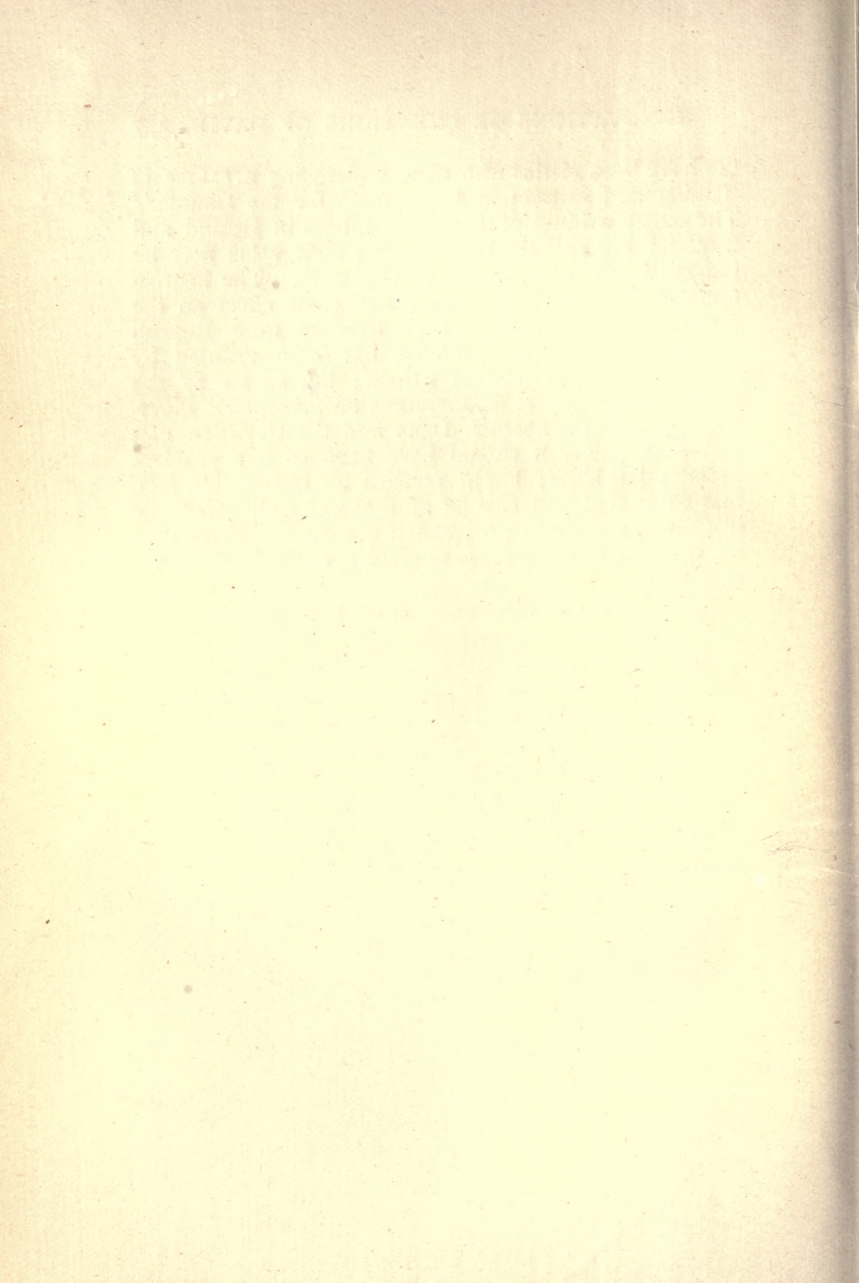
What little education existed, was confined to the clergy. Even so firm a Celtic advocate as Dr Skene, says that the scolocs or scholars, for whom provision was made, seem

¹ Marmion, canto vi.

‘to have been clerics who were undergoing a course of training and instruction to fit them for the Church.’¹ The scanty writings of these clerics, both in Ireland and Scotland, are entirely hagiological; their value may be judged, in the second part of this work. The instructions of these men may have had some effect on the people—their orthodoxy, their freedom from Romish superstition, their non-celibacy, has been vaunted by patriotic and Presbyterian writers; but so far as the scant records inform us, there was no perceptible difference between the heathen Dane and the Christian Pict and Scot. Why it should have been so is a problem perhaps insoluble; but it remains an indubitable fact, that when Scotland cast off all that was Celtic-Gadhelic in Church and State, progression was made. Since then no nation has done more to civilise, to Christianise the world.

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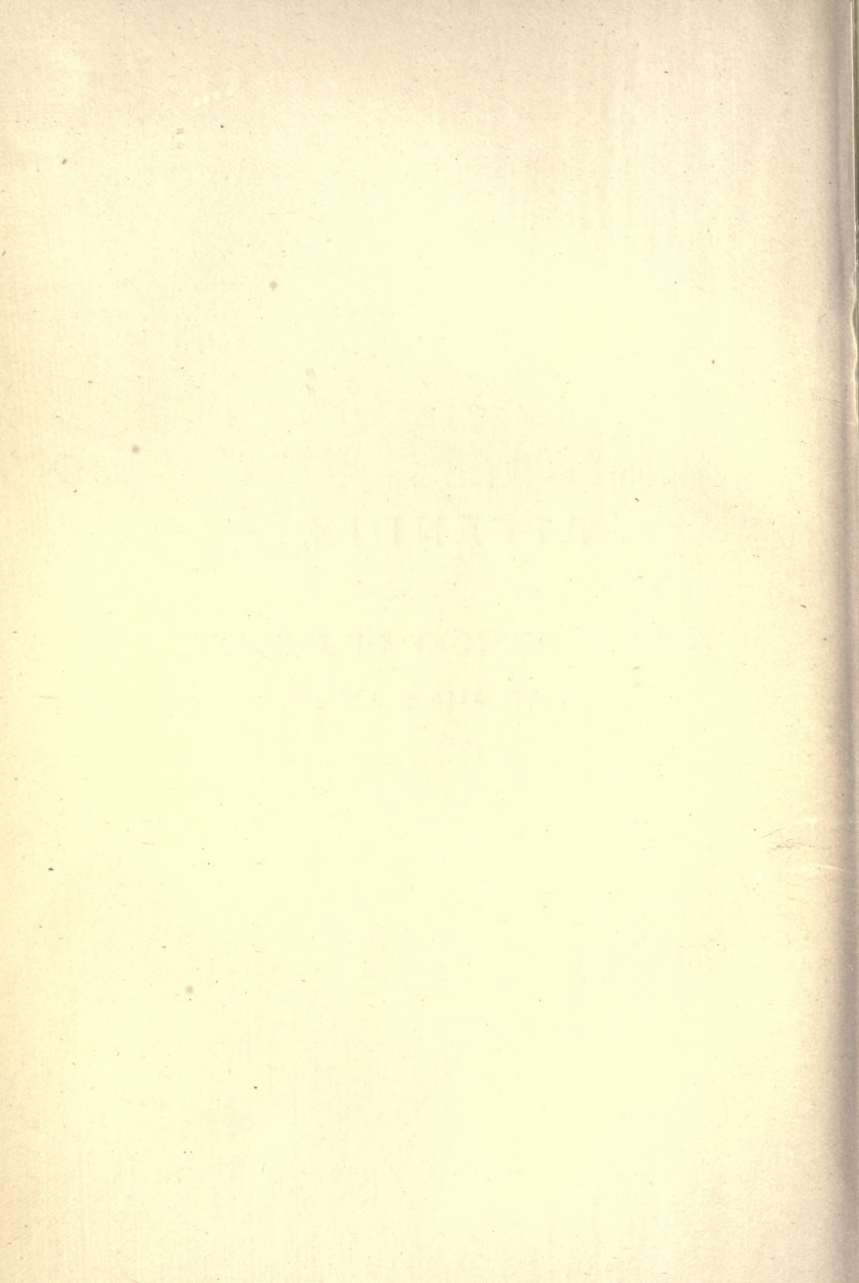
¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 446.



APPENDIX.

A SHORT HISTORY OF IRELAND,

FROM A.M. 2242 TO A.D. 498.



ANTEDILUVIAN PERIOD.

THERE are various opinions concerning the first mortal that set foot on the green sod of Erin. It is held by some that three daughters of Cain, arrived several hundred years before the Deluge ; the eldest of these sisters, named Bamba, gave a name to the whole kingdom. After this three men and fifty women followed, who, after forty years' residence, died from a certain distemper in a week's time. A.M. 2242.

Another account is, that three fishermen from Spain landed, and were so pleased with the country, that they resolved to go back for their wives. On their return they were unfortunately drowned by the waters of the Flood.¹ But the recognised account² is, that Caesair, daughter of Bith, an antediluvian patriarch, applied to Noah for apartments in the ark, and met with a churlish refusal. Bith, Fiontan the husband of Caesair, and her brother Ladhra, nothing daunted, built an ark for themselves, which was launched, and, after having been tossed about for seven years, the voyagers, consisting of three men and fifty women, landed on the shores of Ireland. (The voyage ought to have been a little more protracted, as within forty days the flood came.) Ladhra died shortly after arrival, and left his seventeen wives to Bith and Fiontan. Within a few days Bith also departed this life, and the whole community of wives was thrown on the unfortunate survivor. It was too much for him ; he ran away, and his fate is uncertain. Some authors believe he survived to the time of St Patrick, and was converted to Christianity. Ceasair, upon the loss of her husband, retired to Conacht, where, out of grief she broke her heart and died there six days before the deluge ; the remainder of the colony was swept away by the waters of the flood, Anno Mundi 2242.

¹ Keating's History of Ireland, vol. i. p. 78, Ed. 1841.

² Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. p. 3.

A.M. 1978.

The kingdom of Ireland after this lay wild and uninhabited for three hundred years, till Partholanus, the fifth in descent from Magog, the son of Japhet, arrived there with his people A.M. 1978,¹ twenty years before the birth of Abraham. He began his voyage from Greece, and landed on 14th May at a place called Inbher Sceine, on the coast of Munster. The colony consisted of himself, his three sons with their wives, and one hundred soldiers. Partholanus at his death divided the country among his four sons. The dynasty lasted three hundred years, when the whole of the inhabitants, to the number of nine thousand persons, were destroyed by the plague at the Hill of Howth. During this period two well-known customs were introduced. Samailiath invented the use of cups for the conveniency of drinking at hospitable entertainments. Bregha recommended the pernicious practice of duelling and single combat. The pages of Lever testify to the manner in which these customs have been preserved. It was a highly advanced state of society previous to this, though they lacked the conveniences of drinking. Partholanus brought over with him in his expedition four learned men, four principal Druids, three generals, and two merchants.

A.M. 2308.

Ireland continued without inhabitants for thirty years after the death of the Partholanus, until Nemedius, another scion of the house of Japhet, arrived on the coast. He established himself and his followers in the country, and built two royal seats. There must have been a colony of another race at the time in the island, or it must have arrived before these stately edifices were reared, as the following narrative shows:—‘These places were erected by the four sons of Madain Muinreamhair, who were called Fomhoraicc. These master builders, and their countrymen, were distinguished by this name, because they were a sort of pirates or sea-robbers, that came originally from Africa, and settled from that time in the

¹ The chronology of the Annals of the Four Masters is the computation of the Septuagint, as given by St Jerome in his Cronicon of Eusebius. In a narrative like the present, *any* scheme of chronology is equally satisfactory.

north of Ireland. The next morning after these palaces were finished, Nemedius commanded the four builders to be slain, out of jealousy, lest they should afterwards erect other structures that should exceed his in state and magnificence.¹ Following up this, Nemedius engaged the African settlers in three bloody battles, in which he was conqueror; in a fourth, however, he was defeated, and the most of his men cut to pieces. 'This misfortune broke the heart of Nemedius, who died soon afterwards, with two thousand of his subjects, men and women, at a place in the county of Cork.'² The vagabond Africans entirely subdued the Nemedians, and made them tributary. The resistance was, as in all *Irish* accounts of these struggles, desperate and heroic; but, in a last bloody battle the Nemedians were defeated, and the three grandsons of the founder of the state, Simon Breac, Jobbath, and Briotan Mol, had to flee the country. The account in the *Annals of the Four Masters* of this last conflict is much terser than this: 'They nearly all mutually fell by each other; thirty persons alone of the race of Neimhidh, escaped to different quarters of the world, and they came to Ireland sometime afterwards as Fírbolgs.'³

Simon Breac fled to Greece, Jobbath to the north of Europe, and Briotan Mol to Scotland. Keating thinks that the name of Britain must be derived from that of the last-mentioned prince. 'The account (of Briotan proceeding to Scotland) from the authentic records of the Irish nation, gives a great light to the name of Britain, and deserves our belief, rather than the fabulous relations of partial and romantic writers (Geoffrey of Monmouth), who have been the bane and distraction of true history.'⁴

Simon Breac landed in Greece, and his followers became a numerous people; so much so that the Grecians, out of fear that they should become dangerous to the State, put them to the most degrading labour. The Nemedians sighed by reason of the bondage; they resolved

¹ Keating's History, vol. i. p. 91.

² There is no mention of a battle or pestilence, so the reader is bound to suppose monarch and subjects died from the same cause.

³ *Annals*, vol. i. p. 13.

⁴ Keating's History, p. 95.

A. M. 2308.

to escape, and by surprise seized upon some of the Grecian shipping, in which, to the number of five thousand, they put to sea and sailed until they arrived on the coast of Ireland. These descendants of Simon Breac were named Firbolgs, from the fact of their being compelled, while in Greece, to carry leathern bags of earth; for the word *Bolg* signifies *bag*, and *Fir* signifies men, which compounded makes *Firbolgs*. They were commanded by five princes, who divided the island into five provinces, over which they respectively ruled. We hear of no resistance being made; the remaining Africans must have been exterminated by a pestilence like the Partholians, or killed each other till none were left. The Annals quoted state that, after Simon Breac was driven out, Ireland was a wilderness for two hundred years.

The eight kings of this race ruled Ireland fifty-six years, in which time no important event is chronicled; two died a natural death, one was drowned, the remainder were slain in battle.

It will be remembered that Jobbath, the grandson of Nemedius, is said to have fled to the north of Europe; but the geography is a little confused, for we find him and his followers settled in Achaia, which at that time was invaded by the Assyrians. Ancient Greece was not so large but one would have thought they could hardly help hearing of, or meeting with, their expatriated brethren; but such was not the case. In Achaia it was that the Tuatha de Danans (for by this name the descendants of Jobbath are known) gained their knowledge of necromancy and enchantment, and they became so expert in magical knowledge that they had a power of working magical feats, so far as seemingly to raise the dead. This power they exercised for the benefit of the Athenians in various conflicts with the Assyrians, but the latter, by the advice of a Druid of great learning, found a means of foiling their diabolical adversaries. The Athenians were defeated, and their allies thought it time that they should beat a retreat, and carry their skill to some country where no learned Druids were to be got.

The Tuath de Danans left Greece, and found their

way to Norway and Denmark, where they were received with great hospitality by the inhabitants, who admired them for their learning and skill in magic, and the wonderful effects of their enchantments. The Danes being a barbarous and illiterate people, entertained such a regard for these strangers that they gave them four cities to inhabit, where they should erect schools to instruct the youth of the country in their diabolical learning. This wonderful people, after some time, determined to seek a new settlement. There is no reason given for their wish to leave the hardy, but ignorant, Norsemen, and they evidently left with the good wishes of the people who had sheltered them, and brought with them from the four cities they occupied four curiosities or monuments of great antiquity. The first was the Fatal Stone or Lia-fail: it had many virtues derived from diabolic sources, which it possessed till the birth of Christ, who contracted the power of the devil, and in a great measure put an end to his delusions. This stone, called Lia-fail, had likewise the name of Fatal Stone, or Stone of Destiny, because of a very ancient prophecy belonging to it, which foretold that in whatever country this stone should be preserved, a prince of the Scythian race, that is, of the family of Milesius, King of Spain, should undoubtedly govern, as Hector Boece gives it—

‘ Unless the fix’d decrees of fate give way,
The Scots shall govern, and the sceptre sway,
Where’er this stone they find, and its dread sound obey.’

Another legend of this is, that it was brought by the Gadeliens from Egypt to Spain, and by the sons of Milesius to Ireland, and that it was the identical stone on which the patriarch Jacob pillowed his head, when he saw the wondrous vision of the angels descending and ascending the heavenly ladder. The father and mother of Gadelas were on intimate terms with Moses and Aaron, and this may guide the reader in his judgment as to which account is the true one. Fergus, the first of the Dalriadic kings, brought the wondrous talisman to Scotland with him, the monarchs of his race were crowned on it, without

A. M. 2308.

interruption until the time of Alexander III. This venerable and national relic was removed by Edward I. from its sanctuary at Scone, and placed in the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey, where it may still be seen. The prophecy was in the end accomplished, for, as we all know, Her most gracious Majesty is a descendant of that illustrious family whose lineage can be traced back to the great Milesius, and, as we shall see, from him to the accomplished Feniusa Farsa, professor and king, the fourth in descent from Noah. The other three relics brought from the north of Europe were a sword, a spear, and a cauldron, but unfortunately (perhaps from being articles in daily use) they have not been preserved.

The Tuath de Danans landed in the north of Scotland, where they remained seven years, and then they removed to Ireland.¹ They arrived there on the first Monday in the month of May, A.M. 3303, and immediately set fire to their shipping. By the aid of enchantments they formed a mist about them for three days and three nights, and in this undiscerned manner they marched through the land without being discovered by the Firbolgs. Being now in the centre of the country, the invaders sent ambassadors, demanding the surrender of the kingdom, or to try the issue by one decisive struggle. The Firbolgs accepted the challenge, a bloody battle was fought, in which their King, Eochaidh, was slain, and with him ten thousand of his troops, 'other histories with more probability informs us that an hundred thousand men perished on the spot.' The Firbolgs, who escaped this defeat, retired to the Isle of Arran, Eilie, Rachruin, Innis-Gall and other places for safety, where they remained till the provincial times, when every one of the provinces of Ireland was governed by its own king. This unfortunate race were then driven out of this part of the country by the Picts; they found another refuge in Leinster, but the King of that country so rack-rented them that they had to remove to Conacht. The historian says that the possessions they enjoyed there are known to this day by some of the names of that people, and that there are three families in

¹ Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. p. 17.

Ireland who are lineal descendants of the Firbolgs, and are not Gadelians.

A. M. 2308.

Very little is known or mentioned of the Tuath de Danans, their first king was named Nuadha, the silver-handed. In the great battle with the Firbolgs he lost his hand, the wound was seven years under cure. Danecht, the Irish Æsculapius, formed a silver hand which answered all the purposes of the natural one. According to the Master of Cashel this dynasty lasted one hundred and ninety-seven years.

But Ireland, on the expiry of this period,¹ was at last to receive the race of kings and heroes which was to add the true lustre to her annals, and to give her, according to those annals, the foremost place in the world's history. We have now to tell the history of the Gadelians, Milesians or Scoti, who trace their ancestry from the present day back in unbroken descent to Feniusa Farsa, grandson of Magog, King and law-giver of the great Scythian nation.

B. C. 2247.

The Scythians, according to a passage in Epiphanius quoted by Keating, were much further advanced in civilisation in early times than is generally supposed. 'The Scythian monarchy began soon after the flood, and continued to the captivity of Babylon; the laws, customs, and manners of the Scythians, were received by other nations as the standards of policy, civility, and polite learning, they were the first after the flood who attempted to reform mankind into notions of courtesy, into the art of government and the practice of good manners.'²

The great Feniusa Farsa, King of the Scythian nation, was a prince who applied himself to the study of letters, and made it his business to understand the several languages of the world, which began from the general confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel. It is supposed that seventy-two tongues arose, besides the original speech, Hebrew, with which the faithful Heber was rewarded for his piety.

Feniusa Farsa, with a laudable ambition determined to make himself master not only of this sacred language

¹ Chronology in margin from Bagster's Bible.

² Keating's History, vol. i. p. 110.

B.C. 2247.

but of the others, and took measures accordingly. He despatched seventy-two persons of learning, who were commanded to study the different tongues for seven years, and then return to teach the youth of Scythia. The King himself left the government of his dominions to his son, and after a long and laborious course of study, founded a university at Magh Seanair, but where this was, the historian leaves us in doubt. In one paragraph he says, it was near the place where Hebrew was the common language of the inhabitants, in another it is said to be near the city called Athens. The institution was intended for the attainment of the knowledge of the universal language as the poet observes :

‘In Magh Seanair, after the lofty tower
Of Babel was erected, the first school
At Athens was erected, where the languages
Were taught with care, and the industrious
Youth instructed.’

The Principal of the University was its learned and indefatigable founder ; but besides the seventy-two professors, he associated with himself two celebrated linguists, Gadel, a Grecian, and Caoih Saoin Shreathach, a Hebrew. These three Principals first invented the alphabet in three principal languages, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, which they inscribed on tables of wood, as the learned Cionfhaola, who wrote in the time of St Columbanus, justly observed. This University was opened 242 years after the flood, and for a period of twenty years was presided over by Feniusa Farsa. On the expiry of this period he returned to his dominions, opened seminaries for learning, and appointed Gadel president over them.

Gadel was now appointed to a most important task, no less than the formation of a language which has survived to the present day, and bears the name of its author, ‘the Gadhelic branch of the Celtic language.’ Gadel was commanded to digest the Irish language into form and regulation, and to divide it into five several dialects. The first was the Fenian dialect, which was spoken by the militia and soldiery of the island, the second was the poetical, the third the historical, the fourth was the dialect of the physicians ;

the fifth was the common idiom, or the vulgar Irish, used in general by the people of the country, this dialect received its name from Gadel, the master of the schools, and was called Gaidhealg, that is, Irish, and not from Gadelas, as others imagine.

B.C. 2247.

When Feniusa, had thus finished his great work twenty-two years after he had assumed the government of his native country, he fell sick and at the point of death, he then demised the kingdom of Scythia to his eldest son Nenual, and left nothing to Niul the younger brother, but the advantage arising from the public schools he had erected, and the benefit of instructing the youth of the country in the learned languages. We hear nothing more in the Irish Annals of the great institution at Magh Seanair, whether it languished and expired after the departure of its founder; unaccountably no mention is made of it by either the sacred or classical writers.

Niul was a scion worthy of such a sire, the fame of his accomplishments spread far and wide, even to what is generally considered the birth-place of civilisation. Pharaoh Cingeris, King of Egypt, sent messengers desiring him to carry his talents there. Niul complied, and his patron was so pleased with his learning and modest behaviour, that he bestowed on him his daughter Scota, and with her an appanage of the lands of Capacirunt, on the coast of the Red Sea. The Pharaoh on the throne of Egypt was the wicked king who oppressed the children of Israel, but Niul, though connected with royalty disapproved of those infamous proceedings, he sympathised with the oppressed people, and in their sore distress supplied them with provisions. In this way he became intimate with Aaron, and as a historian of the present day Cusack, gravely remarks, he became acquainted with the Mosaic law, and through this intercourse his descendants became possessed of it and conveyed it to Ireland.

B.C. 1533.

A difficulty strikes even an Irish historian here, but only to be satisfactorily explained: 'It may seem strange, perhaps, that Niul, who was the fifth descendant from Japhet, should be contemporary with Moses, especially considering that it was the space of 997 years from the

B.C. 1533.

Deluge, till Moses took upon him the command of the Israelites. This difficulty will be answered, if we observe, that, it was not impossible for Niul to live some hundred years; for in these ages of the world the lives of mankind were very long, as may be proved from the testimony of Scripture. Shem lived six hundred years, Heber four hundred and sixty-four years; why not Niul a like period.¹

To Niul and Scota was born a son whom they named Gadelas, after Gadel the celebrated linguist. This young Prince had the misfortune to be bitten by a serpent, and was at the point of death, to the great consternation of his parents, but Niul having seen or heard of the miracles performed by Moses with his wonder-working rod, be-thought himself of his friendship with the brother of the prophet. He lost no time, but took the child to the Hebrew camp, and Aaron at once interested Moses on its behalf, he laid his rod on the wound, and a cure was instantaneously effected. 'When Moses had so miraculously cured this bite of the serpent, he prophesied, that wherever that young prince or his posterity should inhabit, the country should never be infested with any venomous creature.' It is well known that in the island of Crete, now Candia, where there are at the present day descendants of this illustrious prince, no venomous creature can live; it dies immediately on its arrival, as it does in Ireland. The general opinion is that St Patrick expelled these creatures, but Keating is of opinion that this is a figurative expression, the saint expelled the devils and infernal spirits, who very properly may be called serpents. There were no real serpents, as no mention is made of them by any of the Irish annalists or historians. In England dragons were not uncommon, and in Scotland, so late as the time of St Servanus, a dragon was slain at Dunning by that blessed man; if there had been similar events like these to chronicle in Ireland, they would surely have been noticed. From this Prince Gadelas, the Gadelians derive their name, and the Irish from him are called Clana Gaodhal.

¹ Keating's History, vol. i. p. 118.

Niul did not accompany his father-in-law in his pursuit of the Israelites, he disapproved of it, and by the help of Moses who despatched a thousand well-armed men on the service, the Egyptian fleet was seized, and Niul, with his people, embarked and put to sea, to await the result. On hearing of the destruction of the Egyptians, he returned with his people, to his possessions on the Red Sea, administered his affairs wisely, and in a full old age died, leaving his kingdom to his son Gadelas, who associated his mother Scota with him in the government.

The descendants of Niul were not suffered to remain long in Egypt, for the successor of the Pharaoh who perished at the Red Sea expelled them from Egypt. After sundry wanderings by sea and land which confound all physics and geography, quite as much as the preceding narrative confounds all history, sacred and profane, the Gadeliars arrived in Spain. Bratha was the name of the leader under whom they arrived in that country, and by whom a settlement was effected after many desperate engagements, with the inhabitants the descendants of Tubal the son of Japhet. To Bratha was born a son named Breogan, who eclipsed the fame of his father, and by the terror of his arms spread the fame of the bold Gadeliars over the whole of the peninsula. He built the city of Bragantia, named after himself, and it is his name which still survives in the royal house of Braganza. He left issue ten sons, one of whom, Bille, had the honour of being the father of the great Milesius, the name so dear to every son of Erin.

This hero, while yet a youth, after having shown his ability and gallantry in Spain, resolved to visit his relations in Scythia, and with a powerful force set sail, arrived there, and was hospitably welcomed. His own skill, and the bravery of his companions naturally gained him employment, and he was raised to the rank of prime minister and generalissimo of the forces. But as in later times the Milesians, though the darlings of the people, became objects of suspicion to the ruling power. Treachery, of course, was tried; the King of Scythia deter-

B C.
1533-1342.

mined to despatch his minister, but Milesius, informed of the atrocious design, frustrated it by despatching the monarch, a thoroughly Irish expedient, unfortunately copied at the present day. With his followers he escaped to his ships, and sailed through the Euxine and the Hellespont till they arrived on the coast of Egypt.

As the fame of the learning of his ancestor had reached the ears of the Egyptian King, so the military fame of Milesius had preceded him. The reigning Pharaoh was more in need of a general than a professor, he welcomed the bold adventurer and his companions, and engaged their immediate assistance in a war of life and death he was engaged in with the Ethiopians. Milesius was made general of the Egyptian forces, and the tide of battle which had set strong against them was turned. By reducing his troops to strict military discipline, and by his own bravery and skill, Milesius soon broke the power of the Ethiopians, and made them tributary to the crown of Egypt. The victorious general was rewarded with the hand of Pharaoh's daughter, a lady called *Scota*, which seems to have been a common name among the princesses of Egypt, the reader will remember that the wife of the learned *Niul*, the ancestor of Milesius, bore the same name. Though Milesius was chiefly renowned as a warrior, he was not forgetful of the importance of learning, as might be looked for in a descendant of *Feninsa Farsa*. While in Egypt 'he appointed twelve of the most ingenious youths that came over with him to be instructed in the curious arts and sciences of Egypt, with a design, when they were perfect masters of their several professions, to teach his own countrymen the trades and mysteries of the Egyptians.'

Milesius did not settle in the land of the Pharaohs; when seven years had elapsed he remembered the remarkable prediction of *Caicer* the principal Druid, who foretold that the posterity of *Gadelas* should obtain possession of a western island, which was Ireland, and there inhabit.

Confiding in the truth of the prophecy, with his wife, family, and followers, Milesius set sail in sixty ships, and

after a most remarkable voyage, in which he passed through Thrace, and came to an island in the British sea called Gothiana. After some time spent there, the adventurers stumbled on the kingdom of the Picts, landed there, plundered all the country that lay on the coast, and conveyed the booty to their ships. Setting out for the promised island they were unfortunate enough to miss it, and landed on the coast of Biscay, in Spain. Milesius on his arrival found things in a very bad state indeed; during his absence the Goths had overrun and ransacked the whole country, an invasion unaccountably passed over by Greek and Latin historians, indeed, strange to say, the Gothic invasion of Spain, according to other authorities, did not take place till the middle of the fifth century of our era. However, Milesius soon put matters right, he summoned the whole of the Gadhelians, brought them under strict military discipline, and formed them into regular troops. With this force and his own veterans who had seen so much service, he engaged the enemy, and after defeating them in fifty-four battles, drove them out of the kingdom. Milesius and his relations became masters of almost the whole kingdom of Spain.

But the prophecy as to the future home of the race remained to be fulfilled, and an expedition in search of the promised land was organised. Ith, the son of Breogan, was appointed to the command. With a small force he set sail, lands in Ireland, and found a people speaking his own language, for the Tuath de Danans, then in possession, were Scythians, and Irish in its five different dialects, we have seen, was the language of that people.

Ith found Ireland governed by three kings, and in the normal condition of Irish kings, quarrelling. The dispute was about some crown jewels, and it ran so high, that no other means than the sword seemed likely to settle it. The arrival of the distinguished stranger who spoke their own language, suggested a more peaceable settlement. Ith was appointed umpire; and after hearing parties, he gave what would seem a fair decision; that the articles in dispute should be equally divided.

B.C.
1533-1342.

B. C.
1533-1542.

The parties expressed their satisfaction, and acquiesced in the judgment. Ith, whose expedition was simply to examine the country, made his adieux, and prepared to return, but was treacherously attacked on his way to his ships. After a heroic resistance, in which their leader was mortally wounded, the Gadhelians gained the shelter of their fleet, with the senseless body of their chief, who expired before the Spanish coast was reached.

Before the return of this expedition, that incomparable prince Milesius, the deliverer and father of his people, died, after he had reigned in Spain thirty-six years. He left issue, as the poet testifies in this manner,

‘ Milesius the warlike Spanish King
Had two and thirty sons, and heroes all,
But only eight born from the marriage bed
Arrived in Ireland.’

We now come to the account of the most important colonisation of Ireland, and certainly the one which occupies the foremost place in its annals, and which has influenced its fortunes more than any other. Previous to commencing his narrative Dr Keating disposes of the peevish objections of those who assert that the Gadhelians were ignorant of the art of navigation, and could not have undertaken so long a voyage. He disposes of those objections, by showing that other nations of antiquity made long voyages, and why not the Gadhelians, who were ever a people esteemed the most ingenious and enterprising of any in the world? ‘Let me for once recommend them to the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, where the holy writer gives a relation of St Paul’s voyage from Jerusalem to Rome, with these memorable circumstances, that the ship was of a large size, and able to contain two hundred and seventy-six persons; that she had sails and anchors, and that the mariners steered by the stars, long before the chart or compass was discovered, so that this objection is of no manner of force, but designed only to destroy the authority of the Irish Records, which give an account of the voyage of the Gadhelians from Spain into Ireland; and to impose upon the world with a fiction,

that the Gadheliens came from some other country, and were accidentally driven upon the Irish coast, and for no other reason but because they could not steer by the compass, which at that time was undiscovered. But the ancient chronicles of Ireland shall ever be a guide to me, and unless we depend on their authority, it is impossible to arrive at any certainty of the antiquities, and the religious or political state of that kingdom.'¹ The author unconsciously fully accounts for the history of Ireland and its religion and politics, past and present; a belief in such a farrago of vain and insipid inanity gives a true key to the character of the Scoto-Celt wherever he is to be found.

The unfortunate result of the expedition to Ireland naturally aroused the feelings of the relatives of the slaughtered chief, and Scota determined to avenge his death, and at the same time fulfill the ancient prophecy previously referred to. This time the expedition was to be in force not for the purpose of exploration but for conquest.

The Princess Scota was the moving spirit, she embarked with her sons and nine hundred and fifty men, under the command of forty brave and skilful generals. The armament consisted of thirty transports, and the armed force were accompanied by their wives and families; many others also followed them out of a prospect of obtaining possessions in the new plantation, whether on board the transports or in other vessels, we are not informed.

The Milesian fleet set sail, and made the coast of Ireland according to the Annals of the Four Masters, in the year 1700 B.C. (in a note in the same work the date is 1342 B.C.) The Annals of Clonmacoise give a later date and are precise, the day is given 17th May 1029 B.C. The invaders attempted a landing in Leinster and Wexford, but unsuccessfully; the Tuath de Danans, alarmed at the appearance of such a formidable armament, flocked towards the shore, and by the power of their enchantments and diabolical arts cast such a cloud over the whole island, that the Milesians were confounded, and

¹ Keating, History, vol. i. pp. 138, 139.

B.C.
1700-1029.

thought they saw nothing but the resemblance of a hog, and for this reason the island was called Muicinis. Nothing daunted, the fleet put to sea, and after sailing about the island for some time, a landing was effected in the west of Munster.

The resistance at first was not formidable, they met with no armed force, but were saluted in turn by the wives of the three kings of the island, who were accompanied by a beautiful train of ladies, followed by Druids and soothsayers. Neither the charms of the ladies nor the glamour of the magicians hindered the march of the Milesians, they passed through the country until they arrived at the royal palace of Teamair, where the sons of Cearmada kept their court, and appeared in great grandeur and magnificence, encompassed with their enchanted guards.

Nothing daunted by this display, the leaders of the Milesians boldly demanded possession of the kingdom of Ireland; the modest request, we need not say, was refused. The invaders, though few in numbers, must have presented a most formidable appearance, for the Tuath de Danans entered into negotiations, which came to nothing. Treachery and enchantments were tried, which proved more successful; the Milesians were induced to go on board their ships. A storm was raised by enchantment, many valuable lives lost, and the fleet driven off the coast. A landing was again effected at Drocheda, but the Milesians had been only three days on shore, when they were attacked by Eire the wife of MacBreine, one of the princes of the country, at the head of a strong body of troops. A desperate battle ensued, in which the invading force were victorious, but with the loss of the Princess Scota, the Lady Fais, two principal Druids, and three hundred rank and file—the grave of Scota is still pointed out in the valley of Gleann Scoithin, Co. Kerry. The three kings of the Tuath de Danans then concentrated their forces, and the decisive battle which gave Ireland to the Milesians was fought at Tailton in Meath. They were completely victorious, the enemy put to the route with great slaughter, the three kings with their

queens slain on the field of battle. The ladies seem to have followed their lords to the tented field, and on occasion to have taken command, but they were modest as well as brave, as the following extract shows: 'Fiall, the wife of Lughaidh, was a lady of strict virtue and uncommon modesty, for she was so confounded with shame, because her husband had seen her naked as she was swimming in the river Feil, that she languished and died with grief. The stream received the name of Inbher Feile, from this fair Milesian, and so is called to this time.'¹

The Milesians were soon in possession of the whole island, but it had cost the sons of Milesius dear, their mother and five of their brethren were among the slain, there survived only Amergin, Heber, Fionn, and Heremon. Amergin was more like his ancestor Niul, he was a learned man, a poet, and possessed of singular judgment and ability; after the conquest, he fell into a secondary position, and left the chief power to his brothers Heremon and Heber, who divided the country between them, the first taking the northern part, the other the southern, the river Boyne being the boundary. They assigned lands to the principal officers, where each of them erected a castle on his own estate; these are described as very stately structures. Heremon himself built a magnificent palace where he kept his court.

The brothers administered their governments wisely, and for the space of a year were on most affectionate terms, but at the end of this period a dispute arose concerning the possession of three celebrated hills, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, or according to Keating, a fruitful valley. The dispute was fomented by the wives of the two kings; the one is represented as a woman of great pride and ambition, the other as a lady of masculine spirit. Neither the ties of blood, nor the recollection of their common perils by flood and field, could prevent a contest, a battle was fought at Geisiol in Leinster, in which Heber and three of his principal officers were slain. Not only the disputed territory, but the share

¹ Keating, History, vol. i. p. 154.

B. C.
1700-1039.

of his brother fell to Heremon, the fratricide was monarch of Ireland.

The Milesians brought over with them from Spain a very skilful musician and an eminent poet; the musician was assigned to Heber and the poet to Heremon; after the death of Heber, both would likely attend the court of Heremon, but the south of Ireland must have felt the influence of the great master, for 'that division of the island is observed to be more particularly delighted with music as an old poet observes,'

'Heber, with music first his southern subjects bless'd,
And music flourished in the southern coasts.'

There came over also twenty mechanics and a number of labouring men fit only for servile work; mechanics, musicians, and even poets and warriors, have not taken so kindly to the soil as this latter class, it even seems to raise a breed of them for the use of the Saxon here and in America.

The arrival of the Picts formerly alluded to, is reported to have taken place during the reign of Heremon. After a prosperous reign of fourteen years, the first monarch of the Milesian race died a natural death, a most unusual circumstance, of the kings of the two former dynasties only three were so fortunate. No event of importance is recorded until the reign of Tighernas, who is said to have been the first who introduced idolatry into Ireland. By the judgment of heaven, he and three parts of his subjects were cut off in one night as he was worshipping his idol Crom-cruadh. During his reign gold was first discovered in Ireland. 'It was by Tighearnmas also that gold was first smelted in Ireland. It was Uchadan an artificer that smelted it. It was by him that goblets and brooches were first covered with gold and silver in Ireland. It was by him that clothes were dyed purple, blue and green.'¹ The next King in the order of succession is one of the most important in the Annals of the Gaelic branch of the Celtic family. Eochaidh, more familiarly known as Achy, surnamed Eadghadbach, 'because

¹ Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. p. 43.

it was by him the variety of colour was first put on clothes in Ireland, to distinguish the honour of each by his raiment from the highest to the lowest. Thus was the distinction made between them; one colour in the clothes of slaves, two in the clothes of soldiers, three in the clothes of goodly heroes, or young lords of territories, six in the clothes of ollavs, seven in the clothes of kings and queens.¹ From the party coloured garments worn by the ancient Scots or Irish, Moore derives the national fashion of the plaid, still prevailing among their descendants in Scotland. Most of the clan tartans show that the Gaels in Scotland were entitled to wear the clothes appropriate to goodly heroes, many of those pertaining to royalty itself.

The great legislator of Ireland, Ollamh Fodhla, is the next monarch entitled to notice, and it is like an oasis in the desert to find that he reigned forty years and died a natural death. If he is an historical personage Irish chronologers differ widely as to the period when he lived; the dates vary from 1316 B.C. to 600 B.C. In the Annals of the Four Masters, he is stated to have instituted the feast of Tara, whereunto all the King's friends and dutiful subjects came yearly, and such as came not were taken for the King's enemies. He also appointed a chieftain over every cantred or barony, and a Bruighaidh or farmer over every townland. Keating amplifies this short statement, and to show the effect which these fables have had on the national mind, it is sufficient to quote the words of Thomas Moore, whom Hallam quotes as a *credible* historian.² The author of the 'Lives of the Angels,' the 'Veiled Prophet of Khorasan,' and the 'History of Ireland,' says: 'This Triennial Convention at Tara was an approach so far to representative government, that in these periodical assemblies the leading persons of the three orders of whom the political community consisted—that is to say, the Monarch, the Druids or Ollamhs, and the Plebeians—were convened for the purpose of passing such laws and regulations as the public good seemed to require.'³

¹ Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. p. 45.

² Moore's Ireland, vol. i. p. 119. ³ *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 111.

B.C.
1316-600.

Keating's account is certainly a wonderful statement, and to any human being but an Irish Celt would seem an admirable burlesque: 'This illustrious assembly was called by the name of Feis Feamhrach, which signifies a general meeting of the nobility, gentry, priests, historians, and men of learning, distinguished by their abilities in all arts and professions; they met by a royal summons, in a parliamentary manner, once every three years, at the palace of Tara, to debate upon the most important concerns of State; where they enacted new laws, and repealed such as were useless and burdensome to the subject, and consulted nothing but the public benefit in all their resolutions. In this assembly the ancient records and chronicles of the island were perused and examined, and if any falsehoods were detected they were instantly erased, that posterity might not be imposed upon by false history; and the author who had the insolence to abuse the world by his relation, either by perverting matters of fact, and representing them in improper colours, or by fancies and inventions of his own, was solemnly degraded from the honour of sitting in that assembly, and was dismissed with a mark of infamy upon him; his works likewise were destroyed, as unworthy of credit, and were not to be admitted into the archives, or received among the records of the kingdom. Nor was this expulsion the whole of his punishment, for he was liable to a fine, or imprisonment, or whatever sentence the justice of the parliament thought proper to inflict. By these methods, either out of fear of scandal or disgrace, or of losing their estates, their pensions and endowments, and of suffering some corporal correction, the historians of those ages were induced to be very exact in their relations, and to transmit nothing to after times but what had passed this solemn test and examination, and was recommended by the sanction and authority of this learned assembly.'¹ The only legislation mentioned is a strange commentary on the state of society in this highly civilised nation: 'He made very strict and wholesome laws for the government of his subjects, and particularly expressed his severity against the

ravishment of women, which, it seems, was a piece of gallantry and a common vice in those days; for the offender was to suffer death without mercy, and the King thought fit to give up so much of his prerogative, as to put it out of his power either to extend his pardon or even to reprove the criminal.' The same sentence was to be in force for all attempts on the person or property of a member of parliament during the time of its sessions.

B. C.
1316-600.

That nothing should be wanting to produce that cordiality and kindness of feeling which still characterises the representatives of the Irish people, the members of the parliament of Tara were expected to be there six days before the opening of the assembly. This time was employed in mutual returns of friendship and civility, and paying their compliments one to another. The proceedings were inaugurated on the seventh day by a solemn feast held 'in a convenient room in the palace of Tara; the apartment was very long but narrow, with a table fixed in the middle, and seats on both sides.' The members were summoned by three blasts of the trumpet, and entered according to their rank in the State. The Grand Marshall, assisted by the King of Arms, ranged all in their places, each man sitting under his own shield or target, which was easily distinguished by the coat of arms that was curiously emblazoned on the out-side of it. This gives us a very early date to the science of Heraldry, which is generally supposed to have been a product of the middle ages. Dinner being over, business was commenced, but 'care was particularly taken, that their debates should be kept secret, for which reason no woman was ever to be admitted.'

Literary men had a fine time of it in those days, and the authors of the present day may apply to the days of Ollamh Fodla, what has been poetically said of another celebrated monarch :

'Such times as his were too good to last,
And we sigh without control,
When we work all day for too little pay
Alas for good King Cole.'

B. C.
1316-600.

There were above two hundred principal annalists and historians in the kingdom who had a handsome revenue and a large estate in land assigned to them, to support themselves in the study of heraldry and chronology, and to gain a perfect knowledge in those useful professions. Besides these public servants of the State, every nobleman of any quality retained a number of those learned men, to preserve a record of the actions of himself and his family. The same generosity was extended to physicians, poets, and harp-players, estates and honours were reckoned but their due.

Dr Keating gives us, under his accounts of this reign, some account of the discipline of the Irish forces. The common soldiers were always perfect in their exercise, whatever that was, and they advanced to fight with great bravery in close order of companies, the formation four to eight deep according to circumstances. They anticipated a modern custom, which many of our generals don't think much of, 'the Special Correspondent.' They were always attended in their marches, and when they were engaged, by their antiquaries and annalists, who were employed to take notice and report on the behaviour of every officer.

B. C. 460—
A. D. 106.

'A long series of kings, with scarcely a single event worthy of commemoration, fills up the interval between the reign of this monarch and that of Kimboath. If the Bardic historians, in describing the glory and magnificence of some of these reigns, have shown no ordinary powers of flourish and exaggeration, it is to be hoped, for the credit of human nature, that they have also far outstripped the truth in their accounts of the discord, treachery and bloodshed, by which almost every one of these brief paroxysms of sovereignty was disgraced. Out of some two-and-thirty kings, who are said to have reigned during the interval between Ollamh Fodhla and Kimboath, not more than three are represented as having died a natural death, and the great majority of the remainder fell by the hands of their successors.'¹ During this period the central power seems to have diminished, and no wonder, the kings of

¹ Moore's Ireland, vol. i. p. 113.

the pentarchy would be practically independent. Ulster is represented as taking the lead. The history here is very confused, three rival houses are represented as governing Ireland alternately, the usual quarrels and bloodshed ensue. After being for the third time King of Ireland, Kimboath was asked by a Princess Macha to resign in favour of her father's house, he declined, but the heroine was victorious in battle, and by a stratagem too indecorous to tell, she gained possession of the person of her rival. The lady was of a kindly disposition, though a terrible warrior, she pardoned the princes and married Kimboath. The pair reigned jointly for seven years, when the husband died, and his masculine helpmate was left sole monarch. She occupied the throne for other seven years, and then met the usual fate, she was slain in battle.

B.C. 460—
A.D. 106.

The palace of Emania is said to have been built by this Queen, or by Kimboath. The building of this palace forms a prominent era in Irish Annals, and from it Tighernach dates the dawn of authentic history. The date of this splendid epoch in the Annals of Ulster is about 450 B.C.

The next monarch of any note is Ugaine Mor, or Hugony the Great. He is said to have succeeded in annulling the pentarchy and establishing himself sole monarch. He divided the country into twenty-five districts, and though the provincial kings attempted to regain their position, this system lasted to near the commencement of the Christian era, when, under the monarch, Achy Fedloch, it was rescinded, and the ancient form restored.

After the reign of Hugony there succeeds a long sterile period, extending, according to the Bardic chronology, to three hundred years. With the exception of a most improbable account of one of the kings proceeding to France, and returning with a French princess and a formidable body of retainers, nothing is recorded but murder, incest, and unnatural crimes. The reign of Lahbra seems to be a sort of interpolation, intended to relieve the horrid picture of discord and bloodshed. In it Keating introduces two

B. C. 460—
A. D. 106.

romantic stories, one of them resembling the fabulous adventure of Richard Cœur de Lion and Blondel, and the other the story of Midas' ears, and the miraculous revelation of his secret.

Nothing breaks the uniformity of the Irish Annals of this period but the oft-repeated tale that a king reigned a few years and was slain by another who reigned in his stead. The great shadowy warrior, the young Cuchullin of Ossian and the bards, passes before us. We read of Feidlim the legislator, and Conn of the hundred battles, of savage fights and massacres, but little else. During this period also, the horrors of the normal fighting between the kings themselves, was heightened by servile insurrections. The plebians, for so they are termed, were so far successful as to massacre a principal portion of the nobility, and seat one of themselves, Cairbre, the cat-headed, on the throne. These people are termed Aith-each Tuatha, usually Latinised Attacotti, and are supposed to have been the descendants of the Firbolgs. They were treated by the dominant Scoti as a servile or helot class.

The Milesian dynasty soon recovered the throne ; but there were numerous risings, and the chiefs of the Attacotti seem to have held their own with the dominant race. Later on they are met with in the west of Scotland, adding their fierce valour to the forces of the Picts in their assaults on the majesty of Rome. Subsequently, either voluntarily or as captives, they are found in the ranks of the Roman armies, and commanding respect for their undaunted courage and valour.

A. D. 106.

These wars were terminated by the accession of Tuathal, A. D. 106, who found no difficulty in inducing the states of the kingdom to renew their oath of allegiance to the ancient line. This monarch, besides the Triennial Council at Tara, instituted their annual assemblies in different parts of the country. He also imposed an enormous mulct on the kingdom of Leicester, the exaction of which caused much confusion and bloodshed. It was remitted A. D. 993, through the intercession of St Moling.

From the family of Conn of the hundred battles was descended Cairbre Musc, whose son, Cairbre Riada, established his sept in Ulster, and which from him was called Dalriada. About the middle of the third century they are said to have sent a colony to Argyllshire. This is far, however, from an established fact. Though vouched for by Irish Annalists, there is no evidence that any permanent settlement was made there until the children of Erc passed over into Alban A.D. 498-501. Yet there is nothing improbable in the belief that numerous individuals, singly or in parties, passed over in very early times from Erin to Alban. The connection between the Cruithnigh of the two countries was intimate, and discontented parties on both sides would find a refuge with their relatives.

But the expeditions, with the names of their leaders, now so conspicuous in the Irish Annals, in which Alban was conquered, are all fabulous. The Irish bards of a later age, heedless of the stern command not to manufacture history, took the exploits of contemporaries in any part of the world, and transferred them to their own country and countrymen. One monarch indeed rivalled Solomon. 'Fothadh Canann obtained the government of the whole world, from the rising to the setting sun, and took hostages of the streams, the birds and the languages, and that from him descended the tribe of Mac-Cailin, or the Campbells, in Scotland.'¹

We now come to the reign of Cormac, the son of Art, who, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, assumed the sovereignty of Ireland A.D. 227. He is described by Moore as 'the most accomplished of the Milesian princes, whether as legislator, soldier, or scholar, and was the only one of the few sensible princes whom the line of Milesius produced that was able to inspire enough of respect for his institutions to secure their existence beyond his own lifetime.'² 'He was a famous author in laws, synchronisms and history, for it was he that established law, rule and direction for each science, and for

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. iii. p. 113.

² Moore's Ireland, vol. i. p. 130.

A. D. 227.

each covenant according to propriety ; and it is his laws that governed *all that adhered to them* to the present time.¹ This Irish Charlemagne and Alfred rolled into one wrote a book, entitled Princely Institutions, which ‘contains as goodly precepts and moral documents as Cato or Aristotle did ever write.’² He was also the author, through his chroniclers, of the celebrated and often quoted Psalter of Teamhair. It is almost superfluous to say that no fragment of these great works has been discovered, or even identified, in writings of a later date, and now extant.

The period was one of the most glorious in the Annals of Erin. Cormac’s son-in-law was the great Fin-MacCumhall, the Fingal of the Epic of Macpherson, who, in addition to the exploits narrated there and in the Irish poems, was one of the contributors to the wise monarch’s great legislative work. There is no mention made, even in Keating, of his formation of the Giant’s Causeway, though the fact is vouched for by the intelligent guides there, who probably repeat a tradition handed down from father to son from this period.

Cormac, with the assistance we should suppose of Fin-MacCumhall, who was commander-in-chief, was victorious in thirty-nine battles. He carried his arms across the channel, and in A. D. 240 obtained the sovereignty of Alba (Scotland). According to Moore this monarch abdicated in the full vigour of his age and faculties, on account of a wound in his eye, which, being a personal blemish incapacitated him from exercising the supreme power. This gives the historian an opportunity of drawing a parallel between this incident and one related in Persian history of a similar nature. One would think the Irish kings were singularly fortunate in their battles, or the most of them would have had to abdicate on account of scars received in action.

The Annals of the Four Masters state that ‘Forty years was Cormac, son of Art, in the sovereignty of Ireland, when he died at Cleiteach, the bone of a salmon

¹ Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. p. 117.

² *Ibid.* p. 116, note.

sticking in his throat, on account of the siabhradh (genii) which Maelgenn the Druid, incited at him, after Cormac had turned against the Druids, on account of his adoration of God in preference to them.'¹ This narrative supports the opinion that Cormac was a convert to Christianity (held by some), and that by becoming so, he incurred the resentment of the priestly class. Cormac, the accomplished scholar, legislator, and soldier, may therefore claim our sympathy as the first and almost the only Christian martyr in Ireland.

A considerable portion of the pages of Keating are occupied with the history of this monarch. The narrative is of the most incongruous character. Law, license, civilisation and barbarity jostling one another.

Cormac was an illegitimate son, and the account of his birth shows, perhaps, not the low state of morality at the time, but the low opinion that the chronicler of the *assumed* events had. 'Art, the father of Cormac, was charmed with the beauty of a young plebian lady named Eachtach, whom he used as a concubine. For it was a custom in these times that a king's son might lay his commands upon any poor mechanic to deliver up his daughter, and it was thought honourable to the family to have a child admitted within the embraces of a prince; but the father might refuse to give up his daughter, unless the prince engaged to endow her with a handsome portion.'²

Cormac's own wife, the beautiful Eithne, was wooed and won in a most romantic way *à la* Cophetua and the beggar maid. She became the mother of a great figure in Irish history, Cairbre Leffeachalr; but, like the most of queens up to a very recent period, she had to put up with the infidelities of her husband. Cormac got into his possession Ciarnuit, daughter of the King of the Picts, and fitted up an apartment for her in his palace. Eithne, like Queen Eleanor, was a lady of great spirit, but, fortunately for the fair Pict, not of so bloodthirsty a character. She threatened to separate herself from her lord for ever,

¹ Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. pp. 115-117.

² Keating's Ireland, vol. i. p. 274.

A. D. 227.

unless he gave up his mistress to her. Cormac was not prepared for so dreadful an alternative, and resigned poor Ciarnuit into the Queen's hands. She was used with great severity, and as a punishment was obliged every day to grind with a quern or hand-mill, nine quarters of corn. Cormac, however, did not forget the captive; he sent over to Scotland for one of the most expert carpenters there, who constructed a mill by means of which the stated tale was completed with little or no labour. She is said to have been *enceinte* at the time; but whether she escaped from her bondage and became the mother of a race of heroes, the poet who records her history sayeth not.

A fearful tragedy is recorded in this reign, Dunlug, son of the King of Leinster, in one of his forays, surprised Tara, and massacred thirty females, forming a sort of college of vestals. The massacre of the girls at Cleanfearta. Thirty royal girls was the number, and a hundred maids with each of them. 'Twelve princes of the Leinstermen, did Cormac put to death together, in revenge of that massacre, together with an exaction of the Borumha' (the tribute which seems often not to have exacted).

Cormac, in addition to his other accomplishments, was 'a great proficient in divination and soothsaying,' and had beside him 'a great number of Scottish Druids and enchanters.' He made use of their powers in a campaign against the King of Munster. At first their magic skill was completely successful, by it all the springs of water in the camp were dried up, men and cattle were ready to expire with thirst. The King of Munster was in despair, till he bethought himself of a native Druid, who was sent for, and soon changed the aspect of affairs. 'The counter-charm which he used was an enchanted dart, which he flung into the air, and wherever it fell a fountain of the purest water sprung up.' Refreshed they offered battle to Cormac, who distrusting the courage of his troops surrendered without a blow. Where was the hero Finn MacCumhall and the invincible Irish militia embodied by him at this time, and in the highest state of discipline?

We can only notice this celebrated body of troops, which are said to have been organised by Finn into a standing army, probably a rude imitation of the Roman legion, whose composition may have reached Ireland by this time. The necessary qualifications for every member of it are stated by Keating, they are ten in number, and are about as amusing as they are absurd, the second peculiarly so. 'That no one should be received unless he had a poetical genius, and could compose verses, and was well acquainted with the twelve books of poetry.' Lever's Mickey Free would be the most distinguished representative during the peninsular war, of this illustrious corps.

According to the Annals of the Four Masters, after the death of Cormac a usurper occupied the throne for a year, at the expiry of which Cairbre Liffeachair succeeded to the throne of his father; he reigned seventeen years, and was then killed in battle. His reign is celebrated as the time when the celebrated militia of Ireland, torn by dissensions, were summarily put down by force. How they kept together for a single campaign, when every man was a poet, will be a matter of surprise to military men of the present day. The army was divided between two septs, the Clanna Boisgne commanded by Ossian the son of Finn, and the Clannamorna. The first claimed precedence, and the right not been granted, they had the audacity to defy the power of Cairbre. This led to the bloody battle of Gabhra, in which the two military tribes slaughtered each other almost to extermination. Osgar the son of Ossian fell by the hand of the king, slain in single combat, but the monarch severely wounded met with his death from another warrior, immediately after. 'The fame of this fatal battle of Gabhras and the brave warriors who fell in it, continued long to be a favourite theme of the Irish bards and romancers; and upon no other foundation than the old songs respecting the heroes of this combat, mixed up with others relating to chieftains of a still more ancient date, has been raised that splendid fabric of imposture which, under the assumed name

A. D. 327-405. of Ossian, has for a long period dazzled and deceived the world.'¹

Nothing remarkable occurred in the course of Irish affairs till about the beginning of the fourth century, when the violent usurpation of the throne by Huas Colla, one of three brothers, produced a long series of sanguinary conflicts. After a reign of five years the usurper was compelled to abdicate, and flee to Alban, with three hundred of his followers. They returned in the course of a year, A. D. 327, and Colla managed to conciliate Muredach, the reigning monarch. He even obtained his assistance to make war on the King of Ulster. In the course of the struggle consequent on this invasion, the princely palace of Emania, was destroyed, 'and not a trace of its long celebrated glories left behind.' It was perhaps as well for its fame that such should have happened, we are approaching true history, and it might not have appeared so very magnificent to eye-witnesses.

An interval of nearly half a century now elapses, and we come to the last three pagan kings of Erin whose achievements eclipse all that has been previously narrated.

'Crimhthann, A. D. 366, sat next on the throne of Ireland. This monarch carried his arms into foreign nations, and overcame the Scots (Picts), the Britons, and the French in several engagements, and made them tributary.'²

He was succeeded, A. D. 379, by Niall of the nine hostages, so called because he had received hostages from nine nations he had conquered and made tributary. He is said to have commanded the expedition which, passing through the mountains of Wales in the fourth century, spread ruin and devastation in the Roman province. Theodosius, we have seen, had not much difficulty in chasing the Scoti back to their curachs.

But King Dathy, who succeeded A. D. 405, fairly overshadowed his predecessors in the extent of his conquests. He carried his arms into France, but while pursuing his

¹ Moore's Ireland, vol. i. p. 136.

² Keating's Ireland, vol. i. p. 315.

victorious career he was killed by a thunderbolt at the foot of the Alps.

A. D. 428.

The chronology now approaches to certainty; the date of St Patrick's arrival in Ireland has been fixed on reasonable grounds A. D. 430, certainly about the middle of the fifth century. The Irish Annals give the date of the accession of Laoghaire, the reigning monarch of the time, as A. D. 428. His period is interesting only from the conversion of the people, and many of the petty kings to Christianity, though it was nearly a century later before a Christian monarch sat on the throne of Tara A. D. 513. The conversion seems to have had some little effect on their fighting propensities; but the change was short-lived, the saints and monks became more belligerent than the Druids, mixed freely in the contests, and in addition to their fleshly arms, used with great effect curses and imprecations.

Any notice of St Patrick and his labours would unduly swell this short sketch; but it is interesting and curious to observe how the pride of race, the genealogies of the kings and nobles, and the history of the famous deeds of bye-gone days are brought forward whenever a prominent character turns up. St Patrick, as will be seen by the following extract, was very much interested in these, and gave his valuable assistance, in compiling a new edition of them revised and corrected. One would think from the Confession of the saint, that like his Arian brother Ulphilas, the apostle of the Huns, who suppressed the fighting portion of the Old Testament in his translation of the Bible, that he would rather have left in oblivion these annals of bloodshed. 'The tenth year of Laoghaire, the Seanchus and Fenechus, *i.e.* the History and Laws of Ireland were purified and written, the writings and old books of Ireland having been collected and brought to one place, at the request of St Patrick. These were the nine supporting props by whom this was done, Laoghaire, *i.e.* King of Ireland, Corc and Daire, the three kings; Patrick, Benen and Cairneach, the three saints, Ross, Dubthach, and Feargus, the three antiquaries.'¹

¹ Annals of the Four Masters, vol. i. p. 133, see also interesting note on the subject.

A.D. 428.

This collection was called the Seanchus Mor. Keating amplifies this statement from valuable manuscripts extant in *his* time, but not now. He is very particular about the genealogies, and says in support of Irish history in general: 'We have the same evidence to prove the authority of the Irish Annals and public manuscripts, as is esteemed sufficient to confirm the histories of other nations, and perhaps it would be no more than truth to affirm that no people except the Jews, whose writers are divinely inspired, have more genuine or earlier accounts of the concerns of their ancestors, than the chronicles and records that give being to the present history; and for this reason, among many others, because no nation in the world could possibly be more exact in preserving their records, and transmitting them uncorrupt to posterity, than the ancient Irish, especially considering they were corrected and confirmed by the most pious and learned prelates of the Christian Church in that kingdom.'¹

If these statements were accepted at the present day as romance, as the histories of Geoffrey of Bœce and Buchanan are accepted by Englishmen and Scotchmen, the genius and character of the Irish would not suffer, but unfortunately this is not the case; in a work published at the present day, and from the pen of an able and learned *littérateur*, all this so-called ancient history is swallowed and its authenticity defended.

The question of the early, if not the pre-Noahacian colonisation of Ireland, though distinctly asserted in our Annals, has been met with the ready scepticism which men so freely use to cover ignorance or indifference. It has been taken for granted that the dispersion, after the confusion of tongues at Babel, was the first dispersion of the human race; but it has been overlooked that, on the lowest computation, a number of centuries equal, if not exceeding, those of the Christian era, elapsed between the creation of man and the flood; that man had multiplied exceedingly upon the earth; and that the age of stone had already given place to that of brass and iron,

¹ Keating's History of Ireland, vol. ii. pp. 19, 20.

which, no doubt, facilitated commerce and colonisation, even at this early period of the world's history.

Let us again conclude an apology for our antiquity, if not a proof of it, in the words of our last poet historian : ' We believe that henceforth no wise person will be found who will not acknowledge that it is possible to bring the genealogies of the Gaedhels to their origin, to Noah and Adam ; and if he does not believe that, he may not believe that he himself is the son of his own father. For there is no error in the genealogical history, but as it was left from father to son in succession, one after another.

' Surely every one believes the Divine Scriptures, which give a similar genealogy to the men of the world, from Adam down to Noah ;¹ and the genealogy of Christ and of the holy fathers, as may be seen in the Church (writings). Let him believe this, or let him deny God. And if he does believe this, why should he not believe another history, of which there has been truthful preservation, like the history of Erin? I say truthful preservation, for it is not only that they (the preservers of it) were very numerous, as we said, preserving the same, but there was an order and a law with them and upon them, out of which they could not, without great injury, tell lies or falsehood, as may be seen in the Books of Fenechus (Law) of Fodhla (Erinn), and in the degrees of the poets themselves, their order and their laws.'²

The Annals of Ireland from the time that Christianity was introduced, and when the light of history feebly illuminates it, present a marked contrast to the pagan time. The magnificent palaces and halls of law and justice, the grand feudal militia, the foreign conquests, are not spoken of, poets only survive and are found to be a nuisance. The record of events is a strange and incongruous mixture of monastic asceticism, miracles

¹ This is a clear argument. The names of pre-Noahacian patriarchs must have been preserved by tradition, with their date of succession and history. Why should not other genealogies have been preserved in a similar manner, and even the names of individuals transmitted to posterity. Cusack's Note.

² Cusack's Irish Nation, p. 70.

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and free fights, in which priest and layman take their share equally. The combination of these elements largely influenced the character of the colony, which under Feargus the son of Erc, left the shores of Erin and founded the little kingdom of Dalriada in Scotland. St Columba cannot be reckoned an unfair representative of his countrymen, and his life shows, that while a man of the highest talent and of the most exalted piety, he was also as hot-headed a Celt as ever lived, ready to strike and curse in the fashion of the age, all who incurred his resentment. St Columba, as will be seen further on in the narrative, added to all this a respect for the poets of his country, and would probably give his countenance to those who found their way to his island home. The character of the Dalriadic kingdom and its inhabitants, cannot be more forcibly drawn than in the words of the historian of Ireland. It is not pleasant to think on what would have been the state of Scotland to-day had this noble race peopled the country and absorbed the Teutonic element. 'On the small stage of this miniature realm (Dalriada) we find acted over again most of the dark and troubled scenes of the Irish pentarchy, the same lawlessness and turbulence, redeemed sometimes by the same romantic heroism; a similar reverence for all that was sanctioned by the past, combined with as light and daring a recklessness of the future. That rooted attachment to old laws and usages which marked the natives of the mother country, was here transmitted in full force to their descendants—the ancient language, and all the numerous traditions of which it was the vehicle; the system of clanship, and laws of succession; even the old parti-coloured dress, worn by the ancient Scots—all continued to be retained in North Britain to a much later period than among the original Irish themselves.'¹

Characteristically enough, the approximate date of the departure of the Scots for Argyllshire, is gained by the record of a battle. The Synchronisms of Flann Mainistreach were compiled in the eleventh century, and

¹ Moore's History of Ireland, vol. ii. p. 40.

possess real historical value ; it is there stated 'Twenty years from the battle of Ocha, till the children of Erc, son of Echach Muindremhar, passed over into Alban.'¹ The battle was fought in A.D. 478, and is an era in the annals of Irish history well authenticated. The date of the formation of the Dalriadic monarchy in Scotland may thus be fixed at A.D. 498.

A.D. 498.

We thus conclude our sketch of the history, real or fictitious, of Ireland, previous to the emigration to Scotland, our object being to show, what was, and in fact is, the character of the people who gave a name to North Britain, and for a period of several centuries influenced the civilisation and religion (if the terms are not misnomers) of Scotland. During this time the connection between the two countries in affairs of Church and State was intimate, and though there were many redeeming points in the Celtic rule, it left the country quite as barbarous, and nearly as heathenish as when St Columba and his twelve disciples landed at Iona.

The poets of Ireland, we have seen, formed a distinctive and most important class, ranking with the most distinguished minstrels of the Scandinavian Vikings and the mediæval monarchs. The kings of Ireland seem to have appreciated their calling, like Rene King of Provence, and to have showered honours upon them. These privileges and honours seem to have turned their heads, so much leisure to meditate on and record in flowing measure the heroic exploits of kings and heroes was too much for them. In the year A.D. 40 their insolence and pretensions rose to such a height, that king and people determined to get rid of them, and they were about to be expelled the kingdom. Their numbers were formidable, no less than one thousand principal bards, who are classed in two orders. Those of the first degree retained thirty poets of inferior note as his attendants, those of the second degree had a similar retinue of fifteen. This body found a friend in Conquovar, King of Ulster, who counselled reformation, instead of expatriation. The bards were allowed seven years of probation ; and if

¹ Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, p. 18.

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they did not reform their way of life in that time, they would certainly be banished.

Like many other individuals and corporations, they lived softly and behaved themselves discreetly for some time; yet on two other occasions a persecution, as it is called, and a reformation was made. But under the reign of Hugh in the time of St Columba, they became insupportable, and Hugh, like his predecessors, determined to get rid of them. In this crisis St Columba came to the rescue; he besought the King to retract his purpose of banishing the poets. 'The King said in answer that it would be of infinite prejudice to his government to give any protection to the poets, for they were a lazy, covetous, and insatiable body, and an insupportable grievance to the people. . . . He was obliged, for the ease of his subjects and his own safety, to purge the island of them, and transplant them into new settlements.' St Columba acknowledged the justice of the King's remarks, but suggested reformation, not suppression. The King demanded to what extent did he propose to carry this reformation? St Columba, in answer, proposed a sweeping measure, viz., that the King, every provincial prince, and every lord of a cantred should alone have the privilege of maintaining a poet, but no others. This regulation was the standard by which the society of poets was regulated in future ages. If the story was worthy of belief, one would think that the saint was of the opinion that the monks and saints who were now numerous, constituted quite a sufficient body of idle men in the country. There can be little doubt, however, that there is a basis of historical truth in the statements as to the numbers of the Irish bards and the estimation in which they were held, their pretensions and emoluments.

The earliest form of composition was probably in poetic numbers; history, philosophy, and religion found thus an expression. The character of a race may be very fairly estimated from its poetry, and the appreciation of it by other races. If produced in the infancy of the race, does it still commend itself to the culture of later times? Another and more crucial test is, Can it

bear translation into other languages, and still preserve its vitality? Though the peculiar characteristics inseparable from an original be lost, are the thoughts, the incidents, the description for all men and all time?

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In comparing Celtic poetry (its only literature almost) with that of other races, it would be unfair to contrast it with those other than in the earliest stage of culture. When the Celts had passed this stage, their language had become an exotic; in fact to gain any culture they had to learn another language or languages. The poems are but feeble echoes of the past, framed on a bygone model, but savouring strongly of the present.

We can hardly contrast the early Hebrew and Greek poetry with the Irish, it would be profane to do so, yet it is perfectly fair to say, that the Milesians did not improve the advantages derived from the educational foundations of the gifted Feniusa Farsa, and his inestimable gift of letters, long before the time assigned by linguists to the formation of the Phœnician, Hebrew, and Greek alphabets. But to speak seriously, if possible, can anyone not an Irishman or Scotch Celt, compare for a moment the Scandinavian Eddas and Sagas, the Anglo-Saxon odes, the Norman romances, with early Irish literature. The first even in the rude idiom of a half-formed language, stir the heart and enlarge the conception, they strike chords which vibrate through the innermost being of the advanced thinker of to-day, and tell him of kindred thoughts; the latter is a weariness to the flesh, a collection of tedious records and childish fables.

Pinkerton, in his vehement manner, says, 'The whole tale of the Milesians and the history of monarchs of that time is the most deplorable piece of nonsense that ever stained the annals of mankind. The fables of the other grand Celtic race, the Welch, are sober and sapient compared to the Irish fictions. In the page of Geoffrey may be found an Imogene, a Lochrine and Guendolen with their daughter Sabra; a Bladud, a Lear and his daughters; a Gordobuc, a Belinus, a Lud, an Arthur; all non-existences, yet well known in the regions of poetry

A. D. — and romance. But the whole Irish historic fictions, are not only beneath contempt as history, but beneath contempt as fictions. Destitute of the smallest charm of fiction, they are not only lies, but nauseous and disgusting lies. Boyce, Buchanan, and the other Scottish forgers, made their fictions lessons to monarchs, and it is to their falsehoods that we owe the death of Charles I. and abdication of James II. The tales of the Welch and Scottish forgers had an influence on the whole history of Europe; those of the Irish never had nor can have any effect, being wholly contemptible even to imagination.¹ In comparing further with the Scandinavian literature he says, 'The Gothic tales are often ingenious, always vigorous, sometimes sublime. Even the wildest of them has always strong marks of ΝΟΥΣ , of thought, of sense. The mythology, and well-known unconquerable character of the people, live and breathe in them all. The Irish legends are in all points the reverse. The Milesian fable is connected with Pharaoh, and bears other palpable marks of being invented long after Christianity was established in Ireland.'¹

It is highly improbable that any literary matter, other than barren lists, was compiled before the eleventh or twelfth centuries, or, like the Cymric poets of the sixth, some remains would have been preserved. When the Gadhelic poets did compose other than chronological lists, the classical and Christian culture of the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries was extinct; the Danish and Norwegian skalds had taught them nothing, their fables were a travestie of what little they knew of sacred and profane history, filtered, through monasticism, anarchy, and bloodshed.

The author previously quoted gives a parting advice well worthy the careful consideration of Irishmen, and we should say also of Scottish Gaels who believe in the dignity of their ancestry: 'The point is utterly to give up these abominable fables; and till this be done the Irish antiquaries will have them all to themselves, without one rival. For how can the literati of Europe converse with

¹ Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. ii. pp. 13, 14.

those who give evident signs of madness, of a madness unknown to any other nation?'¹

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Many and the best of Irish antiquaries have taken this advice, but unfortunately the mass of the people of Ireland are still afflicted with the disease.

The cruel and unjust laws, and merciless administration of an alien race have for centuries kept the country in a chronic state of anarchy and destitution, and may justly be blamed for the misery prevalent there. But no laws and no administration, however just and merciful, can ever satisfy a people who look back to such a period as we have described, with feelings of pride, and who will be content with nothing else than the recognition of a State based on the Celtic notions of many centuries ago. The egregious fiction, that Ireland was a compact monarchy, ruled for two thousand years by native princes of the grand Milesian stock, and that laws were made by a representative parliament, is still, to a genuine Irishman, a part of his national creed, a return to that, the only cure for his country's woes. He can not lower his dignity to accept, like the Scotchman, a Norman for his hero king, still less like the citizens of the United Kingdom be thankful for 'a wee bit German lairdie.' Still less can the Celt accept his fate, absorption in the Latin or the Teuton, he has no other alternative but servitude or extermination.

The kindred art of music, was cultivated to a high degree, and of this we have ample proof at the present day, in the unmistakable character of the airs which could only have been composed at a period long anterior to modern times. The Celtic melodies are replete with a beauty and pathos far above all others, with the exception of the Lowland Scotch, which in exquisite tenderness of feeling transcend the production of the muse to whom they owe their origin. There can be little doubt that the Scottish settlers introduced the art, and till within a few years, the ballad, reel, or strathspey was the sole music of the country. Whatever benefit Scotland has received from its adoption of English Puritanism, its genius and

¹ Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. ii. p. 16.

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ritual stamped out musical cultivation in its higher walks, and if it could, would have destroyed even the little gained from the early efforts of its Celtic professors. The statements respecting the proficiency in music of the Celtic race in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, are fortunately of no inconsiderable value, and we can have little hesitation in accepting Giraldus' account as worthy of credence, *cum grano salis*. This historian was a native of Wales though a Norman, or Anglo-Norman by birth and education; a learned man for his day, at the same time acute and credulous, his statements must be accepted with caution and discretion. When he speaks favourably of Ireland and the Irish, their writers quote him as a trustworthy authority and eye-witness, when the reverse, his narrative is 'an inexhaustible mine of falsehood.' We give his account of Irish music, which is generally accepted as authentic.

'The only thing to which I find that this people apply a commendable industry is playing upon musical instruments, in which they are incomparably more skilful than any other nation I have ever seen. For their modulation on these instruments, unlike that of the Britons to which I am accustomed, is not slow and harsh, but lively and rapid, while the harmony is both sweet and gay. It is astonishing that in so complex and rapid a movement of the fingers the musical proportions can be preserved, and that throughout the difficult modulations on their various instruments, the harmony is completed with such a sweet velocity, so unequal an equality, so discordant a concord, as if the chords sounded together fourths or fifths. They always begin from B flat, and return to the same, that the whole may be completed under the sweetness of a pleasing sound.¹ They enter into a movement, and conclude it in so delicate a manner, and play the little notes so sportively under the blunter sounds of the base strings,

¹ This description savours so much of the critic of a few centuries later, that we would hardly think it genuine matter of the twelfth century; it was only in the eleventh century that the monk Guido of Arezzo invented the present system of musical notation; modern harmonies were of a still later date, we should think musical criticism much later.

enlivening with wanton levity, or communicating a deeper internal sensation of pleasure, so that the perfection of their art appears in the concealment of it. From this cause those very strains which afford deep and unspeakable mental delight to those who have skilfully penetrated into the mysteries of the art, fatigue rather than gratify the ears of others, who seeing do not perceive, and hearing do not understand, and by whom the finest music is esteemed no better than a confused and disorderly noise, and will be heard with unwillingness and disgust.¹ It must be remarked, however, that both Scotland and Wales strive to rival Ireland in the art of music; the former from its community of race, the latter from its contiguity and facility of communication. Ireland only uses and delights in two instruments, the harp and the tabor. Scotland has three, the harp, the tabor, and the crowth or crowd, and Wales the harp, the pipes, and the crowd.² The Irish also used strings of brass instead of leather. Scotland at the present day, in the opinion of many persons, is not only equal to Ireland her teacher, in musical skill, but excels her, so that they now look to that country as the fountain head of this science.³

But, granted this early cultivation of music, how little it proves the advancement of the people or the musicians in civilisation, is forcibly put by the only Irish poet, and not only a poet but a man gifted with musical taste and feeling of a high order: 'How little music, though so powerful in its influence on the feelings, either springs from, or is dependent upon intellect, appears from the fact, that some of the most exquisite effusions of this art

¹ History repeats itself, many persons of the present day who, by fashion are condemned to Wagner and Berlioz, and regard their compositions with the same feelings.

² Choro, the crowth or crowd, which was played upon by a sort of bow, and is supposed to have been the origin of the violin, which was not commonly known in England till the time of Charles I. Before this time the crowth was most probably confined to Wales. From the name of Crowderoin (Hudibras); as also from a fiddler being still called a *crowder* in some parts of England, though he uses the modern instrument.

³ Giraldus Cambrensis. Bohn's Lib., pp. 136-7.

^{A D} — have had their origin among the simplest and most uncultivated people; nor can all that taste and science bring afterwards to the task do more, in general, than diversify, by new combinations, those first wild strains of gaiety or passion, into which nature had infused her original inspiration.¹

The latter part of this paragraph contains a half-truth. No doubt melody is an inspiration, and is common to the man of culture and the savage. Harmony is not; it was very late in the world's history before it was even discovered, and no harmonised music earlier than the beginning of the seventeenth century is acceptable to modern ears. Man is a creature of complex faculties, the possession of which, in the individual, distinguishes him from the lower animals. The distinction is almost as great between the different races of mankind; some seem to be in the possession of more faculties than others, or in any case they are developed, and not allowed to lie dormant. These faculties thus developed act and react on the emotion and the intellect; wants are experienced which must be supplied. Music, from the sixteenth century, demanded from man, what to all intents and purposes was a new faculty, which in its turn had to satisfy a new want in man's nature. A knowledge of thorough bass and counter-point could not be gained without intellectual effort; the compositions, which were the result of this knowledge, could not be appreciated without a similar exercise of the intellect. The sages of antiquity, especially the Greeks, attached a very high value to the educative influence of music; but as we know absolutely nothing whatever about it, it is useless to speculate on it. It is supposed to have consisted entirely of melodies or recitatives sung or played in unison, and would appear to us monotonous in the highest degree.

Of the music so much vaunted by Giraldus Cambrensis and many others since, we have specimens. Those of the earliest and the latest date are of the rudest construction. To a musician their only distinguishing characteristic is, that they are unlike anything else. They

¹ Moore's History of Ireland, vol. i. p. 314.

are not capable of bearing any harmony but that of a ground bass. An example of this is furnished in the drone of the bagpipes, which, though not originally a Celtic instrument, has been greedily seized by the Scotch Highlander as the one best suited to the musical requirements of his race.

The harp, so dear to the Welsh and Irish, being made the leading instrument, shows how little music could possibly progress; it is but sparingly used in an orchestra; and though the effects from its introduction are striking and natural, it would be no great loss were it eliminated.

The Celtic music is of a kind that can only affect the emotions, it can never satisfy the educated ear. It belongs to the infancy of art, and though the man in the prime of life, who cannot at times enjoy the books of his childhood is not to be envied, yet he is still a child if he is satisfied with no more advanced literature. Similarly, the musical dilettanti is to be despised or pitied who will not listen to a simple air, yet he is but a Squire Western after all who will listen to nothing else.¹

In music as in everything else, the Celt becomes stationary at a certain point; in the divine art he has never passed the first stage.

In the eleventh century the practice of singing in parts, and combining several distinct notes into a single strain, which is the basis of modern harmonies, first appeared in the service of the church. It was many centuries later before the world borrowed from its ghostly instructor, and secular music in the form of the opera, entered into competition with ecclesiastical. But the higher class of music, sacred and secular, which lays siege to the intellect as well as the emotions, was ever progressing in Teutonic and Latin Europe; in this progression

¹ It was Mr Western's custom every afternoon as soon as he was drunk, to hear his daughter play on the harpischord; for he was a great lover of music, and, perhaps, had he lived in town might have passed for a connoisseur; for he always excepted against the finest compositions of Mr Handel. He never relished any music but what was light and airy, and indeed his most favourite tunes were *Sir Simon the King*, *St George he was for England*, *Bobbing Joan*, and some others. *Tom Jones*, Book iv. chap. v.

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It is, as usual, a matter of dispute whether the use of letters was known to the pagan Irish, and the argument in favour of the affirmative, only attempts to prove that it was known to the Druids or learned men.

Mr Burton, in his caustic manner, disposes very summarily of the so-called ancient Irish literature; most people will agree with him, though Mr Skene 'thinks it incredible that he could give so uncandid an opinion.'

'It would be deemed by some unpardonable, not to note that some scratching on these (the sculptured) stones have been set down as inscriptions in the Ogham or Ogam character. This professes to be a method of secret writing, being, indeed, no other than that in which the Druids concealed their mysteries. Its avowed qualities are simplicity and flexibility. These qualities are vouched to us on the faith of experiments made chiefly in Ireland, and especially of one, in which two antiquaries had read an inscription to pretty nearly the same result, and afterwards found, on comparison of notes, that the one had read from left to right, the other from right to left. This phenomenon seems not to have created much surprise among the learned body who received the reports of the decipherers; that the inscription could be read either way was only a testimony to the power and simplicity of the Ogham character, which has also the faculty, that by shifting the places of the letters or ciphers, a long story may be made out of a few straight lines. What those who profess to own the keys of such mysteries may yet bring out of them, it were rash to determine; but in the meantime the Ogham character, and its representations on the sculptured stones, can hardly be admitted within the pale of ascertained facts.'¹ The supposition that St Patrick introduced letters as well as Christianity is much more probable, and also that all Irish literature is of a date posterior to that period. 'That the Irish had letters

¹ Burton's History of Scotland, vol. i. pp. 148, 149.

so early, and many writers soon after is surely enough ; and more than several great nations of Europe can pretend to. In the name of heaven what would those Celtic gentry have? But, like the dog in the fable, by grasping at the shadow they loose the substance ; and the fictions of early Irish history bring contempt on the whole.¹ But to those who believe in the great linguist Feniusa Farsa, the Ogham character ought certainly to be recognised as the vehicle in which the poets and statesmen of Erin conveyed their burning words and wise maxims to an ingenuous and sympathetic people.

Had the Irish ever any written code of laws, an unprejudiced student of their history will at once answer the question in the negative.

That they had customs which had the force of laws is nigh to certain, no nation, however barbarous, when formed into a community has been without these, but after the English conquest, the fond imagination of a people who were deprived of the power of making their own laws, invested those customs with the dignity of laws made and sanctioned by national authority.

The poet Spenser declares the Brehon Law to be 'a rule of right unwritten.' Sir John Davies asserts that 'its rules were learned rather by tradition than writing.' The arguments to the contrary do not carry much weight in proving their statements. Irish writers uniformly commence with 'we are told,' 'are said to have been compiled,' 'in the numerous commentaries on,' authentic MS. containing these laws are non-existent. The Danes and the English get the discredit of the destruction of all this and much more, but it is hardly possible that this was so complete that not a trace has been left. The fact is, the internal divisions, the murderous fights, and the slight control of the central authority, forbid the idea that any code could be formed which could be called national.

In this sketch of the early history of Ireland, following the lines of her annals and histories, we have spoken of the Kings of Ireland as monarchs of the whole island holding their court at Teamhair or Tara, and we are in-

¹ Pinkerton's Inquiry, vol. ii. p. 19.

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— vited to suppose that they exercised a sway similar to a feudal monarch of the middle ages. Even granting that there is some vestige of fact in these Annals and poetical histories, nothing can be further from what was the real state of matters. The German Emperors in the darkest days of the Empire, never held as impotent a sway over turbulent princes; the King of Ireland was simply the Ardrigh of the nation who was chosen to that position according to Celtic custom. In Celtic Gaul a solemn convention was annually held to elect a Vergobreith or high king to rule over the whole Gallic race. 'A similar convention is traceable in Ireland under the name of the *'Feas Temora,'* or 'Feast of Tara,' a place chosen probably for its central situation, and he 'who held the feast' was the acknowledged Ardrigh of the whole nation, 'the tribes of Tara' originally holding their lands on condition of quartering the king and his followers on the occasion of the great festival.¹ 'On this basis have the long accounts of the Parliament of Tara been raised. In addition to the Ardrigh, there were four or five provincial kings, and many chieftains besides assumed the august title and exercised a petty sovereignty over smaller portions of territory.

The Annals of Tighernac commence with the reign of Cimboath two or three centuries B.C., all history previous to this the annalist (who flourished in the eleventh century) considers untrustworthy. At this period is to be traced a dualism common in all the Celtic tribes in Gaul; two powerful combinations divide the country, quarrel, as a matter of course, and the weaker has to go to the wall. On the continent the process is repeated again and again, it seems the normal state of Celtic rule that one family should rise to power only to be replaced in a short time by another.

At this period then, the island is found governed by two Ardrighs, the northern monarch holding his seat at Emania in Ulster, the other bearing rule over the southern half at Tara. This is exactly what the fabulists tell us of the division of the island between the two sons of

¹ Robertson's *Scotland under her Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 30.

Milesius, Heber and Heremon, though they place it many centuries earlier, and give it, as we have seen, a short lifetime. Heremon gained the victory over his rival in a single campaign, and possessed the whole country, but the hostilities between the monarchs of Emania and Tara were interminable, and lasted for centuries. The northern Ardriugh seems to have attained the chief power latterly, to have deserted Emania, which indeed was in ruins and to have 'held the feast of Tara.'

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A period supervened of great anarchy and internal troubles; the time of what was called the Plebian Wars, revolt of the Attacotti and others previously mentioned, from this sea of troubles arose the dynasty of the Hy Nials in the person of Niall of the nine hostages.

The real supremacy of this race, until the Danish invasions, is an unquestionable fact, and there is no doubt that the Ardriughs of Ireland for five hundred years, from the dawn of authentic history until a century and a half before the English conquest, were of the race of the Hy Nials.

At this time the Kings of Munster and Connaught disputed the throne with the Lords of Ulster and Meath, and the royalty of Ireland, no longer the prerogative of a single family, became attainable by any of the provincial kings.

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