











*John Archbishop of ...*



*WITH APPENDICES, ETC.*

BY THE

MOST REV. DR. HEALY,

ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.



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## P R E F A C E .

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OUR chief purpose in writing this new Life of St Patrick, when so many Lives already exist, is to give a fuller and, we venture to hope, more exact account of the Saint's missionary labours in Ireland than any that has appeared since the Tripartite Life was first written. For this purpose we have not only thoroughly studied Colgan's great work, and made ourselves familiar with the really valuable publications of our own times, but we have, when practicable, personally visited all the scenes of the Saint's labours, both at home and abroad, so as to be able to give a local colouring to the dry record, and also to catch up, as far as possible, the echoes, daily growing fainter, of the once vivid traditions of the past.

We have no new views to put forward. We shall seek to follow the authority of the ancient writers of the Acts of St. Patrick, which we regard as in the main trustworthy. Those who do not like miracles can pass them over, but the ancient writers believed in them, and even when purely imaginary these miraculous stories have an historical and critical value of their own.

We find it convenient to classify our authorities into three divisions. The ANCIENT authorities are those that flourished before the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland, that is before A.D. 1172. The MEDIÆVAL authorities will include all those who make reference to St. Patrick's Acts down to the beginning of the 17th century. The MODERN authorities will comprehend the rest, including Colgan and Usher, who have written from that date (A.D. 1600) to the present time.

We have resolved, however, to follow in the main the guidance of the ancient authorities, who, if credulous in things supernatural, had no motive but to write the truth, so far as it was known to them, for the instruction and edification of posterity. There was then only one Church, and they could have had no motive in representing St. Patrick to be anything else than what he was known to them—a great and successful Christian missionary of the Catholic Church.

Those ancient authorities are in substantial agreement on all the main points of our Apostle's history. Some shallow critics of our own time, by unduly indulging in what is mere speculation, have brought confusion into the Acts of St. Patrick, but this confusion, like the morning mist on the mountain side, is rapidly passing away. We shall not follow their example; rather we shall adhere to the ancient authorities, and in so doing we follow in the footsteps of the really great Irish scholars of modern times, like Colgan, Usher, and O'Flaherty, who paid due regard to those ancient authorities, and under their guidance gave their own lives, with brilliant success, to the study of Irish history and antiquities.

The writings of St. Patrick himself must naturally be made the basis of any reliable history of the Saint. There is no doubt that the Confession and the Epistle to Coroticus were, as the Book of Armagh says of the former, originally written by his own hand. Every statement, therefore, in any Life of St. Patrick, ancient or modern, clearly inconsistent with the tenor of these documents must be rejected without hesitation.

Concerning the miracles related in most of the Lives the reader will form his own judgment. Some of the stories are, in our opinion, of their own nature incredible; others are ridiculous, and several are clearly inconsistent with Patrick's own statements in the Confession. But we cannot reject a story merely because it is miraculous. The Confession itself records several miracles, and we are

by no means prepared to say that St. Patrick was either deceived or a deceiver. The most famous Lives of the great saints of that age are full of narratives of the miraculous. St. Athanasius wrote a Life of St. Anthony; Sulpicius Severus has left a beautiful Life of St. Martin; Paulinus of Nola has given us an authentic Life of St. Felix—these were great prelates and accomplished scholars, who had an intimate knowledge of those of whom they wrote, yet we find miracles recorded as undoubted events in every page of their narratives. The absence of the miraculous in any Patrician document is, therefore, no proof of its earlier date or more authentic character, as some modern critics seem to think. The most authentic and eloquent writings of that age are filled with such narratives of the miraculous, and the miracles were attested by most trustworthy witnesses, and are narrated as undoubted facts by contemporary writers. In this work our purpose is not controversial; it is to show St. Patrick as he was known to his contemporaries and their immediate successors who had known the man, or received the living stories of his disciples. Most people will think such a narrative is of far more value from every point of view than the speculations of some of our modern critics and philologists, who would rather do away with St. Patrick altogether than admit that he got his mission from Rome.

The manifold variations in the spelling of Irish words, and especially of Irish proper names, present great difficulty to a writer on Irish subjects, and render it almost impossible to adopt a uniform system. As we have, on the whole, followed the guidance of the Rolls Tripartite, both as to the Irish text and its English version, we have thought it desirable to adopt also its system of spelling the Irish proper names. No doubt many of its forms are now archaic; still they exhibit, we think, the language, especially in this matter of proper names, in simpler and purer forms than those which are at present in use; and,

moreover, tend to preserve a uniformity of usage, which is surely to be desired. Hence, we have adopted, as a rule, the spelling of the Tripartite, especially in proper names, except in the case of certain well-known words, where a departure from the existing usage might be misleading.

✠ JOHN HEALY, D.D.,  
*Archbishop of Tuam.*

ST. JARLATH'S,  
*September, 1905.*

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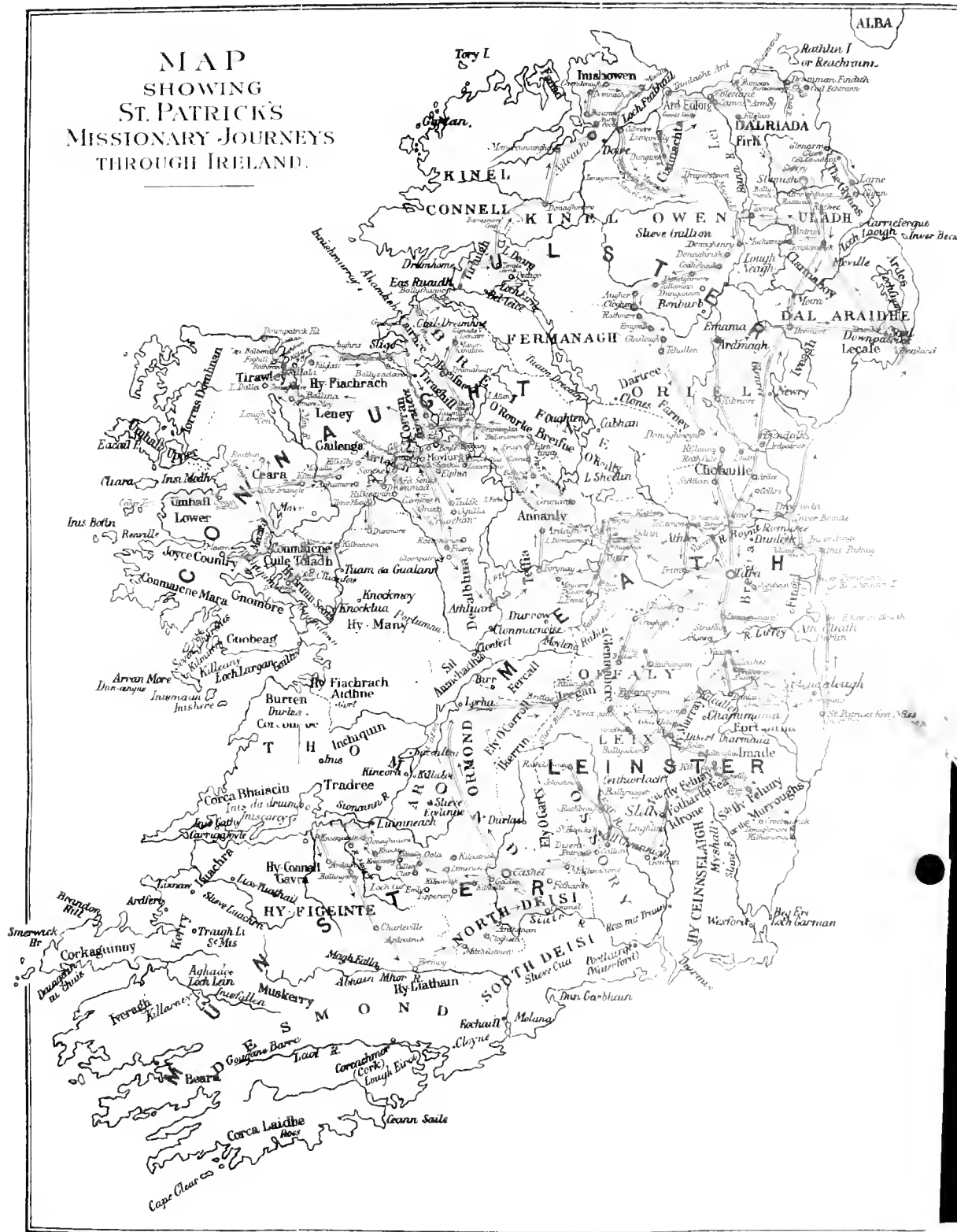
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# MAP SHOWING ST. PATRICK'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS THROUGH IRELAND.



CHAPTER I.  
INTRODUCTORY.



EARLY LIVES OF ST. PATRICK.

I.—ST. FIACC'S HYMN.

THE Irish Hymn of St. Fiacc is the first of the seven Lives of St. Patrick given by Colgan, and, if we except the hymn of St. Sechnall in praise of St. Patrick, seems to have been also the earliest of those now extant. It is contained in the two ancient MSS. of the *Liber Hymnorum*, one of which is preserved in Trinity College; the other is at present in the Franciscan Monastery, Merchants' Quay, Dublin. Colgan published the Irish text of this latter MS. in his own great work,<sup>1</sup> with a Latin version for the benefit of scholars ignorant of the ancient Gaelic. But more accurate versions have been given recently in English by competent scholars, especially that published in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* for March, 1868, and also Stokes' version in the *Rolls Tripartite*.

The Irish Preface to the Hymn gives a very clear account of the time, place, and purpose of its composition, as well as the name and station of the writer. "Fiacc of Sletty," it tells us, "made this eulogy for Patrick." This would seem to imply that Patrick was alive at the time: for it was, as a rule, only living men the poets praised. Now, Fiacc was the son of Erc, son of Bregan, son of Barraig (from whom are the Hy Barrche), son of Cathair Mor. So he was of royal ancestry, being fourth in descent from the great ancestor of the Leinster kings. He was a pupil of Dubthach Mac Hy Lugair, who was in the time of King Laeghaire the chief poet of Ireland. It was Dubthach who rose up to do honour to Patrick at Tara, although the king had forbidden any of his nobles to rise up before the stranger. Thenceforward he became a friend of Patrick, for Patrick had baptised him then, or shortly afterwards at Tara.

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<sup>1</sup>The *Trias Thaumaturga*. Petrie thought the *Liber Hymnorum* was about 1,200 years old; and Todd declared that it may safely be pronounced to be "one of the most venerable monuments of antiquity now remaining in western Europe."—*Book of Hymns*, p. 1.

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Now, it was 'in the time of this Laeghaire, son of Niall, and of Patrick that the poem was made'—that is, it described events that took place in their time, for the phrase does not usually refer to the time a poem was composed.

Patrick going through Leinster on his missionary journey called, as might be expected, to see his friend Dubthach at his house in Leinster. This house was, we are told elsewhere, at Domnach Mor, 'beside the fishful sea.' Dubthach, on his part, 'made a great welcome for Patrick,' and amongst other things Patrick said to his host—"Seek for me a man of rank, of good family, moral, of one wife only, and of one child."<sup>1</sup> "Why seek you such a man," said Dubthach. "To give him Orders," said Patrick. "Fiacc is the very man you want," replied Dubthach, "but he has gone on a circuit to Connaught"—that is on a poet's visitation, to collect the bardic dues for the Arch-poet and his school. Just then it came to pass that Fiacc 'and his circle,' or school, were returning home, and Dubthach at once said—"There is he of whom we have been speaking." "But," said Patrick, "he might not like to take Orders." "Proceed, then, to tonsure me," said Dubthach, who knew that tonsure was the first step to Orders, and marked the man chosen for the clerical state. Patrick set about it. "What are you going to do," said Fiacc. "To tonsure Dubthach." "Oh! that would be a pity; Ireland has no other poet like him," replied young Fiacc. "I will take you in his stead," said Patrick. "My loss to poetry will be less than his," said Fiacc. So Patrick tonsured the young poet, shearing off the flowing hair and beard which he wore in bardic fashion. "And great grace was given him," we are told—and no wonder—in return for his generous self-denial. "He read all the ecclesiastical *Ordo*"—that is the Mass and Ritual—"in one night," but some say—and it is more likely—"in fifteen days." And "the grade of Bishop was conferred upon him, and he became High-Bishop of Leinster, and his successors after him." So far the Scholiast,<sup>2</sup>

Fiacc, being a professional poet, had a trained memory, and must have been an educated man when ordained, if he

<sup>1</sup> It was not necessary that a candidate bishop should have only one child; but it was from the beginning required, even by St. Paul, that he should not have been twice married.

<sup>2</sup> He adds that the place where the Poem was written was Duma Gobla, to the north-west of Sletty; and the time was in the reign of Lugaid, son of Laeghaire (484-507).

was able to learn to read his Missal, or even his Ritual, in fifteen days. But his poem proves he was an accomplished scholar in his native tongue, and it is not unlikely that he already knew something of the Latin language, for he was a 'tender youth' in the retinue of Dubthach at Tara, when Patrick appeared there some fifteen years before; and he must have often afterwards witnessed the clergy performing their sacred functions—for there can hardly be any doubt that after the conversion of his master he, too, became a Christian. His poem also proves that the Bards of Erin could read and write their own language even before Patrick came to Erin, for it would have been utterly impossible that a hitherto unwritten tongue could, in one or two generations, become, as it did in the poet's hands, a perfect written language, of great vigour and flexibility, with fixed inflections and definite grammatical rules. If the Hymn of Fiacc is authentic, then there was certainly a written language in Ireland before St. Patrick, of much grace, strength, and beauty.

We do not think that any really valid argument has been brought forward against the authenticity of this most interesting memorial of our ancient Irish Church. The 'Stories'<sup>1</sup> declaring that Patrick was born in Nemthor merely refer to the current traditions at the time of the writer, and have no necessary reference to a far-distant past. Again, when Fiacc says that the 'Tuatha' or tribes of Erin were prophesying that 'Tara's land would be silent and waste,' he merely tells us, what the Druids had frequently declared, that the new religion would cause the overthrow of the paganism, of which Tara was at once the centre and the symbol, for its kings continued to be pagans during the whole lifetime of St. Patrick. It is by no means necessary to suppose that, when the poet wrote, Tara had already become waste and silent, as it certainly did after A.D. 565, when it was cursed by the Saints. So also when Fiacc, like a patriotic Irishman, says "it is not pleasant to me that Tara should be a desert,"<sup>2</sup> the expression does not mean that it was *then* a desert, rather the contrary: it appears to mean that the poet, whilst rejoicing in the glory of Down and Armagh, would not wish that royal Tara should become a desert. This question is further discussed in the account of St. Fiacc's meeting with St. Patrick.

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<sup>1</sup> Ni scelaib.

<sup>2</sup> Nimdil ceddithrub Temair.

## II.—THE HYMN OF ST. SECUNDINUS.

This, perhaps, may be regarded as, in some respects, the most ancient Life of St. Patrick. There can be no reasonable doubt of its authenticity, for the evidence, both intrinsic and extrinsic, is very strong. It is given in the *Liber Hymnorum*, under the title of the ‘Hymn of St. Patrick, Bishop of the Scots’<sup>1</sup>—that is, of course, the Irish—meaning, however, not a hymn written by the Saint, but one written in his praise. The copy in the Trinity College *Liber Hymnorum* has a glossary, but no preface; however, the folio containing the preface may have been torn from the MS. In the Franciscan codex of the Book of Hymns<sup>2</sup> there is a preface or introduction which sets forth, in the usual style, the time, place, author, and object of the composition.

This preface is in Irish, and has been given in Latin by Colgan, who first published St. Sechnall’s Hymn. The *Lebar Brecc* also contains a copy of the Hymn, with a fuller, but probably a less authentic, preface. It was also published by Sir James Ware from a copy that he found in the Library of Usher. It is said to be the Donegal copy; but that is rather doubtful, for it differs from Colgan’s version, and it is not easy to see how it could go to Rome from Usher’s collection. It was also published by Muratori and Villaneuva, and lastly, after careful collation, the Franciscan copy has been printed by Stokes in his *Tripartite Life*.

Reference is also made in the Book of Armagh to the ‘recitation’ of this Hymn as one of Four Honours<sup>3</sup> due to St. Patrick, so there can be no doubt that its authenticity was recognised by the earliest, as well as by the latest, of our Irish historians and scholars.

The internal evidence is no less striking and conclusive. The writer of the Hymn describes at length the virtues and labours of St. Patrick, but throughout he speaks of the Saint as one living at the time, not yet called to his reward, but who hereafter *will* possess the joys of the heavenly kingdom. A mere forger of a later date would

<sup>1</sup> *Incipit Hymnus Sancti Patritii Episcopi Scotorum.*

<sup>2</sup> It originally belonged to the Monastery of Donegal; then went to St. Isidore’s in Rome; afterwards to the Burgundian Library, Brussels, from which it has been transferred to the Library of the Franciscan Convent, Dublin.

<sup>3</sup> The Third Honour was, *Hymnum ejus per totum tempus (ejus festi) cantare.* The Fourth Honour was, *Canticum ejus Scotticum (Irish) semper canere.* *Rolls Tripartite*, p. 333.

hardly be so much on his guard in his tenses when speaking of the Saint. The Latin style, too, is characteristic of the period, for the language is, as we might expect, rather like that of St. Patrick himself—by no means elegant, and not always even grammatically correct.

The Shorter Preface given by Stokes in Irish, and by Colgan in Latin, tells us the history of the Hymn. It was Sechnall, son of Restitutus, of the Lombards of Letha, and of Darerca, Patrick's sister, who composed it. Secundinus was his Roman name, but the Irish called him Sechnall. Domnach Sechnaill (now Dunshaughlin) was the place; and the time of its composition was the reign of Laeghaire,<sup>1</sup> son of Niall. Its purpose was to praise Patrick, and also, it would seem, to appease him. For Patrick had heard how Secundinus had remarked that "he (Patrick) is a good man, were it not for one thing, that he preached charity so little;" and hearing it, Patrick was angered. "It is for charity's sake I do not preach it, for the saints after me will need men's gifts and service, and therefore I do not ask them," said Patrick. The Hymn attained its object, for Patrick 'made peace with his nephew' when he heard it. 'This was the first Hymn made in Ireland.' 'It was composed in the order of the alphabet'—that is, the first letter of each stanza in succession followed the order of the alphabet. There are twenty-three stanzas, with four lines in each stanza, and fifteen syllables in each line. There are, the writer adds, three words in it 'without meaning,' that is, introduced merely for the sake of the rhyme.

When Sechnall had composed his Hymn he went to read it for Patrick, merely saying that he had made a eulogy for a certain Son of Life, which he wished him to hear. "The praise of God's household is welcome to me," said Patrick. Then Sechnall began with the second stanza—omitting the first, in which Patrick's name is mentioned—and proceeded to read through the Hymn. Stopping him, however, at the lines:

Maximus namque in regno cœlorum vocabitur  
Qui quod verbis docet sacris factis adimplet bonis,

and walking further on, Patrick said to Sechnall, "How can you call him 'Maximus in regno cœlorum?' How can a mere creature be the 'greatest?'"—for he well knew the Gospel only calls him "great."

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<sup>1</sup> The Irish of Stokes has, 'Tempus Aeda,' Son of Neill, or of Laeghaire.

"Oh, the superlative," replied Sechnall, "is there put for the positive, and only means 'very great.'"<sup>1</sup> It was, however, the rhythm and not the meaning that needed a word of three syllables. Then when the Hymn was finished, Sechnall claimed from Patrick the Bard's usual reward, thereby giving him to understand—what the Hymn itself showed—that Patrick himself was the 'Son of Life' who was eulogised.

"Thou shalt have it," said Patrick; "as many sinners shall go to heaven because of (reading) this Hymn as there are hairs on thy cowl."

"I will not be content with that," said Sechnall.

"Then whoever will recite it lying down and rising up will go to heaven."

"I will not be content with that," said Sechnall, "for the Hymn is long, and it will be hard to remember it."

"Then its efficacy or grace shall be on the three last stanzas."

"Deo gratias," said Sechnall. "I am now content."<sup>2</sup>

The Preface in the *Lebar Brecc*, besides giving a sketch of St. Patrick's history, adds very much to the plain tale given before, and seems to contain unauthentic and later additions. Patrick is represented as going to Sechnall in great wrath when he heard of the latter's observation about his not preaching charity as he might. Sechnall, hearing of his coming, or seeing him approach, left the oblation at the altar just before Communion, 'to kneel to Patrick' by way of apology; but Patrick, still in wrath, went to drive his chariot over Sechnall, when God raised the ground around him on either side, so that Sechnall was not hurt! Then followed the explanation of his not preaching charity given above, and a mutual reconciliation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Longer Preface suggests that it means that Patrick was the greatest of his own race, that is, the greatest of the Britons or of the Scots in heaven.—*Tripartite*.

<sup>2</sup> The *Tripartite* says that Patrick said:—"Whoever of the men of Ireland shall recite the three last stanzas, or the three last lines, or the three last words, and shall come at death with a pure intention, his soul shall be ready"—to go to heaven, we presume.

<sup>3</sup> The picture-que narrative in the *Tripartite* shows it was a very friendly meeting that took place for the recitation of the Hymn. Sechnall and Patrick met at the Pass of *Mi luachair*, near Forkhill, north of Dundalk. Each of them blessed the other, and they sat down to read the Hymn. Patrick, rising up at the words, '*Maximus in regno celorum*,' asked an explanation as they walked together to '*Fida*,' where it was finished, and so the explanation was given, as stated above.

It is evident the Scholiast here indulges his fancy in a very curious fashion, whilst borrowing the substance of the tale from other incidents recorded in the Life of St. Patrick, to which we have referred elsewhere. We have discussed in another place the question of the parentage of Sechnall, especially the strange statement of the Scholiast, that his father Restitutus was of the Lombards of Letha.

Letha is commonly taken to mean Italy, or, in a more restricted sense, Latium: and this statement would seem to imply that the Lombards, or some of them, had settled there before the end of the fourth century, whereas it is certain that they did not obtain a settlement in Italy before the middle of the sixth century—the exact year commonly given being A.D. 568.

But does Letha mean Latium or Italy? Todd has discussed the question at some length without coming to any definite conclusion. Our own view is that Letha means not Italia, but Gallia or Gaul, especially Celtic Gaul,<sup>1</sup> which, as we know from Caesar, extended from the Garonne to the Seine, and from the ocean on the west to the Cevennes range, which separated Celtic Gaul from what was then known as the 'Provincia'—a name still retained in the modern Provence. The Lombards certainly crossed the Rhine and settled in parts of Gaul long before they were established in Italy, and a family or colony of them might have established themselves in Tours or Armorica, and have there met with relatives of St. Patrick's family. This would explain how it came to pass that a sister of Patrick, staying with her own family or relations in Celtic Gaul, might have met and married there a Lombard of Letha—that is, a Lombard settled in Gaul.

It is unfortunate that Sechnall, in this poetic eulogy of St. Patrick, gives us no definite facts regarding the life of his holy uncle, confining himself to a general description of his labours and his virtues. From this point of view the Hymn is valuable, but otherwise it contains nothing noteworthy.

After describing in a general way the holiness of Patrick's life, and his divine mission to preach the Gospel

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<sup>1</sup> In the Tripartite we find 'Burgidala Letha' (p. 239) and 'Airmoric Letha,' showing that Bordeaux and Brittany were both in Letha, which seems conclusive proof that Letha=Gallia, to which in sound it is nearer than to Italia.

to the barbarous clans of Ireland, Sechnall describes his most striking and characteristic virtues—his humility, which glories only in the Cross; his zeal in preaching the Gospel, and feeding the flock intrusted to his care; his chastity, which keeps his flesh a holy temple of the Spirit of God; his preaching, which holds up the lamp of the Gospel to the whole world; his saintly life, which fulfils in act what he teaches by word; his utter contempt of worldly fame and perishable goods, which he esteems mere chaff; his love of Sacred Scripture, of constant prayer, of the daily Sacrifice, of the Divine Office, with all the other characteristic virtues of a saintly bishop and evangelist.

It has been noticed by Stokes that there is no reference to the Roman Mission in this Hymn. Why, indeed, should there be? It was a poetic eulogy of a living man, praising his virtues, but not recording a single fact of his life, as they were all known to his audience. No reference to his birthplace, to his captivity, to his parents, to his teaching, to Germanus, or to Gaul, or to any other extrinsic facts. Why, then, should the writer go out of his way to say that Patrick was sent by the Pope to preach in Ireland? Everyone knew it; no one denied it. Who, even now, in preaching the eulogy of a Catholic bishop, living or dead, says that he was appointed by the Pope? It would be altogether superfluous; everyone knows it. He says that Patrick had a divine mission; that God sent him to preach in Ireland, just as we now say of any other prelate that it was God who placed him over his flock; but in the case of Patrick it was well to emphasise the fact, because his mission was extraordinary; that is, it was the outcome of a special divine command, questioned by some, but emphatically asserted by Patrick himself.

Neither does this Hymn record any miracles of St. Patrick. It is unusual, certainly, to recount any saint's miracles during his life, and least of all to his face; but the Scholiast in the *Lebar Brecc* has some of his own to tell in connection with the Hymn. Not content with the promise that its recital, morning and evening, would secure the salvation of Patrick's pious clients, he adds that Patrick also said that "wherein this Hymn shall be sung before dinner, scarcity of food shall not be there," and also that "the new house in which it shall be sung first of all, a watching or vigil of Ireland's saints will be round it," as was revealed to Colman Elo and Coemghen (Kevin) and other holy men during the recital of this Hymn, for Patrick and his



disciples appeared to them as they recited it. Having promises of such efficacy annexed to its recital it is no wonder the Hymn became a popular devotion, and one of the 'Four Honours of St. Patrick'—*Hymnum ejus per totum tempus in solemnitate dormitionis ejus cantare*—that is, it was constantly sung on the 16th, 17th, and 18th of March, for the solemnity was celebrated for three days—the vigil, the feast, and the day after.

### III.—THE VITA SECUNDA.

The Second Life is attributed by Colgan, with some probability, to Patrick Junior, the nephew of St. Patrick, who was the son of his brother, Deacon Sannan. This Patrick Junior was probably Bishop of Rosdela, now Rostalla, in the Co. Westmeath. Afterwards, it would appear, he resigned his See and went to Armagh, where St. Patrick made him *Ostarius*, or chief sacristan, of his own Cathedral. After the death of his great uncle, Patrick Junior, it is said, retired to Glastonbury, where he ended his life in the odour of sanctity, and wrote this 'Vita Secunda,' published by Colgan. Jocelyn names Patrick Junior as one of those who wrote a Life of St. Patrick, and it would seem that he had the work in his possession. But why Colgan identifies this Second Life with that written by Patrick Junior is not clear. Its author certainly outlived St. Patrick, and St. Fiacc also, for he refers to their death, and he was perhaps the only one of those referred to by Jocelyn who survived St. Patrick; that fact may have some weight in having the Life attributed to him. In its present form it is incomplete, for it only goes as far as Patrick's famous interview with King Laeghaire on the hill of Tara. But it is a very valuable Life, written in fairly good Latin, with a few Irish phrases interposed. The writer makes the Confession the basis of his own account in the earlier part of the Saint's life, and describes it as the 'Book or Books of Patrick the Bishop'—the usual heading being—'*Inceperunt Libri Patricii Episcopi*,' as in the Book of Armagh. The writer is emphatic in his statement that St. Patrick was sent to preach in Ireland by Pope Celestine; that he was thirty years of age when he went abroad; and that he came to Ireland at the age of sixty, and spent sixty years more preaching in this country.

Colgan printed the Life from a MS. of the Abbey of St. Hubert. in the Ardennes, collating it with another which he

procured from the monastery of Alna in Hannonia ; hence Colgan calls the latter the 'Codex Alnensis.'

#### IV.—THE VITA TERTIA.

The Third Life given by Colgan was taken, as he tells us, from a manuscript of the convent of Biburg, in Bavaria, which Father Stephen White had sent to him. Its opening sections agree, almost word for word, with the Second Life ; but this Third Life is complete, whereas the Second Life, as we now have it, does not come further than St. Patrick's interview with King Laeghaire at Tara. But though brief, this Life is accurate and valuable, for it contains some important particulars, to be noted hereafter, not found in the Tripartite. Its author appears to be wholly unknown. Some consider the work to be merely a complete version of the Second Life, copied from the same original. Such is not our opinion. There is ample evidence that the Second and Third Lives came originally from different authors, although they adhered closely to some common authority which was before them. This Third Life may be that written by St. Lomman, or by St. Mel. It was certainly written in Ireland, and, so far as we can judge, by an Irishman.

#### V.—THE VITA QUARTA.

The Fourth Life is very similar to the Second and Third Lives, and many sections in the three seem to point to a common origin. It was printed by Colgan from a manuscript belonging to the monastery of Alna in Hannonia. He attributes its composition to St. Aileran the Wise ; but the only reason he had for this opinion seems to be the better style of the Latinity ; and we know, from the fragments of his writings still remaining, that Aileran was an accomplished Latin scribe. It is quite obvious, however, that it is a later Life than the Second or the Third, and the author implies as much, for he states that he heard certain things—*veracium relatione virorum*—from the narrative of truthful men.

Lanigan caustically observes that if Aileran the Wise were the author he hardly deserves his surname when he wrote such foolish things. But Lanigan himself was not always wise ; and, even at his best, we cannot accept his judgment as the standard of wisdom.

The Life is complete, and in some points valuable. The leading facts of St. Patrick's history are given in these three Lives in the same order, and sometimes almost in the same words, so that the conclusion almost forces itself upon us that they are all derived from a common original, but, at the same time, composed by different writers, who, whilst faithfully adhering to the facts of the common narrative, added here and there some things of their own. The author of this Fourth Life, whilst professing to adhere to what he found in the 'old books,' or heard from trustworthy witnesses, adds reflections of his own from time to time, and undertakes to give the narrative in a somewhat more elegant style than his predecessors. He points out, for instance, how much more necessary miracles were in those 'priscis temporibus' than in his own time—a statement which goes to show that he lived long after the time of St. Patrick, and cannot have been one of the contemporaries of the Saint, who, according to Jocelyn, wrote the Life of our great Apostle. It is a pity we have no clue to the identity of the author; but, as he mentions Brendan, Columba, and other saints, he cannot have flourished earlier than the end of the sixth century.

#### VI.—THE VITA QUINTA BY PROBUS.

The heading of the Fifth Life is as follows:—"Beati Patritii, Primi Praedicatoris et Episcopi totius Britanniae, Vita et Actus, Auctore Probo."

If this title were given to the Life by Probus himself, it would be inconsistent with his own narrative, and with authentic history. For surely no one could truly describe St. Patrick as the 'first preacher and bishop of all Britain.' 'Britanniae' is probably a transcriber's mistake for 'Hiberniae,' but it goes to show that the copy was made in Britain, or somewhere else outside Ireland, where there was not much knowledge of Erin's history at that time.

Probus is not an Irish name; and Paulinus, at whose request Probus wrote the Life, is not an Irish name. Still there are many expressions in the text which clearly prove that Probus himself was an Irishman, and probably Paulinus also. For instance he speaks of Palladius as having been sent to convert *this* island to Christianity. He speaks of the port at the mouth of the Vartry river in Cualann as 'a celebrated port of ours'—*apud nos clarissimum*; he describes the Irish Sea as *our* sea; he speaks of St. Patrick's

preaching as filling all *our* lands with the faith of Christ, and other similar expressions are used, which clearly show that he regarded both himself and Brother Paulinus, whom he addressed, as Irishmen.

If we could identify Paulinus, it would be easy to fix the date of the Life. The most probable conjecture is that of Colgan, who surmises that he was that Maelpoil whom the Four Masters, at A.D. 920, describe as the son of Ailell, a Bishop, Anchorite, and Scribe of Leath Cuinn, and Abbot of Indedhnen. The Chronicon Scotorum gives the last title as 'Head of Purity,'<sup>1</sup> and the Annals of Ulster further add that he was of the race of Aedh Slaine, that is the southern Hy Niall, who dwelt chiefly in Meath. In that case his monastery would most likely be somewhere in Meath; and it would be a very probable conjecture that Probus belonged to the same community, for which he wrote this Life, at their Abbot's request.

The chief difficulty against this theory is the strange blunders that Probus makes in his interpretation of Irish words, and his reference to Irish names of places. For instance—if it is not an error of the scribe, and it does not look like it—he described the place of St. Patrick's captivity more than once as near Slieve Egli, or Cruachan Aigle,<sup>2</sup> instead of Slieve Mis—which is a very serious error, and shows that the author had little or no knowledge of Ireland. Then, again, he foolishly interprets St. Patrick's phrase, 'Modebroth,' as, 'Your labour will not profit you'; and his attempt to translate the poetic prophecy of Laeghaire's Druids regarding the coming of St. Patrick is simply ridiculous.

Moreover, he inverts the order of events, even in essential points, and represents St. Patrick as having been three times a captive, and as having come to Ireland even before Palladius to preach the Gospel, and having failed in his mission returning to get due authority from St. Celestine. All this goes to show that the writer was not well made up, either in the facts of St. Patrick's life, or in the topography of his own country.

Elsewhere, too, he makes the extraordinary assertion that the angel declared to St. Patrick that he (Patrick) would baptise 'Scotiam atque Britanniam, Angliam et Normanniam.' The prophecy is absurd, but it gives a

<sup>1</sup> Cenn Indhidnain.

<sup>2</sup> Cruachan Aigle was the ancient name of Croaghpatrick, in the Co. Mayo.

clue to the date of the writer. The Normans settled in the province that bears their name about the year A.D. 906, so that, if our conjecture as to the identity of Paulinus be correct, the Life was written, say, between A.D. 910 and 920. The motive of ascribing this curious prophecy to the Angel Victor was, in all probability, a hope that it might tend to soften the ferocious Northmen of Ireland, and bring them nearer to Christianity, to which, at the time, many of them were gravitating in various parts of Ireland.

Still, this Life by Probus has its own value.<sup>1</sup> It seems to be an independent authority; and although it is clear the writer had St. Patrick's Confession before him, from which he quotes textually, he must have also had other authorities which we have no longer in our hands. But his knowledge of ancient Irish was very poor, and some of its phrases certainly puzzled him. He was unacquainted, too, with the country, for he entirely lacks the accurate descriptions of the Tripartite in portraying the labours of the Saint.

Hence, some writers have concluded—and it is not improbable—that he was an Irishman living in England or France or Germany, who had left this country in his youth, and had almost forgotten the little he ever knew of its language and its geography. But, being an Irishman, he was requested to write a Latin Life of the great St. Patrick, which the members of the community could understand, and, doubtless, he made the best use he could of the materials at his disposal.

Some have accordingly identified him with an Irish Probus, who was a monk of St. Alban's Monastery at Mayence, the correspondent of Lupus of Ferrières. The Annals of Fulda give the death of this Probus in 859. Others assign him an earlier date, and say that Paulinus, for whom he wrote the Life, was Patriarch of Aquileia, whose death is marked under A.D. 804. There seems to be no argument in favour of this view except the name of the Patriarch. We know, on the other hand, that there was a great exodus of Irish monks to Germany, especially in the ninth century. Fulda and Mayence were both

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<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Moran, a very high authority, speaks approvingly of Probus, and says that his authority, so far from being weakened, has been confirmed every day more and more by the researches of modern archæologists.—*Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, October, 1866.

places likely to receive them, so that if we find a Probus in St. Alban's Monastery of Mayence at the middle of the ninth century, it is not at all unlikely that he was the author of the *Vita Quinta*, although it is not easy to find a 'Normannia' at that date.

Colgan, however, thinks it much more probable that Probus must be identified with Caeneachair, Lector of Slane, who was one of those burned in its Round Tower by the Danes in A.D. 948. The name Probus is the Latin equivalent of his Irish name. He was a professor in the College of Slane; he was a contemporary of Paulinus, and also a neighbour, so that we might fairly expect he would be the person to execute such a literary work for his venerable neighbour, Bishop Paulinus. A man might know the Middle Irish well, it is said, and still know little of the Older Irish of the ancient Lives of St. Patrick, and know little also of the topography of other parts of Ireland. To that opinion we adhere, but not without hesitation.

#### VII.—THE VITA SEXTA.

The Sixth Life was written by Jocelyn of Furness. Colgan thinks that he was a Welshman, and belonged to the monastery of Chester. In 1182 John de Curci expelled the secular Canons from the Cathedral of Down,<sup>1</sup> and imported in their stead a colony of 'black monks,' apparently from Chester. Amongst them was Jocelyn, probably their prior, who, at the request of Thomas, Archbishop of Armagh, and of Malachi, Bishop of Down, undertook to write the Life of St. Patrick in a more elegant style than his previous biographers, 'pruning the superfluous, expunging the false, and elucidating the obscure statements' of the older Lives, composed, he says, by illiterate men. The author, however, is rather pedantic in his style, aiming at what he considers elegance of language, rather than accuracy of statement. Thomas (O'Connor) was created Archbishop of Armagh in 1185, so the Life cannot have been written before that date. Neither was it written after 1186, for it contains no reference to the invention and translation of the bodies of Patrick.

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<sup>1</sup> Father O'Laverty thinks it probable that Jocelyn was one of the Cistercian monks brought from Furness to the Abbey of Inch, near Downpatrick, by John de Curci, in 1180.

Brigid and Columcille, which certainly took place in that year. Hence, we infer that it was composed in 1185-86, and finished before the alleged invention took place. Malachi, the Bishop of Down at the time, was not the great St. Malachi, who died in 1148, but another Malachi, the third of the name, who ruled the See from 1176 to 1200, or perhaps 1201.

Jocelyn wrote at the request of John de Curci, the conqueror and plunderer of Ulster, but the "loving servant of St. Patrick," who wished to have the Saint's life and deeds worthily recorded. Some Irishmen, however, sneered. it would seem, at an Anglican monk undertaking such a task, but the monk resolved to treat them merely as 'envious vipers,' and, like St. Paul, shake them off his hand into the fire. So he tells us himself.

One fact stated by the author lends considerable authority to the narrative of Jocelyn. He quotes more than once a Life of St. Patrick written by his nephew, St. Mel. Unfortunately, that Life appears to be no longer extant, and hence we are unable to judge of the accuracy of Jocelyn's quotations or references; but that he had such a work before him cannot be doubted, and this lends to the Vita Sexta an authority which otherwise it certainly would not possess. The fact, too, that he wrote in Downpatrick may have given him an opportunity of collecting local traditions regarding the Saint, which all the ecclesiastical writers did not possess. Jocelyn, like his countryman and contemporary, Gerald de Barri, was credulous; but we have no reason to doubt his veracity, and hence the Sixth Life is of considerable value, as reflecting the current views of the literary men of the time, in the North-East of Ireland, regarding the history of our national Apostle.

#### VIII.—THE VITA SEPTIMA.

The Seventh Life is the famous Tripartite, as Colgan called it, and is far the most valuable and complete of all the extant Lives of the Apostle. Neither the time nor place of its composition, nor the name of the author, can now be ascertained with certainty: but that he was a master of the Gaelic tongue, was fairly acquainted with Latin, and had a marvellous knowledge of the topography of all Ireland, is quite evident from every page of his work. He traces the missionary journeys of the Saint with the

greatest care, showing an accurate acquaintance with the history of the personages, and the names of the places, which he often describes with minute fidelity. No doubt the writer had existing records before him, but he must have mastered them thoroughly, and reproduced them exactly, if he did not actually follow the footsteps of the Saint throughout the land. In this respect neither Muirchu nor Tirechan gives us the same abundant details, nor the same vivid local colouring to the narrative. And yet this Life was spoken as a homily in three parts, addressed, probably, on the three festive days of the Saint, the 16th, 17th and 18th of March, to the religious community in which the speaker resided, but which, unfortunately, we cannot identify.

Colgan attributes this Life to St. Evin of Monasterevan, who flourished about the middle of the sixth century, and regards it as that which Jocelyn describes as written partly in Latin and partly in Irish, and attributes to St. Evin. O'Curry, on linguistic grounds alone, would be prepared to admit that the work might have been written by St. Evin, but he was staggered by the various references in the text to personages who flourished, and events which took place, at a much later period—some so late as the ninth, and even the beginning of the tenth century. Stokes—who was the first to print the Irish Tripartite, and has given us an admirable edition, not only of that work itself, but of almost all the Patrician documents derived from the Book of Armagh and other sources—holds that the "Tripartite could not have been written before the middle of the tenth century, and that it was probably compiled in the eleventh."

His reasons are partly linguistic, and partly historical. The manifold forms of Early Middle Irish to be found in the text tend to show, he says, that the work was compiled in the eleventh century, and we must admit with him that some of the historical personages referred to certainly flourished in the ninth century. We will only observe, with reference to the first argument, that, in case of popular works like the Tripartite, it was quite a common custom for the scribes of successive generations to modify the more ancient linguistic forms, so as to render them intelligible to the scholars of their own times; and also to interpolate passages of their own, to show the fulfilment of the alleged prophecies quoted in their text. We believe it can be easily shown that the introduction of later grammatical



forms, and of later historical events, can be easily explained, if we only bear in mind these two undoubted facts. We do not attribute the Tripartite in its present form to St. Evin, but it appears to us that there is nothing to prevent his being the original author of the work.

#### IX.—THE BOOK OF ARMAGH.

We need not now give a full account of this, the most authentic and venerable of all our ancient historical books. It has been conclusively shown by the late Dr. Graves that the Book was copied in its present form for Torbach, heir of Patrick—who was Primate of Armagh in the year 807-8, for his death took place in July of the latter year. The actual scribe was Ferdornach, who died in A.D. 845; but it is expressly stated he made this copy from the dictation of Torbach, heir of Patrick. So the Book was written in 808, or rather copied from earlier documents, which the Primate himself read from the old copies in his custody, even then, perhaps, partially obliterated.

The first document in the Book of Armagh is the MEMOIR, or brief Life of St. Patrick, by Muirchu Maccu Machteni. He tells us, in the short preface, that he wrote it in obedience to the command of Aedh (or Hugh), Bishop of Sletty, who died A.D. 698. The writer apologises for his rude style—*vilis sermo*—and refers to the different accounts of the Acts of Patrick, even then in circulation, which made it a difficult task for him to produce one clear and certain narrative.

The first leaf of this invaluable Memoir is lost from the Book of Armagh, but its contents have been supplied by Stokes and others, in their published copies from the Brussels MSS.<sup>1</sup> The first page of leaf 9 of the Book of Armagh contains the *Dicta Sancti Patritii*, written in rather rude Latin; and, though immediately following Muirchu's narrative, they appear to be otherwise disconnected with it, and were probably not written by him originally, but by some other scribe.

The second important document in the Book of Armagh, beginning at the second page of leaf 9, is the *Notes* or *Annotations of Tirechan* on the Life of St. Patrick. They do not, as their name implies, form a consecutive narrative,

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<sup>1</sup> Published by the Rev. Edmund Hogan, S.J., of University College, Dublin, in the *Anecdota Bollandiana*.

but were partially copied from an older book, and partially jotted down from the dictation of Bishop Ultan, of Ardbraccan, who died in A. D. 656, and was tutor or foster-father of Tirechan. The book of Bishop Ultan, to which Tirechan refers, appears to be the *Commemoratio Laborum*, which was said to have been written by St. Patrick himself. If this be not the Confession, as we have it, that work is no longer in existence. These Notes of Tirechan being so early, and derived from sources so authentic, form, perhaps, the most authoritative of any of the documents regarding St. Patrick. The *Additions to Tirechan's Notes* in the Book of Armagh comprise many entries which relate to the associates of St. Patrick, and give short notices of their missionary labours. Some briefer notes still, or catchwords, have been written in a smaller hand, and by a different scribe, in this part of the Book of Armagh, but all bearing on the history of St. Patrick.

At folios 20 and 21 we have what is called the *Book of the Angel*—*Liber Angeli*—which is quite distinct from Muirchu's Memoir and from Tirechan's Notes. It purports to be a Revelation made to Patrick by an Angel, as he rested or slept one day near his city of Armagh. The Angel, in reward for the Saint's great labours, by command of God, defines the boundaries of his vast See, and also the rights and privileges which it was to enjoy amongst the men of Erin for all time. The record is valuable as furnishing us with an early and authentic account, not only of the extent of the See of Patrick, but also of the manifold prerogatives which it enjoyed from time immemorial. This record was of particular value at a later period, when the Primate made his periodical visitations, not only in Ulster, but also in Munster and Connaught, and everywhere 'received his due.' Perhaps it was to lend additional authority to this venerable record of the privileges and jurisdiction of Armagh, that, in after times, it was attributed to an Angel, sent specially to reveal them to Patrick. This would not be considered wonderful, as it was known that Patrick was often privileged to receive angelic visitants.

The last and most important Patrician document in the Book of Armagh is the CONFESSIO of St. Patrick. He himself at the very end pathetically says—"And this is my Confession before I die." The copyist adds—"Thus far the volume which Patrick wrote with his own hand"—which seems to refer to the Confession only, and to indicate that the document which the copyist had before him was

the autograph writing of the Apostle himself. The Confession is admitted by all competent critics to be authentic, for the evidence, especially the intrinsic evidence, is quite conclusive. The Confession never could have been the work of a forger. The best edition is perhaps that of Haddan and Stubbs. We shall examine its authenticity more fully hereafter.

#### X.—THE EPISTLE TO COROTICUS.

The *Epistle to Coroticus* is not contained in the Book of Armagh, but the similarity of its style to that of the Confession, as well as its references and subject matter, leave no doubt as to its authorship. Both these documents are of supreme importance, and must form the groundwork of anything that purports to be a genuine record of the life and labours of St. Patrick.

## CHAPTER II.

### ST. PATRICK'S BIRTHPLACE AND FAMILY.

#### I.—HIS BIRTHPLACE.

DURING the past century a great controversy for the first time arose regarding the birthplace of St. Patrick. As the question is fully discussed in an appendix to this volume, we need not now refer to it at length. It appears to us to be quite clear from the account which the Saint gives of himself, both in his Confession and in the Epistle to Coroticus, that he was a native of the Roman province of Britain, and in all probability was born on the banks of the Clyde in Scotland. He tells us that his father, Calpornius, who was both a deacon and decurion, dwelt<sup>1</sup> in the village of Bannavem (or Bonnavem) Taberniæ, and had a small farm near it, whence he himself was carried off a captive. He describes Roman Britain<sup>2</sup> as his native country<sup>3</sup> and the home of his parents or relations,<sup>4</sup> but as a different country from Gaul, where dwelt the saints of God, his spiritual brethren. Elsewhere he says that after his escape from captivity in Ireland he lived with his parents<sup>5</sup> in Britain (Britannis), who welcomed him as a son, and earnestly besought him to remain at home and leave them no more.

In the Epistle to Coroticus he implies that the soldiers of that British prince were his fellow-citizens, and fellow-citizens of the Christian Romans<sup>6</sup> (of Britain), but were unworthy of the name, clearly indicating that both he and they were all citizens of Roman Britain, although Coroticus had allied himself with the Scots or Irish and the apostate Picts. It is therefore beyond doubt that St. Patrick was a native of Roman Britain and not of any part of Gaul, if we accept his own statements, as contained in his own authentic writings.

But in what part of Roman Britain was this Bannavem Taberniæ, which the Saint tells us was his father's home?

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<sup>1</sup> Fuit vico, or in vico, Bannavem Taberniæ.

<sup>2</sup> Britannias.

<sup>3</sup> Patria.      <sup>4</sup> Parentes.

<sup>5</sup> Cum parentibus meis may refer to either parents or relations.

<sup>6</sup> Sanctorum Romanorum.

We need not pay any attention to identifications of places which are based merely on fanciful resemblances between ancient and modern proper names. It is obviously a much safer course to follow the guidance of the old authorities, some of whom flourished shortly after St. Patrick himself. It is out of the question to suppose that those ancient writers had lost all memory of the Saint's birthplace and native country; and, as might be expected, we find that they are unanimous in their statements on these two points.

Bannavem, or Bonnavem, is an old Celtic word, which is still in frequent use as a place-name both in Ireland and Scotland. It is composed of two root words, *bon* or *bun* and *avon*, meaning simply the end or mouth of a river at the point where it falls into a sea or lake or larger river. In this sense we have in Ireland the forms Bunavan,<sup>1</sup> Bunowen or Bunown,<sup>2</sup> and Bonaveen, giving names to several townlands situated on the banks of rivers, near their mouth or their junction with another river. A similar usage is found in Scotland, especially in the Highlands, where the Celtic names are most abundant.<sup>3</sup>

The curious word "Tabernæ" has given rise to much speculation, yet its meaning is quite obvious. The nominative form Tabernia is, Du Cange tells us, put for the more classical form Taberna, which means any tavern, shop, tent, or temporary habitation. In St. Patrick's Confession the word appears to be taken in a collective sense, as if it were a proper name derived from Tabernæ, and meaning tavern-field or tent-field. Such would be *a priori* a natural explanation of the place-name used by St. Patrick in the Confession to designate his father's dwelling-place, which was certainly somewhere in Roman Britain.

Now, what do we find in the Lives of the Saint? Fiacc says that Patrick was born in Nemthor, or Nempthur, and his scholiast or commentator informs us that Nemthor was a town in North Britain, namely, Ail Cluade, or the Rock of the Clyde, and he adds that the family of the Saint belonged to the Britons of Ail Cluade.

Nempthur, then, is merely another, probably a more ancient, name for Ail Cluade, which is itself another name for Dunbrittan, subsequently corrupted into Dunbarton, the Fort of the Britons on the Clyde.

<sup>1</sup> Parish of Ahascragh, Co. Galway.

<sup>2</sup> Parish of Bunown, Westmeath.

<sup>3</sup> Like Bunessan in Mull.

The Second Life gives us further information. It states that Patrick was born in the Plain of Taburne, or Taberne, which it interprets to mean the Plain of the Tents,<sup>1</sup> and adds, "it was so called because the Roman army during the cold of winter pitched their tents in that Plain." It is clear, then, that Taberne came to be a proper name, meaning simply Tent-field. This Second Life does not expressly state where Taberne was situated, but it clearly implies that it was in the immediate neighbourhood of Nemthor, where it tells us young Patrick was brought up.<sup>2</sup>

All this leads us to conclude that the 'Plain of the Tents'—*Campus Taberne*—is equivalent to 'Bannavem Taberniae' of the Confession, and was a plain close to Nemthor or Dunbarton<sup>3</sup> Rock. The Third Life makes exactly the same statement, formally explaining the 'Campus Taburniae' as the Plain of the Tents, and implying that the 'Bannavem' of the Confession is equivalent to the 'campus' or plain near the river mouth.

The Fourth Life gives further interesting particulars. It states that Patrick was born in the town of Nemthor,<sup>4</sup> the meaning of which (Nemthor) in Latin is 'turre caelestis,' or heavenly tower, (from the Gaelic *nem*, heaven, and *tor*, a tower). That town, we are then told, is situated in the *Campus Taburniae*, which means the Plain of the Tents, because the Roman armies once pitched their tents there; and then the author of the Life expressly adds that, in the British tongue, 'Taberne' is equivalent to 'tents'—*tabernacula*. This statement is important, because it shows that *Taburnia* is merely the Latin for the British proper name *Taberne*:<sup>5</sup> and that the place took this name from the tents of the Roman soldiers usually pitched there.

The writer also places this Plain of the Tents in the 'region' of Strath Clyde,<sup>6</sup> in which region St. Patrick was, he tells us, conceived and born. These first four Lives,

<sup>1</sup> *Campus tabernaculorum.*

<sup>2</sup> *Nutritus ergo est in Nemthor ille puer.*

<sup>3</sup> The Third Life equates Nemthor and the Plain of Taburnia.

<sup>4</sup> *In oppido Nemthor nomine.*" As Skene observes, the Irish *Dun* is generally translated by "oppidum."—*Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*: Preface.

<sup>5</sup> *Britannica autem lingua Campus Taberne idem Campus Tabernaculorum dicitur.*

<sup>6</sup> *In regionem Strato Clude. In qua terra conceptus et natus est Patritius.*

therefore, bear concurrent testimony that St. Patrick was born at or near Dunbarton, on the banks of the Clyde.

It is obvious also that the Bannavem Taberniae of the Confession is the same as the Campus Taburniae, or Campus Taberne of the Lives, and not only the testimony of those early writers, but the nature of the place and the facts of history corroborate the statements in the Lives.

A glance at the map will show that the river Leven, issuing from Loch Lomond, flows through the town of Dunbarton, and falls into the Clyde, just under the rocky brow of the ancient British fortress. The left or eastern bank is now covered with the numerous workshops of a great shipbuilding yard, but in the days of St. Patrick it was an open plain stretching away to the east under the shadow of the Kilpatrick hills, which here press close on the banks of the Clyde. At the same point the great Roman wall extending to the Firth of Forth had its western limit, which was defended by strong fortifications *and a standing camp* against the incursions of the turbulent Picts and Scots, who were constantly making raids on the Roman Province. This great plain would therefore naturally form the Campus Martius, where the Roman troops would encamp, for it was defended on the west by the Rock of Dunbarton, on the south by the Clyde, and on the north by the great wall running up to the roots of the hills. This was the plain of Bannavem at the junction of the two rivers, where the Roman troops had their encampment, which caused it to be known as the Plain of the Tents, that is, the Bannavem Taberniae, to which St. Patrick himself refers in the Confession. Dunbarton, the British capital, was the citadel of this military station, and the colony which grew up around them became, in course of time, a municipium, or self-governing Roman colony, with the privilege of selecting its own municipal governors. They were called decurions, and were selected from its most wealthy and influential citizens. The father of St. Patrick was one of them. His position as a decurion of the municipium entitled him to rank as a noble, and hence the Saint describes himself as inheriting nobility from his father; but by leaving his native town he 'sold,'<sup>1</sup> or forfeited, that nobility, in order to devote himself to the conversion of the natives of the barbarous island of Hiberio,

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<sup>1</sup> We can hardly think that he sold it for money;—no, it was to gain the souls of men he sold it.

which, though not far distant, was yet altogether beyond the pale of Roman jurisdiction and civilization. It will thus be seen that the great plain eastward of the junction of the Leven and the Clyde was, in the strictest sense of the word, a *Bannavem Taberniae*, a plain where the two rivers met, and then came to be known as *Tabern* or *Tentfield*, from the tents of the Roman legion usually stationed there, to protect the western extremity of the Roman wall, as well as the estuary of the Clyde, against the hostile incursions of the Picts and Scots.

In all this there is no speculation, no arbitrary identification of words, no guess-work founded on the uncertain readings of uncertain manuscripts. We merely appeal to the testimony of ancient writers, corroborated by the undoubted facts of history.

And it is not merely the authors of the first four Lives of St. Patrick who bear this testimony. The Fifth, which some regard as a very accurate Life, was written by a certain *Probus*, who, though apparently of Irish origin, seems to have composed his work either in France or Germany. But he, too, states in his very first paragraph that Patrick was born in Roman Britain—in *Britanniis*—that his father *Calphurnius* dwelt in a village of the district<sup>1</sup> known as *Bannave Tiburniae*, which, he tells us, was 'near to the western sea.'<sup>2</sup> This description also most accurately applies to *Dunbarton*, for there the Clyde just opens its arms to meet the advancing sea, which, from that point westward, becomes a great estuary, whose waters at the present time the coasting boats and mighty ocean steamers are ploughing with screw and paddle, both by night and day.

The Sixth Life was written by *Jocelyn* in the twelfth century, and he, too, tells exactly the same story, that the father of Patrick was *Calpornius*, a native of Britain, who dwelt in the 'pagus,' or village, of *Taburnia*, which means the Plain of the Tents, because the Roman armies had pitched their tents therein, *Taburnia* being, he adds, close to *Nemthor*, and bounding the western sea.<sup>3</sup> *Jocelyn* thus confirms the testimony of all the writers who had gone before him.

The Seventh Life of St. Patrick is the famous *Tripartite*,

<sup>1</sup> *Regione*.

<sup>2</sup> *Haud procul a mari occidentali*.

<sup>3</sup> *Mari Hibernico collimitans habitatione*.



which has been so carefully edited in the Rolls series by Dr. Whitley Stokes. As might be expected, the author of the Tripartite does not differ from the other ancient authorities. "As to Patrick," he says, "of the Britons of Ail Cluade was he. In Nemthor, moreover, he was born. Calpurn was his father's name, and Concess was the name of his mother."<sup>1</sup>

We thus find, on careful examination, that all the Seven Lives given by Colgan, written at different times from the sixth to the twelfth century, tell in substance the same story of Patrick's family and of his birthplace. Their very discrepancies in minor details furnish a new proof of their authenticity and credibility, for if their authors had merely copied from each other, or from a common original, there would be no divergencies at all.

We find, too, that all the great Irish scholars of the seventeenth century held the same opinion—Usher, Colgan, Ware, O'Flaherty, and the rest whose names are given elsewhere. It was only early in the nineteenth century that Lanigan started a new hypothesis, which he certainly has not proved, that St. Patrick was born in France, near Boulogne-sur-mer; and that consequently all the ancient writers of the Saint's Acts, as well as the great modern scholars who followed in their footsteps, were entirely mistaken in their statements.

Lanigan was a learned man, but stubborn, wrong-headed, and somewhat fond of originality. Hence, when he once took up an opinion he adhered to it at any cost, and with small regard for the views of his opponents, of whom he speaks very slightly, even when they were, like Colgan, men far more learned than himself in Irish history and antiquities. We shall elsewhere discuss the views of Lanigan, which, in our opinion, have nothing but their novelty to recommend them. Although very ingenious, they are wholly unsustained by argument, either from history or authority. We conclude, therefore, without any reasonable doubt, that St. Patrick was born and nurtured during his early youth at or near Dunbarton, on the banks of the Clyde, in the district which was then known as the 'Plain of the Tents,' extending from Dunbarton to Kilpatrick.

The common opinion is that he was born at or near

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<sup>1</sup> See Stokes' *Tripartite*, Vol. I., p. 9. We take all the Tripartite readings from this excellent edition.

Kilpatrick, which is at the eastern extremity of this plain, about four miles east of Dunbarton. He was certainly taken to be baptized there; but we think his father lived at the municipium of Dunbarton or Alclyde, and that in all probability he was himself born there. The point cannot now be definitely settled, as there is no tradition fixing the site of the 'flag-stone' on which he was born.

## II.—TIME OF BIRTH.

As will be seen hereafter, the ancient authorities generally assign the death of St. Patrick to the year 493,<sup>1</sup> when he was in the hundred and twentieth year of his age. Accepting this statement as true, the birth of the Saint must be assigned to the year A.D. 373, so that, if he were born after the 17th of March in that year, he would not have quite completed the one hundred and twentieth year of his age at the time of his death; but if born earlier in the year he would have completed that age, and that he was about 120 years when he died is, as Todd observes, the best attested fact of his entire history. Some ancient authorities, however, give 372 as the year of his birth. Marianus Scotus the Chronicler expressly says that he was born in that year in the *island* of Britain, and his authority on such a point must be held to be of great weight.

Assuming that Patrick was born on the banks of the Clyde in the year 373, it will be well to get some idea of the state of the country at that time. He was by birth a Brito-Roman; that is, a Roman citizen of British origin, and born in the British municipal town of Nemthor or Ail-Cluade. At this time—that is, about A.D. 369—Roman Britain was divided into five provinces, of which Valentia was the youngest, having been formally constituted a province by Theodosius, after a victorious campaign against the Picts and Scots in that year. It was called Valentia in honour of the Emperor Valens, and included, it is commonly said, all the territory between the Walls—that is, between the Wall of Hadrian, extending from the Solway Firth to the Tyne and the Wall of Antoninus, just then renewed by Theodosius, which extended from Old

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<sup>1</sup> The learned Reeves has said that 'it is the best established era in his history'—that is, his death in 493.

Kilpatrick on the Clyde,<sup>1</sup> where the hills close upon the river to a point on the Firth of Forth, a little to the west of the present Forth Bridge. As it is our view that St. Patrick was born in the Roman municipality at the western end of the Wall, which was always garrisoned by a strong body of Roman troops, it may be well to describe the Wall in the words of one who went over the ground and knew it well.<sup>2</sup>

It consisted of a large rampart of intermingled stone and earth, strengthened by sods of turf, and must have originally measured twenty feet in height, and twenty-four feet in breadth at the base. It was surmounted by a parapet, having a level platform behind it for the protection of its defenders. In front there extended along its whole course an immense fosse, averaging about forty feet broad and twenty feet deep. To the southward of the whole was a military way, presenting the usual appearance of a Roman causeway road.

This vast structure was first erected about the year 140 by Tollius Urbicus, a Roman general sent by Antoninus to repress the inroads of the Caledonians. But the Highland tribes again and again burst through the Wall, so that Severus was obliged to come in person, about the year 208, to teach them a salutary lesson. Severus penetrated far beyond the Wall into the heart of the Highlands, and so punished the northern tribes that they were obliged to sue for peace.

Severus reconstructed the Wall from the Forth to the Clyde, and planted several strong outposts in the Highland territory, so that the invaders were for a time effectually curbed, and confined to the fastnesses of their native mountains.

There were, however, several subsequent revolts, when the tribes of the north crossed the Wall, and harried the Roman territories. The most formidable of these took place in A.D. 360, only a few years before the birth of St. Patrick. It appears that the Picts from the north, the Scots or Irish from the west, the Attacots from the mountains of Galloway, and the Saxons from the eastern shore, all attacked the Roman province simultaneously. It was the most formidable of the barbarian incursions that had

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<sup>1</sup> Both Beda and Gildas say the Wall terminated on the west 'juxta urbem Alcluith'—that is, Dunbarton.—*Hist. Eccles.*, B. I. ch. 12

<sup>2</sup> Skene. *Celtic Scotland*, vol. I. p. 78.

yet taken place, and affrighted not only the loyal Britons, but even the authorities in Rome itself. The 'vagabond'<sup>1</sup> Scots from Ireland are particularly referred to as harassing the province, because, as they came generally by water, the Imperial troops never knew when or where they were about to make an incursion.

This formidable coalition of the barbarians demanded a consummate general; and so Theodosius, afterwards known as the Great, was sent to repel and chastise the raiders. This was in A.D. 369; and it is very probable that amongst the high officials who accompanied the victorious general may have been Colpurnius, the father of the future saint, who most likely had served under Theodosius in Gaul, and accompanied him to his native Britain. That great general not only drove off the invaders, but also renewed the Wall once more, and strengthened the garrisons that defended its various stations from the Forth to the Clyde. For this we have the express testimony of the Roman historian, Ammianus Marcellinus. It may be assumed, then, as quite certain that during this campaign the plain from Dunbarton to Kilpatrick would have been filled with Roman troops, for it was their strongest position along the whole line of the Wall, so that it might well receive the name, if it had not received it previously, of *Bannavem Taberniæ*, or the River-Énd Plain of the Tents. We have said that Nemthor was a Roman municipium or free-town, with the privilege of self-government. This may be fairly deduced from the language of St. Patrick himself, for he expressly states that his father was a *Decurio*, and leaves us to infer that he held that office in the town where he lived at the time of the Saint's birth.

We know both from Bede and Adamnan that after the departure of the Romans from Britain, in A.D. 410, the Britons of the North-West of the Roman Province succeeded in establishing an independent kingdom, extending from the Derwent in Cumberland to the Firth of Clyde. The capital of this kingdom was the strongly-fortified position called Alcluith by the Britons themselves; but by the Gauls it was more commonly designated *Dunbreatan*, or *Dunbrittan*, from which we have the modern form of *Dumbarton*, or more correctly *Dunbarton*. During the Roman occupation it was the strongest outpost of their empire, and from immemorial ages was regarded as the

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<sup>1</sup> *Scoti per diversa vagantes.*

great stronghold of the Britons in the North. We know from Ptolemy that the northern tribes, both British and Caledonian, had several 'towns,'<sup>1</sup> which were probably stockaded fortresses in strong positions, held by chosen warriors for the defence of the frontier. But there was no position in Scotland so strong by nature, and so easily defensible, as the Rock of the Clyde, for it was situated at the junction of the Leven with the estuary of the Clyde, approachable only by a causeway, and even when approached, absolutely inaccessible, except by one steep and narrow pathway, partially cut through the solid rock. Around this fortress grew up a British town, and round the British town a Roman town grew up in the plain along the river bank, both of which were amalgamated into 'municipium,'<sup>2</sup> or free town, whose inhabitants were one governed by their own laws, and enjoyed the right of Roman citizenship. The governing body was the local Senate or Curia, whose members were therefore called Decuriones.<sup>1</sup> The Senate chose the magistrates from amongst their own body, to whom the executive government was entrusted. Hence, St. Patrick describes himself as 'a free-man by birth,'<sup>3</sup> and not only a free-man, but a 'noble,' because the members of a senatorial family belonged to the nobles of the city; but they forfeited their status if they failed to discharge the duties<sup>4</sup> annexed to their position and office. Hence the Saint adds that he 'sold his nobility'<sup>5</sup> for the good of others,' because by going to preach the Gospel in Ireland he forfeited the privileges which he would otherwise enjoy as a decurio and magistrate of his native city.

### III.—HIS PARENTS.

St. Patrick in the Confession tells us that his father Calpurnius was a deacon, and, moreover, the son of Potitus, a priest. No manuscript copy of the Confession describes Calpurnius as a priest, although some of the Lives represent him as such. We may be sure, however, that if

<sup>1</sup> He calls them *πόλεις*.

<sup>2</sup> *Municipes sunt cives Romani ex municipiis, legibus suis et jure suo utentes.* *Gell.* 16, 13-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ingenuus fui secundum carnem.* *Epis. ad Corot.*

<sup>4</sup> The 'municipes' in fact took their name from the 'munia' they were bound to perform.

<sup>5</sup> *Vendidi enim nobilitatem meam (non erubesco neque me pœnitet) pro utilitate aliorum.* *Ad. Corot.*

Calpurnius had been at any time raised to the priesthood, the Saint would not have described himself as the son of Deacon Calpurnius, but of Priest Calpurnius, so that the silence of St. Patrick on this point may be accepted as conclusive evidence that his father was not a priest, especially when we find him referring to his grandfather Potitus the priest, in contradistinction to his father Calpurnius the deacon.

Some simple souls who know little of the history of the Church and the nature of its discipline feel somewhat startled at these statements, and cannot well understand them; others, for their own purposes, lay stress on these statements, as if they furnished a justification for the existence of a married clergy in the separated churches.

As a fact, however, there is no argument to be deduced therefrom, either in favour of the marriage of the parson, or against the celibacy of the priest.

We must bear in mind, first of all, that the question merely regards the *discipline* of the Western Church in the middle of the fourth century, and secondly, that being a pure question of discipline, it might vary, and to some extent has varied, at different times even in the Western Church.

What then was the Western discipline on this point about the middle of the fourth century?—for that is really the question at issue. And in particular, what was the discipline of the Church of Gaul?—for we may assume as certain that the British discipline on the celibacy of the clergy was not different from what it was in Gaul and Italy.<sup>1</sup>

We have no documents of the British Church bearing on this question during the fourth century, but we know that British bishops were present at some important Councils in Gaul, from which, apart from other considerations, we may fairly infer their adherence to the Gaulish, not to say the Roman, doctrine and discipline.

The Spanish Council of Elvira, celebrated probably in 305 or 306, forbids a bishop or any other cleric to keep in his house any female except his sister or a virgin daughter dedicated to the service of God.<sup>2</sup> This shows

<sup>1</sup> See especially the Letters of Pope Innocent I., and, before him, the Letters of Pope Siricius.

<sup>2</sup> Can. XXVII. Episcopus, vel quilibet alius clericus, aut sororem aut filiam virginem dicatam Deo tantum secum habeat; extraneam nequaquam habere placuit."

that men who had been married might become bishops or priests; but it shows also that after ordination they were bound to remain continent. The language is very strict, and clearly proves that the Spanish Church at the time repudiated a married clergy in the modern sense of the word—that is a clergy living with their wives. But the thirty-third Canon is even still clearer and more emphatic, leaving no doubt as to the meaning of the twenty-seventh Canon. It enacts that all bishops, priests, and deacons, or other clerics placed in the ministry should entirely abstain from their wives (if married), and beget no children; otherwise they were to be excluded from the said ministry.<sup>1</sup> The Latin is neither exact nor elegant; but there can be no doubt as to its meaning; and it is the oldest and most emphatic legislation to be found anywhere regarding the celibacy of the clergy at that time.

The Greek Church, however, was not so strict. Priests and deacons who were married before they were ordained were allowed to live with their wives; but they were not allowed to get married after ordination, except in the case of deacons who protested at the time of their ordination that they could not live in a state of celibacy.<sup>2</sup> Bishops, however, were neither allowed to marry nor to live with wives married before their ordination. The Council of Nice, if we may believe Socrates and Sozomon, influenced by the earnest remonstrance of Paphnutius, declined to make the law more rigid; and up to the present such in substance has been the discipline of the Greek Church.

But the stricter discipline of Elvira was universally adopted throughout the Latin Church in the course of the fourth century. A married man might become a bishop, priest, or deacon, as often happened, but in all cases he was required either to separate from his wife, or to live with her as a sister, from the moment of his ordination. This was the law, although, no doubt, like other laws, it was not always observed.

The Synod of Arles held in 314, at which British bishops were present, forbids in its twenty-ninth Canon priests and levites who had been married before ordination,

<sup>1</sup> *Placuit in totum prohibere episcopis, presbyteris et diaconibus, vel omnibus clericis positus in ministerio, abstinere se a conjugibus suis, et non generare filios; quicumque vero fecerit ab honore clericatus exterminetur*—See *Hefele*. Vol. I. 147.

<sup>2</sup> Council of Ancyra (314), Can. X., and Council of Neocaesarea about the same time, Can. I.

to cohabit with their wives, on the ground that such cohabitation was inconsistent with the chastity and decorum of men engaged in the daily ministry of the altar.<sup>1</sup>

A Synod of Carthage held in 387 or 390, just about the time St. Patrick became a captive, ordains that bishops, priests, and levites must abstain from all intercourse with their wives,<sup>2</sup> thus exhibiting the discipline of the African Church in the fourth century, as exactly the same as that prevalent in the Churches of Gaul and Spain. Married men might be ordained priests and bishops, as often occurred, but the law at the time required them to abstain from all marital intercourse with their wives. The discipline in Britain, and afterwards in Ireland, was exactly the same. There may, no doubt, have been crimes and abuses, but they were never sanctioned by law.

Having these principles before our mind we can easily explain the statement in the Confession. Potitus, the father of Calpurnius, may have been ordained after the death of his wife, or after separation from his wife, or after a mutual vow of chastity; but if any children were born to him after his marriage it would be a violation of the existing discipline of the Church—which certainly ought not to be rashly assumed in the case of a man deemed worthy of the priesthood. So also Calpurnius might have been ordained deacon after his marriage, or after the death of his wife, but we have no ground whatsoever for assuming that Deacon Calpurnius would violate the existing law by living with his wife after his ordination as deacon.

In many cases, indeed, not only on the Continent, but even in Ireland, it was found desirable to ordain as priests, and even as bishops, men who had been married, and whose wives were in some cases still alive, but living in continence. Such men were, doubtless, often better subjects for the sacred ministry in the infancy of the Church than untried youths,<sup>3</sup> who in their early years could not have been trained to lead lives of chastity and virtue. A married man, who had already given proof of conjugal

<sup>1</sup> *Praeterea quod dignum pudicum et honestum est suademus fratribus ut sacerdotes et levitae cum uxoribus suis non coeant, quia ministerio quotidiano occupantur. Quicumque contra hanc constitutionem fecerit a clericatus honore deponatur.* This decree, if not enacted by the first, was certainly enacted by one of the earliest Councils of Arles.

<sup>2</sup> *Hefele*, vol. II., p. 235. See also the Decretals of Pope Siricius, died 398, and of Innocent I., A.D. 404.

<sup>3</sup> As the writer of the *Life of St. Germanus* observes, the '*Societas uxoris*' was a '*testimonium castitatis*' in their case.



chastity and sober wisdom, was at that time, from many points of view, a more desirable candidate for the sacred ministry. Such was the great Paulinus of Nola, such was Germanus of Auxerre, the teacher of St. Patrick, and many other great prelates of the fourth century, but in all these cases we find it expressly stated that, in accordance with the discipline of the Church, they abstained from all marital intercourse with their wives after their ordination.

#### IV.—HIS MOTHER TONGUE.

It would be an interesting question to try to ascertain what was St. Patrick's mother tongue. We may assume it as certain that all the five languages mentioned by Bede<sup>1</sup> as prevalent in his own time in Britain were spoken, even so early as 373, on the shores of the Forth and Clyde. For the Picts certainly dwelt in the mountains to the north, and spoke their own language, of which very few traces now survive. The Scots, although they had not yet founded their kingdom of Scottish Dalriada, or Argyle, were hovering round the coast, and had undoubtedly established themselves, either as guests or masters, here and there on the western islands and headlands. The Saxons had lately arrived on the eastern shores, and their tongue might be heard at any point of the coast from Berwick to the Roman Wall abutting on the Forth. The British or Welsh tongue was, of course, spoken by the Britons of the Province of Valencia, especially in the hilly and rural districts. The Latin was spoken by all the educated classes; and was the usual language in the Roman stations along the Wall, and in all the towns under the Roman influence. It would certainly be the official language of the Roman municipality of Alclyde; and the decurions or senators, most of whom were doubtless old Roman officers or soldiers, would naturally use it, not only in their debates in the curia, but also in their own homes. It held precisely the same situation along the Clyde, as the English tongue did in the towns of the Pale in Ireland up to the seventeenth century. So we must assume that although St. Patrick and his family were Britons, still they were, as he tells us, Roman Britons of the upper class in a Roman town, and would naturally use the Roman language<sup>2</sup> in their household, as the Saint implies when, apologising for the rudeness of his Latinity,

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Ecc.* Book I., C.I.

<sup>2</sup> At best it was a corrupt and debased Latin dialect.



he declares that his speech—that is his mother tongue—was changed into a foreign tongue by reason of his captivity in Ireland, “as any one may easily infer from the flavour of my discourse.”

But although the father of St. Patrick was a Briton, there is every reason to believe that his mother was a native of Gaul. Her name in its Irish form, as given in the Tripartite, is Concess, and sometimes Conchess,<sup>1</sup> but in Latin it is usually written Conchessa, and she is said by some of the older authorities to have been a niece, and by others a sister,<sup>2</sup> of the great St. Martin of Tours. It is safer to say that she was merely a kinswoman, for the word *suir* used in the Tripartite may designate either a sister or any near relation. Jocelyn, in the Sixth Life, tells a romantic story, to explain how it was that the Gallic maiden came to find a British husband on the banks of the Clyde. Conchessa<sup>3</sup> was, he says, a maiden of striking beauty and elegant manners, who, with her elder sister, was carried off a captive to the northern extremities of Britain, and there sold as a slave to the father of Calpurnius. That youth, fascinated by her beauty, and, at the same time, admiring her devoted service and virtuous life, took the slave girl to be his wedded wife. Her sister, about the same time, married another citizen of Nemthor or Dunbarton, and so it came to pass that Patrick was born of one French maiden, and, as we are told, was nurtured by another—that is, by his mother's sister. This is an ancient, and by no means improbable, story. Some other, but later, writers suppose that Calpurnius served in France during his youth as a Roman soldier, and there met with Conchessa, whom he carried home to his native city on the banks of the Clyde, when his term of foreign service had expired.

A recent writer<sup>4</sup> tells us a still more romantic story—but, we feel bound to add, one that is purely imaginary—of how Conchessa was carried off a captive by the Franks beyond the Rhine, and there ‘the high-born Gallic maiden’ was married to one of the rude barbarians, Calpurnius by name, who afterwards became, mainly through her influence, the Christian father of a sainted family!

<sup>1</sup> Scholiast on *Secundinus*.

<sup>2</sup> *Chronicle* of Marianus Scotus, anno 372.

<sup>3</sup> The Scholiast on Fiacc says her father's name was Oemus, and that she was of the ‘Franks.’ The Lebar Brecc says, ‘of France was her kin.’

<sup>4</sup> See *Succat*, by Mgr Gradwell, p. 16.

There is much that is romantic, though not always historical, in the life of St. Patrick; but if we are to have romance at all, let us keep to the old romance of bard and sage, which is consistent with the facts narrated in the ancient Lives of our Saint, and let us not devise new stories, wholly inconsistent with what Patrick tells us himself of his country and his family. Now, one thing he says distinctly is that he inherited his nobility—he was by birth<sup>1</sup> ‘ingenuus,’ and therefore his father must have been ‘noble,’ either by birth or by official position.

It is clear also that the family of St. Patrick must have been not only ‘noble’ in the official sense, but also possessed of considerable wealth, for his father had slaves and handmaidens in his household, when the Irish raiders swooped down upon it, and carried off into captivity all those whom they did not slay. The Tripartite and the Scholiast on Fiacc assert that this raid, in which St. Patrick was carried off, took place in Armorica, and that the raiders were exiled Britons. But this is clearly a mistake, for St. Patrick himself in the Letter to Coroticus clearly implies that the raiders were Irish. “Do I not show my love of sympathetic pity by so acting towards that nation (the Irish) who once took me captive, and destroyed the men-servants and maid-servants of my father’s house?”<sup>2</sup> The Armorica, too, on which the raid was made was not the Armorica of Gaul, but the western coast-land (Airmorica) of the Clyde, where the villa of St. Patrick’s father stood.

These facts, referred to by St. Patrick himself, clearly show that the raiders were from Ireland, and naturally returned with their booty to the place from which they came. But in this there is nothing to prevent us accepting the account given in the Lebar Brecc Homily to the effect that the seven sons of Sechtmad, King of Britain, were in exile (in Ireland); that the exiles wrought rapine in the land of Britain by bloody raids; that Ulstermen were along with them in their raids, and that it was in one of them they carried off Patrick in captivity to Ireland with his sisters Tigris and Lupita—as will be explained further on.

<sup>1</sup> *Ingenuus sum secundum carnem, nam Decurione patre nascor.*

<sup>2</sup> *Numquid amo misericordiam quod sic ago erga illam gentem (Hiberniam), qui me aliquando cepit, et devastavit servos et ancillas patris mei.*

## CHAPTER III.

### ST. PATRICK'S CHILDHOOD AND BOYHOOD

#### I.—HIS CHILDHOOD.

How Patrick spent his childhood and youth in his father's home on the banks of the Clyde we have no means of knowing. We are not told how he was educated, who were his teachers, his companions, or his counsellors. We might infer from the fact that his father was a deacon that the boy was carefully trained in Christian virtue as well as in Christian knowledge, even from his earliest years. We are told also in several of the Lives that he was not only a docile and obedient youth, growing daily in grace and favour before God and men, but that he was consciously or unconsciously the author or instrument of performing many wonderful miracles almost from his very birth. Stories of this kind are very common in the lives of all our Irish saints, and there is a family likeness about them, accompanied sometimes by a certain puerility, which renders them extremely suspicious. Still, in the case of St. Patrick we cannot altogether pass them over.

If we may credit several of the Lives, there was no part of his career more supernatural than his childhood. No doubt he was predestined by God, like the prophet Jeremias, from his mother's womb, to do marvellous things for the promotion of his Master's glory. Still the account which he himself gives of his early youth is so inconsistent with the wondrous miracles which he is said to have worked during this period, that we think it best to place the two accounts in sharp contrast to each other, leaving our readers to form their own conclusions as to the credibility of the marvellous statements recorded in the Lives.

In the opening paragraphs of the Confession, St. Patrick thus speaks of himself during the period preceding his captivity:—

I was then," he says, "nearly sixteen years of age. I was ignorant of the true God; and with several thousand persons I was carried into captivity in Ireland, as we deserved, for we had departed from God, and had not kept His commandments, and we were not obedient to our priests, when they admonished us con-

cerning our salvation. Then the Lord brought upon us the chastisement of His wrath ; and He scattered us through many nations, even to the ends of the earth (that is Ireland), where now it has been allotted to my littleness to dwell amongst strangers.<sup>1</sup> And there the Lord opened my unbelieving mind (*sensum incredulitatis meae*), so that I remembered my sins, and I was converted with my whole heart to the Lord, who had regard to my humility, and took pity on my youth and on my ignorance, and guarded me before I came to know Him, and knew how to distinguish between good and evil ; moreover, He defended me and pitied me, as the father pities a son.”

This is an exact rendering of the Latin of St. Patrick, which it is not always easy to translate and explain. Now, making all due allowance for the humility of a saint, and for that exaggeration of their own faults in which saints are wont to indulge, we think it is clear that in his own estimation Patrick and his companions were guilty of some rather serious faults ; that they were not well instructed in the knowledge of God and of the law of God ; that they were indifferent to the admonitions of the clergy, and set small store on the importance of securing their eternal salvation. The Saint declares, moreover, that they were justly punished for these sins, and he is, at the same time, grateful to God for a captivity which opened their eyes to their sinful state, and caused them to have recourse to God, their merciful Father and protector.

Here the Saint paints in vivid colours the spiritual destitution of himself and his fellow-captives in language which, we think, it is impossible to reconcile with a boyhood spent in holiness and abounding in manifestations of supernatural power, such as the biographers of the Saint would attribute to him. If we are to believe his own account, young Patrick was a rather ignorant and wayward boy, caring little for his soul's welfare, until his captivity opened his eyes and softened his heart. It is true, indeed, the biographers, even when describing his miracles, were not ignorant of these words of the Saint ; but they regarded him as describing not his own case so much as the state of others who shared his captivity, and with whom, in his humility, he identifies himself. They call special attention also to that sentence in which the Saint tells how God pitied his youth and his ignorance, shielding, defending, and consoling him as a father consoles his son. In our opinion,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ubi nunc parvitas mea esse videtur inter alienigenas.*

however, these sentences refer to the spiritual awakening which was brought about by his captivity, rather than to the state of his soul before that most important and most merciful event.

With these words before their minds, our readers will now be able to judge whether the miracles narrated by his biographers as occurring during these early years can be accepted as genuine or not. It is certainly very hard to reconcile them with a belief on Patrick's part that he was ever the instrument of working miracles in his boyhood.

It is remarkable that all the early Lives given by Colgan, except that of Fiacc, narrate the same miracles, and in substantially the same words, as performed by St. Patrick, during the years of his youth. In all they number twelve, more or less, and cannot be passed over without some reference in any full Life of the Saint.

Three prodigies are stated to have occurred at the baptism of the child. There was, it seems, no priest near at hand to baptise the infant, so he was carried to a blind, flat-faced hermit called Gornias, who dwelt in the neighbourhood, that he might baptise the child. This man had a great reputation for sanctity, but he had neither sight to read nor water to baptise. Thereupon, taking the hand of the infant in his own, he formed the sign of the cross with it on the ground, when lo! a stream of water at once burst forth, with which he first washed his face, and found his sight thereupon restored; then taking the book he read out the Order of Baptism, although he had been blind from his birth, and thus baptised the child in that miraculous stream. A church, in the form of a cross, was afterwards built over that fountain, and the well itself might be seen near the altar, 'as the learned say.' The place where the church was built was not far from the place where the child was born, and where the wonderful flag was to be seen on which he was first laid. "It is still held in great honour," says the author of the Third Life, "on account of perjurers. For the perjurers, when they swore upon it, saw it grow moist, as if it bewailed their crimes with tears, but if the accused swear the truth it remains in its natural state."

Here, indeed, we have four miracles—that of the sweating flag, which was a standing marvel; and then the miraculous fountain: the recovery of his sight by the blind man, Gornias: and his reading letters that he never knew, as he was blind from his birth. In some of the Lives he is

even said to have been a priest,<sup>1</sup> no doubt because he undertook to baptise; but in the other Lives he is described, not as a priest, but as a holy hermit.

It is also said that the old church of Kilpatrick, close to the Clyde, about three miles east of Dunbarton, was the scene of these wonderful events. We went carefully over the ground. The existing church is not a very ancient building, but it is surrounded by a large churchyard in which there are some tombs dating from the sixteenth century. There is no doubt that it is built on the site of an earlier church dedicated to our Saint, which gave its name to the place. We could find no traces of St. Patrick's flag, and we believe that it was not there, but somewhere near Dunbarton, although now it is not to be found in that incredulous land. We inquired carefully for the well. At first we could find no trace of it; but presently we met an old woman, who pointed out the spot where 'St. Patrick's well used to be.' She had often carried water from it herself, 'and very good water it was'; but some nine or ten years ago the local authority of Kilpatrick closed up the well, which was already half filled with rubbish, so that now nothing remains to mark the spot except a few stones of the wall that once surrounded it, rising still above the surface, and the few venerable trees that kept its holy waters cool beneath their shade even in the hottest summer. It is the other side of the road just opposite the churchyard; and it is not improbable that the old church was built on the very spot, or perhaps the ancient fountain moved away from the church, as sometimes happens. But one thing is clear, that the good people of Kilpatrick have small reverence for blessed wells, or even for the saint who gave his name to their town, for otherwise they surely would never allow St. Patrick's Well to be filled with rubbish on the very margin of the highway, at the very gate of their ancient church. We almost regretted that the truth of history compelled us to seek for traces of the birthplace of our national Apostle in a place where his name and memory are so little revered.

We are told in all the Lives that the child was called Succat at his baptism. It is not a saint's name, but was doubtless a favourite name with the Britons of Dunbarton, for we are told by the Scholiast on Fiacc that the name in the British tongue signifies "brave in war"—*Su* signifying

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<sup>1</sup> In the *Tripartite*, for instance, Vol. I. p. 8.

'brave,' and *cat* 'war.' In Gaelic *cath* certainly signifies a battle, whatever be the meaning of the first part of the compound. He also adds that Cothrige was Patrick's name in bondage in Ireland, because he served four masters; that Magonius was his name whilst studying under Germanus, because he was doing more—*magis agens*—than the other monks; and that he received the name of Patricius from Pope Celestine in Rome. All his biographers refer to those four names of Patrick, although their origin seems rather fanciful.

## II.—HIS BOYHOOD.

Another miracle recorded of Patrick's boyhood is interesting, because it goes to show that the child then dwelt in the lowlands near a river like the Clyde or the Leven. Once upon a time there came a great flood in winter, which filled the house and quenched the fire of his foster-mother. Patrick was hungry and called for food, but none could be had for want of a fire. Thereupon he stood on a dry spot, and dipping his fingers into the water near him the drops from his fingers became five sparks of fire, which lit the fuel, and caused the waters to recede from the whole house.

At another time, in winter's cold, the holy boy Succat brought home to his foster-mother<sup>1</sup> his lap full of icicles. "'Twere better," she said, "you brought faggots for the fire." "God can make them faggots if you only believe," said Patrick. So the icicles were cast into the fire, and when Patrick blew upon them they flamed like firewood.

Once when Patrick and his sister Lupita were herding sheep, the lambs broke into their dams' enclosure. Whereupon Lupita, running quickly to drive them off, fell and struck her head against a stone. 'so that death was nigh to her.' Then Patrick, in great grief, made the sign of the cross over the wound, and she was healed without illness; but the scar remained, and, as we shall see, served afterwards to identify Lupita at a critical period of her life.

Once as Patrick was herding the sheep a wolf carried off one of them. Thereupon his foster-mother blamed him greatly; but the wolf next day brought back the sheep safe and sound—truly a strange kind of restitution, as the narrative quaintly observes.

Once, too, when his foster-mother was milking the kine in the byre, one of them went mad, for a demon entered

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<sup>1</sup> This foster-mother was his aunt on the mother's side.



her—and she killed the other five kine. Then Patrick, seeing his dear foster-mother in sore distress thereat, brought back the dead kine to life, and cured the mad one, so that God's name and Patrick's were magnified thereby. On another occasion being present with his foster-parents at 'a great folkmote of the Britons,' his foster-father died suddenly, but Patrick restored him to life. Once again he changed water into honey for his foster-mother, and the honey had a great healing virtue over every kind of disease and ailment.

The next miracle, if there is anything at all authentic about it, gives us a glimpse of the simple manners of the times. Here it is, the Tripartite version:—Once the reeve or sheriff of the king (that is of the Britons) went to announce to Patrick and his foster-mother that they should go to cleanse the hearth of the palace of Ail Cluade. Patrick and his foster-mother went. Then came the angel to Patrick and said—"Make prayer, and that work will not be necessary for thee." Patrick prayed. Then the angel cleansed the hearth. Whereupon Patrick said—"Though all there is of firewood in Britain be burnt on this hearth, thereof there will be no ashes on the morrow." "And this is still fulfilled," adds the writer.

This is a curious legend. That there was a nominal British king of Ail Cluade even during the Roman occupation of Valentia is fairly certain, and that the sheriffs of the king made strange demands for the royal service, both in Erin and Britain, is equally certain. The story hints that it was not proper to make such a demand of menial service from Patrick and his foster-mother, and therefore their obedience was rewarded by the ministry of the angel. The story, too, shows that they must have lived at the time near the rock of Dunbarton, and that families dwelling near the palace were required to keep the royal kitchen in due order.

We are told that on another occasion the steward of the king came to Patrick's foster-mother to seek the usual tribute of curds and butter. She had none to give him. Then Patrick made curds and butter of the snow, and they were taken to the king; but on the royal table they became once more snow in the sight of the king, whereupon he remitted the tribute in favour of Patrick for the future. Such tributes in kind were the rule amongst all the Celtic tribes both in Erin and Alba, so we naturally find reference to them here. The picture of royalty these stories give us

is not after our notions, yet it is quite in accordance with the manners of the times. But whether such a series of miracles performed by Patrick during his childhood can be reconciled with the truth of the account which he gives of himself we leave it to the reader to judge. Lanigan does not deign to notice them ; and even the pious Colgan justly regards them as incredible. So that we can very well afford to regard them as the invention of imaginative story-tellers of a later age.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE CAPTIVITY OF ST. PATRICK.

#### I.—PLACE OF HIS CAPTIVITY.

THERE is no part of the story of the Saint's life more interesting and more instructive than the history of his captivity. Here, too, we are on firm ground. We have his own account of those marvellous six years of his captivity, and we have the additional advantage of knowing the scenes which he describes, and, we might almost say, the persons to whom he refers. The whole story is, therefore, worthy of careful examination and reproduction.

First, let us examine the account of the captivity as given by himself.

He tells us in the Confession that his father had a small farm or country-house,<sup>1</sup> near the village<sup>2</sup> of Bannavem Taberniæ, and that it was there he was taken captive.<sup>3</sup> The phrase he uses is a strange one, by no means classical; but there can be no doubt as to its meaning. His age at the time was close on sixteen.<sup>4</sup>

He tells us, too, that many thousand persons were taken captive in the same raid, and that the rovers 'devastated his father's house, and put to death his men-servants and maid-servants,' but he does not state that his parents—either father or mother—were slain or captured at the same time.

We may assume, then, that as the Saint was certainly born on the banks of the Clyde, he was carried away captive from the country-house of his father, which was near (prope) to the town in which he was born. Now, this is exactly what might be expected. A high official of the municipium would have not only a house in the town itself but also have a country-house not far off—located somewhere on the banks of the river. It would, therefore, be all the more accessible to

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<sup>1</sup> Villulam.    <sup>2</sup> Pagus.

<sup>3</sup> Capturam dedi—in the same sense as in the phrase 'pænas dedi'—I suffered captivity or capture.

<sup>4</sup> Fere sedecim.

the sea rovers of the time, because it was somewhat secluded and near to the sea. In our opinion, therefore, there can be no reasonable doubt that the Saint was carried off by Irish raiders from his father's villa, which was probably on the northern bank of the river, somewhere between the modern Dunbarton and Helensburg, on the line of the present railway to Helensburg.

Yet, it is strange that some ancient writers who admitted that St. Patrick was born at Alclyde still assert that he was carried off to Ireland, not from Strathclyde, but from Brittany in France. The Scholiast on Fiacc, who expressly says that "Nemthor," where Patrick was born, "is a city in North Britain, namely, Ail Cluade" (the Rock of Clyde), yet states that Patrick, with his parents—Calpurn, his father, and Concess, his mother—together with his five sisters and his brother, Deacon Sannan, "all went from the Britons of Ail Cluade over the Ictian Sea southwards to the Britons of Armorica—that is, to the Letavian Britons—for there were relatives of theirs in that place at that time; and besides, the mother of the children, Concess, was of the Franks, and she was a near female relation of (St.) Martin. That was the time at which seven sons of Sechtmad, King of Britain, were in exile from Britain. So they made a great foray on the Britons of Armorica, where Patrick was with his family, and they slew Calpurn there, and they brought Patrick and Lupita with them to Ireland, and they sold Lupita in Conaille Muirthemne, and Patrick in the north of Dalaradia."

The Tripartite gives nearly the same account. That story, too, seems to have got into the mind of Probus, for he describes this foray, in which Patrick was captured together with his brother Ructi and his sister Mila, as having taken place in 'Arimuric,'<sup>1</sup> which, however, was in the native country (patria) of the Saint, although it was the sons of Rethmiti, the British king, from Britannia<sup>2</sup> who made the inroad. Probus, however, is unreliable in his narrative and his names, for he admits that Patrick was born in Britain (in Britanniis), and he speaks of this as a second captivity from 'Arimuric,' quite distinct from the first captivity at the age of sixteen, with which he nevertheless confounds it in giving the details.

<sup>1</sup> In our opinion, this word has given cause to this story of the Scholiast. He referred 'Arimuric' to Armorica in Brittany, whereas it might be applied to any western land on the sea-board.

<sup>2</sup> De Britannia.

Here is a grave difference of opinion, and the Book of Armagh does nothing to settle the question, for it makes no reference to the point at issue. It is highly probable that the Tripartite and Probus took their account from the Scholiast on Fiacc; and the Scholiast—if indeed there were not more than one—seems to contradict himself. Several modern writers have adopted the same view, following most likely the authority of the Tripartite.

The author of the Homily in the Lebar Brecc gives probably the true account when he says that these seven sons of the British king with some Ulster men raided *Britain*—not Brittany—and carried their captives thence to Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

We must, however, adhere to the plain statement of the Saint in the Confession, that he was carried off from the country house near where his father dwelt in Bannavem Taberniae; that a great number of captives were carried off at the same time, and that the spoilers devastated his father's house, and slaughtered his men-servants and maid-servants. He makes no reference to the killing of his father or mother on that occasion, from which we may fairly infer that they were not slain in that foray; and were probably either absent or dead at the time.

There are many other circumstances that confirm this view. The author of the Second Life says expressly that the raiders were an Irish host<sup>2</sup> ravaging, as was their custom (*de more*), the shores of Britain. The Fourth Life also describes them as fleets of the Irish who were in the habit of crossing the sea to plunder Britain.<sup>3</sup>

The Roman writers tell the same story. The Province of Britain was first invaded by the 'Picts' and 'Scots,' on its northern limits, about the year A.D. 360<sup>4</sup>. The Picts crossed the northern wall, while the Scots, that is the Irish, harried the western sea-board from the Clyde to the Severn. Four years later, in 364, a second attack was made in greater force, the Saxons on this occasion swooping down in their long ships on the eastern coasts of Northumbria. Again and again these attacks were renewed until 369,

<sup>1</sup> See *Rolls Tript*, p. 439. They were probably exiled to Brittany, but returned home to make the raid.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotensis exercitus*.

<sup>3</sup> *Classes Hibernensium ad Britanniam causâ praedandi transnavigare solebant*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ammianus*, B. XX, C. 1. Breacan, grandson of King Niall, had fifty curraghs trading with Britain. See O'Curry. *M.M.*, p. 257.

when Theodosius, a brave and skilful warrior, was sent over to Britain by the Emperor Valens to chastise the barbarians. He drove them out of the Province, renewed the wall from the Clyde to the Forth, and having completely subjugated the country between the two walls called it Valentia, in honour of his master, the Emperor Valens. As we have seen he established its chief military station and civil capital close to the British stronghold on the Clyde. The commander-in-chief of the new Province was called the *Dux Britanniae*, and as it was his duty to defend the northern frontier, he naturally kept his headquarters on the Clyde, from which he could keep both Picts and Scots in check. He is said in the *Notitia Imperii*, or Army List of the time, to have had no less than 8,000 foot and 600 horse, that is a whole legion, along the line of the northern wall. *Bannavem Taberniae* was, therefore, a populous and important place at that period, that is about the time St. Patrick was born, in 372 or 373; and we need not be surprised that, as the capital of the new province of Valentia, and the head-quarters of the army, it was made a *municipium* or free town.

One of the chief officers of Theodosius during this campaign in Britain was the Spaniard, Claudius Maximus, who afterwards became commander-in-chief in Britain, and then revolting against the Emperor Gratian was himself proclaimed Emperor by the army at York in 383. He remained, however, only a short time in Britain, for next year he crossed over into Gaul to vindicate his claims to the western empire, and took with him nearly all the British troops, as they were the men who had raised him to the purple, and who were likely to prove his most staunch allies. This was in 385 or 386. The Picts and Scots, finding the Roman troops called away from Britain, at once renewed their incursions, especially about 388, when Maximus collected all his troops from all quarters, and crossing the Alps fought the great battle of Aquileia, in which he was defeated and slain by the Emperor Theodosius the Great, the son of his former master. It was about the year 387 that Britain was thus completely denuded of Roman troops, for Maximus was slain in 388; and this is the very time, too, that St. Patrick was carried into captivity by 'the fleets from Ireland.' The British historians, Gildas and Nennius, tell us expressly that the invaders were Picts and Scots—the Picts coming from the north, and the Scots from the west, that is from Ireland.

The poet Claudian also, when lauding the achievements of Stilicho, who drove back the barbarians a few years later, describes him as guarding the extreme limits of the British frontier, curbing the ferocious Scot, and curiously observing the punctured marks on the bodies of the slaughtered Picts.<sup>1</sup> We may safely assume, therefore, that the raiders, who carried off from Strath Clyde at this period 'so many thousand' persons into captivity, were Scots from Ireland, who crossed the narrow seas in fleets of 'hired boats.'<sup>2</sup> These were the years, too, during which Niall the Great reigned in Ireland; and except the bards belie him, he spent much of his time in ravaging the coasts of France and Britain. We have no historical evidence of the raids into France, but we have undoubted authority to prove that the Scots harried the British coasts, from which they were driven off only for a while by Stilicho. We are assured,<sup>3</sup> indeed, that Niall was slain at sea, on the Muir n-Icht, or Ictian Sea, between France and England; but that was several years later, in A.D. 405.

We are told that Lupita, a sister of Patrick, was carried off in the same raid, although the Saint himself makes no allusion to the fact. It is in itself, however, not unlikely; and the venerable authorities who make the statement are not to be lightly set aside.

As St. Patrick himself says that many thousands were taken captive on the occasion when he was carried off by the Irish rovers,<sup>4</sup> they must have had many boats; for they were not ships in the modern sense of the term. Each boat carried off its own portion of the captives, and doubtless sold them as best they could, for the benefit of themselves and their leaders. On their return, therefore, they would not all sail for the same port, but each of the crews would naturally make for the port where they were most likely to dispose of their spoil. In this way we can

<sup>1</sup> Venit et extremis legio praetentis Britannis  
Quae Scoto dat frena truci, ferroque notatas  
Perlegit exanimis Picto moriente figuras.  
*De Bello Getico.*

<sup>2</sup> Totam cum Scotus Iernen  
Movit et infesto spumavit remige.  
*Claudian.*

<sup>3</sup> By the Four Masters.

<sup>4</sup> The Second and Third Lives both state that it was an 'Irish host' coming by sea that carried him off from Britain. The Fourth Life says the same—that it was an 'Irish fleet' carried off him and his sister Lupita. Jocelyn merely calls the raiders 'pirates,' who carried off Patrick and sold him as a slave in Ireland.

readily understand how Lupita might have been brought in one boat to Dundalk Bay, and sold as a slave in the district of Conaille Muirthemne, the famed Hy Conaille land around Dundalk, where Cuchulain fought and the young St. Bridget prayed. The Tripartite tells us there were two sisters of Patrick sold as slaves in Hy Conaille; but the older authorities mention only one. Patrick himself was probably carried off by a Dalaradian crew that landed somewhere near Larne, and sold him to the king of North Dalaradia, to whom Larne belonged, as his sister or sisters were sold further south in Conaille Muirthemne, 'and he and his sisters knew nothing of each other.'<sup>1</sup> This statement bears out the view that the children were carried off in different boats, which probably belonged to different districts of the Irish sea-board, to which they afterwards returned.

## II.—LIFE AS A SLAVE IN IRELAND.

St. Patrick himself does not tell us in what part of Ireland he lived as a slave, but all the ancient authorities, including the Book of Armagh, say that his master was Milcho,<sup>2</sup> king of North Dalaradia, and that Patrick's chief work was herding sheep and swine on the slopes of Sliabh Mis, a mountain in the heart of the Co. Antrim, about six miles east of the town of Ballymena. It still retains its ancient name under the form Slemish, and is a very conspicuous object in the district, for it rises up a huge, dark cone to the height of 1,437 feet, thus overtopping all the surrounding hills.

North Dalaradia, of which Milcho was king, extended from Belfast Lough to the river Braid, which separated it from Dalriada.<sup>3</sup> But in the time of St. Patrick Milcho seems to have ruled over the whole valley of the Braid south of the ridge of hills rising on the northern bank of the river. For Skerry Church, where the angel appeared to St. Patrick, was north of the Braid, and so it seems was the dun where Milcho himself lived. The real boundary between Dalaradia and Dalriada in the time of St. Patrick—for it varied at later times—was the range of hills extending

<sup>1</sup> *Tripartite*.

<sup>2</sup> Colgan adopts the form Milcho, which we follow. The Tripartite gives the genuine Irish name as Miliuc, of which the genitive would be Milcho. He is described as Miliuc Maccu Buain.

<sup>3</sup> See Reeves.



from Glenarm inland in a north-west direction to the modern Bushmills, which is built on the Buas, as it was called in the time of our Saint. The valley of the Braid, extending from Ballymena nearly all the way to Carnlough on the coast, is a fertile and, in our time, a highly cultivated valley, producing all our Irish crops in great abundance. It is no wonder, therefore, that the king of Dalaradia chose it as his own demesne and dwelt somewhere in the district—for there is a difference of opinion as to the exact situation of his dun.

St. Patrick himself tells us that his daily occupation during his captivity was to feed swine<sup>1</sup> and sheep, large numbers of which were fed in the woods and on the slopes of the mountains. The swine-herd constantly attended them with his dogs to drive away the wolves from the flock, and give notice of the approach of robbers, for both were quite common at the time. At night in winter the herd was usually driven home to the neighbourhood of the master's *dun* for shelter and protection. But by day and night, both at home and abroad, the young captive was responsible for the safety of his flock.

It was a hard lot for a boy of sixteen, brought up in the midst of the comforts of a civilized 'Roman' home. In summer he probably slept in the woods in a sheeling. In winter he doubtless had better shelter from the biting winds, but few people cared how the wretched slaves were lodged, and they were generally left to provide for themselves as best they could, without being excluded, however, from the chieftain's *dun*. Yet it was this hard life of a slave that made Patrick a saint. Whilst they were at home, and he and his fellow-captives had forgotten God<sup>2</sup>—so he says himself—and "their sins have brought on him and his companions the anger of God; and He chastised them in His justice and mercy, making them slaves in a foreign land." But now Patrick's eyes were opened—and he betook himself to frequent prayer; the love and fear of God grew more and more within him; his faith was strengthened; his fervour waxed warmer, so that during the day he often prayed a hundred times, and in the night likewise; and whilst living in the woods and mountains he awoke to pray before the dawn in frost and snow and rain, neither felt he

<sup>1</sup> Cotidie pecora pascēbam.—*Confession*.

<sup>2</sup> Deum unum non credebam neque ex infantia mea sed in morte et incredulitate mansi donec valde castigatus sum.

any sloth or weariness, as he felt in his old age, his spirit was then so fervent within him.<sup>1</sup>

It was a wonderful change brought about by tribulations, for, as he tells us himself, cold and hunger made him truly humble in the sight of God,<sup>2</sup> and that humility was the basis of all his subsequent holiness and merit. These sufferings were all for his good; it was by them that the Lord trained him to think of others, and be zealous for their salvation, whereas, previously he had no concern even for his own.<sup>3</sup> And so he lived for six years, growing daily in favour and in the grace of God. He had an opportunity, too, of learning the Irish language during these years of his captivity, by which he was afterwards enabled, through the Providence of God, to preach to the people in their own tongue, the inability to do which on the part of Palladius was, probably, one reason why his Mission was a failure.

Other authorities give us glimpses into what may be called the domestic life of the Saint during this period; they are very interesting, and in themselves not improbable. The account given in the Tripartite<sup>4</sup> tells us that Milcho had three children, one son and two daughters,<sup>5</sup> and these simple children were greatly attracted by the kindly and gracious bearing of the young slave. They loved to be with him, and frequently sought opportunities of speaking to him, which was, doubtless, deemed rather irregular in the king's children, thus to associate with their father's slave. They were kind to him, too, and frequently carried food to the half-starved boy, which, no doubt, he was very glad to get as a supplement to his own scanty rations. Very naturally he came to love the kind-hearted children, and made them the only return in his power by giving them rather surreptitiously, we are told, some knowledge of the mysteries of the Christian religion.<sup>6</sup> But now it came to pass that Milcho had a wondrous dream or vision, in which he saw Patrick come into his house breathing flames from his mouth and nostrils, which also shone in his eyes, and even his ears, so that his countenance became, as it were, one flame of fire which threatened to burn up the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Confession.*

<sup>2</sup> *Et in veritate humiliatus sum a fame et nuditate.*

<sup>3</sup> *Confession.*

<sup>4</sup> Vol. I., p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> The Second Life mentions only one daughter.

<sup>6</sup> Patrick dared not do this openly, for Milcho, we are told, was a magus, or druid, and very hostile to the new religion.

house. He thought that he himself succeeded in keeping off the flames, but he saw all his children wreathed in the devouring fire, and reduced, as it were, to ashes in the conflagration.

Thereupon Milcho sent for Patrick and told him what he had seen, asking him, at the same time, if he could explain its meaning.

Thereupon Patrick replied:—"The flame which you have seen, O King, issuing from me is my faith in the Holy Trinity, with which I am wholly fired and enlightened, and which hereafter I hope to diffuse by my preaching. But in your case my preaching will be fruitless, for you will repel the grace of God with obstinate mind, and die in your infidelity; but your son and your two daughters will embrace the faith, which will be preached to them, and the Holy Spirit will, by the fire of love divine, burn out of their hearts all their sins and vices. Moreover, they will serve God in justice all the days of their lives; and, after dying a holy death, their relics will be held in veneration throughout all Ireland, and cure many diseases and infirmities."

Milcho, even with the vision before his mind, must have thought this strange language coming from a slave. His reply is not recorded; but the story of the vision and its interpretation is very ancient, for it is given both by Muirchu and Tirechan in the Book of Armagh. The names of the children, too, are given—one became Bishop Guasacht of Grandard, and the two sisters called Emeriæ, *i.e.*, Emers, became nuns at Clonbroney, in Longford. They are referred to, as we shall see hereafter, not only in the Book of Armagh, but also in nearly all the early Lives of the Saint.

But Patrick was privileged during the years of his captivity to converse with even higher beings than the children of the King; and here himself is our chief informant, for if the story were contained merely in the Lives written by others it would have been scouted by our modern critics as the invention of monkish chroniclers. Nay, we find that some of those critics who recognise Patrick as a saint are yet sorely puzzled how to explain the angelic visions recorded by himself in his Confession.

His own account is that one night he heard a Voice<sup>1</sup> saying to him in sleep—"You fast well, and will soon

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<sup>1</sup> Responsum—a divine voice.

return to your native country";<sup>1</sup> and shortly afterwards he heard another divine Voice saying to him—"Lo, your ship is ready." Yet, as he adds, it was not ready there, but some 200 miles away, 'in a place where I had never been and where I knew no one.' Such is his own account of this warning vision. Muirchu tells us in the Book of Armagh that the Angel spoke to him frequently, and that if the swine happened to stray away from him, so that he could not find them, the Angel told him where to get them. Notably he spoke to Patrick no less than thirty times from the rock Scirit, which is near, he says, to Slemish, "and on that rock of Skirit," he adds, "the footprints of the Angel may still be seen where he was standing when he went to heaven in the sight of Patrick; and there, too, the prayers of the faithful are known to produce most happy fruit." The same statement is given by Tirechan, who adds that it was on the rock of *Scirte* the angel stood when he said to Patrick—"Behold the ship is ready; arise and set out";<sup>2</sup> and thereupon Patrick saw the angel ascending, and as he rose his feet were stretched far apart from hill to hill—which we take to mean from Mount Scirte, on which the Angel stood, to Slemish, on which St. Patrick lay. The distance between the two hills in a direct line is about two miles. In most of the Lives the name of the Angel is given as Victor,<sup>3</sup> and elsewhere Victoricus,<sup>4</sup> and he is described not only as Patrick's guide and counsellor, but as the guardian Angel of the Irish race.

In the Tripartite, the rock on which the Angel stood when Patrick saw him is called Schirec Archaille;<sup>5</sup> and in later times, as Colgan tells us, it was called Schire Padruic—the word "schire" meaning a rock, the root of which, *sker*, enters into the composition of a great many Irish words.<sup>6</sup> The place still retains the ancient name, with a modern termination, and is called Skerry. As it became a place of pilgrimage and holiness, a church was built upon the rocky cliff, and behind the modern church may still be seen the flag bearing the print of the Angel's feet which he

<sup>1</sup> Bene jejunas, cito iturus ad patriam tuam.

<sup>2</sup> Ecce navis tua parata est; surge et ambula.

<sup>3</sup> Third Life.

<sup>4</sup> Second Life.

<sup>5</sup> Archaille was the ancient name of the valley of the Braid.—Fiacc's Scholiast.

<sup>6</sup> Like Skerries, Co. Dublin.

left when speaking to Patrick for the last time. The basaltic hill itself is very conspicuous from the road leading eastward from Ballymena, crowned as it still is by an ancient but, we believe, now disused church; and the summit of the rock would be easily visible from every point of the country round about, as well as from the slopes of Slemish, which rises up beyond the river two miles to the south, Skerry itself being a quarter of a mile north of the river Braid. Hallowed as it was by the footprints of an angel, and with all its traditions clinging to it still, the rock of Skerry is one of the most interesting spots on Irish soil, even for the antiquarian who has science, if not faith, to kindle enthusiasm in his soul. The learned Reeves thus describes this venerable spot:—"What may be called the present church, though now in ruins, is 64 feet by 19; it is not characterised by any marks of very great antiquity, but close beside it on the north are some traces of a smaller building, which was probably erected at an earlier date"—we should say, indeed, by St. Patrick himself, when he returned to preach the Gospel there—and such has always been the tradition of the place. A few yards distant from the north-east angle of the church is a patch of rock, on the edge of which is a depression having a faint resemblance to the print of a shoe, which the Ordnance Survey, agreeably to the local tradition, notices as St. Patrick's footmark. In Colgan's time it was, he tells us, a famous place of pilgrimage. The Scholiast on Fiacc says that the Angel came to visit St. Patrick in the shape of a bird; but the footprint would seem to indicate, like the Book of Armagh,<sup>1</sup> that he rather came and spoke in human form.<sup>2</sup>

### III.—ESCAPE FROM CAPTIVITY.

So now that the six long years of penance, prayer and suffering were over it pleased God to release the saint from his penitential captivity. He was a stone sunk in the mud, he tells us, before God had humbled him in captivity; but the Mighty One now raised him and placed him high as a living stone in the spiritual edifice of His Church.<sup>3</sup> God had destined him for a great work; and under His special

<sup>1</sup> Sicut homo cum homine loquitur.—Vol. II., p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> There was a holy well on the south of the road called Tubbernacool—a 'miraculous well' Colgan calls it.

<sup>3</sup> *Confession.*

guidance Patrick was enabled to return to his own country. It was brought about in this way:—

He heard the Angelic voice saying that his ship was ready, and urging him to set out at once on his journey. Thereupon the saint forthwith betook himself to flight,<sup>1</sup> and by divine guidance<sup>2</sup> was enabled to make his way direct to the port where the ship of which the Angel spoke was tarrying. Neither did he find anything to fear on the way, for God, who was guiding him to a higher destiny, protected him from every danger.

This is his own account. There is no need to go beyond it, or to suppose that Patrick paid a ransom in miraculous gold to his master. He needed no ransom, for he was captured, not in just war, but by violence and injustice, and he might lawfully escape whenever he got the chance. The Tripartite says that Patrick, at the suggestion of the Angel, asked Milcho's permission to depart; but Milcho refused, unless a lump of gold equal in weight to Patrick's head were paid to him. Then the Angel who appeared to him on Skerry Hill told him to follow a certain boar from the herd he was tending, and that the boar when rooting in the soil<sup>3</sup> would turn up a lump of gold large enough to pay the required ransom. So Milcho getting this gold for the time was content, and Patrick was allowed to depart. This story savours of later times; and appears to us inconsistent with the language of the Confession. It is in our opinion a clumsy attempt to justify—what needed no justification—St. Patrick's escape from an unjust and galling servitude.

There has been much difference of opinion regarding the port from which Patrick effected his escape—whether it was from the Boyne, or from Wicklow, or further south from Bantry Bay, or finally from Killala. In our opinion everything points to Killala as the port of departure, for the following reasons. Patrick tells us that the port was about 200 (Roman) miles<sup>4</sup> from Slemish; and that he had never been there, and knew none of the people there. When the Saint was writing this Confession he must have been well

<sup>1</sup> *Conversus sum in fugam.*

<sup>2</sup> *In virtute Dei, qui viam meam ad bonum dirigebat.* There is no ground for reading 'Boindum' instead of 'bonum.'

<sup>3</sup> There is a townland still called Ballylacpatrick in a straight line between Skerry Church and Slemish. It was doubtless some way connected with these angelic visions.

<sup>4</sup> *Ducenta milia passus.—Confession.*

acquainted with distances in Ireland, and especially with the country from Antrim to Killala, for in his missionary journeys he had more than once travelled over many parts of it. Now 200 Roman miles is equivalent to something like 185 miles English, and Killala, across the country, is about that distance from Slemish. So also is Wicklow town; but the mouth of the Boyne is, of course, only a little more than half that distance from Antrim, and therefore cannot have been the port of departure.

Bantry Bay, on the other hand, would be, not 200, but nearly 400 Roman miles from the place of the Saint's captivity. If, therefore, we accept as fairly accurate his own statement of the distance, we must leave both Bantry Bay and the Boyne out of consideration. Neither would the Saint be likely to come to Wicklow, for that route would bring him along the eastern coast through the most fertile and populous parts of the country, where a runaway slave of the Britons would almost certainly be re-captured. Then he had been there before, whereas he tells us himself he had never been in the part whence he escaped.

Besides, there is one all-powerful reason in favour of Killala. The Wood of Focluth was there along the shore of the western sea, as all admit, and the Saint tells us more than once that it was from that Wood of Focluth the Angel Victoricus brought him the letters calling him back to Ireland; and it was the voice of those who dwelt by that wood that called him again and again, inviting the holy youth to come *once more* and walk amongst them.<sup>1</sup> It is clear that these words imply his presence at an earlier period, whilst he was still a boy, amongst those who dwelt by Focluth Wood on the western sea; and that previous presence can only refer to his brief visit to the place when escaping from captivity. Lanigan admits the force of this argument, and makes the ridiculous suggestion that perhaps Patrick went there with his master to buy or sell pigs, just as people in our own time go from all parts of Ireland to the fairs of Ballinasloe!<sup>2</sup> When so acute a writer was driven to offer such an explanation, it shows pretty clearly that there is no satisfactory way of meeting the difficulty except that which we have suggested.

The Tripartite states that Milcho regretting the loss of

<sup>1</sup> Rogamus te sancte puer ut venias et *adhuc* ambules inter nos.

<sup>2</sup> The suggestion shows that Lanigan knew little of the social state of Ireland at the time.

a faithful slave, although he had got his gold, pursued Patrick with a view of bringing him back by force. But the light-footed youth, who was well acquainted with the wilds of Slemish, was enabled to evade his pursuers and continue his journey. Milcho, greatly disappointed, returned home only to find that the gold which was the price of Patrick's liberty had also disappeared. It was only quite natural that Milcho should pursue a fugitive slave; but the story of the gold here also reveals itself as a later addition. Then—continues the Tripartite—the young fugitive continuing his flight came to the mouth of the Boyne, where he met with a certain Kienanus, who seized Patrick, as a runaway slave no doubt, and sold him to certain merchants who were there at the time for a bronze pot, such as was used in Ireland at that period. But when he brought the pot home and hung it on the wall he found his hands fastened to it, so that he could not loose them. When his wife came to help him her hands in like manner clung to the pot, and finally all the family got their hands glued to it, until they were glad to call on Patrick to release them, which he did. This whole story is ridiculous and wholly inconsistent with the account of his flight given by St. Patrick himself. Focluth Wood, by the western sea, is one of the most interesting places referred to in the Lives of St. Patrick. The name still survives in a form only slightly changed from the original. In the Irish Tripartite the name is Fochlad<sup>1</sup>—Caille Fochlad—of which the present form is beyond doubt a corruption, or rather a modification, in accordance with well-known phonetic laws. The modern townland of Fõghill is a little to the south of Lackan Bay, and is marked in the County map of Mayo; but in ancient times the Woods of Fochlad extended all along the low ground from the head of Lackan Bay to Killala, and even some distance to the south-east of that ancient church. There is a little to the west of the present railway line, just before it enters Killala, an extensive marsh, which was once a lake surrounded by rather steep hills on the west, where in places the natural wood still survives. We can easily gather from the Tripartite, as will be seen hereafter, that all this marshy ground was in the time of St. Patrick a portion of the great Focluth Wood; and it was probably that part of it to which he expressly refers, when

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. I, p. 130. The various forms are Fochlad, Fochloth, Fochlithi, Fochluth, Focluti, and at present Fõghill or Fõhill—obviously the same word.



he describes the voices of those who dwelt near it as calling him back to Erin in language so pathetic and endearing.

Killala was at the time, as it is still, a much better harbour for boats and light craft than for large ships. It has many quiet coves sheltered from every wind and sea, where the lighter craft of the olden time could easily glide in and out with the full tide, and lie not only secure, but completely hidden from inquisitive eyes at low water. Just before reaching the station of Killala the railway crosses over such a cove at the present day. In old times the trees of Fochluth Wood surrounded these quiet coves, for there was no Killala then, that is before St. Patrick had founded his church for his disciple Muiredach, whom he placed over his converts, that were newly baptized in the spring still flowing by the edge of the sea. It was there, in our opinion, or in some cove near at hand, that the 'ship,' all unknown to its crew, was awaiting, by Divine providence, the runaway slave—the ship destined to be laden with the most precious freight that ever left the shores of holy Ireland.

About two miles more northward and seaward, near the point where the Rathfran river enters the bay, there is a low-lying ridge of rocks, still called 'St. Patrick's Rocks,' and marked as such on the Ordnance map. Beyond these rocks, a little more to the north, and just under the ancient church of Kilcummin, is a small bay sheltered by the rising ground to the west, and protected from the ocean swell by a low rocky ledge running out at right angles to the shore. It affords secure anchorage against all winds and sea, except the north-east gales, which sometimes break into this estuary with great fury. It was here the French ships, under Humbert, landed in 1798; and it may have been here, as some think, that Patrick's ship was drawn up on the sandy beach just under the rocks where the coast-guard station now stands. The modern townland of Foghill, representing the old Fochluth Wood, is less than a mile to the west, and the spot certainly affords a convenient and secure harbour in the summer months. We think, however, that the place where the ship abode was in the inner harbour of Killala, close to the spot where St. Patrick long after built a church for the maidens whose sweet young voices in many a dream and vision called him to come over the sea and walk once more amongst them. A remnant of an old Patrician church still stands over the sea where the full tides fill the grassy meadows beneath its venerable walls. We have seen it when the beautiful estuary was lit up with

the glory of a summer's sun setting in the north-west, and the murmuring wavelets lapped the foot of the rocky ridge on which the church was built. Some have thought that this venerable ruin—perhaps the only Patrician ruin still remaining in Ireland—was that Cill Forglan of which the maidens 'Crebrin and Lesru, the daughters of Gleru, son of Cummene, were the patronesses,' and doubtless the original custodians. "It is they," says the Tripartite, "that called to Patrick out of their mother's womb when he was in the isles of the Tyrrehene Sea." Others, however, place the church of Cill Forglan about a mile further to the north beyond Killala, as we shall see hereafter—but still by Focluth's Wood, on the marge of the western sea<sup>1</sup>

The Saint having arrived at the place where the ship was, tells us that on the very day of his arrival she left her moorings to start on her voyage. Patrick, just then coming up, asked to be taken on board as a passenger, working his way, it would seem, but the skipper, in anger, replied to the fugitive slave—"You must not on any account attempt to come with us." Thereupon, the poor youth hearing these angry words, left the vessel to return to the hut where he lodged, and where, it would appear, he had stayed for some time before he found the ship. On the way he began to pray; and lo! before the prayer was finished he heard one of the crew shouting aloud:—"Come back quickly, they are calling you." "I immediately returned," says the Saint, "and then they said to me: 'Come with us; we will take thee in good faith,'"—which seems to mean on credit, that is, trusting to your word for payment. "Make friends with us," they added, "on your own terms." "I refused, however," says the Saint, "to become intimate<sup>2</sup> with them, through fear of God, because they were gentiles. Yet I had some hopes that they might come to the faith of Christ; therefore I kept with them, and forthwith we set sail."

The whole account of this incident is obscure, and the text seems to be corrupt. We have given what appears to us to be its true rendering in English. It is worth noting that Patrick cannot have remained long at Focluth Wood,

<sup>1</sup> If Patrick came to Killala by the shortest route from Slemish, he would have crossed the Bann at Toome Bridge, the Erne at Ennis-killen, then passing through Leitrim and Sligo, he would have crossed the Moy, perhaps, at Buiragh, and so come to Focluth Wood.

<sup>2</sup> *Reppuli sugere mammellas eorum*—a strange phrase. It appears to mean that he declined intimate friendship with them.

since he found the ship, as he says, on the very day of his arrival at the harbour. Yet we find that he lodged for some time, at least, in a hut—tergoriolum he calls it—where, no doubt, he found rest and refreshment after his long journey. He may have been there, however, some time before he found the ship, for what he states is that she unmoored ‘on the day he came to where she was.’ It was, no doubt, in this poor hut by Focluth Wood that Patrick saw the children ‘all light and laughter, angel-like of mien,’ whose voices afterwards called him back to Erin, growing up in beauty and innocence, yet walking in the shadow of death. His heart was touched, and it is not unlikely that there, for the first time, the idea occurred to him of one day returning to rescue those fair young souls from sinful bondage and spiritual death—a thought that has been beautifully expressed by Aubrey de Vere:—

From my youth

Both men and women, maidens most, to me  
 As children seemed; and oh! the pity then  
 To mark how oft they wept, now seldom knew  
 Whence came the wound that galled them. As I walked  
 Each wind that passed me whispered, Lo, that race  
 Which trod thee down. Requite with good their ill;  
 Their tongue thou knowest; old man to thee and youth,  
 For counsel came, and lambs would lick thy feet,  
 And now the whole land is a sheep astray  
 That bleats for God.<sup>1</sup>

Gratitude, too, was a striking trait in the character of St. Patrick, as is shown throughout his whole career. We see it here too. He was, it would seem, received in the poor hut where he lodged<sup>2</sup> with genuine Irish hospitality. He was a fugitive, hungry, foot-sore, and friendless, when they took him in, and gave him food and shelter. The two sweet little maidens, like Milcho's children in Ulster, were kind and confiding. He pitied them, and he loved them with the divine love which our Saviour had for the little children who were brought to Him. Ever after in distant lands, their faces were before his mental vision; their voices were in his ears; he heard their pitiful cry over distant seas and mountains, and we know from his subsequent history, that he never rested until once more he turned his

<sup>1</sup> *The Confession of St. Patrick.*

<sup>2</sup> Ubi hospitabam.

steps to the western sea, to lead them out of darkness into the glorious light of the Gospel. It is the most touching incident in the whole history of our great Apostle, and of itself proves, as we think conclusively, that Killala was the port from which Patrick escaped.

St. Patrick does not himself tell us where the ship was bound for, but he says that the Angel had told him that he was about to return to *his native country*. Both Muirchu<sup>1</sup> and the Tripartite, however, like almost all the other ancient authorities, state that she was bound for Britain—that is the Roman Province of Britain. Indeed the reference could not be to any part of France, for in three days they could not possibly make the coast of France, especially at Bordeaux, which is more than 800 miles distant from Killala. Even Brest, the nearest port of France, is nearly 600 miles distant by sea from the mouth of the Moy, a voyage that no vessel of that period could accomplish in three days. On the other hand, any craft with a tolerably fair wind could easily make the western coast of Scotland—which was then called Britain—in three days; and there can be no reasonable doubt that such was the destination of the ship—that very country from which he had been carried off a captive six years before.

The Tripartite and some other Lives speak of a great storm that threatened shipwreck, but was quelled by the prayers of Patrick, and was followed by a favourable breeze that carried the vessel in safety to its destined port<sup>2</sup> in Britain. St. Patrick himself, however, makes no reference to this storm, though he is very minute in detailing their troubles after landing in Britain.

A recent interesting writer<sup>3</sup> of lively imagination holds it as quite certain St. Patrick and his companions were driven by north-western gales into Morecambe Bay in Lancashire. They stuck fast on the sands at the mouth of the Duddon, but the rising tide carried them ashore near Heysham; St. Patrick's *sker*, or Rock, still marks the spot. Patrick then undertook to lead the shipwrecked mariners to Dunbarton. They were nearly perishing of thirst on the sandy coast of Bare, but in the end they found their way to the Clyde, and left their footprints in many local names along their route.

<sup>1</sup> Muirchu says :—That leaving Ireland—ad Britannias navigavit.

<sup>2</sup> In optato Britannie applicuerunt portu. Vol. I., p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Succat*, by Monsignor Gradwell, p. 294

It is only necessary to observe with reference to this ingenious speculation that it is all conjecture and no proof. It may be all true, but we have no means of ascertaining it. In truth, we cannot even conjecture at what British port St. Patrick landed, nor do we know whether his crew were Irish, or Pictish, or British. They were certainly pagans; and as we know that they had many dogs along with them, it is not improbable that they were a hunting or marauding party from Tirawley, who crossed over to Britain to hunt the deer and wild boar in the great Caledonian Forest. This immense forest, extending from the Grampians to the western ocean, was not unknown to the Romans, and we learn from many of our Irish bardic tales that Irish warriors were in the habit of making hunting excursions to Caledonia long before their kinsmen of Dalriada had established a Scotie colony in Kintyre and Argyle. And we know, too, from many a bardic tale, when the Irish warriors of the North got into trouble at home they fled for refuge to the glens and islands of Scotland, just as readily as their descendants slip off to Glasgow at present when they wish to avoid the police after a hard-fought faction fight or other trouble of that kind.

We can conjecture, however, but vaguely that the crew of Patrick's ship landed somewhere on the western coast of Scotland, and suffered much in that wild, uninhabited country.<sup>1</sup> St. Patrick gives the following account of their wanderings :—

After three days (from Killala) we made land, and then for twenty-eight days travelled through a desert. They had no food, and were sorely pressed with hunger. Then one day the captain (gubernator) said to me :—

“ Well, now, Christian, you say your God is great and omnipotent. Why can you not then pray for us, for we are in danger of perishing from hunger, and we can hardly see anywhere a single human being.”

Thereupon I plainly<sup>2</sup> said to them : “ Be ye truly (*ex fide*) converted to the Lord my God, to whom nothing is impossible, that He may send food in your way and you may be filled—for He hath abundance everywhere.” And so, through God's help, it came to pass. A herd of swine appeared on the road before their eyes, and they killed many of them, and remained there for two nights until they were well refreshed. Their dogs, too, were

<sup>1</sup> The Caledonian Forest was not a close but an open forest of native bush.

<sup>2</sup> Evidenter.

filled, for many of them had been left half-starved by the wayside. Then they gave great thanks to God, and I was honoured in their eyes. They also found wild honey and offered me a part: but as one of them said it had been offered to idols<sup>1</sup> I, thank God, tasted none of it.

Such is Patrick's account of this extraordinary journey, without the additions to be found in some of the later Lives. The whole is perfectly consistent with the hypothesis of the hunters losing their way in the great Caledonian Forest, when seeing neither game nor men they were reduced to the verge of starvation, as has often happened hunters both before and since, especially in that wild region beyond the Grampians, in similar circumstances. The Caledonian Forest was not a growth of tall trees, but rather an immense extent of scrub and bush, such as covered great portions of the Highlands down to a comparatively recent period. It was, in truth, a wilderness, as the Saint calls it—that is, a barren<sup>2</sup> land, such as the Tripartite describes it, empty and deserted. Such a description would apply with even greater propriety to the wilds of Argyle and Inverness in the time of St. Patrick; and, as a fact, we find in a very ancient "Description of Scotland" express mention made of "the mountains and *deserts* of Argyle."<sup>3</sup> This view is confirmed by the Scholiast on Fiacc's Hymn, who, explaining how Patrick after leaving Slemish and crossing the sea "went over all Alban," points out that this refers to the mount of Alban, that is Drum Alban, the Grampian range. In no other sense can it be explained how Patrick after his escape went over all "Alban"—*tar Elpa*—except the word means the Alban Hills—the Highlands, in fact, as we call them now.

At this stage of their journey Patrick records a very extraordinary incident which happened to himself, and has sorely puzzled some of his recent biographers. The learned Todd thinks it was a nightmare; but, perhaps, it is safer to take St. Patrick's own view of the matter at the time, than to go to Trinity College for an explanation in this sceptical nineteenth century:—

On the very night that God had sent (to Patrick and his companions) the hogs and the honey to feed them in their great

<sup>1</sup> *Immolaticum est.*

<sup>2</sup> By the term 'arida' in the Tripartite we understand 'barren' and rocky, not 'dry.' There never could have been a want of water in the Highlands.

<sup>3</sup> See 'Description of Scotland:.' *Chronicle of the Picts and Scots*, p. 135.

need, whilst "I was sleeping," says the Saint, "Satan strongly tempted me; and I shall remember it as long as I live in this body of mine. There fell upon me, as it were, a great rock, and I had no power in my limbs. And then I know not how it came into my mind to invoke Helias. Whereupon I saw the sun rise in the heavens, and whilst I kept invoking Helias with all my strength the light of the sun fell upon me, and at once drove away from me all that crushing weight.<sup>1</sup> And I believe that by Christ, my Lord, I was aided, and that His spirit then cried out on my behalf; and so I hope it will be in the day of my need always, as our Lord says in the Gospel—"It is not you who speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."<sup>2</sup>

One thing is very clear from this narrative, no matter what others may think, that Patrick believed he was tempted by Satan, that his invocation of Helias, or of Eli—according to other readings—was efficacious, and that Christ and His Holy Spirit thus invoked came to his relief and drove away the tempter. This may not be a scientific explanation, but it was clearly the idea of St. Patrick himself, and with that we may well rest satisfied.

Patrick tells us no more in the Confession of his friends from Killala. We do not know where they went, or what became of them; and, worse still, the corruptions of the text leave us greatly in doubt as to what became of himself during the next few years. The narrative is hopelessly confused. Taking the Rolls Text, Patrick says, "and once more, after many years, I again became a captive."<sup>3</sup> But we are not told where it took place, or who were the captors, nor how the Saint escaped. We merely know that on the first night of his captivity Patrick heard a voice saying to him, "two months you will be with them," which was fulfilled, for he was delivered on the sixtieth night by God from his captors, and after a fourteen days' journey—or as other readings have it, a ten days' journey—during which God provided them with food, fire, and shelter, they were restored to civilization.

The words 'post multos annos' seem to refer to the time when he was *first* carried off a captive. The meaning would then be, 'and now so many years after I first became

<sup>1</sup> Gravitudinem—the oppression of spirit perhaps.

<sup>2</sup> Confession.

<sup>3</sup> Et iterum post annos multos adhuc capturam dedi, *i.e.* [multos] annos; but the 'multos' is put in brackets as doubtful. The words 'capturam dedi' are important, because they show that 'once more' refers to the act of his falling in the hands of his first captors, not to the state of captivity.

a captive, and having only just succeeded in effecting my escape, I once more became a captive.' The Lebar Brecc says he was captured on his homeward journey in a foray, and that the raiders kept him with them for two months, when Patrick made prayer, and God delivered him and brought him safe to his parents. A Highland foray was the most natural thing in the world under the circumstances. A party of Pictish warriors seeing Patrick and his Scotie or Irish companions in their territory would naturally try to take them prisoners, and carry them off to their strongholds. Muirchu says the captors were 'alienigenae'—strangers, therefore, at least not British Provincials. The Tripartite, however, says that this raid took place three months after Patrick had succeeded in reaching his own country (*patria*)—not his own home—and that the raiders were Britons. If so, they were probably of the Attacottic tribes, who were Britons, but in a state of chronic rebellion against the Romans. It also calls this a third captivity, assuming that Patrick's brief arrest by Kienanus at the mouth of the Boyne was a second one. We have already seen that such a story is wholly improbable.

#### IV. RETURN TO HIS HOME IN BRITAIN.

"And so once more," says the Saint, "after several years<sup>1</sup> I found myself at home with my parents (or perhaps relations) who received me as a son and earnestly besought me, after all the trials I had undergone, never to leave them again." It was an affectionate and not unreasonable request. But a higher messenger came to him and made known the divine will, which Patrick was resolved to carry out.

We cannot understand the career of St. Patrick, or interpret his language in the Confession, if we do not assume as confidently as he himself did the supernatural character of the revelations that were made to him by his guardian angel, Victor, or Victoricus, as he calls him. Again and again, both in the Old Testament and the New, we read of God sending his Angels to guide, to instruct, to

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<sup>1</sup> The meaning here is doubtful. It might mean as the Second Life renders it: 'So once more I spent some years thereafter with my parents,' etc., etc., taking 'post' to be an adverb, and the 'few years' to mean the time he spent with his parents in Britain after his captivity. The text is: 'Et iterum post paucos annos in Britannis etiam cum parentibus meis,' etc. Cicero uses the phrase 'multis post annis' to mean 'many years afterwards.'



protect, and to deliver from danger his chosen servants. We have in the angel that guided and instructed the young Tobias an exact counterpart of the dealings which Victoricus had with St. Patrick. He himself assures us again and again that this angel manifested the divine will to him in various ways. The mission of Patrick was almost as important, and its fruit has been as abiding, as in the case of any of the Apostles themselves, for truly he was a great Apostle. No christian, therefore, who recognises the presence of the Holy Spirit of God in His Church at all times can consistently question the supernatural character of these manifestations, when it is asserted so emphatically by that great Apostle himself. It would be almost as absurd in such a case to say that St. Patrick was deceived as that he was a deliberate deceiver. Such a man with such a mission could have been neither one nor the other.

The account which he gives us of the first momentous message that stirred his soul in Britain is full of pathetic interest, and can never be forgotten in Ireland.

Whilst there (with my relations in Britain) at midnight I saw a man whose name was Victoricus, coming as if from Ireland with letters innumerable, and he handed one of them to me, and I read the heading of the letter, which contained these words—**THE VOICE OF IRISH.** And, as I read the beginning of the letter, methought I heard in my mind the voice of those who were near the Wood of Focluth, which is by the western sea, and it was thus they cried out: "We beseech thee, holy youth, come and once more walk amongst us." And I was greatly touched in my heart, so that I could read no more; and thereupon I awoke.

'Thanks be to God,' he adds—'that after so many years the Lord granted them the fulfilment of that strong cry'—that is, by bringing him back to Ireland to preach the Gospel to the people of Focluth Wood by the far off western sea. This was the first vision that, as he tells us, stirred his heart so deeply that he could not read the letter from Ireland, but only its heading. Strikingly it reminds us of that mentioned in Acts XVI. 9, when "a vision was shown to Paul in the night, which was a man of Macedonia standing and beseeching him and saying, 'Pass over into Macedonia and help us.'"

It would appear from the narrative that at first Patrick had some doubts as to whether the vision should be regarded as supernatural or not, but his doubts were soon

set at rest, "for on another night," he says, "but whether within me or without me I know not, God knows, in the clearest words, which I heard but could not understand until the end, a voice addressed me (effatus est)—'He who gave His life for thee He it is who speaks in thee.' And thereupon I awoke full of joy." The Saint appears to imply that when he heard the words first he did not realise their full significance, but when he awoke and realised their meaning then his heart was full of joy. Thenceforward he had no doubt that it was the Spirit of God that spoke within him.

Once more—that is, a third time—he had another vision which confirmed the reality and supernatural character of the two previous visions.

"I saw," he says, "within me Him who prayed, and I heard Him that is within the interior man, and there He strongly prayed with groaning. And thereupon I was amazed and wondered, and thought in myself who it was who thus prayed within me. But at the end of the prayer He announced that He is the Spirit.<sup>1</sup> And thereupon I awoke and remembered the Apostle saying, 'The Spirit aids the infirmity of our prayer. For what we should pray for as we ought we know not; but the Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings'<sup>2</sup>—which cannot be expressed by words. And, again, 'the Lord, our Advocate, asketh for us.'<sup>3</sup>

These visions, therefore, coming, as he was assured, from the Holy Spirit, convinced him that he had a divine call to preach the Gospel in Ireland, which he dare not disobey.

It is important to bear this in mind, for St. Patrick's main purpose in the Confession seems to be the assertion of his extraordinary supernatural mission to preach the Gospel in Ireland.

The next passage in the Confession, regarding certain charges brought against him at a later period, though omitted from some MSS., we hold to be clearly genuine. For it is in the same peculiar style of Latinity, and, moreover, we can well understand why it would be omitted from some MSS., lest it might seem to militate against the honour of the Apostle; but we can conceive no reason why a falsifier should have inserted it. The wording is obscure and uncertain, but its general drift is

<sup>1</sup> Sic effatus ut sit Spiritus. 'Effatus' means a solemn utterance or declaration, especially of a religious character.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. VIII. 26.

<sup>3</sup> The allusion is to I Joannis, II., 1st.

unmistakable. It is a further argument that the Apostle had what he emphatically claimed, an immediate supernatural call to preach the Gospel in Ireland :—

“And when,” he says, “I was tempted by some few of my elders, who, on account of my sins, went in opposition to my undertaking this laborious episcopate (in Ireland), assuredly on that day I was strongly driven towards falling away<sup>1</sup> (by opposing the will of God) both in this world and for evermore. But the Lord, for His namesake, had mercy on me, a stranger and proselyte, and greatly aided me in that humiliation, so as not to allow me to become a stain and an opprobrium. I pray God that it may, not be imputed to them as an occasion of sin; for, after thirty years they found me, and brought against me a word which I had confessed before I became a deacon. At that time, on account of anxiety of mind, in great sorrow I confided to a very dear friend some things I had done one day in my boyhood—nay, it was in one hour, for I was not yet strong in spirit.<sup>2</sup> I know not, God knows, if I was then quite fifteen years,<sup>3</sup> and I had not from my childhood a practical belief in one God, but in death and infidelity I remained until I was greatly chastised, and humbled by cold and hunger. And daily with reluctance I tarried in Ireland<sup>4</sup> until I was almost fainting away. But this was all rather for my good, for from that time I was corrected by the Lord, and He prepared me to be today what was once far from me, a person who would care for and labour for the salvation of others, whereas at that time I did not even think of my own.

“Well then, on that day on which I was objected to by the aforesaid elders, at night I saw in a vision of the night a writing was written against me without honour—[that is, to dishonour him]—and thereupon I heard a voice saying to me, we look with disapproval on the face of thy accuser—the person above referred to—disclosing his name”—which Patrick did not wish to mention. “He did not say, *you* have disapproved, but *we* have disapproved—as if He joined Himself to me and said, who touches you touches the apple of My eye.

“Wherefore I give thanks to Him who, in all things, hath strengthened me so that no one could prevent me from undertaking the mission on which I had resolved, and from taking that share in the work which I had learned from Christ my Lord. Nay more, from that day I perceived no small power in myself; and my fidelity hath been approved both by God and men.”

<sup>1</sup> Impulsus sum ut caderem.

<sup>2</sup> Quia necdum prævalebam.

<sup>3</sup> It was therefore before his captivity he committed the fault.

<sup>4</sup> The wording is obscure—“Et cotidie contra Hiberionem non sponte pergebam.”

The whole of this passage is, as we have said, somewhat obscure, and has been often and gravely misunderstood. The meaning, however, appears to us clear enough. The Saint had referred to three supernatural manifestations of God's will in his regard urging him to prepare himself for the mission in Ireland. Here he refers to a fourth, which took place, however, later on in his life, and probably when he was about to be consecrated Bishop in France for the Irish Mission. Some persons, whose names he carefully conceals, opposed his consecration, and the opposition went far to induce him to renounce his project to the peril of his own soul. Amongst other charges brought against him was some fault or sin which, thirty years before, when about to become a deacon, he had made known in confidence to a very great friend. It was a sin committed not then, but at the age of fifteen, before he became a captive, and whilst he was still ignorant of God. It was indeed a hard thing to reveal it thirty years after its confidential manifestation, and some forty-five years after its commission. But God comforted him in that great extremity by showing him in vision the charge written against him, and at the same time saying, we disapprove of the action of the accuser—naming him at the same time. This vision gave new courage to Patrick, and was a new proof of a divine mission to preach the Gospel in Ireland.

Todd has gravely misunderstood this passage of the Confession, and based an argument on his own error. He says<sup>1</sup> that a fault "which he had committed at the age of 15 was brought forward and objected to him by his friends 30 years afterwards, with a view to prevent his being consecrated a bishop, and to obstruct his design of devoting himself to the Irish Mission;" whence he infers that Patrick was 45 years old at the time of his consecration as bishop.

But what St. Patrick says in the Confession is not that the fault was objected to him 30 years after its *commission*, but 30 years after his confiding it to his friend in anxiety of mind, *when he was about to become a deacon*. At that time the regular age for receiving deaconship was at least 25 years, and in his case it was probably 30, so that it is in reality a new proof that Patrick was 60 years of age when he was consecrated Bishop, in immediate preparation for the Irish Mission. The point is a very important one.

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<sup>1</sup> Todd's *St. Patrick*, p. 392.

The next passage, too, is a rather intricate, and closely connected with the other. St. Patrick, comforted by the Divine visions he had received, says :—

Wherefore, I confidently say that (in undertaking the Irish Mission) my conscience does not upbraid me now, nor will it hereafter. I call God to witness that I have not spoken falsely in all I have stated. Nay, I rather grieve for my most intimate friend that I deserved to hear such a Divine answer<sup>1</sup> (responsum). For I intrusted my soul to him. Yet I discovered it—(that is his manifestation of my fault)—from some of the brothers before putting forward my own defence, because I was not present at the time (the charge was made), nor was I even in Britain, nor was I in any way the cause that he should thus strike at me in my absence. Nay, he himself had said with his own lips, “you are to be promoted to the rank of Bishop,” of which indeed I was unworthy. But how was it that he should publicly, before good and bad men, dishonour me in regard to that of which he had of his own accord and quite willingly declared me not to be unworthy.<sup>2</sup> But, God is above us all. I have said enough. Yet it is not fitting that I should conceal the gift of God which He has given me in the land of my captivity, where I sought Him and found Him; and He it is who has preserved me from all iniquity through His Holy Spirit, who, as I confidently believe, has worked in me up to the present day. Daringly again I speak, but God knows if that man had spoken this to me myself, in all probability I would have held my peace, and borne it in silence in the charity of Christ.

The whole passage is obscure, and the Latin is intricate and unusual, we may say intentionally so in this case. But in substance it is this. The law of the Church required then, as it does now, that all candidates for Orders—especially for the higher grades of the Ministry—should have good testimony from those around them. Hence it was usual not only to make careful inquiries regarding the merits of the candidate in the place where he was to be ordained, but also to get official letters after careful inquiry from the places of his sojourn, especially if it were a prolonged one.

When St. Patrick was about to be consecrated Bishop such inquiries were duly made in Britain, where he had dwelt for many years, and it was then and there, it seems, that some person objected to his promotion on the

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<sup>1</sup> Which implied a fault on his friend's part.

<sup>2</sup> The text is here doubtful and obscure.

ground of a fault told to that person in confidence,<sup>1</sup> and with a view to quiet his own scruples thirty years before, when he was about to become a deacon, but committed when Patrick himself was only about fifteen years of age, that is just before his captivity in Ireland. Yet neither then nor afterwards did that man raise any objection to Patrick's promotion. He went further and said, "You will one day be promoted to the episcopate." But, nevertheless, when Patrick was absent, he made that charge publicly against him, which greatly grieved Patrick, and was certainly one of the reasons why this Confession was written. This was the best proof of God's call, and his own fitness through the Holy Ghost, that he converted the whole Irish people to the Christian faith—which Patrick distinctly asserts, but not without many apologies for speaking so strongly, giving at the same time all the glory and all the thanks to God. It reminds us of the defence of his own conduct and of his apostolate which St. Paul found it necessary to write more than once, but especially in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, when he was unjustly assailed by false brethren in the ministry, just as Patrick was in somewhat similar circumstances and from the same motives—jealousy and disappointed ambition.

Here we get incidentally, as it were, a picture of the state of mind in which St. Patrick was before he went to Gaul. The voice of God was calling him, and the Angel of God was beckoning him onward to prepare for the great work of converting the Irish people. The call of the children from Focluth Wood by the western sea was ringing in his ears; but his mind was anxious, and his pure conscience was very scrupulous as to his fitness to become even a deacon, on account of the fault which he had committed in his boyish ignorance<sup>2</sup> before he was fifteen years of age. He sought counsel and got it from his most intimate friend, who told him, so far as we can judge, that he might with a safe conscience become a deacon. And perhaps he did then become a deacon about the age of thirty and before his departure for France, although the time and place are by no means certain.<sup>3</sup> His friends were still anxious to keep him

<sup>1</sup> Not, of course, in confession, but '*propter anxietatem animi insinuavi amicissimo meo*'—to get advice and quiet his scruples.

<sup>2</sup> *Nescio, Deus scit, si habebam tunc annos quindecim; et Deum unum non credebam neque ex infantia mea.*

<sup>3</sup> It is said he got a monk's tonsure from St. Martin.

at home, but the voice of God called him away, and so, yielding to the divine guidance, he resolved to prepare himself for the great task before him.

A man at that time might be a deacon with little knowledge of Theology or Sacred Scripture, for it was purely a ministerial office, and did not necessarily imply either great knowledge or further progress towards the priesthood. St. Patrick's father appears to have remained a deacon all his life, doing good work in the Church, but leaving to others the ministry of the Word, and the conferring of the Sacraments. But a deacon's training would not suffice for the Irish mission. He must get divine knowledge, and official authority to preach the Gospel in Ireland—and so he resolved to set out to visit and honour the Apostolic See, the head of all the Churches of the whole world, in order that in wisdom he might learn and understand and fulfil the divine and holy functions to which God had called him—namely, to preach and bestow divine grace on the stranger tribes (of Ireland), by converting them to the faith of Christ.

Whether St. Patrick actually visited the Apostolic See or not, and received therefrom his commission, there can be no question that such was his avowed object in crossing the sea to Gaul and Italy. It is expressly stated in the oldest book we have—the Book of Armagh<sup>1</sup>—and the statement is confirmed by all the Ancient Lives of the Saint without exception.

But, as to the route he followed there is considerable difference of opinion. Muirchu's narrative in the Book of Armagh takes him right across the southern British or Iccian Sea, with the purpose of crossing—ut in corde proposuerat—the Gallic Alps at their extremity,<sup>2</sup> and so making his way to that city which he regarded as 'the head of all the Churches of the whole world,' at once the supreme seat of learning and of authority. But meeting St. Germanus of Auxerre, a great and holy prelate, he remained with him for a long time in all subjection, patience, and obedience, a virgin in mind and body, drinking in from the instruction and example of his great

<sup>1</sup> See Book of Armagh with the heading of the Chapter:—

De aetate ejus quando iens videre Sedem Apostolicam voluit discere sapientiam.

His primary purpose when going abroad was 'to visit the Apostolic See and learn wisdom.'

<sup>2</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, Vol. II., p. 496.

teachers not only divine wisdom, but chastity, and God's holy fear in all simplicity and fervour of heart.

It is clear, however, from the fuller accounts given in the other Lives of our Saint, that Muirchu here merely sums up the outcome of St. Patrick's tuition under Germanus, whom he justly designates as his chief master, and God's best gift to him. If we are to look for a more detailed account of the thirty years that Patrick spent in Gaul we must go to other authorities, who do not, however, contradict the summary statement of Muirchu. So far as we can judge, Germanus was not a bishop, or even a monk, when Patrick went to Gaul about the year A.D. 400. He was then civil governor, and did not become a Bishop for some eighteen years afterwards. So that Patrick could not have gone to him at once.

The Tripartite makes substantially the same statement as Muirchu, that Patrick having crossed the Iccian Sea, or English Channel, went as far as the Alps and the southern part of Letha,<sup>1</sup> and there met German, the most celebrated Bishop in Europe, under whom he read the ecclesiastical Canons, like Paul the Apostle at the feet of Gamaliel.

*Afterwards*, the Tripartite says, he went to Saint Martin at Tours that he might get the monastic tonsure, and there he entirely renounced all wordly cares and pleasures, giving himself entirely to the service of God in the monastic state.<sup>2</sup> The Third Life makes a similar statement, but the Second and Fourth Lives make no reference to this visit to St. Martin.

Probus, however, in the Fifth Life breaks new ground, and distinctly states that Patrick, escaping from captivity in Ireland, was sold as a slave in Meath to certain men of Gaul, who carried him to Bordeaux, and afterwards to Trajectum, where he escaped from his captors, and succeeded in making his way to his relative, the great Saint Martin of Tours.

The question, therefore, is—whom did St. Patrick first visit in Gaul: St. German or St. Martin? In our opinion the dates compel us to assume that Patrick first went to visit St. Martin of Tours, whether the monastery or the man, or both, is a secondary consideration. For it is said in the Lives that he left Britain when approaching the

<sup>1</sup> The Latin of Colgan has Italia, but it is certain the Irish word was Letha, which rather means Gallia, to which, too, it is near in sound.

<sup>2</sup> St. Martin was dead at least sixteen years before Germanus became a bishop.



thirtieth year of his age,<sup>1</sup> that is to say about the year A.D. 402. But that is the year in which, at the latest, St. Martin died. Consequently, if Patrick intended to see his holy relative alive, his first visit must have been to Tours, for, next year, all France knew that the great Saint was dead.

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<sup>1</sup> *Annum jam aetatis attingens trigesimum.*

## CHAPTER V.

### ST. PATRICK'S TEACHERS.

#### I.—VISIT TO ST. MARTIN'S AT TOURS.

We may, therefore, fairly assume that St. Martin's great Monastery at Tours was the first school of virtue and learning which Patrick visited, and there it is said he spent at least four years.

How he journeyed from Britain to Tours is uncertain. Adhering to the ancient authority of Probus, we may assume that he found a Gallic wine-ship somewhere in Britain which took him over 'the Iccian Sea,' or, as we say now, down the Channel, and thence across the Bay of Biscay to Bordeaux. Then, as now, it was a famous city, with a great coasting and foreign trade, especially in wine. It was, moreover, connected by great roads with the principal cities of Gaul, and had long been celebrated for its schools and learned professors. Patrick, however, does not appear to have made a long stay in Bordeaux, for, we are told by Probus that he journeyed thence to a place which he calls Trajectum. As the name implies, this was the point where the Roman road going north to Perigueux and Tours crossed the river Dordogne some fifty miles eastward of Bordeaux. This road would bring Patrick after a long and weary way to Poitiers, the ancient Roman town whose remains have been lately discovered in the modern city, and there, doubtless, he would seek shelter and hospitality in the great Monastery of Ligugé, founded near the city some fifty years before by his relation, the great St. Martin. Going thence still northward—if we are to trust a very ancient tradition—Patrick came to the Loire, which he crossed, some say, floating on his cloak, at a point a few leagues westward of Tours, where stand the ancient Church and very modern railway-station of St. Patrice.

It was mid-winter when the weary traveller, footsore and hungry, arrived at the great river, seeking in vain for some place of shelter; but, finding none, he lay down to rest beneath the spreading boughs of a blackthorn tree which grew near at hand. They were covered with hoar

frost: but lo! that hoar frost disappeared under the warmer breath of air from heaven. The frozen boughs were softened by the living sap, and, throwing off the snowy crystals, were soon clothed with their own flowers of purest white, which covered the weary Saint like a canopy, sheltering him as he slept. And from that time to the present, every year at the close of December the "Flowers of St. Patrick" reappear, as if in vernal bloom, on the same tree, in spite of the utmost severity of the weather. The fact has been witnessed by generations of men, living and dead, who have seen it with their own eyes, and we have, moreover, the official testimony of the curé of the parish, and also of the President of the Archæological Society of Touraine, who cites the "Annals of the Local Agricultural Society," which give a full account of that marvellous bloom in mid-winter.<sup>1</sup>

Having crossed to the right or northern shore of the great river, Patrick would have no difficulty in making his way along its banks to the great Monastery of St. Martin at Marmoutier, near Tours, which he longed to visit and had toiled so hard to reach.

## II.—AT MARMOUTIER.

And now that we find St. Patrick at Tours, we must give a short account of St. Martin, and of his celebrated Monastery of Marmoutier.

It is fortunate that we have the Life of St. Martin, written by one in every way worthy to be the herald of his virtues. The 'Vita S. Martini' by Sulpicius Severus is one of the most beautiful works in the whole range of Christian hagiology. The historian was in every way qualified for the task, for he was a man of the highest culture, possessing a chaste and polished style, and was, moreover, for several years the intimate friend and disciple of St. Martin, who loved him as a son. Then, he was a man of austere virtue, who had voluntarily renounced great wealth, high station, official rank and authority, in order to give himself entirely to the service of God as a simple, self-denying monk—for it is doubtful if ever he became a priest. But he loved and venerated Martin with his whole soul, and he tells us that, in recording the facts of the Saint's life, what he did not know of his own

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<sup>1</sup> See Father Morris's *St. Patrick*—Appendix, p. 271.

knowledge he had learned from Martin himself or from his chosen friends and disciples. When the work appeared, shortly after the death of St. Martin, it was sought after everywhere with the utmost eagerness. It was read throughout all Gaul. Copies could not be multiplied fast enough in Rome to supply the demand, and booksellers made large profits on the work. It was inquired for with similar eagerness in Africa, at Alexandria, even in Syria, and in Constantinople, although written in Latin. Many religious men carried it always with them on their journeys, and some of them had it almost by heart. If it were written by an Irish monk in a rude style, Lanigan and writers of that school would set it aside as 'stuff,' for it is filled with miracles; but it is not so easy for a Catholic to set aside the work of a scholar and saint like Sulpicius Severus, for he was assuredly both. He may possibly have been deceived himself, but such a man could never voluntarily deceive others. In most cases he cites his authority, and frequently attests the truth of what he says with the utmost solemnity in the presence of God. It is not improbable that our St. Patrick met him or saw him at Tours, for he was writing the Life of St. Martin and his Dialogues, or perhaps some of the Letters, at the very time that St. Patrick sojourned at Marmoutier.

St. Martin was born at Sabaria in Pannonia early in the fourth century. Being the son of a veteran officer, he was compelled in his youth to serve in the imperial cavalry, but though only a catechumen—for his parents were pagans—in the midst of the licence of a camp he lived the life of a saint. Escaping as soon as he could from the army, he went first to Milan, where his zeal against the Arians exposed him to great danger, and finally caused his expulsion from the city. He then retired to the small island of Gallinaria, near Genoa, where he devoted himself to a life of silence, prayer, and penance. Shortly afterwards he visited the great St. Hilary of Poitiers, who received him with the utmost kindness, and led him up the steep ascent of heroic virtue. With the aid of Hilary, he founded, near Poitiers, the Monastery of Ligugé, which was probably the earliest institution of its kind in Gaul. There he raised to life a catechumen of the Monastery who had died in his absence, and "who lived afterwards many years amongst us," says Sulpicius, "at once the object and the testimony of the miraculous power of Martin."

Then, most reluctantly, he was taken from his cell to become Bishop of Tours, to the great joy of the people, but to the dissatisfaction of certain ecclesiastics, who thought the illiterate<sup>1</sup> soldier-monk unworthy of that high station, for they said "he was a contemptible person, of mean presence, with hair unkempt, and poorly clad."<sup>2</sup>

But the 'sordid' monk, still remaining poor and humble, became the greatest and most venerated prelate in all the Gauls. At first he dwelt in a little cell near his church, but being too much disturbed there by crowds of importunate visitors, he built himself that Monastery which still bears his name,<sup>3</sup> about two miles from the city. It was a spot as lonely as the desert, for it was enclosed on one side by a steep cliff running parallel to the river, and on the other side by the river itself, which at two points came quite close to the cliff, thus entirely insulating the intervening meadow, and leaving only a narrow passage leading into the secluded valley which formed the monastic enclosure. There the saint himself dwelt in a wattled cell, but his monks, climbing up the face of the cliff, found caves in its rocky walls which they further excavated, thus forming for themselves little cells like pigeon-holes, where they watched and worked and prayed. There were eighty monks there living the life of angels under the care of the blessed Martin. They had nothing of their own, they bought nothing, they sold nothing. They took their food together—one meal in the afternoon. They never knew the taste of wine except a brother got sick. They were clothed in garments of camel's hair. They seldom left their cells except to go to the oratory. The elder ones gave themselves almost exclusively to prayer, but the younger wrote and copied books or worked in the garden. Such is the picture of the life led by Martin and his monks, given, too, by an eye-witness, at the very time that St. Patrick visited them. "And yet," adds Sulpicius, "many amongst them were of noble birth, and brought up in the lap of luxury, but now of their own accord they trained their hearts in the way of patience and humility." It is not surprising that many amongst them were chosen to be Bishops of various cities throughout Gaul and all its borders.

<sup>1</sup> Sulpicius says Martin was 'illiteratus,' just like St. Patrick—'untrained in College learning, but not in Sacred Scripture.'

<sup>2</sup> *Hominem vultu despicabilem, veste sordidum, crine deformem.*

<sup>3</sup> *Martini Monasterium, or Majus Monasterium = Marmoutier.*

Such was the first monastic school of our St. Patrick on the Continent. The tradition of his presence there is still very vivid at Tours, and one of the rock-hewn cells is pointed out to the visitor as that in which he dwelt. These cells are yet in a remarkable state of preservation, in the very face of the steep escarpment overlooking the Loire. We visited them all; they were airy and dry, and, although dimly lighted, might still be used as sleeping chambers or small oratories. Outside the cells is a level platform of rock, not more than ten feet wide, but forty feet over the road beneath. This served at once as a kind of street before the cells, and also as a graveyard for the monks; for, in the solid rock are excavated graves, just the size and shape of the human body, in which the dead monks were laid outside their cells, exactly as they slept during life in their habits within. They were doubtless covered with flags or concrete after burial in the old times; but these flags are now removed, and the empty grave-chambers are quite open in the surface of the rocky platform. This platform is approached from below by a flight of stone steps cut in the rock. There must have been a railing of some kind running along the edge of the platform, otherwise a single false step might have been fatal.

This rocky platform looks south over the river and far away into a richly-wooded, undulating, and very fertile country. When we saw it, the whole scene was bathed in the rich effulgence of the mid-day sun, and a scene more varied and more picturesque it would be difficult to imagine. The fare of the monks might be scanty, and their beds be hard—a rug covering the naked rock—but when they emerged from their cells to the rocky platform before their door, they could at least feast their eyes on a glorious scene of beauty. In dry weather the Loire is a mere stream, treading its way through wastes of sand; but when the mountain floods came rushing down and filled the whole bed of the river, it must have presented a scene of awful grandeur. As it fronted the south, too, the chambers in this rocky escarpment must have been, during most of the year, both dry and healthy; although, doubtless, in the long nights of winter, they would be cold and cheerless for those whose hearts were not warmed with the fire of Divine love.

The ancient monastery at the foot of the rock, once the richest and most famous in Gaul, has completely disappeared, with the exception of a single carved gateway of

exquisite workmanship, which is now the only surviving remnant of the building. The grounds, however, are—or were until lately—in possession of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart, who have not only a convent, but also a large boarding school for young ladies, which is one of the best in France. The grounds are admirably kept, and the vineyards seem to be cultivated with skill and success.

The memory of St. Martin is still greatly revered in the city itself. A new church has been built over his shrine, and the chapel in the crypt has every hour in the day fervent worshippers, whose prayers to St. Martin are frequently attended with most wonderful results, as their votive offerings testify.

As we have seen from the testimony of Sulpicius Severus, the discipline in Marmoutier was strict, and the fare was meagre in the extreme, meat and wine being only allowed in case of sickness. A man of Britain must have found this fare harder than even a man of Gaul; and, moreover, Patrick was not quite accustomed to it. So on one occasion, we are told, he greatly longed to eat some pork that came in his way; but, in order not to give any scandal to the brethren, he hid the pork under a barrel, waiting to get a chance of cooking and eating it. Straightway he met a strange being, with eyes in the back, as well as in the front, of his head. Whereupon Patrick asked him in surprise who and what he was. "I am a servant of God," replied the monster, "and with my eyes in front I see the ordinary actions of men, but with those behind I saw a certain monk hiding pork under a barrel that he might not be caught"—and having thus spoken the strange being at once vanished. Thereupon Patrick was smitten with sore sorrow, and besought with ardent prayers pardon from God. Then the Angel Victor appeared to him, and told him that God had forgiven his sin, whereupon Patrick rose up full of joy, and promised that he would never again in the whole course of his life eat flesh meat—a promise which the writer declares that he kept. But still anxious to get a further assurance of pardon, he besought Victor to give him some other proof of forgiveness. Whereupon Victor told him to throw the pork into the water in presence of his monastic brethren. Patrick did so, and in sight of all the pork was changed into fishes suitable for the monks. Patrick, it is added, used himself to tell this story to his own disciples, in order to teach them the need and merit of restraining gluttonous desires.

The Tripartite also states that it was at St. Martin's Monastery of Tours Patrick received the monastic tonsure, which is a further proof that it was the first of the Gallic monasteries that he visited; hitherto he had been tonsured as a slave. This would, certainly, seem to imply that the visit to Tours was paid shortly after his captivity in Ireland. It is also expressly stated that after he received this tonsure from St. Martin he renounced all worldly cares and pleasures, and devoted himself entirely to prayer and self-denial. It is not easy to determine how long he remained at Marmoutier. One writer says four years, and, in the absence of better authority, we may accept the statement. If Patrick, as we think, came to Marmoutier in A.D. 402, he came the very year in which, at the latest, St. Martin died.<sup>1</sup> We have the express statement that he received the monastic tonsure from St. Martin, and, although then, as now, a monastery is often called by the name of its founder, it would be difficult to understand this expression as simply meaning that he received it in St. Martin's. We are inclined, therefore, to think that the saint did not die until late in 402—the 11th November; and that St. Patrick had the satisfaction of being tonsured by his illustrious relative, and making his vow of monastic obedience into his hands. Martin has been always perhaps the most popular saint in France, if we judge from the number of dedications under his name. He has been also—excepting, of course, St. Patrick—the most popular saint of foreign birth in Ireland. His festival from the earliest times has been observed with pious fidelity by the people, and Martinmas was one of the 'set times' of special feasting in Ireland.<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to explain this peculiar devotion to St. Martin in Ireland, except on the ground of his known relationship to our own national Apostle, who, doubtless, from the very beginning taught his Irish children to pay special reverence to the name and memory of one who was at once his blood relation and spiritual father.

But much greater prominence is given in the Ancient Lives to St. Patrick's tuition under Germanus of Auxerre than under St. Martin. Some of the authorities say that he spent no less than thirty years under the guidance of Germanus; others reduce it to eighteen; and some still

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<sup>1</sup> See *Dict. Christ. Biography*.

<sup>2</sup> Many old churches in Ireland were dedicated to St. Martin, and were often built near the Patrician churches.



further to fourteen, or even to four years.<sup>1</sup> It is certain that the period of fourteen years fits in best with the known dates of the life of Germanus, for he became Bishop of Auxerre in 418, and, therefore, if St. Patrick had not met him while still a layman, he could not have been his disciple for a longer period than fourteen years.

These ancient authorities, too, whilst expressly stating that Auxerre was the episcopal city of Germanus, yet make what at first sight appears to be a strange statement, that Patrick was trained under him in the island called "Aralatensis"—that is the island of Arles, although Arles is an inland city. Other authorities call this island the *Insula Tamarensis*<sup>2</sup>—the island of Tamara, in which he is said to have spent nine years. Then Probus makes the significant statement that before going to that island, 'between the mountains and the sea,' he had spent eight years with certain cremites and bare-footed solitaries who dwelt in separate cells, but he does not state where. We have personally gone over the ground, and studied the Lives, and we think all these places can be identified with reasonable certainty, and that the dates given above will fit in with the known facts of St. Patrick's history. Our opinion, then, is that Lerins is the solitude of the bare-footed hermits where Patrick spent eight years, that the Isle de Camargue, as it is now called, is the *Insula Aralatensis*, or *Tamarensis*, where he spent nine years, and that part of that time he was under the spiritual care of St. Germanus at Arles, and for several years afterwards at Auxerre, until Germanus, after his return from Britain, sent Patrick to Rome to receive episcopal consecration, and formal authority to preach the Gospel in Ireland.

The development of these points has a very special interest.

### III.—IN LERINS.

Lerins is a name that is dear to every Christian scholar, for it was during many centuries a nursery of learning and holiness, whilst the tide of barbarism swept over the decaying empire of Rome. The ancient Leron and Lerina are two small islands off the coast of Var, and quite near Cannes, in the south of France. They are now

<sup>1</sup> *Vita Tertia*. Et mansit apud eum quatuor annis legens et implens Scripturas, virgo corpore et spiritu.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita Tertia*. Tamarensis Insulam. Transactis ibi novem annis voluit Patritius visitare Romam, etc.

called St. Marguerite and St. Honorat, from the holy sister and brother who first chose them to be their monastic homes. St. Honorat, the smaller but far more celebrated island, is less than a mile from St. Marguerite,<sup>1</sup> and hides itself, as it were, behind the larger island from the gaze of the curious eyes on shore. But it is very beautiful, above all when the beams of a southern sun light up the sparkling waves that dash on its rocky fringe, and reveal the snowy Alpine peaks in the blue distance, and all the charms of the enchanted shores of this fairy island, with its flowery meads and crown of crested pines breathing out their sweet odours on the bland and balmy air. Hence we find that Lerins has been called not only the Island of the Saints, but an earthly Paradise, and the Pearl of the Sea, and one enthusiastic poet has said that in Lerins he would wish to live for ever, for there is no more beautiful spot in all the world.<sup>2</sup>

But Lerins was very different when Honoratus first landed towards the close of the fourth century<sup>3</sup> on its rocky shores. It is fortunate that we have an authentic account of his life and character from his own beloved disciple, St. Hilary, who succeeded him in the See of Arles, and preached his funeral oration, as well as in the affectionate references made to him by several other members of his saintly island family.

Honoratus, like Sulpicius Severus, belonged to a consular family of Cologne, and received an education befitting his high station. His father was a vain, worldly-minded man, who even delayed the baptism of his son for some years, lest he might give his young heart to God. But his efforts were vain, because God called. Leaving parents and wealth and family behind him, as obstacles to his salvation, he resolved, in company with his brother, to serve God in solitude, and leave the world for ever.

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<sup>1</sup> When Honoratus came to dwell at Lerins his sister resolved to found a convent in the larger island. Once a year only would he allow her to visit him in his island. "At what season will it be," she said. "When that cherry tree is in bloom," he replied. Then St. Marguerite prayed to God, and He clothed the cherry tree with its own white blossoms every month in the year. So that Marguerite could visit her holy brother according to his promise, not once but twelve times in the year.

<sup>2</sup> *Pulchrior in toto non est locus orbe Lerina. Dispercam, hic si non vivere semper amem.*

<sup>3</sup> The local guide-book fixes A.D. 375 as the date. But the monastery was not founded until 410, and although St. Honoratus had been there for some years on the island, we can hardly admit so long an interval before the founding of his monastery.

Accompanied by an aged priest named Coprasius, whom they took as guide and spiritual director, the brothers travelled through Italy and Greece, visiting the sacred places and holy solitaries, of whom they had heard so much in their own palace by the Rhine. But his brother dying on the journey, Honoratus returned to Gaul with his remains, and after the burial resolved, with his director and a few companions, to take possession of the lonely island of Lerins, and there serve God in solitude for the rest of his life. Hilary, who knew the island well, describes its state at the time. It was a desert—exactly what Probus calls it—horrid, with wild growths, and so full of venomous snakes, that no one ventured to set foot upon its shores. When the tide rose a little, and the water dashed over the rocks, these serpents came out of their holes and roamed over the whole island. Then there was no open space for cultivation, and no fresh water to be found in its arid wastes. But Honoratus, strong in faith and armed by prayer, was not deterred from his purpose.

At his strong prayer a fountain of limpid water burst forth from the arid rock, and is flowing still, as many a tourist knows, in all its sweetness and purity. The serpents disappeared before the man of God, or, if any remained, they were never known to hurt anyone. At first, Honoratus and his companions dwelt in separate cells made of interlaced pine boughs, and in separate parts of the island. They were true solitaries, living on herbs and fruit, with abundance of pure water to drink. Abiding in the desert like John the Baptist, they were clothed like him in a single coarse garment, made of hair or skin; but they walked, as holy men do still, bare-headed and shoeless. These were, so far as we can ascertain, 'the bare-footed solitaries in the desert,' with whom, according to Probus, St. Patrick lived for eight years. When he joined them first, about the year 406, they had not yet built their monastery, or formed themselves into a regular community; but it was just then in process of formation. For we are expressly told by St. Hilary, in very beautiful language, that Honoratus had the arms of his love wide open to receive all who came to his lonely island, and that he cared for them with more than the love and tenderness of a father. The fame of the holy island and of its sainted founder soon spread over all Gaul, and, as might be expected—for it was the spirit of the time—crowds came to Lerins, not only from Gaul, but,

as Hilary says, from all parts of the earth, differing in character as much as they differed in language.<sup>1</sup> But Hilary received them all with loving kindness, and in him 'they found home and country and kindred.'

It must be borne in mind, too, that at this early period there was no other monastery in the West except Marmoutier, and perhaps a few others, so that this holy island naturally attracted crowds of strangers to its shores, seeking God in solitude.

Then Hilary found it necessary to build a church, and gather his solitaries into a regular community. With their own hands they built their church in the centre of the island, where the modern church now stands; and with their own hands, too, they rooted out the wild brakes; they cleared away the useless trees; they quarried the stones from the rocky soil, forming new and fertile fields, in which they planted fruit trees, and corn, and vines, making that desert smile as a rose, and produce teeming crops of all that was necessary for their self-denying and simple lives. St. Patrick must have seen it all, for it was during the years of his sojourn there that this wondrous change was accomplished. He must have had his own share in the blessed work, and seen with his own eyes how much strong hands and loving hearts can do for God—and the lesson was not lost upon him during the sixty years of his own manifold toils in Ireland.

But Lerins soon became something more than a place of prayer and labour for God; it became a great school where all the sacred sciences were taught with signal success. It was in his cell at Lerins that the great St. Vincent of Lerins wrote his immortal 'Commonitorium,' or Admonition, in which he lays down, for all time and for all men, a Rule of Faith that can never be assailed—'Teneamus id quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est.' It was to Lerins that Eucherius, who has been described<sup>2</sup> as 'the greatest of the great pontiffs of his age,' retired from one of the highest offices in the empire with his wife and children, whom he left—the girls with their mother at St. Marguerite, and the boys at Lerins. It was from Lerins he himself was called to preside over the great Church of Lyons; and it was in Lerins he wrote his beautiful spiritual treatises:

<sup>1</sup> Tam moribus quam lingua dissona (congregatio).

<sup>2</sup> By Mamertus.

'De Laude Eremi,' and 'De Contemptu Mundi et Secularis Philosophiæ.' It was in Lerins that Cassian and Salvianus, with a host of other great writers of the time, received most of their training in divine wisdom. From Lerins there issued not only prelates and doctors of high renown, but Popes and Cardinals and statesmen and philosophers. More than once, too, its soil was reddened with the blood of martyred monks, especially at one great slaughter in A.D. 730, when hundreds of them were slain. With good reason, therefore, did Pius IX. declare,<sup>1</sup> that Lerins became a nursery of Saints for the Church, of Apostles for the nations, and of Pontiffs for the episcopal Sees; and such it remained down to the date of its suppression in 1788.

The island was shortly afterwards purchased by an actress, who loved its natural beauty, but made its sacred sites the scene of unholy revels. From the actress it passed to an Anglican minister, who unwittingly sold it in 1859 to an agent of the Bishop of Frejus. The Bishop at once took steps to restore the island to its ancient and holy purpose, with the final result that it was given over in 1867 to a branch of the great Cistercian family, and is at the present moment the seat of a flourishing community, numbering some sixty brothers, with more than twenty priests, who are ruled by the Vicar-General of the Order, whose seat is the Abbey of Lerins.<sup>2</sup> So once more Lerins has been restored to its ancient splendour, and now, as of old, to the saints of God.

It is manifest that Patrick must have learned much in a school like Lerins, under the guidance of a spiritual father like Honoratus, whose very letters, so sweet and gracious, seemed to have been written with honey on tablets of wax,<sup>3</sup> and in the society, too, of the noble Gallo-Romans,<sup>4</sup> who had given up everything for God. And how they must have sometimes pitied the poor British monk who was tending swine in barbarous Scotia, whilst they were declaiming in the schools of Rome and Arles, and who had, as might be expected, so little of that "Romana

<sup>1</sup> By Brief, dated March 12, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> This was written before the late expulsion of the Religious Orders from France. What has happened since we do not exactly know.

<sup>3</sup> St. Hilary.

<sup>4</sup> St. Patrick makes one brief reference in the Confession 'to God's Saints in Gaul, whose faces he longed to see again,' but he dared not leave his flock in Ireland.

eloquentia," of which, as Hilary tells us, Honoratus was himself a master. But eloquence is not everything; and the British monk in the end accomplished a task greater than they did. One thing is certain—we could never understand the life of St. Patrick, as he himself and his deeds have revealed it to us, except we understood how he was trained in the School of Christ, and spent a long noviciate under the greatest masters of the spiritual life.

#### IV.—IN THE ISLAND OF ARLES.

It was, we are told,<sup>1</sup> the Angel Victor that directed Patrick to Lerins to the barefooted hermits to learn the lessons of the desert; and it was the Angel Victor who now also, after eight years in the desert, directed him to go to the 'island monks between the mountain and the sea.' The expression is, as we have said, a peculiar one. It was not an island in the sea like Lerins, but between the mountains and the sea. This description applies exactly to what was then known as the Island of Arles, but is now called the Isle of the Camargue, or the Camargue simply. It is an island between the Alps on the north-east, and the sea on the south, formed by the two branches of the Rhone—the Great and the Little Rhone—which bifurcates at Arles, and encloses the island between its two arms and the sea. In ancient times this island was not nearly as large as it is now, for the Rhone is daily gaining on the sea, and filling up its own shallow estuaries with the *debris* taken down from the mountains. In the time of Julius Cesar Arles was a seaport in immediate connection with the sea, but now it is many miles inland, and the island has grown in proportion. There is no doubt that it was always called in ancient times, as it is in the Lives of St. Patrick, the *Insula Aralatensis*. In our opinion the other name, *Insula Tamarensis*, is a mistake of the copyist for the *Insula Camarensis*, that is the Island of the Camargue, and so there can be no doubt of the identity of these two places mentioned in the Lives of our National Apostle.

Now, we know for certain that Constantine connected the 'Island of Arles' with the city by a great bridge of stone, and that a new suburb was built within the island. We know also that a great monastery was founded some

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<sup>1</sup> By Probus.

time during the fifth century in the island, for we have an express reference to it in the Life of Cæsarius of Arles, who was himself a monk of Lerins, from which he was taken to preside over the island monastery of Arles. We do not know when it was founded, but it seems highly probable that it was a daughter of Lerins, and was founded by a colony of monks from that holy island, which was always closely connected with Arles. Is it a rash conjecture to suppose that Patrick was one of the monks of Lerins, who were sent there shortly after its foundation, and whilst the island community was still young?

Then there is a story told of a great beast which dwelt near the well where the monks got their water, and Patrick was required to go like the rest in his turn for the water, otherwise he could not stay amongst them. So he went, but he prayed to God to banish the fierce creature, and it appeared no more. There are many fierce beasts in the Camargue still, for a great part of the island is uninhabited, and even the bulls and horses that graze there become in course of time very wild. For the Rhone enters the sea through a regular network of lagunes, marshes, and mud-banks, which are almost impassable, and in their dark abysses afford shelter to many amphibious creatures who do not readily give themselves up for inspection. If the estuary of the Rhone was somewhat similar in ancient times, it would be no way wonderful if some strange beasts dwelt in the deep pools of its trackless marshes.

It is highly probable that it was in this insular monastery of Arles that Patrick first met the great St. Germanus of Auxerre. For Arles was then the capital of Gaul; it was the residence of the Prefect of all the Gauls, as well as of Spain and Britain. The chief schools of Gaul were in that city and the highest court in the wide Praetorian Province, so that it was usually crowded with professors, lawyers, and officials of every kind. Before he was 'dux' or governor of his native province Germanus had been a brilliant lawyer, and practised, as we know, with signal success both at Rome and at Arles. Even after he became governor of his own province, his visits to the imperial city of Gaul must have been frequent and prolonged. In this way he might naturally be expected to visit the island monastery and become acquainted with its monks. Although he became a Bishop, like St. Ambrose, *per saltum*, still he was certainly some time a priest, and naturally would retire to some monastery to

prepare himself for the new spiritual duties imposed upon him. It would appear, therefore, that even before he became Bishop, in 418, Germanus had opportunities of meeting our St. Patrick at Arles, and giving the British monk advice in the prosecution of his spiritual studies. It was a very natural way of making an acquaintance, which afterwards ripened into friendship so fruitful of spiritual blessings for our own country. Then, to reside near Arles at this time was an education in itself. It was a very beautiful city. Constantine the Great had at one time resolved to make it the capital of his entire empire, East and West, and although he afterwards gave that honour to Byzantium he did much for Arles. He built a royal palace on the left bank of the Rhine, and enriched the city with many noble buildings. The amphitheatre still remains standing, and although much smaller than the Coliseum, it is in far more perfect preservation. The ruins of the theatre also remain to attest the ancient splendour of the city. It was called Roma Gallula, the Gallic Rome, a miniature of the imperial city in all things, just as we see it in the fragments of its skeleton to-day. It was, therefore, only natural for Patrick to seek the great monastery of this Gallic Rome, and it was there his good fortune to find the wisest guide and best friend of his life—the soldier, statesman, bishop, and saint, all combined in the nobly born and highly accomplished Bishop of Auxerre.

#### V.—ST. GERMANUS AND ST. PATRICK.

This is the proper place for giving a sketch of the career of that truly illustrious man who so greatly helped to plant the faith in Ireland, and preserve it in England.

In the case of Germanus, as well as of the two other masters of St. Patrick, Martin and Honoratus, we have an authentic biography, published by a learned priest of Marseilles, some forty years after his death. Later on in the eighth century this Life was versified and supplemented by Heric of Auxerre, who, although much later still, had very special sources of information at his disposal in the episcopal city of Germanus himself. We must accept, therefore, as perfectly authentic the main facts of the life of Germanus, who was, if not the first, certainly amongst the greatest, of the Gallic prelates of the fifth century.

Germanus was born about the same time as Patrick himself, or perhaps a little later, at Auxerre, in the modern



department of Yonne. It was an old and noble city, not inferior to many of the great cities of Gaul in respect to its fertile soil, its fruitful vineyards, and its navigable river.<sup>1</sup> His parents were noble, and sent their son to the best schools in Gaul—which would be at Arles—and thence he went to Rome to study eloquence and law. Returning to Gaul, he practised before the tribunal of the Prefect, which was certainly in Arles, and so successfully that he was appointed one of the six Dukes of Gaul, with very extensive jurisdiction. About the same time he married, and gave himself up with passionate eagerness to the chase, in which it seems he was pre-eminently successful, for he brought home his trophies, and used to hang them on an ancient pear tree in the very centre of his city of Auxerre. This tree was it appears, at an earlier period the object of pagan or druidical worship; and once more, by bearing the spoils of the hunting Duke, it became an object, if not of religious worship, at least of great interest to the people.

The Bishop, St. Amator, was much displeased at this, and, finding the Duke had gone one day to his country house, he caused the pear tree to be cut down, and scattered all its 'spolia opima'—'oscilla' Constantius calls them. When Germanus returned to the city he swore vengeance against the Bishop, and even went so far as to threaten to take his life.

But the Bishop took another way of meeting the danger. Fearing for himself, he went south to Autun, where the Prefect Julius was then staying, and asked his permission to have the Duke of Auxerre ordained as Bishop of that city in succession to himself, for he assured the Prefect that he had only a short time to live.

The Prefect consented; and Bishop Amator, returning with the safe guard and promise of the Prefect, convoked the people to the church; and finding Germanus therein he caused him to be brought before the altar, and then and there tonsured the mighty hunter with the tonsure of a cleric, thus giving him the first grade in preparation for the succession to himself.

It seems to us a strange proceeding; but the history of St. Ambrose shows that it was not an isolated case, for Ambrose was not even baptised when he was chosen to be bishop of Milan. Germanus likewise received the epis-

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<sup>1</sup> Gallia Christiana.

copate under protest ; but it wrought in him a sudden and total change, as the holy Amator had doubtless anticipated.

His wife thenceforward became to him a sister ; he gave up his hunting ; his property he bestowed on the poor ; and his whole life he devoted to the service of Christ. The story of his self-denying asceticism is amazing. His body was his only enemy. He slept on a bed of cinders, covered with a rug without a pillow, strewn on a framework of boards ; he abstained from salt in his food, from oil, vegetables, and even wine, except on the chief festivals, when he partook of a little mixed with water. His clothing was the monk's cowl and hood, which he wore unchanged until they fell to pieces, and he always carried a purse of relics near his heart. Yet he was hospitable, and gave to his guests food and wine in plenty, barely tasting the rich viands himself. "I can assure you," says Constantius, "that his life was one long martyrdom, voluntarily undertaken in penance for his sins." Such was the man who, as all our Annals tell, was the chief teacher and patron of St. Patrick.

The river Yonne flows through the city of Auxerre, whose population at present is about 17,000. In the time of Germanus, Autissiodurum, as it was then called, was a busy and flourishing city, in the midst of which he was ill at ease. So he built himself a monastery beyond the river at a point where it bounds the town, and there with his monks he gave himself, as far as possible, to the prayerful, contemplative life which he loved. When duty called him to his cathedral he crossed the river in a small skiff, thus as far as he could avoiding the crowded streets of the city. There can be no doubt that St. Patrick spent several years in that monastery under the immediate direction of the greatest prelate of Gaul, who was also the highest model both of that active and contemplative life which Patrick afterwards led in Ireland.

All the Lives are emphatic in proclaiming that Germanus was the principal teacher of St. Patrick in the Sacred Sciences. Fiacc says—"he (Patrick) read the Canon with Germanus"—meaning thereby, in all probability, the books of the Old and the New Testament, with which he certainly shows himself familiar. The Second Life says that he remained "a long time with Germanus, the holiest and most orthodox<sup>1</sup> bishop in all Gaul, like Paul at the feet of

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<sup>1</sup> Fide probatissimum.

Gamaliel, in all subjection and obedience, devoting himself with eager zeal to the study of wisdom and the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures." The Third Life says—"Patrick remained with Germanus four years, reading and fulfilling the Scriptures, a virgin in body and spirit." The Fourth Life uses the same language as the Second, adding that Patrick was received by Germanus 'with the greatest reverence'—no doubt on account of his holiness—and that he remained thirty years under his guidance; but, if the numerals are exact, which is very doubtful, that must be understood of a kind of general superintendence during the whole period that Patrick was in Gaul. Probus adds that Patrick abode with Germanus not only 'in all subjection,' but 'in patience, obedience, charity, chastity, with perfect purity of mind and heart, living a virgin in the fear of God, and walking in virtue and simplicity of heart all the years of his life.' This, no doubt, is an accurate description of the monastic life which Patrick led during these years, under the guidance of the greatest and holiest prelate in Gaul, as all the Lives declare Germanus to have been. Similar language is also used in the Book of Armagh, as well as by Jocelyn and the Tripartite.

Yet, it is singular that Patrick in the Confession makes no reference to Germanus by name, nor to Pope Celestine, his great purpose being to vindicate the supernatural character of his own mission to Ireland against certain unworthy detractors of his own nation, who accused him of rashness and presumption in undertaking the conversion of the Irish tribes.

One of the most noteworthy events in the life of Germanus was his mission to Britain, in 429, in conjunction with St. Lupus of Troyes, to extirpate the Pelagian heresy. It is said by the Scholiast on Fiacc that on this occasion Germanus took Patrick along with him; and it was only natural that he should do so, for Patrick, being a Briton, must have known something of the language, and might, in many other respects, be very useful to Germanus during his sojourn in Britain.

What special connection Germanus had with Britain that he should be chosen to go on a mission to that country is now impossible to tell. We only know for certain that the British bishops sent an embassy to their Gallic brethren—perhaps to St. Germanus himself—to announce that the Pelagian depravity had infected the population far and wide in their country, and to beg them, as soon as

possible, to bring succour to the cause of the Catholic faith. Thereupon a numerous Synod of the Gallic prelates was convened, who besought Germanus and Lupus to undertake the difficult task. That request was conveyed to Rome; and as Prosper, a contemporary chronicler, expressly tells us, the two bishops were commissioned to go in the name of the Pope<sup>1</sup> to root the Pelagian heresy out of Britain, the soil of its origin. We know that their mission was completely successful, for through their efforts, inspired by Celestine, as Prosper says, the Roman Island (of Britain) was preserved Catholic, as the barbarous Island of Ireland was made Christian by the subsequent mission of Palladius, whose commission was, however, really carried out, not by him but by St. Patrick.

This brings us to an interesting point—what was the connection between Germanus and Palladius, with Ireland, as well as with Britain? Who was Palladius? Was he a deacon of the British Church, or of the Gallic Church of Germanus, or of the Roman Church? We find that it was on his representations—‘ad actionem Palladii diaconi’—that the Pope sent Germanus as his legate, *vice sua*, to Britain. This fact is undoubted. We know also that when Palladius failed in Ireland, he went to Britain and died there; and we know that the British bishops sent a mission to the Gallic prelates to tell them of the spread of heresy in Britain, and ask their succour. Is it not natural then to conclude that Palladius was the head of this legation, and that when Germanus was requested to bring help to the Catholics of Britain he sent Palladius to Pope Celestine to represent how things stood in Britain, and that the Pope, on his representations, commissioned Germanus to go to Britain?

When Germanus went to Britain he had many opportunities of learning the deplorable state of the ‘barbarians’ of Hibernia, who were still plunged in idolatry, and altogether beyond the influence of Roman civilization. We might naturally expect, therefore, that a man of his burning zeal would take a great interest in the conversion of Ireland, and strive to make the light of the Gospel shine in that unhappy country.

He returned home in 430; and, no doubt, at once

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<sup>1</sup> Ad actionem Palladii diaconi Papa Celestinus Germanum Autissiodorensem Episcopum vice sua mittit ut, deturbatis hereticis, Britannos ad Catholicam fidem dirigat.—*Chronica*.

reported to the Pope the success of his mission in Britain. But he must have done more. The close connection of events shows us that either he or Palladius, or both, brought the state of Ireland under the notice of the Pope; and the Pope at once resolved to consecrate Palladius and send him to convert the 'barbarous island' to the faith. The choice of Palladius for this weighty work is in itself a strong reason for supposing that Palladius was a Briton,<sup>1</sup> for the Pope would hardly have selected a man wholly unacquainted with the language and customs of the Irish tribes, to undertake so arduous and perilous a task as the conversion of Ireland to the Catholic faith.

#### VI.—MISSION OF PALLADIUS TO IRELAND.

Some knowledge of this mission of Palladius is essential to understand the subsequent mission of St. Patrick.

The entry of Prosper in his Chronicle, under date of A.D. 431, is brief but significant:—

“Palladius<sup>2</sup> is consecrated (this year) by Pope Celestine, and sent as their first bishop to the Scots believing in Christ.”

The present tense marks the contemporary Chronicler, and the entry also shows that in Rome they knew there were some Christians in Ireland, although not yet forming an organised Church. Of course, then, and long after, the term 'Scots' meant Irish, or rather the Gaels of Ireland. The Book of Armagh calls Palladius Archdeacon of Pope Celestine, and so no doubt he was in a certain sense.

At least whilst in Rome he was under the immediate jurisdiction of the Pope, and the epithet, 'Archdeacon,' like 'noble priest' in Irish, merely means that he occupied an eminent position in his office. The more accurate Prosper simply calls him Deacon Palladius: but his stay in Rome might easily procure him the title of Archdeacon of Pope Celestine.

Here the Irish Annalists give us further information, of which the Chronicler of Aquitaine knew nothing. The substance of their narrative may be summed up as follows: Palladius, with twelve companions, of whom two are named, Sylvester and Solinus, landed at Inver Dea, in the

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<sup>1</sup> So think Father John Bollandus, Usher, Reeves, and many other high authorities.

<sup>2</sup> Ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatur a Papa Celestino Palladius, et primus episcopus mittitur.

territory of the Hy Garrchon. This was the district extending northwards from Wicklow town to Bray Head; and, as we shall see later on, Inver Dea was certainly the estuary of the Vartry River, near the town of Wicklow—'the most commodious and celebrated port of that district' at the time. The ruler of this territory was Nathi, son of that Garrchu who gave his name to the tribe and trieland; and we know also that this Nathi was married to the daughter of that stubborn old pagan, King Laeghaire, who then reigned at Tara.

Nathi was hostile to the preaching of the Gospel in his territory. Still he did not attack the newcomers with fire and sword; and they succeeded in founding three churches, whose names are given in the old books—Teach na Roman, *i.e.*, the House of the Romans; Cell-fine, the Church of the Relics; and Domnach Arda, which would simply mean the Church of the Height. Special reference is made to the relics, which are described as books that Palladius got from Celestine,<sup>1</sup> and also a box containing relics of the Blessed Peter and Paul and of other saints, and the tablets on which Palladius used to write, and which are called in Irish from his name Pall-ere, or Pallad-ere, the burden of Palladius.

As might be expected, we are told that all these Palladian relics of the Church of Cell-fine were held in great veneration. The third church, called Domnach Arda (or Ardec) is particularly noteworthy as the place where the two holycompanions of Palladius, Sylvester and Solinus, died and are buried; it is added they are held in great veneration there.<sup>2</sup>

That is the whole record of the work of Palladius in Ireland—the founding of three churches in the Co. Wicklow—for, seeing that he made little or no progress, Palladius sailed away to Britain, and died there early next year, if not the same year, that is 431.

A competent local authority, the late Father Shearman, identifies Teach na Roman with Tigroney, an old church in the parish of Castle Mac Adam, Co. Wicklow. The building has completely disappeared; but the ancient cemetery still remains.

<sup>1</sup> *Second Life.*

<sup>2</sup> See the *Second Life* in Colgan.

But another account says, and probably with truth, that the remains were carried to Inis-Baithen, 'and are there held in merited honour.'—*Vita Quarta.*

Cell-fine Shearman identifies with Killeen Cormac, now an old churchyard, 'three miles south-west of Dunlavin;' but, as might be expected after the ravages of the Danes, all traces of the relics have completely disappeared. The third church, *Dominica Arda*, as it is called in the old Latin, Shearman locates in the parish now called Donard, in the west of the Co. Wicklow. We do not assent to Shearman's location of the last two churches, mainly because we think it improbable that Palladius and his associates, remaining for so short a time in the country, penetrated the Wicklow mountains so far to the west. We think all these sites should be sought for in the neighbourhood of the town of Wicklow, where Palladius landed; but, while the matter is still doubtful, we may accept the suggestions of Shearman, as not by any means certain, but as probable.

The Scholiast of *Fiacc* probably gives the true account of the subsequent history of Palladius. He tells us that Palladius was not well received by the people of Wicklow, but was forced to go round the north coast of Ireland until, driven by a great tempest, he reached 'the extreme part of Mohaidh to the South,' where he founded the Church of Fordun. 'Pledi is his name there.' The *Second Life* adds that Palladius died after a short time in the plain of *Girginn*, in a place which is called Fordun, 'but others say he was crowned with martyrdom there'—'that is,' the *Fourth Life* adds, 'in the region of the Picts'; others, however, say that 'he was crowned with martyrdom in *Hibernia*,' but this last suggestion may be summarily dismissed as altogether unsupported by any Irish authority.

Palladius died, therefore, shortly after leaving Ireland, 'in the region of the Picts,' in the plain called *Magh Girginn*, at the town of Fordun. Such is the concurrent testimony of several of our most ancient authorities. Skene, a very judicious critic, suggests that this legend "owes its origin to the fact that the Church of Fordun in the *Mearns* (*Magh Girginn*) was dedicated to Palladius under the local name of *Paldi*, or *Pledi*, and was believed to possess his relics," and that these relics were brought to Fordun by his disciple *Ternan*, either from Ireland or from *Galloway*. We think it far safer to adhere to ancient authorities, for Skene only meets one difficulty by raising another. He cannot accept the statement that the storm blew Palladius round the north coast of Scotland, and

then down south as far as Fordun; so he suggests that if not martyred in Ireland he must have died in Galloway.

But what is to prevent us from assuming that Palladius was driven into the Firth of Clyde, and that, still anxious to carry out his mission so far as he could by preaching to the Pictish tribes, he made his way overland to the Mearns, and there founded the Church of Fordun, which kept both his name and his relics for many ages? The fact that Palladius, instead of returning from Wicklow direct to Gaul, set out to preach the Gospel in Scotland, goes to show, in our opinion, that, like St. Patrick, he had some close connection with Britain, perhaps with North Britain, and that, failing in Ireland, he resolved to preach the Gospel in his own country, 'to the apostate Picts' beyond the Roman Wall.

Muirchu, in the Book of Armagh, says that Palladius failed in Ireland because 'God hindered him'—did not grant him success—'for no one can receive anything from earth except it be given to him from heaven.' God destined the conversion of Ireland for St. Patrick, and no one else could succeed in the difficult task. He implies, too, that what we have just now stated regarding an overland journey to Mearns is highly probable, for, he says, on Palladius' return hence, having crossed the first sea (to Britain), and having begun his land journey, he died in the territory of the Britons, or perhaps we should translate 'in finibus Britonum' on the border lands of the Britons, which might very well apply to Mearns.

And now let us come back to Patrick, who all this time was waiting the course of events, and the fulfilment of God's will in his monastery in Gaul.

#### VII.—ST. GERMANUS SENDS ST. PATRICK TO ROME.

The subsequent narrative, until the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland, although clear in things substantial, is rather confused in detailing the order of events. Yet, it is of great interest and importance, and must be set forth with care in all its details.

The narrative in the Fourth Life is, so far as it goes, both clear and orderly. After detailing the ineffectual attempt of Palladius to preach the Gospel in Ireland, and recording his death in Pictland, or, as others say, by martyrdom in Ireland (Hibernia), the author proceeds:—  
"Germanus, thereupon, as we have stated before, sent the



Blessed Patrick to Rome in order that he might be able to set out on his evangelical mission with Apostolic authority, for so right order demanded, wherefore he passed on ship-board through the Tyrrhenian Sea, and received in a certain island the Staff of Jesus, from a certain young man, Christ himself being his host.<sup>1</sup> And the Lord spoke to Patrick in the mountain, and commanded him to return to Ireland. When he arrived in Rome he was honourably received by the holy Pope Celestine, and having obtained from him the relics of saints, he was by the same Pope Celestine despatched to Ireland."

Then it states in the next paragraph that Patrick, having got this 'licentia apostolica' to preach in Ireland, though not yet consecrated a bishop, set out direct for that country, and coming to what is now called the English Channel, with the Staff of Jesus on the shore he changed a heap of sand into a solid stone, in answer to the challenge of two turbulent brothers contending amongst themselves, and whom he wished to restore to unity. It was at once a proof of his sanctity and a model of the unity to which he desired to win their adhesion.

Then in the 31st section, having brought Patrick, as it were, to the French shore of the Channel, it tells how, hearing there of the death of Palladius in Britain, which his disciples Augustine and Benedict and others returning from Pictland announced to Patrick and those who were with him, they turned aside (*declinaverunt*) to a certain holy and venerable bishop, *Amatorex* (*Amathoregem*) by name, who dwelt hard by. There Patrick, foreknowing what was to happen, 'received (episcopal) grade.' There also *Auxilius* and *Esserninus*, with others of inferior grade, were ordained, and all set out for their Irish mission.

Now, it is well to note the series of events as set out in this narrative.

(1) Some rumour of the failure of Palladius and of his departure from Ireland reached Germanus and Patrick in Gaul. (2) In consequence (*ergo*) Germanus resolved to send St. Patrick to Rome, and we know from other sources that he sent with him *Segetius*, his own assistant priest, bearing testimonial letters from Germanus in favour of

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<sup>1</sup> *Hospitium Christo tribuente*. This might mean that Christ, by a special providence, procured hospitality for Patrick.

Patrick. (3) They went, not over the Alps, but by sea (from Arles or Marseilles to the Tiber). (4) During the voyage Patrick received the Staff of Jesus from a certain young man in a certain island, where Christ himself was his host—but neither the name of the young man nor of the island is given. (5) The Lord also appeared to him on a certain mountain, and commanded Patrick to return and preach the Gospel in Ireland, so that, like St. Paul, he had a very special extraordinary mission. (6) But all the same he went to Rome, where he was honourably received by the Pope, who sent him to preach in Ireland, but did not yet give absolute authority for his consecration as Bishop. (7) He went with his companions to the Gallic shore of the British Channel, and there, it seems, authentic information was brought to them of the death of Palladius in Britain. (8) Whereupon they 'turned aside' to the holy Bishop Amatorex, who dwelt near at hand, and gave episcopal Orders to Patrick and other Orders to his companions, on the strength of the Papal Commission which they carried with them, and which, it appears, gave authority for the consecration of Patrick, only when certain knowledge of the death of his predecessor would render it lawful and becoming.

The narrative, as here set out from the Fourth Life, may not be exact in all its details, but it is reasonable, and as to the Pope's action it is just what we should expect from a wise and experienced Pontiff like Celestine. Patrick was long anxious to set out for Ireland; the angel Victor repeatedly called upon him to make ready. But Palladius had gone to Ireland, and for some cause or other not known to us Patrick did not go with him. But still strong in faith he waited the manifestation of God's will. The winter of 431 brought them news, so far as we can judge, of the failure of Palladius, but not yet of his death. Then Germanus, as the law required, sent Patrick to get the authority of the Pope to go to Ireland. The Pope received him kindly, and gave him authority to go and preach in Ireland as a simple missionary; but, having no information of the death of Palladius, he declined to allow him to be consecrated Bishop before he obtained certain information of the death or failure of Palladius. It seems, however, he gave conditional authority for his consecration for the Irish mission; and hence when the messenger announcing his death met Patrick, so far as this story indicates, on the coast of the British Channel, they went

to a neighbouring bishop named Amatorex—a common Gaulish name—and the latter, on the strength of the licence of the Apostolic See and the letters of Germanus, consecrated Patrick and his companions, who forthwith sailed away for Ireland. Such certainly is the drift of the clear and orderly narrative given in the Fourth Life, and we venture to think it is the true one.

But we must examine it more closely point by point, especially in the light of the facts recorded in the other Lives.

The Tripartite gives prominence to the fact that at this time, when Patrick had completed the sixtieth year of his age, and the thirtieth of his sojourn in France, his guardian angel, the same Victor who had watched over him whilst he was in bondage with Milcho, now appeared to him, and, it would seem from the other Lives, more than once commanded him to prepare for his Irish mission. "Thou art commanded," said Victor, "by God to go to Ireland, to strengthen faith and belief, and so bring them by the net of the Gospel to the harbour of Life. For all the Irish cry aloud for thee; they think thy coming is now timely and mature,"—as indeed it was.

Some critics cannot understand Patrick's long sojourn of thirty years in Gaul; they think in fact that God should arrange things after their own notions. Not so Patrick; he waited long and patiently, trusting to that divine guidance which was never wanting to him in seasons of perplexity and peril. The voice of God spoke to him, and he at once obeyed. He bade farewell to Germanus, who gave him his blessing, and sent his own assistant priest<sup>1</sup> along with him, a trusty old man, Segetius by name, to guard him and to testify for him—that is to testify on the part of Germanus to his character, his studies, his Orders, and the purpose that had for many years filled his heart.

All this, of course, implies that Germanus wished Patrick to get from the Pope what he could not lawfully give himself,<sup>2</sup> episcopal orders and authority to preach the Gospel in Ireland. If it were a mere question of having Patrick consecrated without the authority of the Apostolic See

<sup>1</sup> In the functions of the Church he used to be at Germanus' right, or as Colgan has it, he was his Vicar in Spirituals.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter to the bishops of the provinces of Vienne and Narbonne the Pope (July 25, 428) required the Metropolitans to be content with their respective bounds, and in no way to intermeddle with other provinces. See *Dict. of Chris. Biog. Sub. voce.*

there was no need of sending Patrick away at all. Germanus, the greatest prelate in Gaul, or any of his neighbours, could do themselves what was wanted.

But Germanus knew well both the law and the practice of the Church at the time—that the missionary should go forth to preach with the licence of the Apostolic See, ‘*sic enim ordo exigebat*’—as the Fourth Life puts it. The law, indeed, was clear. Pope Siricius, in a letter to the Bishops of Africa, had clearly proclaimed the law that “no one should, without the knowledge and the sanction of the Apostolic See, that is of the Primatial See, presume to ordain”<sup>1</sup> (a bishop). The same law was laid down by Innocent I. at a later date, yet still before the time of St. Patrick’s ordination. But the Pope frequently delegated his authority to the Metropolitan for his own province, and in this way also the ordination took place, with the sanction of the Apostolic See. But no Metropolitan at the time in any part of the west would venture to ordain a prelate for any diocese or mission outside of his own province, without the express sanction of the Holy See. Germanus himself did not go to England without the authority of the Apostolic See, although he was chosen by a synod of Gallican bishops for that purpose. When St. Ninian went to preach in Galloway about the year A.D. 400 he also, as Bede tells us, went to Rome to get the authority and blessing of the Apostolic See, and such undoubtedly was both the law and practice during the fifth century.<sup>2</sup>

As to the fact we may accept the testimony of the ancient Lives as quite conclusive, and that testimony has never been questioned except for controversial purposes by a few later writers. We simply adhere to the ancient authorities, who are unanimous, and had no assignable reason for inventing the Roman Mission of Patrick, seeing that no one at the time denied the Papal Supremacy, either *de facto* or *de jure*. As to the purely negative arguments usually advanced against the Roman Mission of St. Patrick, we shall deal with them later on.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ut extra conscientiam Sedis Apostolicæ, hoc est primatis, nemo audeat ordinare.* The letter is undoubtedly genuine; but in any case the very same words are repeated by Innocent I. in a letter to the Bishop of Rouen.

<sup>2</sup> See the Letters of Innocent I. to the African Bishops, A.D. 413, which expressly declare that it was from the Apostolic See all episcopal authority was derived; that nothing, even in distant provinces, could be regarded as settled without the sanction of the Apostolic See, which was the fountain-head from which all minor streams flow. *Epis. Innoc. clxxi.*, etc.

It is an interesting point to ascertain how did St. Patrick travel from Germanus to Celestine. All the Lives appear to imply that he went by sea. The Tripartite says so too, and that he sailed with nine companions, doubtless either from Arles, which was then a much frequented seaport, or from Massilia. It would be an easy voyage from either port to Rome, in fact merely a coasting voyage, during which they called at that island where Patrick saw a 'young man' in a 'new house,' and a very old hag, who was the grand-daughter of the young man. For the latter had received the gift of perpetual youth, because he had once long ago made a feast for Christ whilst He was still in the flesh, and as a reward Christ blessed their house and themselves, so that they were destined to abide there in perennial youth—himself and his wife—until the day of judgment. We may pass over this as an Irish tale of later date. But the important point is its alleged connection with the Staff of Jesus. The Son of God had foretold to them how Patrick was to preach to the Gael, and he left them as a token, to be given to Patrick, the Staff in question.

But Patrick said: "I will not take it till He Himself gives me the Staff," and that favour was shortly afterwards granted him.

For, having stayed with them three days and three nights, Patrick 'went thereafter to Mount Hermon,<sup>1</sup> in the neighbourhood of the island.' There the Lord appeared to him and told him to go and preach the Gospel to the Gael, giving him at the same time the Staff of Jesus 'to be a helper to him in every danger and in every unequal conflict in which he was destined to be engaged.'

We shall say more about the Staff hereafter; for the present we need only say that the tale, as here set forth, is apparently borrowed from the history of Moses. Still, we do not venture to set aside this narrative as a pure fiction; let each man follow his own opinion as to its credibility.

But an interesting geographical question in connection with the tale is to try and ascertain where was the island. Where, too, was the neighbouring Mount Hermon or Mount Arnon, and where was Capua, the Seven-gated city, which was near the scene of these events?

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<sup>1</sup> Also given as 'Morion' and 'Arnon.' The variations show us that nothing certain was known regarding this mountain, and it is now impossible to identify it—if, indeed, it ever had any existence.

There was certainly only one Capua in Italy, the famous capital of the rich Campanian plain. Now, the story of Probus is that the Angel of the Lord appeared to Patrick, and directed him to go to a certain St. Senior, a Bishop who dwelt in Mount Hermon, on the right-hand side of the ocean-sea, and his city<sup>1</sup> there was defended by seven walls. And when he came there the said Bishop Senior ordained him a priest, and he studied with the venerable Elder for a long time, at the end of which the angel again appeared to him commanding Patrick to go to preach in Ireland; and Patrick went, but failed in his mission. Whereupon he threw himself on his knees and besought God to direct his way to Rome, the head of all the Churches, that he might ask and receive the apostolic blessing and authority to continue his work in Ireland. This he did, going first to Germanus, who sent not Segetius, but Regirus, to be the guide and companion on his way to the Pope. The Pope at first declined to give Patrick episcopal ordination for the Irish mission, as he had already sent Palladius to preach the Gospel in Ireland, but hearing of Palladius' failure at Euboria, he gave Patrick the apostolic authority, and he was ordained by Amator, as stated in the other Lives.

We have no hesitation in rejecting the story of this first mission of St. Patrick to Ireland as a figment, because we think it wholly inconsistent with his own Confession. He refers only to one mission in Ireland, which took place a long time after his captivity, and he was so devoted to his converts that he declares he *never* left them, not even to visit his parents in Britain, or to see the faces of his brethren, the Saints in Gaul. Probus mixes up two stories in a most improbable fashion, and is not supported in his statement by any other ancient authority.

Moreover, he knew so little of the true history of what happened on the Continent that he does not give us correctly the name of Segetius, the assistant priest of Germanus—for the name Regirus, which he gives, can hardly be regarded as a mere error of the scribe or printer. We may, therefore, leave this narrative out of the question in trying to trace the journey of St. Patrick to Rome.

Jocelyn's account is substantially the same as that given in the Tripartite. He calls the mountain Mount Morion,

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<sup>1</sup>He does not, however, call the city Capua, nor was that city on a mountain, although Mount Tifata was not more than a mile distant.

which was, he says, "near the Tyrrhene Sea, and close to the city called Capua."<sup>1</sup> 'Morion' here is probably a copyist's mistake for 'Hermon' as given in the Tripartite.

The Scholiast on Fiacc makes Patrick go to the islands of the Tyrrhene Sea *after* Pope Celestine refused to confer episcopal orders upon him, and "it was then he found the Staff of Jesus in the island called Alanensis, near Mount Arnon" or Armon, as it is in Colgan—but here we have no reference to Capua.

The Third Life, however, implies that the Angel took Patrick from Rome to Mount Arnon—*ar mair Lethe*—over the rock of the Tyrrhene Sea, in the city called Capua, and there, like Moses, he saluted the Lord, but no reference is made to the Staff of Jesus. *Ar mair Lethe*, 'on the Sea of Lethe,' seems to be an insertion in Irish explanatory of the other phrase, 'Super petram maris Tyrreni.' The word Lethe is generally taken to mean Latium, but it is really an Irish form of the word Gallia, as we have explained elsewhere.

It is clear from these passages, especially the last, that the city called Capua was on the Tyrrhene Sea, not an inland city like the capital of Campania, and it must be sought near the coast, or on the coast, in the neighbourhood of some island. Colgan conjectures that it was Caieta, where there was certainly a famous and convenient port, and a strong city on the sea, and although much south of the Tiber it would still be the best place for a coasting vessel to find refuge if flying before a storm.

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<sup>1</sup> Tyrrheno mari vicinum secus civitatem Capuam.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ST. PATRICK'S MISSION AND CONSECRATION.

#### I.—THE ROMAN MISSION OF ST. PATRICK.

SOME few Protestant writers in our own times have, for controversial purposes, sought to obscure or deny what is called the Roman Mission of St. Patrick; that is, his commission from St. Celestine to preach the Gospel in Ireland. Their arguments are purely negative; that is, from the silence of certain writers, who, in their opinion, might be expected to make special reference to the Roman Mission, they infer that it had no existence. When brought face to face with the vast array of ancient authorities that expressly assert in various ways this Roman Mission of St. Patrick, they try to explain them away as the inventions of a later age. These writers have also sought to mix up the acts of Palladius and Patrick with a view to throw doubt on both, and, ignoring the substantial agreement in the ancient Lives of our Saint, they seek to magnify the minor points of difference for the purpose of throwing discredit on them all. Really learned men, like Usher and Ware, never lent their authority to controversial arguments of this kind. They set out the facts as they found them, and let history speak for itself.

We merely propose here to give an outline of the question, so that any impartial reader can judge for himself the real points at issue.

First of all we may point out that the practice of getting a Roman Commission to preach the Gospel in new countries existed even so early as the end of the fourth century. St. Ninian of Candida Casa was probably the earliest British missionary of whom we have any certain information. He was the Apostle of the Southern Picts, 'a most reverend bishop and holy man of the British nation,'<sup>1</sup> and he founded his Church of Candida Casa, as

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<sup>1</sup> *Bede, E. H.*, III. 4. Ninian studied several years in Rome, was consecrated by Pope Siricius himself, and sent by him as Bishop to the western part of Britain. On his journey to Scotland he called to see St. Martin of Tours, from whom he got masons to build the Candida Casa at Whitberne. So it was Rome gave him his mission.



Bede expressly tells us, towards the close of the fourth century. But though a Briton, he was regularly instructed at Rome in the faith and mysteries of the truth 'and came from Rome with apostolic authority to preach to his countrymen in North Britain.' So far Bede.

When the Pelagian heresy was rampant in the British Church, we know that St. Germanus of Auxerre was sent as his legate, *vice sua*, by St. Celestine, to arrest the progress of heresy in Britain. Although requested by a synod of Gallican Bishops to undertake the weighty task, Germanus would not do so without the express authority of the Pope, as the contemporary Chronicle of Prosper tells us.<sup>1</sup>

Again, when Germanus reported the state of Ireland to the Pope, and suggested, so far as we can judge, the propriety of sending missionaries there, it was Celestine who commissioned Palladius to go to Ireland, ordaining him a Bishop with plenary authority to preach the Gospel to the Irish Scots, as the same Prosper asserts, and the scholars of every school admit.

Later on, too, when the pagan Saxons of England were to be converted, everyone knows that it was Pope St. Gregory who sent St. Augustine and his companions to carry out that glorious mission, which they did with such marvellous success. Seeing, then, that it was from Rome that all the great missionaries whom we have named were sent to all parts of the British Islands, is it not natural to expect that St. Patrick likewise would seek his commission from the Pope, just as his master Germanus had done before him, and Palladius also, his immediate predecessor in the Irish Mission?

And, as a fact, we find that all the ancient writers without exception, both at home and abroad, who refer to the question, as well as all the greatest modern scholars, expressly declare that St. Patrick was sent to preach in Ireland by Pope Celestine. Colgan gives all these testimonies at length; we can only touch upon them briefly.

Perhaps the oldest, and certainly not the least authorita-

<sup>1</sup> Prosper, in his *Chronicle*, sub anno 429, says that 'Pope Celestine, at the suggestion of the deacon Palladius, sent Germanus as his representative, *vice sua*, to Britain.' And again in his work, *Contra Collatorem*, A.D. 432, he speaks of Celestine as striving to keep the Roman island of Britain Catholic by this mission of Germanus.

tive, are the statements in the Book of Armagh. Tirechan says :—

In the ninth<sup>1</sup> year of the Emperor Theodosius, Patrick the Bishop is sent to teach the Scots by Celestine, Bishop of Rome. This Celestine was the forty-second<sup>2</sup> Bishop from Peter the Apostle in the city of Rome. Palladius the Bishop is first sent, who was called Patrick by another name; he suffered martyrdom amongst the Scots, as the ancient holy men tell. Then the second Patrick is sent by God's Angel, Victor by name, and by Pope Celestine: in him all Ireland believed, and he baptized almost the whole country.

The original Latin of this passage is found in the fifteenth folio of the Book of Armagh,<sup>3</sup> in the original hand of the first copyist. Bishop Tirechan is there stated to have written these collections from the dictation, or copied them from the Book of his own tutor, Bishop Ultan of Ardraccan, who died A.D. 656. They were, therefore, written by Tirechan before that date, and copied into the Book of Armagh, as we have it, in the beginning of the ninth century. It is not likely that either of these holy bishops invented the Roman Mission of St. Patrick. They simply record the ancient traditions of Ardraccan and Armagh, if they did not take the statement from the now lost work written by Patrick himself, called the 'Commemoratio Laborum,' which Tirechan had before him, and which seems to have been different from The Confession, called by Tirechan 'Scriptio Sua.'<sup>4</sup> This clear and definite statement of Tirechan is of itself quite enough to settle the question of the Roman Mission. There is not a shadow of reason for rejecting its accuracy.

In the Book of Armagh we also find reference to the Sayings of St. Patrick—well-known maxims of his handed down by tradition. One of these clearly shows that he travelled much in Italy, as well as in Gaul and the Islands

<sup>1</sup> In the MS. it is XIII, but this is a mistake of the transcriber in the numerals. Theodosius became sole Emperor in 423, on the death of Arcadius.

<sup>2</sup> *Recte* 'forty-five'; the mistake arises from the copyist taking V. for II.

<sup>3</sup> Here is the entire passage :—Tertio decimo anno Teothosii imperatoris a Celestino episcopo Papa Romae Patrius episcopus ad doctrinam Scotorum mittitur. Qui Celestinus XLV. episcopus fuit a Petro Apostolo in Urbe Roma. Palladius episcopus primo mittitur, qui Patrius alio nomine appellabatur, qui martyrium passus est apud Scotos, ut tradunt Sancti antiqui. Deinde Patrius Secundus ab angelo Dei, Victor nomine, et a Celestino Papa mittitur, cui Hibernia tota credidit, qui eam pene totam baptizavit.

<sup>4</sup> See Stokes' *Tripartite*, Vol. I., xci.

of the Tyrrhene Sea. "I had," the Apostle used to say, "the fear of God, the companion of my way, through the Gauls and Italy, and in the Islands which are in the Tyrrhene Sea."<sup>1</sup> It would be incredible if he travelled through Italy without going to Rome; and going to Rome he would naturally claim the sanction of the Pope for that missionary journey to Ireland which he contemplated. The man who always called upon his flock 'to be Romans as they were Christians'—*ut Christiani ita et Romamni sitis*—was not likely to set out from Italy to preach the Gospel in Ireland without the sanction of the Pope; and as a fact all our ancient authorities are unanimous in asserting this Roman Mission.

Take first Fiacc's Irish Hymn. There we are told that Patrick abode with Germanus in Southern Letha,<sup>2</sup> and there studied the canons under Germanus, who was an intimate friend of Pope Celestine; and the ancient Scholiast on Fiacc adds that 'it was Celestine, the successor of St. Peter, who conferred the name *Patritius* on our Apostle'; and, moreover, that it was at the suggestion of Germanus Patrick went to Celestine to receive Orders and authority from him to preach in Ireland. 'Go,' he said, 'to Celestine that he may confer Orders upon thee, for he is the proper person to confer them'—that is, to authorise the ordination of St. Patrick for the Irish mission. We also know that such was the discipline of the fifth century; for no Metropolitan but the Pope had authority to ordain bishops for any mission outside their own provinces.<sup>3</sup>

The Second Life in Colgan expressly states that after the failure of the mission of Palladius in Ireland, St. Patrick, 'by command of Pope Celestine,' crossed over to Ireland and landed at Inver Dea.<sup>4</sup>

The Third Life makes the same statement in different words—that Patrick, by command of Pope Celestine, returned to this Island.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Timorem Dei habui ducem itineris mei per Gallias atque Italiam, etiam in insulis quae sunt in mari Tyrrheno.*

<sup>2</sup> Letha, in our opinion, means not Latium or Italia, but Gallia, as we have already explained.

<sup>3</sup> In one of his letters to the Bishops of Southern France, Celestine says—'Let the Metropolitans be content with their respective bounds,' and not meddle with other provinces. See *Dict. Chris. Biog.*

<sup>4</sup> *Patritius ab eodem Celestino in Hiberniam transmissus pervenit ad ostium ejusdem fluminis Deae.*

<sup>5</sup> *Tunc S. Patritius ex imperio Papae Celestini reversus est ad hanc insulam.*

The Fourth Life, attributed to St. Aileran the Wise, tells us that Patrick, on his arrival in Rome, was honourably received by the holy Pope Celestine, and getting relics of the saints, was sent by the same Pope Celestine to Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

The Fifth Life by Probus goes into more minute details, and represents St. Patrick as failing at first to convert the Irish, then begging God to direct his way to the Holy Roman See, that he might receive there proper authority to preach the Gospel in Ireland 'He then came to Rome, the head of all the Churches, and having received there the Apostolic Benediction, he returned once more to Ireland to preach the Gospel.'

The author of the Sixth Life, Jocelyn, enlarges on the Roman Mission, showing that it was the universal belief in the twelfth century; and the author of the Tripartite Life attributed to St. Évin is equally explicit in asserting the Roman Mission so early as the seventh or eighth century, if we accept O'Curry's opinion of the antiquity of this ancient Irish Life.

The author of the Irish Life in the *Lebar Brecc* declares likewise that Patrick was received with honour by the Romans, and 'by their Abbot, whose name was Celestine,' and that it was 'in accordance with the will of the Synod of Rome that he came to Ireland.' So we see that every single ancient Life of our Apostle makes reference to his Roman Mission. So likewise Marianus Scotus and Nennius formally assert the Roman Mission of Patrick as an unquestionable historical fact.

Hence it is that Protestant scholars, like Usher and Stokes, have generally admitted it, and that no one down to our own time called the ancient authorities in question regarding this Roman Mission of St. Patrick.

And now, why should this great host of ancient authorities who affirm the Roman Mission of St. Patrick be summarily ignored? Because, forsooth, they are not contemporary authorities, and the contemporary authorities whom we should expect to speak are silent on the question. A negative argument is always unsafe,<sup>2</sup> but let us ask why should we expect them to speak on this particular question.

<sup>1</sup> Ab eodem Papa Celestino in Hiberniam missus est.

<sup>2</sup> "An argument from silence," says Professor Stokes, of Trinity College, in his article on St. Patrick (*Dict. of Ch. Biog.*), "is notoriously an unsafe one; there are so many reasons which may lead a writer to pass over even a burning topic in his day." This saying of Stokes is of itself a sufficient refutation of Todd's negative argument.

The first expected to speak would be St. Patrick himself in the Confession. 'The one object of the writer was to defend himself from the charge of presumption in having undertaken such a work as the Conversion of the Irish, rude and unlettered as he was. Had he received a regular commission from the See of Rome, that fact alone would have been an unanswerable reply.'<sup>1</sup> Here one may ask—why would it have been unanswerable except for this one reason, that the contemporaries of St. Patrick universally recognised the authority and supremacy of the Roman See—an admission on which we may observe, it is satisfactory to find a writer like Todd basing his argument.

Now, as a fact, St. Patrick in the Confession seeks not only to vindicate himself from the charge of presumption in undertaking to preach in Ireland, but likewise from the charge of rashness in exposing his life to danger amongst a barbarous people, and also from any suspicion of self-seeking in preaching the Gospel in Ireland. He vindicates himself against all these charges, mainly by showing that he had a direct and immediate mission from God Himself to preach in Ireland; a command which he dare not disobey, and which was again and again intimated to him by God's Angel, Victor, by the voices of the youth from Focluth Wood, which were always ringing in his ears, as well as by the personal command of Christ<sup>2</sup> Himself. He then points to the marvellous success of his mission to prove that God was with him in his work, and to his constant refusal to accept the generous gifts of the people, lest anyone there or elsewhere should question his disinterestedness in preaching the Gospel. He sought neither honour, nor wealth, nor influence in Ireland; nothing but the souls of the people. Everyone knew he was sent to Ireland by the Pope; no one questioned or denied his mission from Celestine. Why, then, should he appeal to his mission from Celestine when adopting this line of argument? To appeal to a mission from man, when he was claiming an immediate mission from God, would rather weaken than strengthen that argument.

Hence St. Patrick makes no reference to the Pope, nor any reference to St. Germanus, the greatest and holiest prelate of the time, his teacher, too, and adviser. If

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<sup>1</sup> Todd's *St. Patrick*.

<sup>2</sup> Non ego sed Christus Dominus qui mihi imperavit ut venirem, et esse me cum illis residuum vite mee.

Todd's line of argument were good, that Patrick makes no reference to a mission from Rome, because there was none, might we not, at least, expect that Patrick would say, 'I came to Ireland with the full sanction and approval of the great and holy Germanus, whose pupil I had been for so many years.' But he does not. He appeals to no mission from man, because he claimed a direct and immediate mission from God; and he gave all his thought and attention to prove the existence of that divine mission by narrating the marvellous supernatural facts of his own life history, as well as the undeniable success of his missionary labours in Ireland. A whole nation turning from the worship of idols through his ministry to serve the true and living God was the all-sufficient refutation of the charges made against him, and a complete proof of the supernatural mission which he claimed for himself. To a man who argues in this way it would only weaken his case to say—'I was sent to Ireland by the Pope'—a fact which everyone knew, and which one knew also did not suffice to make the mission of Palladius successful in Ireland, nor his own prudence unquestionable. But Patrick had the divine call; to that he appealed, and rightly too; for it was that, we know, which made his mission a success.

But it has been said—Secundinus, his nephew, in the Hymn which he composed in praise of Patrick, makes no mention of the Roman Mission. It is quite sufficient reply to say that Secundinus confines himself to describing the virtues of St. Patrick's character, which he does fully; but he does not narrate a single fact in his history beyond the one central fact that he preached in Ireland. He does not refer to his birth-place, or parents, or country, or captivity, or education in Gaul, or contests with Laeghaire's Druids, or to any other single one of the well-known facts in the life of our great Apostle. Why, then, should he go out of his way to refer to the Roman Mission? It would not be in place, but decidedly out of place, in the Hymn, as it has been written by Secundinus. But, it is said, Prosper the Chronicler makes no reference to the Mission of Patrick, although he refers to that of Palladius in 431. 'If he knew anything of Patrick's Mission in 432 he would have certainly referred to it.' Perhaps he would if he did know it; but it seems he knew nothing of the issue of the mission of Palladius, which he regards as successful; for he says that by that mission Celestine made christian the barbaric island (of the Scots), which we know was not the fact; or,

it may be that the Chronicler contented himself with announcing the mission of the first Bishop sent to convert the Scots, implying thereby that Celestine, through him and his successors, had christianised the island. The Chronicle is very brief and by no means full. So one pregnant entry was made to do all he wanted, that is to give the credit of christianising Ireland to Celestine, who certainly deserved it.

It is, however, very doubtful if Prosper ever heard of the failure of the mission of Palladius, or the subsequent mission of St. Patrick, for the work in its first form closes in 433, when Patrick had only begun his preaching in Ireland. The Chronicle was continued afterwards to A.D. 444, and again to 455, but whether by Prosper himself or by other hands is doubtful. It is said by some that Prosper died in 433, before he could by any possibility have heard anything of the success of Patrick's mission. To base an argument on the silence of Prosper in these circumstances does not argue either critical acumen or controversial candour.

But Fiacc, the disciple of Patrick, is silent as to the Roman Mission, although he gives in the metrical Life the leading facts of St. Patrick's history. Yes, he gives some, but he certainly does not give them all; for the whole poem consists of sixty-eight lines only. He merely refers in the briefest fashion to the chief events in the Apostle's life, hinting at rather than expressly stating them. And so, too, he seems to hint at the Roman Mission, for we are told that Patrick went *tar Elpa*, which Todd translates 'over the Alps,' and adds that he was with Germanus in the southern part of Letha, which the same learned authority renders Latium, or, in other words, the territory of Rome. To cross the Alps and dwell in Latium implies clearly enough that Patrick was in Rome and came to Ireland with the sanction of the Pope, whose name the poet would find it exceedingly difficult to introduce into his Irish metre. But if Fiacc himself is silent on the Roman Mission, his ancient Scholiast is not; for, commenting on Germanus' connection with Patrick, he expressly says that Germanus told Patrick—"Go to Celestinus that he may confer Orders upon thee, for he is the proper person to confer them." So Patrick went to him, but "he (the Pope) did not *at first* give him that honour, for he had previously sent Palladius to Ireland to teach it;" but when the Pope heard of the failure of Palladius then he authorised Patrick to undertake the task.

It will be seen, therefore, that no sound argument can be deduced from the alleged silence of certain contemporary documents to overthrow the long array of ancient historical testimonies, derived from so many different sources, which expressly assert the Roman Mission of St. Patrick.

## II.—ST. PATRICK'S EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION.

This is quite a different question from St. Patrick's Roman Mission. As Colgan observes, all the ancient authorities—indeed, all writers in his time without exception—admit the Roman Mission of St. Patrick, but they do not quite agree as to the question who was the consecrating prelate, and where the ceremony took place. The Pope then claimed, as he now always does, the right to institute bishops; <sup>1</sup> that is, he elects them to the office and authorises their consecration, but it is only very rarely that the Pope himself has performed the ceremony, either in present or past times.

Now, some ancient authorities appear to assert that Patrick was consecrated by St. Celestine in person. The most important testimony to that effect is the statement in the *Tripertite*. We quote from the Irish text:

When Patrick heard and knew (from the messengers announcing the death of Palladius) that unto him God had granted the apostleship of Ireland, he went thereafter to Rome to have Orders given to him; and Celestinus, Abbot of Rome, he it is that read Orders over him, Germanus and Amatho, King of the Romans, being present with them.<sup>2</sup>

We find a statement in substance to the same effect—that is, that Patrick was consecrated by St. Celestine—made in several Breviaries, which give a special Office and Lessons to St. Patrick, notably in the Roman Breviary, the Rheims Breviary, the Breviary of the Canons Regular, and also in the Lives of several of our Irish saints, especially St. Ciaran of Saiger and St. Declan of Ardmore. Marianus Scotus, too, and many later chroniclers, who

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<sup>1</sup> Innocent I., in his Letters, formally asserts the right to do it directly or indirectly. See his Letters to the African Bishops, already quoted. But frequently this right was exercised by the Metropolitans, with the sanction and subject to the approval of the Pope.

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to find an Amatho, King of the Romans, in genuine history, and it is not unlikely that the Irish chronicler here confused the traditional account that Patrick was consecrated by the authority of the Pope, but through the agency of Amatorex, the Bishop.



followed his authority, state the same thing. The main authority is, however, the Tripartite, from which both Scotus and his followers in all probability borrowed the statement, and Jocelyn may be quoted in favour of the same opinion. But it cannot be accepted, except in a very general sense not intended, so far as we can judge, by the author of the Tripartite. Of course, if St. Celestine elected St. Patrick to the episcopal office and authorized his consecration for the Irish mission, it may be truly said that he consecrated him in the sense that he was responsible for his consecration, and gave the necessary authority for performing the ceremony.

But the weight of ancient authority certainly goes to show that St. Patrick was not consecrated by St. Celestine in person, nor consecrated at all in Rome, but in a place variously called Eboria,<sup>1</sup> or Euboria,<sup>2</sup> or Ebmoria,<sup>3</sup> and by a prelate named sometimes Amatus or Amator, but much more probably called Amatorex by others, although we cannot for certain determine his See.

Thus the author of the Second Life says that Patrick received the Pontifical grade from a wonderful man and high bishop, Amatorex by name, and the place he calls Eboria.<sup>4</sup> The same statement is made by the author of the Third Life in almost the same words;<sup>5</sup> but the author seems to imply that he was ordained Bishop *before* he came to St. Celestine to get his mission, not afterwards, as the author of the Second Life more correctly states. The Fourth Life says that Patrick first went to Rome, and got due licence from the Apostolic See, in virtue of which he set out for Britain, and had actually arrived at the sea between Gaul and Britain, when he met the messengers announcing the death of Palladius. Thereupon they turned aside from their way to Amatorex, a bishop dwelling in the neighbourhood, and there Patrick received episcopal grade; but the strange statement immediately follows—which seems to be an interpolation—that ‘Patrick was

<sup>1</sup> By the authors of the Second and Fourth Lives.

<sup>2</sup> By Probus in the Fifth Life.

<sup>3</sup> In the Book of Armagh.

<sup>4</sup> Audita itaque morte Palladii in Britannia (quia discipuli ejus Augustinus et Benedictus et caeteri redeuntes retulerunt in Eboria de morte ejus). Patrius et qui cum eo erant declinaverunt iter ad quendam mirabilem hominem summum episcopum Amathorem in propinquo habitantem, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Patrius quoque declinavit iter ad quendam mirabilem hominem summum episcopum Amatorem nomine; ab illo S. Patrius gradum episcopalem accepit.

ordained in presence of Celestine and Theodosius the younger, King of the world; and Amatorex, Bishop of Auxerre, is the bishop who ordained him.' The last sentence looks very like an interpolation from another source by some one who was not satisfied with the accuracy of the previous statement. It is, at any rate, clearly incorrect, for Germanus was certainly Bishop of Auxerre at the time of Patrick's consecration, since Amator, his predecessor, had died in A.D. 418.

Probus does not name the place of consecration, but says, like the rest, that Patrick, when the message of the death of Palladius was brought to him, turned aside from his journey, and was ordained by an admirable bishop, who was a man of great sanctity, Amator by name. Jocelyn, in the Sixth Life, merely says that Celestine, after considerable delay, when at length he heard of the death of Palladius, consecrated Patrick a bishop, but whether with his own hands or not he leaves rather uncertain. He makes no mention, however, of any other consecrator, or place of consecration, except Rome.

Following, therefore, the weight of ancient authority, we may accept it as fairly certain that Patrick was not consecrated by St. Celestine in person at Rome, but by some prelate named Amator, or Amatorex, at a place called Ebmoría, or Euboria, an episcopal city, which it is now very difficult, if not impossible, to identify.

It would be very satisfactory if we could with certainty identify this Amatorex and Ebmoría; but we fear it is no longer possible to do so with certainty. The ablest scholars have held different opinions in the matter; and it is very doubtful if ever the question can be settled satisfactorily, as these opinions are based on mere conjecture.

Colgan, whose views are entitled to great weight, seems to think that Eboría—the form of the word which he favours—must be sought for amongst the Gallic tribe called by Cæsar the Eburones, who dwelt between the Rhine and the Meuse; and he makes Amatorex either Bishop of Trèves or Tongres. His chief reason is that the Fourth Life brings Patrick to the sea between Gaul and England, where he heard of the death of Palladius; and thereupon 'he turned aside' to a bishop dwelling in the neighbourhood, from whom he received episcopal consecration in virtue of the Pope's authority, which was, however, conditional on the receipt of news of the death of Palladius, whence he infers that Eboría—perhaps Liège—was the place to which

the message was brought, and Trèves or Tongres would, in that case, be the most likely city where he could find a bishop in the neighbourhood.

Lanigan hesitatingly suggests Evreux, the capital of the tribe, called anciently Ebuovices, who were a subdivision of the Gallic Auterci. They certainly dwelt near the Channel; but this is the only reason that can be alleged in favour of identifying Eboria with Ebroica, which appears to have been the ancient name of Evreux.

The Bollandists think that Eporedia, now called Ivrea, not far from Turin in the north of Italy, was the Eboria referred to in the Lives. Cardinal Moran defends this view with much ingenuity, and there are many things to be said in its favour. It was situated in a very strong position on the river Duria, at the mouth of the picturesque Val d'Aosta, and thus commanded two of the most frequented passes over the Alps. It was a natural place for Patrick to rest on his return journey from Rome, and also a natural place for him to meet the two messengers, Augustine and Benedict, who, after crossing the Alps, were now on their way to announce the death of Palladius to the Pope. They could not pass, so to speak, without meeting each other, for the narrow Roman bridge over the river, which still exists, was carefully guarded, and strangers would be required to declare themselves. The Bishop to whom 'they turned aside' was, Cardinal Moran thinks, the great Maximus of Turin, which is in the immediate neighbourhood. So the phrase that he was ordained 'a Maximo' would not differ much from 'ab Amatore,' and might be mistaken for the latter. The name Eporedia, in the process of corruption, might easily become Eboria, before it was still further shortened into Ivrea.

Ivrea is still an interesting and important town of some 8,000 inhabitants. It was certainly, so to speak, the gate to and from the Mount St. Bernard Passes, and hence was always an important station. It has now a double interest for Irish Catholics, for it was there the Blessed Thady McCarthy died on his homeward journey from Rome, and in the Cathedral the great part of his holy relics were, till quite recently, preserved. We had the privilege of venerating them ourselves in November, 1895. The chief purpose of our visit was to see if we could find any trace of St. Patrick in the ancient city. The Bishop, who received us with the greatest kindness, knew nothing of any traditions

connected with the Apostle of Ireland—they all concerned the Blessed Thadeo. But the place is exceedingly interesting. It is a neat and thriving town, beautifully situated under the roots of the Alps, well cleansed and cared for. The Cathedral is a fine building, close to the episcopal palace, and both are situated near the ancient castle which commanded the pass over the river from the days of Augustus to the present time.

The one great difficulty, in our mind, to accept Cardinal Moran's view is this, that the Fourth Life seems clearly to state<sup>1</sup> that the messengers announcing the death of Palladius met Patrick near the sea between Gaul and Britain, and it adds that after having received his episcopal consecration, he forthwith embarked for Ireland, and landed, after a prosperous voyage, at Inver Dea.

Wherever the consecration of Patrick may have taken place, all the authorities admit that Auxilius, Iserminus, and others of Patrick's religious household in Ireland, were ordained on the same day. It was on that occasion also that he received the Roman name Patricius—'a name of power,' says the Tripartite, 'as the Romans think, to wit, one who looseth hostages,' or bondsmen. The name was appropriate in his case, because he freed the Gael from their slavery to the devil. It was in reality a title of honour<sup>2</sup> instituted by Constantine the Great, granted for life, and only to the very highest officials of the Empire. It is probable, therefore, that in order to lend dignity and authority to the courageous missionary of a barbarous island Pope Celestine either granted or procured this title for Patrick, which thenceforward became his personal appellation, suggestive at once of dignity and paternal authority.

### III.—PATRICK SETS SAIL FOR IRELAND.

The old Lives tell us a very beautiful story, that at the moment 'the Orders were read out,' that is, when the solemn words of episcopal consecration were being pronounced, three choirs were heard to join in tuneful response—the choir of the angels in heaven, the choir of the Romans in the church, and the choir of the children from the 'wood of Focluth by the far-off western sea.'

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<sup>1</sup> Pervenit a mare inter Gallias et Britannias positum, *in cujus litore duos invenit viros inter se pugnantes*—and then in the next paragraph it tells of Patrick's consecration.

<sup>2</sup> See Du Cange, *sub voce*.

We are told they responded to each other, giving glory to God in sweet strains on that great day which made Patrick the Bishop of the Gael—a day that brought joy to heaven and to Erin and to Rome. And the burden of the song of them all was, we are told, the ancient strain which Patrick knew so well:—‘We, the children of Erin, beseech thee, holy Patrick, to come and walk once more amongst us, and to make us free.’ Now the long-deferred hope was about to be realized; their pitiful yearning was soon to be gratified; he was coming quick as the winds could bear him over the Ictian waves, coming with power from Heaven and from Rome to break their bonds and set them free.

The story of Patrick’s leper, which is omitted in the Tripartite, is given in several of the Lives, even in the Second and Third, which are certainly very ancient. We are told that when Patrick came to the sea-shore to embark for Ireland he found a leper sitting on a rock by the sea, and the leper seeing Patrick and his companions about to embark asked to be taken along with them. But Patrick had twenty-four pilgrims<sup>1</sup> with him, and having apparently but one ship they naturally objected to take a leper into their crowded little vessel. Then Patrick, commiserating the leper, threw the portable altar-stone on which he used to celebrate Mass into the sea. The flag floated on the waves, and Patrick told the leper to sit upon the stone. He did so, and the stone bearing the leper floated near the ship until it came to their destined port in Ireland! We are not told the place of debarkation for Ireland. They may have first landed at some place in Wales opposite the Irish shore; but it is more likely, from the narrative, that the party sailed direct from Gaul to Ireland, which was not an unusual thing in those days. We know, however, for certain where Patrick landed in Ireland. It was the same ‘well-known and opportune port’ at which Palladius had landed the year before; that is, Inver Dea,<sup>2</sup> in the territory of Hy Cualann (of which Hy Garachon was a sub-denomination), extending from Wicklow Head to Bray Head, or perhaps to Dalkey.

Wicklow Head is the most conspicuous point on the coast, and, moreover, shelters the low shore to the north

<sup>1</sup> ‘Peregrini’ they are called in the Third Life.

<sup>2</sup> It took its name from Degaid, the founder of the local sub-tribe; hence it is properly called Inver Degaid by Keating.

from the prevailing winds. It was in the Inver, however, which at present is close to the town of Wicklow, that Patrick landed (but at that time the Inver was probably more to the north) at the place now called the Broad Lough. It was just such a beach as suited the large flat-bottomed boats of the time, for they were not moored in our modern fashion, but hauled up on the strand beyond the reach of the tides. When the party landed they were hungry, and sought to procure fish from the fishermen who were netting the Inver. But the churlish natives refused to give them any, and their ungracious refusal so annoyed the Saint that as a punishment for their inhospitality he declared that the river would be barren of fish for ever after, and so, we are told, it came to pass.

Then the Saint 'going up'<sup>1</sup> from the sea-shore, came to the place, called in the *Third Life*, Anat-Cailtrin,<sup>2</sup> but elsewhere it is called Rath Inver, which was probably the chieftain's fort on the higher ground over the town of Wicklow. He was the same Nathi mac Garrchon who had already refused to allow Palladius to preach in his territory, and now we are told that he 'came against Patrick'; and the *Third Life* adds that all his people gathered together and drove away the Saint and his followers with violence—most likely with a shower of stones.<sup>3</sup> Whereupon Patrick 'cursed' him as an enemy of the Gospel, and we are told that the sea, in consequence of that curse, covered all the ground by the river from which they had driven off the Saint and his companions, and 'men will never inhabit it.' This curse and prophecy seem to have been fulfilled. It is highly probable that in Patrick's time the Vartry flowed straight into the sea some three miles north of Wicklow. But a great sand-bar has since formed at the mouth of the river, choking the passage and inundating all the low ground southwards to the town, where the stream with difficulty forces its way into the sea. A local tradition tells that the Saint, on the same occasion, declared they would never have a native priest or bishop at Wicklow—and, says Shearman, 'the

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it simply means landing—'ascendens in terram.'—*Third Life*.

<sup>2</sup> It is called Aonach Tailtean by Jocelyn, but incorrectly.

<sup>3</sup> Cell Mantan was the old name of Wicklow, that is, Mantan's Church. He was one of Patrick's disciples, and had his front teeth knocked out by the blow of a stone on this occasion—whence his name, the Toothless,—and Kilmantan Hill may be the place where Patrick was at the time.

oldest inhabitants have never heard of a priest who was born in Wicklow; the spell, they maintain, has yet to be broken.'

But even amongst these rude men there were children of grace, for we are told that, 'Sinell, son of Finchad, was the first who believed in God in Ireland through Patrick's preaching, wherefore Patrick bestowed a blessing on him and on his offspring.' He must have been quite a child at the time, if, as Lanigan conjectures, he be the St. Sinell the Elder, whose death is marked A.D. 548. But there is no proof of identity between St. Patrick's first convert and the St. Sinell who died in that year, except the name, and the interval is too great to suppose that he could have been an adult convert in 432, which was certainly the year that St. Patrick landed in Wicklow. We are told that St. Celestine authorised the mission and consecration of St. Patrick just one week before his own death, which took place towards the end of July (about the 26th), 432. St. Patrick, as the narrative indicates, made no delay in setting out for Ireland immediately after his consecration, so that we may fairly assume that he arrived in Ireland some time during the month of September of the same year, that is 432.

It appears that he also made provision for the few converts whom he had made at Inver Dea during his brief stay, by leaving his disciple Mantain amongst them to minister to their spiritual wants. But he himself shook off the dust of his feet against them, and resolved to go northward, and preach first of all to his old master, Milcho.<sup>1</sup> 'This seemed to him fitting, since he had once done service to Milcho's body that he should now do service to his soul.'

#### IV.—PATRICK COASTS NORTHWARD.

So once more Patrick stepped his mast and put to sea, sailing by the eastern coast towards the north of Ireland. Speeding quickly past Bray Head, and then making for Howth, they left the 'Ford of Hurdles' on their left, and rounding Ireland's Eye soon cast anchor in Inver Domnann. It does not appear that Patrick landed there, but he sought to get some fish, and finding none, 'he

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<sup>1</sup> It would appear that Patrick had an affectionate regard for Milcho and his family, for his children especially, whom he knew in their childhood, and to whom he had already, so far as we can judge, imparted the rudiments of the Christian faith

inflicted a curse upon it,' says the Tripartite. The run from Wicklow to Malahide is something like forty miles, so that if Patrick and his companions started early they might easily drop anchor in the Bay of Malahide, for the double purpose of procuring some food, and riding safely at anchor during the night. As they got no fish, their supper must have been very scanty, consisting probably of the monk's usual meal of bread and water. So we can understand how Patrick would not be in very good humour, and would naturally say something harsh of the fishless bay, which his companions afterwards, telling the story, construed into a 'curse.'

Inver Domnann of the Tripartite is certainly the Bay of Malahide, but no traditions of St. Patrick linger round it, and, as we have said, the Saint most probably did not leave his vessel during his brief sojourn in the estuary.

He then went, we are told, to Patrick's Island, whence he sent (messengers) to 'Inver Ainge.' Patrick's Island has ever since borne that name—in the Irish, *Inis-Patraic*. It is the largest and most important of three rocky islets lying off the coast of the Co. Dublin, about ten miles north of the bay of Malahide. They give their own name, the Skerries, or rocky islands, to the neighbouring village on the shore, of which they are, indeed, merely isolated projections. The nearest to the shore was called Red Island, and is now connected with the village by a stone causeway. The second, half-a-mile to the east, is called Colt Island. The third and largest, a half-a-mile still further out to sea to the east of Colt Island, is St. Patrick's Island, a grassy islet, rising well from the waves, and having still a ruined church and graveyard at its south-western angle called after St. Patrick. The graveyard is still much used for burials, yet no one lives on the island, though its size is considerable, and the land is regarded as very good for pasture. In mediæval times there was an important religious establishment on the island, and a Synod was held there in 1148,<sup>1</sup> most probably because it was a place of security in boisterous times. It is sometimes called Holmpatrick, and as such gives its name to the parish, and a title in the peerage to one of the Hamilton family.

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<sup>1</sup> Both St. Malachy and Gelasius, then Primate, were present at this Synod, with 15 bi-hops and 200 priests. St. Malachy was on his way to Rome, and died the same year at Clairvaux, before he arrived at the Eternal City.



The island,<sup>1</sup> although not more than two miles from the shore, stands well out to sea, and was a conspicuous and inviting landing-place for St. Patrick and his companions coasting northwards. Leaving Malahide in the morning, a fair wind would, in two hours, bring them to Skerries. Their supper the night before, and probably breakfast, too, were light. So they landed to try if they could find anything on the island in the way of food or refreshment. The search appears to have been unsatisfactory, for in the brief entry of the Tripartite, we are told that Patrick 'sent' from the island to Inver Ainge. Inver Ainge, now called the Nanny Water, can be distinctly seen from Skerries as the most inviting landing place on the shore of the mainland. The coast here, from the point of Skerries, trends away to the north-west—a low, sandy beach, broken only at Balbriggan by a small stream, but showing a more promising opening just three miles to the north at Laytown. This little estuary is Inver Ainge, for the modern name, the Nanny Water, is simply the ancient Ainge in sound with the article prefixed. There is not, we believe, much of anything to be had there even now; and it would seem there was nothing at all for the hungry messengers of St. Patrick. The brief entry is expressive—'nothing was found for him there.' So they came back again to Patrick with this unwelcome message for the half-famished Apostle and his crew, which included at least a score of Gauls and Britons—bishops, priests, and deacons, too, amongst them. Then Patrick once more grew angry, and he inflicted a 'curse' upon it—the mouth of the Nanny Water—and 'both'—that is, apparently, the Bay of Malahide and the Nanny Water—'are barren' in consequence.<sup>2</sup>

This brief record incidentally shows us what Patrick and his companions had to endure at the very outset of his great task. They land in Wicklow, are received with

<sup>1</sup> Tirechan calls the Skerries—the islands of Maccu-Chor; the most easterly is, he adds, Patrick's Island, and he had with him there 'a multitude of holy bishops, and priests, and deacons, and exorcists, and door-keepers (ostiarum) of the churches, and lectors and youths whom he had ordained'—for the Irish mission. This shows that Patrick had a considerable number of associates from Gaul and Britain.

<sup>2</sup> It would appear that next morning at sun-rise Patrick himself sailed over to the mainland, near the estuary of the Delvin River, at Gormanstown, and while resting there sent some of his men to seek for food, for the subsequent narrative shows he was there himself. This time the weary travellers were successful. They came to Sescen's house, where the whole party were received with great kindness and hospitality.

a shower of stones, and forced to re-embark; they come to Malahide after a day's sailing in an open boat, but they could get no fish there. They land at Inispatrick—no food there either. They send across to the Nanny Water, on the coast of the fertile plain of Bregia—still no supplies. Surely, it was enough to try the patience even of saints. until, at length, they found the hospitable home of Sescnen, which was a paradise for the weary travellers.

But one remarkable event took place on that fertile Bregian shore, which renders it an interesting spot. It is the beautiful and touching story of young Benen, or Benignus, the first Irish boy whom St. Patrick tonsured for the service of the Irish Church.

'There,'<sup>1</sup> says the Tripartite, 'came Benen into his service.' It seems his father, Sescnen, dwelt near at hand—in the valley of the Delvin River, so far as we can judge—who hospitably received the Saint and his companions. But Patrick, weary of his toil by land and sea, fell asleep 'among his household,' apparently on the green sward. Then the youthful Benen, pitying the wearied Saint, came and gathered up all the odorous flowers that grew around, and put them gently and tenderly in 'the cleric's bosom' as he slept. Thereupon some of Patrick's household said to Benen—"Do not that," said they, "lest Patrick should awake." Whereupon the Saint, perhaps overhearing the words, woke up, and seeing the gracious boy with his hands full of flowers, with which his own bosom was also filled, he said—"Trouble him not; he will be the Heir of my Kingdom," which was afterwards verified when Benignus became Coadjutor Bishop of Armagh, and the destined successor of Patrick himself, if God had spared him to survive his holy and beloved master. But Providence willed otherwise.

There, too, 'in Sescnen's Valley,' Patrick built his first church in Ireland, and left in charge of it two of the foreign youths whom he had ordained.<sup>2</sup> From the Delvin River, according to the Tripartite, Patrick sailed to Inver Boinde—the Mouth of the Boyne—where he appears to have rested for some time, for we are told that 'he found fish therein, and he bestowed a blessing upon it (the estuary).

<sup>1</sup> It would appear from other authorities that this incident took place after Patrick returned from Saul to the Boyne.

<sup>2</sup> So Tirechan expressly states—"Edificavit ibi ecclesiam primam . . . et reliquit ibi duos pueros peregrinos."

and the estuary is fruitful'—and we may add that it is so down to the present day. We are also told that at the same place, Inver Boinde,<sup>1</sup> he met a wizard or Druid who mocked at Mary's virginity. Patrick then sained the earth—made the sign of the cross over it—and 'it swallowed up the wizard.' The explanation seems to be that Patrick after landing took occasion to explain the mysteries of the new Gospel which he preached, dwelling, of course, on the Incarnation and the Virginity of the Mother of God, of which the whole Church was full at the time, after the great Council of Ephesus, two years before. The Druid mocked at this new doctrine of a Virgin giving birth to the Son of God, and then Patrick, if we may credit the Tripartite, taught the blasphemer of Mary that lesson which has never since been forgotten in Ireland. Nowhere else has the tender, passionate devotion of the people at all times to the Virgin Mother of God been more conspicuously displayed.

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<sup>1</sup> The Tripartite says that Patrick went to Inver Boinde—whilst Tirechan, in the Book of Armagh, makes no mention of Inver Boinde; but says that on the evening (of the day he landed) he came to Inver Ailbine, which was, beyond doubt, the Delvin River, as Reeves has shown (*Columba*, page 108). It is not improbable that the Tripartite made Inver Boinde out of Inver Ailbine.

CHAPTER VII.  
ST. PATRICK IN ULSTER.

I.—PATRICK SAILS FOR ULSTER.

IT would appear that St. Patrick, on this occasion of his first visit, merely touched at the Boyne mouth, and then continued his voyage to Ulster. From the Boyne it was plain sailing to Uladh, for, from the Boyne mouth, he clearly saw Slieve Donard and all the noble peaks around rising in stern grandeur from the sea. He sailed past Connaille, the ancient name of Louth, where Cuchullin once ruled in pride, and kept inviolate against all the West the passes through his own Northern hills. But Patrick did not touch the low-lying shores, with their long stretches of sandy flats on which, in broken weather, the waves are always dashing in white ridges of foam. Onward he swept under the very shadow of the great peaks frowning over the sea, 'past the coast of Uladh,' until he anchored in Inver Brenea,<sup>1</sup> as the Irish Tripartite has it, 'thence he went to Inver Slan,<sup>2</sup> and the clerics hid their vessel in that stead, and went on shore to put their weariness from them, and to rest.' And truly they needed some repose after the long inhospitable coasting voyage, probably in October, from Inver Dea to Inver Brenea. It will be observed that there are two Invers mentioned—one Inver Brenea, in which they cast anchor; the second was clearly an inner estuary—Inver Slan, where they hid their boat, and went ashore.

Colgan, in the Latin Tripartite, only mentions Inver Slainge, but the Fourth Life, with great accuracy, describes Patrick as passing through a certain strait called Brenasse, and coming to the mouth of the Slan, and there hiding his ship.<sup>3</sup> This confirms the Irish Tripartite, and describes

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<sup>1</sup> Muirchu calls it Brene.

<sup>2</sup> Ostium Slain, in Muirchu, where Slain is genitive of Slan.

<sup>3</sup> Muirchu also describes how they entered the farthest strait, which is Brene, and afterwards landed at Inver Slain (within the strait). 'Ad extremum fretum quod est Brene se immisit, et descenderunt in terram ad ostium Slain.' The language is both graphic and accurate. It is highly probable that this took place in October, 432. Patrick received his Commission from St. Celestine, before the death of the later on July 26th, 432. It must have taken him some two months to come to Ireland, where he probably arrived about the end of September. He would then sail north, probably in the beginning of October.

the course of the Saint exactly. The fretum, or strait, is the long, narrow, rocky waterway now called the Strangford River, through which the tide rushes to fill up the vast basin of Strangford Lough. This was called, it appears, of old, the Inver Brenea, and at the head of this ocean river, turning to the left out of the rushing tide, the Saint cast anchor somewhere near Audley Castle, or perhaps a little further inward. The name, it appears, was long retained in that of the townland of Ballibrene, which was an alias for the modern Ballintogher.<sup>1</sup> The inner estuary of the Slan was admirably sheltered both from wind and sea, and its green banks, clothed then, as now, with shady groves, wooed the sea-worn mariners to rest their wearied limbs on shore. Waiting there, perhaps, for high water, they took careful note of the low coast of the Lough, and then getting up their anchor they glided with the tide into a sheltered nook at the mouth of the Slan River, which appears to have been the stream that flows from Raholp, between the townland of Ballintogher and Kingban, and there the tired crew hid their boat beneath the branches, and went ashore 'to put off their weariness, and rest themselves on the bank of the stream.'<sup>2</sup> This incident serves to explain one of the stanzas in Fiacc's Life of St. Patrick, which otherwise would not be easily understood:

In (the fountain) Slan, in the region of Benna Boirche, which  
neither drought nor flood affected,  
He sang a hundred psalms every night; to the angels' King he was  
a servant.  
He slept on a bare flagstone there, with a wet mantle round him,  
A pillar-stone was his bolster;  
He left not his body in warmth.

The fountain Slan (the healer) is now known as the Wells of Struell, near Saul, 'where is—or used to be—a great station and a drinking well, and a bathing well, blessed by the Saint.' He slept, tradition says, in the rocky caves whence the waters flow, the mantle around

<sup>1</sup> See O'Laverty's *Down and Connor*, vol. i., p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> We cannot agree with those who think that the Bay of Dundrum was the place where the Saint landed. Its position does not fit in with the incidents recorded. The place of landing was close to Saul, and the swine-herd appears to have discovered the strangers at once. Then the name of the estuary is not Inver Slainge, as supposed by Colgan, from the name of the mountain, but Inver Slain, a name probably derived from the well whose healing waters flowed into it—the Shruell Springs.

him was surely cold and wet, for the spray and the damp air would make it so. His 'bolster' is there, a pillar-stone, still pointed out, but it is outside the cave. There he sang his psalms and chastised his body, and there his spiritual children have done penance for over 1,200 years. It was a cold perennial fountain, unaffected, apparently, by drought or flood: so tradition verifies every incident of the ancient Life.

## II.—PATRICK AT SAUL.

And there it was the swineherd of Dichu, son of Trichem, found them 'in the stead wherein to-day stands Saball-Patraic,' that is Patrick's Barn. They had, it is said, advanced 'a little distance,' from the place where they landed, but not quite a mile, when the swineherd saw them. To him they were strangers, and sailors, who had come stealthily in; and perhaps he had seen them hide their boat in the estuary of the stream. No wonder he mistook 'the sages and clerics' for robbers and thieves, and that he returned quickly to his master, and told him about the lurking strangers he had seen. Then Dichu came with his dog—perhaps a fine wolf-dog—and he set his dog at the strangers, whereupon Patrick, full of the words and spirit of the Scriptures, chanted the prophet's verse—'Ne tradas Domine bestiis animas confitentes tibi,' 'Leave not the souls that confess to thee, O Lord, a prey to the beasts,'—surely a most appropriate and mighty prayer at the moment, and thereupon 'the dog became silent.' He barked no more in anger at the strangers. At the same moment his master's heart was touched too, and by the same divine power. When Dichu saw Patrick 'grief of heart seized him;' he believed, and Patrick baptised him. We are not told how long it took for his instruction and his preparation. But the very sight of the clerics had changed his heart and filled it with remorse. They were not robbers or pirates, those white-robed, mild-eyed men. Their message was a message of peace and love. He believed—this bold chieftain—the first of all the men of the North who believed in Patrick's God, and was baptised by the Saint—perhaps in the fountain Slan, now in truth the Healer. And his was not a faith of words, but of deeds, for we are told that at once he gave his Barn to Patrick, and that Saball or Saul, whose name will never be forgotten in Ireland, became, so far as we know, the first Christian church in Ireland, at least it was the first

consecrated edifice of all the land of Ireland, in which Patrick offered the Holy Sacrifice, whereupon the grateful Saint blessed Dichu for his generous gift to the Church of God, and it was a bountiful blessing to himself, to his posterity, to his flocks and to his herds.

God's blessing on Dichu,  
 Who gave me the Barn.  
 May he have hereafter  
 A heavenly home, bright, pure and great,  
 God's blessing on Dichu—  
 On Dichu and his children;  
 No child of his or grandchild  
 Whose life will not be long.<sup>1</sup>

And in some sort that blessing is still fulfilled in Lecale. Dichu's offspring, in spite of John De Curci and Cromwell and the rest, are there still. Old Lecale has still nearly two-thirds of its population Catholic—Catholic of the Catholic, men who have made every sacrifice for the faith. Even the invaders there have kept the faith, and some of the followers of John De Curci in Lecale have fought as noble a battle for the Church, as the ancient Celtic race who held that fair land before the Norman built his castles in Dundrum or Downpatrick.

Lecale<sup>2</sup> itself is a very interesting district for many reasons, but chiefly because it was the cradle of the faith in Ireland.

Lecale consists of the two baronies that bear the name, Upper and Lower Lecale, on the southern coast of the Co. Down, between the Bay of Dundrum and Strangford Lough, anciently known as Lough Cuan. It is nearly an island surrounded by the sea on all sides except for about three miles, where the railway now runs from the head of Dundrum Bay to the Head of Strangford Lough, at its south-western corner. It is a fertile, undulating plain, anciently called, with great propriety, Magh Inis, the Island Plain, of high fertility, but, from its exposure to the sea, nearly destitute of trees. Its ancient rulers were the chieftains of the Dal Fiatach race, who, although Ulidians, did not belong to the Clanna Rury, but to the Heremonian

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<sup>1</sup> The Barn was dear to Patrick's heart from the first and continued to be dear to his heart to the last. He died there.

<sup>2</sup> The name Leath Cathail, Cathal's Half, is derived from a chieftain of the Dal Fiatach, who owned it in the 8th Century.

race, and gave many kings to the Southern Picts of Dalaradia. Dichu, son of Trichem, belonged to the same royal line of the Dal Fiatach, and he appears to have had his residence at Durlas, the Strong Dun, afterwards known as Downpatrick.

When John de Curci invaded Ulster in 1177, with a soldier's eye he saw the strength of the position and the fertility of the soil. So he drove out the natives, but not without difficulty, and occupied their lands, in which he built two strong castles to defend his conquests on the site of the ancient forts of the native chieftains—one at Dundrym and the other at Downpatrick. He then divided most of the fertile peninsula between his chief followers—the Savages, Russells, Fitzsimonses, Audleys, Jordans, and Bensons—some of whom have kept their lands and their faith down to our own times. We are told also that when the Catholics were expelled from other parts of the County Down in Cromwell's time many of them found refuge in Lecale with the Norman settlers; and hence it has continued to be the most Catholic part of the County Down up to the present, for out of a population of about 20,000, in round numbers, probably 13,000 are Catholics. The whole barony is filled with the sites of ancient churches, holy wells, strong castles, and Celtic duns, so that there is, perhaps, no part of Ireland of the same size more interesting than Lecale. Some of these ancient sites we shall treat of more fully hereafter in this present work.

Saul is about two miles from Downpatrick to the east, and about one mile to the south-west of the place where St. Patrick landed.

The name certainly means a 'barn' in Gaelic; and the church most probably got the name, not from the fact that it was one of a special set of churches that ran north and south, but rather from the fact that it was a barn, which was consecrated as a church, and retained the ancient name in memory of its ancient use.

There is no evidence that St. Patrick founded a church at Downpatrick on the occasion of this, his first visit, to Lecale. Dichu dwelt there, and at the time his dun was called Rath Celtair; but at a later period it came to be called Dun-da-leth-glass—the Rath of the Two Broken Fetters. When it became famous as the burial-place of St. Patrick a great church was built there, and it was made the cathedral of the diocese. But even in St. Patrick's time it must be regarded as the chief cathair or city of the kingdom,



not only of Lecale, but of South Dalaradia; and it has maintained its position of county town and cathedral church, at least to some extent, ever since.

It was the invariable custom of St. Patrick, so far as we can judge, when coming into any new tribe or territory, to go first to the Rath or Dun of the 'King,' for his subjects dare not become Christians without his sanction, or, at least, his toleration. We may assume, too, that St. Patrick in making his way through Strangford Lough to Saul, simply sought, not merely a secure haven, but also the easiest way to reach the dun of the King of South Ulidia. Perhaps he acquired some knowledge of the place during the six years he spent as a slave in the County Antrim; and, in any case, he could readily have obtained information enough at the Boyne Mouth to enable him to reach Downpatrick. It was not by chance but of fixed purpose, that he and his companions found themselves on the territory of Dichu, son of Trichem. It is probable that Patrick lived in Lecale during the winter months of 432. For he must have come there late in the season, and now had a church for himself and his companions, as well as a friendly Christian prince, to supply them with the necessaries of life. So we may fairly conclude that he did not make his way to Milcho in the far north until the early spring. It was a long road to travel, especially if he went on foot, and we are expressly told by Probus that it was a journey on foot—*pedestri itinere*. Yet, as the Apostle was certainly anxious to visit his old master, he may have taken the earliest opportunity that presented itself in the closing weeks of 432 to accomplish the journey, and, old as he then was, winter travelling had no terrors for him.

But Milcho was by no means anxious to meet his ancient slave. One account tells us that Patrick sought to reach him first directly by sea, landing somewhere about Larne or Glenarm, the nearest seaports in the kingdom of Milcho, but he repelled Patrick and his companions by violence, and would not suffer him to effect a landing in his territory. But this story is improbable, and inconsistent with the simple narratives in the Lives.

### III.—PATRICK REVISITS SLEMISH.

We have already heard something of Milcho's palace and kingdom. He seems to have been a Magus or Druid, and, certainly, must have been a most obstinate pagan. The tale is a very strange one, almost incredible, but in

later historic times we have read of men allowing themselves to be burned rather than abjure their errors, and we can well understand that it does not need much more obstinacy to burn oneself for the same reason. Milcho must have been then an old man, for Patrick was sixty, and he had been Patrick's master when the latter was a youth of sixteen. So we may fairly assume that he was now at least about seventy years.

'Patrick,' says the Tripartite, 'went to impress faith on Milcho,' and, knowing his avarice, he took gold with him to make his preaching more acceptable to the greedy old miser. Perhaps he also meant to begin by offering the gold as the price of his own ransom, which his old master might still consider his due. But Milcho was unwilling to believe, and he declared it shameful 'to believe in his own slave and be subject to him.' Think of a Virginian planter taking a new religion from one of his own runaway slaves! Yet he feared that Patrick, by magic or by gold, or by some other artifice, might bring this great disgrace upon him in his old age, so he took counsel of the Evil One, who suggested, says the Tripartite, how to prevent it. So Milcho entered into his palace with his gold, his silver, and all his treasures, and then set fire to them all, so that he and they were consumed together, 'and his soul went down to hell.'

Now Milcho had heard that Patrick was approaching from the south, when he adopted this diabolical counsel, so it came to pass that when Patrick arrived at the right or south-eastern flank of Slemish Hill on his journey, looking down over the valley of the Braed, he saw the palace in flames, and he knew by inspiration what happened. For the space of two or three hours he was silent, standing there on the mountain's slope, where the cross still stands to mark the spot, sighing and groaning in spirit at the awful fate of his old master; and then he said to his companions, "Yonder is the fire of Milcho's house; he is after burning himself lest he should believe in God at the end of his life." "Upon him," he said, "there lies a curse; of him shall be neither king nor Tanist; his seed and offspring will be in bondage after him, and he shall not come out of hell for ever." Then Patrick went no further north, but, turning about right-handwise to the south, he retraced his steps to Magh Inis, even to Dichu, the son of Trichem, his host, and favourite disciple. There, we are told, Patrick stayed a long time, sowing the faith, until

he brought all the men of Ulidia (Uladh) by the net of the Gospel to the harbour of Life. There is no doubt that Patrick, towards the end of his life, spent many years in Saul bringing the men of Ulidia to the harbour of Life, but the statement here seems to refer to his stay amongst them during the winter of 432 and the early spring of the following year. That he preached the Word of Life fruitfully in Lecale and its neighbourhood is shown by the number of ancient churches with which the whole place is studded, as well as by the many vivid traditions that still survive in the memory of the Catholic inhabitants. Memorials of St. Patrick—churches, stations, wells, or beds, are to be found in every parish; his memory, too, is still fondly cherished with the greatest veneration, and, as we know, he loved the people dearly, and chose Saul to be the place of his death, and Down of his resurrection.

#### IV.—PATRICK FOUNDS THE CHURCH OF BRIGHT.

Only one of his missionary expeditions during this period is specially referred to; that is, his founding of the Church of Bright. He went, as we are told, from Saul southwards to preach to Ross, the son of Trichem and brother of Dichu. He dwelt at Durlus—the Strong Fort—to the south of Downpatrick, ‘where stands to-day the small city of Brechtan—that is, Bright.’ It is called a cathair, or city, because Patrick placed there Bishop Loarn, who is described in Latin as the man who had the courage to blame Patrick for harshly driving away<sup>1</sup> a boy who was playing near his church, and possibly disturbing the solemnity of public worship. Of Bishop Loarn of Bright we know nothing else, except that he was a disciple of Patrick and Bishop of Bright. He was, doubtless, one of the household or family of twenty-four disciples who accompanied the Saint from the Continent. The name, however, is a Gaelic name, but this would not prove that he was trained on the Continent for the Irish mission, for there were certainly many Christians and some priests in Ireland before the arrival of St. Patrick in 432. It is unlikely, however, there were any such in Uladh at this time.

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<sup>1</sup> The Fourth Life says his hoop ran into a hole in the Saint's *grave*, and the boy could not extract the hoop, whereupon Loarn rebuked the Saint, and the boy drew out his hoop. The phrase in the Latin is ‘tenentem manum pueri!’ ‘laying hold of the hand of the boy’ to drive him off. It refers to an incident that took place when Patrick was alive, not after his death, as has been foolishly imagined. Patrick had a hot temper, and Bishop Loarn rebuked him for undue severity to the boy.

The old Church of Bright has completely disappeared. It was situated four miles south of Downpatrick, and about one mile from the sea, in the centre of a small but very interesting parish, of which O'Laverty gives a full and interesting account. Derlus, or Durlus, as it is more commonly written—the Stronghold of Ros—was the place now occupied by the Castle of Bright. Of this Ros, son of Trichem, who dwelt at Durlus, there is a curious story told in the *Third Life*. He was not pleased that his brother Dichu had become a disciple of Patrick, and when Patrick went to Durlus to visit Ros, 'he fought against the Saint and refused to believe.' Now, Ros was very old; so Patrick said to him :

"Why do you strive for this life, which is failing you, and neglect the life to come? All your senses are failing—your eyes are getting blind, your ears are growing deaf, your tongue stutters, and your teeth are falling out—all your members are going. If anyone made you young again, would you believe in him?"

"Yes," replied the old chief. "If anyone gave me back my youth I would believe with my whole heart."

Then, by the prayer of Patrick, Ros received his youth, the youth of a brave and handsome man, and forthwith he believed and was baptised with three other sons of Trichem, his brothers; and many others also were baptised along with them. It seems, too, that the faith of Ros was fervent and genuine. As he said, he believed with his whole heart, for when Patrick asked him if now he would prefer to live long on earth or go at once to heaven, he replied: "I prefer to go at once to the life eternal," and immediately having received the Sacrifice—that is, the Holy Communion—he went to his Lord.

This story will have to be examined more carefully hereafter, when we come to consider who was Ros, one of the Nine appointed by St. Patrick to reform the Brehon Code. If the Ros named amongst them be the Ros, son of Trichem of Lecale, we must reject the foregoing tale as a later invention utterly unworthy of credence, seeing that the chieftain in question must have lived for at least seven years longer if he took a part in the purification and codification of the Brehon Laws.

Another interesting occurrence took place during Patrick's stay through this winter in Lecale. On one occasion, going his way, perhaps to Bright, he saw a tender youth herding swine. Mochae was his name. Patrick

instructed him first, then baptised and tonsured him. He also gave him a Gospel and a *menistir*, as it is called in Irish, that is, the requisites of the ministerium or the due celebration of Mass. At another time, but of course later on, he gave him a crozier, which fell from heaven, its head falling in Patrick's bosom, and its foot in Mochae's bosom, that is, it fell between them as they sat, indicating that Patrick was to give it to Mochae, which he did, thereby investing him with episcopal authority. The crozier thus marvellously given was called the Etech, or 'winged' crozier of Mochae of Noendrum. In token of submission and obedience, Mochae promised to Patrick, and to his church, a 'shaven' pig, that is, the cleaned carcase, every year, and 'the same is still offered,' but whether to Patrick's Community at Saul or Armagh is not stated in the Tripartite.

#### V.—PATRICK AND MOCHAE.

The narrative explains to us how Patrick trained candidates for Holy Orders. Mochae was a 'tender youth' when Patrick first met him herding swine, and the sight reminded him of the old time when he, too, still a tender youth, was engaged in the same work on the slopes of Slemish. Finding him apt and bright, he caused him to be instructed in the catechism and the rudiments of the Latin tongue by the clerics of his own household. Then he baptised him, and to show that he was destined for the clerical state, he tonsured him, giving him, at the same time, a copy of the Gospels, which was at once his Latin class book for the study of the language, and his theological treatise, which his teachers duly explained in all its power and simplicity. When he was thus trained to read the 'Lebar Ord,' or Ordinary of the Mass, Patrick ordained him a priest, and at the same time gave him the necessary outfit for saying Mass, such as is now usually contained in a vestment-box—not elaborate, perhaps, as in our time, but certainly including a chalice, a paten, a small altar-stone with relics, and, of course, his Mass-book—such was the *menistir*.

Later on Mochae received episcopal Orders, and was invested by Patrick with the crozier as a sign of his jurisdiction. Of course, all this took some time, but the process is here very accurately, though briefly, summed up. It is not unlikely that this Mochae was the priest whom, in

his old age, St. Patrick sent with his Letter to Coroticus. He tells us himself that the messenger was one whom he had taught from his infancy, and this, in a sense, would be true of Mochae, and also of Benignus; but the latter was certainly dead when the letter was written.

Mochae was, we are told, the son of Bronach, daughter of Milcho; and this fact at once explains the deep interest that Patrick took in the boy—he was the grand-child of that stern old pagan master who had committed himself and all his property to the flames rather than become the spiritual bondsman of his own slave. Patrick probably knew his mother while she was yet a child in her father's dun, and he a poor slave-boy tending the swine. Ancient affection for the family woke up within him, and so he resolved to make a bishop of the boy—and that boy became a holy and a learned man, the founder of the monastery and school of Noendrum in one of the green islands in Strangford Lough, where he in turn became the teacher of many distinguished saints and scholars.

Mochae is said by some learned writers to be equivalent to Mo-Caolan, the latter part being the baptismal name of 'the tender youth,' and Mo the usual Gaelic prefix of endearment. From him, according to O'Lavery, Kilschaelyn, as given in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas, takes its name, which is elsewhere called Ballchatlan, and has, in our own time, become Ballynoe—ancient church land certainly belonging to St. Mochae's monastery of Noendrum or Island Mahee. If that be so, we may fairly assume that Ballynoe, between Downpatrick and Bright, represents the place where St. Patrick met young Mochae, where the youth was baptised, and where he afterwards had his first church, which in course of time became subject to his own great monastery of Noendrum.<sup>1</sup>

Patrick remained in Magh-Inis during the winter and early spring, but 'when the high tide of Easter drew nigh he thought there was no fitter place for celebrating the chief solemnity of the Church, that of Easter, than in Magh Breg—the Plain of Bregia—the place which was the chief abode of the idolatry and wizardry of Erin, to wit, in Tara.' So he bade farewell to Dichu, son of Trichem, and embarking with his companions, they sailed southward till they anchored once more in Inver Colptha, at the mouth of the Boyne.

<sup>1</sup> See O'Lavery's *Down and Connor*, Vol. I., p. 143.

## VI.—SOCIAL LIFE IN ANCIENT ERIN.

Before, however, we go with Patrick to Tara, it is essential to get an idea of the national and social life of the men of Erin at the time, for otherwise we could not understand the marvellous narrative of all the strange things that took place at Tara. Here was to be the crisis of Patrick's career, and the turning-point of Ireland's history.

In a previous passage, explaining how Patrick was so badly received in Wicklow, the Tripartite gives a brief sketch of the political state of the Kingdom :—

At that time there was a certain fierce heathen King in Erin, namely, Laeghaire, son of Niall, and in Tara was his residence and royal stronghold. It was in the fifth year of the reign of this Laeghaire, son of Niall, that Patrick came to Erin.

After some chronological data, it adds :—

This cruel king there had wizards and enchanters who used to foretell by their wizardry and heathenism what was before them. Loethru and Lucat-mael, that is Lucat the Bald, were the chiefs of them, and the chief professors of this art of false prophecy. They foretold that a prophet of evil law was coming over the sea to Erin, that many would receive him, and that he would find love and veneration with the men of Erin, and that he would drive the (pagan) kings and lords out of their realms, and would destroy all the images of the idols, and that the new law which he would bring should abide in Erin for ever. Two or three years before Patrick's arrival this was what they used to prophesy :—

“ Bare-pole will come over the wild sea,  
 His mantle hole-headed, his staff crook-headed,  
 His altar in the east of his house,  
 And all his family shall answer  
 Amen. Amen.”

The Irish of this prophecy is given in all the Lives of the Saint with more or less accuracy, and, no doubt, it states what even human prudence could foresee at the time. The Druids were not ignorant of what was happening in Britain and Gaul; they were expecting Palladius and they were expecting Patrick, for they had ample means of hearing of their intended coming. Their knowledge of contemporaneous events elsewhere told them what would surely happen in Ireland, if the new priest succeeded in effecting

a landing, and the poetic description of the Christian Bishop and his ritual was what anyone could have seen who had ever crossed to the opposite coast of Wales.

Their purpose was to keep their own power and prestige as long as possible, and hence they bound up the fate of the Kings of Erin with the fate of their Druids, and sought by every means in their power to rouse them to fierce anger against the foreign missionaries, with a view of excluding them entirely from Ireland, or, if not, of destroying them as soon as possible after their landing.

In pursuance of this purpose they had induced the King to persuade his son-in-law, Nathi, King of the Hy Garreth, to exclude both Palladius and Patrick from his territory, and he had done so. But, in the North Laeghaire had little or no influence, and so the Ulster chiefs received Patrick with welcome and became his disciples. Still, at the same time, the well-meaning Dichu told Patrick that if he hoped to convert the men of Erin generally he must go to Tara and meet the King and his Druids face to face. If he conquered them, all would be easy, but if he failed there, he could not win Erin to be the Kingdom for Christ. It is certain that Patrick, too, came with that conviction in his mind to the Boyne's Mouth, and it is the real key to his subsequent conduct. He had to meet not only the 'fierce, cruel King,' but also his Druids, Bards, and Brehons, face to face, and conquer them or die—they would show him no mercy, and he knew it well.

King Laeghaire himself was a formidable foe. He was the eldest son of the great Niall of the Nine Hostages, and he had inherited much of the spirit, if not of the ability, of his mighty sire. Moore describes Niall as one of the most gallant of all the princes of the Milesian race; and Dr. Joyce, a far better authority, justly calls him 'one of the greatest, most warlike, and famous of all the ancient Irish kings.'<sup>1</sup> King Dathi, his nephew, of the Connaught lineage, succeeded Niall in A.D. 405, and Laeghaire, the son of Niall, succeeded Dathi in 428. Hence, we can understand why it is said that in the fifth year of King Laeghaire—that is, in 432—Patrick came to Ireland.

Niall the Great had a large family, whose power had not disappeared in Erin. Four of his sons settled in Meath and became the ancestors of the southern Hy Neill, and

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<sup>1</sup> *A Short History of Ireland*, p. 134.



we shall meet them later on ; four settled in Ulster, where they won their broad acres by the sword. The Hy Neill of Ulster became in later ages the most illustrious princes of Erin, as they were the last who fought with skill and valour for her independence.

King Laeghaire belonged to the southern Hy Neill, and his brothers of the same stock held under their dominion all the royal lands of the principality of Tara, from the Shannon to the eastern sea, and southward to the Boyne. Laeghaire, as a civil ruler, appears to have been just and brave, but not on the same level as his mighty sire. He was an obstinate pagan, and although, for appearance sake, he 'yielded to Patrick,' he never became a true Christian, but died, as he had lived, a pagan in soul and spirit.

#### VII.—DRUIDS, BARDS, AND BREHONS.

Around Laeghaire, in the spring of 433, was gathered all the estates of his kingdom—the princes of Erin ruling their own territories with practical independence ; and along with them were the privileged estates of ancient Erin—the Druids, Bards, and Brehons—whom we shall meet at Laeghaire's court on Tara's Hill, and who were the most formidable and influential factors in the Irish nation at the time, if we can justly designate it by that name.

Laeghaire's supremacy over Leath-Cuinn, the northern half of Ireland, was recognised by all the kinglets of the minor territories, and we find them at his court of Tara doing him honour and yielding him obedience. But the chiefs of Leath-Mogha, or the southern half of Erin, never yielded cordial submission to the Hy Neill princes. The fact that Laeghaire was in Tara gave him at least a right to be called the High King of Erin, but so far as the south was concerned it was little more than an empty title. The men of Leinster, especially, never yielded anything but a forced obedience to the King of Tara ; between him and them there was a bitter and life-long feud. When Laeghaire first met Patrick in the spring of 433 he was still a young man, proud of his high descent and fair domains ; anxious, too, in his own person to maintain the ancient glories of Tara and the high renown of the High Kings of Erin. Around him were gathered together, when Patrick met them, nearly all the princes of his own royal line who ruled in Meath and in north-west Ulster, and also the royal chiefs of Connaught, who were his cousins by the

half-blood, for they were all descended in the third or fourth generation from the great Eochy Moyvane, the common ancestor of the kings of Meath, of Connaught, and of Ulster. His death took place less than a hundred years before, in A. D. 365.

But the Druids were the great defence of Laeghaire's throne and the old religion. We know nothing of the Irish Druids from our legal treatises, for all reference to them was carefully expunged from the national chronicles; so that we find little or nothing about them in our Annals. Whatever information we possess regarding them in Ireland is derived from two sources—the bardic tales and the Lives of the Irish Saints, especially from the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick.

Cæsar tells us many things of the Druids of Gaul and Britain; and we may fairly assume that the Druids of Erin did not differ in essentials from those of the Celtic nations in Britain and Gaul.

They were certainly priests, as Cæsar tells us; but they were also men of science, seers, magicians, and councillors of State. As priests they had the direction of public worship, as magicians they had power over the elements, and as prophets they foretold the future for the guidance of their royal patrons. A company of Druids always dwelt near the royal rath, not only of the High-King, but of all the provincial kings. Their gods dwelt in wells, and in trees, and also within the bosom of the beautiful green hills of Erin, in the islets of its lakes, or in fairy caves beneath their limpid waters. Sometimes they offered human sacrifice, especially of children, to secure abundant harvests; they worshipped the sun, and perhaps the moon also; and had certain idols, mostly of stone, which they worshipped with unclean rites. They had marvellous power over the elements, and they adored especially the sun and wind and water, the great rulers of the inferior powers of nature. Still it appears highly probable they believed in one Supreme Being, and they certainly recognised some kind of a future state connected with their doctrine of the transmigration of souls.

All this will be made manifest from our subsequent narrative.

But they certainly had one thing that gave them great power over the minds of men in a rude age—they had knowledge, and they made the most of it. Few people will deny that they had also great magical or wonder-

working power, and it was that made them so feared and venerated by the kings as well as by the people. Christianity was in essential opposition to such a religious system, and hence the struggle between Patrick and the Druids was a struggle to the death.

Of the Bards and Brehons it is only necessary to say here that they also were privileged orders in Erin. The Bards were the historians or chroniclers of the kingdom; but they were also much more, for it was their duty to be present on the field of battle, to record the brave deeds of the warriors on either side; and afterwards to chant the deeds of the victors at the banquet and on the battle-march. They went about the country in itinerant schools under the guidance of the Chief Bard; they levied dues from the people; they claimed the privilege of free entertainment and lodging for themselves and their scholars, and also large gifts for their poems. Their avarice was extreme, and when it was not gratified they satirised their hosts without mercy. But they had no special hostility to Christianity; and one of the first converts of Patrick at Tara was the chief poet of Erin.

Then there were also the Brehons—the judges attached to the High-King's court, as well as to the courts of all the inferior kinglets. Their legal knowledge was kept zealously to themselves, and conveyed from father to son in a learned language of their own, known only to themselves. But they followed the laws of natural justice in their decisions, and when the code was purified by Patrick at a later date, it maintained its ground amongst the Celtic tribes of Ireland down to the beginning of the seventeenth century, and its spirit is still alive in Erin.

It is well to have at least a general notion of this state of society in Erin, in order to understand the great conflict between Patrick and King Laeghaire with his Druids and courtiers on the royal Hill of Tara. This is, indeed, the central fact in the history of his missionary life. It is a marvellous narrative, but it is given without substantial variation in all the ancient Lives of the Saints. You may reject it, if you will, but then you must still explain the victory gained by Patrick; and, to my mind at least, the victory cannot be explained without accepting the marvellous narrative, at least in its substance, or leaving the mighty revolution unexplained.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ST. PATRICK'S CONFLICT WITH THE DRUIDS.

#### I.—PATRICK SAILS FOR THE BOYNE.

AS we have seen, Patrick had resolved to celebrate his first Easter in Ireland in the very headquarters of the idolatry and Druidism of Erin. In fact his friend Dichu had told him what he felt to be true, that if he did not conquer there he could not succeed elsewhere. A message had already been sent from the High King to Dichu, bidding him beware of the wiles of the bare-crowned priest, and yield him no obedience. This message did not affect Dichu, but he felt it might be effective elsewhere, as it already had been in Wicklow, except Patrick was able to secure } at least toleration and liberty to preach from the central authority at Tara.

Now, having come in their boats from Strangford Lough to Inver Colptha, Patrick and his companions left their vessel in the estuary there, and went by land along the swelling shores of the Boyne to Ferta fer Feicc—the graves of Fiacc's men—now known as the Hill of Slane, 'and Patrick pitched his tent there, and struck the paschal fire.'

This is a brief, but significant entry, and throws much light on the customs of the time.

It would be very interesting to know what kind of a boat Patrick and his crew had on this occasion. As it was intended to ascend the Boyne as far as possible, we may reasonably conclude that it was a curragh, such as were commonly used at the time. Some of them were of good size, for we are told in an ancient tale of one that was covered with forty hides, and had twenty benches for the rowers, with two thick tall masts and broad-bladed oars. Patrick would not need so large a craft as this, but still it was probably of good size, yet of light draught, so that it could be easily beached and drawn over the shallow fords of the river.

Dichu had, no doubt, many such boats on Lough Cuan,

and would be glad to accommodate the Saint with a suitable craft. We are expressly told that they had a prosperous voyage, sweeping out of Lough Cuan, we may suppose, with the first of the ebb, and then keeping away from the mountains on the starboard and the dangerous flats off the coast of Louth, they would in about ten hours cover the distance of fifty miles, and run their light craft into the estuary of the Boyne with the next flowing tide.<sup>1</sup>

They left their vessel in the estuary, somewhere near Drogheda, in charge of Lomman, who was a nephew of Patrick, with instructions to him and his companions to make their way as best they could up the river. Patrick himself, with a few more of his household, set out for Tara by road, keeping, it may be, the right bank of the river as far as Donore, and then striking across the bend of the Boyne for the Hill of Slane, which is about nine miles from Drogheda. They travelled on foot, setting out, doubtless, in the early morn.

We are told that Patrick left his nephew Lomman at the mouth of the Boyne, to watch his ship for the forty days and forty nights of Lent, and that Lomman, in a spirit of obedience to Patrick, watched some forty days more before he resolved to sail up the Boyne on his own account. This statement is improbable, and does not fit in with what is elsewhere recorded, both in the Tripartite and the Book of Armagh.

What is clear is this, that Patrick, having sailed from Saul with the opening spring, landed at the mouth of the Boyne, perhaps about the beginning of Lent, and then leaving Lomman with a few companions to guard his 'ship' and push up against the stream as far as they could, he himself, with some ten or twelve of his clerics, resolved to make the journey to Tara by land. There is some reason to think that it was on this occasion, just after his voyage from the North, that Patrick, tired after his voyage, enjoyed the welcome hospitality of Sescnen, father of Benignus, and that it was in the valley of the Boyne—the valley of Sescnen—that the gentle boy clung to the feet of Patrick, and would not be parted from his dear spiritual father, whose bosom, as he slept on the green sward, he had strewn with choicest flowers.

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<sup>1</sup> Bene et prospere delati sunt.

## II.—PATRICK AT SLANE.

In that case it would appear that Patrick, on his land journey to Slane, first took the left or southern bank of the river, under the guidance of Kannanus of Duleek, who was probably a companion of Patrick and a native of that district. It is at least expressly stated that Patrick ordained him Bishop 'at his first Pasch or Easter in Slane.'<sup>1</sup> If this account of Tirechan be correct, then we must assume that Ciannan of Duleek had already received his education in Britain or on the Continent, whence he accompanied Patrick on his return to Ireland to preach the Gospel in his native land. There are certain statements in some of the Lives of St. Patrick which lend probability to this view. It is further stated by Tirechan that it was Ciannan who carried the blessed fire and the wax-lights from the very hands of Patrick, to kindle them 'in the nostrils of King Laeghaire and his gentile lords and Druids,' who were in conflict with his beloved master, St. Patrick.<sup>2</sup> If all this be accurate, St. Ciannan of Duleek was the first bishop whom Patrick consecrated in Ireland, and he was consecrated on that most momentous day in Irish history—the morning of that very Holy Saturday, on the eve of which St. Patrick came in conflict with Laeghaire and his Druids on the Hill of Slane.

Now, on Holy Saturday evening, and after a journey through a district unsurpassed in Ireland for beauty and fertility, they sat down to rest themselves near the graves of Fiacc's men on the very summit of the Hill of Slane.<sup>3</sup>

The saints of Ireland were great lovers of the beauties of nature, and now Patrick's family had a scene before them of grandeur not surpassed throughout the length and breadth of beautiful Erin. The Hill of Slane dominates the whole plain of Meath, or, as it was then called, Magh Breg—the Beautiful Plain—where nature pours out her choicest gifts with lavish hand. Far away to the north, in the blue distance, Patrick saw the great range of the Mourne mountains, which he had left behind him some days before. On the horizon's verge, towards the south-east, rose the brown summits of the Wicklow range,

<sup>1</sup> Kannanus episcopus quem ordinavit Patricius in primo Pasca hi Feti virorum Feice—that is in Slane, and it would be on Holy Saturday, before that Easter Sunday that Patrick went to Tara.

<sup>2</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, page 306.

<sup>3</sup> Ferta Fer Feice (*Tripartite*). Feti virorum Feice (*Muirchu*).

overhanging that inhospitable Crich Cualann, from which Nathi had driven him some months before. Far away, like a cloud on the southern horizon, rose the crest of Slieve Bloom, dimly outlined against the sky, and suggesting many a weary day before he could hope to preach the Gospel beyond its shadowy summits. There, too, in the foreground, some ten miles to the south, was the Royal Hill whither he was faring—Tara of the Kings—crowned with many a rath, and crowded with the princes and nobles of the Scots who were there at that time from all parts of the kingdom holding high festival. Then all around them, where they sat, were pleasant waters, and fertile fields, and long reaches of woodland, vocal with the manifold voices of the opening spring. Yes, it was all very beautiful; but again and again their eyes and thoughts must have turned to yonder royal hill, for Patrick knew it was the very citadel of the paganism and idolatry of Erin. He was now about to assault it, 'to drive a wedge into its very crown, so that it might never stand up against the faith of Christ.' It was a daring purpose, which needed more than human wisdom to conceive, and more than human strength to realise.<sup>1</sup>

But Patrick lost small time in these speculations; like a true apostle, he set to work at once. He would go no further that day, for it was now growing late, and, in accordance with the Church's rule, the Holy Fire must be blessed for their Easter solemnities. So he pitched his tent on the very summit of the hill, and prepared to bless the Paschal Fire. Those who are acquainted with the ceremonies of the Church must know that by an ordinance, dating back to apostolic times, the 'new fire,' from which the Paschal Candle was to be lighted was struck from a flint and solemnly blessed, not, as at present, in the morning, but in the evening of Holy Saturday. From this new fire, the Paschal Candle, typifying the light of the Gospel shining over the world, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, was lighted, and then all the other lamps of the Church were lit from the same sacred flame, and were kept burning during the night, to usher in at dawn the Light of the World.<sup>2</sup> Now St. Patrick faithfully

<sup>1</sup> The Fourth Life in Colgan truly declares that no one should be surprised to hear of Patrick working great miracles, for without them the pagans would never have given up their idolatrous superstitions. 'Nunquam pagani idolorum superstitionem desererent, nisi talia miracula viderent.'

<sup>2</sup> The account that here follows is taken almost word for word from the Latin version of Muirechu, as given in the *Book of Armagh*, but all the accounts are in substance identical, differing only in words and a few minor details.

observed this ceremony, and when evening came he blessed the new fire and lighted his Paschal torch, which from the lofty summit of the Hill of Slane blazed through the darkness over all the plains of Meath—a most appropriate symbol of the Orient Light that was soon to illumine all the hills and valleys of Erin.

Slane is distinctly visible from Tara, so that the light of Patrick's torch, shining on that conspicuous summit, was seen at once from the Royal Hill; and the sight filled the beholders with mingled anger and consternation. For on that very night King Laeghaire was holding a religious festival<sup>1</sup> at Tara in honour of his own gods, with his Druids and nobles, his Bards and his Brehons, all around him. Now it was a solemn ordinance, proclaimed in ancient laws, that no man far or near should dare to light a fire on that night before the beacon fire on the Royal Hill was kindled. Whoever transgressed this edict was doomed to die, and no eric might be accepted for his ransom. When holy Patrick kindled his own fire on the Hill of Slane he knew nothing of the royal ordinance, but even if he did, he would, says the record, have despised it.

Now the King, seeing the light on the Hill of Slane, in great anger called his officers and asked who had dared to transgress the royal mandate. They replied that they knew not. Thereupon the Druids, addressing the King, said, "Sovereign King, except that fire which you see on yonder hill, and which has been kindled before the fire in this royal palace, be extinguished this very night, it will never be extinguished in Erin; and, moreover, it will outshine all the fires that we light. And he who has kindled it will conquer us all; and his Kingdom will overthrow you and us and your kingdom; and he will seduce your subjects, and rule over them all for ever."

Then King Laeghaire, like Herod of old, was sorely troubled, partly with fear and partly with anger, and all his nobles likewise. Whereupon he said:—"It shall not be so. We will go this moment and see the end of this thing; and we will seize and slay the man who is guilty of this outrage against our royal authority."

So Laeghaire, taking eight chariots full of his chosen warriors, and, moreover, his two chief Druids, Lucat-mael

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<sup>1</sup> The Tripartite calls it the 'Feis Temra, a high solemnity of the Gentiles,' at which all the nobles of the land assisted. Muirchu declares that it was an idolatrous festival, accompanied with superstitious rites and arts of wicked magic.



and Lochru, set out for Slane by the great northern road from Tara, which crossed the river at the fords of Slane. As they came near to the hill the Druids said to Laeghaire : "Go not thou to the place<sup>1</sup> where the fire is kindled, lest perchance thou shouldst honour him who kindles it ; but remain thou outside, and let him be called before thee, so he shall pay the homage as is fitting ; and then we shall talk to him before thy face, O King ; and so shalt thou judge of him and us." "It is well said," replied the King. "I shall do as you have counselled."

Accordingly, when the King with his nobles and Druids came to the hill of Slane they dismounted from their horses and chariots, and sat down nigh to the place where the fire was lit, but they entered it not.

Patrick was at once summoned before them by command of the King, and 'he came out of the place which was lit up'—that is the area before his tent, which was, no doubt, enclosed in some way as a temporary church or oratory. "Let no one rise before him when he comes," said the Druids, "for if any rises he will do him homage and believe in him." Now Patrick, seeing all those warriors, with their chariots and horses, was not afraid, but came into the midst of them, chanting, with heart and lips, the words of the Psalmist, "Hi in curribus, et hi in equis, nos autem in nomine Domini nostri ambulabimus."<sup>2</sup>—Let them trust in their chariots and horses, but we shall walk in the name of the Lord.

No one, however, rose to meet Patrick when he came before the King and his courtiers,<sup>3</sup> except one man, 'inspired by God,' who would not obey the command of the Magi, and he was Erc, the son of Degeo, 'whose relics are now venerated in Slane ;' and, we may add, whose ancient oratory is there still beside the river, although all the other monuments of remote antiquity have now disappeared. Erc rose to do Patrick homage, and that homage was of itself an act of faith, for it was a recognition that Patrick was a divine ambassador. Whereupon the Saint blessed him, 'and he believed in the eternal God ;' wherefore, most

<sup>1</sup> In pagan estimation charms and spells were not so likely to be effective without the magic circle as within it.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xix., 8.

<sup>3</sup> There is a graphic touch in the *Tripartite* narrative which tells how the grim warriors of Laeghaire sat around, 'with the rims of their shields against their chins,' as if protecting themselves against the spells of the mighty wizard from beyond the sea.

fittingly, Patrick afterwards made the sweet-spoken Brehon Bishop of Slane, and also, for a time, attached him to his own household, by appointing him judge or official arbitrator in all causes that came before his tribunal, and especially in those requiring a knowledge of the Brehon Laws.

Then, we are told, they began to 'converse,' and, no doubt the first question put to Patrick was to ask him who he was, and why he dared to contravene the royal edict by kindling his fire and lighting up his house before the fire of Tara was kindled. Patrick from this took occasion to explain the Good Tidings that he bore to the men of Erin, dwelling particularly, as was his wont, on the great mysteries of the Trinity, Incarnation, and Resurrection, which, for those simple folk, was the basis of all his teachings. Whereupon the Druid Lochru, with wicked words, reviled these awful mysteries of the Catholic Faith. Then Patrick, turning to the blaspheming Druid with angry eyes, uttered aloud in words of power, a strong prayer to the Lord :—"O Lord, who canst do all things, and by whose power all things live, and who hast sent me hither, let this impious man who blasphemes Thy name be raised aloft and quickly perish." And, lo ! forthwith the Druid was raised high in the air, and falling to the ground, his brains were dashed out against a stone, so that he perished miserably in the sight of all ; and thereupon the pagans were sore afraid. The writer in the Book of Armagh adds :—And his stone—whether that against which he fell, or the stone that marks his grave—is in the south-western edge of Tara down to the present day ; 'and I have seen it with my own eyes,' adds the writer. Whereupon Laeghaire, full of wrath, sought then and there to slay Patrick, and exclaimed :—"Seize him, the wretch, that would destroy us all." At this Patrick, seeing the wicked Gentiles preparing to rush upon himself, rose up, exclaiming with a loud voice,<sup>1</sup> "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered, and let those who hate Him fly from before His face." It was once more a most appropriate and efficacious prayer. A dark cloud rushed down upon them, and a dreadful panic seized them. They fought fiercely<sup>2</sup> against

<sup>1</sup> Exurgat Deus, et dissipentur inimici ejus, et fugiant qui oderunt eum a facie ejus.

<sup>2</sup> The *Tripartite* says that fifty men of them fell in that uprising of Patrick's curse.

each other, whilst the earth shook beneath their feet, and a whirlwind dashed their chariots to pieces, and swept themselves and their horses far over the plain, so that, in the end, only a few succeeded in making their escape to Mount Moduirn. The fugitives rushed blindly onward, half dead from fright and the effects of Patrick's curse, which still pursued them as they fled. In the end, of all their host only four remained at Slane, Laeghaire and his wife, with two attendants; and they, we are told, as well they might, were sore afraid.

Then the queen approaching Patrick said to him: "O just and mighty man, do not kill the King; he will bend his knees and adore thy God." And the King did, unwillingly, however, bend his knees, and 'pretended to adore Him whom he wished not to adore.' And when they had separated, and the King was gone a little distance in advance, he called Patrick to come to him: but it was a pretence, for he wished to slay him by some means or other. Patrick knew the King's design; yet, blessing his eight<sup>1</sup> companions, with young Benignus also, he came with them to the King. The King saw them and counted them coming; but lo! as he looked they vanished from his eyes, and he saw them no more; but the Gentiles saw eight young stags and a fawn rushing past to the woodlands, whereupon Laeghaire, full of sorrow, fear, and shame, returned to Tara at the dawn of day; that is, on Easter Sunday morning.

This last incident is somewhat differently narrated in the *Tripartite*.<sup>2</sup> Laeghaire meditated killing Patrick, and said to him, "Come after me, O Cleric, to Tara, that I may believe in thee in presence of the men of Erin." Yet forthwith, as he went, he set an ambush on every path from Slane to Tara so that Patrick might be killed. But God permitted not this. 'Through Patrick's blessing a cloak of darkness covered them as they journeyed to Tara, so that the heathen in ambush saw nothing but eight deer going past them under the mountain—the Hill of Slane—

<sup>1</sup> Muirchu here has *octo*, eight; but when Patrick goes to Tara in the morning of Easter Day he goes accompanied by five only—*quinque* tantum viris. This shows that the two things are distinct in the estimation of the writer—the attempt to slay Patrick and his eight companions with Benignus, and the subsequent journey of Patrick with only five and Benignus to Tara.

<sup>2</sup> The narrative of the *Tripartite*, although more marvellous, appears more probable, for Laeghaire would scarcely at once attempt to slay Patrick, especially as his men of war were scattered. The ambush must have been set on the road to Tara.

and behind them a fawn with a bundle on its shoulder. That was Patrick with his eight and Benen, the gillie, behind with his tablets on his back.'

It was on this occasion that Patrick chanted the *Faed Fiada*, or *Deer's Cry*, by which he sought the protection of God and his Saints and Angels against the wiles and magic of all his enemies. The Hymn is given elsewhere in the Appendix on Patrick's writings. There are, however, a few points to be noted here.

Patrick on that day was in deadly peril at every step, and he knew it well. But he knew also that he had a divine mission to preach in Ireland, and he was full of hope and confidence in God. The might of faith and prayer was never more strikingly shown than in his case, and this Hymn reveals at once his hopes and his fears. His whole confidence was in God, and to God he pours out all his heart with a strong cry, and also to all God's servants, animate and inanimate, to help him and to shield him in the hour of peril. This is the key-note to the understanding of the Hymn. If miracles were ever needed to save from the jaws of death they were needed on that day, and if ever there was just cause for expecting God to work miracles in favour of a creature, Patrick might well expect them on the Hill of Slane and of Tara, for the spiritual destinies of Ireland for all time were the issue at stake.

Thoughts like these filled Patrick's brave heart :—

As forth to Tara he fared full lowly,  
 The Staff of Jesus was in his hand,  
 Twelve priests paced after him chanting slowly,  
 Printing their steps on the dewy land.  
 It was the Resurrection morn,  
 The lark sang loud in the springing corn,  
 The dove was heard and the hunter's horn.  
 The murderers stood close by the way,  
 Yet they saw nought save the lambs at play.<sup>1</sup>

### III.—PATRICK AT TARA.

And now the momentous conflict begun at Slane was to-day to be fought out at Tara. Hitherto it was a drawn battle; the final issue was to be determined on this Easter Sunday just then dawning. Laeghaire had returned from Slane to Tara full of shame and sorrow; Patrick, too, with

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<sup>1</sup> Aubrey de Vere.

his nine companions, including Benen, having escaped the wayside ambushes by God's good Providence, were now approaching Tara, and they were coming there on the invitation of the King himself.

Then strange rumours filled all the Royal City—strange rumours of what had taken place during the night—how the King had come back shame-faced and disheartened; how the great Druid, Lochru, had his brains dashed out against the rock by the Cleric of the Shaven-Crown; how a wild storm and whirlwind had scattered the heroes and braves of Tara when they attempted to seize the Christian priest; and how the King himself and the Queen had in the end been forced to beg for mercy at the hands of the mighty Tailcend. It was whispered, too, that the great Christian Magus was coming to Tara that very day, but when or how no one knew—only all were filled with anxiety and fear, as well as with a strong curiosity to know what might happen next. That curiosity was soon to be gratified to the full, as we shall now explain, adhering strictly to the original narrative of Muirchu in the Book of Armagh.

On that day, then, that is on Easter Day, Laeghaire had made a great feast for his sub-kings, his chiefs, and his Druids, for, according to ancient custom, it was a day of high festival at Tara. So they all sat down to the feast prepared for them in the palace of Tara, and whilst some were talking, and others thinking of what had taken place the night before, Patrick himself, with five men only, stood in the midst of the company, although the doors were all closed, and no one had seen them enter. His purpose was to proclaim the Good Tidings that they bore before the High King of Erin in the very midst of his assembled nobles. No doubt the scene of this meeting was the Teach-míodhcuarta—the great banquet hall of Tara, whose site can still be distinctly traced, having seven great doors on either side, giving access to the princes and warriors, who enjoyed the right of admission to the splendid hall. At a royal feast like the present, it contained all that was best and bravest in Erin, and hence it was that Patrick, strong in the strength of God, was anxious to appear before the King in the great banquet hall, which was also their council chamber.

They were all surprised when they saw Patrick, with his attendants, in the very midst of the hall; but, in obedience to the King's command, no one rose to do him

homage except only Dubthach Maccu Lugair,<sup>1</sup> the chief of the poets of Erin, and also a youth, then a poet student, namely Fiacc, who afterwards became a wondrous bishop, whose relics now repose in Sletty. Patrick blessed them, for it was not only an act of faith, but a brave, nay, a daring act of faith; and Dubthach, we are told, was the first who believed on that day, and his faith justified him. Now, at the worst of times an Irishman is not inhospitable; so Patrick was invited to sit down at the banquet, and, although he knew some of them meant mischief, he accepted the invitation. He sat near the King and his chief Druid, Lucat-Mael, who, wrathful in mind at the death of his colleague the night before, resolved, if possible, to try and poison Patrick. So, taking a suitable opportunity, unseen by Patrick, but not unseen by the others, he poured poison into the cup that he might see what Patrick would do. Patrick knew his guile; and so, in the presence of all who had seen the poison dropped into the cup, he blessed the vessel, and forthwith the contents were curdled, or, as Muirchu has it, were congealed, all except the poison. Then Patrick, turning the cup a little on its side, the poison dropped out, and when he again blessed the cup the liquor became fluid as before.

Failing to effect his purpose within the great chamber, the Druid, whose name and fame were at stake, now challenged Patrick to a trial in the open. "Let us do wonders," he said, "in this great plain before all the multitude." Patrick accepted the challenge, but asked: "What do you propose to do?" "Let us bring snow upon the ground," said the Magus. "I like not," said Patrick, "to do anything contrary to the will of God." "Well," said the Magus, "I will bring the snow in sight of you all;" and by his magical incantations he covered the earth with snow to the depth of their girdles in the presence of all. Then said Patrick, "Lo! we see the snow—remove it now." Whereupon the Magus replied, "I cannot remove it until to-morrow." "Then," said Patrick, "you are powerful for evil, but not for good; not so with me." So stretching forth his hands, and blessing all the plain, the snow at once disappeared, without rain, or cloud, or wind. It came as a magical delusion, and like a delusion it vanished, whereupon the crowds who witnessed it marvelled much.

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<sup>1</sup>Erc, the Brehon, rose up to do honour to the Saint at Slane; at Tara it was the Poet and his pupil, Fiacc.

Next the Magus, invoking his gods or demons, brought very dense darkness over the face of the whole land, as his associates did later on over Magh Ai; and all the beholders were filled with amazement. Then said Patrick: "Drive away the darkness;" but he could not until the following day. Whereupon Patrick betook himself to prayer and blessed the plain, when, lo! all the darkness vanished, and the sun once more shone out in his meridian splendour. Upon this, all the folk cried out with a loud voice, and gave glory to Patrick's God.

Now, all these things left the victory still somewhat doubtful; so Laeghaire said: "Cast your books into the water"—doubtless that very stream which still flows from the northern flank of Tara—"and he whose books come forth uninjured by the stream, we shall adore." Patrick said: "So be it." But the Magus said: "No, he hath water for a god," alluding to the Baptism administered and preached by Patrick. "Then," said the King, "let the trial be by fire," and Patrick said: "I am ready." But the Magus again said, "No. He hath fire for his god on alternate years—one year water, the next fire." "Then," said Patrick, "let the trial take place this way: You and one of my youths along with you shall go into separate parts of a house, closed and locked on the outside. My garment shall cover you, and yours shall be given to him, and then let both the buildings be set on fire at the same moment." This proposal was accepted by all present. A house of dry material was built, and also a house of green material. The Druid went into the latter with Patrick's cloak covering him, and Benignus went into the former with the Druid's cloak over him.

Then the doors were closed, and the houses were fired. Patrick at the same time began to pray, and lo! in a brief space the flames consumed the green wood and the Magus within it; but the dry wood around Benignus remained untouched by the flames, and he himself, too, remained unscathed, although the Druid's cloak around him was burnt to ashes,<sup>1</sup> whereas Patrick's cloak around the Druid was untouched.

It is strange that Laeghaire was once more enraged at the death of his false Druid, and sought again to slay Patrick, but God prevented him. No wonder that at

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<sup>1</sup>Whereupon Patrick said—'In hac hora consumpta est gentilitas Hibernie tota.' (It was quite true).—Tirechan.

Patrick's prayer God's anger descended on the impious King, and many of his people perished, and Patrick said to the King, whose help he wished to win: "except you now believe, you will quickly die, for God's anger will descend on your own head also." The King was then afraid, and all his people with him. He feared Patrick and Patrick's God, not without good reason; and, on the other hand, it would appear he feared the Druids, and clung, for honour sake, to the ancient national religion. Besides, an Irish king was not a despot. He dare not act in such a crisis without the consent of his nobles; so he gathered them together in the hall of assembly and said to them, "It is better for me to believe than to perish." They thought so, too; and thereupon, in accordance with the will of his chiefs, 'Laeghaire believed on that day, and turned to the Lord God, and many of his people believed with him.' What was more important still, by this act of submission to Patrick, insincere as it was, he set an example to his chiefs of submission, and at the same time gave Patrick not only permission to preach the Gospel, but also a guarantee for his personal safety—a matter of the greatest moment to the Saint. Still Patrick said to him, "because you have resisted my preaching, and given scandal to others, although your own reign will be long, none of your seed will be king after you"—a prophecy that was subsequently modified so far as the child then in the queen's womb was concerned—and he only was allowed to reign. So ended the mighty strife between Patrick and the Druids on Tara Hill.

The passage of the Tripartite explaining how it came to pass that one child of Laeghaire's was excepted from the curse is interesting. "Patrick said 'since thou hast believed in God, and done my will, length of days will be given thee in thy kingdom; in punishment, however, of thy disobedience some time ago, there will not be King or Crown Prince of thee'"—save Lugaid, adds the writer, the son of Laeghaire, because his mother besought Patrick not to curse the child lying in her womb. Then Patrick said—"till he opposes me (in preaching the Gospel) I will not curse him." Thereafter Lugaid took the realm and went to Achad Forchai. There he said, "is not yon the church of the cleric who declared that there would be neither King nor Crown Prince from Laeghaire?" Thereupon a fiery bolt was hurled from the skies against him, which killed him; and therefore the place is called Achad



Forchai<sup>1</sup>—the Field of the Lightning. With this significant statement ends the First Part of the Tripartite.

It cannot be denied that the foregoing account of the struggle of Patrick with the Druids of Tara is a very marvellous record; yet it is found in all the Lives of the Saint from the earliest to the latest, and without substantial variation. For most people it is too marvellous. Some writers who reject miracles altogether seem to think that they are proof of the later date of the documents in which they are found. But will any scholar say that this record, marvellous as it is, is more marvellous than similar records in the Life of Anthony, by St. Athanasius, or in the Life of Felix, by Paulinus of Nola, or in the Life of St. Martin, by his friend and contemporary, Sulpicius Severus? They were amongst the holiest men and the greatest scholars of the fourth century, and the Lives were all written before St. Patrick set his foot on Irish soil.

Again, who will venture to say that there was more need of miracles in the case of any of these saints than in the case of St. Patrick? All of them had a great work to do; but none of them had a greater work than Patrick in the conversion of Ireland; and if miracles be admitted in the one case there is no reason *a priori* why they should not be admitted in the other. In fact Patrick accomplished a greater work for God, so far as we can judge, than any of the three; and if we are prepared to accept miracles in the case of the former there is no reason why we should not accept them in the case of the latter also, especially in the account of this great struggle, which must have been known to the whole nation, and to which all the biographers of the Saint bear a unanimous testimony. The battle of the faith in Ireland was fought and won on the Hill of Tara on that Easter Sunday morning. If Patrick failed, he failed once for all. When he won he established the supremacy of his new spiritual kingdom over all the land of Erin. The victory was not yet complete, but the citadel was won.

There are many persons who will not admit the miraculous at all in the lives of the saints. Then we ask them—Do they admit the miracles of the Old Testament or of the New? If they do not we cannot argue with them here. But if they do why should they admit the

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<sup>1</sup> This place is said to be in the parish of Enniskeen, barony of Lower Kells, at the extreme north of the Co. Meath. See O'Hanlon, vol. iii., p. 565.

miracles of Moses before Pharaoh in Egypt, or the miracles of the Apostles recorded in the New Testament, and yet reject the miracles of a later date performed by the saints? It is true that those are recorded in the inspired Word of God, but our Saviour expressly told His Apostles that they could do what He did, and that they would even do greater things than He did, if only they had faith, and, we may assume, a great occasion to make it operative. Surely Patrick had faith, and a high purpose, and a great occasion; and those who accept the New Testament as inspired, and believe in our Lord's Word, must admit that when preaching at the peril of his life to the heathen for the salvation of a whole nation, he had a great occasion; so that if ever the Gospel promise was to be fulfilled, we might naturally expect its fulfilment at that momentous crisis of a nation's history.

#### IV.—PATRICK IN MEATH.

St. Patrick, by his victory over the Druids at Tara and his alliance with the King, had gained two great advantages. He was now free to preach the Gospel, not only in Meath, but throughout Ireland generally, and Laeghaire also pledged his royal word to secure his personal safety, which, so far as we can judge, he faithfully kept. He was at heart a stern old pagan, and though he yielded 'obedience and submission' to Patrick, he would not believe 'from his heart' and become a true Christian. "Niall," he said, "my father, when he heard the Druids' prophecy regarding the coming of the faith, enjoined me not to believe, but that I should live a pagan and should be buried in the topmost part of Tara like warlike men;" for it was a not unfrequent custom of the heathen warriors to be buried standing up and clothed in their armour with their face to the foe. And so it came to pass. Laeghaire was buried, like his sires, in the ridge of his own royal rath, standing up, with sword and spear, facing the men of Leinster, whom he hated, until the day of doom. One cannot but feel some admiration for the stern old warrior, 'whose honour rooted in dishonour stood.' He would not accept the new faith; he would keep the faith he pledged to his great father Niall; and he would also keep his word to Patrick. He said in effect: 'I cannot believe without breaking my word and forgiving the Leinster men, and I am not prepared to do either.' Yet he knelt to Patrick, we are told, and believed in God, 'but not with a pure

heart.' It was merely an external profession of faith; still his subjects believed, and on that day, we are told, many thousands of them accepted the new faith and were baptised. Laeghaire, too, was allowed to retain his throne because of his submission; but in punishment of his unbelief no King or Crown Prince of his seed, save only Lugaid his son, was destined thereafter to rule over Royal Tara.

Before giving an account of Patrick's preaching in Meath, it may be useful to say a few words of the Royal Province.

The history of Tara itself goes back to immemorial time. We find it mentioned by the Bards as a royal residence under all the High Kings of Erin. Slainge, the first king of the Firbolgs, is said to have built his royal rath on the 'hill of Temur,' as it is called in Irish, and from his time onward, under the kings of the Firbolg, De Danaan, and Milesian race, it continued to be a royal residence. To Ollamh Fodla is attributed the establishment of the Feis of Tara, but his reign only glimmers through the shadowy cloudland of bardic tradition. When we come, however, to the second century of the Christian Era we find ourselves on firmer ground. Tuathal Teachtmair reigned for thirty years (130-160), and must be regarded as the real founder of Tara. When he came to the throne of Erin he convoked a Feis, or National Assembly, of his nobles and chiefs on the Royal Hill, and bound them, under a most solemn oath, by all the gods and elements, to maintain him and his posterity against all rivals of any other race in the supreme sovereignty of the kingdom at Tara, 'so long as Erin was surrounded by the sea.' Then to maintain the dignity and power of the King of Tara he took a portion from each of the four provincial kings to form a fifth province, of which Tara was made the capital, and the chief stronghold of the High Kings of his race. From Munster he took Tlachtga, the rich territory south of the Hill of Ward, near Athboy, which was then the northern limit of the Munster kingdom. From Connaught he took the famous Hill of Uisneach and all the territory westward to the Shannon. From Ulster he took Tailteann, with the fertile plains north of the Boyne and Blackwater to the very roots of the Ulster hills; and from Leinster he took the great Bregian Plain—Magh Breagh—between the Boyne and the Liffey—of which Tara itself was the capital and stronghold.

In this way the great principality of Meath was

formed, which extended from the Shannon to the sea, and from Slieve Bloom to Dundalk, or, at least, to the Fane River, beyond the town of Louth.<sup>1</sup>

In later times this great principality was divided into eleven sub-kingdoms, each of considerable extent, as set forth in the Book of Rights, which was originally composed by Benignus, the disciple of St. Patrick. We shall have occasion to refer to several of these sub-kingdoms in recording the missionary journeys of our Saint.

Tara, being the capital of the kingdom, was in direct communication with all the provincial kingdoms. Five great roads led from Tara to all parts of Ireland; and it may be said that they followed to some extent the direction of the great railway lines which now radiate from Dublin throughout the country. We shall find, as might be expected, that Patrick, who had a numerous retinue, followed in his missionary journeys the line of these roads, diverting from them, however, as occasion required.

On entering a new territory or sub-kingdom, Patrick always went, if he could, straight to the residence of the king or chief, to secure his protection, and, if possible, his conversion. If the chief and his friends accepted the faith, and received baptism, there would be little difficulty in dealing with the tribesmen. Frequently, however, some members of the Royal family would readily accept the faith; while others remained hostile and intractable. In dealing with those refractory chiefs Patrick showed at once great courage and great prudence. Sometimes, as he tells us, he even made presents to them and to their sons, in order to win their good-will for the propagation of the Gospel.

His first request was always for permission to build a church, which was seldom refused, for the refusal was nearly always visibly punished by some Divine chastisement.

In founding his churches it was Patrick's custom, as a rule, to build them near the dun or rath of the chief, in order that the clergy might thus be protected from the hostility of marauders or other foes; and frequently the chief gave one of his own duns for the purpose. These considerations will help to guide us in trying to trace out

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<sup>1</sup> This ancient kingdom of Meath is still represented by the vast modern diocese of Meath, extending from the Shannon to the sea, and from the roots of Slieve Bloom to the Collon Hills.

the missionary journeys of the Saint, not only in Meath, but throughout the country generally. We must remember, too, that on these journeys the Saint was attended by a number of clerics—bishops, priests, and others of inferior grade—who had come with him from abroad, or afterwards joined him when his success was known to be assured. He also took with him several young clerics like Guasacht and Benignus, whom he wished to be trained up for the service of the Church under his own guidance. Similar itinerant schools of bards and brehons were quite usual in Erin; and, in truth, Patrick had for a time no resource except to follow their example.

When the strife with the Druids was over on that memorable Easter Sunday, the 2nd of April, A.D. 433, according to Lanigan, Patrick heard of the arrival of the boat which he had left at the mouth of the Boyne, under care of Lomman, with instructions 'to row against the stream.' It had come to the Ford of Trim, and, so far as we can judge, the Apostle set out on Easter Sunday in the afternoon to meet his nephew at the hospitable home of the kindly British matron who had received Lomman with so warm a welcome. The story, as given in the Tripartite, is full of interest, and bears intrinsic evidence of its own authenticity<sup>1</sup>—it never could have been invented.

It would appear that Lomman had worked his curragh against the stream up to the ford of Trim—Ath Truim—late in the evening, and remained there during the night. At dawn of day, Fortchern, son of Fedilmid, going down to the river, found Lomman 'with his Gospel before him'—perhaps saying Mass. Now, it was a strange sight, to see the British cleric with his companions thus engaged in Divine worship at dawn of day by the fords of Trim. It would seem Fortchern waited a little, and then made inquiry as to the strangers' purpose. They told him in few and simple words; and we are told that the doctrine he heard was to him a marvel. But he received the Good Tidings in a spirit of faith; and, believing, was baptised by Lomman in the 'open well' close at hand. It is, we believe, there still; and reveals one of those unconscious touches which furnish the most striking evidence of the authenticity of the story. These events occupied some

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<sup>1</sup> O'Hanlon throws doubt on the existence of Lomman at this early date; but he was thinking of another Lomman of Lough Gill, who flourished about 100 years afterwards.

time, possibly some hours; until at length the mother of Fortchern, wondering what kept him away so long from home, came down herself from the dun to the river to ascertain the cause of the delay. And there she found her son still listening to the teaching of Lomman; and she marvelled greatly to hear him speak in her own British tongue, 'for she herself was of the Britons,' and was rejoiced to see her countrymen, to whom she gave most cordial greeting. Like her son, she believed, and was doubtless baptised. and then, returning home, she told her husband all that had taken place. Thereupon he, too, was rejoiced at the arrival of the clerics from Britain, because his own mother had been the daughter of a British king, and bore the beautiful name of *Scoth Noe*—the *Fresh Flower*. Coming down to the bank of the *Boyne*, he saluted the strangers in their own British tongue, and then made full enquiry about Lomman's family, and the new religion which he preached. The other replied—'I am Lomman, a Briton and a Christian, a disciple of Patrick, the Bishop, who has been sent by the Lord to baptise and convert the Irish people to the faith of Christ, who also sent me in accordance with God's will.'

Thereupon Fedilmid and all his family believed, and in the first fervour of his young faith he offered *Ath-Truim* to God and to Patrick, and to Lomman, and to his own son Fortchern, for ever.

#### V.—PATRICK VISITS TRIM.

Now Patrick, hearing these things at Tara on Easter Day, went down to Trim to the hospitable home of Fedilmid, where he found Lomman and his companions, with their kindly host and hostess of his own British race. He accepted Fedilmid's grant to God with gratitude, and founded a church at Trim, in the twenty-fifth year before Armagh was founded, which gives us 457 as the date of the foundation of the primatial city.<sup>1</sup>

This narrative, given both in the Tripartite and the Book of Armagh, is very suggestive. It shows us that the church of Trim was the first erected in Meath, and that it was endowed by a son of King Laeghaire himself. It shows also that there was much social intercourse between

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<sup>1</sup> A.D. 457 is obviously the 25th year after 433, counting both the extremes.

Meath and Britain, for we find that King Laeghaire had a British wife, and that her son Fedilmid had another British wife, and that Patrick's nephew Lomman was also a Briton, and conversed familiarly with that lady in her own British tongue. We have also this Prince Fedilmid making a royal gift of his own stead to Patrick and to God, migrating himself to another place beyond the river.<sup>1</sup>

Now Lomman, who ruled the church of Trim, died young, and we are told that when his death drew nigh he sent Fortchern, 'his foster son,' and destined successor in the See of Trim, to have speech of his (Lomman's) brother, Broccaid, in Immluich Ech in Connaught—that he might, so far as we can judge, explain to his brother his own dying wishes, for his purpose was to bequeath his church 'to Patrick and to Fortchern.' But Fortchern refused his foster-father's inheritance, and entrusted it to God and to Patrick, whereupon Lomman said :—"Thou shalt not receive my blessing unless thou receivest the abbacy of my church." Then he consented ; but he only kept it for three days, when he resigned it to Cathlaid the Pilgrim. Wisely, too, he acted, for Fortchern feared that his acceptance of what his father had given to God might prove an evil example in favour of that hereditary succession in ecclesiastical benefices which afterwards wrought widespread ruin in many of the churches of Erin.

Of the other churches which Patrick founded in eastern Bregia we know little or nothing. There is a brief list of them in the Book of Armagh, but it is not easy to identify the localities. The first is the church 'in Culmine,' which perhaps may refer to the Hill of Slane, on which Patrick no doubt founded a church. The second is the 'Ecclesia Cerne,' in which Erc, who was carried off in the great plague (of 550?) is buried. It may be Kilcarne, to the south-east of Navan. Another was founded—in Cacuminibus Aisse—on the summit of Asse. It has not, we believe, been identified. A fourth was in Blaitiniu, which Reeves correctly identifies with Blaitine, now Platin, in the parish of Duleek. The fifth is said to be in Columbus, in which Patrick ordained the holy Bishop Eugene. The sixth is called the Church of Mac Laffy—filii Laithpli. Another was in Bridam—Collis Bovis—in which was the holy Dulcis, brother of Carthacus. The eighth was 'Super

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<sup>1</sup> Migravit autem Fedilimid trans annem Boindeo, et mansit in Cluain Lagen.

Argetbor,' in which was the Bishop Ciannan, whom Patrick ordained on his first Easter festival in Ferta-fer-Feice—that is in Slane. This shows that Argetbor was the old name of Duleek. It is curious there is no reference to the foundation of the church of Dunshaughlin, over which Patrick placed his own beloved nephew, Sechnall, whom he destined to be his successor in Armagh. Yet it was certainly one of the earliest churches founded in Bregia, probably during the summer of 433. We should be very glad if we could get further particulars about the ancient churches of Bregia from any of the clergy or antiquaries of the district.

Patrick, in his missionary progress, now turned westward from Tara, and on Easter Monday—*prima feria*—as it is called in the *Tripartite*, that is, the first week-day of the Easter week, he came to Tailteann, where just then a royal assembly was being held,<sup>1</sup> and there he met Cairbre, son of Niall. Cairbre, like his brother Laeghaire, was a pagan, and, like Laeghaire, he had, doubtless, pledged his word to his great sire that he would live and die as his fathers, and have nothing to do with the new doctrines of the Tailcend from over the sea. But he was worse than Laeghaire, for apparently, even after the peace of Tara, he desired to slay Patrick, and not finding an opportunity of so doing, he scourged Patrick's servants into the river at Tailteann, because, it seems, they would not inform against their master, and tell the tyrant where he was. Wherefore Patrick called him God's foe; and foretold that his seed should serve the seed of his brother, "and of thy seed," he added, "there never shall be a king." Moreover, that river Sele, the modern Blackwater, which joins the Boyne at Navan, was also cursed with the doom of sterility. 'There will never be salmon in that river owing to Patrick's curse,'<sup>2</sup> says the *Tripartite*, and we believe if they are

<sup>1</sup> The fair of Tailteann continued to be celebrated by the Hy-Niall princes long after Patrick's time. So late as 810 it was banned or interdicted by the family of Tamlacht, because the Hy-Niall had violated their Termon, but when satisfaction was made the interdict was withdrawn.—*Annals of Ulster*.

<sup>2</sup> So says the *Tripartite*. 'There will not be large salmon in it,' says the author of the *Fourth Life*. If you wonder why, he adds, the Saint cursed the innocent river, you must first wonder why David cursed the mountains of Gilboe, so that neither snow nor rain fell upon them. We may add that the Saints said many things not by way of cursing but by way of prophesying. God justly punishes sinners in the creatures that serve them, as he punished the wicked Cairbre here for opposing the Gospel by making the river that served him barren of fish at the prayer of Patrick.



there still, they are very few. When the fish come to Navan they prefer the Boyne to the Blackwater, and go up the stream to the south rather than take the accursed waterway of Cairbre to the west.

Of this Cairbre we shall hear more hereafter. He was one of the eight sons of Niall the Great, four of whom permanently settled in Meath, and four in the north-west of Ireland, in a great territory which they had during the lifetime of their father acquired by the sword. The four who finally settled in Meath and became the ancestors of the Southern Hy Neill, were Laeghaire, Conall Cremthainn, Fiacha, and Maine. The four sons who settled in the North<sup>1</sup> were Conall Gulban, 'chief of the sons of Niall,' Cairbre, Eoghan, and Enna. But some of these bold warriors retained their estates in Meath after their conquests in the North, and so we find Cairbre at Telltown, where, on this occasion, he probably presided at the great fair, but he certainly had a territory in Northern Teffia, which has long borne his name, as well as in Carbury of Drumcliff, a beautiful and famous land extending from the Owen More River at Ballysodare to the Erne at Ballyshannon. It was this Cairbre Mac Neill who now opposed St. Patrick at Telltown on the Blackwater.

It is evident from the Book of Armagh that the great gathering at Tara of the King's satraps—the leaders, princes, and nobles of Erin—on Easter Sunday eve, was not the triennial Feis of Tara, which was a political assembly of the chiefs of the nation, but a 'religious assembly,' or, as the writer calls it, 'an idolatrous assembly,' under the direction of the Druids, convened for the purpose of celebrating some great religious festival. Some writers think it was the birthday celebration of Laeghaire himself, but the stringent ordinance forbidding the kindling of any fire before it was lighted in Tara, rather suggests a religious festival in connection with the Bel-tine, or May-day festival in honour of the sun-god. May-day, it is true, had not yet come, but this might have been a preliminary celebration in connection with the same solemnity, of which the games

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<sup>1</sup> Conall Gulban made war on the men of the North-west, to punish them for slaying his tutor, Fiacha. He drove them out of their territories, with the help of his brothers, and then shared the conquered lands with them as a reward for the assistance they had rendered him. In this way Cairbre got the barony that bears his name in North Sligo, Eoghan got Inishowen, Enna got the Tir-Enna, and Conall himself Tir-Hugh, as far as Barnesmore. See Flann's poem.

at Telltown also formed a part, and, doubtless, the chiefs and nobles of Tara went from the Royal Hill to take their own share in the great celebration on the banks of the river at Telltown.

#### VI.—PATRICK AT TAILTEANN.

Tailteann or Telltown was from immemorial ages the great marriage mart of Erin, not an assembly for political or religious purposes, but for amusement. The marriage fair was celebrated about the 1st of August, or, more correctly, on the last Sunday of Summer, and traces of its existence are still to be found in connection with Garland Sunday. But this meeting at Telltown was not the regular annual gathering, but a special meeting in connection, no doubt, with the great gathering of the princes on Tara Hill a few days before. Telltown, on the left bank of the Blackwater, is about nine miles to the north-west of Tara, so there would be no difficulty in the chiefs and warriors of Tara making their way to the great games on the banks of the Blackwater. On this occasion we are told that Patrick blessed the green or place of assembly at Telltown, 'so that no corpse will ever be carried away from it.' The blessing must have been a strong one, for although the law forbade all riots at such assemblies, it was not always observed by the passionate warriors of Erin.

Patrick never missed an opportunity of doing his Master's work, and therefore went to the Telltown meeting on that Easter Monday, for he knew he would thus have an opportunity of meeting the men and maids of Erin in great numbers; and he went there, too, which was very important, under the safe conduct of the King of Tara.

No doubt it was that safe conduct saved his life. We have already seen how the wicked Cairbre received Patrick, and how he treated his servants and followers, and, doubtless, he would have slain the Saint if he dared. But the journey was not without happy results. Patrick was, it would appear, driven away from Telltown by Cairbre, but turning aside he went to visit Conall, son of Niall, 'who dwelt at the place wherein stands Donaghpatrick to-day.' Unlike the graceless Cairbre, Conall received the saint 'with great joy,' and Patrick baptised him, 'and confirmed his throne for ever.' Moreover, Patrick said, "Thy brothers' seed shall serve thy seed

for ever, thee and thy sons, and thy sons' sons, so that it may be an enduring blessing for my faithful children." And so, we may add, it came to pass, for most of the kings of Tara in after times were sprung from this Prince Conall; and of Cairbre there was only one, namely, Tuathal Maelgarbh, who is said to have been a grandson of Cairbre, and was slain in A.D. 543 by Diarmaid Mac Cerbhaill, a grandson of this Conall Cremthainn. Yet Cairbre was, next to his brother Conall Gulban, amongst the bravest of the sons of Niall the Great. He gained several battles over the Leinstermen, especially the two great battles of Granard in 485 and in 494; and another so late as 500 at Magh Ailbhe, in the County Kildare.<sup>1</sup> In the former the Leinstermen were the aggressors, but Cairbre drove them back to Kildare, and defeated them at home like a true son of the Great Niall. We shall hear of him again on the banks of the Erne, and find him there, too, acting in the same bad spirit as he did on the banks of the Blackwater.

Now, Prince Conall received Patrick with joy after Cairbre's rude repulse, and gave him the place of a church—the second in Meath—near his own fort, which was called Raith Airthir, a name still surviving in Orristown. 'He measured out the site of a church for God and for Patrick with sixty feet of his own feet'—that is, it was sixty feet long, but the breadth is not specified. It was, however, according to that scale of length, about 26 feet broad;<sup>2</sup> and Patrick foretold that only one slaughter should profane the holy ground, which took place at a much later date, and is recorded in the *Tripartite*.<sup>3</sup> This church was founded during Easter week, and was probably dedicated for Divine worship on the following Sunday. Hence, like so many other churches founded by the Saint, it came to be called *Domnach Patraic* (*Donaghpatrick*), and it still retains the name, and gives title to a parish, about three miles north-west of Navan, on the left bank of Blackwater. Patrick left his flag-stone there, too—that is, a portable altar containing relics of the saints—with some of his people to attend to the religious services of the church; and he said,

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of Ulster*.

<sup>2</sup> This appears to have been the normal scale of the larger churches in the time of St. Patrick, 60 × 26 feet.

<sup>3</sup> The homicide referred to took place at a much later date. The reference is probably a later insertion in the text of the *Tripartite*. The two sons of Cerball slew the son of Bressal in the church on a Sunday.

“Whoever shall profane this church, his life and his realm shall be soon cut off.” And that prediction was afterwards verified in the case of Cinaed, son of Irgalach, King of Tara, who slew a man that had fled for sanctuary to the church. Thereupon drops of blood began to flow from Patrick's altar-stone, until reparation was partially made by bestowing on the church three townlands as an eric. Final reparation was not, however, made until the prediction was fulfilled, and Cinaed himself was slain in battle. Donaghpatrick continued to be an important religious centre for many centuries, although it was more than once plundered by the Danes. The ancient building has, we believe, entirely disappeared; but the old churchyard is still a favourite burying place, and the ashes of many generations of holy men rest in peace beneath its sacred sod.

When this Easter week was over, Patrick went further up the river on the Monday after Low Sunday—the close of the Paschal octave—as far as Ath-da-laarg, the Ford of the Two Forks, where Kells was afterwards founded by Columcille. And there he founded a church, in which he left three brothers and their sister, who were of his household, and seem to have accompanied him from Britain—that is, Cathaceus, Cathurus, Catneus, and their sister was Catnea, a holy virgin of great meekness, who used to milk the wild hinds, ‘for so,’ says Tirechan, ‘we have heard the elders say.’ Patrick also founded another church in the same neighbourhood, called Drum Corcortri, and he left therein Diarmaid, son of Restitutus the Lombard; and hence, it would appear, a nephew of his own. The connection will be more fully discussed hereafter. The old church at the Two Forks was on the river in the modern Headford demesne; Columcille's later and more famous foundation was a little to the west, at the modern town of Kells.<sup>1</sup>

It was on this same journey, probably when returning to Tara, that Patrick baptised the tribe known as the Luigne, and founded for them the great church of Domnach Mor Maige Echnach, still called Donaghmore, a little to the north of Navan. The tribe-name of the Luigne is still retained in that of the modern barony of Lune; but it is

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<sup>1</sup>Bishop MacCainne, of Ath-da-Laarg, beside Kells, is commemorated in the *Mar. of Donegal* on the 1st December. Kells was, for many centuries, an episcopal See. Bishop Diarmaid is commemorated on December 12th.

clear from the narrative that in the time of St. Patrick the territory included at least some part of the barony of Lower Navan, in which the church and parish of Donaghmore are situated. The ancient celebrity of the church is still shown by the beautiful round tower built near it, to protect its clerics and its treasures during the raids of the Danes. All these events took place, it would seem, in what was afterwards known as the sub-kingdom of Laeghaire, the mensal lands of the monarch extending from Trim to Tlachtga, near Athboy, and from Navan to Kells, by the Blackwater. It is, perhaps, the most fertile and beautiful part of the Co. Meath, and the very centre of the royal principality.

Patrick placed Presbyter Cassan in Donaghmore; Tirechan puts his name in the list of 'Patrick's Franks,' who, it would appear, accompanied the Saint from Gaul to aid him in preaching the Gospel to the Gael. The Tripartite says he was one of six young clerics, with their books in their girdles, whom Patrick met on his journey either to or from Rome, to which city, it would appear, they were going on their pilgrimage.

#### VII.—FURTHER MISSIONARY JOURNEYS IN MEATH.

After placing Cassan in Donaghmore, Patrick returned to Laeghaire at Tara, perhaps to seek his advice as to his next move from that centre, for there was, as we have seen, established a kind of friendly agreement between them, and Patrick did not wish to take any important step without the sanction of the High King. The result seems to have been that Patrick set out on another missionary journey, this time taking the great road to the west that led by Delvin and Mullingar to Longford, somewhat on the line of the Midland Great Western Railway. This road was called Slighe Asail, from Asal, who is said to have 'discovered' it; that is, traced it out and cleared it in the reign of Conn, the Hundred Fighter. This hero seems to have given his name to the Plain of Asal, which was one of the sub-kingdoms of Meath, and it is still retained in the name of the barony around Mullingar—Moyashal. Delvin, another of the sub-kingdoms, is called Delvin-Asail in the Tripartite, to distinguish it from other territories of the same name; that is, Delvin of the Plain of Asal. From Tara by Trim, then, St. Patrick went to Delvin, where he seems to have remained some time and

founded several churches in the neighbourhood, in which he placed some of the clergy of his household. Five are specially referred to as clerics whom Patrick met on their pilgrimage abroad, and, as they had no means of carrying their books except in their girdles, he gave them a hide of seal-skin or cow-skin to make wallets for their books. When they had finished their pilgrimage and education they returned to Ireland, and joined Patrick's household or travelling College of Clerics. No doubt he was glad to get them, and he appears to have located them all in churches in the kingdom of Delvin, which was much larger than the modern barony of that name, and included at least a part of the north-west of the Co. Meath.

Now these are the six:—Presbyter Lugach in Cell Airthir, perhaps Kilskeer; Presbyter Columb in Cluain Ernain, which is, no doubt, Clonarney, north of Delvin; Meldan in Cluain Crema, which seems to be the modern Loughcrew, an easy substitution for Cloncrew; Lugaid, son of Erc, in Fordrinan, perhaps the place now called Fordstown, north of Athboy; and Presbyter Cassan, whom, as we have seen, he placed at Donaghmore, near Navan. 'These five saints were of Patrick's household in Delvin-Asail,' says the Tripartite, and as they were pilgrims together he placed them near each other. The sixth was old Ciaran of Saigir, who had settled, by Patrick's advice, far away to the south at Seir Ciaran by the roots of Slieve Bloom, for he was a Munster man. In the same connection we find it stated that as Patrick was setting out in his chariot from the hill (perhaps of Tara) a certain woman, with her son, met him. "For God's sake," she said, "O priest, bless my son; his father is very sick." Patrick took the boy, and making the sign of the cross over his mouth, delivered him to Cassan of Donaghmore to be instructed. 'It is said he read the Psalms in twelve days'; that is, learned to read them. 'That boy is (now) Lonan, son of Senach, who is in Caill Mallech,' now Killulagh, west of Delvin, and 'Rigell<sup>1</sup> is his mother.'<sup>2</sup>

At the same time Patrick placed Do Lue, of Croibech, and Lugaid, son of Ængus Mac Natfrach, who were of his household, in Druiminesclaind, in Delvin. Lue's 'place' seems to be the parish of Killua, in the north-east angle of

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Regrella, in the same parish, takes its name from her.

<sup>2</sup> The community of Clonmacnoise afterwards got it in exchange for Cell Lothan in Breagh, and Cluain Alad Deirg in the west.

the county Westmeath, and a little east of Delvin. So that all these churches appear to have been founded whilst Patrick was at Delvin, and they were all, so far as we can judge, situated in the ancient kingdom of Delvin.

From Delvin, it appears, that Patrick went south-west into the ancient sub-kingdom of Feara Tulach, that is the 'men of the hills,' a name still extant in the barony of Fartullagh, south of Mullingar. It appears to have included the whole of the beautiful hills and swelling uplands from Killucan to Lough Ennell, and southwards as far as Tyrrellspass. These are the 'men of the east of Meath,'<sup>1</sup> whom Patrick baptised, as the Tripartite tells us, in Tech Laisrenn, in the South. 'His (Patrick's) Well is in front of the church,' and he left two of his people there—the virgin Bice, and Lugaid; and 'Bice's tomb stands to the north of the Well.' Midhe, or Meath, is here distinguished from Bregia, or Mag-Bregh, which certainly extended as far west as the Boyne. In fact, at this point, the boundary between Meath and Bregia appears to correspond with the existing boundary between West and East Meath. So that the description of the Tripartite is perfectly accurate. But, where is Teach Laisrenn, which is thus noted with a few graphic touches? It must have been somewhere near Mullingar, for it is added that Moluc, a pilgrim of the Britons, and one of Patrick's household, was placed by him at Imlliuch Sescainn, to the south of Tech Laisrenn, on the shore of Loch Aininne, or Lough Ennell, as it is now called. This would seem to imply that both churches were near Lough Ennell. It is not unlikely they were on the western shore near the place now called Dysart, that is the desert, or pilgrims' abode, where there was, certainly, an old church and graveyard, and what is still a bountiful spring of clearest water.

Patrick thence went northward into Tir-Asail, and founded there a church for the men of Asail, north of Mullingar, at the place called Temair-Singite, where he baptised them, and it is noted 'that on the road between Raith Suibne and Cluain Fota Ainmirech,' there was a hawthorn-brake, but 'he who breaks anything therein will not have luck in his doings. Domnach is its name.' As this was the name usually given to the churches founded by St. Patrick, perhaps the place referred to is the modern parish of Kilpatrick. This place was nearly on his way to

<sup>1</sup> Midh is different from Bregia; the latter included nearly all the modern county Meath, whereas Midh meant rather Westmeath.

the spot where we next find him at Ath Maigne,<sup>1</sup> in Asal. There can be no doubt that this refers to the modern parish of Moyne, west of Castlepollard, in which there was a famous ford over the river Inny, about two miles north of the point where it enters Lough Derravaragh. It was one of the *gesa*, or things forbidden to the King of Tara, to leave the track of his army across Ath Maigne of the bright salmon on the Tuesday after Samhain, that is, the Tuesday after November Day.

At Ath Maigne, Patrick founded the church which still gives name to the parish, and close to the south of it he set up one of his household called Mac Dicholl. The old church of Moyne was at the cross roads of Coole, and a little to the south, just at the north-eastern angle of the lake, there was another ancient church called Kiltoom, perhaps the place where Dicholl's son was buried. The Magh Asal of the Tripartite appears to have been identical with Magh Locha of the Book of Rights, a very appropriate name for that beautiful 'lake-land,' still famed, as it was in ancient times, for the salmon-trout that abound in all its pleasant waters. The king of the lake country at that time was a certain Brenain, who is described as brother of Fergus, son of Eochy Moyvane, and therefore an uncle of King Laeghaire. Fergus died during his father's lifetime, and the reference to him at all seems to imply that his younger brother Brenain inherited his kingdom round the lake. He resisted Patrick when founding his church at Ath Maigne. Patrick inscribed with his crozier a cross in the flag-stone, 'and he cut the stone as if it were soft clay.' "If I were not patient with thee," saith Patrick, "the might of God's power would cleave thee as my crozier has cleft the stone." But there was a penalty, though a less one, inflicted for his opposition to the Gospel. Patrick 'cursed him,' that is, said that he would have neither son nor successor in his kingdom, and so it came to pass. When Brenain's wife heard Patrick pronouncing their doom, "For God's sake, O Patrick," she said, "let not thy curse fall on me." "It shall not visit thee," he said in reply, "nor shall it touch the child that is in thy womb." Still of him there is no successor, and so Brenain's race have passed out of history, as the cloud passes out of the sky, leaving no trace behind.

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<sup>1</sup> There was another Athmoyne, now called Lismoyne, in the parish of Arnurchu, which may be the place here referred to (see *Annals of Clon*, p. 203). It is in the barony of Moycashel = Magh Asail.



## VIII.—PATRICK AT UISNEACH.

As we have just seen, St. Patrick on his second missionary journey from Tara went first due west to Delvin, where he founded many churches. Thence he proceeded south-west towards Lough Ennel, south of Mullingar, where he baptised the men of that neighbourhood, but we are told nothing of their rulers. Thence, going north-east of the lakes, he founded several churches, until he came to the northern limits of the royal territories at Ath Maigne. He did not then cross the ford on the Inny, but returned to Tara, doubtless revisiting on his way the first churches which he had founded on the banks of the Blackwater.

It is probable that he spent the whole summer of the year A.D. 433 in founding these churches around Tara towards the west, and that he remained during the winter months perhaps with his nephew, St. Lomman of Trim, and the kindly British lady and her children who had received the missionaries so hospitably on their first arrival at her doors. No doubt there was plenty of work to do in his immediate neighbourhood, even during the short winter days, and Patrick was not the man to make delay in doing the work of God.

With the spring—the early spring—of the year 434 he once more set out from Tara, and again journeyed westward, visiting his recently founded churches till he came to Uisneach.

After Tara Uisneach was the most famous of the old historic hills of Erin. It was at first called—and it deserved the name—Caen-druim, ‘the Beautiful Hill.’ Originally it belonged to Connaught, of which it formed the eastern outpost,<sup>1</sup> but as we all have already seen it was made part of Meath by Tuathal Teachtmhar, in the second century of the Christian Era.

From immemorial ages it had been the great meeting place of all the chiefs and tribes of Erin, who celebrated religious games<sup>2</sup> there, as men did in ancient Greece, at

<sup>1</sup> It would appear that before the time of Tuathal all the provinces met on a rock on the summit of Uisneach, called Aill-na-Miren, the Stone of the Divisions, which is still to be seen on the summit of the hill, a grand memorial of the far-distant past.

<sup>2</sup> Keating tells us that these games were of a religious character, and were celebrated in honour of Eól, the sun-god. Two great fires were lit in honour of the god, and the cattle were driven between them to protect them from diseases and other evil influences.—Joyce’s *Social History*, vol. I., p. 291.

least once every seven years. For this purpose it was admirably suited, for it was the very centre of the kingdom, extremely fertile, and well supplied not only with grass and water, but also with sheltered valleys on its wide-spreading flanks, where all the hosts of Erin might find shelter and abundant food for their sheep and cattle. We have walked to its summit and closely observed all its natural features. The rich grass, knee deep, on which the bullocks grow fat for the English market, is very remarkable on a hill reaching the height of over 600 feet. Then it has a great area, so that there are on its slopes four or five plateaux with deep sheltered valleys, where the flocks could be penned, and the provincial kings with their followers might find ample accommodation, yet perfectly distinct and well marked off from the camping ground of their neighbours, all around the hill. This was most important, for by that means the risk of a collision between the rival chiefs was diminished. From its summit there is a prospect of far-reaching grandeur, for the eye can range over the whole centre of Ireland from the Shannon to the Dublin Mountains, except at one point where Rosemount hill breaks the distant view for a little space on the west. On the summit of the hill, between two long ridges, there is a wide depression containing a small lake and a perennial fountain. This lake at different points would be accessible to all the hosts of Erin without confusion, so that from every point of view the hill was, without doubt, the most convenient in all Ireland to be a meeting place for the tribes of Erin. It is a lonely place now, fertile and well watered as of yore; but the cattle have taken the place of men, and where all the sons of the Gael were wont to assemble to celebrate their national games for a fortnight or three weeks in ancient days, one might now wander for a long summer's day and not meet a living soul to break the silence of the great lone wide-spreading hill. All that remains of the past is the mighty Rock of the Mearings.

It is said by Keating that King Tuathal erected a palace on the summit of the hill for his own temporary residence; but it appears also that the right was reserved to the King of Connaught of getting a horse and harness from each of the great chiefs who came to celebrate the games. The site of this palace or dun can still be traced on the crown of the hill; and not far off, beside the lake, are the remains of the church which Patrick founded there, for the Tripartite

expressly says that he founded there a cloister or monastic church. No doubt, the palace on the hill belonged to Laeghaire himself, and it was in virtue of his permission, as owner-in-chief, that Patrick founded his church on its summit.

But two of his brothers, sons of Niall the Great, who dwelt at or near Uisneach, 'came against Patrick,' that is, opposed him in building the church and preaching to his converts. Their names were Fiacha and Enda, and very rudely they opposed Patrick, driving him and his 'family' away from the famous hill. Then Patrick, as was his custom, denounced God's vengeance against the enemies of the Gospel. "A curse," he said—"be on the stones of Uisneach," interposed Sechnall, his nephew, who was standing by, and wished to divert the curse of Patrick from the men to the stones. "Be it so, then," said Patrick; and so it was fulfilled. The crumbling, impure limestone of Uisneach became good for nothing—"not even washing stones<sup>1</sup> are made of them," adds the author of the *Tripartite*.

But there was a great difference between the two brothers. Fiacha persisted in his opposition, and refused to be baptised, although it seems Patrick paid him a visit at his own fort at Carn Fiachach, which is close to Uisneach. Not so Enda; he received baptism, and in a spirit of great self-denial he offered to Patrick, for God's service, his infant son, Cormac, who had been born the night before; and with the child, as its dowry for fosterage, he offered also every ninth 'ridge'<sup>2</sup> of land that Enda possessed throughout Ireland, and King Laeghaire afterwards confirmed the donation, allowing Enda to alienate to the Church for that purpose fifteen *senchleithe* or townlands, which Laeghaire had himself given to his brother Enda in the province of Connaught, hence called Enda Artech; and the name still survives, as we shall see further on.

In connection with this donation the *Tripartite* here anticipates several events by way of interlude, for it tells us that Patrick handed over the child to be fostered<sup>3</sup> by

<sup>1</sup> The word washing stones has been sometimes rendered 'bathing stones,' that is, stones which were first heated, and then plunged into water to prepare a hot bath. This appears to have been Jocelyn's idea.

<sup>2</sup> Ridge seems to be equivalent to 'field.'

<sup>3</sup> There was in ancient Erin a literary as well as a civil fosterage. The pupil dwelt in the house of his master, by whom he was maintained and carefully instructed in the learning he sought. The pupil, on the other hand, loved and honoured the master as a father, and was bound to provide for him in his old age.

four of his own household, who were also his nephews—to wit, Bishop Domnall, Coimid Maccu Baird, Da Bonne Maccu Baird, and another. Those holy prelates after a while sent for the child and had him trained up in his father's territory of Enda Artech, where they themselves had got their churches. Bishop Domnall was established at Ailech Mor, called also Ailech Artech, near Castlemore, at Ballaghadereen. Bishop Coimed set up at Cluain Senmail, now Cloonshanville, near Frenchpark, and Bishop Da Bonne at Kilnamanach, in the same neighbourhood. The land belonged to their young pupil, Cormac, who became afterwards, it appears, St. Patrick's successor at Armagh, and in recognition of the rights of Armagh, it was usual for each of these churches on All Saints' Day to send a cow to the successor of Patrick in acknowledgment of the fact that Cormac was his daltha, and that Patrick himself was the chief fosterer of that saint. That 'servitude' of the churches of Enda Airtech continued until it was remitted by Nuada, Abbot of Armagh, in A.D. 810.<sup>1</sup>

Cormac was known as Cormac Snithene, and Snithene's field is before Dermag Cule Coënnai, and Snithene's tree also, showing the place where the youth was fostered; but the field itself was never given to Armagh, much to the regret of Patrick's community there, as the Tripartite expressly tells us. But all this is an episode in the Tripartite story of the doings of Patrick.

From Uisneach Patrick went to a place called Lecan Midhe, and there he left a number of his household, with Crumaine as their Superior. There can be no doubt that this Lecan of Meath was the old church near the Inny Junction, to the south, which has given its name to the modern parish of Lackan. Patrick founded a church there about two miles south of the Junction between the railway and the river, and we are told that he left with the family of Lackan relics of the saints, according to his custom. It is probable that this was the Meath estate of Enda, whom he baptised there, and after making this excursion towards the north he returned again southwards to Uisneach, and thence prosecuted his journey west by Templepatrick to Moyvore, founding churches along his route.

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<sup>1</sup> Abbot Nuada went to Connaught that year 'with the Law of Patrick and with his shrine,' that is, he went to collect the Primatial dues, and it was, doubtless, on that occasion he released the churches of Enda Artech from the servitude referred to by the *Tripartite*. See *Annals of Ulster*.

## IX.—PATRICK AND MUNIS AT FORGNEY.

The territory west of this point as far as Lough Ree and south of the Inny River was the ancient kingdom of Cuirne, a name still retained in the district, which, however, is now better known as the barony of Kilkenny West.

Here at the place called in Irish Forгнаide, which bears its name to the present day, Patrick founded a church a little to the south of the Inny, over which either then or at a later period he placed Bishop Munis, who is described as a Briton and brother of St. Mel of Ardagh, and, therefore, Patrick's nephew.

The entry in the *Tripartite* regarding these brothers is important. 'When Patrick went on the sea from Britain to journey to Ireland, Bishop Munis came after him and after his brothers who were with him,' namely, Bishop Mel of Ardagh, and Rioc, of Inis-bo-fine (in Lough Ree), 'and they are sons of Conis and Darerca, Patrick's sister, as the households of their churches say, and that is not to be denied.' There are, moreover, sisters of these bishops—Eiche, of Kilglass, to the south of Ardagh in Teffia, and Lallocc, of Senlis—that is Fairymount in Connaught; and it is considered that she is the mother of Bard's<sup>1</sup> sons also, so that Darerca had seven sons and two daughters doing the work of God in Ireland.

This family history will be more fully discussed in the Appendix. But here it is necessary to observe, if we accept the authority of the *Tripartite*, that Munis followed his brothers Mel, Rioc, and Melchu—whose name is mentioned lower down—to Ireland, that they came with Patrick, although they were not yet bishops, but are so called by anticipation, and that they were of the household of Patrick in Ireland from the beginning. Wherefore Patrick, needing priests and bishops, placed them all over churches in this western part of Meath, just as he had placed Franks and other Britons, his relatives, over several churches in Bregia, because they were already either priests or bishops, or, at least, fit for ordination.

It would seem from the story told in the *Tripartite* that Patrick did not at first place Munis at Forgney, although he had, doubtless, designated him for that church. For it

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<sup>1</sup>In the *Tripartite* the phrase is 'mater filiorum Bairt,' where Bairt seems to be a proper name in the genitive case.

is implied that Munis accompanied the Saint during his journey through Connaught, and Patrick, who wished to get the new Pope Leo's blessing upon his work, and also wanted relics for the altars of his new churches, sent Munis from Croaghpatrick to Rome to procure them in the spring of 441. Returning home to Patrick, who was probably still in Connaught, Munis stayed for a night at Clonmacnoise, doubtless waiting to cross the river. Here 'Patrick's Leper' had already set up as a pilgrim, and as he was helpless he asked a stranger to dig a sod for him, from which a well sprang forth, which gave its first name to Clonmacnoise—'Tibraid, that is the Well,' and then asked to have his grave made near at hand, because he knew it was destined to become a very holy place, and there, we are told, he was buried.

Now, when Munis came to the place to spend the night there under the hollow elm, he put his case of relics into the hollow of the elm, and as he lay down to rest he saw 'a service of angels' over the Leper's grave, so he knew a saint was buried there. When he sought his reliquary in the morning he found the tree had closed around it, and he was sad thereat. So he went, apparently without the relics, and told Patrick what had happened. "Be not disturbed," said Patrick, "they are not lost; a son of Life will come there hereafter, who will need them, namely, Ciaran the Wright"—the great founder of Clonmacnoise, and of many other dependent monasteries.

This story is inserted in the Tripartite as a traditional episode in the history of Munis. It was apparently before this journey that Munis had been told by Patrick where he himself was to settle. It was in answer to a question put to Patrick, by Munis, at Ardagh. "My brothers," he said, "Bishop Mel and Rioc, have got their own places; tell me in what stead am I to be placed?" "There is a good station down below there," said Patrick, pointing out Forgney, from the high ground at Ardagh, whence it can be distinctly seen about six or seven miles to the south. The text, which is corrupt, seems to imply that there would, in Patrick's opinion, be more souls going to heaven from Munis' Church at Forgney than if he were to set up, as it appears he wished, 'on the high hill yonder,' perhaps, Bri Leith, near Ardagh. "The lake near it—Forgney," said Munis, "will be troublesome; I shall have no peace there; the warriors passing there with their shouts and their tumult will leave no life in me." It would

seem that there was a much-frequented pass across the river at Forgney; and 'the lake' was a watering place, and, perhaps, a camping place for the hosts of Meath when passing by. Thereupon, Patrick removed the difficulty by his prayers. The Lake of Forgney disappeared; 'and it is now Loch Croni in Hy Maine.' There is, or was, a small lake called Lough Croan in the parish of Dysart, west of the Shannon; but it is more likely the alleged 'translation' of this lake took place, at least to some extent, by drainage, which formed another lake in Hy Maine, *east* of Athlone. Tor Maine, son of Niall the Great, ruled this territory, and it is from him that the modern name, the Brawny, is derived. It is a clumsy corruption of Bregb Mhaine, that is the Bregia of Maine.<sup>1</sup>

One thing is clear, the nephews of St. Patrick were located helpfully and conveniently for each other,—Munis, in Forgney, near Ballymahon; Mel, a few miles to the north, with Melchu; his brother Rioc was in Innisboffin, some miles to the west in Lough Ree; and their sister Eiche, a holy nun, was in the church of Kilglass, just three miles south of Ardagh. These undoubted facts will help to explain subsequent events.

#### X.—PATRICK IN SOUTHERN TEFFIA.

The Tripartite says that Patrick 'went into Southern Teffia, the place where stands Ardagh—High Field, (Ardachad).' The course of the narrative certainly gives us to understand that he crossed the river at Forgney, and went thence due north to Ardagh. It was his natural course, for Maine, the king of South Teffia, dwelt at Ardagh, and it was the Saint's settled practice to go straight to the dun of the chief. O'Donovan seems to place southern Teffia south of the Inny, but this was not the view of the author of the Tripartite.<sup>2</sup> He represents St. Patrick as going to southern Teffia, *by crossing* the river from the south, and he certainly places Ardagh in South Teffia, and Granard in North Teffia. This was clearly the case at that time. Teffia was a sub-kingdom of the Royal province, but distinct from Meath. It was bounded on the south by

<sup>1</sup> See *Book of Rights*, 188, n.

<sup>2</sup> The country south of the Inny was a portion of the ancient Meath, and it still belongs to the diocese of Meath or Clonmacnoise, not to Ardagh, that is Teffia.

the Inny and was divided on the line of the present railway from Mullingar to Longford, into two parts. The southern Teffia, over which Maine ruled, comprised the southern half of the Co. Longford; the northern half, comprising the modern baronies of Longford and Granard, was the principality of Cairbre, 'God's Enemy,' as Patrick called him.

Crossing the river then at the ancient ford near Forgney, where the modern bridge stands, the Saint went due north to Maine's dun at Ardagh. No Irish chief ever built his dun except on a commanding height; and Ardagh, as its name implies, occupied a very commanding position, and gave a wide prospect over the vast plains of southern Longford. 'There he founded a church, and prophesied of the earthly things, and of the pregnant females; and of the men's dwellings, what they would bring forth and how the offspring would be.' We know St. Patrick had the gift of prophecy;<sup>1</sup> he proved it often, and he certainly needed it at that time, for we may infer from the brief but significant narrative given by the author of the Tripartite, that the men of South Teffia taxed his powers to the utmost.

'There he left Bishop Mel and Bishop Melchu, his brother.' Many of our greatest writers, relying chiefly on a passage in the Life of St. Bridget taken in connection with an entry of her age in the Annals of Ulster, have decided that Mel could not have been a bishop before A.D. 454. We disagree with that opinion, because we think that Bridget must have been some seventeen years older at her death in 523 than the Annals of Ulster assert. The Annals say she died in 'the 70th year of her age,'<sup>2</sup> but the Irish Life in the Book of Lismore says she died in her 88th year; and this is confirmed by the Chronicon Scotorum, which gives practically the same date, that is the 87th year of her age. If so, Saints Mel and Melchu could have on their first missionary journeys in West Meath with St. Patrick during the course of the year

<sup>1</sup> He says himself in the *Confession*: 'Neque abscondo signa et mirabilia quae mihi a Domino ministrata sunt ante multos annos quam fuerunt'—'made known to him many years before they happened.' We cannot gainsay his own words.

<sup>2</sup> If we take it to mean her 'age in religion' it would be accurate enough. She was seventy years a nun, and it is not improbable that the *Annals of Ulster* may have so understood it, or misinterpreted their authority, who so understood it.



A.D. 435 met her mother, and 'blessed herself in her mother's womb,' and foretold her future greatness. Hence so far from proving that Mel and Melchu were not bishops from A.D. 435, it rather confirms the statement that they were then bishops, or became bishops very soon afterwards.

Our opinion, therefore, is that St. Mel and St. Melchu came with Patrick from Britain, or very soon after his arrival in Ireland. and were consecrated bishops by him in 434 or perhaps 435: and, as the brothers did not wish to be divided, he left them both in the church of Ardagh, which was the first church founded since Patrick had left Tara and the territory of Meath in the *stricter* sense of the word.

We have visited Ardagh. It was a noble site for a church, and a portion of St. Patrick's Church, with massive walls characteristic of the earliest Christian architecture of Ireland, is standing there still. Unfortunately, the characteristic features, that is the windows and doors, have disappeared, but a glance at the remnants of its cyclopean masonry is quite enough to prove to those skilled in the earlier types of Irish architecture that it was indeed a beautiful primitive church, most likely dating back to the time of St. Patrick himself.

'There on the hill of Ardagh, in his new church, Patrick left Mel and Melchu' rulers of the church, which has since become the mother church of the diocese of Ardagh. Here occurs the narrative of an interesting incident which could not have been invented. Maine, son of Niall, was ruler of South Teffia; he dwelt at Ardagh; and he believed in Patrick, who baptised him, and no doubt it was he gave to Patrick the site of his church on that noble hill, although the fact is not expressly stated.

Now, Maine was, like most pagans, of loose morals, and kept concubines; so he brought to Patrick a pregnant woman, who was, it seems, his own niece, and he besought Patrick 'to bless the child lying in her womb and to bless herself.' Patrick at first thought she was the legitimate wife of Maine, but stretching forth his hand to bless her, he drew it quickly back again, saying the strange words—"I know not, God knoweth." He *felt* there was something wrong, which stayed his hand, and he often used the expression in similar cases.

Still he was anxious to oblige the prince, and, so he blessed the pregnant woman and her offspring. 'But,' adds

the writer, 'he knew in the spirit of prophecy that it was the accursed Cairbre's grandson that was lying in her womb, namely, he who afterwards became Tuathal Mael Gairbh, King of Erin. Patrick had 'cursed' Cairbre and all his seed at Telltown, as we have seen, and foretold that no son of his should ever reign, while now here, unfortunately, was one of them whom he had unwittingly blessed. "Luckless it is, O Slender Maine," said the Saint, "there shall never be a king from thee" (through this woman). Then Maine kuelled and made repentance; and Patrick, like his Master, was always moved by repentance, whereupon he added—"There shall be no king in Erin who will not maintain thee (and thy seed), and it is thy bond which shall remain longest in Ireland. Moreover," said the Saint, relenting and undoing the effect of the former curse, "he whom I have blessed (the child in his mother's womb) shall be a king"—namely, Tuathal, grandson of the accursed Cairbre. It is strange that Dr. Todd, in the face of this narrative, should represent Patrick's curse on Cairbre at Telltown as an instance of an unfulfilled prophecy of Patrick. He ought to have remembered more of the prophecy of Jonas about the destruction of Ninive. Maine's penance modified the 'curse,' so far as the offspring of his concubine was concerned, just as the penance of the men of Ninive modified the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jonas.

Then the author of the Tripartite, with great candour, tells the story of a 'scandal which grew up at Ardagh,' the mere narrative of which is in itself a strong proof of the authenticity and honesty of those ancient Lives of St. Patrick.

'Through error of the rabble,' it was given out that Mel had sinned with his 'own kinswoman,' who dwelt along with the saint as his housekeeper at Ardagh. This kinswoman was St. Lupait, or Lupita, sister of St. Patrick, who is said to have been carried captive with him to Ireland. If so, she must have been at this time nearly sixty years of age. But the pagans could hardly understand Christian chastity; and the mere fact that a man and a woman were living in the same house gave them ground for rash judgment. This rumour reached the ears of St. Patrick at a much later period than the founding of Ardagh, when Lupita must have been at least seventy years of age. This fact, of itself, ought to have killed rash judgments—but it is hard to kill a calumny. The tradition,

however, as to the story and its surroundings is still so vivid in the locality that in substance it cannot be gainsaid.

Now, when Patrick heard the rumour, he came at once by the north-eastern road to Ardagh from Armagh, as the people say. Patrick is represented in all the Lives as a man of hot temper, which was easily roused, especially when scandal was given to the weak. Mel knew this, and knew the cause of his coming; so he had recourse to God to prove his own innocence, and God did not desert him. When he saw Patrick 'coming down from the North,' he went 'to angle for salmon in the furrows' at the foot of the hill, which, at the time, were filled with water, doubtless after a heavy rain. But, in any case, the field is low-lying, and the furrows would be easily filled by a good shower. It seems, too, that he really caught fish in the presence of Patrick, for so God vouchsafed to prove the innocence of his servant. Whereupon the 'dry fishing' of Mel passed into a proverb. The field where he fished is still shown, and was called in Colgan's time *an chora thirim*—the dry fishing, just under Canon O'Farrell's house—a Canon worthy of St. Patrick's time—and the people have no more doubt of St. Mel's catching salmon there in the furrows than they have of their own existence.

Then Patrick, going up the hill on the road, where the present beautiful Catholic church stands, met his sister, Lupait, 'carrying live coals of fire in her chasuble,' and her mantle was in no way touched by the flame. Whence the road is to this day called *Tochar maol tine*—the road of the harmless flame.

Then Patrick knew that his sister and nephew were sinless, for God himself had proved it. Still scandal, even in its widest sense, must be avoided. Wherefore, 'though he knew there was no sin between them,' he said—"Let men and women be apart, so that we may not be found to give any opportunity to the weak, and God's name be thereby blasphemed—which far be from us." He added—"Let Bri Leith be between them"; and, therefore, he sent Lupait to the west of Bri Leith, the beautiful hill that rises near Ardagh to the south-west, and there she founded a famous monastery for women at Druim Chea. But St. Mel he left at Ardagh, with his brother Melchu, to continue his holy work.

Bri Leith is now called Slieve Golry. We have stood on its summit, and it is worth a long journey to stand there

of a clear day. The height of the hill is about 650 feet, and the view all over the lower country, north, south, east and west, is one of surpassing grandeur.

Ardagh itself, as its name implies, is high ground; but Bri Leith is much higher, and gives a magnificent view of the lowlands on every side, especially towards the Shannon, which seems to wind like a silvery serpent through its reedy borders, in the green and grey of the distance. Indeed, we think we have never seen a more enchanting view than met our eyes on a bright Autumn day from the summit of that lone hill, although the breeze blew so strongly that we could scarcely keep our feet on the crest of the heath-covered cairn that crowns its summit. We saw the site of Druim Chea about two miles from the western roots of the hill, where Lupita ruled her small convent after Patrick had pronounced his decree; on the opposite side of the hill, to the east, was the swelling ridge of Ardagh, crowned with its old ruins and its new church. So the works of men, the holiest and the best, pass away, but the lines of beauty and grandeur, drawn by Nature's hand, are unchanged and unchangeable

#### XI—PATRICK IN NORTH TEFFIA.

From Ardagh Patrick went some twelve miles north and by east to Granard 'in the dark land of northern Teffia.' So it is described in the Book of Rights, most probably because it was the territory of the accused Cairbre, and it was a *gesa*, or unlucky thing, for 'a true king to go at all on a Tuesday' into that dark country. Cairbre's royal dun was at Granard, and perhaps the great moat marks the stern old warrior's grave. But though an unbeliever himself, his sons seem to have been Christians, for it is stated that Granard was offered to Patrick as the place of a church by Cairbre's sons. The old chief himself was, it would appear, either accidentally absent at the time or kept away on purpose, for he had good reason to fear the Tailcend's curse. So Patrick founded a church at Granard, and he left there Guasacht, son of his old master, Milcho, and therefore his own foster-brother, as the Tripartite calls him. But the Book of Armagh speaks of him and his sisters as the foster-children of Patrick, because whilst he was yet a slave he cared them and taught them in secret the Christian religion, for he feared much the

Magus, that is, their then father.<sup>1</sup> He left there also the two Emers, his own foster-sisters, as they were daughters of Milcho, and had accompanied their brother Guasacht all the way from their far-off northern home to Granard.

This incident reveals a beautiful trait of tender human affection in Patrick's character. It would appear that when Milcho burned himself in his flaming dun, Patrick took over the guardianship of his son and two daughters. He attached them to his own religious family, and had Guasacht trained for the sacred ministry, and now he placed him, the very first of all his Irish disciples, over this church of Granard. His sisters, the two Emers, he consecrated as virgins to God—the very first of the daughters of Erin whom he veiled for Christ—and he placed them near their brother at a place called Clonbroney, which must, we think, be regarded as the first convent of nuns established in Ireland. Then the Tripartite adds: 'It is the airchindech,' or chief cleric of Granard, who 'ordains' the head of the nuns, that is, appoints the reverend mother in Clonbroney. 'Now when Patrick blessed the veil on the aforesaid virgins, their four feet went into the stone, and the traces of their feet remain there for ever.' Clonbroney, which still gives title to a parish, is midway between Granard and Longford, about six miles from the former town. The old graveyard in the centre of the parish marks, it is said, the site of the convent where the two first of that great host of Irish maidens, who in every age since that distant day have given their pure young hearts to God, lived and died in peace. Surely it is a sacred spot, and if it could be ascertained, even from local tradition, where the holy maidens rest, it would be a fitting thing to mark the sacred spot with some appropriate memorial.

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<sup>1</sup> Nutrivit filium, Guasacht nomine, et filias duas ejusdem viri, quando erat in servitute, et docuit illos in taciturnitate cum juramento pro timore Magi.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ST. PATRICK AT MAGH SLECHT.

#### I.—PROBABLE ROUTE.

ST. PATRICK'S visit to Magh Slecht is, next to his great conflict with the Druids of Tara, the most noteworthy incident in his missionary career. It is very briefly narrated in two short paragraphs of the Tripartite, but we must examine it at greater length.

'Thereafter (that is, after he left Granard) he went over the water to Magh Slecht, the place in which was the chief idol of Ireland, namely, Crom Cruaich, covered with gold and silver, and twelve other idols covered with brass, about him.' The water here referred to seems to be the chain of small lakes stretching from Drumshambo Lough to Gulladoo Lough on the borders of Co. Cavan. There are eleven or twelve of them in all, and they form the mearing line between Longford and Leitrim in modern, as they probably did between Teffia and Magh Rein in ancient, times.

It is expressly stated by Tirechan that Patrick went from Granard into Magh Rein,<sup>1</sup> and therein ordained Priest Bruscus, and founded a church for him in that place. It is not easy to identify this church or Priest Bruscus, of whom the following curious story is told by Tirechan:—After his death he appeared to another saint who dwelt in Inchicairbre—in Latin, *Insula generis Cothirbi*—and said to him: "It is well for you whilst you have your son with you, but I am afflicted in death, for I am alone in the desert and my church is deserted and empty; no priests offer the Sacrifice near me." For three nights the island saint had the same vision, so on the morning of the third day he rose early, and taking pick, shovel, and spade, he opened the lonely grave of Bruscus and carried off his bones with him to his own island, where they rested in peace. It would be interesting to identify

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<sup>1</sup> Et venit in campum Rein et ordinavit Bruscum presbyterum, et ecclesiam illi fundavit.—Rolls *Top.*, Vol. II. 211.

this island, but even 1,000 years ago the scribe in the Book of Armagh noted on the margin that the place was uncertain.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it was Church Island in Garadice Lough. There was certainly an ancient church on the island, but whether it was the one here referred to or not is still uncertain.

In its wider sense, Magh Rein designated the whole of the great undulating plain of southern Leitrim, but it was more properly applied to the fertile plain around Fenagh, which in all the old books is called Fenagh of Magh Rein, for it was its capital and religious centre. There is a Lough Rein a little to the north of Fenagh, which probably gave its name to the plain, and the lake itself was so called from Rein, the nurse of Cobhthach, son of King Conaing. The youth was drowned in the lake, and his nurse, in trying to save him, also perished there, but gave her name to the lake for ever.<sup>2</sup>

From immemorial ages Fenagh of Magh-Rein was famed in bardic story, and was, certainly, both in pagan and Christian times, one of the great religious centres of the land. Its ancient name was Dunbaile, and before the Conmaicne established themselves in Magh-Rein, this territory as well as Magh Slecht was held by a Fírbolgic tribe, named the Maisraige, who were certainly there in the time of St. Patrick, since they slew Conal Gulban near Fenagh in A.D. 464, a deed of which they greatly boasted, for he was the bravest of all the sons of Niall the Great.

Magh Slecht lay to the east of Magh Rein, but O'Donovan is not accurate in saying that no part of it lay in the County Leitrim. The entry in the Annals of the Four Masters, under date A.D. 1256, proves that beyond doubt a great part of the parish of Oughteragh, north of Ballinamore, formed a part of Magh Slecht. It is true that it also extended into the modern County Cavan, comprehending the level part of the barony of Tullyhaw, through which the light railway now passes, by Ballymagauran to Ballyconnell, in County Cavan. Magh Slecht formed a part of what was afterwards called Breifne O'Reilly, but Magh Rein belonged to Breifne O'Rorke, the dividing line being marked by the existing boundary between the diocese of Kilmore and of Ardagh. The parish of Oughteragh is in the diocese of Kilmore, and its

<sup>1</sup> On the upper margin—'Isbaile inso sis asincertus.'

<sup>2</sup> *Book of Fenagh*, page 251.

boundary passes about one mile north of Fenagh and less than a mile south of Edentenny, the last-named being thus a part of Magh Slecht.

## II.—SITUATION OF MAGH SLECHT.

In our opinion Edentenny is the undoubted Plain of Adoration, where 'Crom Cruaich and his sub-gods twelve' were adored by the pagan Irish from time immemorial. It is well, therefore, to bear in mind that the name Magh Slecht has been used in two senses—first, to designate a great wide-spreading plain in the baronies of Tullyhaw and Carrigallen, and, secondly, to imply the actual scene of the idol worship, which was, in our opinion, at Edentenny, between Fenagh and Ballinamore.

The aspect of the place is such as would at once strike a visitor as marking a most appropriate place for druidic worship. It is a limestone ridge about 400 yards long and 80 or 90 yards wide. On the eastern side the ridge is bounded by a steep escarpment rising from the low ground. From the base of this rocky wall there issues full-born, like the fountains of the Jordan, a strong, clear, and rapid spring, powerful enough to turn a mill, coming out, as it were, from the very heart of the hill. This is, no doubt, a subterranean stream coming down from the lakes of Fenagh and Rein, some two miles to the south. But there is no visible connection between them, and it would strike a simple people as if the river-god dwelt within his rocky halls beneath the ridge, and poured out for man, and beast, and field, this perennial fountain so beautiful in the abounding wealth of its crystal waters. If the Irish held the king of waters to be a god it is no wonder they adored him on the green brow of the ridge that gives birth to this grand fountain. On its northern and western side the ridge is bounded by a deep gully running all round it except on the south, where the ridge falls slowly to the level of the surrounding plain. This gully is in winter oftentimes filled with water, and was, in our opinion, the 'fossa' of Slecht to which reference is made by Tirechan, for, when filled with water, especially in the low ground to the east, where it joins the bed of the stream, the term would be most appropriate.

This ridge itself is fitly called Longstones, which appears to be an attempt at giving an English equivalent for the Irish name Cairginns. It was a seat of the Druids



both before and after the arrival of St. Patrick, for they always set up near the royal dun, and Dunbaile had been for ages a 'holy regal place,' as the Book of Fenagh styles it. We note proofs of their presence on the ridge and all around it; and, beyond doubt, they chose an admirable site, for it was visible from afar; their sanctuary was isolated by nature itself; and the wondrous water-god was ever pouring out the life-giving stream from the very heart of their sacred shrine. On the flat summit of the ridge there are still remaining traces of two circular stone enclosures such as the Druids used, and close at hand are the wonderful stones, or slabs, which have given their names to the place. One is now prostrate—an immense slab about eighteen feet long by four broad; the other is still standing, but inclining to the west, and is partially buried in the soil. Another, close by, is also standing, but inclines to the east. Between them is a third slab, nearly sunk in the soil, and of smaller dimensions. The whole place is suggestive of druidical worship, and we have no doubt it was the true scene of the striking incidents narrated in the Life of St. Patrick.

From time immemorial it was a sacred place in the estimation of the pagan Irish.<sup>1</sup> The great King Tighearnmas, who flourished long before the Christian era, and is credited with being the first smelter of gold in Ireland, held a great assembly of the men of Erin on this very spot for the worship of Crom Cruaich, whom the Four Masters describe as the Chief idol of Erin at the time. But he and three-fourths of his people with him perished at that festival, which was held on November eve, and the Christian chroniclers say that their death was in punishment of the impious rites which they used on that occasion. But it still continued to be the Field of National Adoration down to the time of St. Patrick, and there can be no doubt that it was to destroy the grim idol of the Firbolgs that St. Patrick took his journey to Magh Slecht.

From Granard, as we have seen, he crossed the country to the north-west, and came into the plain of Magh Rein

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<sup>1</sup> There was the King idol of Erin—namely, Crom Cruaich, and around him twelve idols made of stones, but he was of gold. Until Patrick's advent he was the god of every folk that colonised Erin. To him they used to offer the firstlings of every issue and the chief scions of every clan. 'Tis to him that Erin's King, Tighernmas, son of Follach, repaired on Hallow-tide together with the men and women of Erin in order to adore him, whence is Magh Slecht, 'Plain of Prostration.'—*Dinds.*

most likely by Ballinamuck and Cloone. When he arrived there, perhaps in the early Autumn of 435 or 436, he saw the people in the distance prostrate before the idol.<sup>1</sup> This sight excited his angry zeal, and before he had yet reached the spot he protested against the idolatry in a loud, commanding voice, whence the spot where he stood was called Guth-ard, that is the 'loud-shout.' Those who know the ground can easily realize the scene. As we have said, the place was an isolated ridge, surrounded on the south-east at least by the waters of the great fountain bursting from its rocky face. Then Patrick, drawing nigh, 'saw the idol from the water (afterwards) named Guth-ard, because he uplifted his voice, and when he drew nigh to the idol he raised up his hand to strike it with the Staff of Jesus'; but before he touched it the idol fell prone 'on its right side,' for to the south was its face, namely, to Tara, and the mark of the Staff still remains on its left side, and yet the Staff did not move out of Patrick's hand! Such is the version in the Tripartite of the overthrow of the idol and it seems to imply, as Colgan renders it, that Patrick's cry from the water, with his threatening gesture, overthrew the idol, and left the imprint of the Staff of Jesus on the stone, although he really did not strike the idol with his Staff at all; and the same account is given by Jocelyn.

The Tripartite adds that, 'the earth at the same time swallowed up twelve other images as far as their heads, and they still stand thus in token of the miracle.' This no doubt refers to the circle of druidical stones standing round the principal idols, and traces of some of them may still be seen on the ridge; but whether the others vanished or were carried off by quarrymen must remain an open question. That a stone circle did exist there is, we think, quite evident; and we spent some hours of a summer's day examining the place and its neighbourhood. 'Patrick, too, cursed the demon that dwelt within the idol, and drove him to hell,' and all the people with Laeghaire, the King, who, it appears, was there adoring at the time, saw the demon, and they feared they would perish except Patrick drove him back to hell. In this conflict Patrick

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<sup>1</sup> There is good reason to think that Patrick came there on the last Sunday of summer, commonly called Garland Sunday. But of old it was called *Domnach Cromdubh*, the Sunday of Black Crom, which was originally a pagan festival, but afterwards became a Christian festival, and is commemorated in our Calendars on the 31st of July. This would seem to imply that in that year the 31st July was Sunday, but this is merely a conjecture.

acted with 'prowess against the idol,' and hence it came to pass that the brooch or fibula, which fastened his cloak or cope, fell off and was lost in the heather, so he caused the grass or heather to be pulled up until he found his brooch; 'but no heather grows there more than in the rest of the field.' It is difficult to see how heather ever grew in it, for the limestone rock crops up everywhere, and heather does not love the limestone. The word rather means 'herbage' than 'heather,' and of the former there is a good crop.

It may be assumed as fairly certain that the idols in question were the huge slabs now prostrate on the ridge, for such standing stones were always held sacred by the Druids, and their sacred enclosures were always surrounded by such blocks of stone. From the earliest times these slabs, typical of the water-god who sent forth the rushing stream from the bowels of the hill, were covered with plates of bronze, and sometimes no doubt also with plates of gold and silver, whilst the lesser idols in the circle were merely covered with bronze. They were ancient—very ancient—idols in this sacred place, and so Patrick resolved utterly to destroy them. He succeeded at least for a time; but we know from the Book of Fenagh that the druidical worship still lingered on near its old home, for in the time of St. Caillin, one hundred years later, the Druids of Fenagh and Magh Slecht opposed him and his clerics, and kept their old unclean rites and ceremonial, reviling the saint at the same time in very filthy language. But Caillin was a 'blazing fire' to destroy the enemies of God and his Church; so he transformed the Druids 'into forms of stone' in presence of all the multitude. And there they are still on the crest of the Longstones ridge to testify the fact to future ages. It is clear that the scribe did not wish that Caillin should in his own country be outdone by Patrick.

### III.—CHURCH OF MAGH SLECHT.

There are two other things worthy of note in connection with Magh Slecht—first, St. Patrick's Well, and, secondly, the church which he founded there. The Tripartite refers to the first very briefly:—"There at the 'Plain of Adoration' is Patrick's Well, in which he baptised many." A little to the north of Fenagh, just under the road to Magh Slecht, there is a round, deep, and limpid spring, under a

spreading ash tree, which all the people regard as a holy well. We asked if it were St. Patrick's Well. Yes, our informant thought so; and it is just such a well as St. Patrick would have blessed for the baptismal rite. It is close to a deep stream, coming out of the rock, over which there still remains *in situ* a splendid example of the dolmen or cromlech, which usually marks a hero's grave. We know that Conal Gulban was killed at Fenagh by the Firbolgs, and it is highly probable that this monument marks his grave. But the well is not in Magh Slecht properly speaking, although near the mearing; it is rather in Magh Rein, and hence we can hardly think it is the holy well referred to in the Tripartite. There is another well, however, at Edentinny, close to the Field of Adoration, and it was either there or in the copious fountain that issues from the face of the rock itself, that Patrick baptised his converts on the great day when he overthrew the ancient idols.

It is also stated that he founded a church in that place, namely, Domnagh Mor Maige Slecht, and he left therein Methbrain, called also Patrick's Barbarian, a relative of his own and a prophet, who foretold, as Tirechan adds, many wonderful things. There is no old church or churchyard, as far as we could ascertain, in the immediate neighbourhood of the place, and the church founded by Patrick must, as its name implies, have been an important one. Hence, we are inclined to think that this Domnagh Mor is identical with the parish church of Ballinamore, some two miles to the east. It is called the Church of Oughteragh, or Oughterard, and has given its name to the whole parish, which was certainly a portion of the ancient Magh Slecht. We may add that the whole district is very interesting and is full of memorials of the past. Unfortunately we had no local scanachie to guide us in our explorations. The expression, however, used by Tirechan here is very significant. He says that Patrick sent his relation, the 'Barbarian' Methbrain, to the dyke of Slecht, where he founded this Domnagh Mor.<sup>1</sup> As we have already stated, the dyke appears to have been the low ground through which the great fountain flowed into the Dale river, and

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<sup>1</sup>Mittens (for misit) autem Patricius Methbrain ad fossam Slecht, barbaram Patricii propinquum qui dicebat mirabilia in Deo vero.—The expression shows that the fossa was at some distance from the Plain of Adoration. It also shows that some of Patrick's British relations were not Roman citizens, and hence this Methbrain is described as a barbarian.

the church of Oughterard is really over this dyke or marshy hollow. The word Barbarian merely means that Methbrain was not like Patrick himself and most of his relatives, a Roman citizen, and hence the family of the Saint gave him this title as a cognomen, or rather nickname, although, as it is expressly stated, he was a relation of the Saint, and had, doubtless, like the rest of his relations, accompanied or followed Patrick from Britain to Ireland.

#### IV.—PATRICK CROSSES THE SHANNON.

The next stage in Patrick's journey brings him from Magh Slecht to the Shannon. His road lay due west by the roots of the Iron Mountain, on the line of the present light railway to Drumshambo, at the head of Lough Allen. It is a picturesque road, skirting many small but beautiful lakes, and affording several sweet glimpses of exquisite rural scenery. Tirechan says that Patrick came, due west, to the bed of the Shannon, where his charioteer Buadmoel by name, died, and was buried.

Patrick crossed the river at a place called Snám-dá-En,<sup>1</sup> the Swimming Ford of the two Birds. O'Donovan says this Ford was near Clonmacoise, and that Patrick must have crossed the river there. There may have been a place of the same name at Clonmacnoise, but the narrative here clearly implies that he crossed over into Magh Ai, at Doogary, and near Tir Ailella, now Tիրerrell, which anciently came as far south as the Boyle River, a tributary of the Shannon separating Magh Ai from Tir Ailella. We have carefully gone over this ground, and with the help of the parish priest<sup>2</sup> easily identified all the places referred to in the narrative of the Tripartite. About one mile-and-a-half north of Battle Bridge the Shannon cuts through a ridge now called Drumboylan, forming at the point a considerable island. The stream here is very rapid, but shallow, and the stepping-stones that formed the ancient ford may still be seen on the bank, foot-worn on the top and water-worn on the sides by the stream that surged around them for 2000

<sup>1</sup> The ford is called Banea by Tirechan. It is said that Patrick went into the harbour (port) at once, that is, crossed to the other side at once, and that Buadmoel died there, which seems to imply that he died on the Roscommon shore, and this is borne out by the living tradition of the place.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Father Meehan.

years. The Board of Works have recently cleared the river bed at this point,<sup>1</sup> and so removed the stones. They erected at the same time a foot-bridge across the stream for the convenience of the people. When the river is full a fierce current runs beneath in the main bed of the river; yet an old man assured us, that although scores of people had fallen into the stream when the river was in flood, no one was ever drowned there, owing to St. Patrick's blessing the ford. The tradition of his having crossed the river at this point is quite vivid in the minds of the people; and they also show where Buaidmoel, Patrick's charioteer, died on the right bank of the river, and also the green meadow on the brow of the ridge overlooking the Shannon, where he was buried, nigh to the little church that bore his name—Cell-Buaidmoel. The church itself has disappeared, but its site can still be traced, and human bones were quite recently found on the spot. It is said, too, in the village, that the very flag-stone on which he lay when he was dying is preserved in the floor of the house next the ford, which was probably built on the very spot, for the wall is now partially over the flag-stone. The name of the village—Drumboylan—is, undoubtedly, a corruption of Drum-Buaidmoel, a vocable easily shortened into Drumboyle or Drumboylan. From Drumboylan by the river's ford, the old road led straight to Doogary, the ancient Duma Graid, called *tumulum-Gradi*, by Tirechan, in the Book of Armagh. The village is about two miles from the ford, and still bears its ancient name, but there are no traces of an old church; nor, indeed, is it stated that any church was founded there. But at this point it would appear that Patrick, before going further South, met the sons of Ailell, who crossed the Feorish River to greet him before he left their territory, and there he ordained Ailbe, 'who is in Shanco'—Sen-chua—as a priest to minister to the sons of Ailell. The narrative seems to imply that Ailbe was ordained then and there. In that case he was in all probability at the time a member of Patrick's religious family.

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<sup>1</sup> The Shannon here is not navigable, but a canal has been cut east of the river from Lough Allen which joins the river at Battle Bridge.

## CHAPTER X.

### ST. PATRICK IN ROSCOMMON.

#### I.—PATRICK AT DOOGARY.

WHEN Patrick crossed the Shannon, he touched the north-eastern extremity of the great Roscommon plain of Magh Ai in its widest sense.<sup>1</sup> The royal palace of Cruachan, to which Patrick was, in accordance with his usual practice, making his way, was in the heart of Magh Ai, near Tulsk; and there Mael and Caplait, two brothers, Druids both, dwelt with the daughters of King Laeghaire, of whose education they had charge. The Druids knew Patrick was coming, for they must have heard what had taken place at Magh Slecht, and they were preparing to receive him; so, as soon as he crossed the great river, 'they brought a thick darkness over the whole of Magh Ai, through the power of the devil, for the space of three days and three nights.' Then Patrick bent his knees in earnest prayer to God, and blessed the plain, so that it became lightsome once more for all except the two Druids. Whereupon he gave thanks to God, who banished the darkness from Magh Ai.

The spiritual darkness, at least, soon disappeared from that fair and wide-spreading plain. That the Druids might, by the power of the devil, have brought storm and darkness over the plain, can hardly be doubted by those who remember the plagues of Egypt, and believe with St. Paul that the demons are rulers of this air and princes of darkness in high places. But they could not frighten away Patrick, who was strong in faith and the power of the Saving Name of Him who is the true Light of the world.

We are told that when Patrick ordained Ailbe as chief priest at Doogary, he, at the same time, told him of a stone altar in Sliabh Hy n-Aillella under the ground, with

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<sup>1</sup> In the strict sense Maigh Ai extended 'from Clonfree, near Strokestown, to the bridge of Castlereagh, and from the high ground, a little north of Roscommon, to the Turloughs of Mantua,' where it meets Moylurg; but, in a wider sense, it included Moylurg and much of the surrounding territory. See *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 179.

four glass chalices at the angles of the altar; "beware," he added, "of breaking the edges of the excavation."<sup>1</sup>

This is a strange statement, which has greatly puzzled the Saint's biographers. How did it come to pass that there was an altar and chalices in this remote and rather wild part of the country. The most probable conjecture is that Patrick passed that way long before when making his escape from Slemish to Killala.<sup>2</sup> Anyone can see that his direct course would lie across the country, by the head of Lough Allen, over this very Sliabh Hy n Ailella, now called the Bralieve Mountain, and thence across the plain of Corann to Ballina. In this way the fugitive Christian youth might have come across some Christian family or hermit amongst the Hy Ailella, and have been entrusted with the secret of this cave, which was, as it were, a catacomb for the scattered Christians of the district.

The statement is certainly confirmed by one fact, which we ourselves observed. In the summer of 1898, accompanied by the Bishop of Elphin, we went to visit the old church of Shancough, or Shancoe, which is situated about a mile to the west of the modern church of Geevagh, but in a far more commanding and picturesque site, that affords a noble prospect of the long, brown range of Sliabh-Ailell mountain. The ancient church was, as usual, built near the rath of the chief, of which some traces still remain. We asked our guide was there a cave near at hand, and soon discovered its existence within twenty yards of the church door. The entrance was partially closed up; but one of the young men present assured us that it extended underground as far as the church. This cave must, in old times, have been very roomy, and was probably connected with the church. There is every ground to believe that this is the identical cave referred to in the Tripartite, and that it was the seat of Christian worship before St. Patrick ever crossed the Shannon. Chalices of glass, or crystal, were certainly used in early times, when it was difficult to procure the precious metals, or even bronze cups, for the Sacred Mysteries.

Of St. Ailbe, the first priest ever ordained west of the Shannon, we know nothing else. His feast day was the

<sup>1</sup> Et dixit, cavendum ne frangantur ore fossure—*e* being put for *ae*.

<sup>2</sup> There is no ground whatsoever for assuming that Patrick himself had ever preached the Gospel there on any previous occasion; but he may have seen the cave or heard of it from others.



30th January,<sup>1</sup> that of Ailbe of Emly was 12th September. His 'bed' and 'well' are high up on the mountain's brow, in full view of his ancient church, but some three miles away, in a wild and lonely spot. It is probable that he retired to live there as a solitary in his old age; and wished to be buried, as he had lived, alone with God, on the bare face of the mountain. The tradition that he was ordained by St. Patrick is still very vivid amongst the people; and they have a great veneration for his 'bed' and 'holy well.' From his cell on the lone mountain crest, he had full in view the whole parish over which Patrick had placed him. There he prayed for his people in his old age, as, no doubt, he prays for them still in his high place near St. Patrick in heaven.

At Doogary also, or perhaps at Shancough, for the text is vague, Patrick baptised the holy Maneus or Maneus, whom Bishop Bron, son of Icne, ordained some years later, and who was placed over the church of Aghanagh on a southern arm of Lough Arrow in this same Tírerréll country. It is a beautiful spot, too, this old church of Aghanagh, standing over the lake shore, looking to the warm south, with fertile fields around, where the monks of old wandered in the sweet repose of their heavenly seclusion. But now, like so many other ancient churches, it is shrineless and roofless, open to the wind and rain, a lonely but a very beautiful home of the dead. The country around, the ancient Tir-Ailell, now Tírerréll, is very picturesque. Its lakes particularly are strikingly beautiful, and all abound in fish. Lough Arrow, Lough Kee, Lough Skean, the Keadue Lough, and several smaller sheets of water are all visible from any commanding point on the hills which overlook them, and lend a wonderful charm and variety to a landscape which lacks no element of beauty—neither wood, nor water, nor hill, nor dale, nor rushing river.<sup>2</sup>

The ordination of Ailbe and the baptism of Maneus at Doogary are both interesting facts, and give rise to some

<sup>1</sup> He is called in the *Martyrology of Tallaght*, Ailbe Cruimtir, that is, Priest Ailbe, which shows he was never raised to the Episcopate. There are only two saints of the name in our calendar, Ailbe of Emly and Ailbe of Shancoe. The *Martyrology of Donegal* says the latter was son of Ronan, of the race of Conal Gulban.

<sup>2</sup> Aghanagh has a special interest for the author, for it contains the sepulchre of his ancestors in the nave of the church, and stands on the land that once formed part of Baile O'Heligh or Healystown, now Hollybrook. It is called by both names on the Ordnance map.

enquiries here. 'Who was this Ailbe?' There are only two of the name mentioned in our Calendars, Ailbe of Emly, and this Ailbe of Shancoe. The festival of the former is, as we have seen, quite a different day from that of the latter, and this second Ailbe was son of Ronan, of the race of Conal Gulban. Where then did Patrick first meet him? Most probably at Tara, or somewhere in Meath four or five years before, for he was a young prince of the royal family. Finding a suitable youth for the sacred ministry, Patrick at once took him into his own family or retinue, where he received the necessary instruction for the priesthood; and, as the foreign missionaries were now almost exhausted, Patrick ordained this youth for a church which was not far from his own country of Tirconnell, and where he probably had some friends amongst the chieftains of the district.

Mane or Maneus, whom Patrick baptised, was merely a youth of ten or twelve at the time. He was afterwards ordained by Bron, son of Icne, and we know from the Life of St. Finnian of Clonard that he lived to be a very old man at Aghanagh, for St. Finnian met him there probably some seventy years after the events here recorded.

These things took place at Doogary in the modern parish of Ardcarne or Tumna, which got its name from the Woman's Tomb, that is from St. Edania, who is buried in the old church by the Boyle River, of which she is patron and most likely founder.

From Doogary Patrick went, so far as we can judge, southward across the Boyle River at Cootehall into Magh-glass. Moyglass, as it was called in later times, is the green and fertile plain extending along the Shannon's western shore from Carrick to the bridge of Carnadoe near Rooskey. It is low-lying for the most part, and liable to floods in winter; but then, as now, the green fields of its higher uplands were fertile and densely populated. So Patrick, declining a little eastwards from his straight road to Cruachan of Magh Ai, founded the church of Kilmore Maige Glass, not far from the river's bank, in a green meadow, which still bears the ancient name. There he founded a church, in which he left two of his household, called Conleng and Ercleng. The names are rather British than Irish; and indeed he could hardly have found time hitherto to train any of the natives, especially of the West, for the service of the Church. In after time Kilmore

Maige Glass, or Kilmore na Shinna,<sup>1</sup> as it was called later on, became a famous church, and at the present time gives name to a parish in the diocese of Elphin. The Patrician church has completely disappeared: but a ruin of later date still marks the holy ground, and is surrounded by a densely-populated churchyard, where the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

## II.—PATRICK AT ELPHIN.

From Moyglass, Patrick went into the territory known as Corca Ochland, as it is called in the Tripartite. It was north of Sliabh Badgna, now Slieve Bawn, the most conspicuous object on the southern horizon; but it was on 'this side,' that is, to the south of Hy Ailella, for the men of Tirerrill then claimed as their own all the mountain land from Lough Gill, near Sligo, to the neighbourhood of Elphin. At the present time the district is comprised in the barony of Roscommon, and was always considered a part of Magh Ai. But the term 'Corcagh Achlann' was in later times more properly applied to the eastern part of the district from Strokestown to Elphin, which was the tribe-land of the O'Brennans and O'Hanlys.

Two brothers were bidding in that place, that is, near Elphin, namely Id and Hono; Druids they were and owners of the fertile plain around them. Patrick, as usual, asked the site of a church. Then said Hono to Patrick:—"What wilt thou give me for the land" (that you want)? "Life eternal," answered Patrick. Then said Hono, "You have gold; give me some of it." Patrick thereupon replied, "I have given away all my gold; but God will give me more (to give you)." And God did give him more. For, thereafter, Patrick found a lump of gold where the swine were rooting, and he gave that mass of gold to Hono for his land. *Tir-in-Brotha*, that is, 'the Field of the Lump,' 'is its name,' says the Tripartite. But though Patrick gave the gold to Hono, he liked not his avarice in selling the field to God, wherefore he added, "Thou shalt not be a king, nor shall any of thy seed reign after thee." Then fear conquered avarice, and Hono burst into tears,

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<sup>1</sup> In our opinion Kilmore of Moyglass, or Kilmore na Shinna, is not the Kilmore Duitribh where Columba, at a later period, founded a great church. Columba's Kilmore of the Wilderness was, in our opinion, the ancient church which gives its title to the present diocese of Kilmore or Cavan.

so that Patrick, touched with pity, added, "Although thou shalt not be king, nor thy seed—still he shall not be king, whom thou and thy posterity will not accept and ordain." If they were not to be kings, they were yet to be, to some extent, king-makers. 'And that has been fulfilled,' adds the author, 'for the race of Mac Erce (sons of Hono) are the mightiest and firmest in Connaught, but they never ruled as over-kings of the Province, nor, indeed, as kings at all.' This Hono, or Ono, was son of Oengus, son of Erc Derg, son of Brian,<sup>1</sup> the great father of the Connaught Kings.

When the promise was made, and he had got his gold, Hono the Druid gave to Patrick his own royal dwelling, on the crest of the beautiful ridge of Elphin, to be the site of the new church. It was then called Emlach Onand, from the name of its owner, 'but to-day it is called Ail Find, from the White Stone which Patrick took up from the stream just in front of the church.' It is not unlikely that this was deemed a 'sacred stone,' from which the fountain flowed, and that it was worshipped by the Druids as the god of the waters. Wherefore, Patrick took it up out of the fountain, which he blessed at the same time. But the rock still remained on its margin before the church, and ever after gave its name to the church, the parish, and the diocese—that is Ail Finn—the Rock of the Clear Stream, from which the apostle had raised it. The ancient church of Elphin is gone, the rock is gone too, but the fountain flows for ever clear and strong before the door of the '*new*' Protestant church, that now stands on the site of the edifice founded by St. Patrick.

Over this church of Elphin Patrick placed Bishop Assicus, and Bite, son of the brother of Assicus, and Cipia, mother of Bite, or Biteus, the Bishop. They were of the race of Hono the Druid, for Patrick had promised, and said, "Thy seed shall—not reign—but be blessed, and there shall be victory of laymen and clerics from thee for ever, and they shall have the inheritance of this place."

Herein Patrick showed consummate prudence. The family of Hono were of the priestly caste; but they were also of the royal race of Connaught, and hence possessed a double influence. To set up a Briton or a stranger in

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<sup>1</sup> The text of the Tripartite has Bron, but we believe it is an error for 'Brian,' the elder brother of Niall of the Nine Hostages, and the great ancestor of all the Connaught Kings.

Elphin would have been a dangerous experiment, so he chose one of their own race to be the bishop of the place, a skilled artisan, too, in metal-work, just such a man as he wanted to do the work of the Church. The mention of Bite, nephew of Assicus, shows that the former was now rather advanced in years, and that his title as bishop was rather an honorary one. The work was to be done by Bite, but Assicus was the nominal ruler, and the holy mother of Bite, the nephew of Assicus, undertook to look after the new church in those ways which a woman can best manage. The name of Assicus is not found in that form in our ancient martyrologies, but the Martyrology of Tallaght commemorates Asaach<sup>1</sup> under date of April the 26th, which has long been regarded as the feast day of Assicus of Elphin. This goes to show that our Assicus of Elphin must be identified with Essa or Essu, who is described as one of the three artisans of Patrick in the lists of his household. His nephew, Bite, is the second, and Tassach, who 'gave Patrick the Sacrifice' at his death, was the third; so that Elphin supplied two of the famous artificers of Patrick, who were, perhaps, the most indispensable and most valuable members of his religious household.

This is recognised by the Author of the Tripartite, for he adds that the 'Holy Bishop Assicus was Patrick's copper-smith; and he made for Patrick altars and square patens and book-covers, in honour of Patrick, and one of these patens (doubtless with its cup) was in Armagh, and another in Elphin, and another in Domnach Mor Maige Seolai, on the altar of Felart, the holy bishop of the Hy Bruin Seolai, far west from Elphin'—near Headford, in the Co. Galway.

We are told that Imlech Onand<sup>2</sup> was at that time the name of the place where Ono dwelt, which he offered to Patrick to be the site of his church, 'but,' adds the Tripartite, 'it is called Ail-Find to-day. The place is so named from the stone (ail) which was raised out of the well that was made by Patrick in the green, and which stands on the brink of the well; it is so called from the water.'<sup>3</sup> The writer first says the place got its name Ail-

<sup>1</sup> It is quite clear that Asaach, Essa, and Essu must be regarded as different forms of the same Irish name; and that Assicus was regarded as the Latin equivalent, which is the form used in the *Tripartite*.

<sup>2</sup> That is Ono's Marsh or Meadow. Tirechan calls it Imliuch Harmon; but it is probably the same name corrupted by the transcriber.

<sup>3</sup> De aqua nuncupatur (locus).

Find from the 'White Stone' taken out of the water; then he seems to say that the stone gets its name from the clear water, so that Elphin would mean the Stone of the Clear (Stream), rather than the White Stone (over the well).

The 'clear stream' of most excellent water is still flowing in the 'green' before the spot where the church of Assicus once stood. But the white stone itself which stood on its margin was broken and carried off for building material, it is said, by the Rector of the Protestant church, which now stands on the commanding site where the original church of Assicus formerly stood. The Catholic church is at the western end of the town, a new and very commodious edifice.

The subsequent history of Assicus, as told in the Tripartite, is not without its own pathetic human interest, and the mere recital of the story is of itself an evidence in favour of the authenticity of those ancient documents.

"Assicus thereafter in shame, because of a lie told by him—or, rather, of him—went in flight into the North to Sliabh Liacc (now Slieve League) in Tir Boguini. He abode there seven years in an island (that is Rathlin O'Beirne), and his monks went a-seeking of him, and at length, after much trouble, they found him in the mountain glens—(Glen Columcille)—and they brought him away with them, but on his journey home he died in the wilderness, and they buried him at Raith Cungai, in Sereth—now Racoon, near Ballintra—for he declared that he would not go back again into Magh Ai on account of the falsehood that had been circulated there. Hence came the proverb, 'it is time to travel into Serthe,'<sup>1</sup> that is, we may assume, to do penance. But the holy old man was rightly deemed a saint in Serthe, and the king of the land gave to him, and to his monks after his death, the grazing of a hundred cows, with their calves, and of twenty oxen, as a permanent benefice. 'His relics are in Raith Cungai, and to Patrick belongs the church,' as it belonged to his disciples, 'but the community of Columcille and Ard Sratha have taken possession of it.'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This proverb would seem to imply that the falsehood was spoken by Assicus himself, otherwise it would have no point.

<sup>2</sup> This passage seems to imply that the Columbian house at Drumhome in the neighbourhood encroached on the possessions of the monks of Racoon, and denied the claims of Armagh as mother church. The monks of Aid-straw also appear to have seized some of the land.

The venerable Assicus, if he sinned, did penance. It is a far cry from Elphin to Rathlin O'Beirne, a small, storm-swept island at the very extremity of south-western Donegal. Even at the present day, though green and fertile, no one dwells there but the lighthouse keeper. There is no lonelier spot around the wild west coast of Ireland, yet there he dwelt away from men for seven long years, sometimes, perhaps, coming ashore to the glens, where his monks found him working at his craft, after long seeking throughout the black North. Reluctantly, it seems, he consented to return. 'He was ashamed to go back to Magh Ai,' because of the lie told there, and he sickened by the way--the long, rugged road that leads down to the North--between Ballyshannon and Ballintra, at a place that still bears the ancient name, shortened into Racoon, in Magh Serthe. There he died, and there they buried him as a saint on the summit of a small round hill to the west of the highway near Ballintra. We searched the place in vain for any trace of his grave. It is still used as a burial place for children, but the planter who got the ancient site of his monastery in Tirhugh knows nothing of Assicus. Still, he has spared the holy spot, and the grave of Assicus has not yet become common earth. In our view this noble shame of the artist-bishop, bred up, as he was, in paganism, is a higher testimony to his virtue and nobility of character than if a whole volume of miracles were attributed to him by later, but less trustworthy, writers.

Thereafter Patrick went from Elphin to Dumacha Hy n Ailella--the Mounds of the Hy Ailella--and there he founded a church known as Sencell Dumaige, the Old Church of the Mounds. This place<sup>1</sup> is only one mile north-west of Elphin, on the very verge of the southern bounds of what was then the territory of the sons of Ailell. It still bears its ancient name, and gives title to the parish of Shankill, west of Elphin.

The old church was just at the cross-roads beyond the Deanery, and the 'mounds' that gave it its ancient name may still be noticed. But, the building itself has now completely disappeared, although the graveyard is still much frequented.

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<sup>1</sup> Colgan places it in Ciarraige Arne, barony of Costelloe, Co. Mayo; but this is clearly a mistake. Archdeacon O'Rorke places it at Carradoo, Co. Sligo. There was a Sencell in Ciarraige, but not this one, as Colgan himself explains elsewhere. At Carradoo there is no old church at all, although it is said there was a nunnery at Carricknahorna.

It may be, however, that the Mounds of the Hy Ailella does not signify that the territory was theirs, but that it was merely a place name, where some of that clan fell in battle, and so their burial mounds gave the place its name. It seems rather to have been in Magh Ai. At this point Patrick was at the meeting of three territories, Tir Ailella, Corcu Achlann, and Magh Ai, in its stricter sense, which designated merely the royal demesne of the Connaught kings. Their palace lay straight before him to the south-west, about four miles distant, on the brow of the beautiful ridge which overlooks one of the fairest scenes in Ireland.

But before leaving Shankill, Patrick, as usual, provided for the future of the young church which he founded there. He left in it Maichet and Cetchen and Rodan, a chief priest, and, moreover, Mathona, the sister of the youthful Benen. There Mathona received the veil from Patrick and from Rodan, and thus became their spiritual daughter. It is interesting to observe how carefully Patrick provided for his clerics and for his nuns, according to their seniority, so to speak. First of all, he left the two Emers at Cionbroney. They were the earliest holy maidens whom he ever knew in Ireland, and now he leaves, at least for a time, Mathona, the sister of Benignus, who was probably the next of the Christian maidens, who, following her holy brother's example, resolved to give her life for Christ. Of Maichet and Cetchen, the presbyters of Shankill, we know nothing. Their names appear to be British, and it is not improbable that they were amongst the British disciples of Patrick who had followed him to Ireland. Only one Rodan is mentioned in the Martyrology of Tallaght under date of the 25th of September. The name merely is given.

The text of the Tripartite would seem to imply that from Shankill Patrick went into the Tirerrill country and founded the church of Tamnach (Taunagh) beyond Lough Arrow to the north, over which Mathona was either then or later on appointed Superioress.<sup>1</sup> Our view, however, is that these things are said by anticipation of what occurred afterwards, that Patrick from Shankill went straight towards Cruachan, which was his purpose from the beginning, and

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<sup>1</sup>The *Book of Armagh* (Rolls, p. 314) clearly shows that it was *Mathona*, not *Patrick*, who went through the mountain of the Hy Ailella at this time, and founded the church in Tamnach, which, at a later period, was visited by Patrick. The nominative to the verb *exiit* is not *Patricius* but *Mathona*.



that the visit of the Saint to North Tirerrill took place at a later period, after he had gone round through the west of Connaught. It is likely, too, that this Mathona was sister, not of Benen of Meath, but of Tirerrill, as we shall see later on.

From Shankill, then, Patrick went by the high ridge stretching over the small lakes and marshes that intervened on the south by Cloonyquin towards Tulsk or Tomona. It was the road to Cruachan, and he probably pitched his camp for the night not far west of Tulsk. When the morning sun rose over the hills near the Shannon he and his clerics went at sunrise to the well, namely Clebach, on the eastern flanks of Cruachan Hill. The well is there still, a great rushing fountain coming out from the rocks just under the road from Tulsk towards Cruachan, close to the spot where stood the ancient church built expressly to commemorate this most touching scene in the whole history of St. Patrick. Even the old chroniclers felt its charm, and were almost melted into poetry when they described it. It never fades from the mind of those who read the history of St. Patrick, and to this day no one can ever hear the story unmoved. But to appreciate it fully, one must visit the place or, at least, try to realize the scene.

### III.—PATRICK AT CLEBACH WELL.

Patrick and his household camped during the night close to this well of Cliabach, or Clebach, intending next day to proceed to Cruachan. They rose early, before the sun, to chant their office, and prepare to celebrate the mystic Sacrifice. They were dressed in their long robes, worn by the monks of the time : but their tonsured heads were bare, and their feet were sandalled. There is a green bank all round the well ; and limestone crops up here and there, making natural seats just on the margin of the great limpid fountain. It was a quiet and beautiful spot ; and so the clerics sat down on the rocks, with their books in their hands, to chant their Office, just as the sun was rising over the far-distant hills of Leitrim, through which they had traversed some days before.

But now they, too, see a strange sight at early morn—two maidens tripping down the green meadows ; one of fair complexion, with her golden hair streaming in the wind ; the other of ruddier features, crowned with auburn hair. They were attended by their maids and by two aged

men, clearly Druids, who had charge of the maidens, as their fosterers. It was customary for these royal girls, according to the simple habits of the times, to come and wash in the fountain, as royal maidens did in ancient Greece. But now, when they came to the fountain and saw the clerics seated with the books in their hands, dressed in strange garments, and speaking strange words, they stood lost in amazement. But they were royal maidens, daughters of the High King of Erin, and they were not afraid. Their curiosity prompted them to speak, for, as the Book of Armagh tells us—they knew not who the strangers were; nor of what guise; nor of what race; nor of what country—they thought them fairy men, or gods of the earth, or, perhaps, ghosts.<sup>1</sup>

Wherefore they said—"Who are you, or whence have you come?" Whereupon Patrick, repressing their curiosity, said—"It were better for you to confess your faith in our true God than to ask about our race." The narrative is exact, but the questions are compressed in it.

Then the elder girl, the fair-haired Eithne, said—"Who is your God? Where is your God? Of what is He God? Where is His dwelling place? Has your God sons and daughters, gold and silver? Is He ever-living? Is He beautiful? Have many chiefs fostered His Son? Are His daughters beautiful and dear to the men of this world? Dwelleth He in heaven or on earth—or in the sea, or in the rivers, or in the mountains, or in the valleys.<sup>2</sup> How is He to be loved? Is He to be found? and shall we find Him in youth or in old age? Tell us this knowledge of God, and how He can be seen."

This flood of questions the curious maiden, with royal courage, addressed to Patrick, the leader of those strange beings. Then Patrick, full of the Holy Spirit, says the writer, replied to the royal maidens, answering all their questions, but beginning with the most important.

"Our God is the God of all men; the God of the heavens and of the earth, of the sea and of the rivers; the God of the sun and of the moon; the God of the lofty hills and of the deep valleys; a God who is over the heavens, in the heavens, under the heavens; Who hath for His dwelling-

<sup>1</sup> Sed illos viros *side*, aut deorum terrenorum, aut fantasiam aestimaverunt. p. 315.

<sup>2</sup>The Gaels worshipped Terrene gods, whom they believed to dwell in the fountains, and the green hills, or the dark woods, where the Druids had their temples.

place heaven and earth and sea, and all things that are therein. He breathes in all things, gives life to all things, rules all things, sustains all things.

“He kindles the light of the sun, and the moon-light he keeps by night. He made the fountains in the dry land, and the dry islands in the sea; and the stars He has set to aid the greater lights. He has a Son alike and co-eternal with himself. Neither is the Son younger than the Father, nor is the Father older than the Son, and the Holy Spirit breathes in them both; nor are the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost divided.

“Now, as you are the daughters of an earthly king, I wish to bring you nigh to this heavenly King. Believe ye, then.”

And the maidens, as with one voice and one heart, said—“Teach us with all care how we may believe in this heavenly King; tell us how we may see Him face to face, and how we may do all that you have told us.” Then Patrick, after instruction, no doubt, said—“Do you believe that by baptism the sin of your father and mother (original sin) is taken away?” They said—“We believe it.” “Do you believe in penance after sin?”—that is, as a remedy for sin. “We believe it.” “Do you believe in a life after death, and a resurrection on the day of judgment?” “We believe it.” “Do you believe in the unity of the Church?” “We believe it.”<sup>1</sup> Whereupon they were baptised, and Patrick blessed a white veil and placed it on their heads. This was, apparently, not the veil of the baptismal rite, but the white veil of their virginity, which they consecrated to God.

Then they ‘asked to see the face of Christ,’ but the Saint said to them—“You cannot see the face of Christ except you taste of death and receive the Sacrifice” (before death). And they replied—“Give us the Sacrifice that we may see our Spouse, the Son of God.” So, by the well-side, under God’s open sky, the Sacrifice was offered, and they received the Eucharist of God, and fell asleep in death. Then they were placed in the same bed covered with one coverlet; and their friends made great mourning for the maidens twain; but all heaven rejoiced, for so far as we can

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<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that Patrick here merely requires faith in the chief articles of the Apostles’ Creed. He had, no doubt, first instructed the royal maidens, and then required them to make a formal act of faith in those articles, as is done still before baptism.

judge they were the first of the white-robed host of Irish maidens who passed the gates of death to be with their Spouse for ever in heaven.

‘Give us the Sacrifice.’ Each bright head  
 Bent toward it as sunflowers bend to the sun :  
 They ate ; and the blood from the warm cheek fled :  
 The exile was over ; the home was won :  
 A starry darkness o’erflowed their brain.  
 Far waters beat on some heavenly shore :  
 Like the dying away of a low, sweet strain  
 The young life ebbed, and they breathed no more :  
 In death they smiled, as though on the breast  
 Of the Mother Maid they had found their rest.

AUBREY DE VERE.

We have here given the account of the Book of Armagh, word for word. To add to it would be to spoil it. The same account, in almost exactly the same words, is given in the Irish of the Tripartite ; so we may fairly assume it gives us not only an exact, though brief, account of what happened by Clebach Well, but also a fair summary of Patrick’s preaching to the people whom he was about to baptise there. Then we are told of the two Druids who hitherto were listeners only, if they were at all present at the earlier portion of this beautiful scene. It is rather doubtful, for it is stated when the maidens fell asleep in death, that Caplait, who fostered one of them, came and wept ; whereupon Patrick consoled him, no doubt, and preached the Gospel to him also, ‘and he believed, and was shorn as a cleric’—that is, he received the tonsure by which he became a cleric destined to the service of the Church.

But his brother Mael acted differently at first. He came up in anger, and said, “My brother has become a Christian, but it must not be so, nor shall it profit thee : I will bring him back to heathenism :” and he spoke injurious words to Patrick. But Patrick here, in a patient spirit, made allowance for the anger of the man. He was long-suffering with Mael, and continued to preach to him until he converted him also to penance ; then he tonsured him like his brother, changing the *airbacc giunnae*, or Druid’s tonsure, into the frontal clerical tonsure then used in Ireland, whence, we are told, arose the celebrated Irish proverb, ‘Mael is like unto Caplait,’ which seems to signify the hardened sinner has at last been converted.

So both the Druids believed in God, and when the time of wailing for the maidens was over they buried them by the fountain Clebach, making for them a round grave or *ferta*, according to the ancient custom of the Scots. But we call it, says Tirechan, a '*relic*,' from the relics of the dead which are therein. And that graveyard, or *ferta*, with the bones of the saints, was given to God and Patrick and to his heirs for ever.<sup>1</sup> They also built a church of earth in the same place, and it was called Sendomnach Maige Ai, and was given to Patrick for all time.

There can be no doubt that this ancient church is that whose ruins, though of later date, still stand close by Clebach's Well. It is called '*Ogulla*'—the Church of the virgins—and has given title to the parish. At first sight it might seem that the well is too far from Cruachan, somewhat more than a mile, to be the well where the maidens were wont to wash. But the Druids with their charge may have lived nearer to it, and it is certainly the only fountain on the eastern slopes of Cruachan which answers the description in the text. The name, too, of *Ogulla* is peculiar and convincing.

#### IV.—ROYAL CRUACHAN.

Cruachan itself, the ancient and famous palace of Magh Ai, deserves a short notice here.<sup>2</sup>

We find from various entries in the Annals that princes of the line of Heremon dwelt in Cruachan of Magh Ai from the beginning, and continued to dwell there down to the Anglo-Norman invasion. The land is fertile, the prospect over all the royal plain is far-reaching, so that the advance of a foe could be seen at a distance, and the air is very salubrious. It was for seventy years the scene of the loves and the wars of the renowned Queen Meave during the first century before the Christian era, and always continued to be the chief royal residence of the Gaelic kings of Connaught.

Not far from the royal rath was the royal cemetery, which is filled with the dust of kings. It was perhaps the

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<sup>1</sup> In the Registry of Clonmacnoise *Ogulla* is called *Ciliogealha*, and it was granted by Cathal O'Connor, with other churches, to Cluain as the price of his mortuary church in Ciaran's holy ground.

<sup>2</sup> According to the *Dindsenchas* the name is derived from a lady named *Cruachu*, or *Cruachan*, a handmaid of *Etain*, who eloped with *Midir*, of *Bri Leith*. By the right of the fairy king the name of the handmaid clung to the place for ever—'in guerdon of thy travail it shall bear thy name.'

most celebrated of all the pagan cemeteries of Erin, and an ancient poem published by Petrie commemorates the long list of kings and queens, and warriors, 'and fierce fair women,' who sleep in the cemetery of the 'ever beauteous Cruachan,' as the poet calls it. There was a famous cave there, too, the enchanted cave of Cruachan, which is celebrated in fairy legends, and may still be seen near the royal cemetery. And there, too, stands the pillar-stone of red granite—the famous Cairrthe-dhearg—which marks the grave of the renowned Dathi, who fell either at the Alps, or at Drum Alban, in Scotland, on the field of victory, and was carried home to the Relig-na-riogh, to sleep with his royal sires—the latest kingly tenant of the pagan burial-ground.

The enchanted cave can still be seen; the royal cemetery can still be traced; and Dathi's pillar still stands erect above the hero's grave. But the royal palace is merely a great green mound overlooking all the wide-spreading plain of Magh Ai.

#### V.—PATRICK AMONGST THE CIARRAIGE OF MAGH AI.

Patrick next went from Cruachan into the place which the Tripartite calls Tir Cairedo, and Tirechan Magh Cairetha; but it is evidently the same name. It is about eight miles west of Cruachan, and lay around the modern town of Castlerea. In this plain Patrick founded a church near the place called Ard-lice, and he left therein Deacon Coeman. From him the church came to be called Kilkeevan; and the parish naturally took its title from the church. The old church was little more than a mile from Castlerea, to the west, and its ruins, or rather its site, in the old churchyard may still be seen, near the mansion of O'Conor Don, at Clonalis. Of Deacon Coeman himself, we know nothing else; but the epithet would seem to imply that he had been a deacon in the religious family of Patrick, and he is described as a youth dear to God and to Patrick.<sup>1</sup> The name is Irish, and it may be that he was in some way connected with the district. The modern parish of Castlerea is, properly speaking, the parish of Kilkeevan, and, as such, is set down in all the parochial registers of the diocese of Elphin, of which it forms the

<sup>1</sup> *Book of Armagh.*

most westerly district. It was also called Sen-domnach, being the oldest church of the place; but that name has disappeared from the memory of the people.

From Kilkeevan Patrick turned his steps northward, and came to Ard Senlis—the Height of the old Fort—and there he built a church, wherein he placed the holy virgin Lallocc; and near it he obtained another church site in Magh Nento. It would appear that Lallocc had her convent and oratory at some distance from the church of Magh Nento. The place is now known as Fairy Mount, a conspicuous hill about five miles north of Castlerea. Magh Nento was the surrounding plain.

Now, Patrick had in his company at Fairymount the holy Bishop Cethech, whom he first met, so far as we can judge, at Duleek, in Meath. Finding him a worthy youth, he had him trained, and then consecrated him a bishop. But though the mother of Cethech was of the Cenel Sai of Domnach Sairigi, near Duleek, his father was of the race of Ailell;<sup>1</sup> so now when he found himself near his father's people he, together with Lallocc, and the priest of Magh Nento, if not with Patrick also, resolved to pay a visit to his father's people. But what came of it is uncertain, for it is not there but at Oran, as we shall presently see, he founded his church; and Oran certainly was not in Tirerrill. It is distinctly brought out, however, that Bishop Cethech used to visit his mother's friends in Meath; 'and it was his custom to celebrate the Great Easter at Domnach Sairigi, near Duleek, but the Little Easter he used to celebrate at Kells (Cennannus<sup>2</sup>) with St. Comgilla.' because, as his monks used to say, it was he that had given the veil to that holy maiden, and so he retained, at least by courtesy, the right to visit her convent. The whole story is mentioned incidentally, and, perhaps, out of place; nor indeed is it likely that St. Patrick went further northward on this occasion.

But it is stated expressly that he went a little to the south into Hy Maine. The northern boundary of this territory may be taken roughly as extending at that time from Ballymoe on the Suck to Lanesborough on the

<sup>1</sup> The *Tripartite* says that Cethech's mother, not his father, was of the race of Ailell, and that Cianan of Duleek was his father. We follow Tirechan in the *Book of Armagh* as the better authority.

<sup>2</sup> At Ath-da-Laracc in Cennanus.—*Tripartite*.

Shannon,<sup>1</sup> so that when Patrick came into the barony of Ballymoe he was in the Hy Maine territory. There he founded a church about three miles west of Roscommon town at a place called Fidarta, or as it is now called, Fuerty, on the left bank of the Suck, although the parish includes both banks of the river at this place. Therein he left an archdeacon, or rather a chief deacon, of his household, namely, Deacon Just or Justus, whom, of course, he ordained as priest. To him also he gave 'his own book of ordinal and of baptism,' that is his missal and ritual, and Justus baptised the Hy Maine, and amongst them, we may add, was the celebrated St. Ciarain, the founder of Clonmacnoise. But this was long after, in his old age, as the Tripartite expressly states. It was about the year A.D. 512 when, according to the Tripartite, Justus was 140 years old,<sup>2</sup> 'as the best authorities say.' But the numerals in these cases given in the manuscripts are always uncertain. The ruins of an ancient church still remain at Fuerty; but it certainly was not a building of the time of St. Patrick.

In the parish of Athleague, south of Fuerty, there is a stone called Gloonpatrick<sup>3</sup> (Glun-Phadruig), so called because 'it bears the mark of Patrick's knee, which he left there when praying.' It shows that Patrick must have gone further south into Hy Many, either on this occasion or more likely later on when he was returning from the West to Tara, and went through Magh Finn on his way to Athlone.

## VI.—PATRICK AT ORAN.

Patrick does not appear to have gone further south on the present occasion, but turned back to Magh Ai, which was in Roscommon the centre of his missionary activity, as Tara was in Meath. He had, however, others amongst his household who wished to get churches in that fertile territory, and who, it seems, began to show signs of impatience at delay. Amongst them were certain Franks who had accompanied him from Gaul. We are now told

<sup>1</sup> From Ath-mogha (Ballymoe) to Sidh Neannta (Fairymount, south of Slieve Bawn), and thence to the Shannon at Clontuskert near Lanesborough. See *Hy Many*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Tirechan says there were exl. years, as the best authorities say, between the death of Patrick and the birth of Ciaran. The numerals most likely were xxi., which would be correct.

<sup>3</sup> *Hy Many*, p. 82.



that 'they went from him,' as if to set up for themselves. So Patrick followed them, it would seem—fifteen brothers and one sister, or perhaps five brothers and one sister; but only the names of three are given, Bernicius, Hibernicius, and Hemicus, with their sister Nitria.<sup>1</sup> And Patrick gave them many places to dwell in and serve God and the people, but the chief place he gave them was Imgoe Baislicc,<sup>2</sup> 'between Hy Maine and Magh Ai,' that is it was just on the boundary. Sachellus was their head, but he was not one of the Franks. Baslic is still the name of a parish church in the diocese of Elphin, and a glance at the map will show that it is only a little north of the boundary line between Hy Many and Magh Ai, as we have already described it. The old church was, we believe, near Castleplunket. It would appear that the Frenchmen had found out the place for themselves, or rather Patrick showed it to them 'with his finger' from the summit of the hill of Oran a little further south, where he was at the time engaged in founding a church. Although they went off to provide for themselves, they had returned to Patrick that he might sanction their choice of the places they had found;<sup>3</sup> they were clearly unwilling to set up anywhere without his express approval. The graphic language in which Tirechan tells how from the summit of the Hill of Oran Patrick pointed out with his finger the site of the church of Baslic on the high ground some five miles away due north, is a striking proof of the authenticity of the narrative, which he must have had directly or indirectly from eye-witnesses. Incidental touches of this kind, which are frequent both in Tirechan and the Tripartite, clearly show that the original narrative was both truthful and accurate.

A stump of a round tower still marks the site of the ancient church of Oran. The name Uaran means a cold spring; and Oran deserves it, for a beautiful spring pours out its abounding waters close to the tower and the ancient church. Patrick loved this place, for he had a keen eye for the beauties of nature, and was charmed by the swelling

<sup>1</sup> Tirechan names only two brothers—Bernicius et Hemicus.

<sup>2</sup> Tirechan calls it Basilica Sanctorum, because, doubtless, many of the foreign saints lived and died there, but Sachell, brother of Cethecus of Oran, was its bishop, or chief priest, and the church itself was in Ciarraige of Magh Ai at its eastern extremity.

<sup>3</sup> They had found several places in the neighbourhood, the names of which, Tirechan says, he did not know except the 'Basilica Sanctorum' alone, that is Baslic. It still retains the name.

fountain watering those green and fertile fields; and he enjoyed the noble prospect which is revealed from the summit of the hill. He even became poetic in its praises:—

Uaran Gar!  
 Uaran, which I have loved, which loved me.  
 Sad is my cry, O dear God,  
 Without my drink out of Uaran Gar,  
 Cold Uaran,  
 Cold is every one who has gone from it (with sadness),  
 Were it not my King's command,  
 I would not wend from it, though the weather is cold,  
 Thrice I went into the land,  
 Three fifties was the number (with me),  
 But with thee . . .  
 Was my consolation, O Uaran.

The place is as beautiful as it was of old, but it would be hard to get 'three fifties' of human beings there now. Of bullocks there are plenty, but of men there are few. One or two wretched cottages and the broken tower now mark the desolate site of the church on that fair but lonely hill which Patrick loved so well.

Over this church of Oran, Patrick placed Cethecus, the brother of Sachell, or Sachellus, of 'Baslic.' He was a holy youth, and Tirechan says that he crossed the river Suck without wetting his feet or his shoes,<sup>1</sup> which was taken as a proof of his sanctity. It would appear also that Patrick's family at the time numbered three fifties, which is not wonderful, if we bear in mind that he had to make provision from amongst them for the spiritual care of the young churches which he was every day founding. Many of them still were Gauls and Britons.

#### VII.—PATRICK BAPTISES THE SONS OF BRIAN AT MAGH SELCE.

'Thereafter Patrick went to Magh Selce, that is to Duma Selce, where the six sons of Brian were biding, namely, Bolc the Red, Derthacht, Eichen, Cremthann, Coelcharna, and Echaid.' This Brian,<sup>2</sup> son of Eochy

<sup>1</sup> Aridi pedes ejus et ficones erant sudæ.

<sup>2</sup> He is described as a brown-haired, powerful, bull-like man, with solidity of limb, and with the strength of nine, and in either hand endowed with equal weapon-skill.—*Silva Gaul.*, 374.

Moyvane, was the great ancestor of all the Connaught Kings, and the elder brother, by a different mother, of Niall of Nine Hostages. The six named above were therefore first cousins of King Laghaire, and if the succession went by seniority would have even a better claim than he to the throne of Erin. Magh Ai was, however, their father's territory; and so we find them now not far from Cruachan. It has been said, indeed, that Magh Selce<sup>1</sup> was the plain around Castlehacket, west of Tuam, in the Co. Galway; but the whole course of the narrative here points to it as a part of Magh Ai, and we think it can be clearly identified therein. It means the Plain of the Chase.

Here is the narrative of what took place at Magh Selce:—

Patrick wrote three names in that place on three stones, to wit, JESUS, SOTER, SALVATOR—the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin names of the Saviour. And he blessed the Hy Briuin from Duma Selce and Patrick's Seat is there among the three stones on which he inscribed the letters. The names of the Bishops who were with him there are Bron (Biteus), of Cashel Irre; Sachell, of Baslic Mor in Ciarraige; Brochaid of Imlech Ech, brother of Lomman of Trim; Bronach the Priest; Rodan, Cassan, Benen, Patrick's successor, and Benen, brother of Cethech; Bishop Felart, and a nun, a sister of his, and another sister who is in an island in the sea of Connacne, namely, Croch (now Cruach),<sup>2</sup> of Cuil Connacne. And he founded a church on Loch Selce, namely, Domnach Mor Maige Selce, in which he baptised the Hy Briuin and blessed them.

This narrative is highly interesting and instructive. Patrick's purpose was always to gain the chiefs, for then he could easily win their followers. These six princes,

<sup>1</sup> Not Magh Selce, but Magh Seola was the name of the plain around Castlehacket. It was the ancient patrimony of the O'Flahertys before they were driven westward, beyond the Lakes, in the thirteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> This is now called Deer Island, but, properly, Cruachan Coelann. The foundations only of her church remain. She was the sister, it appears, of Bishop Felart, and must have gone to the island from Headfort, her brother's church—Donaghmore of Headfort.

Another identification has been suggested. Croch of Cuil Connacne is the village now called Cross, near Cong, where there was an old church, beyond doubt, Cuil Connacne being another form of Connacne Cuil Toladh, the ancient name of the modern barony of Kilmaine, in which Cross is situated. This is highly probable, as the nun in question would naturally like to be near her brother, Bishop Felart, at Donaghpatrick, near Headfort.—See Knox's *Notes*,

named above, were the chiefs of a great part of Connaught, and hence he sought them out, instructed, and baptised them, and erected these enduring memorials in stone that there might be some monument to commemorate the great event. Carnfree, near Tulsk, was, from time immemorial, the place where the Kings of Connaught were inaugurated. It was the centre of their royalty, and hence we find that Patrick erected this memorial close to the place to be a testimony to future ages of their reception of Christianity, and their renunciation of paganism. Oran, where we last left him, is only a few miles to the south, and from Oran, according to the narrative, he came straight to meet the princes at Magh Selce. We conclude, therefore, that it was somewhere in Magh Ai, not far from Oran, and that there was a lake in the place, and a church was founded either on the shore or in an island of that lake. The parish of Killukin, north of Oran, includes or borders on Carnfree; in that parish is a lake, now called Arda-killin Lake;<sup>1</sup> on its shores stood the old church of Killukin, and that we believe was the place where the Hy Briuin of Magh Ai were baptised, and where Patrick set up the memorial stones. The holy well of their baptism is on the lake's shore.

Then, again, St. Patrick's church at Castlehacket is referred to later on in the Tripartite as Domnach Mór Maige Seolai, which is quite a different name from Domnach Mor Maige Selce; it proves in fact that the two plains and the two churches were quite different<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, we know that the princes of the O'Conor line had in after ages a famous castle or fort at this very place which is called in the Annals Ard an Choillin, now Ardakillin.<sup>3</sup> The ancient mounds still remain near the shore of the lake in the townland of Ardakillin; so there can hardly be a doubt that these mounds are the Dumae Selga referred to in the Tripartite, which continued to be for many centuries a stronghold of the O'Conors, especially of O'Conor Roe, after The O'Conor Don had set up further west in his great castle of Balliutober. The exact situation of the old

<sup>1</sup> But heretofore called Cargins Lake, and it is so called still, we believe.

<sup>2</sup> It is clear from the *Dinnsen. has* that Dumae Selga was in Magh Ai, and Magh Selga or Selce was the plain around the mounds and lake. *Kennes Dinncenchas*, 471. There is another lake now called Cloonfree Lake nearer to Strokestown, which may be the place indicated.

<sup>3</sup> See *Four Masters*, A.D. 1388.

castle of O'Connor Roe was on the northern shore of the lake, close to the high road, about two miles to the west of Strokestown.

St. Patrick's sojourn in this district is further confirmed by existing memorials. For instance, there is a St. Patrick's well on the shore of Ardakillin Lake which marks the presence of the Saint in the district not far, we believe, from the very spot where he set up the three memorial stones to commemorate the conversion of the Hy Briuin princes to the Christian faith. Local traditions also still vividly testify to the presence of St. Patrick in that locality.

#### VIII.—PATRICK AMONGST THE GREGRAIDE OF LOUGH GARA.

Patrick now went north from Magh Ai to the Gregraide of Lough Techet. This is the beautiful and well-known lake south-west of Boyle, now called Lough Gara. The railway to Sligo beyond Boyle gives some picturesque glimpses of the lake as well as of the Boyle river, which carries its superfluous waters through that town down to Lough Key on their way to join the Shannon. The 'Greagraidhe,' as they are called in the Book of Rights, occupied the territory around the lake, which is now known as the barony of Coolavin. They had migrated into this territory from Ulster, for they were descended from Aengus Fionn, who was a king of that province in the first century. Another colony of the same tribe were settled on the right bank of the Moy, and they were a rude and ill-conditioned people.

There, east of the lake, "Patrick founded a church, to wit, in Drumne,<sup>1</sup> and by it he dug a well, and it hath no stream flowing into it or out of it; yet it is for ever full, and hence its name 'Bithlan,' that is, the 'Everfull.'" It is there still, and is ever full, as of yore, under the shade of an ancient ash, about three miles from Boyle, on the right side of the road to Frenchpark. The spot cannot be mistaken, for it is still called St. Patrick's Well. But the church has disappeared, only the church-yard remains.

"After that he founded Cell Atrachta in Gregraide, and

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<sup>1</sup> Tirechan calls it Drumma. Though east of the lake it is part of the barony of Coolavin, and is still in the Co. Sligo—a mere angle on the 'wrong side of the lake,' as a native described it.

he placed therein Talan's daughter, who took the veil from Patrick's hand, and he left a paten and chalice with her." She is there described as the daughter of Talan of the Gregraide of Loch Techet, a sister of Coeman of Airtne Coeman. Patrick blessed the veil for her head, and at the time they were bidding in Drumana<sup>1</sup>; 'but Machara is now the name of the place,' adds the Tripartite. A 'casula' was sent from Heaven into Patrick's bosom, whilst they were bidding there. "Let this casula (or chasuble) be thine, O nun," said Patrick; "not so," she said, "for it has been given not to me but to thy Beatitude."

This is an interesting narrative, and the local details are strikingly like the truth; yet there are difficulties about the chronology. According to the statement here given by the Tripartite, which is in all points confirmed by Tirechan, an older authority, this Saint *Attracta*, as she is now called, must have been at least some sixteen years of age when she received the veil from St. Patrick, most probably about the year 437 or 438. It is not likely, therefore, that she lived much beyond the fifth century; yet her Life, as given by Colgan, represents the saint as contemporary with Saint *Nathy* and other personages, who flourished in the sixth and early part of the seventh century. But these stories cannot be accepted as authentic, or must be referred to her successors at Killaraght rather than to herself. The place called the Maghera seems to have been on the south shore of the lake which still forms a part of the parish of Killaraght, and contains an ancient grave-yard close to the shore, which was probably the site of the nunnery. There is no saint of the diocese of Achonry more celebrated than *Attracta*. Numerous old churches and holy wells throughout the whole diocese still bear her name, which is also intimately associated with the folk-lore of the district. It is interesting to note that she was a sister of St. Coeman of Airtne, which some take to be the most easterly of the three islands of Aran. This island was always known as *Ara Coeman*, because he was its patron saint, and if we accept the authority of the Tripartite, he was not a brother of St. Kevin of Glendalough, as O'Flaherty says, but rather of Saint *Attracta*

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<sup>1</sup> Called before Drumne. The learned Dr. O'Rorke, in his history of Sligo, makes this place to be Drum, close to Boyle, on the south-east. But the narrative shows it was close to the Church of Killaraght, and the townland still retains its ancient name, Drummad, in the parish of Tibohine.

of Loch Techet. We must assume, therefore, that he was born in that neighbourhood, and that his father was Talan, chief of the district around the lake. His beautiful little church in Inisheer<sup>1</sup> still stands, and is dear to the natives of the island, who often visit his grave, and never fail to invoke the powerful name of Coemhan when the tempests of the wild west rage around their little boats, and they believe their own beloved saint seldom fails to watch over them and calm the angry waters.

Both Attracta, then, and her brother Coemhan were children of Talan, a chief of the Gregraide of Loch Techet. This tribe were descended from Cufinn, otherwise called Aengus Finn, a son of the famous Fergus MacRoy. The modern half barony of Coolavin (Cuil-o bh-Finn) takes its name from the descendants of this ancient hero, and represents their territory around Lough Gara. As a body they might be described as a bad lot in the time of St. Patrick, and he foretold that their name and power would disappear from the land—a prediction that has been completely fulfilled.

Patrick did not then cross the lake to the north, but he went further on towards Boyle to preach to the sons of Erc, 'at the place where the nuns now live,' says Tirechan. But the godless crew stole the Saint's horses, at the Ford of the Sons of Erc,<sup>2</sup> whereupon he cursed them, and said—"Your offspring shall serve the offspring of your brethren for ever," and so it came to pass. Tirechan tells us that these things took place on the southern shore of the Boyle River at Eas Mic n-Eirc, now called the Assylin, which was an ancient ford on the Boyle River, just at the point where the railway now crosses it. The nunnery was near the ford.

Patrick did not then cross the dark Curliou Hills, but turned back again to the south-west by Frenchpark and Loughglynn and came into Magh Airtig, which he blessed. Artagh, as it is now called, still retains the ancient name, and it is said by O'Donovan to contain the parishes of Tibohine and Kilnamanagh,<sup>3</sup> in the north-west corner of

<sup>1</sup> O'Flaherty (*West Connaught*, p. 90.), says that the genitive of Ara is Airtne or Arann; if this be so the *Tripartite* actually describes Coemhan as of Aran, that is of Inisheer. The islanders call him Cavan.

<sup>2</sup> The nunnery was founded at a later period, and the Ford was called Assylin. The convent was close to the Ford, just at the point where the railway now crosses the river. An old churchyard marks the place.

<sup>3</sup> Between the River Lung and the Breedoge. *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 477.

the County Roscommon. It is sometimes called Ciarraige Airtech, because this district was inhabited by a tribe of colonists from Kerry, who had originally settled further west, as we shall presently see. It is merely stated in the Tripartite that Patrick blessed 'Ailech Artig<sup>1</sup> in Telach na cloch,' but Tirechan says he *returned* (from Assylin) to Magh Airtech, and he founded the church of Senchell<sup>2</sup> in that plain; and *then* blessed the place called Tulach Lapidum, which is manifestly the same name as Telach na cloch. It appears to be the place now called Tullaghan Rock,<sup>3</sup> the last part of which is obviously a corruption, and is situated near Edmonstown House, close to Ballaghaderreen. The 'old church,' in the plain, was, probably situated in the ancient graveyard, which may still be seen a little to the left of the road, about a mile from Lung Bridge, at the mearing of the county. This was what is now called 'Artagh North.' Thence he went further on towards the south-west, to 'Drummat Ciarraigi,' now the townland of Drummad, in the parish of Tibohine, and in the electoral division of 'Artagh South,' which shows in what a remarkable way the ancient names have been preserved in this district.

Here he found two brothers, Bibar and Lochru, sons of Tamanchann of the Ciarraige, fighting with swords about their father's land after his death. Patrick, whilst yet an acre away from them,<sup>4</sup> blessed their hands, doubtless by making the sign of the cross, 'and their hands stiffened around their sword-hilts, so that they could neither stretch them nor lower them.' Then Patrick said—"Sit ye still," and he made peace between them. Then they gave the land to Patrick for the good of their father's soul; and Patrick founded a church therein, in which he placed Conn the artificer, brother of Bishop Sachell of Baslic. The ancient graveyard, north of Drumlough Wood, in all probability marks the site of this Patrician church, which

<sup>1</sup> Knox in his *Notes* identifies 'Ailech Artig' with the place now called Castlemore. Ailech itself was, as its name implies, an ancient fort, that is still to be seen. The old church founded by Patrick was within the fort.

<sup>2</sup> 'Cella Senes' in the text, which is equivalent to Senchell, that is 'the old church.'

<sup>3</sup> It is not easy to trace St. Patrick's movements here. Our idea is that he crossed by the ford or togher, between Upper and Lower Lough Gara, now called the Cut, and came by Clogher to the place now called 'Tullaghan Rock,' a townland close to Edmonstown House, where the rocky eminence is still visible, and, hearing of the dispute between the brothers, he *went out* to Drummad.

<sup>4</sup> Tirechan.



was thus in the very centre of this extensive but barren district. Two centuries later St. Baithen built a church in the same parish, which has given it its present title of Tibohine; but from the account given in his Life,<sup>1</sup> as sketched by Colgan, we gather that he was a great grandson of that Enda whom St. Patrick had baptised at Uisneach, and that he inherited this Patrician church in Tir 'Enda' of Airtech as a matter of spiritual inheritance belonging to his tribe.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Feb. xix

<sup>2</sup> According to the rules of spiritual inheritance as laid down in the *Book of Armagh*.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ST. PATRICK IN MAYO.

#### I.—PATRICK AMONGST CIARRAIGE OF MAYO.

THENCE from 'Ciarraige Airtech' Patrick went further west to 'Ciarraige Arne,' where he met Ernaisc and his son, Loarnach, sitting under a tree. And Patrick wrote an alphabet or catechism for the youth Loarnach, and he remained with him—Patrick and his family of twelve men<sup>1</sup>—for a week, or more. And Patrick founded a church in that place, and made him the abbot or superior thereof, and he was, indeed, a man full of the Holy Spirit.

This shows us what we know otherwise must be true—that Patrick spent a week, or sometimes a fortnight, in each new district, preaching, baptising, and building his church with the help of the willing hands of the people. On Sunday he consecrated it; and when he had no man of his own 'family' ready to place over it he took some other likely youth, generally a son of the chief, gave him a catechism, taught him how to say his psalter, read his missal and his ritual, and then ordained him for the service of the Church. But these boys were educated youths; they had well-trained memories, for they generally belonged to the schools of the Bards or Brehons, and so in a very short time they could be trained to do the indispensable work of the ministry. But we must also assume that for some time they accompanied the Saint on his missionary journeys in their own neighbourhood, and when that was impossible he left one or more of his own 'familia' to give them further instructions and moral guidance.

We find reference in the above passages to three districts called Ciarraige or Kerry, for the name is the same. This tribe, like their namesakes of the South, derived their descent from Ciar, son of Fergus MacRoy

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<sup>1</sup>As Patrick had to camp out for the most part, he needed to have several assistants with him. Their names are given elsewhere. They were all clerics.

and of Meave, Queen of Connaught. It is evident from the Lives of St. Patrick that they were established in Connaught before he began to preach there, in 437, or thereabout. The territory which they inhabited to the west of Cruachan is, perhaps, the poorest and most barren in Ireland, except one district, which contained comparatively good land. That is Ciarraige of Magh Ai, comprehending the parish of Kilkeevan, around Castlereagh.<sup>1</sup> Their patron saint in after times was St. Caelainn, a daughter of their own race, whose church and tithing land was, says O'Donovan, about one mile east of Castlereagh. The second sub-tribe of the Ciarraige were called the Ciarraige of Airtech, in the north-west of Roscommon, of whom we have just spoken. The third division was the Ciarraige of Arne, as the Tripartite calls them, that is those who dwelt around 'Loch na n-Arneadh,' as the name is given by O'Donovan,<sup>2</sup> that is the 'Lake of the Sloe Bushes.' It is now called Lough Mannin, and is situated about two miles to the north of Ballyhaunis. This is the heart of that wild territory of which three quarters, in Perrott's composition of Connaught, were taken to be equivalent to one quarter elsewhere. It was a wide desert, including the parishes of Aghamore, Knock, Bekan, and Annagh, desolate, water-logged and wholly undrained, whose marshy flats supply the head waters of the Suck, the Lung, and many tributaries of the Moy, as well as of several other streams that flow westward into Lough Mask and Lough Corrib. That St. Patrick had the courage to travel through it in those ancient days, shows that he was a man to be deterred by no obstacle in the prosecution of his great task.

The church founded by Patrick in this Ciarraige of the Lake, over which he placed Loarnach,<sup>3</sup> is, doubtless, the ancient church of Aghamore, in the very centre of the district, about a mile to the north of the lake, that is, Lough Mannin. But Tirechan adds that either then, or

<sup>1</sup> It extended from the Bridge of Cloonalis westward to Clooncan, at the borders of Mayo, and from Clooncan on the south to Clooncraftfield on the boundary of Airtech, on the north.—*Book of Rights*, 103.

<sup>2</sup> This district still bears its ancient name of Ciarraige. It includes the southern portion of the barony of Costello, which, comprising the four parishes of Bekan, Knock, Annagh and Aghamore, belongs to the diocese of Tuam. The northern half of the same barony (called Sliabh Lugha) is in the diocese of Achonry, of which only a small portion was occupied by the 'Kerry-men.' (See *F. M.*, A.D. 1224.)

<sup>3</sup> Tirechan gives it as 'Locharnach,' which seems to be a name borrowed from that of the place. His father he calls Iarnaschus.

at a later period, Patrick left in the same place, that is, at Aghamore, a certain Medbu, who in his text appears to be the person described as 'full of the Holy Spirit.' He was a deacon of Patrick's family, and appears to have afterwards studied at Armagh, and subsequently founded a church of his at Imgoe Mair Cerrigi,<sup>1</sup> wherever that was—the text is corrupt and uncertain. Aghamore is still a large and very populous parish in the diocese of Tuam, and the modern Catholic church is only a short distance from the site of the ancient church and churchyard.<sup>2</sup> There is a tradition amongst the people that St. Patrick founded his church close to the eastern shore of the lake, beside the holy well that still flows, as of old, under the shadow of an ancient white-thorn. But the building was bodily carried away by the people at a later date, and rebuilt where its ruins still stand, near the village.

Thence Patrick went south by Ballyhaunis, it would appear, and came to Tobur Mucno, where he erected Senchill. There can hardly be a doubt that it is the well now known as Patrick's Well, or Toburpatrick, about two miles south of Ballyhaunis. This marks the Apostle's route as due south from Aghamore; and we may fairly assume that the 'old church,'<sup>3</sup> founded by the Saint, is that whose ruins are still to be seen, or rather its site, a little to the west of the well. It is in the parish of Annagh, which, as we have seen, was a part of the Ciarraige territory. We are then told that Secundinus or Sechnall—Patrick's nephew—was there apart under a leafy elm; and 'the sign of the cross is in that place to this day.' Tirechan seems to imply that Sechnall, who certainly accompanied Patrick in his early missionary journeys, built himself a cell or oratory under this leafy elm at Tobur Mucno, and, perhaps, when leaving, erected a stone cross to be a memorial of his sojourn there. The holy well is there still, but there is no leafy elm, only one or two old white-thorns mark the site of Sechnall's church.

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<sup>1</sup> The explanation of Tirechan's text seems to be that at a later period the holy Medbu, who came from Iar Luachair, 'in Kerry,' when Patrick was in this neighbourhood, went to study at Armagh, under Patrick, and was ordained deacon by him, and afterwards came to his relatives the Ciarraige of Arne, and founded a church there. *Mair* is probably put for *Maige*, that is Maige Ciarraige.

<sup>2</sup> Some three miles to the north-west, on the shores of Ullar Lake, in the same desolate region, a Dominican convent was founded in 1434, by the Custello or Nangle family. It is in the Diocese of Achonry.

<sup>3</sup> Cellam Senes in Tirechan.

## II.—PATRICK AMONGST THE CONMAICNE.

From this point the missionary journeys of St. Patrick on the borders of Mayo and Galway are not set forth with clearness. The Tripartite brings him at once to the land of Conmaicne Cuile Toladh, that is the barony of Kilmaine; and adds that 'he founded four-cornered churches in that place, one of which is Ard Uiscon, etc.'

Tirechan, however, has an interesting paragraph, though the readings are somewhat uncertain, which says that Patrick, leaving Secundinus at Tobur Muckna, fared through 'the desert of the Hy Enda,' as we take it; and therein he left the holy Lomman. He then adds that after many days 'Senmeda, a daughter of Enda, son of Brian, came to see Patrick there, and received from his hand the pallium or nun's cloak.' Moreover, in token of her utter renunciation of the world, the blessed maiden gave up to Patrick all her necklaces and bracelets, also her ornamental sandals and armlets, 'such as the Scotie maidens wear, which are called in their language their *aros*,' or ornaments.

As this royal maiden was a daughter of Enda of the Hy Briuin race, we may safely conclude that the territory called the 'desert of the Hy Enda,' or Tir Enda, was the present parish of Kiltullagh, which never formed any part of the Ciarraige territory, and, as a fact, still belongs for that reason to the Co. Roscommon. Lomman's church was, no doubt, the old church of Kiltullagh, and most probably it was there the blessed maiden Senmeda received the veil from Patrick. As it would not be possible to cross over Slieve Dart, Patrick, it would appear, passed from Kiltullagh, by Clogher, to the old church of Kiltivna, or rather to the place where it once stood, and near it was a blessed well now dry. The local traditions still tell of the Saint's prayers at this old church, and of his journey through this district. As Conmaicne Duine Moir (Dunmore) was always a fertile territory, and the residence of the ancient chiefs, Patrick, no doubt, visited the place and probably founded a church there; and such is the local tradition of the people. From this point he went south-west to Kilbannon, near Tuam, where he left his disciple, Benen, of the Hy Ailell, brother of Cethech—not Benen of Meath, but of Tirerrill. The two are carefully distinguished by the Tripartite. The imprint of Patrick's knees, where he prayed, is still shown at Kilbannon, and the remnant of

a slender round tower marks the ancient celebrity of the place. Benen is described by Tirechan as son of Lugni, a scribe, a priest and an anchorite. His mother was daughter of Lugaith Mac Netach. She was of the Conmaicne, and her family, who dwelt near Kilbannon, gave young Benen a farm on which he founded his church, dedicated to God and (afterwards) to St. Patrick. Patrick himself, we are told, marked out the site of Kilbannon, and blessed the place with his crozier; and he was the first to offer the Body and Blood of Christ there, after he ordained Benen, and he blessed Benen, and left him there in his place. It is not improbable that Benen afterwards retired to Aranmore, where he founded the beautiful little church that still bears his name, for Tirechan describes him as an anchorite, which implies retirement from the world. Tuam was not yet founded by St. Jarlath, who was a disciple of Benen at Kilbannon, if not of Patrick himself.

The Saint did not cross the Clare River here, but passed by Sylane and the old church of Killower south-westward to Domnach Mor Maige Seolai, which was even then the royal seat of the ancestors of the O'Flahertys. Killower itself takes its name—the Church of the Book—from a book which Patrick left there, or forgot there, and which afterwards became the cherished treasure of that church.

From Killower Patrick passed, in our opinion, to the territory of Magh Seolai, and there founded, near the chieftain's dun, the church of Domnach Mor Maige Seolai, now called Donaghpatrick, near Headford.

We have no written evidence that Patrick, on this missionary journey, went further south through Galway into the Hy Maine territory. There is, indeed, a 'Patrick's Well' between Aughrim and Kilconnell, and another is marked some miles further west near Bullaun. Colgan, too, thought that the old church of Kilricle, in that neighbourhood, took its name from St. Richell, a sister of St. Patrick, but the evidence is vague and unsatisfactory. We can, however, clearly trace the Saint from Ballyhaunis, by Kiltullagh, Kiltivna, Dunmore, Kilbannon, and Killower, to Donaghpatrick—and that was, in our opinion, the road he followed on this missionary journey. We find traces of the Saint in living traditions all along this way, which strongly confirm the meagre references of the written records in the Tripartite and Book of Armagh.

In Domnach Mor Maige Seolai, better known as Donaghpatrick, to which we have traced the Saint, he placed his

disciple, Bishop Felartus, for whom Assicus of Elphin made one of his quadrangular patens, described in the Life of that saint. At that time close at hand was the royal residence of the princes of the Hy Briuin race, who were ancestors of the O'Flahertys. In after times it became the stronghold of that tribe, whose chief dun was situated in an island of the lake, now called Lough Hackett, near the old church.

It is expressly stated that Patrick founded several churches in this neighbourhood, but not within that territory. Tirechan says that Patrick fared (from Donaghpatrick) to the territory of the 'Conmaicne hi Cuil Tolat'—that is to say, into the modern barony of Kilmaine, in the Co. Mayo. To do so, his natural course would be to cross the Black River at the fords of Shruel, where 'the Bloody Bridge' was afterwards erected. It was a famous and historic pass from Galway into Mayo, and we may assume it as fairly certain that Patrick crossed over it.

There is some reason to think that he founded a church north of the ford in Sruthair, which was the ancient name of the village on the Mayo side of the ford, now corrupted into Shruel,<sup>1</sup> and it is set down as a Patrician Church in some of the old records. About three miles north of Shruel was Kilmaine Beg, which is, beyond doubt, the 'Cellolam Mediam,' or Middle Little Church between Shruel and Kilmaine Mor. in which Patrick left the sisters of Bishop Felartus, of the Hy Aillel race. Felartus was Bishop of Donaghpatrick, so it was quite natural that Patrick would leave his sisters near him, yet not with him, in Kilmaine Beg.

Some three miles further north was Kilmaine Mor, which was always regarded as a Patrician Church, and was certainly a larger and more richly endowed establishment than the Nuns' church at Kilmaine Beg. We are inclined to think, however, that Kilmaine Mor was not itself Patrician, but of a later date, and that the real Patrician church in this district was the ancient church of Cuil Corre, now known as Kilquire, in which we are told Patrick baptised many persons. It is not more than a mile north of Kilmaine, on the road to Hollymount, and was undoubtedly founded, like Kilmaine Beg, by St. Patrick.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The half obliterated word *air*, in Tirechan, where Patrick founded a church, seems to be the latter part of the old word *Sruthair*.

<sup>2</sup> Cuile Corre is expressly mentioned in the *Tripartite*.

The old church has disappeared, but the graveyard is there still, not far from the noble Anglo-Norman Castle of Kilternan, close to which is a *Tobur Patrick*, which indicates the presence of the Saint in the place, and where, doubtless, he baptised his converts. No fairer or more fertile fields of richest green can be found in all the West than those around Kilternan Castle and Kilquire Church; but the men who dwelt there of old are all gone—only sheep and bullocks now depasture those most fertile fields of Mayo. So it is as we write, but that unnatural state of things is, thank God, rapidly passing away.

Tradition, rather than history, brings Patrick from Kilmaine, far west, into the Mountains of Connemara. It is not improbable that he founded a church at the place now called Cross, near Cong, and then faring westward between the Two Great Lakes, he preached the gospel to the rude natives until he came to the wild gap in the hills beyond Maam, where Patrick's Bed and Patrick's Well may still be seen. Farther progress through the Twelve Bens was then impossible, and, even at the present day, the traveller who ventures to follow Patrick on foot into the wilds of Ross will find his task a difficult one. He blessed the wild hills to the west, and the wilder people who dwelt amongst them; but it was reserved for St. Fechin and others, two centuries later, to bring them to the faith.

Patrick must have then returned by Cong to Kilmaine, or Kilquire, and continued his missionary progress northwards through the plains east of Lough Mask. The territory south of the River Robe, that is the country of the *Conmaicne Cuile Toladh*, was then, as now, a fertile and prosperous land, of which the modern town of Ballinrobe may be regarded as the capital.

We have thus brought Patrick to Kilquire, but thereafter his progress northward is not so clearly ascertained.

### III.—PATRICK IN CARRA.

Patrick, at Kilquire, a mile north of Kilmaine, saw a fertile and populous country before him, stretching away towards the north. We are only told, however, that the Saint went into *Magh Foimsen*, which has not been exactly identified, but which we take to be the plain east of Ballinrobe, yet south of the River Robe,<sup>1</sup> towards Holly-

<sup>1</sup> In ancient times the territory of Cera, or Carra, extended from the River Robe northwards to a line drawn from Aghagower to Ballyglass. Aghagower



mount. There he found two brothers—Conlaid and Derclaid, sons of Coiliud. In the Tripartite they are called, perhaps, more correctly, Luchta and Derglam. The latter sent his servant to slay the intruding priest, Patrick, but Luchta, not without difficulty, restrained them from attempting to commit such a crime; whereupon Patrick said to Luchta, ‘There will be priests and bishops of thy race. Accursed, however, will be the seed of thy brother, and his offspring will be few.’<sup>1</sup> One of the standing blessings promised by Patrick to those who favoured the Gospel was nobility of clerics and of laics from their seed; the ‘curse’ on its opponents was to have neither temporal nor spiritual rulers of their race—an appropriate reward and just penalty.

Magh Foimsen appears to have been a sub-division of Magh Carra; if so, the chiefs even then were of the race of Fiachra, son of Eochy Moyvane, and brother of the renowned King Dathi. His eldest son, Earc Culbhuide—of the golden hair—inherited Carra ‘of the beautiful fruit,’ a fair and fertile land flowing with milk and honey. The sweet district of Magh na Beithighe—Plain of the Birch Trees—is fondly described as ‘a terrestrial fairy palace,’ where all delights abounded. He left in that place Priest Conan, of whom we know nothing else. The name is Irish so he was probably a native of the district whom Patrick had instructed in the usual way. His church was probably near Tobur Lughna, in the parish of Robeen. This Lughnat<sup>2</sup> of Lough Mask, from whom the well gets its name, is said to have been a nephew of St. Patrick, and, doubtless, accompanied his uncle on this missionary journey. He loved this beautiful land of the lakes ‘where the hazel waved its hundred tendrils,’ and took up his abode there, and made it the place of his resurrection. But, late in life, he probably retired to that island in Lough Corrib, where his gravestone still stands.

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itself was west of it, in the ‘Owles.’ See *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 150. But, in a wider sense, Carra included the territory of Clan Cuan, around Castlebar, and thence northward to the lakes, and some think it also included that Magh Carha in which Kilmaine itself is located by the *Tripartite*. In that case Magh Carha, in its widest sense, would extend from the Black River to the Pontoon Bridge, on Lough Cullin. We cannot agree with Mr. H. T. Knox that this Magh Foimsen was about Kiltamagh. We think it was about Lough Carra.

<sup>1</sup> See *Hy Fiachrach*, 190.

<sup>2</sup> See *Hy Fiachrach*, 201. Lughnat is said to have been *lumaire* or pilot to St. Patrick, and his services would be needed here to ferry the saint over the lakes of Carra.

Northward still went Patrick, between the lakes to Tobur Stringle, 'in the wilderness.'<sup>1</sup> This is the place now called the Triangle, a corruption of the ancient name. It seems Patrick encamped there over two Sundays, baptising and instructing the people. But it is not stated that he erected a church at Tobur Stringle, either because it was a wilderness, or he could not procure a suitable site. From Tobur Stringle he went to visit a place further north called Raithin.<sup>2</sup> It was the northern boundary of Carra, which extended from the River 'Roba to Raithin;' and the name is still retained in that of Raheen Barr, a townland about two miles south-west of Castlebar. The railway runs close to the lake, which formed the boundary at this point.

#### IV.—PATRICK AT AGHAGOWER.

Returning from Raithin to Stringle Well, Patrick left Magh Carra, and went further westward to the boundary of Umall, at Achad Fobair. This place is now called Aghagower, a misleading corruption of the ancient name. It was a bishopric in ancient times, and is still an important parochial Church in the diocese of Tuam. Here Patrick founded a church, over which he placed Senach, whom he consecrated a bishop, apparently in the same place. He was a man of great meekness and piety, wherefore Patrick

<sup>1</sup> We have, after some searching, found out the Well of Stringle 'in the desert.' There is one of the touches that show the wonderful accuracy of the *Tripartite*. The coarse 'desert land' is there still, reclaimed on one side of the well, but still covered with the wild heather on the other side. It is a beautiful spring well issuing from the rocks beneath an ancient whitethorn. The people around have a vivid tradition of Patrick's visit to the place, of his blessing the well, and baptising the people in it. The modern Triangle is at some distance, where three roads meet, but the old road, of which traces still remain, passed close to Patrick's 'Tobur Stringle in the desert.'

Near the chapel of Killavalla there was an old road called Togher Patrick, which, we think, marks Patrick's road from Partry to the 'Triangle,' that is Tobur Stringle. In our opinion Patrick did not then visit Ballintober, but at a later period, when he came from Croaghpatrick, as the *Tripartite* implies. Hence we cannot agree with Mr. H. T. Knox that Tobur Stringle is the well at Ballintober.

<sup>2</sup> The ancient Raithin was the district around Islandeady Lake, west of Castlebar. There is a mediæval church, surrounded by a large churchyard, in a promontory running northward into the lake. But this was not the Patrician church. Its foundations can still be traced in the large promontory further east, which afforded an admirable site for the church, almost surrounded by the lake, which is full of fish, and very finely situated, from a scenic point of view. The old church was between Islandeady Lake and the southern angle of what is now called the Castlebar Lake, somewhat nearer to the latter. It is marked on the Inch Ordnance Map.

called him 'Agnus Dei.' His humility, too, was very striking, for we are told that he made three requests of Patrick—first, that through Patrick's prayers he might not sin after ordination, that the place might not take its name from him—and his prayer has been heard in this respect—and, thirdly, that what might be wanting to his (full) age when called away by God, might be added to the age of his son Oengus.

Oengus, too, was a saint, and Patrick wrote an alphabet, or catechism, for the youth, that he might be trained for the priesthood. His sister too, Mathona by name, became a nun, and received the cloak and veil from Patrick himself; who likewise founded a church for her and her nuns, the ruins of which still remain a hundred paces to the north of the ancient church of Aghagower. Patrick also, edified no doubt by the sight of so much holiness and self-denial in one family, prophesied that many good bishops would arise in that church, and that their spiritual offspring would be blessed for ever and ever.

Patrick himself dearly loved Aghagower,—its swelling fields of green, its streams, and wells,<sup>1</sup> with its walks for silent prayer; and he meditated making it his own spiritual city:—

'I would choose  
To remain here on a little land,  
After faring around churches and waters  
Since I am weary, I wish not to go further.'

But the Angel said to him:—

'Thou shalt have everything round which thou shalt go,  
Every land,  
Both mountains and churches,  
Both glens and woods,  
After faring around churches and waters  
Though thou art weary, still thou shalt go on further.'

Patrick at this time had spent about eight years in Ireland. So that he must have, according to the common chronology, been then very near seventy years of age—the span of life assigned to man by the Psalmist. His life hitherto had been laborious and eventful beyond that of most men. No wonder he was weary—climbing hills, wading through waters, camping out by night, building churches, blessing, preaching, baptising from farthest Antrim to the western sea.

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<sup>1</sup> The name Achad-Fobair means the Field of the Spring.

But there was to be no rest for him yet, even half his work was not yet done. Such was God's high will; and once more Patrick girt his loins for his great task. Truly his life is a noble lesson of patient untiring zeal in the cause of God, which should inspire the prelates of Erin for all time.

So he left Aghagower for a while—and he left there also, as the neighbours say, two small trout in the stream that still flows by the road side in front of the church. "Angels will keep them in it," he said, "for ever." Patrick had a great love of nature, and doubtless saw the trout in the stream, and watched them with loving interest—so when leaving he forbade them to be disturbed. He blessed the wells, and he blessed the stream with its fish; and men fondly think it is the same little fish that are still there. The wells are often dry in summer, or nearly so,<sup>1</sup> but the stream flows for ever; and let us hope will never want a trout to remind us of Blessed Patrick's tender love for all God's creation,<sup>2</sup> both great and small.

We are also told in the Book of Armagh that this church of Achad Fobair received the Mass of Patrick<sup>3</sup> This statement probably refers to a later period, when considerable divergence had grown up in the liturgies used in the Irish monasteries. The neighbouring Anglo-Saxon monks of Mayo may have introduced from Iona or Lindisfarne a 'Mass' different from the ancient Patrician liturgy; and this statement might be intended to indicate that the clergy of Aghagower were faithful to the traditions of their founder, and adhered to the 'Mass' introduced by St. Patrick.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So we were told on the spot of the well under the great tree near the ancient church.

<sup>2</sup> The  $\text{ix}\theta\upsilon\varsigma$  or fish, was a sacred symbol, because its letters are the initials of the Greek words corresponding to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour.

<sup>3</sup> Ipsa est (ecclesia) Achad Fobuir, et missam Patricii acceperunt (p. 322, Rolls *Trip.*).

<sup>4</sup> It was in the sixth and seventh centuries that these variations of the Gallican liturgy became common both in Gaul and Britain, before the Roman use was adopted in these countries. See Duchesne's *Christian Worship*, p. 96.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ST. PATRICK ON THE CRUACHAN AIGLE.

#### I.—THE SAINT'S FAST.

FROM Aghagower Patrick went to Cruachan Aigle.<sup>1</sup> The beautiful cone of this hill, since called Croaghpatrick, rises just over the low hills surrounding Aghagower on the west ; and it appears so near, so striking, so attractive, that the heaven-aspiring soul of Patrick must have longed with an ardent longing to reach its summit. He would there be farther from men, he would be nearer to God, and he could see from that lone summit by land and sea all the western country he had already won or was still to win for Christ. It was like Mount Sinai, on which Moses saw God face to face ; there he would fast and pray for Erin, and strive with God for the land that ' He had given him at the end of the world,' so that neither men nor demons should ever wrest it from His sway. No one who reads the Confession of St. Patrick will deny that he was, like St. Paul, a man of burning zeal and of high enthusiasm in the service of God ; and such a man could hardly see Croaghpatrick near him without longing to ascend it, for the lone grandeur of its soaring peak has a strange fascination for the beholder, and attracts the eye from every point of view.

Tirechan's narrative is brief and simple. The Apostle went there on Shrove Saturday, that is the Saturday before Ash Wednesday, and his purpose was to fast the forty days of Lent, thus following the example of Moses, of Elias, and of Christ himself. He buried his coachman at the foot of the mountain near the sea where he died ;<sup>2</sup> and then he went to the summit himself and remained there forty days and forty nights. The birds were a trouble to

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<sup>1</sup> Ad montem Egli.—*Book of Armagh*. The plain at its foot between the mountain and the sea was called Muirisc, and took its name from a Muirisc, daughter of Liogan, who dwelt there. In after times a famous Augustinian monastery was founded in the same place, and still bears the name—the Abbey of Murrisk.

<sup>2</sup> Totmael was his name ; over the grave they raised, in Irish fashion, a great cairn of stones, and Patrick said : ' So let him remain for ever until he will be visited by me in the last days '—no doubt to give a new life to the ashes of the dead.

him; and he could not see the face of the heavens, the earth, or the sea (on account of them); 'for God told all the saints of Erin, past, present, and future, to come to the mountain summit—that mountain which overlooks all others and is higher than all the mountains of the West—to bless the tribes of Erin, so that Patrick might see (by anticipation) the fruit of his labours, for all the choir of the saints of Erin came to visit him there, who was the father of them all.'

The idea here clearly is that the flocks of white birds which disturbed the repose of Patrick really represented the choirs of Erin's saints who were come to meet their common father, and join him in blessing all the tribes of Erin.

But the *Tripartite* enlarges greatly on this simple narrative in a fashion that suggests the perfervid imagination of the *Scotic Chronicler*. Still, as it is a very ancient narrative, and has laid hold of the minds of the western people for many ages, we shall give it here in full, but at the same time as briefly as possible:—

Patrick then went to the summit of the mountain, not only to fast, but above all to pray for the people of Ireland, and he was resolved to do violence to heaven until his petitions were granted. The Angel then came to him to tell him that God was disposed to grant his petitions, although he was 'excessive and obstinate' in urging them, and the requests were also great in themselves. 'Is that His will?' said Patrick. 'It is,' said the Angel. 'Well, then,' said Patrick, 'I will urge them; and I will not go from this Rick till I am dead, or till all the petitions are granted to me; and so he abode on the mountain in much disquietude without food, without drink, from Shrove Saturday until Easter Saturday, after the manner of Moses, son of Amra; for they were alike in many things, but especially in this that God spoke to both out of the fire, that the age of both was at their death 120 years, and that the burial place of both is unknown.

But meanwhile Patrick was by his prayers and fasting doing violence to heaven, and he was greatly tormented. For towards the close of his term of forty days and nights the mountain was filled with black birds,<sup>1</sup> so that he knew not—that is, could neither see heaven nor earth. He sang maledictive psalms against them; but still they held on.

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that in Tirechan's account the birds seem to be the Spirits of Erin's Saints come to visit Patrick and bless the land with him; but the *Tripartite* makes these black birds to be demons come to tempt and torment the Saint, whilst the white angelic birds come afterwards to comfort and console him.

Then he grew wrathful against them, and rang his bell against them, 'so that all the men of Erin heard its voice;' and, as the birds still kept flying around him, he flung the holy bell at them, whereby a piece was broken out of it, whence it was called Bernan Brigitte or Brigid's gapling, because it seems Brigid had given the bell to Patrick. Then Patrick's heart was filled with grief, the tears in streams flowed down his cheeks, and even his chasuble was wet with them. At length the demon birds disappeared; and no demon for seven years, seven months, seven days, and seven nights afterwards came to torment the land of Erin.

Now when the demon birds were gone an angel came to console Patrick, and the angel cleansed his chasuble from the tear stains and brought beautiful white birds around the Rick, which sang sweet melodies to comfort the afflicted Saint. The angel, too, announced the granting of the first petition. "Thou shalt bring," he said, "an equal number of souls—equal to the birds—out of pain, yea, as many as can fill all the space sea-ward before your eyes." "That is not much of a boon," said Patrick, "for mine eyes cannot reach far over the sea." "Then thou shalt have as many as will fill both sea and land," said the angel—but Patrick, recalling his sorrows and the crowds of demons that had surrounded him, said—"Is there anything more that He granteth me?" "Yes," said the angel, "seven persons on every Saturday till Doomsday shall be taken out of hell—that is, torment—by your prayers." "Let twelve be given me," said Patrick. "You shall have them," said the angel; "so now get thee gone from the Rick." "I will not go," said Patrick, "since I have been tormented, till I am blessed" (by having my petitions granted). Then said the angel "thou shalt have seven on Thursday and twelve on Saturday, so get thee gone now." "No," said Patrick, "I must have more." Then said the angel, "a great sea shall overwhelm Ireland seven years before the day of judgment"—so that they will not be tormented in Erin by the signs and wonders of that day—"Now get thee gone." "No," said Patrick, "I must still be blessed." Then said the angel, "Is there aught else you would have?" "Yes," said Patrick, "that the Saxons<sup>1</sup> shall never hold Ireland by consent or force so long as I dwell in heaven." "Thou

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<sup>1</sup>This was written long before the Norman Conquest. The reference appears to be to the pagan Saxons, who were conquering Great Britain, and who, it was feared, might also conquer Ireland.

shalt have this, too," said the angel, "so now get thee gone." "Not yet," said Patrick. "Is there aught else granted to me?" "Yes," said the angel, "every one who shall sing thy hymn (that is the Latin hymn by Sechnall) from one watch to the other shall not have pain or torture." "The hymn is long and difficult," said Patrick. "Then every one who shall sing it from '*Christus illum*' to the end, that is, the last four stanzas, and every one who shall give aught in thy name, and every one who shall do penance in Erin, his soul shall not go to hell: so now get thee gone from the Rick." One would think that this was giving much indeed; but Patrick was not yet content. "Is there aught else I am to get?" said he. "Yes," said the angel, "a man for every hair on thy chasuble thou shalt bring out of pains on Doomsday." "Why, any saint will get that number," said Patrick. "How many more do you want?" said the angel. "Seven persons for every hair on my chasuble to be taken out of hell (or pains) on the day of Doom," said Patrick. "Thou shalt get that, too," said the angel; "so now get thee gone." "Not yet," said Patrick, "except God Himself drive me away." "What else do you want?" said the angel. "This," said Patrick, "That on the day when the twelve Thrones shall be on Mount Sion, that is on the day of Doom, I myself shall be judge over the men of Erin on that day." "But this surely cannot be had from God," said the angel. "Unless it be got I will not leave this mountain for ever," said Patrick, "and I will leave a guardian on it after me." The angel went to heaven to see about this petition, and Patrick went to say Mass to make his own case stronger, no doubt. The angel came back at None after Mass. "All heaven's powers have interceded for thee," said the angel, "and thy petition has been granted. You are the most excellent man that has appeared since the Apostles—only for your obduracy. But you have prayed and you have obtained. Strike thy bell now, and fall on thy knees, and a blessing will come upon thee from heaven, and all the men of Erin living and dead shall be blessed and consecrated to God with thee." "A blessing on the bountiful King who hath given it all," saith Patrick, "and now I leave the Rick."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the *Book of Armagh* Patrick's three petitions only are given, thus:— I. That every one of us doing penance even in his last hour will not be doomed to hell on the last day. II. That the barbarians shall never get dominion over us. III. That the sea will cover Ireland seven years before the Day of Judgment.—Rolls *Trip*, 331.



This narrative is evidently made up; and yet it is full of meaning. It teaches the efficacy of prayer in a very striking way, and it is full of faith and confidence in God. There is no more authentic fact in Patrick's history than this Lenten fast of Patrick on the Rick. The ancient road from Aghagower to the Sacred Hill has been worn bare by the feet of pilgrims who in every age followed the footsteps of their beloved Apostle even to its very summit, as they do still. If the demon tempted our Saviour at the beginning of His public mission, we may be sure he would not leave untempted the man who broke down his ancient empire over the Gael of Erin. In some things the story is extravagant, in others almost untheological; but the prayer, the yearning efficacious prayer, for the men of Ireland, is no myth. It has been fulfilled, and no greater marvel is recorded in the history of the Church than its fulfilment. It is in itself a miracle. The common tradition that Patrick, by his strong prayers, on Cruachan Aigle, conquered the demons, and drove them far from his beloved Erin, has been verified of the nation as a whole, and except through his prayers and blessing it could never, humanly speaking, have been accomplished.

Yes, Croaghpatrick is a sacred and beautiful hill. From most points of view, it rises from the sea on the southern shore of Clew Bay as a perfect cone to the height of 2,510 feet.<sup>1</sup> There are larger and loftier masses of mountain in Ireland, but none so striking from its isolation, and so regular in its outline, especially when viewed from the east. It commands both land and sea, and has the great advantage of looking down on the most beautiful bay in Ireland, with its hundred islets mirrored in its glancing waters. The whole rugged coast-line of the West—its hills, its cliffs, its havens, its rock-bound islands—can be seen from that lone summit of a clear day as distinctly as if they were stretched at its feet. Then the vast inland plains, their woods and towers and towns, can be traced with perfect distinctness. You see the rivers stealing serpent-like to the sea, the great brown bogs in the distance, the clouds resting on Nephin or the Twelve Pins of Connemara, the far-off hills of Donegal on the horizon's verge, rising from the main, the smoke of the train

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<sup>1</sup> Muilrea, over Killary Harbour, is the highest mountain in Connaught—2,688 feet high. Nephin (2,646) is nearly as high. Croaghpatrick is the third in altitude (2,510). See *Joyce's Atlas*.

rounding Clew Bay, the hookers and fishing boats with their white wings spread to catch the gale, the long waves bursting in streaks of light on the cliffs of Clare Island and Achill. Such a scene, combining at once so much sublimity, variety, and beauty, cannot be found anywhere else, at least in these kingdoms.<sup>1</sup>

## II.—PATRICK'S MISSION CONFIRMED BY POPE LEO THE GREAT.

The Tripartite states that 'when Patrick was in Cruachan Aigle he sent Munis to Rome with counsel unto the Abbot of Rome, and relics were given to him.' The full significance of this passage will appear from another and quite independent statement made in the Annals of Ulster under date A.D. 441:—'Leo ordained 42nd Bishop of the Church of Rome, and Patrick the Bishop was approved in the Catholic faith.' This is a most important statement for many reasons. Pope Leo the Great was consecrated on the 29th of September, A.D. 440. News of his election would not probably reach Ireland until the end of the year, or some time in the beginning of 441. Patrick, who was then on Cruachan Aigle, resolved to send one of his disciples to present his own homage and submission to the new Pope, to give an account of the Irish mission, and beg the Pope's blessing. He would also naturally ask for relics, and no doubt in those difficult times he would forward a written confession of his own faith and teaching in Ireland. The Pope 'approved' of Patrick's doctrine, confirmed his mission, and blessed his labours—that is what is clearly meant by the statement that 'Patrick was approved in the Catholic faith.' The entry also enables us to ascertain that Patrick was on Cruachan Aigle during the Easter of the year 441, which is of itself a most interesting fact.

When Patrick left Cruachan Aigle on Saturday of Holy Week, he returned to Aghagower, which is not more than eight miles to the east, by the ancient straight road, traces of which still remain. There at Aghagower, with his beloved Bishop Senach and his holy son Oengus and the virgin Mathona, he celebrated, doubtless with great joy, the festival of Easter. He had been through the desert, and

<sup>1</sup> An account of the pilgrimage to Croaghpatrick, both ancient and modern, will be found in the Appendix.

was now come, as it were, into the Promised Land. But it was not allowed him to remain there; so once more he set out on those toilsome journeys, about which he had already made some not unnatural complainings.

The Tripartite here inserts a curious paragraph, not found in the Book of Armagh, concerning the keepers whom Patrick had set on various well known hills in Ireland. They are said to belong to Patrick's familia, or household; and the writer adds, 'they are alive in Ireland still.' Let us hope that it is in a spiritual sense, for if they keep their lofty lodging in the body they must often have hard times and windy weather to endure.

'There is a man of Patrick's on Cruachan Aigle'—he threatened to have a guardian there if his petitions were not granted—'and people hear the voice of his bell on the mountain, although they cannot find himself.' There is another keeper of Patrick's in Gulban Guirt—the beautiful hill called Benbulbin, overlooking the Bay of Donegal, and, indeed, the whole north-west of Ireland—and we know it well, for we often sat upon its rocky brow. There is a third man from him east of Clonard (in Meath), together with his wife. Well, he is much better off than his fellow-watchers, for there is no hill there by the infant Boyne, only a small mound or tullagh not worth talking about. Besides, east of Clonard it is a dead level, so what the old couple are doing there it is difficult to see. The reason assigned is that they showed hospitality to Patrick when he was there in South Meath, and he rewarded them with an earthly immortality; for 'they will remain there of the same age until the day of doom.' There is another in Drumman Breg or Bregia, the site of which it is not easy to determine. It is probably the hill called the Moat, a few miles north of Slane, which rises to the height of 750 feet, and is the most commanding summit of all that overlook the fair Bregian Plain. Patrick knew it well, for it was not far from that other famous hill where he lit his first Paschal Fire in Erin. There is a fifth watcher of Patrick on Slieve Slainge—namely, Domongart, from whom the hill gets its present name of Slieve Donard—in Down. It will not be denied that he, too, has an airy position and a wide look out, but he has a special duty which he waits to perform. It will be his business to upraise Patrick's relics before the day of doom. St. Domongart, son of Echaid, was a historical personage who had an oratory on the mountain; but his ceaseless watching

is no doubt purely imaginary. The writer adds, however, that 'he has a fork and its belongings'—meat, let us hope—and a pitcher of beer always before him at his church at Rath Muirbuilc on the slope of the mountain, and he gives them to the mass-folk on Easter Tuesday always.

It may be said that in a spiritual sense all this is true. From these lone summits God's Guardian Angels keep watch and ward over all the land of Erin that Patrick loved so well. He foreknew that they would be needed in the evil days to come, and God placed them there to watch the land and the people of the land, and help them in the long struggle that awaited them. Patrick's own striving on the Holy Mountain was only a figure of the still more desperate strife in which his spiritual children were to be engaged, and as God's angels comforted him, so they have comforted them through the prayers of Patrick.

Perhaps, too, it might have some foundation in a more literal sense if we take it that Patrick ordered a perpetual watch to be maintained by the religious of the nearest monasteries from those conspicuous summits. But even that explanation will hardly suit the case of the old couple at Clonard. There certainly was an ancient oratory on Croaghpatrick, and another on Slieve Donard. We know of no trace of an oratory on Benbulbin, although doubtless there was a church of some kind on Drumman in Bregia. The nuns of St. Brigid kept a perpetual fire in Kildare until it was extinguished by John Comyn, Archbishop of Dublin, who, being an Anglo-Norman, declared it savoured of superstition. So it may be that Patrick told his monks to keep watch—a spiritual watch—on these commanding hills, and by their prayers drive far away the demons of the air<sup>1</sup> who might seek to injure his own beloved land of Erin.

It is also noted, both in the Tripartite and the Book of Armagh, that Patrick's charioteer, Totmael, that is Barepoll,<sup>2</sup> died at the foot of the hill of Croaghpatrick—in Murrisk Aigle—that is the plain between the sea and the mountain. So they buried him there at Murrisk, and over his grave they raised, after the fashion of the country, a great cairn of stones; and Patrick said: "It will remain there for ever,

<sup>1</sup> 'The spirits of wickedness in high places,' with whom St. Paul (*Eph.*, 6. 12) says Christians have to wrestle.

<sup>2</sup> 'Totus-Calvus,' in the *Book of Armagh*.

and I shall visit it on the last day," as if he intended to make sure of the salvation of his faithful charioteer before the Day of Doom.

There is good reason to think that during his sojourn at Murrisk St. Patrick paid a visit to at least one of the islands off this coast. Caher Island is a small green island off the coast of Mayo, some three-quarters of a mile long and one quarter in breadth. There is a vivid local tradition that it was visited by our saint; and the ancient ruin, which still bears the name of Temple Phatraic, confirms the tradition. It is at present uninhabited, but its very loneliness would be an additional reason to induce the Apostle to visit the island, which is a striking object as seen from the shore beyond Louisbourg, for it rises in a peaked summit to a height of 188 feet above the sea. No reference, however, is made to this visit in any of the written Lives of the Apostles.

There is one clear statement, both in Tirechan and the Tripartite, that Patrick before leaving the 'Owles' founded a church in the Plain of Umall,<sup>1</sup> the last being the ancient form of what has since been called the 'Owles.' This church was situated close to the later church founded by Columcille, called with reference to this more ancient church Nuachongbhail, that is the New Monastery, which has been corrupted into Oughaval, the modern name of the parish. The old church was on the other side of the road.

### III.—PATRICK IN THE PLAINS OF MAYO.

From Aghagower Patrick fared into the district called Corcutemne; the Book of Armagh adds that he went to the well of Sini in that territory, which has not yet been certainly identified. This region of Corcutemne, of which we have no distinct mention elsewhere, is clearly the territory east of Aghagower, and north of the Lakes, which includes the Three Tuatha, as they were called, that is the Tuatha of Partry, the Tuatha of Manulla, and the Tuatha of the Attacots,<sup>2</sup> which, in our opinion, is now comprised

<sup>1</sup> Tirechan calls it, 'in Campo Humail.'

<sup>2</sup> See *Hy Fiachrach*, 152. This 'Tuath Aitheachta' or Attacottic Tuath is, according to O'Donovan, the district still known as Touaghty, a small parish between Ballyglass and Newbrook, east of the lake (p. 499). It includes the demesne of Tower Hill, which is merely a corruption of the ancient form Touaghty. There is the site of a Patrician church and holy well still to be seen within the demesne.

in the present small parish of Touaghty. These were certainly distinct districts, but still adjacent; they were all known as Tuatha in ancient times, and all contain ancient churches, which were, so far as we can judge, originally founded by St. Patrick. The Tuatha of Partry (Partrigia) extended north and south from 'Caol to Faul,' that is, from the bridge of Keel to Kilfaul, near Ballintober, at the northern extremity of Lough Carra. Whether the Tuatha of Magh na Beithighe, the Birch Plain, was in St. Patrick's time included in this territory or not is uncertain; but later on it certainly was recognised as a distinct territory, and may have been one of the Three Tuatha to which reference is made in the Tripartite. It formed a considerable part of the parish of Ballintober. Manulla was certainly one of the Three Tuatha; it is called the Tuatha of Manulla by our best authorities, and the word is a fairly good rendering of the ancient name—Maige Fiondalbha—in the genitive case, of course. The present small parish of Touaghty represents the ancient *Tuatha Aitheachta*—that is the Tuatha of the Attacots or Firbolgs, who still kept their ground in the district.

Without investigating the matter too minutely, we may then safely conclude that Patrick, after spending his Easter at Aghagower, went to preach the Gospel in the great swelling plain to the east and north of the Lakes, now comprising the parishes of Ballyovey, Ballintober, Touaghty, Ballyhean, and Manulla.

O'Donovan says<sup>1</sup> that 'St. Patrick's causeway, the name of an ancient road still traceable in many places, ran from the Abbey of Ballintober, in the barony of Carra, to Croaghpatrick.' A glance at the map of the Co. Mayo will show that Croaghpatrick, Aghagower, Stringle Well, and Ballintober lie almost in a straight line due east and west.

But about Patrick's Tochar or causeway we must say something more. As Patrick went from Tobur Stringle to Raithin, and thence to Aghagower, we think the roadway in question marks rather that by which he returned from the Holy Mountain to the Plains of Mayo, than the road which he followed from Tobur Stringle to Croaghpatrick by Aghagower.

It is to a great extent a matter of conjecture, more or less plausible; we can only give our own view. To go back, then, a little, it appears to us that Patrick, having

<sup>1</sup> *Hy Fiachrach*, 498.

left his nephew Lughnat at Tobur Loona, east of Lough Carra, either crossed the lake there or went round it at its southern extremity, and then continued his journey northward between the lakes of Mask and Carra, through the modern parish of Ballyovey, or Partry, until he came to Killavally on the line of the modern road to Westport. At that point we find many traces of the old road which he travelled until he came to Tobur Stringle 'in the desert.' On this occasion he did not touch at the place now called Ballintober; but he came to it at a later period when returning eastward from Croaghpatrick. On his return journey we think the road he travelled can be traced accurately enough, for in after ages it was the pilgrims' road westward to Croaghpatrick. One who has great local knowledge says: 'It can be very well traced from Croaghpatrick back to Drum (south of Castlebar); it passed from church to church, thus from Balla to Loona Church, where it is well marked, and thence by Gweeshadan Church to Drum Church, where it is well marked. Thence it is well ascertained (westward) to Ballintober, and from thence to Aghagower, passing in the way a small church marked on the map as Temple Shannagowna, near Bellaburke. From Aghagower it went by Cloghpatrick to Patrick's Chair, and so up the hill. We have not been able to trace its course east of Balla, but feel sure it must have passed by Kiltamagh and Cloonpatrick, and Patrick's Well to Balla.'<sup>1</sup>

Now, in our opinion, this Tochar Phatraic fairly represents not merely the road of the pilgrims westward to the mountain, but also Patrick's road eastward from the Mountain through the Plains of Mayo, and we are much disposed to follow its guidance.

Tirechan says that Patrick came from Oughaval by Aghagower 'into the regions of Corcu Temne to the fountain Sini, in which he baptised many thousands of men and founded three churches' in that neighbourhood.

The well Sini we take to be that which has ever since been called Tobur Phatraic, and the place itself Ballintober. It would be the first stage on his road coming eastward from Aghagower into the plains of Mayo. On the road he probably rested for a while at that Cloghpatrick which still bears his name and marks his road to

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. H. T. Knox, to whom we owe this extract, is a most painstaking antiquary, and must know this district thoroughly.

Ballintober. There he would naturally stay and found his church. It was a fertile and populous district, for the soil, though shallow, was of limestone, and the herbage was green and luxurious, so that in after ages it was chosen as the site of a famous Augustinian abbey, founded by Cathal the Red-handed, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, which has lately been partially restored as the parish church. But, no doubt, what most attracted Patrick was the copious crystal stream bursting out at the foot of a low ridge, which he blessed, and with whose waters he baptised the many thousand converts who crowded around him on its verdant banks. One thing is quite clear, that Tobur Stringle 'in the desert,' was not Ballintober in the green meads at the head of the lake.

The old church of Touaghty, now within Tower Hill demesne, close to which is a Patrick's Well, we take to be the second church founded by Patrick in this district. It is not unlikely that the third was either that old church of Drum, close to which Patrick's Tochar passed, or perhaps the old church of Ballyhean, which is a little more to the west.

Patrick's next move, we are told by Tirechan, was to the Well of Findmaige, which is called Slan or the Healer, 'for the heathens and their wizards worshipped it as a god, and made immolations to its deity.' Well-worship was common in ancient Erin as well as in ancient Greece and this particular well was greatly venerated by the heathen. We are told that it was square, and that a square stone closed the mouth of the well, but that the water forced its way through the joinings of the stones—quasi *vestigium regale*<sup>1</sup>—marking, as it were, the footprints of the (dead) king; for the gentiles said that a certain dead prophet had made for himself a shrine (*bibliothicam*) in the water under the rock, so that his bones might be always kept cool by the stream, because he feared fire and adored the water.

Now this was told to Patrick, who in his great zeal for the living God, declared, "What you say is not true—that this fountain is the King of Waters;" and he further said to the assembled wizards and gentiles, and the crowds around him:—"Raise up the rock that we may all see what is under it—whether bones or not—because I say to

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<sup>1</sup> The passage is obscure. It seems to imply that a square flag was made to cover the square well, but that the dead king left his footprints at the joinings—to imply that he was below—through which the water issued.



you there are no bones under it, but I think from the cementing of the stones that there must be some gold or silver there, but certainly none of your foolish offerings made to the god."

Now they tried to raise it, but were unable to do so. Then Patrick and his attendants blessed or exorcised the rock, and he said to the surging crowds: "Keep back a little, that you may see the power of my God, who dwelleth in the heavens." Then stretching out his hands, he raised the rock out of the mouth of the well, and placed it on the other side over the orifice of the stream; 'and it is there always.' But in the well itself, beneath the stone, nothing was found except the water, wherefore the heathen believed in the Most High God. Then Patrick, being tired, sat down some distance off on the stone, which a certain Caeta, or Cata, had fixed for him; whereupon he baptised that youth, and said to him, "Your seed will be for ever blessed." Then, it is added:—'Cella Tog, in the regions of Corcu Temne, belonged to Patrick.' Bishop Cainnech, Patrick's monk, founded it. Whence we infer that this church of Kill-Tog was near the Well of Findmaige, and that Patrick left his disciple, Cainnech, to rule over it.

We agree with Knox in thinking that this well of Findmaige, called Slan, or the Healer, was the well near Manulla, at present called Adam's Well. The name itself has been preserved in the mediæval documents, which describe the vicarage as Slanpatrick, the lands of which belonged to the Archbishop of Armagh, clearly showing that it was a Patrician church,<sup>1</sup> and the Kill-Tog must be either at Manulla,<sup>2</sup> or, perhaps, in its immediate neighbourhood at Breaghwy.

<sup>1</sup> See Knox, *Notes*, p. 100. Rev. E. A. D'Alton, a careful and competent inquirer, writes to us—"Adam's Well is situated at the northern end of the village of Manulla; up to twenty years ago it was always full of the purest spring water, and in those days the well supplied the whole village with water; but, in consequence of drainage operations, Adam's Well became dry; and so it has remained. No one knows why it is so called; nor has it any sacred traditions connected with it as a holy well." Father D'Alton adds that Mr. Knox describes it accurately, as not more than two feet deep, and about two feet square, each of its four sides being protected by a stone set upright. The flat covering stone mentioned by Mr. Knox is no longer there; nor does anyone in the place remember to have seen such a stone covering the well; but there is a flag lying flat on which people step when drawing water from the well. "This perhaps was the original covering stone displaced by St. Patrick." Father D'Alton is, however, dubious as to the identity of this well with the Slan of the Tripartite.

<sup>2</sup> The name Manulla is a corruption of the old name Maghiondalba, the first part of which is equivalent to Findmaige, as given by Tirechan.

Neither Tirechan nor the Tripartite gives us any further particulars of the churches founded in this district. The name Aglish, the old church of Castlebar, would seem to imply that it was the most important church in that locality, and most likely founded by the Apostle. The ancient church of Turlough, some three miles north-east of Castlebar, appears to have been at one time even a still more important church, for the Round Tower attests its antiquity and celebrity. Moreover, it was, and, we think rightly, always regarded as a church founded by St. Patrick, and hence belonged to the Archbishop of Armagh.

We think, however, that on this occasion Patrick went no further north, as there was strife in the lands of the Hy Amalgaid. So he turned his steps eastwards to Balla, where there is a Patrick's Well that marks his presence.<sup>1</sup> Going further eastwards, there is another Patrick's Well beyond Balla, on the road to Kiltamagh,<sup>2</sup> which was, doubtless, the route the Saint followed on the return journey to Tara. From Kiltamagh he would go by Kilkelly, through the Lower or Northern Ciarraige, until he came to Ailech Airtech, near Ballaghadereen, and so, crossing the fords of the Lung River, he would revisit the churches he had founded in that locality.

Thus we find Patrick once more travelling in the Plains of the Sons of Erc, that is, in the Plains of Boyle, where a strange incident befel him.

#### IV.—PATRICK REVISITS HIS ROSCOMMON CHURCHES.

'Dichuil, in the territory of the sons of Erc,' was the scene of this curious story of the Giant's Grave. As Patrick and his familia came to this place, they found an enormous grave, one hundred and twenty feet in length, and were

<sup>1</sup> Tirechan does not imply that Patrick crossed the Moy after founding Kill-Tog, rather the reverse, for he at once brings the Saint into the plains of Maicc Hercae, namely into Dichuil and Archuil, and thence to Magh Finn, no doubt on the road to Tara. Indeed, the Saint would not cross the Moy at all going from Turlough into Tirawley, although he naturally would if going direct into Tíreragh.

<sup>2</sup> This is a bullann well, formed in a hollow stone. There is a similar Patrick's Well 'a little east of Ballinamore House,' and the place where Patrick knelt in prayer is still shown at these places. There is a third well of the same kind sacred to Patrick, 'between Ballinamore and Kiltamagh, and there is an old saying that the part between the three stones (on which Patrick knelt at the three wells) will be always safe from wars and destruction.' It is then beyond reasonable doubt that Patrick passed through this territory on his journey eastward from Kill-Tog to the Plains of the Sons of Erc. See Knox's *Notes*.

filled with amazement at the sight. Probus gives the length as thirty feet, which is the more likely figure, as an X might easily be mistaken for a C by the transcriber.<sup>1</sup> "We cannot believe," they said, "that anyone so tall ever existed." Then Patrick replied—"If you wish, you will be able to see him." So they answered—"Yes, by all means; we should like to see him." Then Patrick struck the headstone of the huge grave with his Staff, and he drew the Sign of the Cross over the grave, saying, at the same time—"O Lord, open this tomb." The tomb opened forthwith; and the huge giant stood up whole in body, and said—"Thanks be to thee, O holy man, that you have even for one hour relieved me of my great pains." At the same time, he wept bitterly as he spoke, and said—"Shall I go with you?" But Patrick said—"No; you cannot come with us, for men would be afraid to look at you; but believe in the God of heaven, be baptised with the Lord's baptism, and you will return no more to the place of torments where you were. And now," said Patrick, "tell us who you are." He replied—"I am the son of Mac Cas, the son of Glas, and I was swine-herd to King Luger, the King of Hirot. Soldiers of the son of Mac Con slew me in the reign of Cairbre Niafer, just one hundred years ago from this day." So he was baptised, 'having made confession of faith in God, and he rested and was once more laid in his grave.'

The story is a strange one for Tirechan to record in his sober history; and it cannot be accepted as true in its present form. A man dead for one hundred years was raised to life in order to gratify the curiosity of Patrick's disciples, and then he was baptised, and by his baptism released from purgatory, if not from hell itself! That the story was current we may assume as certain, but how it originated it is now impossible to ascertain. The alleged chronology, too, has its difficulties. This 'resurrection' took place, so far as we can judge, about the year A.D. 441. The warriors referred to flourished not one, but two hundred years before that date.

After this it would seem Patrick, still faring towards Tara, came into Magh Finn, in the country of the Hy Maine. Magh Finn, afterwards known as Keogh's Country, was a well-known territory comprising the present parish

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<sup>1</sup>That is, XXX might be mistaken for CXX. The fact that the grave was thirty feet, or a hundred and twenty feet, in length does not prove that the giant was of that height. Such stone chambers of great length were used as sepulchres, but several people were usually buried within them.

of Taghmaconnell, in the south of the County Roscommon. The Hy Maine were not there in the time of Saint Patrick, for, according to their own tribal records, they only came in the next century, when, with the help of St. Grellan, their patron saint, they expelled the Firbolgs from their ancient seats on the River Suck, and took possession of the conquered territory, which was called Hy-Maine,<sup>1</sup> from their great leader, Maine Mor. The name, therefore, like many other names in the Lives of Patrick, is here given to the district by anticipation, that is the writer calls it by the name used in his own time.

Patrick, journeying through this territory, saw a cross erected and two new graves near each other. And the Saint, perhaps wondering at the cross in that remote district, spoke from his chariot, and asked "who was buried there?" Whereupon a voice from the grave replied: "A wretched gentile man I am." "Why then," asked the Saint, "is the cross placed over your grave?" "Because," the voice replied, "the man who is buried near me asked his mother to have the cross erected over his grave, but the foolish man (who erected it) by mistake placed it over mine." Then Patrick leaped down from his car, and pulled up the cross from the gentile's grave, and placed it over the Christian's grave. He then got on his car again, and went his way, praying in silence to the Lord. When the prayer was over, and he came to *Libera nos a malo*, his charioteer asked, "Why did you leave the gentile man unbaptised in his grave? Let us return to him, for I pity a man left without baptism. Would it not be better to pray for him to God by way of baptism, and pour the baptismal water on his grave?" The charioteer was no theologian; and Patrick made him no reply. 'I think,' adds the writer, 'the reason Patrick left him (without baptism) was that God was unwilling to save his soul;' but he evidently thought baptism might even then have saved him.<sup>2</sup>

These two stories are closely connected, at least in the mind of the writer, who could not understand why Patrick baptised and saved the one dead man, but left the other to his fate.

The story, however, shows that from the earliest times in Ireland the sign of the Cross in wood or stone was

<sup>1</sup> *Hy Many*, 12.

<sup>2</sup> It is not unlikely that the strange expression of St. Paul—"Otherwise what shall they do that are baptised for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all?"—might have given origin to those erroneous notions about baptising the dead.

usually placed over the Christian graves as an emblem of their hope of salvation by the Cross in life and in death. We are told, too, by the Tripartite that Patrick had a special devotion to the Cross, and that he was in the habit of signing himself with the sign of the Cross a hundred times every day and every night. And when driving or riding through the country on his missionary journeys wherever he saw a cross he would go and visit it, even though it were a thousand paces from his road. The writer adds that on this journey through Magh Finn Patrick did not see the cross as he travelled past; but his charioteer reminded him of his omission when they reached their station, whereupon Patrick got up again into the chariot, and went to visit the cross, asking at once who was buried there; and when he heard it was a heathen, he said—"that is why I did not see it as I passed."

The writer also makes reference on this occasion to Patrick's assiduity in prayer, even during his long and wearisome missionary journeys. 'No one,' he says, 'can realize the greatness of his diligence in prayer. For he used to chant every day psalms and hymns and the Apocalypse, and all the spiritual canticles of the scriptures, whether remaining in one place or going on his journeys.' This is what every priest is now bound to do to some extent, for the spiritual canticles seem to refer to the *Benedictus* and the *Magnificat* and other canticles which form a part of the daily office. It would, however, be difficult in those days to have regular lessons of what is now called the 'Scripture Occurring,' that is the lessons assigned to that day. It may be, then, that fixed portions of the Apocalypse were read instead of our daily Scripture lessons, or perhaps got by heart. But the number of psalms then recited every day was much greater than at present; and it is highly probable that Patrick and his clergy made it a fixed duty to recite the whole psalter not every week, as at present, but every day. Before all things Patrick was a man of prayer.

The writer also adds that Patrick never travelled from first Vespers on Saturday until None on Monday. That time he gave, with his familia, entirely to the worship of God; and on a certain Sunday evening when Patrick was abroad—doubtless praying—a great rain overtook him there pouring down upon the earth, but where Patrick stayed in the open it was dry like Gideon's fleece, though all around was wet with the rain.

The journey through the Plains of Boyle and thence to Magh Finn seems to imply very clearly that Patrick went south through the County Roscommon, revisiting the churches which he had founded there the previous year. This visitation would bring him to Fuerty, and from Fuerty he would naturally pass through Magh Finn on his way to the ford at Athlone, which was certainly the usual place for crossing the Shannon at that time. He would thus have an opportunity of visiting the churches he had founded in Westmeath on his way to Tara, where he went in all probability to meet the sons of Amalgaid, who were coming to plead before the King. The Book of Armagh and the Tripartite give a consecutive account of Patrick's foundations, but they do not attempt to give any account of his subsequent visitations of his churches: and, unfortunately, they never tell us when or where he wintered. We must now, however, accompany him to Tara and see what took place there.

#### V.—PATRICK REVISITS TARA.

Patrick had more than one purpose in view in going to Tara at this time. It is stated in the *Chronicon Scotorum* and other weighty authorities that the 'Seanchus Mor was written' in 438, that is, the ancient code was purified of pagan principles, and corrected in accordance with the maxims of the Gospel. We shall fully discuss this question hereafter, but it may be observed that it was in the same year, if we trust the *Chronicon*, that Secundinus, Auxilius, and Iserninus were sent to Ireland. The two former were nephews of St. Patrick, and the latter, though probably a Briton like the others, appears to have had an Irish mother from the Co. Carlow. It is not unlikely that Patrick met his two nephews in Leinster, and afterwards took them with him on his mission, but Bishop Fith, as Iserninus was called, remained in South Leinster preaching the Gospel.

It was in this year, then, that is 438, that the famous Commission of Nine was appointed to examine and codify the Brehon Laws. But the work must have taken time, and it is not unlikely that the leading purpose of Patrick in returning from the West to Tara was to promulgate the new Code. This work could only be accomplished with the sanction and help of the King, and hence he returned to Tara to secure his approval and authority. He had

already found by experience how necessary it was to purify the ancient code, for it was closely interwoven with druidic doctrines and practices.

It is clear Patrick returned to Tara before going into Tirawley, although that is not expressly stated in the Tripartite. As we have already said, the main purpose both of the Book of Armagh and of the Tripartite is to record Patrick's missionary journeys and the foundations of his new churches, taking no account of his interruptions or subsequent visitations, except when, now and then, they recorded some striking miracle or other extraordinary event. Hence, after giving an account of his foundations in Corcu-temne,<sup>1</sup> that is, the portion of the modern barony of Carra north-east of the lake, both Tirechan and the Tripartite give the general statement that he crossed the Moy to come into Tirawley.

This statement, however, of itself implies that he did not immediately go into Tirawley from Carra, for if he did he would not cross the Moy, but proceed along the line of the present railway to Ballina and Killala, keeping all through on the left bank of the river from the neighbourhood of Foxford. His 'crossing' the Moy therefore implies that he had left Carra and gone eastward somewhere, and then, returning through the great and wide territory of Corann in the Co. Sligo, came to the banks of the Moy, and crossed it to come into Tirawley, as we shall presently see.

This is clearly enough implied in the Tripartite, for, after stating that he crossed the Moy to go to Tirawley, it *goes back* to explain how it came to pass. The narrative certainly implies that he met the sons of Amalgaid somewhere in the west, at the time when they were on their road to Tara.

'There came to him twelve sons of Amalgaid, son of Fiachra, son of Eochy Moyvane.' Amalgaid was King of Connaught at the time, and was, although now advanced in years, still the ruler of the province. He had a very large family, eight sons by one wife and seven by another, according to the official Chronicle of his own Kingdom. He was first cousin of the King of Tara at the time, that is Laeghaire, for their respective fathers Fiachra and

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<sup>1</sup> It is quite clear from Tirechan (p. 329) that Corcu-temne was in Carra. It was, in fact, the territory around Castlebar afterwards called Clan-Cua'n. Kill-Tog was in that district.

Niall the Great, were both sons of Eochy Moyvane. His lands were some very rich and some very poor; but the chief strife was who should succeed him as King of Connaught, or at least as King of Tirawley.

No doubt at this time some of his sons were dead, but the Tripartite gives the names of the twelve who were contending for the sovereignty.<sup>1</sup>

The real competitors, however, were two, namely, Oengus, the haughtiest of all the sons of Amalgaid, who gave a nickname to all his brothers because the tribesmen were unwilling to have anyone with a nickname reign over them. The real cause, however, was that the nickname was supposed to indicate some personal defect or deformity, and persons of that kind were not considered eligible for the headship of a tribe. Oengus wished to note such defects, whether real or imaginary, and hence he sought to give a nickname to all his brothers in order to disqualify them for the kingship.

The second formidable competitor was Enda Crom, who is represented as the eldest of the twelve sons, and therefore having the right of seniority. But the 'nickname' marks a personal defect, and hence the hunchback chief would not be well in the running. Now, Enda had a son, Prince Conal, young, vigorous, eloquent, and energetic; and this youth was determined to assert his own rights, derived through his father, to the last. These facts will help to explain what follows. It would appear from the course of the narrative that all parties concerned wished to refer the question to the arbitration of the King of Tara. Such, too, was, so far as we can judge, the advice of St. Patrick; and it is probable that he himself resolved to see the question settled in Tara before entering on his mission in Tirawley. One thing is quite clear—it would be fruitless to go to preach the Gospel in Tirawley, whilst the rival chiefs were absent in Tara trying to settle the succession. Even if he had no other business on hand in Tara, Patrick's wisest course was to accompany the sons of Amalgaid to the Court of the High King; and we are expressly told that he resolved to do so, making at the same time a visitation of the Churches which he had founded, as we have already explained, both in Roscommon and Westmeath.

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<sup>1</sup> 'There came to meet him twelve sons of Amalgaid, son of Fiachra:—Oengus, Fergus, Fedilmid, Enda Crom, Enda Cullonun, Cormac, Coirpre, Echaid Oenau, Echaid Diainim, Eoghan Coir, Dubchonall, and Ailill Kettle-face.' Patrick could do nothing in Tirawley until this strife was settled.



Now the sons of Amalgaid went to Tara in twelve chariots to lay their case before the King; 'but in the Books of Patrick it is found that only seven brothers of them submitted to the judgment,' that is, were prepared to accept the arbitration of the King. The 'Books of Patrick' here referred to seem to mean the Book of Armagh, which contains Tirechan's Notes and Muirchu's Life of Patrick. Tirechan states that six of the sons of Amalgaid came to judgment before Laeghaire, besides Enda (and his young son Conall), that is seven; that Laeghaire and Patrick judged the cause, and decided that they should divide the inheritance into seven parts, and that Enda made offering of his son, and of his own share of the inheritance to God and to Patrick for ever.<sup>1</sup>

The version of the judgment, given in the Tripartite, is fuller and more significant. 'When the princes came to Tara they found welcome from the King,<sup>2</sup> Oengus especially, for he was a foster son of Laeghaire's,' that is, he was brought up by Laeghaire in the royal palace of Tara. Now Oengus was astute as well as ambitious, and feared young Prince Conall, who was, it appears, both eloquent and earnest in defending his father's right, which was also his own. So he begged the doorkeepers of the palace, whom he knew, not to admit young Conall into the royal dun; and they accordingly refused him admittance to the King, so that he could not plead his father's cause.

Whilst Conall was thus bidding outside the court of the King, 'he heard the voice of Patrick's Bell from Patrick's Well'—Tobur Patrick—which was close to the fortress or court of the King. Thereupon Conall went to meet Patrick; and the Saint gave his blessing to the gracious young chieftain. "O Cleric," said Conall, "knowest thou what language is this that is in my memory: 'Hibernenses omnes clamant ad te pueri'<sup>3</sup>—all the children of Erin call upon thee—which two girls sang out of their mother's womb in our territories?" The phrase 'out of their mother's womb' seems to mean, as we have before stated, 'in tenderest childhood,' as they were when Patrick saw them long ago. Yes, he remembered them well: they were the voices of those who dwelt by Focluth's wood on the

<sup>1</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> They were his cousins—first cousins once removed, for their father and Laeghaire were grandsons of Eochy Moyvane.

<sup>3</sup> Of course Conall spoke the words in Irish, but the Tripartite gives them, as a set phrase, in Latin.

western sea, which he often heard in far off lands, and he at once said to Conall: "It is I who was called thus, and I heard that voice when I was bidding in the Isles of the Tyrrhene Sea, and I knew not whether the words were spoken within me or outside me; and I will go with thee into thy country to baptise, to instruct, and to preach the Gospel."

How Prince Conall came to know the words is by no means clear. It might well be known in Tirawley that the great Bishop, who came from over the sea to preach in Erin, and whose fame was now spread over all the land, was in truth the fugitive slave, who many years ago took shipping from their own port of Killala. Perhaps, too, the prattling of the children, who in tender childhood asked the holy youth to promise to come once more and dwell amongst them, was well remembered; for these maidens still dwelt in their home by the western sea, and could never forget the memorable scene of their childhood.<sup>1</sup> And so Prince Conall in Tirawley came to hear the wonderful story; and reminded Patrick of the strange, prophetic words. One thing is clear, that they touched a deep and tender chord in the heart of the Saint, who from that hour became Conall's friend and protector.

Then, we are told that Patrick, now deeply interested in young Conall, asked why he had come to Tara, and Conall told the cause, adding that he was excluded from the palace by the door-keepers. But the doors were opened at Patrick's bidding; and he said to the young prince—"Enter now, as the doors are open, and go to Eoghan, son of Niall, who is a faithful friend of mine<sup>2</sup>; and he will help thee if thou take secretly the finger next his little finger, for that is always a token between us." Patrick, we know, had many enemies at Tara, and needed powerful friends at court, especially when he was absent himself. So, doubtless, this token was agreed upon in an age when no letters could be written, as a secret means of making known to Eoghan, who was general-in-chief at Tara, the messengers and friends of Patrick. What follows makes this quite clear. When his finger was touched, "Welcome," said Eoghan, "what is Patrick's desire?" "To help me," said Conall; and then the young prince was allowed to

<sup>1</sup> Prince Conall himself dwelt close to the wood of Focluth, and might have easily got word of the sayings and doings of Patrick in that locality.

<sup>2</sup> He had, doubtless, made Eoghan's acquaintance and secured his friendship some years before at Tara.

state his cause before Eoghan and the King. "If," said he, "it is according to my age the questions of the palace and the land are to be decided, I must admit that I am the youngest and have no claim. But, if it be according to my father's age, then my father, Enda Crom, is the oldest, and has, therefore, the right on his side." Laeghaire reluctantly acquiesced in this reasoning, and adjudicated the chieftaincy to the eldest of the sons of Amalgaid, directing, however, that the land should be divided between them, and that each should retain the jewels and other personal property already in his possession. No doubt the astute Oengus had already provided himself well in this respect; but he was defeated on the main issue. We have already noticed that Enda Crom, as his name implies, was rather stooped, and perhaps not well fitted to be a warrior, for which reason some of the tribesmen objected to him on account of his deformity. But Conall, being young and vigorous, could take his father's place as a warrior, and was well able to defend his rights against the intrigues of Oengus. This controversy serves to explain much of what follows.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### ST. PATRICK IN TIRAWLEY.

#### I.—PATRICK'S JOURNEY FROM TARA TO TIRAWLEY.

NOW that their dispute was settled at Tara, the sons of Amalgaid set out for their native territory. They travelled in twelve 'chariots,' and Patrick, who accompanied them, gave a place in his own chariot to young Prince Conall, so that it was the thirteenth chariot. Their route from Tara lay by the great north-western road, through Meath and Longford, crossing the Shannon somewhere near Carrick-on-Shannon.<sup>1</sup> It was a much-frequented track, and was called sometimes *Slighe na g-carbad*, or the Road of the Chariots. Patrick, too, in fulfilment of his promise to Conall, and perhaps also at the request of Laeghaire, was accompanied by Enda Crom, as well as by young Conall, who were now his devoted friends and protectors. But Oengus had no affection for them—either for Patrick or for his own nephew, Conall. He hated both cordially; and he was determined, if possible, to get rid of them. So going forward, in advance of their party, he solicited his brothers, Fergus and Fedilmid, to kill Patrick and Conall. They agreed to do so, as soon as they came to the territory of Corann in the Co. Sligo, part of which, it seems, belonged to their family. But this plot miscarried, for the brothers, on consideration, refused to kill the holy Patrick, as well as their own brother and brother's son.

Then the party journeyed onward through the west of Sligo, and crossing the Ox Mountains, most likely by the wild valley of Lough Talt, they would soon descend to Ballina, where, doubtless, they crossed the Moy, and so they came into their father's land of Tirawley. Now, the wicked Oengus, disappointed in Corann, once more sought the life of Patrick. Tirawley, being a royal seat, had a college of the Druids, who, as usual, dwelt near the King's dun. Oengus went forward, and raised their anger against the daring cleric, who was coming into their own territory

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<sup>1</sup> If the river was low there would be no difficulty in driving chariots over the fords of the Shannon at Drumboylan, where Patrick himself had crossed.

to overthrow their worship.<sup>1</sup> So they all gathered round the chief Druid, Rechred by name, who urged them to combine and kill their common enemy. The Tripartite says they, with their retainers, formed themselves into two bands, one of which was led by the Druid, Reon, and the other by Rechred, the chief Druid, who had nine of his disciples with him, all clothed in their white priestly garments.

## II.—PATRICK'S CONFLICT WITH THE TIRAWLEY DRUIDS.

The scene that followed is somewhat differently described by Tirechan and the Tripartite, but in the main the accounts agree. Patrick, with Enda Crom and young Conall, had come to the place called afterwards Crosspatrick, and the Saint was, it appears, then engaged in baptising a number of the Tirawley men, who were, doubtless, followers of Enda Crom. The scene of their baptism was the holy well which still flows in a copious stream about one hundred yards west of the old church of Crosspatrick, and close by the modern road to Killala. Just then they heard that the troop of the heathen was approaching against them, and whilst Enda Crom seized his arms to repel them, it seems Patrick sent Conall forward to indicate to him by some sign where exactly the Druids' leader stood. They were then about one mile distant to the west. Patrick saw them clearly from the cross to the west of Crosspatrick church—it was doubtless placed there to mark the spot. He had heard that Reon the Druid declared that as soon as he, Reon, would see Patrick he would cause the earth to swallow him up. But Patrick replied, "It is I shall first see him," and as soon as he saw Reon, 'the earth opened to swallow him down.' "I will believe," said Reon, "if I am saved from death." Then the earth threw him up again; he believed and was baptised. But Rechred, the leader of the pagan host, was lifted high in the air, and falling down, his head was broken against a rock, and fire from heaven burnt his body to ashes.<sup>2</sup> Tirechan, however, does not give these particulars, but merely says that when Patrick saw the Druid host he raised his left hand to heaven and cursed the chief Druid, whereupon he

<sup>1</sup> Andierunt quod sanctus vir venisset super eos in suas regiones proprias.  
—*Book of Armagh.*

<sup>2</sup> Exustus est.

fell dead in the midst of his fellows; his followers, too, were scattered over the whole country, and he was burned to ashes in the sight of all.

The locality of this wonderful event is defined with great accuracy, and all the places referred to can be readily identified. 'There is a church there' (where Patrick stood) says the Tripartite. Crosspatrick is its name, to the east of the wood of Focluth. Telach na n-Druadh is the name of the place wherein was the troop of the heathen (one mile)<sup>1</sup> to the west of Crosspatrick. Glais Conaig is between them—this was the stream that flowed and still flows from Meelick Lake to the sea. The church and holy well at Crosspatrick are well known, and Patrick's seat is still shown just outside the old churchyard. Telach na n-Druadh, where the magus perished, was near Killala, and a church was built on the spot to commemorate the miracle. The church and the Druid's stone have entirely disappeared, but we learned from some old men that both were to be seen in their youth in a field a little to the left of the new road to Palmerstown, just beyond the village of Killala. The 'improving' owner, however, cleared all away.

### III.—PATRICK AT FOCLUTH WOOD.

This victory opened the way for Patrick in Tirawley. When the people saw that wondrous miracle they believed, 'and he baptised a great number on that day' at Crosspatrick Well, it seems; and he ordained for them Bishop Mucna, the brother of Cethiacus, and Patrick gave Mucna the seven books of the law, which Mucna afterwards left in turn to Bishop Mac Erca, the son of Mac Dregain. Moreover, he built a church for Mucna at the Wood of Focluth,<sup>2</sup> called Donaghmore, where his relics rest,<sup>3</sup> because 'God told Patrick to leave his law there, and to ordain bishops, and priests, and deacons in that region.' And Patrick was prompt to obey the voice of God, for the Wood of Focluth was dear to his heart, and the voices of its children were ever sounding in his ears; and now that God, after so many years, had fulfilled his soul's desire, and realised his vocation, it was only natural that Patrick would pour out with full hand the richest treasures of his ministry on that

<sup>1</sup> 'Mille passuum,' says Tirechan.

<sup>2</sup> Super silvam Focluth.—*Tirechan*.

<sup>3</sup> In qua sunt ossa ejus.—*Tirechan*.

blessed region. And so in truth he did. There was no other district of the same extent throughout all Ireland, where he founded so many churches, ordained so many bishops, and performed so many wondrous miracles as around that ancient Wood<sup>1</sup> of Focluth by the western sea.

O'Donovan<sup>2</sup> says that, although the old church of Donaghmore has completely disappeared, the name still survives as that of a townland in the parish of Killala. We cannot, however, find it in the published list of Irish townlands, at least in that form.<sup>3</sup> Colgan identifies Mucna, or Mucneus of Donaghmore with Muckin of Moyne, whose festival is fixed by our martyrologies on the 4th of March. This is highly probable, as Moyne is close to Crosspatrick, and in the parish of Killala. The site of the old church can still be traced near the bank of the Moy, a little to the south of the beautiful ruin known as the Abbey of Moyne, which, of course, being Franciscan, is of a much later date. Donaghmore was, probably, the first church which Saint Patrick founded in Tirawley, and as usual its site was admirably chosen. It was apparently near Crosspatrick, to which the Saint returned from Donaghmore, that Patrick performed two other miracles recorded in immediate connection with his victory over the Druids. A poor blind man, seeking to be cured, came hastily to Patrick, and appears in his haste to have stumbled, whereupon one of Patrick's household laughed aloud at him. "My troth," said Patrick, "it were meet that thou shouldst be the blind man," and forthwith the blind became hale, and the hale became blind in punishment of his ill-timed mirth. Mignae was the cleric's name, and Roi Ruain was the name of the place where the blind man was healed, because his name was Ruan, and he was son of Cu Cnama, the charioteer of King Amalgaid. The place itself, in memory of the miracle, was given over to Patrick for the Church. The chastisement was severe, but it made the delinquent a saint, for he became thenceforward a hermit in Disert-Patraic, which was the name given to the wild woodlands between Crosspatrick and Killala around Meelick Lake. They were wild and lonely then, and they are the same to the present day, as anyone can see who notes the place on the left of the road to Killala.

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<sup>1</sup> 'The oldest wood that ever grew in Eire was Focluth Wood, and gloomiest.'

<sup>2</sup> *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 466.

<sup>3</sup> The townland name has been corrupted into Tawnaghmore.

About the same time and locality two lame men came to Patrick at Ochtar Caerthin to be healed of their infirmity. They dwelt near the mountain, and they complained that they were unable to travel from the highlands to the plain, and they had land in both places. Patrick cured them at once.

There, too, at the well of Crosspatrick, Aedh the Tall, Son of Eochaid, Son of Oengus, besought the Saint to cure his lameness. Patrick heard his prayer, and the grateful youth, therefore, bestowed on Patrick two ox-gangs of land for the site of a church, in which Patrick left two of his household to minister, namely, Teloc and Nemnall. This appears to be the church of Crosspatrick itself, which got its name from Patrick's Cross, erected, no doubt, to commemorate his signal triumphs over the Druids on that holy ground. The donor was the grandson of the wicked Oengus, who sought to slay the Saint; but Oengus now, having seen or heard of all those marvels, declared himself willing to believe, if Patrick would raise his sister from the dead, that is Fedlem, daughter of Amalgaid, 'who had died long ago.'<sup>1</sup>

It was apparently at this time that a certain man, by name Mac Dregain, came to Patrick, bringing his seven gentile sons along with him, and asked God's baptism for them all. Patrick was pleased with this man's good dispositions, and after their baptism not only gave a special blessing to him and his children, but chose one of the sons to be educated for the ministry. The youth's name was Mac Erca, and Patrick wrote 'elements' for him, that is a catechism of Christian Doctrine, both dogmatic and moral. The father, however, did not wish his son to go far away from home. "It will grieve me," he said, "if my son goes far away with you." Then Patrick, like St. Paul, making himself all to all men that he might gain all, replied, "I will not take him with me, but I will place him under the care of Bron Mac Ieni and Olcan"—two bishops whom he left in that country—one near Sligo and the other at Kilmore Moy. Then raising his hand, he pointed out where the young cleric would have his church and afterwards his grave, and on that spot he erected a cross to mark the site, according to his custom. The place which

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<sup>1</sup> Not Amalgaid himself, but his daughter. The old king was baptised at Killala a short time before his death. He was the 'first King of Connaught after the faith'—that is, the first Christian King.—*Chronicon Scotorum*.



St. Patrick thus pointed out is the old churchyard of Kilroe, over the estuary, about a half-mile north of Crosspatrick. It is the only Patrician church of which even the remnant of a ruin now remains in Tirawley. The site was beautifully chosen on the very brow of a rocky escarpment, whose base is washed by the waters of the high spring tides when they sweep up the estuary of the river. A considerable portion of the south wall still remains, built of very large stones with little or no mortar. The grey old walls still frown above the flood, and, doubtless, the bones of Mac Erca, as Patrick said, are now commingled with the dust of the old churchyard.<sup>1</sup> The place is well worthy of a visit, and is not more than fifty or sixty yards to the right of the old road to Killala.

#### IV.—THE MAIDENS OF FOCLUTH WOOD.

Tirechan adds that 'two maidens came to Patrick'—apparently in the same place—'and they received the pallium from his hand, and he blessed a place for them at the wood of Focluth.' The Tripartite is more explicit—it says he baptised the women, namely, Crebriu and Lesru, the two daughters of Gleru, son of Cummene. It is they that called to Patrick out of their mother's womb, when he was in the isles of the Tyrrhene Sea. It is they that are patronesses of Cell-Forgland in Hui Amalgada, west of the Moy.

This is one of the most interesting passages in the life of St. Patrick. Some forty years before he came to these shores footsore and weary, a fugitive slave seeking a passage to Britain, and he lodged, he tells us himself, at Focluth Wood, in a poor cottage by the sea. There he saw the children, these very children of Gleru, whom he promised to instruct and baptise; theirs were the voices he heard calling him over the sea; and now he had come as he promised, after many years travelling over seas and mountains, bearing with him the message of salvation. Joyfully they came to him, grown up women now, but still unmarried, waiting all the long years, with their hearts filled with the hope of his return and the fulfilment of his promise that he would bring them to God. What a joy it

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<sup>1</sup> Some have identified Kilroe with Cell-Forgland, the church that Patrick built for the maidens twain, whose voices called him over the sea, but that church was north-west of Killala, and has now disappeared.

must have been to him and to them when they knelt before him to receive from his hand that 'pallium' which was the bridal robe that made them spouses of Christ for ever. Then he built them a little church there by Focluth Wood in the hearing of the sea, and he blessed it 'with the blessing of a father,' and close at hand he built their little convent cells, where they spent the remaining years of their holy and joyous lives praising and serving Him who had so marvellously led them from the darkness of paganism into His admirable light.

Ten years in praise to God and good to men  
That happy precinct housed them. Grief her work  
In life's young morn for them had perfected;  
Their eve was bright as childhood. When the hour  
Came for their blissful transit, from their lips  
Pealed forth ere death, that great triumphant chant  
Sung by the Virgin Mother. Ages passed;  
And year by year, on wintry nights, that song  
By mariners was heard—a cry of joy.

—AUBREY DE VERE

They were the 'patronesses' of the church of Cell-Forgland, so, doubtless, it was there they lived and prayed, and there their relics rest. At one time I thought Kilroe was the church of the maidens twain; and it would be a satisfaction to know that even one of its broken walls still remained. It seems, however, from the narrative in the Tripartite, that Cell-Forgland was their church, and that its site was at Telach na n-Druadh 'over' the wood of Focluth, as we have already explained. The exact spot cannot, we fear, be now ascertained. But the name of Focluth Wood still remains.<sup>1</sup> Foghill is yet the name of a townland beyond Killala in the parish of Kilcummin. It is undoubtedly the ancient name, modified as usual, and it shows that the 'wood' really extended from Crosspatrick along the low ground past Killala to Palmerstown, and thence to the head of the bay at Lackan. But the wood merely meant woodlands interspersed with open glades; and a glance even at the present aspect of the country will show that such must have been its character in ancient times. Some of the natives told me they remem-

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<sup>1</sup> We find the forms Fochlad, Fochlot, Fochluth, in the Tripartite. Any Irish scholar will easily see that Fochlad is nearly the same in sound as the modern 'Foghill.'

bered the time when portions of the 'old wood existed.' They exist still between Crosspatrick and Killala around Meelick Lake; but, so far as we could ascertain, nowhere else. The woods at Palmerstown appear to be modern plantations, which now occupy at least a portion of the ground occupied by that ancient Focluth Wood of immemorial fame.

#### V.—PATRICK FOUNDS KILLALA.

It would appear from the context of the Tripartite that the Maidens of Focluth Wood were baptised by Patrick in the holy well at Killala. It is there still, close to the shore, under the brow of the hill, and covered over with a small stone house. The reference to Killala itself is very brief in the Tripartite, but very important. It simply states that 'Patrick founded Cell Alaid (Killala), and left therein an aged man of his household (or religious family), namely Bishop Muiredaig.' Tirechan makes no reference to Killala or to St. Muredach during Patrick's journey in Tirawley, but when he crossed the Moy and was going round the coast to Sligo he came to 'Muirisc,' or in Irish 'Muirsci,' to Bishop Bron, son of Ichni, and he blessed there a youth named Mac Rime, who became a bishop, and he wrote elements, that is a catechism, for him and for 'Muirethacus, the Bishop, who was at the River Bratho.' Both the youths in question are named bishops by anticipation. The River Bratho is the Borrach, which flows into the sea near Aughris Head, in the barony of Tireragh, as we shall presently see. It seems highly probable that this district was the native place both of Mac Rime and Muredach, that they learned at least some of their Latin and Theology there, that Muredach, who was then of ripe years, joined the family of St. Patrick for a time, and was afterwards appointed by the Saint, perhaps before he left Connaught, the chief Bishop of the Northern Hy Fiachrach, and established in the church of Killala, which was the parish church of the royal dun at Mullagh-horn, close to Killala.

The chief difficulty against this view is the genealogy of Muredach, Bishop of Killala, quoted by Colgan from the *Sanctilogium*. Muredach is there represented as fifth in descent from Laeghaire Mac Niall, who was King of Ireland at the very time St. Patrick was preaching in Tirawley. Besides the Life of St. Farannan at the 15th of February,

states that Muredach, the Bishop of Killala, met Columcille at the Synod of Easdara about the year A.D. 580, that is, after the Synod of Drumceat. Hence Lanigan and other critics deny that St. Patrick placed Muredach over the See of Killala.

The mistake that Lanigan makes is to assume that there was only one Muredach Bishop of Killala. It was a very common name amongst the Hy Fiachrach, and as a fact we have the undoubted testimony of Mac Firis of Leacan, in Tireragh, who certainly knew what he was talking about, that there were seven Bishops of Killala of the Clan-Cele, and amongst them we find the name of a Bishop Muredach third on the list, and certainly not the founder of the See. Those prelates, too, derived their descent from a Laeghaire, but it was not Laeghaire Mac Niall, but from another Laeghaire, the grandson of King Dathi, who was ruler of the very district in which Killala is situated.<sup>1</sup> There is no good reason, therefore, for denying the statement in the Tripartite that St. Patrick founded the church of Killala and placed over it his own disciple, St. Muredach, who was, probably, a native of Templeboy, in Tireragh.

The island of Inishmurray, in the Bay of Donegal, in our opinion, takes its name from this saint. He must have known it well, for it is only about fifteen miles distant from Aughris Head, where his family dwelt, and hence, when in his old age, he was anxious to live alone with God, nothing would be more natural than that, like so many Irish saints of the time, he should seek a 'desert' in the ocean, and retire to that lonely island surrounded by the wild Atlantic billows. Yet he was not the patron saint of the island. St. Molaise, who flourished a century later, is universally recognised as the patron saint of Inishmurray. Still it is strange that the festival day of both saints is the same, that is, the 12th of August, which would seem to imply some connection between them. But that of itself is no reason for identifying, as some have done, Muredach of Killala with Molaise of Inishmurray.<sup>2</sup> We find, however, that the truly learned Dr. O'Rorke is inclined to that view.

The scene is now transferred from the low ground near Killala along the river to the hill of Mullaghfarry,<sup>3</sup> which is

<sup>1</sup> See O'Donovan's *Hy Fiachrach*.

<sup>2</sup> Some think the island may have taken its name, not from the first Muredach of Killala, but from his namesake, who was a contemporary of Columcille more than a hundred years later.

<sup>3</sup> He calls it 'Foirgea filiorum Amoluid.'

some three miles south-west of Killala. It was the tribal meeting-place of the men of Tirawley, and hence its name—mullagh-forraigh—the Hill of the Meeting, where the princes of Tirawley were inaugurated, and all the important gatherings of the tribe were held. It still bears the ancient name, and is well known to everyone around Killala.

Tirechan says that Patrick went there<sup>1</sup> to divide the territory amongst the sons of Amalgaid, doubtless in accordance with the instructions which King Laeghaire had given him before his departure from Tara. The place was admirably adapted for a tribal open air-parliament. It is a spacious flat-topped hill, commanding from its summit a splendid prospect of all the swelling plains and fertile valleys of Tirawley far and near from Ballina to the sea, and from Nephin to Slieve Gamh beyond the river. Tirechan then adds that Patrick built on its summit a quadrangular mud-wall church,<sup>2</sup> 'because,' he says, 'there was no wood near the place.' All the ordinary turf buildings were circular, and hence he notes that this church was, according to the Christian usage, quadrangular. It shows, too, that stone was seldom employed in those primitive churches, for the writer here complains not of want of stone but of wood. When a stone church was built it was called by the special name of *daimhliac*.

No doubt all the sons of Amalgaid and the men of the 'twenty-four old tribes'<sup>3</sup> were gathered at this great meeting. It was a momentous one for them, for not only was the land to be divided but the religious question was to be finally settled, and, besides, they would all see the wonderful priest of whom they had heard so much. It was a no less important assembly for Patrick, for it was necessary to prove his mission and gain their good will, if his work was to endure in Tirawley. He had friends there, like Enda Crom and Conall, but he had enemies too, for the guileful Oengus was not yet converted, and the Druids still had their own adherents in the tribe. Miracles were needed, surely, for the tribesmen were not people to listen to either philosophical or theological arguments. If the rude infidels were to believe they must see signs; and they saw them, too, there on that day, and elsewhere. It was not necessary for Patrick in the might of his faith to cast Mount Nephin

<sup>1</sup> It is doubtful if Mullaghearn was yet established as the royal fort of the Hy Awley kings. See *Hy Fiachrach*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ecclesiam terrenam de humo quadratam quia non prope erat silva.*

<sup>3</sup> Probably the Firbolgs of Erris.

into the sea ; but it was very necessary for him to prove to the rude tribesmen of Tirawley by visible signs that he was sent by God to preach the new Gospel and destroy the religion of their fathers.

Here, again, Tirechan is very brief. He merely says that they brought to Patrick a sick woman having a child (alive) in her womb, and that he baptised the child in the womb of its mother. This is sometimes done still in case of necessity, when the baptismal water can reach a partially born child. But Tirechan adds that this baptismal water was also the water of the communion of the mother. Perhaps the reading is inaccurate, but, if not, it merely means that a portion of the water blessed for baptism was used to enable the dying woman to receive the holy Viaticum, and, perhaps, the Viaticum may have been under the species of wine, which at that time was certainly not unusual. He adds that they buried her 'in cacuminibus ecclesiae'—the roof of the church—a very strange place ; but we must remember that this church was just then being built, that it was constructed of turf or earthen sods, and that in those buildings there was sometimes a kind of croft or loft, which might be used for the burial. A vault above the loft is in itself not more objectionable, rather less, than a vault below the floor. But in all this there is nothing miraculous, and the narrative clearly alludes to something not fully explained.

The Tripartite, however, more than makes up for this omission of Tirechan. It will be remembered that Oengus said he would believe 'if my sister is brought back to life.' Now, the Tripartite tells us that at this great meeting of the Sons of Amalgaid, the seven sons of the king believed in Patrick, together with Enda and with the old King himself. Then it is added—'Therein, on the hill, it is that he baptised the pregnant woman and her child, and raised another woman to life.' Then we are told how it happened. Patrick and Conall went to the grave wherein the dead pregnant woman, namely Fedilm, was biding, by the lower path to Killala. Oengus (her brother), however, went along the upper path (to Killala). They reached the grave (at Killala). Patrick raised the woman to life, and the boy in her womb. And both were baptised in the well of Oenadarc (the One-horn). 'From the steep little hillock of earth that is near it the well was so named.' And when she was brought to life, 'she preached to the multitude of the pains of hell and the rewards of heaven, and with tears

she besought her brother, Oengus, to believe in God, through Patrick; and in that day twelve thousand were baptised in the well of Oen-adarc—and he left with them Manchen the Master. If the tribesmen were eye-witnesses of these great miracles, or even heard of them from the actual eye-witnesses, it is no wonder that twelve thousand believed and were baptised on that day.

Such is the story in the Tripartite. The text leaves it doubtful where the baptism of the twelve thousand took place—whether at Killala or at Mullaghfarry. To us it appears clear that it was at Killala, and that the well of the ‘One-horn,’ or hillock, was not at Mullaghfarry, but at Killala. It still flows there under the hillock, as anyone can see; there is no such hillock at Mullaghfarry, and no well near the site of the old church there. Then it is evident that when Oengus challenged Patrick to raise his sister to life as the condition of his believing, Patrick accepted the challenge, going to Killala by the ‘lower road,’ while Oengus took the higher or western one. The two roads are there still. No doubt the multitude accompanied them to see the miracle at the grave; they saw it, and twelve thousand of the men of Tirawley were accordingly baptised on that day at Killala. We have gone over the whole ground—walked every inch of it—and we have no doubt even those who might deny the miracle would be greatly surprised at the extraordinary fidelity of the narrative in all its local details.

It is not easy to ascertain who Manchen the Master was. No native of Tirawley was at this time fit to take charge of a church. The ‘bishops’ referred to are so called by anticipation; they were then only learning their ‘elements’ or ‘alphabets,’ that is, their catechisms, in preparation for their ministry. Hence Patrick left to the men of Tirawley one of his own followers from Britain, or who had been trained in Britain, and was thus, as his title shows, well qualified to teach both the clergy and the people. But he took his students from the sons of the native chieftains, thereby strengthening the infant Church through the rising influence of a local clergy and their manifold tribal connections. On this, as on many similar occasions, Patrick showed consummate prudence in the organisation of his infant Church.

Oengus was baptised after the miracle at Killala, and Patrick now went to visit his territory, which was at Loch Dacla, now Lough Dalla, a small lake about five miles

south-west of Crosspatrick. The Saint was anxious to get the place of a church there, and subsequently got it, not, however, without rudeness and reluctance on the part of Oengus. The old warrior came half drunk to Patrick, and treated him with disrespect, for, like King Laeghaire, 'it was not from the heart he believed,' but rather from fear or policy. Patrick reproached the drunken chief severely. "By my troth," he said, "it were right that thy dwellings and thy children after thee should not be exalted. Thy successors will be ale-bibbers, and there will be parricides from thee." It is noteworthy that O'Donovan says of the descendants of Oengus, who were once in Tirawley, that their family names (mentioned by Mac Firbis as those of the Cenel-Oengusa), are all obsolete at present in the barony of Tirawley.<sup>1</sup>

#### VI.—FOUNDING OF KILMORE-MOY.

From Lough Dalla Patrick went eastward to Lecc Finn, that is towards the place where Ballina now stands. Lecc Finn, or the White Rock, was the name of a large stone cropping up on the summit of the high ground just over the old church of Kilmore Moy, and it is quite accurately described in the Tripartite, 'as over the church to the west.' It was afterwards called Lia na Monagh, or the Monk's Stone, from St. Olcan, the founder of the church of 'Kilmore Ochtair Muaide.' This rock was a conspicuous object in the field, having on one side a smooth face, rising over the soil. On this face of the rock Patrick, who had special reverence for the symbol of our redemption, incised a cross, thus marking it out as the place of a church, 'although there was no church there at that time.' The old church has completely disappeared, although the graveyard remains, but Patrick's Cross engraved on the face of the living rock still remains. It is sometimes covered with the earth which has risen up around the rock, but it is there; and by removing the clay the visitor may see it at any time, and surely the sacred spot is worthy of greater care than it has received from the local proprietors.<sup>2</sup>

Bishop Olcan, who accompanied Patrick to this sacred spot, was probably his own nephew, the son of his sister, Richella, as has been already explained. Olcan carried an

<sup>1</sup> *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 7, note.

<sup>2</sup> We venture to suggest that the clay should be removed from the face of the rock and the lines of Patrick's Cross be clearly brought to light.



axe on his back for the purpose, it seems, of procuring timber for his new church, but Patrick had not yet fixed the exact site. "Go and build it," said the Saint, "at the spot where the axe will fall from your shoulder—there your residence will be." The axe fell at the place 'where Kilmore Moy is to-day,' just under the White Rock, and there Olcan built his church, on a very beautiful site, close to the highway from Ballina to Killala, and not more than half-a-mile from the former town. It was, in fact, the parish church of Ballina, on the left bank of the river.

Just beneath the old church there flows a bounteous spring, 'right in the doorway of Kilmore Moy,' as the Tripartite says, and along the high road that passes close to it. This well, or stream, was just then the scene of a wondrous miracle, as recorded in the Tripartite. Eochaid, son of the great King Dathi, was, it seems, ruler of the district, and was baptised in this well. His wife, Echtra, had died a short time before, and he besought Patrick to raise her to life. Patrick heard his prayer; and 'he raised Echtra to life at Ath-Echtra (that is the Ford of Echtra), over the little stream, right in the doorway of Kilmore. And Echtra's grave-mound is on the edge of the Ford. It is in the knowledge of them in this country'—the story which commemorates this miracle.<sup>1</sup> The grave-mound of Echtra was there until quite recently, when an 'improving' farmer levelled it to manure his field; but the spot is still pointed out: and we can testify that the story is still green in the memory of the people. The writer of the Tripartite is perfectly candid. He points to the tradition of the locality, as the evidence of the miracle, and hence he is so precise in defining the places referred to; and, as usual, his description is perfectly accurate. Tirechan, in the Book of Armagh, makes no reference to this miracle; but his account is confessedly brief and imperfect.

Then Patrick faced again northwards, and passing on beyond Killala he came to the place called Lecc Balbeni, where he found the sons of Amalgaid 'and blessed them.' There can hardly, we think, be any doubt that 'Lecc Balbeni, or the Stone of Balbeni,' is the very striking pillar-stone, standing near the strand at the head of Lackan Bay; placed there, no doubt, to mark the grave of some ancient hero, who probably perished in the tide-way. St. Patrick's Well, a deep and beautiful spring, stands near the pillar-

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<sup>1</sup> It is a challenge to the local historians to deny the fact if they can.

stone, and of itself points to the presence of the Saint in the district. It was there he probably baptised the people of that remote territory.

The Tripartite does not follow the Saint further north ; but there can be no doubt that on this occasion he crossed the hill over Lackan Bay, and journeyed to the very remarkable promontory that still bears his name, that is, Downpatrick Head.

#### VII.—PATRICK AT DOWNPATRICK HEAD.

This is a very wild, but highly picturesque spot, and naturally attracted one who had so keen an eye as Patrick for the beauties of nature. On the land side it is low, not much above the level of high tide ; but then the headland gradually rises towards the sea, affording a fine view, especially westwards, of all the bold coastland of Erris, with the Stags of Broadhaven rising from the sea in the distance. The turf under foot is soft and green, with all the tender elasticity of a velvet carpet. Upward still you walk and seaward as you advance, watching the glorious prospect on either side, until suddenly a deep abyss opens before you, with the roaring waves one hundred and thirty feet beneath. Involuntarily you step backward, for it is a place to try one's nerves, and then, getting courage, you see before you an island, Doonbriste it is popularly called, that is, the Broken-off-fort, and such it clearly is. It was the sea that tore off the island from the main ; they are exactly the same height, and the little island shows the same strata and the same gradual elevation towards the sea. Broken off it surely was from the promontory on which you stand—and an impassable gulf now yawns between them—but when no man can tell. They say there is an ancient fort on the island, built there before the fracture. It could not have been done since, for no man can now surmount it, either from the land or from the sea. The wild birds have it all to themselves, and they know it. The cliffs, the rocky ledges, and the green area of the summit of Doonbriste are literally alive with them ; they build their nests everywhere, even on the bare rocks, in perfect security that they cannot be disturbed. It would be a cruel and fruitless thing to shoot them ; they might be destroyed, but nothing could be gained thereby.

On the slope of the hill there is an old ruin, which the people say was an ancient church built by St. Patrick.

It is not cyclopæan, and we think it is not so ancient as the time of St. Patrick; but as all the characteristic features have disappeared, it is now hard to say what it was. The tradition, however, that St. Patrick came there, and founded an oratory on the Head, is still very vivid, and, we have no doubt, is founded in fact. The name itself is sufficient evidence of the Saint's sojourn there for some brief period. Knox thinks the church may have been that called by the Tripartite the church of Ros Mac Caithni. O'Donovan, however, more justly places this church at Ross Point, near Killala. I do not think there was a church on Doonbriste; the ruins are those of a very ancient fort; although there certainly was a church called Dunbristia, but it was on the mainland—that is, on Downpatrick Head.

It is likely that St. Patrick, returning from Downpatrick, came by way of Mullaghcross to Fearsad Treisi, close to the old Abbey of Rafran. It was the usual way, and besides it was a place likely to be visited by the Saint. Mullaghcross—the Hill of the Cross—appears to take its name rather from the cross roads than from any ancient cross erected on the spot. But it is a remarkable place, for it seems to have been the original seat of Druidism in Tirawley.<sup>1</sup> The great stone circle surrounding the Druid's altar still remains on the left of the road to Palmerstown; and close to the cross roads a very ancient ogham pillar once stood. When we saw it the monolith was overthrown, so that we could make no attempt to copy the inscription, but we have since heard that it has been re-erected, and that the inscription, though much defaced, has been deciphered.<sup>2</sup>

The whole locality is at once very remarkable and also very picturesque.

From the cross-roads St. Patrick would descend a gentle slope through green and fertile meadows to the ford at Rafran. Here the Pagan and Christian memorials stand side by side at a spot which is, perhaps, one of the most beautiful in Connaught. The bay of Rafran penetrates far into the land—the tidal waters coming up to meet the mountain river at Palmerstown, but the ancient ford was

<sup>1</sup> Amalgaid himself had his chief dun near at hand over the river at Rafran.

<sup>2</sup> It is in the townland of Breastagh, and the inscription signifies :—' (Stone) of Carrbri, son of Ammlagnitt.' The elder Amalgaid (+ 449) had a son named Cairbre.

about half-a-mile to the seaward of the present road, just under the old abbey. It was called Fearsad Treisi because Treisi, daughter of Nadfraoch, King of Munster, who was wife of King Amalgaid, was drowned at the crossing. In later times it came to be called Fearsad Raith Bhraín (Rafran) from the rath of Brunduibh, which stood at the same spot—doubtless to command the ford; and the rath certainly was, and most fitly too, one of the royal forts of the kings of Hy Fiachrach.<sup>1</sup> The friars were not likely to miss such a spot—it was so quiet, so fishful, so picturesque. Wherefore the Dominicans, at a very early date, got a grant of the place from the conquering D'Exeters, and built their beautiful church just over the river in one of the most charming sites in Tirawley. The ford is a little below it, and is, we believe, still used by those who wish to shorten the way to Killala by crossing the river at this point.

There can hardly be a doubt that it was over this ford St. Patrick passed into the peninsula of Ross, when he returned from Lecc Balbeni to cross the Moy to the east. The peninsula of Ross retains its name; and Tirechan—not the Tripartite—tells us that Patrick founded a church there 'with a certain family in the bosom of the sea.'<sup>2</sup>

This description of the place is very picturesque and quite exact. We spent a day rambling through the sand hills of Ross to find out the site of this church, and at length found it, just one hundred yards south of the coast-guard station, at the southern extremity of the promontory, looking towards Bartragh Island.

It is described happily as 'in the bosom of the sea,' for it is a sand-hill with the tide flowing nearly all round it; but it is a pleasant spot at any time, and in summer it must be quite delightful. It is strange the good people of Killala seem to have deserted it for Enniscrone on the opposite side of the bay. The few lodges around it are roofless and desolate.

<sup>1</sup> See *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Apud familiam in sinu maris, id est, Ross filiorum Caitni.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### ST. PATRICK IN TIRERAGH.

#### I.—HE RECROSSES THE MOY.

FROM this southern point of Ross St. Patrick crossed the shallow bar of Killala harbour into the western Bertriga, as Tirechan has it, or Bertlacha, as it is in the Irish text. We have the name still in the form Bartragh—‘the flowery Bartragh’<sup>1</sup>—which is a long narrow sandy island ridge thrown up by the waves where they meet the river floods; and is divided into two parts by the tide at high water in our own time, just as it was in the days of St. Patrick. According to the Tripartite, ‘Patrick went from Bertlacha in the west to Bertlacha in the east of the estuary of the Moy over against the sea.’ Here again we see the wonderful accuracy in his topographical descriptions shown by the writer of the Tripartite—an accuracy which no subsequent writer has even attempted to imitate. The island, as we have said, and as the ordnance map shows, is divided into two islands at high water of spring tides. The Moy mostly flows past the eastern shore of the eastern island, which the river floods have thrown up against the sea waves; but at low water this eastern bar, like the western or Killala bar, is not more than three or four feet deep. Over or through this the Apostle and his companions crossed; but it seems in crossing ‘a girl was drowned before him there;’ and then he blessed the port or estuary, and said that no one should be drowned there for ever after—a prediction which, let us hope, will not too much encourage the bathers at Enniscrone to do foolish things. It is said, indeed, that not alone Patrick but Brigid, Muredach, Columcille and others blessed the port of Killala. Patrick’s blessing, however, seems to have been bestowed not on Killala Bay, but rather on the eastern estuary of the Moy along the Sligo shore.

Patrick also prophesied that this eastern Bartragh would belong to him, that is to his church of Armagh,

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<sup>1</sup> M’Firbis’ *Hy Fiachrach*.

'It stands in one of their histories—local histories—that in the day of war the king of that land shall call on Patrick, and he shall be victorious.' It appears that eastern Bartragh and the Tireragh shore adjoining belonged to Prince Conall at that time. Prince Conall and his father had made at Tara an offering of their territory 'to Patrick and to God;' and so it came to be especially under the Saint's protection.

## II.—PATRICK AND THE GRE CRAIDE OF THE MOY.

But all the natives were not equally courteous or generous. A rude tribe called the Gre craide, whose principal home was at Lough Gara,<sup>1</sup> in the County Sligo, had, it seems, a colony near the Moy, at this place; and those savages received the Apostle and his followers just as they were emerging from the water, after crossing the bar, with a shower of stones. 'They flung stones at Patrick and his household there at the stream.' Patrick was not the man to allow this to pass with impunity. "By my troth," he said, "in every contest in which ye shall be ye shall be routed, and ye shall abide under spittle and wisps and mockery in every assembly at which ye shall be present." We find that both the Gre craide and the Calraige of the County Sligo were kindred tribes, and both opposed the preaching of St. Patrick. They were, probably, of the Firbolgic race, although the Gre craide are said to have been descended from Ængus Finn, son of Fergus Mac Roy. We find the Calraige around Lough Gill, and also in Murrisk (of Tireragh) and Coolcarney, that is in the mountains of North Sligo. The Gre craide we find in Coolavin, Leyney, and Gallen, but they were driven out of the plains of Corran by the Luigne, and forced to take refuge in the mountains east of the Moy and along the eastern shore of that river. In St. Patrick's time these tribes still held those territories, but the sons of Amalgaid had already crossed the Moy, and were driving them into the great wild range of the Ox Mountains, extending in a semicircle from Foxford to Collooney, where their descendants are to be found to this day. Both opposed the progress of the Gospel, and

<sup>1</sup>O'Flaherty tells us that the Gre craide of Lough Gara, now the half barony of Coolavin, were sprung from Ængus Finn, son of Fergus Mac Roy, and Queen Maeve. From this Finn the barony itself of Coolavin (Cuil ua Finn) is said to have taken its name.

Patrick declared that they would be utterly routed and despised. So it came to pass. O'Donovan declares "we hear no more about the Greccraide, afterwards they were consigned very properly by Patrick to deserved infamy and oblivion."

### III.—PATRICK AND PRINCE CONALL.

Not so, young Prince Conall. He either accompanied Patrick from the West, or met him on the eastern shore of the river. Patrick was greatly pleased with this affectionate and generous devotion. "Arise, O Conall," he said, "thou must take the crozier"—the *bachal*, or symbol of ecclesiastical authority. "If God wills it I am even ready to do so" (that is to become a cleric) said Conall. "Not so," said Patrick, "for the sake of thy tribe and their heritage thou shalt be a warrior, but thou shalt bear the crozier on thy shield, and thou shalt be Conall of the Crozier Shield. Dignity of laymen and clerics from thee, and every one of thy descendants in whose shield shall be the sign of my crozier, his warriors shall never be turned in flight." 'Which thing Patrick did for him,' adds the Tripartite.

Thou shalt not be a Priest, he said ;  
 Christ hath for thee a lowlier task ;  
 Be thou His soldier ! Wear with dread  
 His Cross upon thy shield and casque !  
 Put on God's armour, faithful knight !  
 Mercy with justice, love with law ;  
 Nor e'er except for truth and right  
 Thy sword, cross-hilted, dare to draw.

A. DE VERE.

Conall had given his inheritance to Patrick, and he was ready to give himself also to his service ; but Patrick rather made him the champion of the Church as well as of his tribe, to defend the rights of both under Patrick's special protection. Lands thus given over, or 'immolated' to St. Patrick, were not forgotten by his successors in Armagh. So we find in the 'Additions' to Tirechan that the Hy Fiachrach immolated to Patrick for ever the plain of the North, between the Gleoir and the Ferni, with all the tenants (*servis*) ministering to them therein. This

<sup>1</sup> Item campum Aquilonis inter Gleoir et Ferni cum servis in eo sibi famulantibus filii Fiachrach Patrio in sempiternum immolaverunt, p. 337. The tenants were the Greccraide.

northern plain by the sea extended from Enniscrone, where Patrick landed, north-eastwards to the Gleoir, which O'Donovan has shown is the Leaffony River, that flows into Killala Bay about three miles north of Enniscrone. It contained the ancient church of Kilglass and the Castle of Leacan Mac Firbis, a name that will for ever be dear to Irish scholars as the ancestral home of a race of hereditary antiquaries, whose learning and diligence were never excelled, not even by their ancient fellow-tribesmen, the renowned O'Clerys of Donegal. Leacan by the sea knows them no more; their castle is now a ruin, and the last and greatest of the masters fell by the hand of a vile assassin in 1666, when there was no law for Catholics in Ireiand; but the name of Mac Firbis of Leacan will never be forgotten in their native land whilst the ancient tongue is spoken and the ancient learning is prized by her sons.

It was here, according to Tirechan, that Patrick founded a church, 'juxta fossam Rigbairt,' that is at Rath-Rigbairt; but the exact site has not been determined. It was probably near Kilglass by the Moy, although O'Donovan says a place of this name was near Killasburghbrone, not far from the town of Sligo.<sup>1</sup> It is quite clear, however, from the Tripartite, that Rath-Rigbairt was near the Moy at this place, for it tells us that as Patrick came over the river into Grecreaide three wizards sought to poison him at Rath-Rigbairt, but failed in the attempt. St. Patrick's progress now lay eastward through Tireragh, by the coast road towards Sligo. Few particulars are given of his journey through this district, but, as usual, the statements of the Tripartite are strikingly accurate from the topographical point of view.

We are told that 'he went eastward into the territory of the Hy Fiachrach by the Sea.' The Hy Fiachrach here referred to are known as the Hy Fiachrach of the Moy—whose principal seat was on the right bank of the river—and they have given their name to the territory since known as Tireragh. They took their tribe name from Fiachra, son of the great King Dathi, whereas the *race* of which they were only a sub-division took their name from Dathi's father, Fiachra, the son of Eochy Moyvane.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Ily Fiachrach*, p. 496. But this Rath-Righairt seems to have been on the right bank of the Moy.

<sup>2</sup> That is Fiachra Foltsnathach.



Now as Patrick was advancing eastward by the sea road, which still exists, we are told that 'a water opposed him,' that is, a great unnatural flood therein, and he cursed it. Many an angry water comes down to that wild coast from the slopes of the Ox Mountains when the rain clouds of the west sweep over their summits, but the Easky River is perhaps worst of all in times of flood. Its deep bed is strewn with granite boulders carried down by the raging waters, still its name implies that it is a fishful river though its unnatural floods angered the Apostle so much as to merit a malediction. This 'cursing' of the river could be understood if the proprietor brought it upon himself by his opposition to the Gospel, as often happened; but the mere fact that angry waters swollen by the rains barred the Apostle's progress is, of itself, scarcely a reason for cursing the impetuous stream. Every impediment to the progress of the Gospel throughout the land more or less ruffled the apostolic zeal of St. Patrick; and it is not unlikely that the traditional narrative may express his impatience of delay in stronger language than he really used. Our Saviour, no doubt, 'cursed' the fig-tree because it was barren, but there at least there was a moral lesson intended to be conveyed. Perhaps Patrick, too, if indeed he 'cursed' the river, intended that his followers should learn, even from inanimate things, a similar moral lesson concerning the wickedness of impeding, in any way, the progress of Gospel.

'By that water there was a stead, Buale Patraic is its name, that is Patrick's byre or shed, and there is a small round cross thereon.' From this we gather that Patrick found it necessary to await the subsiding of the flooded stream, and built a shed for himself and his family on the bank, which as usual he marked with the symbol of the Cross. There was a church built afterwards on that left bank of the river, at the same place, but Patrick's Byre was, no doubt, the original church where the Apostle and his companions celebrated the Sacred Mysteries whilst they waited for the subsidence of the rushing waters; for it is added, 'he tarried there a little while.'

His course still lay east by the shore, through the 'mead-abounding Muirisc,' that is the Sea Plain, which, says O'Donovan, extended eastwards from the Easky River to the stream which flows into the sea between the townlands of Ballyeeskeen and Dunnacoy. It is now called the Ballymeeney River. The Calraige probably dwelt

there still as tenants, but the chiefs seem to have been of the Hy Fiachrach. In after times O'Conmy ruled this district, and one of the family even now worthily rules the ancient See of St. Muredach.

There, we are told, probably at Duncontreathain,<sup>1</sup> where the chief dwelt, "Patrick met Bishop Bron, son of Ichni, and he blessed another youth, (afterwards) Bishop Mac Rime, of Cell-Corcu-Roide, and also Bishop Muirethacus, who dwelt on the Bratho, and he wrote elements for them."<sup>2</sup>

This passage is very significant. It seems to imply that the three prelates were natives of this district<sup>3</sup>, that Bron<sup>4</sup> was already there, for Patrick is said to have come to him there—*apud Bronum filium Ichni*—then 'they' wrote elements for the two youths, Mac Rime and Muirethacus, who are called 'bishops' by anticipation. Mac Rime here referred to is called Mac Rime of Cell Corcu Roide in the Tripartite; it is the place called Corcagh by Mac Firbis, and the name is still retained at Aughros, in the parish of Templeboy. The church of Corcu Roide, where Bishop Mac Rime dwelt, was, in all probability, the old church of Templeboy. The Bratho where Muredach dwelt was the river now known as the Borrach of bright streams, as Mac Firbis calls it, which flows into the sea east of Aughris Head; and there can hardly be any doubt, as we have said above, that he was the Muredachus whom St. Patrick at a later date placed over the See of Killala. Bron of Cashel Irra appears to have been their senior, and, in some degree, their teacher, although the Tripartite, which makes no mention here of Muredach, says that Patrick wrote elements there for Bron and Bishop Mac Rime. It is more likely, however, that Tirechan is correct in stating that 'they,' Patrick and Bron, wrote the elements for the other two younger men, one of whom is expressly stated

<sup>1</sup> Patrick's church, or Donnach, was built near Lis na Draighne, as this fort was afterwards called.

<sup>2</sup> The words of Tirechan are significant—"Venit in Muiriscam apud Bronum filium Ichni et benedixit filium, qui est Mac Rime episcopus et scripserunt (Patricius et Bronus?) elementa illi et Muirethiaco episcopo qui fuit super flumen Bratho."

<sup>3</sup> My venerable and learned friend, Archdeacon O'Rorke, makes Bishop Bron a native of Coolerra; but the present passage is against him.

<sup>4</sup> Ardnaglass, also known as Ardnabrone, in the parish of Skreen, contained an old fort, and later an old castle, which may have been the dwelling-place of the Bron's family, who were, doubtless, chiefs of the district. *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 478.

to have been a youth, 'filium,' if the word does not signify that he was the son of Bron himself. This, so far as we can judge, was Patrick's last stage<sup>1</sup> in the diocese of Killala as at present circumscribed.

#### IV.—PATRICK AT SLIGO.

His next journey brought him to the famous Traigh Eothaile (now Trawohelly), a wide beach of white sand separating the diocese of Killala from that of Achonry, and bounding Tireragh on the east. In the time of Bishop Bron, however, Hy Fiachrach extended to the Drumcliff River, north of Sligo, and hence in our ancient martyrologies Cashel Irra or Cuil Irra of Bishop Bron is expressly stated to be in Hy Fiachrach of the Moy.<sup>2</sup>

Traigh Eothaile, which took its name from an ancient warrior who fell there after the battle of Moytura of Cong<sup>3</sup>—if that be indeed the real origin of the name—was sometimes a very dangerous place to cross. There were shifting sands in it, and the tidal waves at high springs came in with a rush and a roar that might appal the stoutest heart.

But St. Patrick certainly crossed it, for it was the ordinary route eastwards, and then came to another ford or pass at Streamstown, which led across the strand of Ballysadare to Cuil Irra, just under Seafield House. It was called Fintragh Pass, and in ancient days was the usual route from Coolerra into Tireragh. At this time, as we have said, Coolerra was a part of the Tireragh territory, although it afterwards became a portion of the barony of Carbury, and now belongs to the diocese of Elphin.

Tirechan merely says that Patrick crossed the strand of Eothaile (Authili) with Bron and the son of Erc Mac Dregin, and came into the plain called, doubtless from the latter, Ros Dregain, 'in which is preserved the chasuble<sup>4</sup> of Bron.' 'And, as he sat down there, a tooth of Patrick fell out, which he gave to Bron,' who preserved it as a relic. Patrick added also that the sea would in the last days drive

<sup>1</sup> Grangemore, in the parish of Templeboy, is described as 'Patrick's Seat' by Mac Firbis. It is near the Borrugh River, and further on to the east is Tobur Patrick, which marks another station of the apostle on his journey to the 'beautiful strand of Eothuili.'

<sup>2</sup> *Martyrology of Donegal and The Four Masters*, A.D. 511.

<sup>3</sup> There are various derivations of the name given. See O'Rourke's *Ballysadare and Kiltarnet*, 251.

<sup>4</sup> Cassulus Brooni.

them from that place, and then he said—"You will go out (from the Ros, or promontory) to the wood by the Sligo river." The Tripartite is more precise as to the foundation of the Church, for it says that 'Patrick marked out (the church of) Caissel Irre,' and in the middle of the hall or porch of the cashel stands the flag-stone on which Patrick's tooth fell. Bishop Bron *is* in that place; and Patrick prophesied that the place would be desolated<sup>1</sup> by the heathens, which thing, it adds, 'has come to pass.' And Patrick, we are told, sang a stave after the manner of the bards; but its meaning is by no means clear, except that it expresses great affection for Bishop Bron.

The heathens, that is the Danes, devastated this place early in the ninth century, and the sea, too, has been encroaching on Bishop Bron's ancient church. It is situated at the very extremity of the promontory, amongst the dunes, and is at times nearly covered with the blowing sand. It was long ago deserted, as Patrick had prophesied, and the principal church of the district is now by the Sligo river, close to the site of the ancient wood. But the venerable ruin still exists; and it is of the very earliest type of Christian architecture. The flag-stone, on which Patrick's tooth fell, is still pointed out; and the local description of the Tripartite, as usual, is found faithful in every detail. The parish still bears the name of Bishop Bron; it is called officially Killasbugbrone, although it is now more commonly known by its ancient name of Coolerra, that is, the Western Corner, a very appropriate appellation. It was once the head church of the district, and Bishop Bron and his successors for many centuries appear to have exercised episcopal jurisdiction over that and the neighbouring parishes. Bron himself, who was certainly one of the favourite disciples of St. Patrick, lived to a great age, for we find his death noticed by the Four Masters at the year A.D. 511, that is about eighteen years after the death of his venerable master.

It would appear from Tirechan that Bishop Bron was a native of Muirisc, as he calls it, probably a son of the chieftain of the district, who at that time appears to have dwelt at the place now called Donaghintraine, for Dun Cinn

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<sup>1</sup> This is one of the passages cited to show that the Tripartite was written after the ninth century, when the Danes first appeared off the Sligo coasts. It rather proves, however, that this particular passage, written in Latin, as if to distinguish it from the original text, was written by the transcriber after the ninth century.

Treathain, the ancient name, was one of the royal seats of Hy Fiachrach, otherwise called Lis na Draighne by the Sea, which was not far distant. There is some reason to think that Patrick remained a considerable time there preaching and teaching the three youths, Fron, Mac Rime and Muirethacus, for whom he wrote alphabets and afterwards designated as Bishops—making Muirethacus, or Muredachus, Bishop of Killala; Mac Rime, Bishop of Aughris, on the Batho, where Muredachus was for a time; and Bron himself Bishop of Ros Dregain, or Coolerra.

The next entry in the Tripartite, which is, however, omitted by Tirechan, brings St. Patrick to the bank of the Sligeach, or Sligo river. He and his familia wanted food, so they asked the fishermen to shoot their nets in the stream. But they said—"Salmon are not caught here in winter; but as you ask us we will do it." They shot their nets and caught some large salmon, which they gave to Patrick. Then he blessed the river, 'so that the Sligeach became the very milch-cow of Irish rivers, for salmon is caught in it every quarter of the year.' A few years ago an investigation was held by the Fishery Commissioners as to the proper time for the opening of the salmon fishery in the Sligo river. Some old fishermen swore at the enquiry that fish in prime condition might be found in the estuary *at every season of the year*;<sup>1</sup> and hence it was decided to open the fishery on the first of January, so that it is in very truth the 'milch-cow of Irish waters'—for only one or two other streams in Ireland, or in England either, afford salmon at that season, when it sometimes fetches up to eight or ten shillings a pound in the London market.

It is not stated that Patrick crossed the Sligo river, and the context both in the Tripartite and Tirechan seems to imply that he did not then cross it to the eastern shore. Tirechan brings Patrick directly from Killasbugbrone, through the mountain of the Hy Aillella, into the barony of Tirerrill, and so we think the Tripartite also must be understood, for there is no reference to his crossing the river and coming into Calry. But at this point the Tripartite interposes a curious paragraph regarding Bishop Rodan, Patrick's herdsman, whom he left in Muirisc-Aigle,<sup>2</sup> that is at the foot of Croaghpatrick. He was, it

<sup>1</sup> His words were an unconscious reproduction of the statement in the Tripartite.

<sup>2</sup> There were two Muiriscs—Muirisc Aigle, under Croaghpatrick, and Muirisc, in Tírerrill.

seems, a first-rate herdsman, for his calves used only to do what he permitted them—they would not even suck the cows without permission. Patrick had a large company to provide for, and his family brought their sheep and cows along with them; so it was necessary to have some person to keep an eye on the drovers. This was Bishop Rodan's office. He got a church to look after at Croaghpatrick, but still he kept with his beloved master, and came with him, it seems, this far at least. Dr. O'Rorke thinks that the church of Kildalough, at Streamstown, near the pass over the estuary into Coolerra, was his church, for the old people, he says, always connect its foundation with that of Killasbugbrone, and say 'they are the two churches first prayed for in Rome.' This would explain the reference to Bishop Rodan here, but the Muirisc of the Tripartite is not the Muirisc of Tireragh, and, in any case, that latter Muirisc did not extend beyond Aughris Head, nor, indeed, quite so far east. The reference to Rodan here does not otherwise affect the narrative.

Here the Tripartite says that after Patrick got the fish from the river in Sligo, 'the Calraige of Cule Cernadan were in a secret place, ahead of Patrick,'<sup>1</sup> and they struck their shields with their spears to terrify Patrick and his household. "By my troth," said Patrick, "not good is that which you have done. Every battle and every conflict that you and your children after you shall deliver, ye shall be routed therein." Whereupon they all, except five, knelt to ask pardon of Patrick. Then Patrick added, "Every battle in which you shall be routed, though all Connaught were against you, there shall not fall more of you than five men, 'as is fulfilled.'"

It is not stated where this took place, but it must be on Patrick's journey towards Tirerrill, for we think it can be clearly shown that on this occasion he did not cross the Sligo river; his immediate purpose being to visit the territory of the sons of Ailell, and perhaps revisit some of the churches in South Tirerrill, which he had directed to be founded, but did not yet visit.

There were several districts in Ireland called Calraige—now Calry—all, it would appear, taking the appellation from the descendants of Cal, grand-uncle of Maccon, who flourished in the second century of the Christian Era.

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase 'ahead of Patrick' is a curious one, and seems to imply that the object of the noise was to cause Patrick to turn back.

There was a Calry in Westmeath;<sup>1</sup> a Calry in Mayo,<sup>2</sup> and, as we have seen, the Calraige dwelt in the Ox Mountains in Sligo, extending even into Leitrim—the last district in part still bears the ancient name.

Tirechan is here, no doubt, our safest guide, and he speaks of Calrige Tre Maige, which was certainly the district round Drumahaire. Then he speaks of Calrige Ailmaige, which, as we shall presently see, was the adjoining parish of Killasnet. These are in Leitrim, but the present parish of Calry, in Sligo, is called by McFirbis, Calry Laithim, and we cannot afford to set aside his authority. Where then was Calrige Cule Cernadan? O'Donovan,<sup>3</sup> we think rightly, identifies it with the district still known as Coolcarney, comprising the parishes of Kilgarvan and Attymas, in the Co. Mayo,<sup>4</sup> on the slopes of the Ox Mountains. The adventure here referred to is introduced as an incident, but it is not stated where it occurred. It might well happen that some of this tribe who held the Ox Mountains would meet the Apostle as he was going into Tirerrill by the 'Gap,' at the edge of the Ox Mountains, and try to frighten him back, lest he might, perhaps, come amongst themselves by the pass at Collooney, which led into the plain of Leyney. Such seems to us the most probable explanation of the meeting of St. Patrick with the men of Coolcarney.

They likely held the whole of the Ox Mountains, and made an excursion towards Ballisodare to frighten the Saint.<sup>5</sup> But Patrick did not go westward in Leyney as they perhaps anticipated, but due northward by the well-known pass called the Bernas Hy Ailella,<sup>6</sup> under Slieve da En. The old road passes through it still; and it is a lonely and romantic spot, for the hills rise steeply on either side, clothed with dense woods, which in disturbed times made it a peculiarly dangerous gap of very evil repute.

<sup>1</sup> See *F. M.*, A.D. 787; A.D. 281, also A.D. 1225 and 1251.

<sup>2</sup> There were several other places called Calry besides these. See Index to *Four Masters—Sub Voce*. We also find reference to Calry of Lough Gill and Calry of Drumcliff—different sub-divisions of the same territory.

<sup>3</sup> See *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 247, and *F. M.*, anno 1225.

<sup>4</sup> Seven townlands of Coolcarney properly belonged to the barony of Tíreragh, Co. Sligo, but were forcibly withheld from the said barony in 1585, when Perrott's composition was made.—*Iar Connaught*, p. 241.

<sup>5</sup> Can it be that the men of Calry referred to were really the men beyond the Sligo river to the east, and they made the row to deter Patrick from crossing the stream into their own territory. He did not cross it, so far as we can judge, on this occasion.

<sup>6</sup> *Trans montem filiorum Ailello*.

## CHAPTER XV.

### ST. PATRICK IN TIRERRILL AND MOYLURG.

#### I.—CHURCHES FOUNDED IN TIRERRILL.

GOING southward then through Tirerrill, Tirechan says that he founded four churches there—‘Tamnach, Echenagh, Cell Angle, and Cell Senchuae.’ All these still retain their ancient names, and three at least give titles to parochial churches in the diocese of Elphin.

We have seen before that when Patrick founded the church of Shankill, near Elphin, he left there Rodan, an arch-priest, and under his care he placed Mathona, Benen’s sister, ‘who received the veil from Patrick and from Rodan,’ and, as it would appear, remained there some time. Now, Patrick coming south from Sligo, founded the church of Tawnagh, near the northern extremity of Lough Arrow, and over it he placed Cairell, a native of the district, as bishop. It appears, too, that Patrick, Bron, and Bite, of Elphin, consecrated him on that occasion. Mathona, the nun of Shankill, had also, it seems, some connection with the place,<sup>1</sup> for Patrick now placed her there with her nuns under the care of Bishop Cairell. But she did not forget her old church of Shankill. ‘She made friendship with Saint Rodan’s relics’—he had probably died in the meantime—his relics were the great treasure of his church, and Mathona visited them there frequently, so that the churches of Shankill and of Tawnagh were closely connected through the spiritual friendship of their founders, or, as the Tripartite quaintly puts it, ‘their successors feasted together in turns,’ that is, celebrated together the festivals of their respective founders. Tawnagh is a small parish, but it has a very large graveyard, and we believe traditions of the holy nun Mathona are still vivid in the memory of the people. There is also a holy well called after St. Patrick, in which, no doubt, he baptised his first converts, and a ‘patron’ was usually held there on St. Patrick’s Day, but, we believe, it is now discontinued.

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<sup>1</sup> She was a sister of Benen, whose father—and, therefore, her father—was, we are told, of the Hy Ailella, that is of this very district.



It would appear that this Mathona, who is often described as the sister of Benignus, St. Patrick's Coadjutor in Armagh, was in reality not his sister, but the sister of the second Benignus, to whom reference is made in the Tripartite,<sup>1</sup> as we have elsewhere explained. This family connection would also serve to explain why she became a nun at Tawnagh, and was placed under the protection of Bishop Cairéll, who was probably her near relation.

From Tawnagh, Patrick still going southward by the western shores of Lough Arrow, where the noble woods of Hollybrook demesne now beautify the scene, came to the green swelling meadow overlooking the south-western angle of the lake, and there, in a most picturesque site, founded the ancient church of Aghanagh<sup>2</sup>—Horsefield—over which he placed the holy Bishop Maine, whom he had baptised at Doogary, when he had first crossed the Shannon some years before, and whom he now consecrated bishop of this young church, doubtless giving him jurisdiction over the other smaller churches around the lake. He left there also under his care a holy man, Gemtene by name, who seems to have succeeded him, and whose ashes also rest in Aghanagh. It was from this point that Patrick, instead of crossing the Curlew Hills directly, went westward beyond Kesh hill and founded the church of 'Cell Angle,' which appears to be identical with Killanly, west of Toomona. Tobberpatrick is there still, in the parish of Kilturra, and most likely marks a station on the road of the Apostle southwards to Moylurg.

This course, too, by Kesh and Gurteen, would be a more likely one than the direct route over the Curlew Mountains at Ballaghboy, which was then a rugged and almost impassable way.

## II.—PATRICK IN MOYLURG.

And now, bending first to the west and then to the south-east, the Saint fared onwards until he came to the Boyle river, for he was anxious to revisit some of his foundations in Moylurg. But when crossing over the rough bed of the river in order to go into Moylurg, as the Tripartite says, the chariot appears to have been upset at the ford, and Patrick fell into the Buall, 'that is the river

<sup>1</sup> He is there described as Benen, brother of Cethech.

<sup>2</sup> 'Echenach' in the Book of Armagh.

that comes out of Lough Techet.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter the ford was called Ath Carpait, 'the Ford of the Chariot,' and it is near Eas Mic n'Eirc, close to which, we may add, the railway now crosses the river.

The Saint must have got both a wetting and a shaking, for the writer adds, in his usual style, that Patrick 'cursed the eastern half of the river.' 'But why hast thou spared the western half?' some one said—the part going up to Lough Gara—'Because,' said Patrick, 'there shall come a Son of Life, who will set up there afterwards, and he will like to have a fruitful water at his stead.' Patrick alluded to Columbcille, who afterwards founded a monastery at Eas Mic n'Eirc, the site of which may still be noticed in the old churchyard just beside the railway bridge over the river to the right going north, where the stream tumbles headlong over the rough ground. 'The best fishing in Ireland every one has there still,' adds the chronicler, 'but from that down eastward there is not much fish caught.' The story looks as if it were made up by some ingenious chronicler at a later period; but, beyond doubt, the stream is still fishful up to Lough Gara.

Now, as Patrick fared through Moylurg,<sup>2</sup> that is the Plains of Boyle, the sons of Erc stole his horses—it would appear, too, that this was their second theft—and Patrick 'cursed' the people of that country. One could hardly blame him for denouncing their conduct in strong language, and foretelling its punishment. But the thieves had an intercessor. Bishop Maine, of the Hy Ailella—for Moylurg was then a part of the territory—whom Patrick had just set up in Aghanagh, besought Patrick to forgive his brethren; and his prayers 'weakened the malediction.' The good bishop even washed Patrick's feet with his tears, and drove the stolen horses, now recovered, into a meadow, where he himself cleaned their muddy hoofs 'in honour of Patrick.' Patrick to some extent relented; still he said—'there will be weeping, and wailing, and lamenting with the people of that country, and there will not be good neighbourhood amongst them in sæcula sæculorum'—as 'is fulfilled,' says the chronicler. Patrick said also that he would have afterwards a great part of that country; and

<sup>1</sup> Lough Techet is the modern Lough Gara.

<sup>2</sup> The ancient Moylurg corresponds with the present barony of Boyle, except that the latter includes the parish of Kilonan, the ancient Tír Tuathail, which, though a portion of the principality of M'Dermott, is distinguished from Moylurg.

that, too, was fulfilled, for Nodan<sup>1</sup> of Loch Uama, now Cavetown, founded a church there, and gave its patronage to Armagh. This shows that Patrick founded the church of Eastersnow,<sup>2</sup> and preached there in person. It was on the southern limit of Moylurg, and Patrick did not, on this occasion, so far as we can judge, travel further south.

No doubt, being now in North Roscommon, he may have visited Shankill and some other of his earlier foundations beyond Moylurg, and, perhaps, wintered there, but we have no intimation thereof; but the author of the Tripartite, as well as the original writer in the Book of Armagh, make it their purpose merely to record the missionary journeys of St. Patrick through the Island for the first time. Indeed, there is hardly a single instance in which we have any account of what would now be called a visitation of an existing church.

We can, however, trace with great probability Patrick's return journey from Moylurg, where he probably wintered,<sup>3</sup> in order to prosecute his purpose of going round the North of Ireland. From the neighbourhood of Eastersnow, where the Tripartite leaves him, we find him next coming to Doogary, the place which he first reached some years before after crossing the Shannon. It was just in his way to the north-east, for a glance at the map will show that if he came up to Moylurg, west of Lough Key, he would, by going north and by east, pass to the east of the Lakes, that is he would go by Ardcarne and Knockvicar,<sup>4</sup> into that part of the modern parish of Cootehall, in which Doogary was situated.

### III.—PATRICK AGAIN AT DOOGARY.

It is not expressly stated that he went there on this occasion, but it is distinctly implied in the earlier portion of the Tripartite narrative. For it is said that whilst Patrick was abiding at Doogary (Duma Graid), ordaining

<sup>1</sup> Colgan is mistaken in placing this Loch Uama in Breffney. Bishop Maine's church of Aghanagh also belonged to Patrick's successors as a Patrician church.

<sup>2</sup> Eastersnow, as the place is now strangely called, is a corruption of Ath-disert Nodain.

<sup>3</sup> When he came from Tíreragh to the Sligo river it was growing late in the season, for the fishermen said that salmon were not to be taken there 'in winter.'

<sup>4</sup> The ford across the Boyle water at Knockvicar was the usual way for persons going from Magh Ai to Ulster or *vice versa*. Hugh Roe O'Donnell crossed it many times on his expeditions to Roscommon.

the great host, he smiled. "What is that?" saith Benen—that caused him to smile. "Not hard to say," saith Patrick—it was the ancient bardic formula for answering a question—"Bron and the Monk Olcan are coming towards me along the Strand of Eothaile, and my pupil, Mac Erca, is with them. The wave of the flood (of the intruding tide) made a great dash at them, and the boy (Mac Erca) was afraid of being carried away." 'That,' adds the Tripartite, 'was a prophecy'—that is a manifestation of a thing that could only be known to Patrick by a Divine revelation. The smile seems to signify their folly in not trusting to God and Patrick.

This clearly points to Patrick's visitation of Doogary at a later period than his first crossing the Shannon. For we have seen that these holy persons were all left in Tirawley and Tireragh by Patrick, and that Mac Erca was left there to learn his rudiments, in charge of Bishop Bron. Patrick had, it would appear, invited them to come to him in Moylurg to aid him in ordaining the bishops and clerics necessary for the new churches now founded in Tirerrill. So when, in obedience to his call, they were faring to him across the famous Strand, that intrush of the tide took place, which moved him to smile at their fears of danger in obeying the call of God. We think this passage clearly shows that Patrick on his return journey northward crossed the Boyle water at Knockvicar, and revisited Doogary in the parish of Tumna, which was the scene of his earliest labours west of the Shannon.

From Doogary then Patrick passed north under the mountain of the Hy Ailella, now called Bralieve, and about four miles further on he came to Shancough, where he had at his first visit directed Ailbe to seek for the altar and the chalices of glass in the cave under ground. Patrick had not visited the place, so far as we can judge, on his first arrival at Doogary, because it was then his purpose to go direct to the royal palace at Cruachan. But now as he was going north from Doogary, and his road certainly lay, as it lies still, close to the old church of Shancough, there was no reason why he should not visit it, and confirm all that had been done there by his disciple, St. Ailbe. Hence it is that the Book of Armagh describes 'Cell Senchuæ'—that is Shancough—as one of the churches founded by Patrick on this occasion. We have already observed that the memory of Ailbe is still vividly remembered in this locality: and that his hermitage and his

'bed' are still pointed out by the peasantry high on the mountain side to the east, but within view of the church and the cave with its chalices of glass.

From Shancough Patrick kept still on his way to the north, and so after about six miles he came to Kilellin in the modern parish of Kilross, which may, perhaps, be the site of the ancient church mentioned by Tirechan as one of the four churches founded by Patrick in Tirerrill, that is Cell Angle.<sup>1</sup> Those familiar with Irish will easily perceive how the change of name might have taken place. It was certainly the ancient church of the district, for Kilross was founded so late as 1233, by Clarus Mac Mailin of Trinity Island, in Lough Cé, the greatest church builder of his own time perhaps in all Ireland. Kilellin had its own cemetery in ancient times, but the newer church of the Trinitarians became a more popular place of sepulture.<sup>2</sup> Kilellin is quite close to Ballygawley, and hence would be near Patrick's route either when coming into Tirerrill by Slieve da En, or when leaving it by the ancient track into North Leitrim, which certainly passed by Ballintogher, as the name implies.

#### IV.—PATRICK IN LEITRIM.

At this point Tirechan says Patrick came into Calrigi Tre Maige<sup>3</sup> and founded a church there at Drumlease,<sup>4</sup> and baptised many persons thereat. This Calry Tre Maige was also called Druim Daro, as we know from the Tripartite; and at present it is called Drumahaire, in Irish Druim da Ethiar, a beautiful ridge overlooking the famous valley, near O'Rorke's castle, which Moore has for ever immortalized in his well known poem—'The Valley lay smiling before me.' It was smiling then, and it is smiling still, upon one of the fairest scenes in Ireland, where every charm that can lend beauty to a landscape—lake and river, plain and wood, and mountain—show themselves in

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<sup>1</sup> Killanly, north of Ballymote, was not in Tirerrill. Still the name is more like the original than Kilellin, and the sons of Ailell may have possessed it at the time. But it is in Corran.

<sup>2</sup> See Archdeacon O'Rorke's *History of Sligo, Town and County*, Vol. II., 247.

<sup>3</sup> St. Patrick's Rock is still shown close to the modern village of Drumahaire.

<sup>4</sup> 'Patrick set up in Druim Daro that is in Drumlease.' *Additions to Tirechan*. It is written Druim Dara and Druim Daro.

marvellous richness and variety of perspective,<sup>1</sup> to which neither poet nor painter can do full justice.

Patrick was not the man to pass heedless by so fair a scene. He not only built a church there; but, it seems, he remained a considerable time in the neighbourhood, and it was from Patrick's stations and from the 'sheds,' *liasa*, which he erected there that the place took its name of Drumlease. It would appear he set his heart upon it, and had some intention of settling down there, for he left his foster son, Benignus, as the incumbent of Drumlease for eighteen or twenty years, until he himself had finally resolved to settle at Armagh; and it was only then, so far as we can judge, he resolved to sever finally his own connection with that radiant land of fairy hills and sunlit waters.

Nor did he even then give up all his rights. The "Additions to Tirechan" in the Book of Armagh go to great lengths in pointing out Patrick's rights in Drumlease. The Annotations say that he baptised there Cairthen (the prince of the district), and Cairthen's son, and Caichan; and they add that Caichan offered his fifth of the territory to God and to Patrick for ever, and that the 'King (that is Cairthen) made this offering free of all rents and tributes to God and to Patrick for ever.' Then the writer sets out most carefully the boundaries<sup>2</sup> of this Patrician territory in Drumlease, and asserts that both lord and vassal immediately after their baptism offered all this to Patrick as a free and perpetual gift.

But Caichan gave both his land and his daughter to God. Lassar, daughter of Anfolmid, of the family of Caichan, took the veil from Patrick; and she abode there in Druim Dara after Benignus for 'three score years.' The holy nun was doubtless very young when she took the

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<sup>1</sup> This part of the ancient Calry was the Grianan Calry, the sunny landscape at the head of the lake of which was said:—

Connaught is the grianan of Ireland;  
Carbury the grianan of Connaught;  
Calry is the grianan of Carbury;  
And the Hill is the grianan of Calgaich (Calry).

<sup>2</sup> *Additions to Tirechan*, p. 339.

"These are the boundaries of the fifth part, that is Caichan's fifth. From the stream of the hill of Berach Abraidne as far as a . . . from the mountain. From the stream of Conaclid to Reiriu, and from the border of Druim Nit to the stream of Tamlacht Dublocho, by the stream to Long Grenlaich by Ront"; and so on round the whole estate. See *Rolls Tripartite*, Vol. II., 339.

veil, and has probably given her name to the parish of Killarga, where she lived first under the guidance of St. Benignus, and afterwards of his comarbs in the same parish.

The succession in Drumlease to the rich glebe left by Caichan to Patrick was carefully regulated, and is set forth minutely in the Book of Armagh. The record is valuable to us, showing how the succession in such cases was usually regulated. There should not be a family right of inheritance to Drumlease (for it belonged to Patrick): but the race of Feth Fio—that is the head of the tribe—should inherit it, if there were any one of the clan who should be ‘so good, so devout,’ as to be worthy of the church’s inheritance. But if not, then it was to be seen if any one (even of another clan) of the community of Drumlease or its monks should be found worthy. But if not, then a member of Patrick’s community in Armagh was to be sought out for the vacant church.<sup>1</sup>

Other offerings of land made to this church, the most celebrated in North Leitrim, are also given in the Annotations, one of which is particularly interesting because it shows that not only was there a flourishing community of nuns there from the beginning, but also that besides Benignus Patrick left there two of his own nephews, and they, like the native chiefs, afterwards became benefactors of the Church of Drumlease. ‘Nao and Nai, sons of Patrick’s brother, and Dall, son of Hencar, whom Patrick left there, offered three half *indli* or ploughlands of their own land to Patrick in perpetuity. And Conderc, son of Dall, offered his son as a cleric to Patrick.’<sup>2</sup>

This points to a settlement of some members of Patrick’s family at Druim Dara, who were not clerics, and by marriage or otherwise got a share of the land. It appears, however, they made a good use of it; but of their history we have been unable to ascertain anything satisfactory.

#### V.—PATRICK FOUNDS DOMNACHMORE.

From Drumlease Patrick still going north-east ascended<sup>3</sup> the rising ground of Almaige, which seems to mean the cliff of the plain; and there he founded a church which we

<sup>1</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 340. We cannot say whether the present incumbent, our friend, Father Cormac McSherry, is of the race of Feth Fio or not, but he is certainly a worthy successor of Benignus in the ancient and famous Church of Drumlease. This was written before the recent death of Father McSherry.

<sup>2</sup> Rolls *Tripartite*, 341.

<sup>3</sup> *Erexit se*. The phrase is peculiar but it is used by the writer elsewhere in the same sense.

take to be the same as that described in the Tripartite as founded 'amongst the tribe of Muinremar in the glens eastward of Drumlease.' This description, quite exact as usual, points to the old Church of Domnachmore Aelmaigh in the townland that still bears the old name in the parish of Clooncare close to Manorhamilton. 'Patrick's two nostrils dropped blood on the road,' perhaps from his exertions in climbing the hill. It would appear he then sat down to rest himself. "Patrick's flagstone is there, and Patrick's hazel—by which perhaps he sat—a little distance from the church westward. He set up there. Sraith Patraic—Patrick's Meadow—it is named to-day. Domnach Sratha its name before. Patrick rested on Sunday there, and this is his only church in that territory." The details were evidently given by an eye witness, who had gone over the ground, for they are minutely exact in every particular, and leave no reasonable doubt as to the location of Domnach Sratha,<sup>1</sup> afterwards called Domnachmore.

The learned and judicious Reeves raises a difficulty here. He says the tribe of Muinremar were located in the Glynnns of Antrim, and that this passage is here inserted out of its place. But there is no sign of insertion out of place in the Tripartite, and we find the same order in Tirechan, so that we can hardly assume an interpretation in both places of a wrongly-placed passage. The learned Dr. O'Rorke places this 'Sraith Patraic' near Collooney, on the left bank of the Unshion river, but the text clearly states that it was 'eastward' of Drumlease, so we think his view is quite untenable. The learned writer was, perhaps, unconsciously desirous of doing honour to his own parish.

We know that many of the old tribes of that district were driven out of it by the Hy Neill, especially by Cairbre and Conal, so that there might be a tribe of the Muinremar in the Glynnns of North Leitrim then and long afterwards, although some of them had fled from Conal's conquering sword far away to the Glens of Antrim.

We have no hesitation in locating the place as north-eastward of Drumlease, in the valley near Manorhamilton which lead out into Magh Ene, the route exactly laid down by Tirechan and the Tripartite.

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<sup>1</sup> Sraith is a river meadow, and the Bonnet river flows hard by the side of the Church. On one side was the river, on the other the Cliff, between them the meadow.



From this Domnach Sratha it is more probable that Patrick went north through the Glenade and not the Glencar Valley. Our opinion is that he went due north through Glenade, for it was the usual route, and in this way we can best reconcile the statements of Tirechan and the Tripartite. Tirechan says he went from Domnach Almaige (or Domnach Sratha), where he had remained three days, into Magh Ene—'Campum Aine,' and founded a church there, which the Tripartite calls Domnach Mor Maige Ene; and which we take to be the old church of Rossinver, about a mile north of Glenade, where the valley opens into the plain—Magh Ene. Then, Tirechan adds, 'Patrick *returned* towards Euoi and the plain of Cetni.' Euoi is the same as Eabha, and the name is still kept in the well-known appellation of Magherow (Maghera Eabha), the great plain along the sea from Grange to Knocklane. Cetni is the famous Magh gCedne, the Plain of the Tributes. It is not, as O'Donovan asserts, identical with the plain of Magh Ene. Tirechan clearly distinguishes between Campus Aine, that is Magh Ene, and Campus Cetni, or Magh gCedne, for he represents Patrick, after founding a church in Magh Ene, as coming into the Campus Cetni. Then the Four Masters, who ought to know the place, describe (A.D. 1536) O'Donnell's forces as coming from Ballyshannon, and encamping between the rivers Duff and Drowes, and after dinner sending guards and sentinels 'to watch the pass between them and Magh gCedne'; which shows clearly that Magh gCedne was west of the Duff River, since we are told they were afraid of the O'Conors from Grange and Sligo coming to surprise them, and therefore they watched the pass over the Duff River.

#### VI.—PATRICK IN NORTH SLIGO.

This Magh gCedne then extended from the Duff River to Grange, beyond which stretched the plain of Euoi away to Knocklane, which still bears its ancient name in the form Magherow. This enables us to explain Tirechan's language clearly when he describes Patrick as *turning* from Rossinver of Magh Ene towards Magherow and Magh gCedne. The Saint did not wish to leave that great district unvisited, and probably founded the Church of Ballintemple, near Knocklane. No doubt, being there, he would cross the narrow estuary and visit Bishop

Bron at Cashel Irre (Coolerra). Returning thence to the North, he would cross the strand at the Rosses, for it was the shortest as well as the usual course, and so leaving Drumcliff on his right, as the Tripartite says, he passed eastward by the old road at Cashelgarron down to Magh Ene.

To get into Magh Ene he had to cross the Duff River down near the sea shore, and he 'cursed' that river because of the refusal the fishermen gave him; but he blessed the Drowes, two miles further on, owing to the kindness which 'the little boys who were fishing there did to him.' Even small boys can catch fish there still; 'and a salmon of the Drowes is the finest of Ireland's salmon,' so that when a particularly fine salmon was taken at the Erne 'the fishermen say it is a salmon of Drowes, because peculiar to the Drowes is the beautiful salmon there through Patrick's blessing.' So says the Tripartite.

This river Drowes has a short course of about two miles from Lough Melvin to the sea near Bundoran, but it is still famous for the number and excellence of its salmon. The Duff, too, has some salmon still, but it is far inferior to the Drowes both in the quantity and quality of its fish.

The Drowes has been for ages the boundary at that point between Connaught and Ulster. The stream, just before entering the sea, bifurcates, forming a small green island. On this island stood the ancient fortress of Dun Cairbre, which commanded the pass. It was built by O'Connor Sligo on the site of an old dun, and for the most part was held by the O'Connors as the northern bulwark against the O'Donnells. The island fortress was itself the scene of a hundred bloody conflicts between the North and the West. Not a stone of the Castle now remains in view, but its site can still be noticed just inside the wall on the left of the road from Tullaghan to Bundoran, between the two arms of the river, where the salmon may be frequently seen rushing up the shallow streams from the sea. Dun and castle are gone; but the river and the fish remain as they were in the time of St. Patrick.

There is an entry in the Annotations to Tirechan<sup>1</sup> which appears to refer to Patrick's preaching in Carbury

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<sup>1</sup> Rolls *Tripartite*, Vol. II., 341. The entry follows those which refer to Patrick at Drumlease, and appears to us to prove clearly that Patrick went from Drumlease either by Glencar or Glenade into Magherow, and there founded the church referred to in the text, which was probably that called Ballintemple near Roughly.

and most probably at Magherow. It is said that Mari (or Marii) offered three half-*indli* of his land, and Mac Rime offered his son, and Patrick baptised them and built a church in their heritage. And 'Cairbre offered the kingdom with them to Patrick,'—that is, we presume, placed both it and the chiefs under his protection. This Cairbre, son of Niall, was the same that ill-treated Patrick at Telltown, and later on ill-treated him again on the banks of the Erne. His kingdom included not only the modern barony of North Carbury, extending from Sligo to the Duff river, but also the coast-line thence even beyond the Erne.

Who Mac Rime was is not clear, if he were not that Mac Rime for whose son Patrick wrote the alphabet at Muirisc in Tireragh, leaving him at that time in charge of Bishop Bron. The youth is there called a bishop by 'anticipation.' It is not unlikely that Patrick consecrated him now for this new church which he founded in the territory of Carbury, and which we take to be at Ballintemple near Ard Tarmon, where there certainly was an ancient church. The land belonged to Mari, of the Hy Fiachrach, who gave it for the new church. Mac Rime gave it to his son, and Cairbre, as head chief, confirmed the grant. It would be interesting to know for certain the identity of this ancient church. There is some reason to think that Magherow at that time belonged to the chieftains of Tireragh; but no doubt Cairbre was *chief* lord over all the swordland which still bears his name, and which would certainly include the district yet known as Magherow, that is Machaire *Euoi*, as Tirechan has the last part of the word.

We think this passage lends great countenance to our view, that Patrick, coming out of the valley of Glenade into Magh Ene, turned westward to Magherow, as Tirechan has it, and having founded a church there, over which he placed Mac Rime, crossed the narrow estuary to visit Bishop Bron, and then returned northwards by the Rosses, leaving Drumcliff on his right hand, and such we know was the usual route in after times.

Having brought Patrick through all the West to the mearing of the Province at the Drowes river, the Tripartite sums up his labours in Connaught: 'Thrice did Patrick cross the Shannon into the land of Connaught. Fifty bells and fifty chalices and fifty altars with their altar cloths he left in the land of Connaught, each set in its own church.' So we must conclude that he also

founded fifty churches in Connaught. He left them a blessing then, as he was about to depart from them; 'he blessed their duns, and their rivers, or estuaries, and their churches,' as he did those of the Cenel Conail later on.

Tirechan says that Patrick crossed the Shannon three times and spent seven years in the west country.<sup>1</sup> He could not, indeed, in less time, convert the whole province and establish so many churches throughout its wide area. We may fairly assume that he spent a year in Roscommon, that is in the modern Diocese of Elphin. Another year would be necessary to go through East Mayo and North Galway. Then the great region of Carra and the Owles, including his stay on Croaghpatrick, would take another year. Tirawley, with its numerous churches, and his journey along the seaboard of Tireragh, would require a fourth year. Tirerrill would need a fifth, and his prolonged stay in Leitrim and Carbury, including Kilasbugbrone, would require the remainder of the time. The text of the Tripartite seems to imply that he crossed the Shannon three times *coming* into Connaught; he certainly crossed it three times—twice coming and once leaving, which is perhaps all that the writer meant.

As to the fifty churches with their equipment which he founded in the West, we cannot rely on the numerals, but the number must have been at least fifty. Of these we find from the record that he founded not less than twelve in the County Roscommon, belonging to the diocese of Elphin. In Mayo he founded eleven or twelve more in the diocese of Tuam, to which express reference is made. In Tirawley he founded seven on the left bank of the Moy. In Tireragh he founded at least five, including Kilasbugbrone. In Tirerrill, he certainly founded four, and two in the diocese of Achonry, also in County Sligo. In Leitrim he founded three, and in Carbury three more, giving close on fifty in all. Of all these express mention is made, so that if we add the few cases in which churches seem to have been founded, as far as we can judge, although express reference is not made to them, we shall find that the Tripartite is quite exact in giving the number of churches as fifty or thereabouts founded by Patrick in the Western province. It shows also how careful he was in giving to each church a complete equipment, not perhaps in our modern sense of the word, but still in providing it with

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<sup>1</sup> Occidentali plaga.

the essentials of Divine worship—the altar, the chalice, the bell, and the books, which he copied frequently with his own hand. The Province of Connaught is blessed in having had our great Apostle the founder of so many of its churches, on which he spent such loving zeal in procuring the necessary utensils. Nor has St. Patrick down to the present day any more loving and loyal disciples than his faithful children of the West.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### ST. PATRICK IN TIRCONNELL.

#### I.—PATRICK CROSSES THE ERNE.

PATRICK was now at the gates of the North, for coming to the crest of the hill east of Bundoran he saw spreading out before him that fair valley :—

Where the sunny waters fall at Assaroe,  
By Erna's shore ;

and no one has ever seen it without admiring it. There the mighty river, filled with half the waters of the North, rushes down its foaming staircase from Belleek, and takes its final plunge into the sea over a great ledge of limestone rock. Just below the great fall is the islet where the first colonist that ever came to Erin landed and fortified himself. Rising high over the foaming waters on the right bank is that Sid Aed, where the drowned warrior, who gave his name to the cataract, dwelt in his fairy palace and kept nightly watch and ward over that fair land of his love. The deep pools beneath the cataract are nearly always filled with salmon, which may be seen taking mighty leaps in their efforts to surmount the fall. Then seaward Patrick might see the great ocean surges breaking on the bar which always prevented Ballyshannon from being the emporium of all the North. He saw the whole scene. He had seen the banks of the Boyne from the Hill of Slane, the swelling plains of Roscommon from Oran, the glories of Clew Bay from Croaghpatrick, but here was a scene that surpassed them all—even the beautiful valley and lake that he had seen a short time before from the ' Ridge of the Sheds,' when sunset flushed the bowery spray of peerless Lough Gill. In his own heart he said to himself, " I would it were God's high will to leave me here and found my See in this beautiful valley beside these fishful, murmuring waters." But when he looked across the river his heart misgave him, for he saw Cairbre, whom he had met before at Telltown, with his grim warriors on

the northern bank waiting as if to dispute his passage, and certainly affording him scant hope of 'setting up' on the beautiful banks of the Erne.

This is not imagination—the dry record bears us out in all its details, for we are told that the Saint 'desired to set up there in the place where are Disert Patraic and Lecc Patraic'—most likely on the northern bank of the river. But Cairbre, who then owned the land northwards as far as Racoon, resisted him; and he sent two of his people, Carbacc and Cuangus, to drive him forcibly away from the place. "What you do is not good," said Patrick. "If a dwelling were given to me here, my city, with its Eas-Ruaid flowing through it, would be a second Rome of Latium, with its Tiber through it; and your children would be my successors therein." With his keen eye for natural beauty, Patrick admired and loved that beautiful valley with its wealth of fishful waters. But the wicked Cairbre was obdurate, and his graceless servant Carbacc 'set a dog at Patrick'; whereupon his fellow-servant, with some sense of decency, 'smote the dog with a rod.'<sup>1</sup>

Then Patrick said that the race of the rude Carbacc, who had treated God's servants with so much contumely, 'would be few in number, and that no dignity of laymen or clerics would ever arise from his family.' And that has been fulfilled. No one has ever heard of them since. Cuangus, too, was to be punished for having consented to expel Patrick by having his race reduced to a small band; but as he showed some respect to the Saint, amongst them there would be the dignity of ordained men. 'And so,' adds the Tripartite, 'it has come to pass.'

It seems, indeed, that Cuangus was reluctant to undertake the odious task of expelling Patrick; so Cairbre promised him, if he undertook the work, all the land that he could see to the north of Slieve Cise. This is probably the conspicuous summit now called Bulbin<sup>2</sup> Hill, about a mile and a half north-east of Ballyshannon. It affords a fine view of Magh Sereth by the Sea, from the Erne estuary northward towards Ballintra; but when Cuangus turned round on the crest of the hill to mark the limits of his wide domain, a dark cloud closed round about him, so that he

<sup>1</sup> Cairbre is here more opposed to Patrick than he was at Magherow; but there he was merely the over-lord, sanctioning what he could not well refuse; here he was the actual lord in possession, and as much opposed to Patrick at the Erne as he was by the Blackwater.

<sup>2</sup> Colgan says that the stream at its foot was in his time called the *Kisse*.

could see nothing to the north ; he only saw 'as far as the sea, that is. the estuary of the Erne westward, and as far as the Uinsenn eastward.' The Unshin river is the small stream that rises in the Unshin Lake, which is situated about a mile east of Bulbin peak, and there flows round the hill, first to the north and afterwards to the west, until it falls into the Erne at Abbey Assaroe. So this dark cloud made the promised reward very small indeed, as small as the race that was destined to inherit it. It is very remarkable how accurately the author of the Tripartite defines the locality ; and the ancient name both of lake and river still survive.

Cairbre, too, was to be punished for his churlish opposition to the Gospel. "The river," said Patrick, "that God has given thee, Cairbre, thy share therein shall not be fruitful as regards fishing," that is, 'the northern half of the river lengthwise was Cairbre's share, to wit the half towards the Cenel Conaill,' for Cairbre at that time had the territory of Conall as far as Rath Cungai—now Racoon, near Ballintra. "But," he added, "the share of Conall (the half to the south of it), will be fruitful." And so it came to pass, until Muirguis,<sup>1</sup> son of Moel Duin, son of Scannlan, a wonderful king of the race of Cairbre, gave his barren shore to Columcille, 'and now that Columcille has it, it has become fruitful.' His prayers and merits annulled the curse of barrenness pronounced by Patrick.

Cairbre's river is, of course, the Erne, and it appears that at that time his territory extended as far north as Racoon ; but, as explained by the writer of the Tripartite, the head of the tribe afterwards gave it to Columcille, that is, to him and his monks, who had a great monastery at Drumhome, by the sea-shore, beyond Ballintra. So the whole territory, from the Drowes to Barnesmore,<sup>2</sup> became a part of ancient Tirconnell ; but it was specially known by the name of Tirlugh, which the barony still bears. King Aedh Mac Ainmire, from whom the barony took its name, was a contemporary of Columcille, and both were present at the great Synod of Drumceat in 575.

The river Erne is still a fishful river, abounding in

<sup>1</sup> Muirguis died in 695 ; his father, Moel Duin, in 665 ; so that the offering was made, not to Columcille himself, but to his monastery of Drumhome most likely.

<sup>2</sup> This great gap in the mountain, through which the railway now passes, was anciently called Bearnas Mor of Tirlugh, because it was the pass to and from that famous territory.



salmon. It is one of the most productive salmon rivers in all Ireland. Some years ago the fishing was sold to a private company for £50,000; and it was considered a great bargain.

But the Erne at Ballyshannon has more than its valuable fisheries to make it interesting. As we have said, history, poetry, and romance have flung their radiance around that fair scene, and have peopled it with teeming associations. That little island just below the waterfall is Inis Saimer, and it has taken its name from Saimer, a hound of Partholan, one of the first of the great heroes who landed in Ireland. The bards tell us that he landed there for caution sake, and fortified it; but in a fit of jealousy, in regard to his wife, he killed her faithful hound, whence the island, and the river, and the neighbouring Cistercian monastery have ever since been called from the name of the hound. The poets speak of the river valley as Saimer's 'green vale;' the Cistercians called their great abbey close by 'De Samario;' and so the whole place is aglow with the light of bardic story.

The waterfall gets its name from Aed Ruad, the father of Macha of the Golden Hair, who founded Emania; the hill over the cataract is still called from him Sid Aedha (Ruaidh), because he was buried there; and the old abbey will be for ever immortal as the first home and school of the founder of the O'Clerys of Tirconnell.

Patrick now continued his journey between Assaroe and the sea, through the modern parish of Kilbarron, until he came to Conall's territory, 'where to-day is Rath Chungai' or Racoon. This was the mearing at that time between Cairbre and Conall;<sup>1</sup> and Racoon itself seems to have been in the territory of Prince Conall, for we do not read that Patrick founded any church in the territory of the accursed Cairbre, who drove him away from his lands. 'But he set a stake there at Racoon, and said it would be a territory for seven bishops, and there is Bite (buried), the son of the brother of Asicus from Elphin;' and there also, we may add, as we have already stated, is Assicus himself, Bishop of Elphin, and there also, no doubt, other prelates rest in Christ beneath His Cross.

The phrase, 'he set a stake there,' seems to mean that he traced out the site of a church in the place, and

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<sup>1</sup> This Conall is of course Conall Gulban, brother of Cairbre, quite a distinct personage from Prince Conall, son of Enda Crom, whom Patrick first met at Tara, and then on the banks of the Moy.

marked with a cross the place of the altar, as we do still. Tirechan calls this place Rath Argi in Magh Sereth; and he adds that Patrick encamped in the plain near where he founded the church. There he found a good man of the race of Lathron, whom he baptised, together with his young son Hina or Ineus by name, and he was so-called because he was born by the wayside as his parents were coming down from the hills, and his father carried the child in a cloth tied around his neck. This youth Patrick caused to be instructed, and he wrote an alphabet for the boy; and afterwards he was consecrated by Patrick 'with the consecration of a bishop.'<sup>1</sup> It was he who afterwards extended hospitality to Assicus of Elphin and his monks at Ard Roissen, 'that is in Rath Chungai,' of Magh Sereth, and that was in the time of 'Kings Ferghus and Fothadh.' Ferghus Cennfada, son of Conall, was grandfather of Columcille, and his brother Fothadh, who appears to have been with him joint king of the tribe, died in 546, according to the Four Masters. It was from this Fothadh, son of Conall, that Ard Fothaidh, close to Racoon, appears to have derived its name. Patrick prepared to found a church in that place, and had set up a stake to mark the spot—probably a wooden cross—but on the morrow, when they were about to begin the church, Patrick found the stake 'bent,' whence he concluded that it was not destined to be the site of a church, but of a royal palace; and he prophesied that Domhnall, son of Aedh, son of Ainmire, would build his royal dun in that place, which afterwards came to pass. This was Domhnall, King of Erin, of the line of Conall Gulban, whose death is marked by the Four Masters in A.D. 642. He was fifth in descent from Conall Gulban, and before he became King of Erin had his royal palace at Ard Fothaidh, near Racoon.

The Tripartite here adds that on Sid Aedha Patrick blessed Conall, son of Niall; and he also placed his hands on the head of Ferghus, son of Conall, and fervently blessed him. This was a marvel to Conall that he should bless the child; but Patrick, in the spirit of prophecy, explained the blessing, saying:—

A youth (Columcille) will be born of his tribe,  
He will be a sage, a prophet, a poet;  
Who will not utter falsehood.

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<sup>1</sup>As the child was then an infant he could not be consecrated for many years afterwards; but probably Patrick blessed him at the time with a special blessing, and foretold that he would become a bishop later on.

St. Brigid is represented as uttering a similar prophecy, but it must have been at a later period.

The order given in the Tripartite would seem to imply that Sid Aedha<sup>1</sup> was near Racoon or Aid Fothaidh; but the fairy hill of Hugh still bears its name, and is now called Mullaghshee, the hill on which the Protestant church stands, just over the Erne on the right bank of the river at Ballyshannon. At that time it appears to have been in Cairbre's territory on the north side of the river; but the modern Tirlugh now includes the whole district from the Erne to Barnesmore.

## II.—ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY IN LOUGH DERG.

Tirechan adds that Patrick also founded a church in Magh Latrain, and a second called the Cell-mor Sir Drummo in Doburbar, a church of which the family of Devenish afterwards took possession. These churches have not yet been identified. The church in Magh Latrain was probably the old church at Laghy on the way to Donegal. But the locality of Kilmore Sir Drummo is still open to question. In our opinion it is somewhere in the parish of Templecarne, if it is not identical with the old church of Templecarne. The greater part of the parish was in the ancient Tirconnell, and still forms a portion of the barony of Tirlugh; yet it all belongs to the diocese of Clogher, because, as Tirechan says, the monks of Devenish came down upon it and kept possession of it.<sup>2</sup> We must look for that Kilmore therefore somewhere in Templecarne parish or on its borders. It must have been from this point too, that is Ballyshannon or Ballintra, that Patrick went to Lough Derg, and founded there his famous Purgatory. We know that he was in the habit of spending the Lent in retirement and penance, so nothing would be more natural than that he should retire there, perhaps, during his first Lent in Tirconnell, to strengthen his soul by prayer and gird himself for the great work that

<sup>1</sup> It is the same Aed who has given his name to the cataract and to the hill, that is Aed Ruad Mac Badhain, who was drowned in the cataract, and buried in the hill over the falls. It was also a famous fairy hill, and their choice of this hill for a palace shows the good taste of the fairies. Aed Ruad was father of the famous foundress of Emania—Macha of the Golden Hair.

<sup>2</sup> St. Patrick first spent a Lent most likely at Saint's Island in Lough Derg, parish of Templecarne. Then his disciple, Dabheog, a Welshman, settled there, and became patron of the place; afterwards St. Molaise of Devenish occupied it, and thus originated the claim of that familia.

lay before him in the North; yet it is strange that no reference is made to the Holy Lake either in the Tripartite or in Tirechan, although the tradition of the Apostle's stay there is so vivid and so universal throughout the whole North and West of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Here we merely observe that St. Patrick's Cave was not in the present 'Station Island' in Lough Derg, but in that called the 'Saint's Island,' and sometimes Island Dabheog. This saint was a disciple of St. Patrick, and it would appear that Patrick at his departure left Dabheog in charge of the religious establishment which grew up under his care on the island.<sup>2</sup>

The Saint Dabheog here referred to, if he were indeed a disciple of St. Patrick, was himself of Welsh origin, being the son of Breacan, or Brychan, the great father of a host of Welsh saints, many of whom, as their father was of Irish origin, became themselves closely connected with Ireland. In this way we can easily understand how Dabheog became a disciple of St. Patrick, and was left by his master to take charge of the church and hermitage in Tirhugh. Another Saint Dabheog sprung from Dichu, son of Trichem, of the Dalfiatach race, is commemorated in our martyrologies, but he flourished at least one hundred years later than the time of St. Patrick.

It has often been considered strange that there is no reference to St. Patrick's sojourn at Lough Derg in the ancient Lives. The Tripartite is, certainly, silent on the point, but we think the entry in the Book of Armagh points to the Saint's sojourn at Lough Derg. The 'great church,' *ecclesia magna*—called Sir Drommo, which the Devenish community afterwards grabbed—shows clearly two things—first, that this foundation was a well-known church, and, secondly, that it was a church which became subject to Devenish, and, therefore, to the diocese of Clogher. This church must have been somewhere in the parish of Templecarne, for there is no other parish in the barony of Tirhugh belonging to Clogher. It was, therefore, most probably the old church of Templecarne, which stood close to the road from Pettigo to Lough Derg, and still contains a very large churchyard, although the ancient buildings have disappeared. The old road to Saint's Island passed

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<sup>1</sup> An account of this famous place or Purgatory will be found in Appendix No. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the Kilmore Sir Drummo was that founded in the original Station Island of Lough Derg.

from this church by the south-western shore of the lake, and was known as the 'Pilgrims' Tochar' or road to the Holy Island. There was an ancient church also on the Saint's Island itself, but that probably was founded at a later period, when the pilgrimage became celebrated. Subsequently, an 'Augustinian' monastery was founded, and subsisted down to the year 1632, when the buildings were entirely defaced and destroyed.

### III.—PATRICK COMES INTO MAGH ITH.

And now, Patrick having gone through Tirconnell, and blessed its territory, its princes, and its people, passed with his familia through the wildly picturesque Glen of Barnesmore, and came into Magh Ith. Barnesmore is the most remarkable mountain pass in the North of Ireland. It was quite visible to Patrick during his whole journey through Magh g-Cedne, Magh Ene, and Tirhugh, for it is the only visible break in the great range of the Blue Stack Mountains as they look south-westward towards the ocean. The hills on either side of this wild pass rise some 2,000 feet high, and press so closely on the valley that they barely leave room for the road and the railway which now sweeps through it from Stranorlar to Donegal. No enemy ventured to pass through it when the sons of Tirconnell held the heights, for their destruction would have been assured, as the pass is about three miles in length, and the assailants on the heights would have need of no weapons but the loose rocks on the hill-sides to destroy the invading foe.

The Tripartite represents Patrick after coming through this Great Gap as passing direct into Magh Ith. It was a famous plain extending from Stranorlar to Inch on the inner shore of Lough Swilly for a distance of nearly twenty miles. On the west it is bounded by the mountains, on the east by the Rivers Finn and Foyle. It is the most fertile territory in Donegal, and has been the scene of its more stubborn conflicts. The O'Neills and O'Donnells reddened all its fairest fields with their best blood, shed in fratricidal strife. At a later period it was the battle-ground of the Gaels and Saxons, and it was in Magh Ith that the gallant Heber M'Mahon, Bishop of Clogher, drew a sword that could not save the fallen cause of his country, and paid the penalty by a glorious death at Enniskillen.

The name of this ancient plain carries us back to the

very dawn of Erin's bardic story. Ith was the uncle of Milesius, and when his sons had resolved to invade the country they sent their uncle to spy out the coasts of the land, and tell them of its resources. He landed somewhere in Lough Swilly, most likely at the place now called Inch, in the Lagan. There he surely saw even then a fertile and smiling land; but the princes of the country, jealous of the stranger, waylaid him and his companions on their return to their ships. He was slain in the conflict, and gave his name to the plain; but his sons and companions succeeded in carrying off his body, and brought both sad and joyous tidings home to Spain. The result was the invasion and conquest of Erin.

Patrick, as usual, having come into Magh Ith, directed his course straight towards the royal palace, which was there since the time of Ith himself, for it took its name from its founder, Ailech Neid, who, it is said, dwelt there when Ith first landed in sight of the royal hill. To the same royal palace Patrick now directed his footsteps. But he was not idle on the way.

The Tripartite says that having come through Bearnas Mor Patrick founded there Domnach Mor Maighe Itha, over which he placed Dudubac, son of Corcan, one of his household. The old church has disappeared, but it has given its title to the parish of Donaghmore, on the right or south bank of the River Finn. Eoghan was not there at the time, and Patrick was, it appears, doubtful as to the reception he was likely to meet with from this Eoghan, son of Niall, and brother of Cairbre and of Conall. "Beware," he said, as they advanced—to his household—"beware lest the lion Eoghain,<sup>1</sup> son of Niall, come against you."

When they were now come near Donaghmore Patrick and his family met Muiredach, son of Eoghan, with a troop of warriors, who were, perhaps, keeping the passes of the river. This gallant prince, the father of a still more gallant son, who was called the Hector of the Gael, was favourably disposed to Patrick. Sechnall, too, Patrick's nephew, most likely by his advice, sought to win over the young prince, if he could, to the cause of the Gospel by prudent means.

Said Sechnall to Muiredach—"Thou wilt have from me a reward if thou prevailest on thy father to believe." "What

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<sup>1</sup> Yet, as we have seen before, Eoghan was friendly to Patrick at Tara. The old warrior was, however, jealous of admitting strangers into his territory, and hence Patrick's warning to his clergy to beware of the old lion.

reward?" said he. "The kingship of thy tribe shall be thine for ever, *i.e.*, from thee," said Sechnall. So Muiredach prevailed on his father to believe; and his father consented. This was in the Fidh Mor or Great Wood which has been identified with Veagh, in the parish of Ramochy, 'where the flagstone is;' and there Eoghan believed in God and in Patrick.

But it does not appear that Fidh Mor was in Eoghan's territory<sup>1</sup> for Patrick said "if thou hadst believed in thine own country, hostages of the Gael would come to thy country, that is, as that of a sovereign prince, but now only those hostages will come whom thou shalt win by thy prowess in arms." It seems that Patrick's complaint was that Eoghan did not come to meet him at Donaghmore when Patrick first came into his territory, he rather held back and waited until Patrick had come into Tir Enna, which was his brother's territory, on the south-eastern shore of Lough Swilly and outside Eoghan's jurisdiction.

Donaghmore, near Castle Finn, appears to have been the only church which Patrick founded in Magh Ith. Colgan observes that there were two famous churches in the plain, one towards the west, namely Domnach Mor Maighe Itha, and the other towards the north, namely Clonleigh (Cluin Laogh) founded by St. Carnech, and that these two churches were not far from each other. In this he is quite accurate. The old church of Donaghmore was, we believe, on the right bank of the Finn, mid-way between Stranorlar and Castle Finn; whereas the church of Clonleigh, also in Magh Ith, was about a mile to the west of Lifford, and gives its title likewise to the parish of Clonleigh. It is noteworthy also that these two parishes are still in the diocese of Derry. Anciently they belonged to the diocese of Ardstraw, which was incorporated with that of Derry, and those parishes belonged to the territory of Eoghan, the eldest son of Niall the Great.

It appears clear, however, that Patrick did not on this occasion go westward towards Castlefinn but, as was his custom, went straight from Donaghmore northwards towards Ailech. Muiredach, son of Eoghan, doubtless accompanied him; and so they passed right through the barony of

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<sup>1</sup> Conal's territory at this time extended to Barnesmore. Eoghan's territory, it would appear, extended along the Finn and Foyle from Barnesmore to Derry or rather Ailech where he dwelt; whilst Enna's territory stretched along the western shore of Lough Swilly, and round the head of the Lough to Fidh Mor.

Raphoe to the head of Lough Swilly. It was not far distant—only some ten miles north from Donaghmore. We are told that the meeting between Eoghan and Patrick took place in Fidh Mor at the place where ‘the flagstone is.’ It is not called ‘Patrick’s flagstone,’ but the flagstone simply, although most probably the reference is to some flagstone which Patrick blessed for the purpose of saying Mass, and which was afterwards kept there in great veneration and gave its name to the present parish of Leck, which is just at the head of Lough Swilly and adjoins Veagh in Ramochy. It must be noted, however, that the parish is not called Leckpatrick but simply Leck, in this corroborating the accuracy of the Tripartite.

#### IV.—PATRICK AND EOGHAN MAC NIAL.

The Great Wood of Veagh extended, as far as we can judge, from Leck to the place now called Manorcunningham. It is likely the meeting took place either at the old church of Leck or at the old rath which has given its name to the parish of Ramochy. The woods have long been cleared; and the district, which was planted with Scottish settlers after the Flight of the Earls, is now one of the most fertile and highly cultivated in Ulster. But even in ancient times it was fertile and beautiful, for the ancient monastery of Bellaghan,<sup>1</sup> near Manorcunningham, means in Irish the ‘town of the beautiful field,’ and well deserves the name.<sup>2</sup>

Here on the shore, by the rushing tides of Lough Swilly, Patrick and Eoghan had a long and momentous interview, to which the lively Celtic imagination of later days has, we suspect, added some extraordinary incidents. Muiredach, son of Eoghan, claimed a reward for believing at Donaghmore, so far as we can judge; and now Eoghan himself, according to the strange account in the Tripartite, makes a similar demand. “Not stately am I,” said Eoghan, “and my brothers upbraid me often for my ugliness.”<sup>3</sup> “What shape would you like to have?” said Patrick. “The countenance and shape of the youth who is carrying your box, namely Rioc” (of Inisboffin, in Lough Ree). Patrick, we are told, then covered them both with one mantle, the two

<sup>1</sup> See Cardinal Moran’s *Archaall*, Vol. II., p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> Baile-aghadh-chaoin.

<sup>3</sup> Stokes translates it, ‘give a great *wergild* for my ugliness.’ We give Colgan’s version here.



arms of each of them around the other. They sleep thus, and afterwards awake with exactly the same countenance, their tonsures only, or style of the hair-cutting, being different. Rioc had the clerical tonsure, and Eoghan, we may presume, had the flowing locks of a Gaelic warrior.

But Eoghan was not yet content. "My size is not to my liking." "What stature would you like to have?" said Patrick. "This high," replied Eoghan, raising his spear high over his head. And straightway he grows that height! There is nothing of this in the Book of Armagh, and we may set it down as altogether fanciful. At that time Eoghan was an old and famous warrior, for mention is made of his grandsons, and at that age it is not likely he was so anxious about either his stature or his appearance; but he was always what his clansmen valued much more—the bravest of the brave.

Then Patrick blessed Eoghan and his sons. "Which of them is dearest to thee?" said Patrick. "Muiredach," said Eoghan. "Kingship will be from him for ever," said Patrick. "And next to him?" said Patrick. "Fergus," said Eoghan. "Ordained men will descend from him," said Patrick; "and whom next do you prefer?" "Eochy the Melodious," said Eoghan. "Warriors will spring from him," said the Saint; "and after him, who is next in your estimation?" "All the rest are equally beloved by me," said Eoghan. "Then let them share your favours according to their merits,"<sup>1</sup> said Patrick—a very fair award.

Patrick then, accompanied by Eoghan and his sons, went northward about seven miles by the fertile shore of Lough Swilly, until he came to the ancient road that led up from the lough to the far-famed Ailech<sup>2</sup> of the Kings. It was a steep ascent on that side, for the royal hill rises from the lough to the height of 802 feet, and the ancient fortress crowns its very summit. Even then it had fronted the storm for well nigh 1,500 years, for it is said to date back at least 1,000 years before the birth of Christ, and was commonly regarded both in splendour and antiquity as second to Tara alone. Emania had fallen more than a hundred years before Patrick founded Armagh; but Ailech was still in its glory, and flourished down to the

<sup>1</sup> So Colgan gives it. The Rolls Tripartite has it, 'One man's love shall be on them'—the meaning of which is not clear.

<sup>2</sup> It is often called the Grianan-Ailech or Grianan-Ely, that is, the Sunny Ailech; and it deserved the name, for if the sun was to be seen at all it must have caught his rays.

year A.D. 1101, when it was finally dismantled as a royal fortress by Murtagh O'Brien, in revenge for the destruction of Kincora by Donnell McLoughlin some twelve years before. The name was kept long after as a title of the Northern Hy Niall; but they had transferred their chief residence to Inis Enaigh, in the Co. Tyrone.

Even still the grand old walls crown the hill and front the storm as proudly as of old, although the O'Neill no more holds rule in any part of Ulster, and the stranger reaps the harvests of golden grain along the Foyle and winding Swilly. According to Michael O'Clery, the name Ailech merely means a stone palace.<sup>1</sup> It is rudely circular, about 70 feet in diameter, that is, the inner cashel or stone fort, which seems to have been always open to the sky. There was only a single entrance, but there are galleries in the walls, and steps to reach the parapets, which are like those found in Dun Aengus in Aranmore, and similar stone forts of ancient Erin. This inner cashel was surrounded with several outer concentric ramparts of stone and earth, which rendered the access of an enemy extremely difficult. The walls have recently been restored, and the visitor can now realise the general character of the ancient inner fort almost as distinctly as St. Patrick and his familia could have done.

From its height and commanding position the Grianan of Ely, as it is now called, affords a magnificent panorama of all the surrounding country, to the farthest summits of the distant mountains. At its feet, as it were, the tourist sees the two noble estuaries of the Foyle and the Swilly stretching away on either hand seaward to the north-east and north-west. He can look down into the streets of Derry and trace the outline of its historic walls. He will see the smoke of the trains from Enniskillen and Donegal, for an hour before their arrival, as they cross and recross the gleaming windings of the Finn and Foyle far away to the south. The dark mass of Slieve Snaght, buttressed by surrounding hills, rises in gloomy grandeur far away to the north; the great sun-lit cone of Errigal overtops all its rivals on the west; the massive summits of Tyrone bound the horizon on the east; so that at every point far and near the prospect is full of variety and grandeur. St. Patrick knew how to appreciate such a scene; and no doubt gazed with a full heart over these

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<sup>1</sup> Ail-tech = stone-house.

far-reaching hills and fertile valleys which God had given to him to be the field and the crown of his labours.

We are told that Patrick blessed the fortress, that is Ailech of the Kings; and he left his flagstone<sup>1</sup> there, and he prophesied that kings and prelates from Ailech would hold rule over Erin, and we know that the prophecy was fulfilled for many ages; and that the last vain but glorious stand against foreign rule in Erin was made by the gallant princes of the North, whose fathers had ruled in Ailech for more than one thousand years.

Furthermore, apparently addressing Eoghan, Patrick said, "Whenever you or your successors after you put your foot out of bed (to go on an expedition) the men of Erin will tremble before you." And he not only blessed the palace, but from Belach Ratha he raised his hand and blessed in the distance before him all the land of Inis-Eoghan where the sons of the King then ruled, and into which Patrick now proposed to journey himself.

This Belach Ratha appears to be the highest point of 'the broad ancient road which leads to the summit between two natural ledges of rock.'<sup>2</sup> The fortress itself is frequently called a dun and a rath as well as an ailech<sup>3</sup> or stone cashel; and this ancient road descending to the Lough on the west gave from its crest a magnificent view of Inis-Eoghan in the distance. The old poetic blessing is given in the Tripartite:—

My blessing on the tribes  
I give from Belach Ratha;  
On you descendants of Eoghan  
Grace till Doomsday.  
So long as the fields shall be under crops  
Victory in battle be with their men;  
The head of the men of Erin's hosts be in their place,  
They shall attack every high ground,  
The seed of Eoghan, son of Niall,  
Bless, O fair Bridgid.  
Provided that they do good,  
Rule shall be from them for ever.  
The blessing of us both  
On Eoghan, son of Niall,  
On every one who shall be born of him,  
Provided he act according to our will.

<sup>1</sup> The flagstone—*leit*, as the Tripartite has it—was probably an altar stone which he consecrated for use of the residents in the palace.

<sup>2</sup> See Ordnance Survey of Templemore, p. 217.

<sup>3</sup> See the *Dinnseanchus* of Ailech—*eodem loco*.

We are also told that Echaid, son of Fiachra, son of Eoghan (that is his grandson) was baptised along with Eoghan on this great occasion; and that Patrick told them that if they kept not their sacred promises on that day they would be childless, and without burial in the earth.

It is uncertain what is meant by Patrick's flagstone which he left in Ailech. The word sometimes means an altar stone, but there is no reference to a church in the place, and no trace of one has ever been found there, nor is it probable Patrick would leave a consecrated altar stone in this barbaric palace of warlike kings. There is now preserved at Belmont, near Derry, a great flat slab, rudely rectangular, more than seven feet across, which is called Columba's Stone. O'Donovan thinks it was the stone used in the inauguration of the Kings of Ailech, and that it was originally kept there for that purpose. Patrick, blessing Ailech and all its belongings, would naturally bless also this historic stone. Columba would probably do the same, when the princes of his own lineage came to rule there, and thus the stone would bear his name also. But when Ailech ceased to be a royal fortress the stone was likely transferred to some place near Derry, whence it found its way to its present abode. But all this is mere conjecture.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### ST. PATRICK IN INISHOWEN AND DERRY.

#### I.—JOURNEY TO CARNDONAGH.

FROM royal Ailech Patrick set out with his usual familia to preach the Gospel in Eoghan's Island. Inishowen deserves the name, for it is almost entirely surrounded by the sea, except at the narrow neck from Derry to Inch, on Lough Swilly, which connects it with the mainland of Donegal. As Patrick set out from Ailech, he probably went by Burnfoot to Buncranagh, and then travelled along the western slopes of Slieve Snaght to the fertile valley beyond its snowy summit, that is, says the Tripartite, into the territory of Fergus, son of Eoghan, who ruled the north-west of the peninsula. Patrick came to the place called Aghadh Drumman, which is, in all probability, the district now known as Maghera Drumman, in the parish of Donagh. He was anxious to found a religious house in that place; but Coelbad, son of Fergus, expelled the Saint from the district; whereupon Patrick said, as he always said in similar cases, that none of his race would ever enjoy it in future. Which thing, adds the writer, has been lately verified, when Comman, son of Algasach, of the race of this Coelbad, who dwelt at Eas Mic nEirc, sought to set up in this very place. He built himself a house there, but 'he had not put a rush of thatch on it' before it was entirely demolished by a student from the neighbouring monastery of Domnach Mor Maige Tochair. Eas Mic nEirc is a ledge of rock in a mountain stream that comes down from Slieve Snaght, over which the water leaps into a deep pool below. The wild mountain stream rushes down its rocky bed as of yore, seeking the sea at Trawbreaga; and it is on its bank at a point a little lower down that the famous church of Domnach Mor once stood. When Patrick was repulsed by the rude Coelbad, he advanced further through the glen, and was met by Aed, brother of Coelbad, who received him with joy, and gave him the place of his church. "Thou shalt have welcome with me," said Aed; and so Patrick built his church in

the beautiful glen, and he dwelt there for forty days, and he left a bishop in it, even Cairthenn's son, of whom more presently.

## II.—DOMNACH MOR MAIGE TOCHAIR.

Domnach Mor Maige Tochair<sup>1</sup> has given its name to the parish of Donagh, which comprehends some 25,000 acres of this wild but beautiful district; and it will never be forgotten by Irish scholars, for 'it was on the lands of this very church,' says John Colgan, 'that I was born.'<sup>2</sup> Patrick's memory, too, is still fondly cherished in this romantic glen, and every year great crowds of pious pilgrims assemble near the old Cross of Donagh to go their rounds of penance at 'Patrick's Bed'; nor is there in all Ireland a spot where the memory of their great Apostle is greener than in this wild mountain valley of far Inishowen.

He left there as bishop Cairthenn's son,<sup>3</sup> the brother of St. Mac Cartan of Clogher. The Tripartite, which is always candid, tells us then a story of these two prelates, which is not without a moral lesson for our own times.

When Patrick was bidding at Ailech Airtich, in Tir Enda of Connaught, Enda, son of Niall, prince of the district, met Patrick one day; whereupon Patrick asked him for the place of a church therein for one of his familia. "As if we had not clerics of our own," said Enda, "to put in the place." The native chieftains were extremely jealous at seeing strangers assume the spiritual sovereignty in their tribe-land. So at first he refused Patrick for the church land; but he came next day, bringing with him his own one-eyed son, Eochy, 'who rests in Inver.'<sup>4</sup> Patrick at the time was engaged elsewhere with most of his household 'baptising and conferring Orders and sowing the faith.'

<sup>1</sup> The Tochar is said to have been a serpent that infested the glen, which was destroyed by St. Patrick; but, as a fact, the name Magh Tochair dates back to the time of Nemedius, at least in bardic story. See Keating.

<sup>2</sup> Colgan's words are:—This was formerly a bishop's see, of which the first bishop was Mac Carthen, the brother of Mac Carthen, Bishop of Clogher. In the lands of this very church I was born; it is at this day only a parish church in the diocese of Derry, and commonly called Domnach Glinne Tochair. Here is to be seen St. Patrick's penitential bed enclosed by rough stones, visited by great numbers of people.

<sup>3</sup> Mac Cairthenn of the *Tripartite* is the same as Mac Carthen of Colgan, and Mac Cartan of more recent authorities—all different forms of the same name, as too often happens in Irish literature.

<sup>4</sup> Inver, called anciently Inver Naillé, a large parish west of the town of Donegal.

Not finding Patrick, Enda asked the two sons of Cairthenn, who were already bishops, to ordain his one-eyed son for the vacant church. "Confer ye the rank of a bishop on my son," he said; and being a prince and son of Niall the Great, he spoke peremptorily. But Mac Cartan, afterwards of Clogher, said, "You must ask that of Patrick." The other Mac Cartan, however, said, "It is our duty to do it"—seeing, no doubt, the rank and power of Prince Enda. 'The Order is conferred'; and Patrick at once hears of it. "What!" he said, "to confer that Order in my absence on the son of a wolf." The Orders were valid, and could not be recalled; but the ordination was wholly irregular. So Patrick in wrath said: "There shall always be contention in the church of one of the twain of you, and there shall be poverty in the church of the other." Neither of them had a church at the time, but they got them afterwards. One of the brothers was placed by Patrick in Domnach Mor of Inishowen, and the other in Clogher. 'And this thing was fulfilled,' adds the Tripartite—'contention there was in Donagh,<sup>1</sup> and poverty in Clogher.' Certainly the village of Clogher now is a poor place; but Monaghan has a very beautiful cathedral, which is the head of a great diocese. So it was Patrick's prophecy, as we must presume, that has driven the Bishop away from Clogher, which is now quite as poor as St. Patrick had foretold.

Neither did the angry Saint<sup>2</sup> spare the young prince who was irregularly ordained. The passage giving the prediction in the Irish Tripartite is corrupt and almost unintelligible; but Colgan gives the sense as follows:—'The sanctuary in which the bones of a cleric so irregularly ordained are buried will be the dwelling-place of two homicides and robbers for a hundred and twenty years; it will then be occupied by a Son of Life from southern parts, but will afterwards be restored to me.' And this was all fulfilled, for the bones of Bishop Eochy, which were at first interred on a pleasant hill, were afterwards removed to a squalid valley; and his first resting-place became a refuge for homicides and robbers. The place was then given to Ciaran, son of the Wright, but was after-

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<sup>1</sup> Colgan reverses the sentence—'Contention and discord in Clogher, and poverty in Donagh.' It was perhaps an oversight of transcription.

<sup>2</sup> It must be borne in mind that the Canons even then imposed very severe penalties on all concerned in such an irregular ordination as that of Enda's son.

wards restored to Patrick's successors in Armagh. 'This Eochy (or Echu), son of Enda, is,' adds the Tripartite, 'known to-day as Bishop Ecan'; but neither the Tripartite nor Colgan tells us precisely where his church was situated.

The Tripartite says that at the time of this irregular ordination Patrick was bidding in Tir Enda Airtich in Tulach Liacc in Letter<sup>1</sup>, adding that he set up a horse rod there which grew into a bush, and ordained three bishops who bore the name of Domnall—namely, Domnall, son of Crimthann in Ailech Airtich, 'as we mentioned above,' Domnall, son of Coilcne in Tullach Liacc, and, thirdly, Domnall, of Cuil Conalto. It is quite clear, however, that the entire episode refers to Tir-Enda, in Connaught, and is introduced here merely in connection Bishop Mac Cartan of Domnach Mor Maige Tochair, whose church was destined to suffer for his share in the irregular ordination of Enda's son.

The site of the old church is very grand. It commands a splendid view of the widest plain in Inishowen, looking out on the fine expanse of what is now called Trawbreaga Bay on the west, with the crests of Malin Head to the right, and, further off still eastwards, we get glimpses of the ocean, with Culdaff Bay gleaming in the sunlight, but only when the cloudy skies of the North clear off, as they seldom do, and let the full glory of the sun light up their rocky peaks and stormy shores.

### III.—PATRICK AT MOVILLE.

Patrick went from western Inishowen, that is, from Carndonagh, into eastern Inishowen, which is called Bretach in the Tripartite, but in later times was generally written Bredach, a name which is still preserved in that 'of a glen and also of a small river flowing through the ancient territory into Lough Foyle at Moville.'<sup>2</sup> So says Colgan, and he ought to know, for he was, as we have seen, a native of the neighbouring territory. In the time of St. Patrick it was the patrimony of Oengus, son of Ailell, son of Eoghán; and O'Dugan says that his descendants were 'the noblest sept of the race of Eoghán.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We have shown before that this place was at Edmondstown, near Ballaghaderreen, in the County Mayo.

<sup>2</sup> *Trias. Thaum.*, 145, 185.

<sup>3</sup> See *Irish Topogr. Poems*, p. 23.



No doubt on this occasion Patrick passed on the line of the present road leading from Carndonagh to Moville by the roots of the hills which buttress Slieve Snacht on its northern flanks. You get from time to time glimpses of the northern ocean beyond Culdaff, and further on, towards Inistrahull, which rises from the sea in solitary pride beyond the farthest cliffs of Malin Head. 'There'—that is at Moville—we are told, 'he found the three Dechnans, sister's sons of Patrick, in the district of Ailell, son of Eoghan.' Colgan suggests 'deacons,' instead of Dechnans, that is, three deacons, sons of Patrick's sister, and intimates that they may have been the three Deacons commemorated in our martyrologies as Deacon Reat on the 3rd of March, Deacon Nenn<sup>1</sup> on the 25th of April, and Deacon Aedh or Aidus of Cuilmaine on the 31st of August. He admits he cannot otherwise establish their identity; but he says that these names seem to be those of foreigners, which is true, and that there was a church called Cluain Maine in Inishowen in which three nephews of Patrick are said to have been established. This view is confirmed by the fact that Conis, husband of Darerca, Patrick's sister, is said to have given his name to the church of Bothchonais in Inishowen.<sup>2</sup> Colgan describes it as a 'great and celebrated monastery in the diocese of Derry,' and O'Donovan has located it at the old cemetery of Binnion in the parish of Clonmany, down near the wild waves which for ever break on the broad sands of Trawbreaga Bay. The text would seem to imply that the 'deacons' were already at Moville; it may be Patrick had sent them on before him, and that Conis and his sons had already established themselves as 'pilgrims' in that remotest corner of Ireland. Darerca certainly had many children, and was, doubtless, married more than once; so, in the absence of better evidence, we may accept both the etymology and the story which places Conis by the sea at Binnion, and his sons somewhere in Bredach by the swelling tides of the Foyle.

The Tripartite merely says with reference to Patrick's stay in Bredach that he ordained there Oengus, son of Ailell—the prince of the district—and rested for one Sunday in that place; 'Domnach Bili is its name.' That is

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<sup>1</sup> He is called Deacon Menn, which is probably a mistake, in the Martyrology of Donegal, and is there described as of Cluain Arathair—doubtless some church in Inishowen. There are two townlands of the name in the county Sligo.

<sup>2</sup> See Cardinal Moran's *Archdall*, vol. i., p. 179.

the Church of the Old Tree—perhaps some ancient tree sacred to the Druids' worship; and the name is still retained in 'Moville'—that is Magh Bili—the Plain of the Old Tree. The existing remains of the ancient monastery of Moville show that it must have been the religious seat of a wealthy and numerous community. It was beautifully situated on a low eminence gently sloping down to the Foyle, and commanding a fine view of the estuary itself, and a broad reach of the Atlantic Ocean, sparkling, when we saw it, under the cold blue of the northern sky. The town is now a place of considerable trade with Derry, and is a favourite watering-place in the summer season. Here in far Inishowen one cannot help admiring the indomitable zeal and energy of Patrick, who penetrated into the very remotest bounds of the wild promontory of Inishowen, to bear the blessed light of the Gospel to those sea-bound children of the Gael.

#### IV.—PATRICK IN COUNTY DERRY.

From Moville Patrick crossed the estuary of the Foyle, but at what point we know not, and came into the modern County Derry. 'He goes into Daigurt (thence) into Magh Dula, and founded there seven churches at the River Fochaine'—that is the modern Faughan River, which flows down from the highlands of Derry, and falls into the Foyle opposite the Fort of Culmore.

Colgan says that even in his own time the names of these ancient churches in Faughan Vale were lost, and although we have sought to get information from the best local authorities, we fear they are still lost. Their names as given in the Tripartite are :—Domnach Dola, Domnach Senliss, Domnach Dari, Domnach Senchue, Domnach Min-cluane, Domnach Cati, and Both-Domnach.

Now these seven churches 'are on the River Fochaine'—the Faughan River; and it is remarkable that even yet there are just seven parishes on the Faughan River from its mouth to Sawel Mountain—namely, Faughan Vale, Clondermot, Lower Comber, Upper Comber, Learmount, Boveagh, and Banagher.

Tirechan here is our safest guide in determining the order of events. He is very brief, merely naming the localities in the order in which Patrick visited them. He says—'Patrick came from Magh Tochair (in Inishowen) into Dulo Ocheni, and founded seven churches there.

Thence he came to Ardstraw and ordained Mac Ercae as bishop. Then he went out—exiit—into Ard Eolorg, and Ailgi, and Lee Bendrigi,'—after which he crossed the Bann. In this brief paragraph he sums up all Patrick's work in the Co. Derry, fixing his route, however, exactly, and in this we must follow his guidance.

That part of the present Co. Derry into which Patrick came when he crossed the Foyle is the modern barony of Tirkeeran—anciently Hy Mic Caerthainn—which is really the same name. They were not of Hy Niall race, but were sprung from Colla Uais, and hence paid tribute to the King of Ailech.<sup>1</sup> They were a different race altogether from the Cianachta of Glengiven, who occupied the modern barony of Keenacht, to the east and north-east of Tirkeeran. Now it would appear that Patrick first preached the Gospel to the people of Tirkeeran, going through their entire district from Daigurt through Magh Dula to the very sources of the Faughan River. And in this district he founded seven churches. Patrick's course will be clear if we notice the physical features of the Co. Derry.

The habitable portions of Derry, besides the coast land on the north and the river banks of the Foyle and Bann, consist of three fertile valleys which pierce the central mountain range, that is the valley of the Faughan and of the Roe on the west, with the Moyola valley on the east, reaching down to Lough Neagh. These great vales are fertile and picturesque, exhibiting every variety of scenic beauty. It seems from the brief account given in the Tripartite that Patrick first penetrated the valley of the Faughan River to its very sources in the mountains, founding as he went the seven churches whose names are given above.

Our opinion, then, is that Patrick crossed the Foyle at Culmore—its narrowest point—and came into Daigurt, near the modern railway station of Ballynagard, where the high banks were dry and accessible. Thence he went to Magh Dula, where he founded the first of the seven churches described in the Tripartite, and continuing his journey up the beautiful Vale of Faughan, he founded the other six churches referred to on either bank of the river. Having come to the heart of the hills, he passed through the deep glen between Sawel and Meenard, and so came out into

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<sup>1</sup> See *Book of Rights*, 122.

Magh Dola,<sup>1</sup> west of Draperstown. The name is still preserved in that of the River Moyola, one of whose sources in the plain is a small lake, still called Patrick's Lough. His purpose in coming there was in all probability to destroy the druidical worship of which it was a seat; and a Druids' circle still remains to mark the spot. Then, turning to the west from Moyola, he went towards the modern Newtownstewart, and passing through Glenelly, he founded the church called Both Domnach, or Upper Badoney,<sup>2</sup> which shows the route Patrick followed to Ardstraw. Here he founded, according to Tirechan, the ancient and famous church of Ardstraw, over which he placed Mac Ercae as Bishop. Patrick, as we have seen, had left a youth of that name to study his theology under Bishop Bron in Tireragh, but as he promised his father at the same time that he would not take the youth from his own country, it is difficult to suppose that this is the Mac Ercae from Tirawley. Ardstraw was for many centuries an episcopal Church, with jurisdiction over the surrounding territory, but after the foundation of the see of Derry in the twelfth century it was united to that See.

From Ardstraw Tirechan tells us Patrick went to Ard-Eolorg. Leckpatrick, some two miles north of Ardstraw, doubtless marks the Apostle's route so far. Then trending to the north-east through the hills towards Dungiven, he passed most likely by the place since called Patrick's Lodge, in the parish of Donaghedy, which was probably itself a Patrician Church, as its name implies. As the king of Cianachta had his chief fort at Dungiven, Patrick would surely visit the place, and no doubt he founded a church there.

From Dungiven his route would lie through the picturesque Valley of the Roe, as far as Limavady, which nestles beneath the shelter of the Keady Mountains. Patrick, going thence to the north-east, would go around

<sup>1</sup> Magh Dola and Magh Dula seem to be the same name; and the modern Moyola is simply the phonetic form, originally Magh Dola, which probably included the whole valley of the Faughan River, but afterwards came to be restricted to the plain at the source of the river. The church of Domnach Dola, sometimes called Domnachmore Maigh Dola, was in this plain, for the priest, Bescna, the chaplain or sacristan of St. Patrick, is described as of Domnach Dola by the Faughan River. Some authorities, however, distinguish between Magh Dula in Faughan Vale and Magh Dola in the mountains—the latter being the modern Moyola.

<sup>2</sup> Now Badoney, of which St. Aithen was the patron saint. Glenelly—Gleannaichle—was the birthplace of St. Colman Ela.

the flank of these hills, and so reach 'Ard Eolorg and Ailgi, and Lee Bendrigi.' These places can be all identified with tolerable certainty, as we now purpose to show.

The Four Masters, A.D. 557, describe the battle of Moin-doire-lothair, which took place between the Hy Neill and the Picts of Dalaradia. The latter were defeated, and lost the territories which they had held west of the Bann from the time of the battle of Ocha. These territories then were given as a reward to the Hy Fiachragh of Dalaradia, for their services in enabling the clanna Neill to overthrow the monarch Oilíoll Molt, who belonged to a different family. The two territories are called Lee and Carn-Eolairg by the Four Masters. Lee, or Lei, as it is often called, extended from Bior to Camus on the *western* bank of the Bann; and there can be no doubt that the other territory extended from Camus, a little south of Coleraine, as far as Magilligan point—that is, it comprehended the north and north-west of the Co. Derry. An ancient poem attributed to Columcille makes reference to this Magh n-Eolairg, that is, the plain beneath the height.

#### V.—PATRICK IN KEENACHTA.

Colgan and Manus O'Donnell speak of a Carraig Eolairg as bordering on the estuary of the Foyle. It is not unlikely that the great cairn west of the road to Mill town was the grave of some ancient warrior, who gave his name to the hill, the plain, and the rock of Eolairg. In that case Ard Eolorg<sup>1</sup> of Tirechan would mean the high lands from Coleraine to Magilligan, and thence round to the mouth of the Roe. In this territory Patrick founded several churches, but the names of only three are given, namely, 'Dun Cruithne, where he left Bishop Beo-aed after reconciling him to Eoghan (son of Niall), Domnach Brechmaige, and Domnach Airthir Arda. Patrick's Well is there.'

The learned Reeves identifies Dun Cruithne, not with Dun Ceithern—that is, the Giants' Sconce—but with Duncrun, a townland in Magilligan parish, through which

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<sup>1</sup>The Tripartite calls it Ard Dailauig, and Colgan, following the Tripartite, describes the place as 'agro Ardaoluig,' but Tirechan seems to give the proper word. The great cairn itself is a most conspicuous object in the landscape, overlooking the whole country. It is about two miles west of the great fort called the Giant's Sconce.

the railway now passes. On the top of the hill, called the Canon's Brae, was the ancient dun, and within it were the foundations of a small building thirty-five feet by nineteen. 'There is also a long rude stone, having the figure of a cross in relief. The cemetery has been disused, but was undoubtedly very ancient and much frequented.' We may take it as certain that this represents the site of St. Patrick's church, and marks his course eastwards towards Coleraine. The mountain's brow may be taken as part of that Ard Eolorg already referred to; but the Carn Eolairg itself was further inland.

Domnach Brechmaige has not been identified with certainty. Perhaps it is the church certainly founded by St. Patrick which is described<sup>1</sup> as that 'of Achadh Dubthaigh, in Magh Li, on the banks of the Bann, on the west side between Lough Neagh and the sea.' Tirechan brings Patrick to Li, which was certainly on the west of the Bann, but he does not mention any church he founded there. It is stated in the Tripartite that Setna, son of Drona, son of Tighernach, came to some one of these churches in Cianacht—most likely Domnach Airthir Arda—and there Patrick baptised him, and blessed his pregnant wife, and the child in her womb—that is, Cianan, of Duleek (in the Co. Meath); and he read with Patrick, and there Patrick prophesied of Cainnech, and said that the land should be his.

The third church, Domnach Airthir Arda, of the Eastern Height, has been identified with the church of Magilligan,<sup>2</sup> the situation of which on the slopes of Binevenagh, would justify the epithet, but the point is by no means clearly ascertained. It was anciently called Tamlacht-Ard, and got its name of Magilligan from the hereditary erenachs who bore that appellation. The ruins of the old church were in the townland of Tamlacht, and it appears that Patrick placed Catan, 'a priest of his family,' over it; for the Book of Lecan describes him as the Priest Cadan, of Tamlacht-Ard. His tomb is there, and the well near it once blessed by Patrick, hence called Patrick's Well.<sup>3</sup> One of the churches mentioned before as founded near the Faughan river was Domnach Cati; but it appears

<sup>1</sup> *Martyrology of Donegal*. The modern name of this ancient church is 'Aghadowey,' no doubt different from Donagh-Breaghwy, which would be the modern name of the other ancient church.

<sup>2</sup> See Cardinal Moran's *Archdall*, Vol. I., p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> The parish was first called Tamlacht-ard; afterwards Ard Mac Gilligen, from the erenachs of the church.

to be a different foundation. In this church was preserved a famous scrinium, or shrine of Columba, 'but really dating from the time of St. Patrick. It was made by Conla, the wright, and was at first kept in Dun-Cruithne, but was afterwards transferred to Ballynascreen in Moyola, and finally to Ard-Magilligan.<sup>1</sup>

It would appear that Patrick located several of his household by the Faughan river. In the list of his familia we find Presbyter Mescan, of Domnach Mescan at Fochain, his brewer; and Presbyter Bescna, of Domnach Dula, or as Colgan has it, Domnach Dola,<sup>2</sup> his chaplain or sacristan; and finally we have Presbyter Catan, and Presbyter Acan, his waiters or table-ministers. These appear to be British rather than Irish names, and doubtless these good men wished to be settled near each other. It would be interesting to identify their 'places' with certainty. We have seen that Catan 'is in Tamlacht-Ard,' over the rushing Foyle. Presbyter Bescna was probably settled at Ballynascreen, in the Moyola Plain, and Domnach Mescain was certainly in the Faughan valley, perhaps at the place called Tamnymore, in Lower Cumber, which seems to be a corruption of Domnachmore. Then we hear of a Saint Aithcen,<sup>3</sup> seventh in descent from Colla Meann, as patron saint of Badoney, in Glenelly. The name is very like that of Presbyter Acan, one of the waiters of Patrick, and indeed, if the other 'waiter' were established near Limavady, it is only natural that this one should find a place in the neighbourhood. This helps us then to another identification; for we may conclude, with a fair amount of probability, that the old church of Badoney in Glenelly was indeed the veritable church of St. Acan, the personal attendant of St. Patrick for at least nine or ten years of his missionary labours in Ireland. This parish of Upper Badoney, or Glenelly, has a special interest of its own; for it was the native place of the great St. Colman Ela, whose relations with the saints of the North we shall have to refer to again.

There is also an entry in the Four Masters, A.D. 992, which would seem to imply that during the unhappy period when lay usurpers reigned in Armagh, the true successors of Patrick for a time found a refuge in the deep recesses of Glenelly; for we are told that Muireagan, of Both-domnagh

<sup>1</sup> *Idem.*, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> And the Book of Leinster, 'Domnach Dula.'

<sup>3</sup> Cardinal Moran's *Archdall*, Vol. I., p. 161.

—that is Badoney of Glenelly—successor of Patrick, went on his visitation in Tirowen, and he conferred the degree of King upon Aedh, son of Domnhall, in the presence of ‘Patrick’s congregation,’ and afterwards he made a great visitation of the men of the North of Ireland.

There can be no doubt, therefore, of the Patrician origin of the church. It is in the north-east angle of Tyrone, too, but still in the diocese of Derry, which goes to show that it was a Patrician church, but founded in that territory which the Derry-men claimed as their own.

Thereafter, that is from Ard-Eolorg or Magilligan, Patrick went to Lee, which is on the west of the Bann, ‘where up to that time men used to catch fish only at night.’ But thenceforward Patrick blessed the place, and ordered that they should catch them by day; ‘and thus it shall be until the end of the world.’ They surely catch them there still, and in great abundance, both in the estuary of the Bann and at the Cutts. The Cutts is a pool beneath the waterfall, where the Bann pours his abounding flood over a ledge twelve feet deep; but when the river is shallow the fish cannot leap up the cataract, and hence are taken in great numbers at the Cutts.

The territory called Lei, Lee, or Li, is erroneously stated to be east of the Bann in the Irish text of the Tripartite; the tribe-land is, and always was, west of the Bann, but at a later period the *Fir Li*, or men of that territory, were driven over the river by the O’Neills; and most likely they were there on its eastern or right bank at the time when the Tripartite was written, which accounts for this mistake. They certainly were not there in the time of St. Patrick, for a host of authorities could be cited to prove that the territory known as the Lei or Lee extended from the Bior or Moyola water, near Lough Neagh, on the west bank of the lake and river, to Camus, at Coleraine.

#### VI.—PATRICK AT COLERAINE.

This Camus, or, more correctly, Camas, ‘the bend of the stream,’ was about a mile south of the modern town of Coleraine,<sup>1</sup> but it marks the ford or ferry called the Fearsad Camsa, which was the usual place of passage in ancient times. It was commanded on the right bank by the great fort known as Dun-da-bheann, the Fort of the Two Peaks,

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<sup>1</sup> The Abbey of Coleraine was a later foundation.



one of the greatest fortresses in Ulster. It is placed in romantic legend on the same level as Emania and Cuchullin's fortress at Castletown, near Dundalk, as one of the keys of Ulster. It was also the scene of the Mesca Ulaid, or the Intoxication of the Ultonians, a tale well known in the history of the Cuchullin Cycle. This brings us now to the verge of the great Dalriadan Kingdom, which requires a special chapter.

The history of what was once the County Coleraine, and is now the County Derry, before St. Patrick crossed the Foyle, is almost a blank. The original kingdom of Ulster extended from the Drowes, near Bundoran, to the Boyne, at Drogheda, and 'it enjoyed a succession of thirty-one kings, from Cimbaoth, son of Fintan, B.C. 305, to Fergus Fogha, who fell at the battle of Achadh Lethderg in 332.' During this period Emania, near Armagh, was the seat of the royalty, that is, for 630 years. The power of this line of kings was broken in 332, and thenceforward they were driven to the eastern counties of Down and Antrim by the Collas.

But the Collas themselves and their offspring soon met with a similar fate. When Niall of the Nine Hostages came to the throne in 379<sup>1</sup> he was a very powerful monarch, and had a number of brave and warlike sons. They at once set out to carve territories for themselves with their swords in the north-west of Ireland. They did not assail their cousins in Connaught, who really belonged to the elder line of Eochy Moyvane; but they turned their arms against the north-west, where the Collas were weakest, for they had not yet time to consolidate their authority in those wild districts. So Cairbre took the country which still bears his name in the north of Sligo. Conall Gulban, the bravest of them all, got Tirlugh, as far as Barnesmore. Enda got the territory south and east of the Swilly; and Eoghan won all the country on either side of the Foyle, towards Derry, and moreover the peninsula of Inishowen, which still bears his name.

Thus it came to pass that Eoghan and his sons and brothers confined the Ulster-men to the south-west of Tyrone and the County of Armagh, or, to mark it more accurately, to the territories included in the diocese of Clogher and Armagh, but exclusive of the Maguire country in Fermanagh.

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<sup>1</sup> *Four Masters.*

In the time of St. Patrick, therefore, the County Derry belonged to the sons of Eoghan, as head lords, but the whole of the County Tyrone did not by any means form at this early date a part of their territory. The eastern half was still an independent sub-kingdom under the princes of the Colla line. The County Derry itself had at the time two or three ancient families still in possession, but subordinate to the rulers of Ailech.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### ST. PATRICK IN DOWN AND CONNOR.

#### I.—ULADH, DALARADIA, DALRIADA.

NOW, while St. Patrick is crossing the Bann into Dalarradia, it may be useful to give a sketch in this place of the territories of Uladh, as well as of the leading facts of their history.

As we have already seen, the name Uladh was originally given to the whole northern province, from the Drowes, near Bundoran, to the Boyne at Drogheda. But if it thus included Louth, it excluded Cavan; for that territory never became a part of the province of Ulster until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Emania, near Armagh, was the capital or chief royal seat of the province, and its rulers for the most part belonged to the Clanna Rury (Rudhraighe), and were sprung from the royal line of Ir.

But in A.D. 352, as the Four Masters tell us, the famous battle of Achadh-leith-dheirg was fought between the three Collas and Fergus Fogha, which marks an epoch in the history of Ulster. The race of Rury were utterly defeated, their great palace of Emania was destroyed, the survivors were driven from central Ulster eastwards beyond Lough Neagh and the River Righe, or the Newry Water, as it has since been called.

Two Ulsters were thus created—the Ulster of the Collas, called Orghialla, and in later times Oriel, west of that boundary line, and the reduced Ulster, which retained the ancient name, but with less than a third of the ancient territory. This eastern Ulster is generally called in Latin Ulidia, whilst the name Ultonia designates, as a rule, the whole province.

Uladh or Ulidia, in this sense denoting all the territory east of the Bann and Lough Neagh and of the Newry Water, included the three ancient dioceses of Down, Dromore, and Connor, and their circumscription at the present day gives us quite accurately the limits of the ancient kingdom of Uladh after the destruction of Emania in 332.

But these three dioceses also represent very important sub-divisions of that kingdom of Uladh. The diocese of Down may be taken as representing the half-kingdom of southern Uladh in opposition to Dalaradia, which belonged with Dalriada to the diocese of Connor. In later times this half-kingdom of the more ancient Uladh appropriated that designation, so that Uladh meant the County Down with a small portion of Antrim. The diocese of Connor, on the other hand, included the whole of Dalaradia, and after a while, when the Dalriadans lost their own episcopal Church of Armoyn, it included Dalriada also, that is, almost all the County Antrim—not quite all, however, for its south-western angle belonged to the diocese of Dromore, which also comprised that part of Uladh anciently known as the kingdom of Iveagh. It nearly corresponds at the present day with the two baronies of Iveagh, which fairly represent that ancient kingdom. This, however, was a later sub-division, for in the time of St. Patrick we find in the Kingdom of Uladh only three sub-divisions—Dalriada, Dalaradia, and Uladh—in its restricted sense as designating the County Down, with a small portion of Antrim.

It is necessary to define exactly the extent of these territories in the time of St. Patrick, and here the Tripartite itself is our best guide, for, as usual, its topography is confirmed at all points by our ancient Annals.

First, with regard to Uladh or Ulidia—when Patrick first came to Ulster he is described as sailing *past* Uladh into Strangford Lough, that is on his voyage from the Boyne Mouth. When he baptises Dichu at Saul the latter is said to be the first in Uladh who received faith and baptism from Patrick. But, on the other hand, when Patrick goes to Slemish to preach to Milcho, and, failing to convert him, returns again to Saul, it is said that he went back again into Uladh, thus clearly showing that Slemish was not in Ulidia, as understood by the author of the Tripartite; but Seapatrick, near Banbridge, was in Uladh,<sup>1</sup> and in the diocese of Dromore; we also find that the Bishops of Down were sometimes called bishops of Ulidia, that is at a later date, when the diocese of Down had absorbed all the smaller sees around it except Dromore.

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<sup>1</sup> We find the men of Uladh (Ulltu) distinguished from the men of Oriel and the Hy-Neill. The latter strove to bring Patrick's body to Armagh; but the men of Uladh were resolved to keep it in Down.—*Tripartite*, p. 256.

We may take it for granted, therefore, that Uladh, as used in the Tripartite, did not include Dalaradia, but did include all the territory comprised in the two dioceses of Down and Dromore, that is to say, the whole County Down and that part of the County Antrim south of a line drawn from Whitehouse on Belfast Lough by the Clady Water to the north-eastern extremity of Lough Neagh. This part of Antrim includes the two baronies of Massarene on Lough Neagh as well as that of Upper Belfast.

On the other hand, the Dalaradia, or Dal Araide of the Tripartite, is bounded on the north by Dalriada, on the west by the Bann,<sup>1</sup> on the south by Lough Neagh and the Clady Water. Slemish was in it, and Milcho is more than once described as King of Dal Araide, where it is clearly distinguished from Uladh, with which he had nothing to do. Hence, the Dalaradia of St. Patrick certainly included the barony of Lower Belfast, the two baronies of Antrim, the two baronies of Toome, and at least a portion of Glenarm.

The northern boundary line between Dalriada and Dalaradia is the Ravel Water, which, flowing south-west, becomes the Clogh River until it joins the Main. The Glenariff, falling into Red Bay, probably marked its southern boundary towards the sea, and the Bush River from its source to the sea formed its western boundary. But, at a later period, Dalriada certainly included on the one side the district between the Bush and the Bann, and on the south-east included the two coast baronies of Glenarm as far as the old church of Glynn, a little to the south of Larne. Dalriada, on the other hand, may be taken as including the two baronies of Dunluce, Kilconway, Carey, and Lower Glenarm. To put it in another way, Dalriada was the north-east of Antrim, Dalaradia was the centre of Antrim from the Bann to the sea, and Ulidia was the south of Antrim and the whole of the Co. Down. But these boundaries varied with the fortune of war, and we only give them for the time of St. Patrick. At a later period the men of Dalaradia had established themselves in the south of Antrim and in the north-east of Down, especially on the sea. The two races were also greatly intermixed—the Pictish element predominating in Dala-

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<sup>1</sup> It is clear that the district of Elne, or Elniu, between the Bush and the Bann, belonged at that time to Dalaradia, for Natsluaig, a brother of Saran, is its ruler, and gives Patrick the site of a church at Coleraine.

radia, while the Dal Fiatach, of Heremonian origin, were the leading clan and ruling tribe in Uladh. On the other hand, the Dalriadans were sprung from Cairbre Riada, son of King Conaire II., who was married to a daughter of Conn of the Hundred Fights. These things will serve to explain Patrick's missionary labours in Antrim and Down.<sup>1</sup>

## II.—PATRICK IN ELNIU OR MAGH ELNE.

Patrick now crossed the fishful Bann and came into the district between that river and the Bush, which was then called Magh Elne, and sometimes Elniu. It was a part of Dalaradia, and is described as such both in the Tripartite<sup>2</sup> and in the Notes to the Calendar of Ængus. No doubt, the Saint crossed by the ancient ford known as Fearsad Camsa, the Ford of the Bend, because at that point the river takes a sharp turn from the north-west to the north. It was the scene of many a bloody conflict, and gave the Latin name of Camus both to the town and, at a later period, to the great Dominican Monastery of Coleraine.

When Patrick crossed the noble river which bears the surplus waters of Lough Neagh and all its feeders to the sea, we are told<sup>3</sup> that 'men used to catch fish there only at night.' but he blessed the stream 'and ordered that they should catch them by day, and thus it shall be till the end of the world.' And so in truth it has been. The Bann abounds in salmon at all seasonable times. In the year 1843, 21,660 of these fish were taken at Coleraine, and the average would probably amount to 15,000 every year. At times, when the river is low, the hole known as the Cutts, below the fall, is literally filled with fish 'riding on the backs of one another, and with great ease and pleasant diversements they are taken up in loops.'<sup>4</sup>

The ancient fortress of Dun Da Bheann—the Two-topped—now called Mount Sandell, commanded the ford, and from the days of the Red Branch Knights was regarded as the border stronghold of the Clanna Rudhraidh in the north. It was famed, too, in the romantic

<sup>1</sup> See Reeves' *Down, Connor, and Dromore* for a fuller description of those territories, 318, 334, 352.

<sup>2</sup> *Tripartite*, Vol. I., 161.

<sup>3</sup> *Tripartite*, same page.

<sup>4</sup> See O'Lavery's *Down and Connor*, Vol. II. p. 156. A similar scene is observable in the Galway River.

tales of the bards, who told many a thrilling story of Niall of the Shining Deeds and his son Fintan, and of the other brave heroes who kept the ford and sometimes drank so deep at night that their warrior guests were wholly unable to find the right way home<sup>1</sup> in the small hours of the morning.

Now, when Patrick came to Elniu, the province of the Dal Araide<sup>2</sup> was governed by the twelve sons of Caelbad, who had parcelled out the country amongst themselves. This Caelbad of the Rudrician race was King of Uladh, and having slain the King of Ireland, became himself high-king for one year, at the end of which he in turn was slain by the son of his predecessor, who succeeded him in the sovereignty. He was the celebrated Eochy Moyvane, the great ancestor of all the kings of the North and North-west of Ireland, whose reign began in A. D. 357, that is about eighty-five years before Patrick crossed the Bann. It is more likely therefore that Saran, Conla, and Natsluaig, who are mentioned in connection with St. Patrick, were grandsons of Caelbad, whose death is recorded in A. D. 357. If they were his sons they must have then been very old men,<sup>3</sup> between eighty and a hundred years of age, which is out of the question.

It was the usual practice of the Saint, as we know, when he came to preach in any territory, to go straight to the fortress of the chief of the district. Saran Mac Caelbad, as he is called, seems to have been the eldest of the descendants of Caelbad, but he probably dwelt, at the time, in Southern Dalaradia. It is clear, however, that he refused Patrick the site of a church at Cell Glass, and rudely drove him away from the place. Patrick thereupon was full of wrath and, in the language of the Tripartite, 'deprived Saran of heaven and earth,' that is, as we now say, excommunicated him. It is a strong phrase, as must be admitted; still the language of the Tripartite is hardly stronger than that of St. Paul 'who delivered over to Satan the incestuous Corinthian for the destruction of his flesh, but for the salvation of his spirit' in case he repented, as he afterwards did.

Saran's brother, however, Natsluaig, 'was humble to Patrick'; but was in bondage when Patrick arrived at the

<sup>1</sup> It was the scene of the story called *Mesca Ulaid*.

<sup>2</sup> See *Tripartite*.

<sup>3</sup> The words *da mac decc* of the Tripartite might mean offspring or descendants, as it probably does here.

great Northern fortress of the Dal Araide. No doubt he had heard much of Patrick, and was anxious to secure his influence with a view to his own liberation, if not from higher motives. "Thou shalt have from me,"<sup>1</sup> he said to Patrick, "the site of thy cell." "Where do you grant it to me?" said the Saint. "On the brink of the Bann to the west (of the fortress)," said Natsluaig, "in the place where the children are burning the fern." Patrick at once accepted the gift, saying—"it shall be mine; moreover a descendant of mine and thine shall be there"—to wit, Bishop Coirbre, son of Deggell, son of Natsluaig. It is he 'who is in Coleraine (Cuil Raithin, *i.e.*, the ferny meadow), on the brink of the Bann in the east.' Coirbre was consecrated by Bishop Brucach of Rath Maige Oenaich, now Oenach, near Ballymoney; and as Bishop Brucach had been himself consecrated by Patrick, Coirbre of Coleraine, the grandson of Natsluaig, was also the spiritual grandson of Patrick. He and his immediate successor Conal are the only two bishops of Coleraine mentioned in our annals. Coirbre died about the year 560; and we know that St. Conall entertained Columcille after the synod of Drumceat about 590.

Judging from the Notes<sup>2</sup> of Tirechan the 'little church' of Coleraine built in the ferny meadow that overlooked the swelling waters of the Bann was the first founded by St. Patrick in Magh Elniu. It probably occupied the site of the Protestant church, and though small at first it afterwards became the nucleus of a great monastery, which flourished for many ages. In the 13th century, however, the ancient Celtic monastery disappeared to make room for an Anglo-Norman castle which was built there in 1213 to guard the passage of Bann against the fierce inroads of the Hy Niall tribes. Some thirty years later a Dominican convent was founded, most probably by Walter de Burgo, which flourished down to the time of James I., when its broad acres and fishing rights were granted to Sir James Hamilton, who conveyed them for cash to Sir Thomas Phillips, an enterprising but rapacious Undertaker of that day. His family, too, have completely disappeared.

We are also told by Tirechan that Patrick founded many other churches in Elniu, but he does not give their

<sup>1</sup> This would seem to imply that Elniu was the territory of Natsluaig and Dun da Bheann his fortress.

<sup>2</sup> From the *Tripartite* it would rather appear that it was founded by Patrick towards the close of his mission in Dalaradia.



names. He insinuates, however, that the 'Connor folk' took possession of these churches, which, more properly, in his opinion, should belong to Armagh. The ancient See lands of Coleraine were certainly granted, not to Connor, but to the primatial See, most likely on the ground that Coleraine was a foundation of St. Patrick. There was much ecclesiastical litigation about these churches in later times, but it would rather be out of place to give an account of it here.

### III.—PATRICK IN DALRIADA.

From Magh Elne Patrick crossed the river Bush, and came into the ancient and famous territory of Dalriada, afterwards known as the Route. The Bush is an impetuous stream coming down from the central highlands of North Antrim, and hence furnishes great water-power to the mills on its banks. It is not fishful like the Bann, but it affords, we believe, excellent material for making whiskey, which is distilled in large quantities in the town. The famous Giants' Causeway rises magnificently over the waves about two miles further on to the north.

Dalriada, though of limited area and rather barren soil, was fruitful of brave men, who not only held their own against all their foes in this isolated corner of Antrim, but also sent more than one colony to Scotland, who founded a great kingdom there, the rulers of which afterwards mounted the throne of Scotland, and gave their name to the whole kingdom of the Scots.

At this period the Dalriad kingdom was bounded on the west by the Bush, on the south by the Ravel Water, and on the north and east by the sea as far south on the eastern coast as Glenarm or Red Bay. The precipices, caves, and castles of its northern rock-bound shores are unequalled, perhaps, in the British Islands for scenic grandeur, and yearly attract thousands of tourists from all parts of Europe and America. It is a wildly beautiful region, teeming with romantic legends, and well worthy of a visit both from the tourist and the antiquarian.

The first incident recorded in connection with the Saint's missionary journey into Dalriada is of a very striking character. The following is the narrative as given in the *Rolls Tripartite* :—

Then Patrick went (from the Bann) into Dal-Araide, and afterwards (by crossing the Bush) into Dal Riada. Then came to

him Doro, King of Carn Setnai, in the North. 'He heard the crying of the infant out of the earth. The carn is broken up, the grave is opened. A smell of wine comes round them out of the grave. They see the live son with the dead mother, a woman who had died of ague. She was taken by them oversea<sup>1</sup> to Ireland, and after her death brought forth the infant, who lived, they say,<sup>2</sup> seven days in the carn. "*Olc* (bad) is that," said the King (Doro). "Let *Olcan* be his name," said the Druid. Patrick baptised him. He is Bishop *Olcan*, of Patrick's household in Airthir Maige, a noble city of the Dal Riatai.

Such is Dr. Stokes' version of this important passage; and it appears to us to be an accurate rendering of his Irish text. Colgan's Latin version of the Tripartite is substantially the same except in two points. He makes St. Patrick baptise the *infant*; and the odour exhaling from the open tomb he describes as a 'sweet' odour instead of an odour of wine. As he knew the Irish idiom perfectly from the days of his childhood in Inishowen, we may fairly assume that he has rendered the Irish expression accurately in his own figurative language. But we are fully justified in concluding that there are some inaccuracies in Hennessy's version as given in Miss Cusack's Tripartite. It is not said, as that version has it, that Patrick proceeded to Carn-Sedna, southwards, or that it was Patrick who heard the screams of an infant from out of the ground. So far as we can judge, the incident here must have happened long before St. Patrick came to Dalriada. Doubtless he baptised St. *Olcan*; but the Irish text does not say that *Olcan* was *then* an infant. It was the Druid of King *Daire*,<sup>3</sup> or Doro, that gave him his name, not St. Patrick, although the incident is narrated as if the baptism took place immediately after the finding of the child. That may be so, but it is not stated in the Irish Tripartite; and it seems on the whole more probable that *Olcan*, at the time of his baptism, was not a child, but a youth arrived at least at the years of discretion. The whole story is strange and improbable; but, allowing for the exaggerations of the Celtic imagination, it is not by any means an incredible one. The sepulchral chambers within the cairns were roomy enough to allow a woman to live for some days if she were interred in a swoon or

<sup>1</sup> Probably as captive.

<sup>2</sup> Ut fertur.

<sup>3</sup> *Daire* was one of the twelve 'sons' of Ere; and at this time appears as 'king' or chief of Dalriada.

a trance ; and a living child might be delivered in such circumstances. and so scream as to attract the attention of the passers by. The story was certainly very widely believed in Dalriada, and left its impress on the traditions of the country.

#### IV.—PATRICK AND OLCAN OF ARMOY.

But where was Carn Setnai ? or Carn Sedna, as Colgan has it. We know that Olcan became Bishop of Armoÿ—Airthir-Maige—and hence both Colgan and Reeves think that the place must be somewhere in that neighbourhood. O'Laverty, however, seems inclined to identify it with a place called Drumbulcon, in the parish of Rasharkin,<sup>1</sup> which is some ten miles south-east of Armoÿ, and belonged, not to Dalriada, but to the Dal Araide. The evidence of this identification is not satisfactory, and we think that the identity of Carn Setnai is yet an open question. We should be inclined to look for it somewhere to the north of Armoÿ, on the sea coast, for that appears to be implied in the Tripartite.

Another interesting question is—When did Olcan become Bishop of Armoÿ ? Patrick baptised him—that we know for certain, and we may safely say he did so about the year 443, when he first came into Dalriada. We are also told that Olcan belonged to Patrick's household ;<sup>2</sup> so we may fairly assume that he was educated by the Saint, and prepared for his episcopal duties under his guidance. Usher thinks he was not consecrated Bishop until some thirty years later, about 474, when Patrick himself had been long established in Armagh : and perhaps this is the safest opinion. But the Tripartite speaks of his baptism and episcopacy in the same context, as if he became bishop very shortly after his baptism. In certain cases, as, for instance, St. Fiacc's, such was the fact ; but we can hardly assume it as probable in the case of St. Olcan. Our opinion is he became Bishop before St. Patrick finally left Dalaradia.

By anticipation, no doubt, another singular fact is related regarding Olcan. Saran was, as we have seen, Prince of Dalaradia when St. Patrick crossed the Bann. He was very justly excommunicated by Patrick, not only

<sup>1</sup> It has been conjectured that Rasharkin is the Derkan of Jocelyn, who places Olcan there ; but Rasharkin is not in Dalriada.

<sup>2</sup> *Tripartite.*

because he refused him the site of a church, but also because he drove him and his followers with contumely out of his territory. In that state of excommunication Saran must have lived for several years.

But, 'after a certain time,' this very Saran made a raid into Dalriada, and carried off many captives from that territory.<sup>1</sup> Bishop Olcan met him carrying off his prey. The wretched captives, bewailing their hard fate, besought the bishop to help them. He implored the fierce chief to liberate them; but Saran rudely refused, except on condition that Bishop Olcan would procure him 'admission to heaven, from which Patrick had excluded him.' "Verily," said Olcan, "I cannot do that since Patrick hath taken it from thee." Then said Saran, "I will slay not alone these captives but all your people, sparing only yourself. And wherever I find a shaveling—that is, a tonsured man—I will put him under the edge of the sword."

Saran was a decided anti-clerical of the worst type, so thereupon, the affrighted bishop 'promised heaven to Saran,' or, in other words, released him from Patrick's terrible excommunication, and, no doubt, got off his own followers, as well as the captives, scot free from the vengeance of the fierce warrior.

Now, Patrick soon after heard all this, and when Olcan went from the North—doubtless to Armagh—to do his will, that is at Patrick's command, Patrick happened to meet him on the road, at a place called Cluain Fiacnae. Olcan was sore afraid at this *rencontre*, for he had heard that Patrick was wrathful against him, 'because he promised a blessing and baptism, and heaven to the man from whom Patrick had taken them away.' It seems the road was narrow, and that Olcan threw himself on his knees to implore forgiveness. "Over him with the chariot," said Patrick. "I dare not drive over a bishop," said the charioteer. Then Patrick, still angry, foretold how Olcan's cloister would not be high on earth, and he added that three great evils would overtake it—poverty (midgla), decay, and blood-defilement. "Your land, too," said Patrick, "shall belong to that little boy carrying your vestment-box, who is one of your own household"—namely, Mac Nissi of Condere—"and to one not yet born"—namely, Senan of Inis-altich.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Such is clearly the true reading both of Colgan and the Egerton MS. of the Irish Life.

<sup>2</sup> 'Inis Cathaig' in the Irish text is clearly a mistake of the scribe.

These predictions, if ever uttered, were certainly fulfilled. Armoynow belongs to the diocese of Connor, to which in far distant times all its See lands were annexed. It was burned by Echaid, son of Bresal. And its pavements reeked of blood in the slaughter made by Scandal, King of the Dal Araide, and also by Cu Curain, another chief of the same territory. So the successors of Saran, by a kind of poetic justice, were the instruments of the chastisement inflicted on the successors of Olcan. He was, no doubt, guilty of a grave violation of ecclesiastical law by absolving a man outside his jurisdiction, who had made no satisfaction for his crimes; still, as he meant well and was, morally speaking, coerced to do it, Patrick inflicted no penalties on himself, but foretold these temporal penalties that would overtake his church and his flock as the chastisement of his disobedience. That chastisement, however, took place many years after the death of Olcan. Saran appears to have been contumacious for a good while, since a considerable period must have elapsed between the baptism of Olcan and his absolution of Saran.

Armoynow, Olcan's episcopal See, is described in the Tripartite as 'a noble city of the Dal Riada.' The word 'cathair' implies that it was a place of strength; and we know that it belonged to Fergus Mor, son of Erc, who devoutly made an offering to Patrick, in return for his blessing, of the best part of his patrimony, that is, the town of Armoynow with its adjacent territory. The holy Patrick then blessed Fergus, and said to him—"Though thy brother hath not much esteem for thee to-day, it is thou that shalt be king. The kings in this country and over Fortrenn<sup>1</sup> shall be from thee for ever." And the Tripartite adds—'this was fulfilled in Aedan, son of Gabran, who took Scotland by force.' It is true still, for the blood of Fergus, though greatly diluted by foreign admixtures, still flows in the veins of King Edward VII.

There are no remnants of the primitive church at Armoynow, but the stump of a round tower shows that the episcopal See of Dalriada was once a place of ecclesiastical importance. It is now a small parish near Ballymoney.

St. Olcan's festival is celebrated on the 20th of February; and Colgan gives a sketch of his life at that date. He adds nothing, however, to what the Tripartite tells us,

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<sup>1</sup> Fortrenn—that is the Scottish Dalriada.

except the doubtful statement that St. Patrick sent him to study in Gaul, about the year 460; that he returned home after completing his studies, and opened a great school in his native territory, in which he trained up many disciples in sacred learning, the most celebrated of whom was St. Mac Nissi, the first Bishop of Connor. Usher thinks St. Olcan became Bishop of Armoiy in 474, which is not unlikely. A strange, but unsupported, statement is made in the Martyrology of Salisbury that Olcan's mother was a sister of St. Patrick. We are told, it is true, that she was a woman 'who came over the sea,' perhaps from Scotland, the nearest land to Dalriada; but no other ancient authority makes her a sister of our Apostle.

The Tripartite says that Mac Nissi of Connor (Condere) read his psalms with Patrick; and, according to Colgan's version, misbehaved in a way that brought him under the grave censure of his master, who prayed that the offending hand of the pupil might be cut off. Thereupon it fell off of itself, and was buried at a place called from the fact Carn Lamha, that is, the Cairn of the Hand. But this, if it ever occurred, must have taken place at a later period, though referred to by anticipation at this place in the Tripartite. The fragment of St. Mac Nissi's Life in the Salamanca MS. states that Patrick baptised the child, and then gave him over to be educated by St. Olcan. When, however, the latter offended Patrick by absolving the excommunicated Saran, Patrick foretold that his land would belong 'to the little boy who was carrying his box,' namely, Mac Nissi of Condere—a prediction which, as we already observed, has been literally fulfilled.

#### V.—OTHER CHURCHES OF DALRIADA.

Though Armoiy appears to have been the chief See of Dalriada; it was not the first nor the only church founded there by our Saint. In another paragraph we are told that he founded therein 'many churches and cloisters.'<sup>1</sup> Six are expressly named. He founded Fothrad, and left therein two of his household, the Priest Cathbad and Dinman the Monk—(Manach). This ancient church has not, we believe, been yet identified.<sup>2</sup> Then he founded

<sup>1</sup> The cloisters were monastic institutions of some kind.

<sup>2</sup> It was in the territory of Aengus, one of the sons of Caelbad.

Rath Mudain, and left Priest Erclach therein. This ancient church still retains its name—Ramoan—and gives title to the large parish of which Ballycastle is the chief town. Mudan was, it seems, the local dynast in the time of St. Patrick, and, like many another chief, gave his own rath to be the site of a church, whence its name. St. Erclach's day is the 3rd of March; but of his ancient church no trace now remains. Mgr. O'Laverty says that it was built on the site afterwards occupied by the Protestant church. No traces of a rath, however, now remain. There was a holy well, too, not far off, and stations were held there until 1828, when the well was finally closed up.

Further eastwards, near the river Shesk, Patrick founded another church in a place then called Drumman Findich, over which he placed Enan, who, according to Colgan, was son of Mudan, of Rath Mudain. It was Patrick's usual course to promote to Orders the sons of the chieftains, when he found them worthy of that honour. He thus strengthened the influence of the Church, and, at the same time, showed his gratitude for their generous endowments. This church afterwards came to be called Killenan, from the name of its first pastor. 'It was situated on a gentle eminence, a little west of the river Shesk, about one mile south-west of Bunnamargy.' 'Portions of the walls of the old church remain,' says O'Laverty, 'but the graveyard itself is now under tillage.' Drumman Findich is supposed to be identical with Drumeeny, the modern name of a neighbouring townland; but we are informed that there are no remains of a church or churchyard there at present. Many of the Scotch settlers in Dalriada had small regard for ancient churches.

We are also told in the same paragraph that Patrick left Bishop Nehemiah in Telach Ceneoil .Engusa. This is supposed by Reeves to have been the ancient parish now called the Grange of Drumtullagh. It is to the west of Ramoan parish, and the district apparently belonged to another branch of the family known as the Race of .Engus. The site of the old church is probably marked by the old churchyard, a little to the south of the road from Coleraine to Ballycastle. It would be then on the direct route of the Apostle from the Bush along the sea eastwards; and such was clearly the course he followed, so far as we can gather from the narrative in the Tripartite.

## VI.—PATRICK'S CHURCHES IN CARY.

The Saint also founded Domnach Cainri, in Cothraige, over which he placed the two Cennfindans. The whole barony is now called Cary (Cothraige), but the place here referred to is more accurately marked by the course of the river Carey, which is east of the Shesk. It had a number of small churches—the churchyards still remain in this district—but it is by no means easy to determine which was Domnach Cainri. Perhaps it was the place still called Killyphadrack.<sup>1</sup>

Last of all, we are told he placed Bishop Fiachra in Cuil Echtrann.<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt that this is the place now called Culfeightrin—for it is the same name—which gives a title to a large parish extending from Bunnamargy, all the way round to Torr Head. It is the north-eastern 'corner' of Antrim and of Ireland, wild and bare, but singularly picturesque. The Feast of St. Fiachra is assigned to the 28th of September, but of his personal history nothing else is known, and no successor of his is named in our annals, sacred or profane. 'The ruins of Culfeightrin church stand on a gently rising ground, in the townland of Churchfield, which is merely a translation of its ancient name, Magheratemple.'<sup>3</sup> The graveyard is now devoted to tillage by the frugal tenant, who cares little for the sanctity of God's acre. From the high grounds over the church the spectator has a noble view of Rathlin Island, with the wild and restless sea that laves its rocky shores, stretching far away to the bare hills of Kintyre, in the blue distance. The people of Culfeightrin, from time immemorial, were nearer to their Scottish cousins than to the Dal Araide around Belfast Lough. They were hardy mariners, too, and, in truth, it was easier for them to cross the sea than the wild mountains that bounded their native territory on the south. The Scottish hills were in their view on any clear day, but the ultramontane regions to the south, most of them had never beheld. This physical fact will help to explain much of the history of the Irish Dalriada, and especially its close connection with the south-western parts of Scotland. When St. Patrick stood on the eastern

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<sup>1</sup> See Reeves, page 280.

<sup>2</sup> The old church was situated a mile and a half south-east of Ballycastle.  
—Reeves.

<sup>3</sup> O'Laverty.



slopes of Knocklayd he could easily see the highlands of Ayrshire almost up to the place whence he was carried off a captive to the shores of Ireland, and the Dalriadans of Culfeightrin might hoist a signal on Benmore that would be visible to the keen eyes of their cousins on the Mull of Kintyre, for the deep but narrow sea is not more than twelve or fourteen miles wide from shore to shore.

We are also told by the Tripartite that 'Patrick blessed Dun Sobairci. and Patrick's Well is there, and he left a blessing thereon.' It is not stated that he founded a church or left any priest or bishop in the place, but still the entry is a very interesting one. Dun Sobairci has been corrupted into the modern Dunseverick, a huge dismantled castle, situated on an insulated cliff, overhanging the boiling waves of that wild coast, so well known to every tourist who journeys coastwise from Ballycastle to the Giant's Causeway. The primitive dun was erected shortly after the Milesian colonization of Ireland, for the Four Masters tell us that the hero from whom it is named, Sobhairce of the White Side, was a great grandson of Ir, and kept his court as King of Northern Ireland on the beetling cliff over that stormy sea. It was a well-chosen site, however, and was held in turn by every ruler of northern Antrim, from Sobhairce to Shane O'Neill. It was the strongest fortress of the Dalriads in the time of St. Patrick, and it is not improbable that it was the first place which Patrick went to visit after he had crossed the Bush and come into Dalriad territory. The oldest of the sons of Erc doubtless ruled in Dunseverick at the time, but as it does not appear that he was friendly to Patrick, the Saint founded no church at the grand old fort, nor did he even enter the stronghold itself, but sat on a rock quite near it, which has been called Patrick's Rock ever since. We are also told that it was there he ordained Olcan, Bishop of Armoy. If so, it was at a later date, perhaps on his return from his mission in those districts. We are told that 'Patrick's Well' is also there at Dunseverick, and 'he left a blessing thereon,' no doubt, when he blessed its water for the baptism of his converts.

After this visit to Dunseverick Tirechan expressly says, "that Patrick returned into Magh Elne, and founded many churches, which the 'men of Connor' now possess." The Tripartite, too, says that Patrick, leaving Dunseverick, 'went into Dalaradia,' where he found Coelbad's twelve sons before him. He asked to get the place, 'where

Kilglass now stands,' but was rudely refused, most likely by Saran—'yet he has it still,' adds the writer, which seems to imply that although refused at first by Saran he afterwards got Kilglass from some other of the sons of Coelbad. Therein he left two of his household, namely, Glaisciu and Presbyter Libur. We are inclined to think Kilglass would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of Ballymoney, but it has not yet been identified. We next find Patrick seeking to get from the same sons of Coelbad 'the place in which Lathrach Patraic is now. Therein he placed Daniel, called from his purity the Angel, but from his small size he was named Patrick's Dwarf. 'Close by is Patrick's well—Slan the Healer is its name.' In that place Patrick's *nuu echair*, that is the 'new key,' was found.<sup>1</sup> The wicked Saran, however, drove off Patrick from this place also, wherefore 'Patrick deprived him of heaven and earth.'

Both Colgan and Reeves think this Lathrach Patraic, or Lann Abhaich, the Dwarf's Church, is that afterwards called Glenavy on the eastern shore of Lough Neagh. We rather think it was at the place still called Slan<sup>2</sup> or Slane, the Healer, in the parish of Skerry, north-east of Ballymena, for, so far as we can judge, Patrick was on his way from Magh Elne to visit the family of Milcho at the foot of Slemish; and by Slan, not by Glenavy, his route would lie. Besides Slan is a very peculiar word, meaning the 'health-giver,' which the Tripartite tells us was the name of Patrick's Well at Lathrach Patraic.

Tirechan here tells us that Patrick 'went up' to the mountain of Slemish Boonrigi, because he had care in that place, when a slave, of Milcho's son, Guasacht by name, and also of his two daughters. The Tripartite adds that he took them now into his own family, and brought them out of Dalaradia to place them, as we have seen elsewhere—the son as Bishop of Granard, and the sisters as nuns at Clonbroney in the Co. Longford. On this occasion also Tirechan tells us he visited the hill of Skerry (Skirte) 'on which he saw the Angel standing, and where his footprints are still to be seen,' when he told Patrick, long before, that his ship was ready to carry him home to his native land.

The Tripartite then gives a list of other churches which Patrick founded in Dalaradia, but it does not pretend to give the order of foundation or route of Patrick in founding

<sup>1</sup> Some relic of Patrick's.

<sup>2</sup> See Reeves' *Down and Connor*, p. 23.

them. Saran, as we have seen, repulsed the Apostle at Slan, but his brother Conlae received Patrick with honour, and offered him Domnach Combair, that is the place afterwards called by that name, as a site for his church; whereupon Patrick blessed him, and left him the promise of a race of kings and princes from his seed for ever.

Colgan states that this Domnach Combair—the Church of the Confluence—is identical with Magh-Combair, afterwards corrupted into Muckamore, and that the plain got its name from the junction of the Clady Water and the Six Mile Water at that place, or as others say, on account of the junction of the united streams with Lough Neagh. It was always a fertile and highly cultivated plain, but no doubt the labours of the good monks of Muckamore in later times contributed much to its fertility. We are not told whom our Saint placed there, but Jocelyn says that St. Patrick on one occasion, passing through a place in Dalaradia, called Mucoomuir addressed his companions in these words: ‘Know ye, my beloved sons, that in this spot, a certain child of life, called Colmanellus, will build a church, and will gather together therein many sons of light and many fellow-citizens of the Angels.’ This was St. Colman Elo, patron also of Lynally in the King’s County, who about the year 550 built a noble monastery at Muckamore in honour of the Virgin Mary, which flourished down to the time of the general suppression. In later times a Franciscan Friary was founded at Masarene in its immediate neighbourhood, but, of course, that also has disappeared.

#### VII.—PATRICK IN SOUTHERN DALARADIA.

Instead of going southward into Uladh, our Apostle now appears to have turned eastwards, and founded, we are told, many churches in Dalaradia, the names of which are given by the Tripartite. The first two are Domnach Mor Magh Damoerna and Raith Sithe. The latter is certainly the old church still known as Rashee, in the barony of Upper Antrim, which was included in the ancient Magh Line. The parish still retains the name, and ‘the old graveyard is much used, but no traces of the church remain.’<sup>1</sup> We find reference to two Bishops of Rashee, A.D. 618, St. Comgall and St. Eoghan. It was

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<sup>1</sup> Reeves’ *Down and Connor*, p. 69.

then, doubtless, the chief church of the sub-kingdom of Magh Line, of which Conlae seems to have been the ruler.

Domnach Mor Magh Damoerna has not yet been identified. It appears to us that as Patrick was travelling east from Muckamore—and this is the first church named in the list—it was probably the old church now known as Templepatrick, which is about midway between Muckamore and Rashee, on the very route the Apostle would take through Magh Line. It gives its name to the parish, and was probably adopted as equivalent to Domnach Mor, which also signifies a Patrician church. In these two churches the Saint, we are told, left two of his household, but their names are not given.

#### VIII.—PATRICK IN EASTERN DALARADIA.

From Rashee the Saint appears to have journeyed into the ancient territory of Latharna, now Larne. It included the small barony of Upper Glenarm, comprising the parishes of Carnacastle, Killyglen, Kilwaughter, and Larne.<sup>1</sup> It is stated that Patrick founded in Larne two churches—‘Telach, that is, Cell Conadain, and Gluare, and he left Mac Lessi therein.’

There can hardly be any doubt that the latter is the ancient church of Glone near Glenarm, for it not only retains the name but is still called St. Patrick’s Church by the people. Cell Conadain appears to take its name from a St. Conadan; but it was afterwards shortened into Conic, and is still known as the chapelry of St. Cuning in the parish of Carnacastle to the south of Glone. It may be, too, that ‘Telach’ is still preserved in Tullacur, an ancient vicariate in the same district. Mac Lessi, of the Irish Tripartite, is probably a mistake for Mac Nessi.

We are then told that he founded Glen-Indechta and Imlech Cluane in Semne—‘Coeman is therein—and Raith Episcuip Findich in the country of Hy Darca Chein.’ There can be no doubt that Glen Indechta is the parish of Killyglen, or Killglynn, as it is called in more ancient documents.

It is a very extensive parish; and the ruins of the old Patrician church occupied a highly picturesque site in a shady glen, from which the name was doubtless derived. The locality of Imlech Cluane in Semne is more open to

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<sup>1</sup> Reeves’ *Down and Connor*, p. 333.

question. Colgan thought it should be identified with Kill Chluana, or else Kill-Choemhain; and he places the latter in Hy Tuirtre, east, we presume, of the Bann. These names are, however, now unknown, according to Reeves, and, in our opinion, do not indicate the true site of this Patrician church. This Magh Semne was in Antrim, not in Down, and lay, according to O'Donovan, to the north of Magh Line. It was, therefore, the great and fertile plain in Lower Antrim Barony round Ballymena and Broughshane. About one mile south of Broughshane is the old churchyard of Rathcavan, or Racavan. Reeves says the word means the Rath of the Hollow; but it might also mean Rath-Coemhain, which would certainly be pronounced, as it is in Wexford and the Aran Islands, 'Rath Cavan.' Besides, Rathes were not in hollows; and the place in question is the site of an ancient church in the very heart of Magh Semne. Hence we are, we think, justified in concluding that it was the church in which St. Coeman was placed by St. Patrick.

The last clause in the statement of the Tripartite is that Patrick founded 'Raith Episcuip Findich in the country of Hy Darca-Chein.' Colgan places this church in the valley of the Braid, to which Reeves strongly objects, as, according to him, that territory—Hy Darca Chein—was in the sub-Kingdom of Uladh 'in the county of Down or on the confines of Down and Antrim.' We can only say that, judging from the context, we think Colgan was right; but on the other hand we cannot show Reeves was wrong.

In our view Patrick went from Skerry to Glenarm, and thence along the eastern coast of Antrim southwards until he came to Larne, near to which he founded the ancient church of Glynn. From this point he turned to the west by the southern flanks of Slemish until he came to Rashee. Thence he went southwards to Templepatrick, from which he again went westward by Muckamore and Antrim to the bridge or ford at Toome. The Tripartite appears somewhat confused in narrating the order of events; but it is in most cases so reliable that it is not safe to reject it here.

What stirring memories must have crossed the mind of Patrick as he once more trod the heathery braes of Slemish. He remembered the years of his youth more than half a century ago, when he was a friendless, half-famished slave in the dark woods of Slemish. He thought of a later visit to the same familiar scenes some fifteen years before when

he came to visit his old master Milcho, and saw his home in flames from the brow of the mountain. Now he returned again to those wild scenes of his youth, the recognised Apostle of all Erin from sea to sea. He had proclaimed the Good Tidings on the Hill of Tara, and thence to the far west of Mayo, and the remotest valleys of Inishowen, and now God brought him to preach with success to the people amongst whom he had dwelt as a fugitive slave. He felt indeed that, in his own touching words, God had raised him from the mire and placed him high as a very corner stone in the spiritual edifice of His Church. We may be sure that many a fervent 'Deo Gratias' rose to his lips as he thought on all these things; for we know that he felt in his heart what he proclaimed as the last word of his Confession, that verily and indeed it was all the gift of God.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ST. PATRICK IN ORIEL.

#### I.—PATRICK RE-CROSSES THE BANN.

WE are now told that 'Patrick went out of the province of the Dalaraide by Fertais Tuamma into Hy Tuirtri,' or, in other words, he came from Antrim into Derry by the 'crossing' over the Bann at Toome. This crossing at Toome is near the point where the great river issues from Lough Neagh, bearing all its wealth of waters northward to the sea at Coleraine. The name Tuamm simply means a burial mound, but nothing is known of the ancient hero or warriors who sleep at this point on the banks of the Bann.

Crossing the river, Patrick came into the territory of the Hy Tuirtre, who at this time dwelt on the west of the Bann, between Slieve Gallion and Lough Neagh. At a later period they were driven across the river by the Hy Niall, and occupied on its eastern bank the modern baronies of Upper and Lower Toome, which ecclesiastically formed the deanery of Hy Tuirtre.<sup>1</sup>

This tribe took their name from Fiachra Tort, a grandson of Colla Uais, and were, therefore, of the wide-spread Oriel race. The Fer Li, who dwelt further north on the same bank of the river, were of the same race as their kinsmen the Hy Tuirtre, and, like them, were driven eastward of the great river, as we have already explained.

The Hy Tuirtre occupied the fertile, wide-spreading plain between the lake and the mountains, of which Magherafelt may be regarded as the modern capital. It abounds in wood and water, and the skill and enterprise of its industrious population have made it one of the most well-cultivated and productive districts in all the north. Although it is in the modern Co. Derry, as a part of the ancient kingdom of East Oriel it rightly belongs to the Archdiocese of Armagh.

When Patrick came into this fair and fertile district, with his keen sense of natural beauty he was anxious to

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<sup>1</sup> Reeves, p. 294.

erect a monastic church therein, 'because it seemed to him convenient, with Lough Neagh on one side and Slieve Gallion<sup>1</sup> on the other'; and we are told he was so pleased with the place that he abode forty nights in Findabur, as the Tripartite has it, but which Jocelyn and Colgan give as Finn-abhair, and the former says it means 'albus campus,' that is the 'white plain.' The word in the Rolls Tripartite might, we think, be more correctly rendered as the 'crystal well.'

But Cairthenn Mor, king of the country, went to Patrick and told him to clear out with all his family, whereupon Patrick took away the kingship from him and from his children likewise. Moreover, he bestowed the kingdom on Cairthenn Beg, who was in exile at the time, for he was driven out by his brother. He was probably not far off in the territory of some friendly chief, for it is added that Patrick either then or afterwards baptised him and blessed his wife and the child that lay in her womb with a special blessing. Patrick, in the spirit of prophecy, declared at the same time, "By my troth, the child that is in thy womb will be full of the grace of God, and it is I that will bless the veil on her head." This lady, the wife of Cairthenn, was Morgan, daughter of Fergus Mor, son of Nesse of the Dalriada, and the child of grace whom she then bore in her womb was the virgin Trea, who has left her name to the old church and parish of Ardtrea, on the north-western shore of Lough Neagh.<sup>2</sup> 'It is Patrick who afterwards blessed the veil of virginity for her head, as he foretold.' It was the angels brought down that veil from heaven and set it on her head, low down over her eyes. Patrick began to lift it up. "Why," said she, "is it not good that it should remain as it was placed (by the angels)?" "Good, indeed, it is," said Patrick, "be it so." During her life the holy virgin saw nothing except what she beheld through that veil. There are graceful maidens still in Magherafelt and Ardtrea who have learned from the example of St. Trea to prize modesty like hers as the fairest gem an Irish maiden can wear.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'Slieve Calland' in the text.

<sup>2</sup> We may add that a beautiful new church dedicated to this holy virgin was built by the late parish priest of Magherafelt. His Eminence Cardinal Logue dedicated the church, and the present writer preached the sermon.

<sup>3</sup> Those who were present at the dedication of Armagh Cathedral in the presence of two Cardinals in 1904 will remember the services rendered to the guests in the evening by the daughters of St. Trea, whom Canon Quinn brought from Magherafelt to Armagh.



In this fertile and populous territory of Hy Tuirtre Patrick founded no less than seven churches, which afterwards belonged to him and his successors, namely, Domnach Fainre, Domnach Riascad, Domnach Fothirbe, Domnach Rigduinn, Domnach Brain, Domnach Maelain, Domnach Libuir. The first is now known as Donaghery, which touches Lough Neagh on the west. Stewartstown is near its centre.<sup>1</sup> The second, now called Donaghisk, lay to the west of Donaghery. Reeves could not identify the site of the other churches, except that Donnabaran, in the deanery of Tullahoge, seems to resemble Domnach Brain. The rest are uncertain.

Thereafter we are told Patrick went to the men of Gabrae, and they were obedient to him. Patrick foretold that they would come thereafter 'with tribute to his church in winter time, and that foreign tribes would take their lands afterwards.' The men of Gabrae dwelt in the district between Stewartstown and Dungannon; but it is not easy to ascertain the locality of their ancient church. It was somewhere near Coal Island. The stranger tribes referred to were doubtless the Hy Niall, who seized this territory at a later period, and made Dungannon their chief stronghold. It was probably in process of accomplishment to some extent when the Tripartite was written. Reeves, however, shows that the Hy Tuirtre, who crossed the Bann to the east, maintained their tribal independence down to the fourteenth century, and were governed by their own chiefs, whose family name was O'Flinn, Lords of Hy Tuirtre.

Patrick passed from the men of Gabrae to the men of Imchlar, whom he baptised and blessed, and for whom, we may add, he founded the church of Donaghmore. Therein he left Presbyter Columb, who got from Patrick his own bell and book of ritual, here meaning his Mass-book.

## II.—THE TRIBES OF ORIEL.

The second part of the Tripartite leaves Patrick at Donaghmore amongst the men of Imchlar. The old church was a little to the west of the modern town of Dungannon; but we believe no traces of the ancient building now remain. An 'improving' farmer in the north removes old walls of that kind to make his byres or his fences.

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<sup>1</sup> There is an Ardpatrick about a mile west of Stewartstown, which marks the route of the Saint southward.

Then, in the beginning of the Third Part, after a misplaced paragraph referring to Armoy, in the Co. Antrim, the Tripartite brings Patrick to Telach Maine, which would be now Tullamain; but it cannot be, as Stokes suggests, Tullamain in the parish of Faughanvale, for the whole course of the narrative suggests its location as somewhere south of Donaghmore, on the road to Ballygawley, near the boundary between the dioceses of Armagh and Clogher. He found welcome there from Maine, son of Conlaed, 'who showed great respect' to the Saint, so that Patrick blessed him and blessed his wife, who became with child and brought forth two daughters. Patrick baptised them (afterwards, it would appear), and blessed a veil for their heads, and left an old man to teach them.<sup>1</sup>

Then it is significantly added that Patrick did not proceed to Macha on this occasion, but went into 'the district of Hy Cremthainn, in which he founded churches and cloisters.' In other words, instead of going from Tullamain south-east into the kingdom of East Oriel, of which Armagh was the chief city, he went south-west into the kingdom of West Oriel, of which Clogher was the cathair, or chief city.

It is well to remind our readers here of what we have already explained at length, that the men of Oriel, who were of a different race from the men of Tirowen and Tirconnell on the west, as well as from the men of Dalaradia and Uladh on the east, were themselves divided into two kingdoms—the Eastern and Western Oriel. The King of the Eastern Oriel dwelt at Armagh; the King of the Western Oriel at Clogher, and their respective territories are even to this day fairly represented by the dioceses of Armagh and Clogher. The Kings of Oriel were, therefore, the rulers of central Ulster in its modern sense, that is, of South Tyrone, Monaghan, Armagh, a considerable portion of Fermanagh—and of Louth as far south as the Boyne. Most of this Oriel country in later ages came under the dominion of the Hy Niall princes, whose chief stronghold was at Dungannon, but we must not confound the more extended sovereignty of the princes of Tirowen, which they acquired in later times, with their more limited sovereignty in the time of St. Patrick. Derry even then practically belonged to the Hy Niall, but most of Tyrone did not.

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<sup>1</sup> It would appear that Patrick claimed such heaven-sent children for the special service of God and of His Church.

There were twelve sub-chiefs in the kingdom of Oriel, exclusive of the Co. Louth, six of whom belonged to Western Oriel, that is, the diocese of Clogher, and six to Eastern Oriel, or the diocese of Armagh. When St. Patrick crossed the Bann and came into Hy Tuirtre, between Slieve Gallion and Lough Neagh, that territory was still regarded as belonging to Oriel, but the Hy Niall pressed on the descendants of the Collas, and, at a later period, drove both the Fer Li and the Hy Tuirtre from the western to the eastern shore of the Bann. In still later times O'Neill made Dungannon his chief residence and stronghold, which shows that the Hy Niall were pressing eastwards and southwards from their original seat at Ailech until they came to be recognised as lords paramount of the vast territory represented by the counties Derry, Tyrone, and Armagh, with a nominal kingship over the whole northern province.<sup>1</sup>

### III.—PATRICK AND MAC CARTAN IN CLOGHER.

The Tripartite says that Patrick went from Telagh Maine, that is, the Hill of Maine, son of Conlaed, into the district of the Hy Cremthainn,<sup>2</sup> that is, by Ballygawley and Augher to Clogher, which was the royal seat of the men of West Oriel. It was his usual custom to go straight to the king's dun when he entered any new territory, preaching, however, and baptising by the way. The stream at Ballygawley was probably the boundary between the two territories. It is a fertile and beautiful country, well-wooded and well-watered, nestling under the shelter of Slievemore, which screens it from the bitter winds of the north. At Augher the track crossed the Tyrone Blackwater, and, no doubt, it was at the ford there that St. Mac Cartan complained for the first time of failing strength and toilsome years. He was Patrick's 'strong man,' his helper and protector during the weary journeys of some fourteen long years in Meath, in Connaught, and

<sup>1</sup> The existing dioceses, as already explained, still fairly represent those principalities. Raphoe or Tirconnell belongs to the Cenel Conail; Derry and Armagh show the later territory of Tir-Eoghan; Clogher is the ancient Oriel in great part, while Down and Connor, with Dromore, represent Ulidia.

<sup>2</sup> Colgan seems to think the Hy Cremthainn here referred to were in the north of Meath, but in this he is clearly mistaken. The Hy Cremthainn of Meath were sprung from Conal Cremthainn, son of Niall the Great; the Hy Cremthainn of Oriel were sprung from Cremthainn of the race of Colla Uais.

in Ulster. He stood beside the Saint before many an angry warrior, and he bore him in his strong arms over many a swelling flood. He saw his companions of Patrick's 'family' settled in their churches at many pleasant places by the Shannon, the Moy, and the Erne, and it was no wonder he thought it time that he, too, should be allowed to rest. He remembered, no doubt, his fault at Tir Enda Airtech, but he trusted to his master's kindness to forgive it. Lifting Patrick over the stepping-stones or, perhaps, wading through the river, he murmured "Oh, oh!" as he laid down his burden. It was a painful sigh of relief. "By my troth," said Patrick, "it was not usual for thee to utter that word." Whereupon Mac Cartan replied, "I am an old man now, and infirm, and thou hast left my comrades in churches whilst I am still on the road." Patrick, though not yet thinking of rest for himself, felt this complaint was not unreasonable, so he said, "I will leave thee then in a church, and it shall not be too near for good neighbourhood nor yet too far to pay a friendly visit." And so, shortly afterwards, when Patrick founded the See of Clogher, he made Mac Cartan its Bishop, and, moreover, gave him the Domnach Airgid, which had been sent to Patrick from heaven when he was coming over the sea to Ireland. According to the fragment of St. Mac Cartan's Life in the Salamanca MS., Patrick said to him, upon hearing his complaint, "Go in peace, my son, and build yourself a monastery in the green before the royal seat of the men of Oriel, whence you will rise in glory hereafter. The abode of those who merely seek earthly goods will be laid desolate, but thine will daily be enlarged, and from its sacred cemetery very many will rise to the blessed life hereafter." He added, moreover, "Take this staff that I have so long carried to support my limbs, and this shrine which contains relics of the holy Apostles, and of the hair of the blessed Mary, and of the holy Cross of the Lord, and of His sepulchre, and of other Saints also."

The Domnach Airgid is the most famous of our early shrines, and is, fortunately, still in existence. It has been fully described by Petrie and also by O'Curry, who declares that in his opinion no reasonable doubt can exist that it was actually sanctified by the hand of our great Apostle. Its construction strongly confirms that opinion, for the inner oblong box, apparently of yew, was evidently constructed to contain what it still contains—a very ancient

MS. of the Four Gospels, written in Irish Uncials, still quite legible, though portions of the leaves are greatly decayed from damp, and adhere closely together in one mass. The box was, therefore, originally a *cumdach*, or book-cover, made to contain that precious volume which St. Patrick carried about with him in his missionary journeys. This inner box was afterwards enclosed in another cover of copper, plated with silver, and adorned with interlaced ornament in the peculiar Celtic style. Finally, in the 14th century, this second box was placed in another still more elaborate receptacle made of silver, but plated with gold, and richly ornamented with precious stones and various figures of Our Saviour, the Blessed Virgin, and other saints. This cover served also the purpose of a reliquary, and has a small compartment specially constructed for that purpose. It is evident that this was the 'serinium,' which the author of the Life of St. Mac Cartan describes, for he knew nothing apparently of the precious volume within. Inscriptions on this outer cover record that it was made by a native artist, John O'Barrdan, at the suggestion and expense of John O'Karbri, comarb of St. Tighernach of Clones, who died in the year 1353. St. Tighernach was second Bishop of Clogher, but dwelt in the monastery of Clones, where he died in 548, that is, forty-two years after St. Mac Cartan himself. This shrine is now in possession of the Royal Irish Academy, and may be seen in the National Museum, at Kildare Place, Dublin. A fuller account of this most ancient and interesting shrine will, if space allows, be given elsewhere.

The Life of Mac Cartan in the Salamanca MS., imperfect though it be, helps us to understand more fully the statements in the Tripartite.

It is clear enough that when Patrick and Mac Cartan came with their companions to the royal fort of Oriel they found its ruler by no means friendly. That fort is, beyond doubt, Rathmore,<sup>1</sup> the Great Palace, the site of which still exists within what was once the episcopal demesne of Clogher. It is a curious commentary on the words attributed to St. Patrick—that the abode of the earthly ruler would be desolate, whilst the power of the spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Rathmore, as its name implies, was a lofty earthwork or fortress, surrounded by a deep fosse, portions of which still remain on the south and west. There was another *rath* near it, probably for the royal household; and further southward is a little raised earthwork enclosing a tumulus or cairn, which was likely the *folke-mote* or place of public assembly.

prince would be increased as the ages passed. The successor of St. Mac Cartan is still powerful in Oriel, and his power has been increasing; but where are the rulers of Rathmore, and where are the successors of those who seized it by violence, and held it by force? Time will tell, for the old order changeth giving place to the new—to the ever ancient yet the ever new royal line founded by St. Patrick, and established in the green—the ‘platea’—before the royal palace. This expression very happily describes the situation of the ancient church and monastery founded by the Saint—it was ‘before’ the royal fort of Clogher. The name Clogher itself has been variously but not quite satisfactorily explained. In Irish it is Clochar, not clogh-oir, which makes a very great difference, as we shall presently see.

#### IV.—PATRICK AND KING ECHU'S DAUGHTER.

Echu, son of Crimthann, who gave his name to the territory, was ruler of this sub-kingdom of Clogher at the time, and he seems to have been the chief king of all Western Oriel. In the Book of Rights<sup>1</sup> he is described as ‘King of Leamhain, Ui Crimthainn, and Siol Duibh-thire’; and these three sub-tribes, so far as we can judge, possessed at the time the district now known as the barony of Clogher. It is clear that Echu, at Patrick’s request, gave him a place for Mac Cartan’s monastery and church near his own royal dun; but it appears also that he did so with great reluctance, and it is not improbable that the reason of his reluctance was the fact that Mac Cartan, who was placed over the new foundation, was a stranger in that kingdom<sup>2</sup>—a thing which the native chiefs greatly disliked there as well as elsewhere.

King Echu had two sons and one daughter, of whom special mention is made—‘Cairbre, surnamed Damargait, believed, and Patrick blessed him and blessed his seed,’ in whom the royal race was continued; but Breasal, the second son, refused to believe, and ‘Patrick cursed him’; that is, he foretold that his offspring would not be enduring

<sup>1</sup> See page 145.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Martyrology of Donegal, August 15th, Aedh was the personal name of the saint, Mac Cartan being his patronymic. He was, it is said, Abbot of Dairinis at first, and was also called Fer da Chrioch. His pedigree was traced to Eochaidh, son of Muiredach, and thence to Heremon, but he was not of the race of the Three Collas.

or prosperous. The maiden, Cinnu, the King's daughter, however, was a child of grace, and the Tripartite tells a most touching story of her generous self-sacrifice in the cause of God.

Her father wished the maiden to wed a man of noble birth and great power, namely—Cormac, son of Cairbre, and therefore grandson of Niall the Great. This young prince might also be described as their neighbour, for the growing power of the Hy Niall encompassed the men of Oriel on all sides, and Cairbre ruled over North Longford as well as Drumcliff. The alliance, therefore, from every point of view, was one greatly to be desired.

Just then, however, as Cinnu was walking with her maidens near Clogher, she happened to meet Patrick with his companions; and Patrick, who never missed an opportunity of promoting the cause of Christ, preached to the royal maiden, and recommended her to unite herself to the spiritual Spouse, giving up her earthly love, and devoting herself thenceforward to His service. Thereupon she believed, and followed Patrick, and Patrick baptised her afterwards, when she was properly instructed. Meanwhile, her father was urging her espousals to Prince Cormac. Thereupon both Patrick and the maiden, who had resolved to become a nun, sought an interview with her father, or, in the words of the Tripartite, 'went to converse with him' on the subject. Patrick asked her father to allow her 'to be united to the Eternal Spouse' by making her religious profession. Echu reluctantly consented; but it was on the condition that heaven were given to himself by Patrick in exchange for his daughter, and, moreover, that he 'should not be compelled to be baptised'—at that time, as we must assume. Patrick promised to do these two things, although, the Tripartite naively remarks, 'it was a difficult thing for him to do.' Then the King allowed his daughter Cinnu 'to be united to Christ, and Patrick caused her to become a female disciple of his'; and delivered her to a certain virgin to be taught, namely—to Cechtumbar of Drum Dubain, 'in which place both virgins have their rest.'

The Life of St. Patrick abounds in beautiful and touching stories, but there is none more beautiful and touching than this; and its simple pathos is augmented when we read St. Patrick's own account of it, for there can be no doubt that it is this royal maiden to whom he particularly refers in his Confession, when he wishes to show the zeal

of the Irish men and maidens in devoting themselves to the service of God in religion. 'One blessed Irish maiden,' he says, 'of full age, noble birth, and very beautiful, whom I myself baptised, came to me a few days after (her baptism) for an urgent reason, for she told me that she had received a divine inspiration urging her to become a virgin of Christ, in order that she might come nearer to God. Thanks be to God! Six days after, most religiously and zealously she realised that divine vocation, like so many other virgins of God, who follow the same course, not with the good will of their parents, but rather enduring contumely and persecution at their hands.'<sup>1</sup>

Here, surely, we have a very striking picture of the infant Church of Ireland, and in the foreground must always stand the beautiful figure of the royal daughter of Oriel spurning an alliance even with a prince of the great Hy Niall race, and devoting herself, with all the peerless graces of her spotless maidenhood, to the life-long service of her Eternal Spouse.

It was truly a great sacrifice on the part of King Echu to part with such a daughter; and, it appears, if we can trust the Tripartite, that God forgave his 'ignorances,' half-pagan as he was; and for Patrick's sake, and his daughter's sake, saved him at last. We may safely accept the truth of the story, for surely Cinnu would be as dear to her Spouse in Erin as even Martha and Mary were in Bethany.

After many years, we are told, 'the aforesaid Echu' came to die; but he said to those standing around—"Bury me not until Patrick shall have come." Now, Patrick, at that time, was bidding at Saul in Uladh, where we know he lived much in his old age; and, having an inspiration about Echu's approaching death, he resolved to journey all the way to Clogher. There he found that Echu had been dead for twenty-four hours. Then putting outside all the watchers around the corpse, "Patrick bent his knees to the Lord, and shed tears, and prayed, and afterwards said with a clear voice—O, King Echu, in the name of Almighty God, arise"; and straightway the King arose at the voice of God's servant." Patrick then instructed the King and

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<sup>1</sup> Et etiam una Scotta benedicta, genitiva, nobilis, pulcherima, adulta erat, quam ego baptizavi; et post paucos dies unâ causa venit ad nos; insinuavit namque nobis responsum accepisse a nutu Dei, et movit eam ut esset virgo Christi et ipsa Deo proximaret. Deo gratias; sexta ab hoc die optime et avidissime arripuit illud—(i.e., vocationem ut Deo approximaret). See *Confession*. Rolls *Trip.*, p. 369.



baptised him, and furthermore offered him fifteen years in the quiet enjoyment of his throne, or, if he thought it better, he might at once go forth to heaven. Thereupon Echu said that even if he were to get the kingship of the whole globe, he would prefer to die and enjoy the glory of which he had seen a dim vision. So Patrick said—‘Go in peace, and depart to God, and thereupon his spirit went forth to heaven.’ Not for Echu’s sake, but because of his blessed daughter, Patrick did these wonderful things; and they are by no means of themselves incredible. Yet, perhaps, the true history of the case would be that Patrick, hearing of King Echu’s danger, went to see the old king at his urgent request, that he gave him the long-deferred baptism, and the resurrection from sin, which was in itself a foretaste of the joys beyond the grave, and so sent him straight to heaven.

These things took place, as we are expressly informed, at Clochar Mac Doimni—that is, at Rathmore palace—and those who bear them in mind, when they journey through that fair and fertile vale of Clogher, will, doubtless, look on the grand old rath with a far livelier interest than heretofore.

#### V.—KING ECHU AND ST. MAC CARTAN.

Whilst Patrick was present it would appear that King Echu was afraid to molest Mac Cartan; but after the departure of the dreaded master, Echu troubled Mac Cartan in many ways. He was still addicted to the worship of the Druids, and one of their sacred groves was only two miles from Clogher. No doubt they incited the king to drive away the new-comers, and so caused much trouble to God’s servants. Mac Cartan had a cow for the use of his family. The king would not allow the poor animal to graze near the monastery, but had her driven off and tied up so that the pitiful bellowings of the animal were heard, even in the royal court. “Drive them all off,” said the Druids, “or this place will be theirs.” The king sent his son to bid them go away, but the boy fell asleep and forgot to execute his father’s orders, and through the influence of the queen the wrath of the king was assuaged, and Mac Cartan was allowed to remain at Clogher.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At a later period, too, when Mac Cartan must have been very old, St. Tighernach of Clones, who was a grandson of King Echu (by his daughter Dearfrásich), paid a visit to Clogher, when the old king declared he would expel Mac Cartan the stranger and give the monastery to his grandson. But Tighernach thereupon fled from Clogher lest he might be the occasion of such sacrilegious violence.

Thereafter Patrick went (from Clogher) into Lemain. This is Magh Leamhna of the Book of Rights, which formed a part of the Clogher kingdom. It is the beautiful plain east of Clogher, extending from the slopes of Slieve Beagh at Altadaven down to Augher by Favor Royal, and beyond the Blackwater as far as Ballygawley. The North of Ireland presents no fairer prospect than this beautiful and fertile plain, with its embowering woods and fishful rivers fronting the south, well-sheltered, highly cultivated, and rather thickly peopled with a comfortable and industrious population.

'Findabair is the name of the hill on which Patrick preached.' This has been identified with Findermore by Hennessy. There can be no doubt that it is the hill over the beautiful dale of Altadaven, which is so closely connected with St. Patrick's preaching in the local traditions of the people. It was two young unbroken oxen 'from Findabair,<sup>1</sup> that is from Clogher,' that by direction of the Angel carried Patrick's dead body from Saul to Downpatrick, where they stayed to mark the place of his burial; and, as *damhan* means in Irish a young ox, we may fairly suppose that the beautiful glen itself, that is Altadaven, takes its name from that circumstance. Then it would be impossible to find a more convenient place to address a large crowd than the rocky ridge that penetrated the glen from the higher ground above. Beneath it there is a green meadow, in the midst of which bubbles up Patrick's Well, a full fountain of purest water. Seated or standing by his rocky chair, which is there still, Patrick could address the crowds below as conveniently as he could from the pulpit of a modern church. The huge rock-table on which he celebrated Mass is still in its position before the 'chair,' so that he could not only preach, but say Mass in presence of the vast congregation. The cliff-like walls on either side of the glen gave perfect shelter from the wind, and if they were clothed then, as they are now, with a thick growth of trees and evergreen shrubs of densest foliage, they would also afford shelter even from the pitiless storms of the north.

Those who have seen this singularly romantic glen will not then be much surprised to learn from the Tripartite

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<sup>1</sup> It is not unlikely that the young oxen were brought all the way from Clogher, because the men of Éast Oriel and Uladh were at strife amongst themselves as to where Patrick was to be buried, and neither party would consent to take the unbroken oxen from the territory of the opposite party.

that Patrick was preaching there for three days and three nights, and 'it seemed to them no longer than one hour.' Of course, what is meant is that Patrick remained there for three days and three nights preaching, baptising, and instructing the crowds who came to hear him, and who also remained with him all the time in the beautiful and well-sheltered glen. There would be no inconvenience at any time in summer weather in camping out there and holding a mission for three days, or a much longer time, if necessary. But, Patrick had a special object in view. There is strong reason to think that this sheltered glen, shaded with the dark foliage of its native oak and mountain ash, was sacred to druidism, and was, in fact, a chosen shrine for druidical rites. As usually happened, the Druids dwelt in the neighbourhood of the royal dun, for they were the counsellors as well as the priests of the king, and he rarely acted against their advice. Altadaven suited them exactly, and hence Patrick, having gained over the king at Clogher, was now anxious to root out druidism from its last retreat. It was for this purpose chiefly he went to the glen and blessed it, and erected his altar there, and baptised the people, and left a standing miracle there in the shape of a small basin in the dry rock which is ever full of water, to which we shall presently refer.

#### VI.—PATRICK AND BRIGID IN CLOGHER.

But the Tripartite makes another reference to this preaching of Patrick for three days in Altadaven, which it is more difficult to explain. It says that Brigid fell asleep during his preaching; and Patrick would not let her be rudely awakened. Afterwards he asked the girl what she had seen, and Brigid replied: "I saw white assemblies, and light-coloured oxen, and white cornfields; speckled oxen were behind them, and black oxen after these. Then I next saw sheep, and swine, and dogs, and wolves quarrelling with each other. Thereafter I saw two stones, one a small stone, the other a large one. A shower fell upon them. The little stone increased at the shower, and silvery sparks would break forth from it. The large stone, however, wasted away." "These," said Patrick, "are the two sons of Echu, son of Crimthann, the King of Clogher." One of them, Cairbre Damargait, believed, and Patrick blessed him and his seed. Bressal, however, refused to believe, and Patrick cursed him. Patrick, moreover,

explained the whole vision of Brigid in a striking manner, that is, as Colgan understands it, he explained the vision as symbolizing the present and the future state of the Irish Church. And surely it is not difficult for us, at least, looking back in the light of history, to see its application—the first fair centuries of its primitive holiness, the darker days of the Dane and Norman adventurers, and then the dogs and wolves of a still later period ravening like wild beasts, and devastating the flock over which Patrick's successors ruled in later and more unhappy times.

It is not stated that this maiden was Brigid of Kildare; but it seems to be implied. Yet it is difficult to suppose that she could have been present at Altadaven at this early period, still it is by no means impossible. It is commonly said that Brigid was born about 452—the *Annals of Ulster* says in 457—but the *Chronicon Scotorum* gives 439 as the true date, and says that she died in 523 at the age of eighty-seven, or seventy-seven, 'as some assert.'

The *Irish Life* says she died in the eighty-eighth year of her age, and if we take O'Flaherty's opinion that this was the year 523, then she was born in A.D. 435 or 436. Such also is our opinion.<sup>1</sup> She was in her mother's womb when Bishops Mel and Melchu passed through Offaly about 434 or 435, and rested in her father's house.<sup>2</sup> In that case she might now be ten or twelve years of age, and, therefore, old enough to hear the preaching of the Saint. We are also told in the *Book of Armagh* that St. 'Mac Cairthinn of Clogher was an uncle of Brigte'—for so the names are given. This is merely another form of 'Brigit' of the Tripartite, and if the fact is so, it gives a natural explanation of the maiden's presence on this occasion. Her mother's father was Dalbronach, who belonged to the 'Dal Conchobair of the South of Bregia.'<sup>3</sup> This would go to show that St. Mac Cartan of Clogher belonged to the same tribe, as did also St. Ultan of Ardbraccan in Meath at a later period, who was certainly a relative of St. Brigid—but he can hardly have been an uncle, as some authorities assert.

We find in the *Lives of St. Brigid* that she was at least on four different occasions in the society of St. Patrick. The occasion recorded here was, no doubt, the

<sup>1</sup> And it was the opinion of the Bollandists also.

<sup>2</sup> This statement is made in most of the *Lives*

<sup>3</sup> *Irish Life of St. Brigid*.

earliest.<sup>1</sup> Then she met the Saint at the great Synod of Telltown,<sup>2</sup> to which she went under the guidance of her spiritual father, St. Mel of Longford. It was on that occasion she vindicated the character of the Holy Bishop Bron from the false charge made against him by a wicked woman, who accused him of the paternity of her illegitimate child. Brigid made the Sign of the Cross on the child's mouth, and commanded the infant to reveal the name of its real parent, which it did in presence of the multitude. Once again we find her meeting St. Patrick at Armagh after he had founded his primatial church in that royal city; and it would appear that Brigid dwelt then for a considerable time at Armagh, and also paid a visit to the Saint at Saul, near to which (at Down) she foretold that his blessed body would one day rest. Then Patrick asked Brigid to make with her own hands the winding sheet in which his body would be laid.<sup>3</sup> Brigid promised to do so, and kept her promise; for which cause also God ordained that her own holy relics should sleep beside those of Patrick in Down.<sup>4</sup>

The facts that Brigid was present at Patrick's preaching near Clogher, and also at the Synod of Telltown, that she was an intimate friend of St. Mel and Bishop Bron, as well as of St. Erc and St. Ibar, would all go to prove that she flourished at an earlier date than that commonly assigned. We may, therefore, accept the statement of the Irish Life that she was in the eighty-eighth year of her age when she died, that she was, therefore, born about the year 436, as the Bollandists assert, and that she was an intimate and beloved disciple of St. Patrick, who called her his dear daughter in Christ.

## VII.—PATRICK IN HY MEITH TIRE.

From the smiling Plain of Lemain, with its pleasant woods and waters, Patrick went to the territory of Hy Meith Tire, that is to the portion of it called Tech Talan. His route lay, no doubt, through the parish of Errigal

<sup>1</sup> The *Vita Quarta* of Brigid would seem to imply that Patrick first met her at Telltown; and that she accompanied Patrick from that place to the north; but the vision, as narrated in the *Life*, is somewhat different from that recorded here.

<sup>2</sup> The Feis of Tara was held by Laeghaire in 453; if the Telltown meeting was then held Brigid would be about sixteen years old.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita Quarta*, No. 60.

<sup>4</sup> Patrick also met Brigid at the church of St. Lassara in Meath, but it is impossible to identify the locality.

Trough by Emyvale and Glaslough, until he came to the old church of Tehallen (Tech Telan), which gives its name to the modern parish, and is situated a little to the east of the town of Monaghan. The Hy Meith Tire<sup>1</sup> of the Tripartite, that is the Inland Hy Meith, is so called in contradiction to Hy Meith Mara, in the Co. Louth, whose territory bordered on the sea. The latter still retains its ancient name under the form O'Meath, a district including some ten townlands between Carlingford and Newry.<sup>2</sup> The inland Hy Meith Tire, called also Hy Meith Macha, because it bordered on Armagh, included the parishes of 'Tullycorbet, Kilmore, and Tehallan,' that is to say, that part of the barony of Monaghan east and south of the town of Monaghan, which is, perhaps, the most fertile and beautiful part of the country. The 'House of Talan,' which became the site of the Patrician Church, is, of course, no longer there, but the old churchyard was situated about three miles east of Monaghan, close to the road leading to Middletown.

We are told only of one incident that took place in this part of Hy Meith; but it cannot be denied that it is an extraordinary one. A sub-tribe of the district called the Hy Torrorrae stole, and, it appears, killed and ate one of Patrick's two goats, which were employed to draw water for the Saint's needs. When they were accused of the theft, and confronted with Patrick, they denied it on oath, perjuring themselves before the Saint. 'But the goat bleated out of the bellies of the three, who attempted to deceive Patrick,' whereupon he said—"By my troth, the goat himself announces the place where he was eaten." "From to-day for evermore," saith Patrick, "goats shall cleave to your children and to your race," 'which thing is fulfilled'; for, as the grave and learned Colgan informs us, the men of that race have goat-like beards, which mark them as the descendants of the goat-stealers who robbed Patrick! The story is, no, doubt, an amplification of the original tale; but it shows one thing which is interesting—that goats were sometimes used as beasts of burden to carry water from the well to the camp, but whether the pitchers were slung from their backs or their horns we have no means of knowing.

<sup>1</sup> *Book of Rights*, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> The Hy Meith took their name from Muireadhach Meith, a grandson of Colla Da Críoch, and, therefore, they 'got some of the best land in Oriel.'

A certain Eujan, son of Brian, son of Muireadhach Meith, who gave his name to the territory, is said to have been king of Hy Meith at the time. He and his people believed with earnest faith in Patrick, whereupon the Saint blessed them with a cordial blessing. We are told, too, that so strong was the faith of the king that he entreated Patrick to raise to life his grandfather Muireadhach, who must have been some years dead. Patrick raised him to life, baptised him, and then buried him at a place called Omne Rende, on the borders of Mugdoirn and Hy Meith; 'but the place of burial belongs to Mugdoirn,' adds the Tripartite. It is difficult to account for the origin of a story like this, which is so much opposed to the common teaching about the necessity of baptism before death; and it proves clearly that the inventor was no theologian. The place of burial is said to have been somewhere near Castleblaney, but, as far as we know, there are no local traditions now that recall this strange story. The locality, however, is at present not one likely to preserve the ancient traditions of the Irish saints.

#### VIII.—PATRICK IN CREMORNE.

Patrick then went further south-east into Mugdoirn, now corresponding with the modern barony of Cremorne (Crioich-Mugdoirn), and came to the place called Domnach Maigne, which still retains its name—Donaghmoyne—an old church about two miles north of Carrickmacross in Farney. The church has disappeared, but the churchyard is there still, finely situated in a secluded vale, surrounded by those swelling hills so characteristic of Ulster scenery, which at once give variety and repose to the landscape. A certain Victor dwelt there, whose name sounds foreign, though he appears to have been a native of the district. He was in no hurry to become a Christian; so when he heard of Patrick's approach, he hid himself in a brake, hoping to remain undiscovered.<sup>1</sup> But a divine radiance lit up the brake 'so that even in the darkness of night everything was clear as day therein.' Victor, seeing that he was discovered in this wonderful way by a kind of divine search-light, came out of his hiding-place and

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<sup>1</sup> This goes to show that the people generally at this time were ready to accept the Gospel Message of Patrick; but, in exceptional cases, some of them still clung to their old creed.

'submitted to Patrick'—that is, he believed, or professed to believe, and was baptised. What is stranger still—after suitable instruction Patrick ordained him, and gave him a church to rule as pastor, and afterwards bestowed the order of a bishop upon him, and left him in the church of Donaghmoyne, which consequently must be regarded as the mother church of all the barony of Cremorne. And we are told that Patrick was so pleased with his reception in that territory that he baptised the men of Cremorne, and blessed them with a special blessing, saying that nobles and clerics would spring from them; and, having thus enriched them with his blessing, he bade them adieu.

#### IX.—PATRICK IN FARNEY.

Donaghmoyne was on the southern limits of Cremorne, having to the south the neighbouring half-kingdom of Fir Roiss,<sup>1</sup> which included not only most of the barony of Farney, but also extended into the neighbouring parts of both Louth and Meath. Hence Patrick, still going south-east from Donaghmoyne, came to the place called Enach Conglais, where he rested for a Sunday, 'for it was not his custom to travel on the Lord's Day.' The tribe who dwelt there were called the Hy Lilaig, and they were about the worst type of Irishmen that Patrick had met hitherto—even worse than the Gregraide. They put poison in the curds, and then gave the cheeses to Patrick, hoping to destroy him; but he blessed the cheeses, and they were turned into stones. He left them as soon as he could, on Monday morning, giving them no blessing and founding no church in their land. But they followed him and his 'familia' with fifty horsemen, and sought to slay the Saint as he crossed the ford. Here, too, they failed, for God was with him. But when Patrick and his family had crossed, just in time to escape the assassins, he turned toward them, 'on the hillock to the south of the wood,' and whilst they were yet crossing the stream he raised his left hand, and said—'Ye shall not come out of the ford on this side, nor shall you go out on that. But there in the ford you shall remain until the day of doom.' The water went over them, and there they remain; whence the ford is called Ath Hy Lilaig for ever, in commemoration of their crime, even as

<sup>1</sup> In the Book of Rights Mugdoirn and Ross formed one sub-kingdom (p. 155).



the stone cheeses remain at Enach Conglais as a further testimony against them.

Enach Conglais appears to be the place still called Killanny—the church of the Enach—about three miles west of the town of Louth. The Saint's road thence lay south across the Lagan to Rath Cule, a locality which still retains the name of Coole, and is situated a little south of the river in the barony of Lower Slane. It is not difficult then to determine the point at which the ford of the Lagan lay on the road from Killanny to Coole, in the district of Siddan. The ford was probably at the place now called the Lagan Bridge, near the junction of Louth, Meath, and Monaghan—for bridges are usually built at the ancient fords, where the water was shallowest and the foundation hardest.<sup>1</sup>

Tirechan, however, omits all reference to these miraculous events, and brings Patrick direct from Donaghmoynne in Cremorne to visit Laeghaire and Conall at Tara. In any case, Patrick must have crossed the ford on his way to Tara, but there is no reference to it or to the miracles. He makes a very interesting statement, too, regarding Victor, whom Patrick had left as Bishop at Donaghmoynne. 'Having left Machia,'<sup>2</sup> he says, 'Patrick came to Mugdoirn and there ordained Victoricus Bishop of Machia—Machinensem episcopum—and he founded a great church there, and afterwards proceeded to Laeghaire and Conall, sons of Niall.'<sup>3</sup>

Does this Macha, or Machia, refer to Armagh (Ard-macha), or to Hy Meith Tire, which was also called Hy Meith Macha? The latter seems the more probable reference, so far as we can judge. But, then, if he left Bishop Cilline in Tehallan, why should he consecrate Victor or Victoricus Bishop of Hy Meith Macha? We think this consecration of Victor, who was only *then* baptised, must refer to a later date, when Patrick consecrated him and gave him jurisdiction over the whole territory of Hy Meith Macha and Cremorne. Others, however, understand Macha to refer to the royal city of Armagh, which they say Patrick then founded, leaving Victor to rule the church in his absence. But Victor is not mentioned in

<sup>1</sup> There was another ford where Essex and O'Neill met in 1599, on the Glyde River, hence called Essexford, which may have been the place indicated in the Tripartite.

<sup>2</sup> Relicta 'Machia,' not, however, 'Ard-Macha.'

<sup>3</sup> Rolls *Tripl.*, 330.

any of the lists as a Bishop of Armagh in any sense, and, in our opinion, he never was assistant of St. Patrick there, but he was bishop of the territory, and that explains why some ancient authorities say Armagh was founded in A.D. 444,<sup>1</sup> which gives us also the date of Patrick's sojourn in Monaghan.

#### X.—PATRICK AGAIN IN MEATH.

When Patrick came to Rath Cule he blessed the Fir Cule—that is the men of Cule—a place which, we are told, was in Hy Segain. The modern parish of Siddan seems to retain the ancient name of the district, as the townland of Coole retains the sub-denomination; and doubtless the ancient rath might still be traced in the townland. He left them his blessing, and then proceeded to the place called Bile Tortain, the Old Tree of Tortan, which was in the kingdom called Hy Dortain in the Book of Rights, and, properly speaking, was a sub-kingdom, not of Meath, but of Oriel. It is said by Colgan to have been *near* Ardraccan; but the Irish text only states that the church which Patrick founded there for Presbyter Justan 'now belongs to Ardraccan.' It is probable that the church of Justan was somewhere in Lower Slane, for the mountains of Slieve Breagh<sup>2</sup> formed the southern boundary of Hy Dortain. It was most likely near Julianstown.

Here, however, Tirechan notably differs from the Tripartite, for the former brings Patrick straight from Donaghmoyné to Tara, where he finished his 'circle'<sup>3</sup> or missionary 'round' from Tara through the west and the north of Ireland. And it is from Tara he represents Patrick as 'setting out' to found a church for Presbyter Justan (Justano) at Bile Tortain, 'which belongs to the family of Ardraccan,' and he founded another in eastern Tortan 'in which the tribe of Tech Cirpáin abides, but is always free' (from servitude to the religious of Ardraccan). Then, having founded there two churches, Patrick, according to Tirechan, directs his course to the territories of the men of Leinster—namely, to Druim Urchailli.

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of Ulster*, which are usually accurate.

<sup>2</sup> The Book of Armagh assigns the Dorsí Breg as the boundary of Armagh diocese, that is of Oriel at that point.—Page 352, *Rolls Trip.*

<sup>3</sup> *Finito autem circulo* (when he came to Laeghaire and Conall, sons of Niall), *exiit et fecit ecclesiam Justano presbytero juxta Bile Torten quæ est apud familiam Aird Breccain.*

We know little of Patrick's further progress through Bregia. He was there before; and now, doubtless, visited the old churches and founded new ones of which we know nothing but the names, as given in the Additions to Tirechan. The Tripartite merely states that he journeyed from Domnach Tortain into Leinster, and slept for one night at a place called Druim Urchailli, which Colgan places in the territory called from the King 'Laeghaire'; but other authorities, with greater probability, identify it with Drummuragill in the north of Kildare, as Tirechan certainly does.<sup>1</sup>

Here we find two significant paragraphs in the Lebar Brecc Homily regarding this journey. We are told that 'he went afterwards to the men of Bregia and mightily preached the word of God to them, and baptised and blessed them.' 'And he visited the Ford of Hurdles (Dublin) and found great welcome there, and Patrick said there would be rank and *primacy* in that place, even as is still fulfilled.'

The last statement, on the face of it, is a suspicious-looking paragraph, and savours of a later interpolation; but the first seems to be quite true. The purpose of Patrick certainly was to go to Leinster, and, as usual, to go straight to the royal dun, which was at Naas; but he had to pass through parts of Bregia in a district where he certainly had founded churches, and no doubt he revisited many of them on this very journey.

Of these the most important was that of Dunshaughlin, over which he had placed his nephew, Sechnall or Secundinus, whose name it bears. It was in the direct route of the Saint through Bregia, southwards to Druim Urchailli, on his way to Naas. The Annals of Ulster state that Secundinus, Auxilius, and Iserninus, then bishops, were sent to Ireland to aid Patrick in A.D. 438 or 439.<sup>2</sup> There is reason to think that they accompanied the Apostle on his missionary journey through the north-west and north of Ireland, and now returned with him to Meath. Secundinus was the oldest, for he is said to have died in 447 in the seventy-fifth year of his age; and was therefore

<sup>1</sup> He places it 'ad fines Lageniensium . . . Super viam magnam in valle.' It was therefore in a valley near the highway on the Leinster borders. Colgan seems to confound the territory (Laeghaire) with the man.

<sup>2</sup> Some think, however, that Secundinus came over with St. Patrick in the beginning, that is 432, that he was appointed to Dunshaughlin about 434, when Patrick was in Meath, but having gone once more abroad returned at this time.

as old as Patrick himself. It was only natural then that the Saint, setting out for Leinster and Munster, should have some one to look after the churches of Meath and Ulster during his absence. He made Secundinus Bishop of Dunshaughlin, and also appointed him as his coadjutor and representative through all the North during his absence. Hence it is that Sechnall is commonly described as comarb, or successor-designate of Patrick at Armagh; and that his tenure of that office is given as thirteen years—that is from the date of his appointment in 434 to his death in 447.<sup>1</sup> It also fixes the date of Patrick's setting out on his missionary journey through Leinster, which we may take to be either 444 or the early spring of 445. He had performed the circuit of Ulster in three years, and probably spent three more in Leinster; but he is said to have spent seven years in Connaught and seven in Munster.

#### XI.—PATRICK'S ALLEGED VISIT TO ATH CLIATH.

Here we must pause to consider the question whether or not Patrick really visited the place called in his time Ath Cliath, but known as Dublin to the Danes or Ostmen. We have already referred to the brief and suspicious reference in the Homily on St. Patrick in the Lebar Brecc to this alleged visit of the Saint to Ath Cliath. But Jocelyn gives a much fuller account of this visit which, in substance, is as follows:—

Patrick, in his journey from Meath to Leinster, having crossed a certain stream called Finglass, came to a hill about one mile distant from Ath Cliath, which is now called Dublin (Dublinia). Looking towards it, he blessed the place, and foretold that though now a small village, it would one day become the capital city of the kingdom, a prophecy which has been manifestly fulfilled.<sup>2</sup> He then came to the Ford of Hurdles. On his entry into the town (villa), the people, who had heard of his wondrous miracles, received him with great joy. The Saint then healed the only son of the ruler of the place, who was on the point of death, and restored him to his father; whereupon all the people believed and were baptised by Patrick. Moreover, as the tide made the river water brackish, the matron

<sup>1</sup> It is more likely, however, that he lived to 457, as we shall see later on.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 69. The prediction here looks very like one made after the event predicted.

in whose house the Saint lodged complained of the want of sweet water; upon which Patrick, striking the earth twice with the Staff of Jesus, caused a most abundant spring to gush forth from the earth, whose waters are not only sweet, but powerful to heal diseases. Seeing this, all the people greatly rejoiced; and the fountain has ever since been fitly called St. Patrick's Well.

Here we have at least a simple narrative; but immediately follows another chapter which gives an entirely different and wholly inconsistent account of Patrick's reception in Dubiin. We are told in chapter seventy-one that Patrick came on his missionary journey to a famous city called Dublin, inhabited by Norwegians and natives of the Isles, who, however, recognised the King of Ireland, in an uncertain fashion, as their Suzerain. It was a city steeped in the filth of idolatry and wholly ignorant of the true God. Just then, however, it came to pass that the son of the King died suddenly in his marriage bed, and his sister was drowned in the river Liffey; but Patrick, the miracle-working prelate of Armagh, restored both to life, to the great joy of King Alphinus and all his people. The maiden, who was brought to life by Patrick, was called Dublinia, and gave her own name to the city. Both King and people, too, were baptised by Patrick in a well on the south of the city, which issued from the soil where Patrick struck the earth with his crozier. Moreover, the whole city agreed to pay large offerings to Patrick's church of Armagh for ever, and built a church in his honour near the well, which was outside the city, and another within the walls in honour of the Holy Trinity, close to which they also assigned a mansion, or residence, to Patrick and his successors for all time.

This ridiculous story seems to be an interpolation in the original text of Jocelyn, and is, of course, utterly worthless.

But the first account seems to have been really written by Jocelyn, and must be taken as his version of a living tradition in the time of the writer. Yet we cannot attach much historical importance to the narrative. It is not corroborated by any of our annalists, nor is anything like it found in any of the ancient Lives of our Saints. There is no reference to Patrick's visit to Ath Cliath, or to Dubh-linn, in either the Tripartite or the Book of Armagh, nor in any of the other Lives published by Colgan. We know, indeed, that at a later period a monastery was

founded by St. Mobhi on the banks of the Tolka, near Glasnevin. which is not far from Finglas. Dubious references are also made at a much later period to St. Livinus and St. Rumoldus as Bishops of Dublin; but these Lives were written on the Continent by scribes who knew little or nothing of our domestic history, and it would seem, after the Danish occupation of Dublin.

The Ford of Hurdles, which gave its Irish name to Dublin, was a rude bridge over the Liffey, somewhere at the head of the tide near Kingsbridge. The Black Pool, from which the city got its Danish appellation, was a deep hole at the junction of the Liffey and the Poddle, which was used as a harbour by the Danes. To protect their shipping they built a dun or castle on the high ground just over the pool, and thenceforward—that is from about the year 835, when the Danes made their first permanent settlement there—the place came to be called Dublin.

Yet the presence of St. Patrick's Well, and the dedication even by John Comyn of his great church outside the walls in honour of St. Patrick, as well as the narrative of Jocelyn in chapter 69, go to show that Patrick did visit the place, coming through Bregia to Finglas, and crossing the river at the Black Pool.

Such a visit, though not explicitly referred to, either in the Tripartite or the Book of Armagh, is not excluded, and is expressly referred to in the Irish Homily from the Lebar Brecc already quoted. We know, too, that Patrick on his journey southward passed, not through Meath (Midhe), but through Bregia, which included north Dublin to the Liffey; and if he were, suppose at Dunshaughlin, it would be very easy for him to turn aside for a little, and visit Finglas on the north, or even the pagus or village between the Poddle and the south bank of the river.

It is true we have no account of any royal dun near the Hurdle-Ford; but still ancient authorities represent the place as one of considerable trade from the earliest times. Our annals tell us that the fact of the northern shore of the Liffey being more frequented by ships than the southern shore, was one of the causes that gave rise to the great strife between Conn the Hundred Fighter and Eoghan Mor. The ancient Life of St. Kevin of Glendaloch describes the place, which is called in Irish Dubh-linn, as a powerful and warlike city. We think, however, although Colgan seems to differ from us, that this description was written by one who knew it after Dublin was

occupied by the Danes. St. Sedulius also is described as abbot of Dublin; but here, too, the writer uses a term that was not in use, so far as we can judge, in the time of St. Kevin, and being a foreign writer, he was probably unacquainted with the true history of the city. We can only say, therefore, that the story of St. Patrick's visit to the ancient Ath-cliath is very uncertain, although the presence of his well there and the ancient church dedicated to him, go far to prove that Ath Cliath was visited by our Apostle.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly, Bishop of Canea, assures me that three churches, dedicated to three saints, were founded in Dublin at an ancient date—that is, St. Patrick's, St. Martin's, and St. Bride's. These were certainly Irish, not Danish, dedications, and are often found together.



## CHAPTER XX.

### ST. PATRICK IN NORTH LEINSTER.

#### I.—GEOGRAPHY OF LEINSTER.

IT is well to have a clear idea of what is meant by Leinster, or Laigin, in the time of St. Patrick. Ancient Leinster did not comprise more than half the modern province. It included the territory still contained in the four dioceses of Glendaloch and Kildare on the north, and of Leighlin and Ferns on the south—that is all—and these dioceses still represent very accurately its most important ‘kingdoms.’ Ancient Leinster, then, was bounded on the north by the Liffey, from its mouth to Leixlip, thence due westward by the Rye water and other smaller streams as far as the Boyne. From this point the boundary ran south-west through King’s County as far as Slieve Bloom, then followed the line of the Nore to the south-east as far as Abbeyleix, and further south the line of the hills west of the Barrow to the sea.

It will be seen, therefore, that Leinster included the counties of Wexford, Wicklow, Carlow, and Kildare, with south Dublin, the eastern third of King’s County, and the greater part of Queen’s County—that is, all between the Nore and the Barrow. This wide, and for the most part, fertile territory, included some twelve or thirteen sub-kingdoms, but in the time of St. Patrick two of them appear with special prominence—that is, the kingdom of North Leinster,<sup>1</sup> represented by the diocese of Kildare, of which the royal dun was at Naas; and the kingdom of South Leinster, represented by the counties of Carlow and Wexford, whose chief fort was at Rathvilly, on the Slaney, in the Co. Carlow. The two sub-kings of Cualann, and of Inver on the coast of Wicklow, were cut off by the mountains from their neighbours; but, as we shall see, they did not escape the pastoral zeal and vigilance of St. Patrick.

Cathair Mor, who was not only king of Leinster, but monarch of Erin in the second century, was the great

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<sup>1</sup> Tuath Laighean and Deas Laighean, or Deas Gabhair—*Book of Rights*, 195.



ancestor of most of the kinglets who ruled the province. It is said that he had three wives and thirty sons, ten of whom he mentions in his will, which was a very famous document. These sons became the ancestors of several of the ruling families, and gave their names to the subject tribes in the usual way. Many of them are referred to, as we shall presently see, in the missionary journeys of St. Patrick through the plains of Leinster. The late Father Shearman followed the footsteps of St. Patrick very carefully through this province; but his narrative is confused, and his speculations are sometimes very unfounded and misleading, especially in dealing with the question of the 'Three Patricks,' where his statements are wholly unreliable.

## II.—PATRICK IN MAGH LIFFE.

Both Tirechan and the Tripartite state that Patrick went from Bile Tortain to Druim Urchaili in Leinster, where he spent at least one night according to the latter; but the former adds that he built there a relic-house, or Martarthech, as it is called in Irish, that is a house for the relics of the martyrs. But it really means that he left in the church of the place, and no doubt in a suitable shrine, some special relics of the martyrs, which gave it its name; and we are further told that this relic-church, or house, was situated over the high way through the valley, and that a Leac Patrick, or Stone of Patrick, is there also by the wayside.

It would be most interesting to identify with certainty this church of Druim Urchaili; but it has not yet been done. Shearman seems to think it was west of Kilcock, between that place and Cloncurry, at Drummurragill, but he gives no satisfactory proof, except the similarity of sound in the names. Our own opinion is that it is the old church of Donaghmore, about a mile east of Maynooth, and the churchyard may be seen from the railway on the slope of the ridge, which is crowned by the noteworthy obelisk called the 'Folly.'<sup>1</sup>

This site was certainly on the brow of a ridge. It was on the way from Bile Tortain to Naas, and the name itself implies that it was a Patrician church of considerable

<sup>1</sup>The old church itself has completely disappeared; but the churchyard remains, neatly enclosed by a stone wall, close to the railway, and near the Carton gate, which opens on the Celbridge road.

importance. But we have no certainty about it ; and the point is open to further investigation. From Donaghmore, the road to Naas would lead by Straffan, where Shearman tells us there is a remarkable stone-roofed oratory 'of dubious antiquity,' but he admits that it is still called 'St. Patrick's Church;' and very near it, on the eastern slope of a hill, to the north of the road, called Ardrass, is 'St. Patrick's Bed,' situated in a grassy hollow, encircled by bushes. At its base, as might be expected, is St. Patrick's Well, which has always been greatly frequented by pilgrims. These facts leave no doubt that St. Patrick visited Straffan, either then or on some other occasion ; but, as it was clearly in the direct route to Naas, we think it highly probable that he must have passed that way on this occasion.

The reference to 'St. Patrick's Bed in the grassy hollow under the ridge,' would go far to show that if Donaghmore was not Druim Urchaili, we might fairly seek it at Straffan, and perhaps the 'stone-roofed oratory' would be the identical 'domus martirum' to which Tirechan refers.

Patrick might cross the Liffey at Straffan and go direct to Naas, which was due south ; or he might go up the left bank of the Liffey as far as Clane, and cross the Liffey there by the celebrated Ford of Clane. There is near the ford, on the left bank of the river, a very remarkable mound, and on its western side there is a well called Sunday Well, or in Irish *Toburdonagh*, a name which is usually given only to those places, where the Saint, after a week's instruction, baptised his catechumens on Sunday.<sup>1</sup>

Crossing the river at this point, the Saint had only five miles to cover in order to reach Naas. The Tripartite is here an invaluable and accurate guide. 'Thereafter Patrick went to Naas. The site of his tent is in the green of the dun, to the east of the road ; and to the north of the dun is his well, wherein he baptised Dunling's two sons, namely, Ailill and Illan, and also baptised Ailill's two daughters, Mogain and Fedelm ; and their father offered to God and to Patrick their consecrated virginity. And Patrick blessed the veil on their heads.'

We have gone over the ground ; and, merely from this description, identified all the places referred to. The green

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<sup>1</sup>The ford of Clane was the usual passage over the Liffey at this part of its course, and the present bridge may be taken as marking the site of the ford, which is often mentioned in our legendary story.

of the fort, or dun, is still the fair-green of the town. Patrick's tent was there very naturally, for it was then, as it is now, an open space. The ancient rath of the Kings of Naas has disappeared, but its site can be easily identified in an enclosed field to the 'east of the road,' just inside the fair-green. The holy well is to the 'north of the fort,' beyond the town itself, just inside the demesne wall, which now bounds the road by which Patrick came to Naas from Clane. The old dame at the gate-house will at once conduct the visitor to it, and tell him that it is St. Patrick's Holy Well.

Dunling was dead at the time,<sup>1</sup> and his two sons were joint kings of North Leinster. When the tribesmen saw their kings and the kings' daughters baptised in that blessed well by the wayside, they were not likely to hesitate long themselves in embracing the faith. The maidens twain who thus consecrated their virginity to God afterwards retired to a little church near Dunlavin, to the east of Magh Liffé, where they lived and died in peace and holiness. It was called Cill na n'Inghean, and the festival of the Holy Daughters was celebrated ever afterwards on the 9th of December, which was probably the date of the death of the longest survivor.<sup>2</sup>

Ailill, the father of the nuns, appears to have been the elder, and he seems to have died long before his brother Illan, who afterwards became a great friend of St. Brigid of Kildare, by whose blessing his life was prolonged, in spite of many foes and many battles, down to the year 506, when he is said to have reached the great age of 120, and to have been buried in Brigid's church of Kildare.

But all the men of Naas were not so fervent. Fallen, the King's steward, did not come to meet Patrick, and get instruction and baptism. Then Patrick sent to summon him; but he came not, pretending to be asleep when the messenger called. So the messenger returned to Patrick to make excuses for the reeve—telling Patrick that he was asleep—"By my troth," said Patrick, "it would not be strange to me if it were his last sleep." And so it proved to be. Fallen awoke no more—whence arose the

<sup>1</sup> It is said he was buried in his armour in the ramparts of Maisten, or Mullaghmast (the scene of the terrible massacre by Cosby), no doubt facing Tara, just as Laeghaire was afterwards buried in the rampart of Tara facing the men of Leinster.

<sup>2</sup> See Shearman's *Loca Patr.* 120.

proverb, *Fallen's sleep in the fort of Naas.*<sup>1</sup> It is not safe to mock God or His Apostles.

This narrative, too, shows how Patrick and his familia travelled. They were not welcomed into this fort of Naas, but they had their tents and pitched them in the public green before the fort. This green was an ancient and famous place of assembly for the tribes of North Leinster, even from the time of the Tuatha de Danaan. The word *Nas* itself means an assembly, and gave its name to the royal fort. It continued to be a royal residence down to the year 904, when King *Cearbhall MacMuiregan* was slain, 'and *Nas* is without a king ever since.' It is still a thriving town, finely situated in the midst of the fertile plain of the *Liffey*, which surrounds it in a wide semicircle. The roots of the *Wicklow* mountains rising from the eastern margin of the plain, are very conspicuous in the distance, and afford a fine background to the swelling uplands that stretch away to the base of the hills; their western flanks, looking towards *Naas*, varied in outline and well-wooded, when lit up by the morning sun, rising over the hills, afford many charming views of a landscape highly pleasing and picturesque. The old Irish kings were masters in their own land; and, to their credit be it said, invariably built their duns in the fairest sites which it afforded.

### III.—PATRICK REVISITS HY GARRCHON.

Surely, Patrick, looking over those darkly-wooded hills of *Wicklow* from the fort of *Naas*, must have remembered how he landed on the coast far beyond them some fifteen years before, how he was driven away by *Nathi*, King of *Inver Dea*, and how a few Christians had remained behind, left there, some by himself and some by *Palladius* before him, in the wild mountain valleys, which opened yonder to the east. Was *Nathi*, the fierce king of the *Hy Garrchon*, alive yet, he would naturally ask. 'No, *Nathi* was dead,' but his son, *Dricriu*, reigned in his place, and he also was married to one of the daughters of the high-king of *Tara*.

So Patrick resolved to visit this new king, and, at the same time, see how the scattered Christian communities fared in that pagan land of *Wicklow*. It must have been

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<sup>1</sup> Colgan says it was used as an imprecation, in his own time, 'May his sleep be like *Fallen's* in the fort of *Naas*'—that is, may he never awake.

a toilsome journey over those pathless hills, but nothing in the way of difficulty or danger deterred Patrick when he had God's work to do. He could easily procure guides at Naas who would lead him through the passes of the mountains, and he resolved to set out at once. We have no account of his journey, but his way would naturally lie by Ballymore-Eustace and Hollywood through the Wicklow Gap, and so on to Rathnew, or Rath Inver, where, as far as we can judge, the king of Hy Garrchon dwelt at the time. It came to pass that Dricriu just then had a great feast and meeting of his nobles at his royal rath; and perhaps it was the knowledge of this fact that brought Patrick there just in time for the feast.

But the son was, like the sire, as rude as he was irreligious, and as his wife was one of Laeghaire's daughters we are told that for 'Laeghaire's sake he refused to invite Patrick to the feast and the meeting at Rath Inver.' The hungry Saint and his companions, after their journey through the mountains, were left out in the cold; and, it seems, had nothing to eat. But Cilline, a poor man though a relative of the king, took pity on Patrick, gave him a hearty welcome, and, killing his one cow, gave meat to Patrick, and gave him also the measure of meal which he had brought out of the king's house for his own use. His wife cooked the meat and baked the bread, and whilst she was cooking, and, at the same time, tending her little son, Patrick said:—

O, woman, cherish that little son,  
 A great boar comes from a pigling,  
 A flame comes from a spark,  
 Thy son will be hale and strong.  
 The corn is the best of plants,  
 So Marcan, son of Cilline  
 Is the best of Garchu's issue.

This blessing was fruitful for the child, who became the ancestor of the Christian kings of Hy Garrchon, a far braver and better race than their rude and inhospitable sires.<sup>1</sup>

Patrick, however, saw that it was fruitless to hope for the conversion of Dricriu, or of those under his control, so

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<sup>1</sup> The chieftains and men of Hy Garrchon at that time must bear the infamy of being beyond all others in Erin rude, inhospitable, and anti-Christian, without one saving trait in their character.

he resolved to return once more to the plains of Kildare. But he doubtless visited the three Palladian churches that still existed in Wicklow. Tigroney (Teach na Roman) was in the parish of Castlemacadam, and, as a fact, we find traces of St. Patrick in the parish immediately to the east—that is at Ennereilly, where there is a Kilpatrick Bridge and a Kilpatrick House, showing that there was a Patrician church there too, which would be situated exactly on the by-road from Rathnew to Tigroney. From Tigroney Patrick would naturally return to Kildare by the Glen of Inaile, which was a famous pass since the earliest times, from east to west, almost parallel to the pass through the Wicklow Gap, but further to the south. There is some reason to think that he was accompanied on this return journey by his host, Cilline, the grandson of Dricriu, and if we can accept the authority of Shearman, it was for him, or his son, Marcan, then merely a child, that Patrick founded the church of Donaghmore, which gives title to a parish at the western end of the Glen. Donard, where, according to Shearman, Sylvester and Solinus, the companions of Palladius, preached and died, was just two miles to the north, so that Patrick would not lose this opportunity of visiting them or their successors in the Palladian church. Killeen Cormac, too, would not be far off, which is, according to Shearman, the Palladian church of Cell Fine; for he makes its site identical with that of an old churchyard ‘three miles south-west of Dunlavin.’ This would be exactly on his road, if not to Naas at least to Kilcullen, and, if it were there at all, would certainly be visited by Patrick. We have, however, our doubts as to this identification, and as to making Donard, north of Donaghmore, identical with Domnach Aird we are still more sceptical, and feel inclined rather to identify it with Dunard, near Redcross, not far from Tigroney—exactly where we should expect it to be.

#### IV.—AUXILIUS AND ISERNINUS.

In our view St. Patrick returned from Wicklow to Naas, or, perhaps, to Killashee, about three miles south of Naas, where some of his family were erecting a church, whilst he was making his excursion into Wicklow. It is not said that Patrick founded a church at Naas, or placed a bishop there; but it is said that after his return from Hy Garrechon ‘he went into Magh Liffé—the Liffey Plain—and founded

churches and cloisters therein; and he left Auxilius in Cell Usaili (Killashee) and Iserninus and Mac Tail in Cella Culind, or Kilcullen; and other saints he left in other churches.<sup>1</sup>

This is a highly interesting paragraph, because it once more introduces us to Auxilius and Iserninus, whose names are so often mentioned in Patrician history, especially in connection with the Synod in which they with Patrick were the chief legislators.

As we have seen, all the principal authorities are agreed that 'Auxilius, Iserninus, and others of Patrick's household were ordained on the same day' on which he himself was consecrated bishop, but they did not, it appears, accompany him to Ireland after his consecration—at least Iserninus did not. There is no reason for doubting the truth of the statement made in the Book of Armagh regarding him—not by Tirechan himself, but in the 'Annotations' to Tirechan.

'Patrick and Iserninus were with Germanus in the city of Olsiodra (Auxerre). Then Germanus said to Iserninus that he should come to Ireland to preach. And he was ready to go anywhere else except to Ireland. Then Germanus said to Patrick—'Will you be obedient (and go).'<sup>1</sup> And Patrick said—'Be it as you wish.'<sup>2</sup> Then Germanus said—'Settle it between you, but Iserninus will not be able to avoid going to Ireland.' Afterwards Patrick came to Ireland, and Iserninus was sent to another region (somewhere in Britain), but a contrary wind carried him to the right hand part of Ireland—the south. So far the scribe writes in Latin; then he gives further details in Irish, for he feared to attempt to Latinise the Irish names.

'Then he went (after landing) to his province—a small tribe in Cliu, named Catrige. He went thence and set up at Toicule. He left a saint of his family there. After this he went and set up at Rath Falascich. Therein he left another saint of his family. Thence he went to Lathrach Da Arad, in the two Plains. Therein went to him Cathbad's seven sons; he preached to them; they believed and were baptised: and he went with them southwards to their abode. Whereupon Enna Cennselach banished them (the seven brothers), because they believed before everyone else there. Bishop Fith went with them into exile, each of them going apart. Then Patrick came into Leinster,

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<sup>1</sup>Rolls *Tript.*, 312.

and Dunling's seven sons believed in him. After this he (Patrick) went to Crimthann, son of Enna Cennselach, and he himself believed at Rath Bilech. Patrick, after baptising him, besought him to let go (that is forgive) Cathbad's seven sons and Iserninus together with them, and he obtained the boon.'

Shearman's topographical notes on this passage are valuable, and with their aid we can here give a detailed narrative of the events referred to, which need considerable elucidation.

It has been said that Iserninus was a native of Gaul, but we rather think that he was a Briton; perhaps one of those who went over to Gaul about the year 429, in connection with the spread of Pelagianism in Britain. The fact that the Catrige of Cliu, near Mount Leinster, are spoken of as belonging 'to his own province,' seems to imply that he must at least have had friends or relatives residing there. We know that Gaelic families from the south-eastern coasts of Ireland had long been settled in Wales, and that frequent intermarriage took place between the Irish and the Welsh. We may fairly conclude, therefore, either that the family of Iserninus had come to Britain from Cliu, or that his mother had probably belonged to that territory before her marriage to a Welshman.

The reluctance of Iserninus to go to preach in Ireland arose at first most likely from his knowledge of the rude reception which Palladius and his associates had got in Wicklow. But when he found that St. Patrick was successful in Meath and in the West of Ireland, this reluctance disappeared; if his advent to the coast of Wexford were not, indeed, as is stated, the work of adverse winds rather than of his own purpose to preach in Ireland. It appears he landed somewhere in Wexford, most probably at the mouth of the Slaney, and he followed the course of that river till he came amongst his relatives, the Catrige of Cliu.

Shearman says that this 'small tribe of Cliu'<sup>1</sup> dwelt on the northern slopes of Mount Leinster, and therefore in the modern barony of Idrone East, not far from Clonmore, in the Co. Carlow. Thence he moved to a place in the neighbourhood called Toicule,<sup>2</sup> perhaps the cuil or

<sup>1</sup> Cliu is the nominative, Cliach the genitive, mentioned by the Four Masters, A.D. 527.

<sup>2</sup> Shearman thinks it may have been 'Cowle,' west of Knockatocoyle.



corner of the chief named Toica, who was the ancestor both of St. Ailbe of Emly and of St. Scuthin of Tascoffin. We find him now called by the Irish, Bishop Fith, the equivalent doubtless of his Roman name, and having left a saint of his 'family' there at Toicule to minister to his converts, he himself proceeded further west to a place called Rath Falascich,<sup>1</sup> if that be the true reading, and there he left another saint of his 'family,' which goes to show that the preaching of Bishop Fith in South Carlow was fruitful. Thence he went to a place called Latrach da Arad, 'in the two Plains.' Shearman holds that the village of Lara, between Clonmore and Aghold, in the parish of Mullinacuff, is the place referred to as the abode of the Two Charioteers, and that the two plains are Magh Fea, on the north, and Moyacomb (Magh da Con), on the south of Lara. This identification is important, because it was there at Lara that Bishop Fith met Cathbad's seven sons. 'He preached to them; they believed and were baptised, and he went with them to their abode,' which appears to have been somewhere near Old Leighlin, in Idrone.

But they were not allowed to remain there long in peace. At that time (438 or 439) Enna Cennselach was king of South Leinster. When he heard that these seven sons of one of his sub-kings believed in the new religion, 'before everyone else,' he was wrathful, and drove them from their native territories, so that they were compelled to take refuge with their kinsmen in different parts of the South, and we are told that Bishop Fith went into exile with them: that is to say, he, too, was driven out of Carlow by the king, and accompanied the exiled chieftains, or some of them, to the new abodes in South Kildare.

After some time Bishop Fith made his way to Patrick, and joined his 'family' about the time that the Saint was setting out on his mission through Leinster. His help in that province would be particularly valuable, as he was connected with it by family ties of some kind, and had already laboured successfully therein. One great obstacle also to the spread of the Gospel was now removed by the death of Enna Cennselach about the year 445. He was succeeded by his son Crimthann, who, as we shall presently see, mainly by the influence of Dubthach, the arch-poet

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<sup>1</sup> Shearman conjectures that this Rath may be the great Moat of Clonmore, which is some fifty feet high.

of Tara, became himself a Christian, and at the instance of Patrick, revoked his father's decree and recalled the exiled sons of Cathbad to their own territory. So it came to pass that when Patrick was coming south through Kildare with Iserninus in his 'family,' as the latter had no place of his own, Patrick set him up as Bishop with Mac Tail in Old Kilcullen, but from the fact that two bishops were left there, we may gather that it was Patrick's intention at a later period to re-establish, if he could, Iserninus in his old territory in Carlow. Meanwhile, he gave him regular jurisdiction in the place of his exile, that is South Kildare.

Now Patrick first set up his nephew Auxilius at the place now called Killashee, which is the form that best represents the pronunciation of the ancient Cell-Usaili<sup>1</sup>—the Church of Auxilius. Auxilius was the son of Restitutus the Lombard and Liemania, sister of St. Patrick, of whom more will be found in an Appendix. He was, as we have seen, with St. Patrick when word was brought to them of the death of Palladius in North Britain, and he was one of those 'ordained' along with St. Patrick—the common account being that Auxilius was ordained a priest on that occasion and Iserninus a deacon. We may fairly infer from the fact of his not being placed in Meath, but in Leinster, that he did not accompany St. Patrick to Ireland, but came, most likely, with Iserninus at a later date, that is about 438, as stated in the *Chronicon Scottorum*. It is probable, too, that he joined St. Patrick soon after, and doubtless accompanied him during part of his missionary journeys in the North, or perhaps he may have remained all through with Iserninus, although there is no special reference to the fact. As it is highly probable that St. Patrick did not enter on the Leinster mission for some years after the death of Enna Cennselach, which took place about 445, we may fairly date his first visit to Leinster about 448, which will also mark the date of the appointment of Auxilius and Iserninus to their churches in Magh Liffè. The Scholiast on the Martyrology of Tallaght describes Auxilius, or Auxilinus, as he writes it, as 'Coe-piscopus et frater Patricii Episcopi;' and he adds that he was son of Patrick's sister, as well as the friend, spiritual father, and comarb of Patrick. 'Comarb' could only mean his destined successor in Armagh, that is after

<sup>1</sup> *Ausaili* is the nominative; *Usaili* the genitive form.

the death of Secundinus, which is given under date of 448. The word meant in both cases assistant bishop and destined successor to St. Patrick.

It was thoughtful of St. Patrick to place the two old friends and fellow-students so near each other in the plains of Kildare. Killashee is not more than five miles north of Kilcullen. There is an ancient church there still—but not the Patrician church. A rather ancient Round Tower curiously erected on a square base has been utilised as the tower of a comparatively modern church. It is finely situated on a rising ground surrounded by fertile woodlands, and overlooking the valley in which Patrick so long ago baptised his converts in the Blessed Well, which still flows from beneath a hawthorn tree, as full and clear as on the day that Patrick and Auxilius blessed its waters and poured them on the heads of the kneeling throngs around them. Auxilius, after many labours and miracles, finished his holy life in his church at Killashee, about the year 455. It is not unlikely that the famous Synod, of which more shall be said hereafter, was held at this church of Killashee, for it was convenient to Kilcullen, and would also be a convenient place for Patrick to remain during his journeys through Leinster.

The name of Auxilius is also connected with the church of Cill O mBaird in Donegal;<sup>1</sup> and the compilers of the Martyrology of Donegal who had special knowledge of the country attribute its foundation to him. It may be that when Auxilius first came to Ireland he joined Patrick at the opening of his mission in Donegal, which took place shortly after the arrival of Auxilius in Ireland, and so the Apostle placed him for a time in charge of that far-off church in Tirconnell. His 'day' is not fixed with certainty. By some it is given as March 19th; by others as July 30th, and the Martyrology of Donegal gives it at August the 27th, which is, most probably, the true date.

Kilcullen, where Patrick placed Iserninus, is a still more conspicuous site than that of Killashee. New Kilcullen is a modern village with a fine new church at the ancient pass across the Liffey, but Old Kilcullen is situated on the top of a high hill over the ancient road some two miles to the south. It commands a wide view

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<sup>1</sup> Is it he that was abbot of Cill O mBaird, a good parish of the diocese of Rathbotha? I think it was he without doubt.' O'Clery's note, p. 477.

of the fertile Plain of Kildare, and the windings of the Liffey from the point where it breaks through the Wicklow Hills at Ballymore all along its tortuous course to Newbridge, which can be distinctly seen about ten miles away to the north-west. The ruins of a very ancient church and some fine old crosses remain in the cemetery, which is crowded with graves, but not so much with weeds as some cemeteries are in other parts of the country.

Just one mile to the west of the church-yard rises the still higher hill of Dun Aillinne, crowned by what is beyond doubt one of the finest raths in Ireland. It must cover an area of not less than fifteen or twenty acres, and the earthen rampart around the brow of the hill is still almost perfect, so that a regiment of soldiers with quick-firing guns could hold it against an army. This hill, which rises up in perfect symmetry to the height of 600 feet, overlooks the whole country, and affords one of the finest prospects we have ever seen over as fertile, well-wooded, and well-watered a landscape as any part of Ireland can show. This beyond doubt is the Hill of Almhan, on which Finn and his famed warriors kept their court just two hundred years before Patrick built his church of Kilcullen on the twin summit to the east. The great road to the south ran between them; and no doubt Patrick there, as elsewhere, built his church near the king's dun for protection in troublesome times. The other Hill of Allen, beyond Newbridge to the north-west, has not now a single trace of any ancient mound or rampart on its summit; and, so far as we can judge, was never used as a stronghold at any period in the far distant past.

The Tripartite says that besides Killashee and Kilcullen, Patrick founded other churches and cloisters in Magh Liffe. No doubt Donaghmore, on the south bank of the Liffey opposite Harristown, is one of these, although now it is little more than a name giving title to the parish. Still further east, as we have seen, there is a Kilpatrick, near Baltinglass, which if not founded on the return journey from Wicklow was, in all probability, founded at this period, or, perhaps, a little later on during a subsequent visit of Patrick to Killashee.

#### V.—PATRICK AT NARRAGHMORE.

From Kilcullen Patrick went into the territory called Western Liffè, extending south-westwards towards Athy, between the Liffey and the Barrow. Briga of the Hy Ercain

tribe<sup>1</sup>, who was, apparently, a Christian maiden belonging to the tribe exiled for their faith by the King of South Leinster, gave timely warning to Patrick that 'pit falls' were prepared for him on his road through this district of Western Liffé. But Patrick, strong in faith and confidence in God, pushed on after giving a blessing to the maiden Briga.

Now the sons of Laigis (son of Find) had made deep pools on the road and covered them with green sods so that Patrick might unawares drive into the bog-holes. But, remembering Briga's warning, when he came to the pit he stopped. The youths were watching the event. "For God's sake," they said, "drive on," as if they said, "Trust in your God, and drive on." "Yes, for God's sake drive on," said Patrick to his charioteer, and he drove safely over the treacherous holes. He did nothing or said nothing harmful to the boys, who knew no better: but he cursed<sup>2</sup> Laigis, son of Find, who had instigated them to do the wicked deed. He said there never would spring from him king or bishop, and that a foreign prince would be over them for ever. Laigis dwelt at the place afterwards called Moin Columcille, now Moone, in the South of Kildare; and it may be that the prophecy had special reference to the Geraldines, princes of another race, who have ruled that territory around their castle of Kilkea almost from the Conquest to the present day.

Briga, daughter of Fergna of the Hy Ercain, who gave the warning to Patrick, was blessed by him with a fruitful blessing—and not herself only but her father, her brothers,<sup>3</sup> and all the Hy Ercain were blessed by the Saint. They dwelt a little to the south of the place now called Narraghmore, and Patrick went to visit them there, and remained with them for some time, for he founded a church in that stead. It was of old a famous place, and was known as Bile Macc Cruaigh (the Tree of the Sons of Cruach), but 'to-day it is called Forrach Patraic,'<sup>4</sup> that is

<sup>1</sup> The Hy Ercain take their name and origin from Ercan, who is said to have been eighth in descent from Eochaidh Finn Fothart.

<sup>2</sup> The 'cursing' here, as often elsewhere, simply means the prophetic denunciation of the Divine chastisement of wicked men who opposed, or sought to oppose, by evil deeds the progress of the Gospel.

<sup>3</sup> Briga had, it is said, ten brothers and three sisters. The brothers became great chiefs, and many clerics sprang from them. The sisters became nuns. The King of North Leinster, too, gave them the privilege of getting quite a royal share at the royal feasts.

<sup>4</sup> The *forum* Patricii it is sometimes called in Latin.

the Meeting Place of Patrick, where he sat and taught and baptised the people. The sacred tree had been previously the scene of pagan rites celebrated especially at the inauguration of the local chiefs, which took place on the hill. But now that it was blessed by Patrick it took his name, and became the scene of Christian assemblies gathered there for the worship of God. Narraghmore is merely Forraghmore with the article prefixed and the change of a letter, and still gives its name to a townland, parish, and barony in the south of the County Kildare. Briga, a different person from the great St. Brigid of Kildare, was daughter of Fergna, son of Cobhtach, of the Hy Ercain, whose sons were driven from Carlow by Enna Cennselach. She must have been therefore a Christian herself, and a niece of those sons of Cobhtach to whom we have referred before. A branch of their family had previously occupied this territory around Narraghmore, and so it would seem the exiled brothers and sisters took refuge with them when they were driven from the south of Leinster. The maiden herself and her six sisters became holy nuns, and Patrick founded a church for them close to the place where they dwelt at Glais Eile, which still retains its name in the form of Glas Hely, and is situated about one mile south of Narraghmore. Near at hand, too, is St. Patrick's Well, which he blessed for the special use of the seven virgin sisters. Their festival is celebrated on the 7th of January. Fergna, their father, and their brother, Finnan, are also said to have retired from the world to serve God in solitude and prayer, so that the blessing of Patrick on the maiden herself and upon her father and her brothers, was, indeed, a bountiful blessing. It seems highly probable, too, that when Bishop Fith went into exile with his converts from south Carlow he accompanied this holy family to Narraghmore, and remained with them until he heard of the arrival of St. Patrick at the royal dun of Naas. If this conjecture be well founded we may safely conclude that there were Christians in Narraghmore before they were to be found in any other part of the County Kildare.

#### VI.—PATRICK IN WEST KILDARE AND QUEEN'S COUNTY.

No doubt Patrick founded other churches also at this time in South Kildare. There is a Patrick's Well at Belin near Narraghbeg. It was a ford on the river Greese

anciently called Ath Biothlin, and was occupied by a tribe called the Hy Loscan. There is a Knockpatrick, too, in the parish of Graney, which seems to testify to the presence of the Saint in that district. But, as this was the extreme southern limit of the kingdom of North Leinster, it is probable he returned from that point to Tara before he ventured to penetrate into the hostile territory of the King of Hy Cennselagh.

The Tripartite certainly represents Patrick at this point as going from Tara to visit his friend Dubthach, the arch-poet, for he was long before this time a Christian. Our view, then, is that Patrick, having completed his mission in the eastern part of the kingdom of North Leinster, returned to Tara through its western borders, where, although we have no formal account of his journey, we find many traces of his presence.

There is a Kilpatrick on the left bank of the Barrow, about three miles south of Monasterevan, which was doubtless founded by our Saint; and close to the old castle of Ballyadams, on the right bank of the river, there are two wells of healing virtue, said to have been blessed by St. Patrick. This would go to show that St. Patrick crossed the river at Athy,<sup>1</sup> and went first to Ballyadams, where there was an ancient fort.

From Ballyadams the Saint would go by Stradbally to a place which he certainly visited then, or later on, that is Donnach Mor Maige Reta, which still retains the ancient name Magh Reta in the modern name of Morett Castle, in the Heath, Maryborough. This place was then the seat of the local dynast, and Patrick, in accordance with his usual custom, went direct to the royal dun. 'He abode there for a Sunday,' we are told, 'and founded the Great Church of Morett.' Now, on that Sunday the gentiles were digging the foundation of Rath Baccain, in the immediate neighbourhood. It was to be the new royal stronghold in that place. Now, Patrick sent to forbid them to do this work on Sunday. But they heeded him not. Then Patrick said "the building will be unstable unless offering—that is Mass—is made there every day." He further added that the dun would not be occupied or inhabited

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<sup>1</sup> Its name indicates that Athy was a ford, and no doubt, from time immemorial, it was the usual place for crossing the Barrow from South Kildare into Leix. But the baronies of Portnahinch and Tinahinch formed part of the ancient Offaley, and it is there we find the traces of Patrick on his return journey to Tara.

until the wind (Gaeth) should come out of the lower hill. This referred, they said, to Gaethine (little wind), who rebuilt and occupied the fort in the reign of Fedilmed and of Conchobar, of Tara. Patrick's curse, it would seem, deterred anyone from occupying the fort after it was built, so it fell into decay, until some graceless fellow named Gaethine, heedless of the Saint's malediction, rebuilt and occupied the stronghold sometime between 800 and 817, for Fedilmed died in the last-named year. But church and fort are now equally prostrate; a new church, however, has arisen near the place, but no O'Moore now rules at Morett or on the rock of Dunamase. For ages it belonged to the Fitzgeralds.

Then Patrick, if he were going northward to Tara, must recross the Barrow somewhere at Portarlinton or Monasterevan, and then travel by Rathangan, a few miles to the north-west of which there was an ancient churchyard called the Relig, which Shearman thinks was a Patrician foundation. There is a Patrick's Well on the road to Newbridge, and an old church and cemetery called Cross Patrick some two miles west of the Hill of Allen. A little further north is the parish of Kilpatrick. There can be no doubt that these were Patrician foundations, for the name Cross Patrick is often used, and always signifies the place where Patrick set up a cross to mark the site of a new church in strict accordance with both law and usage from the apostolic times. From this point to the old church west of Kilcock, which Shearman takes to be *Druim Urchaili*, his route to Tara was quite direct to the north and by a well known highway. 'Patrick's Stone,' says Shearman, 'is not far off at a place locally called Clochara.' The old church occupies the summit or crest of a ridge, and its name, *Kilglyn*, in the modern parish of Balfeghan, might refer to the Relig or *Domus Martyrum* over the highway in the valley or glen.<sup>1</sup> It can make little difference whether Patrick was there when going to or when returning from Naas. But the circumstances clearly point to the fact that he founded a church there, and that the parish was sanctified by his holy footsteps.

There were several weighty reasons which might well bring Patrick to Tara at this time. First of all, having heard in South Kildare of the hostile attitude of the King of Hy Cennselagh, it was only natural that he should try

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<sup>1</sup> *Quae sita est super viam magnam in valle.*



to secure the support of Laeghaire in his missionary journey through that country, and although the authority of the High King was merely nominal in Leinster, still the kingly of South Leinster would not wish to do anything to violate Laeghaire's guarantee for Patrick's personal safety. It would seem that Patrick wished also to communicate with his old friend Dubthach before going to South Leinster and, as a fact, he went there for the ostensible purpose of visiting him.

It may be, too, that the great Commission of Nine for the revision and purification of the Brehon Laws had not yet completed their labours at Tara, and of course they would need the guidance and counsel of Patrick at many important stages of their work. Though Laeghaire tolerated this revision, he cannot have been very zealous in forwarding it, so that all Patrick's authority would be needed to push the work forward to completion.

This great work was begun, as the Four Masters tell us, in 438 or perhaps 439, but it must have taken a long time to accomplish, and it is probable that it was not completed until seven or eight years later. The entry in the Four Masters is significant: 'A. D. 438—The tenth year of Laeghaire. The Seanchus and Feinechus of Ireland were purified and written, the writings and old books of Ireland having been collected in one place at the request of St. Patrick. These were the Nine supporting props by whom this was done: Laeghaire, King of Ireland, Corc and Daire, three kings: Patrick, Benen and Cairneach, three saints; Ross, Dubthach and Fergus, three antiquaries.' It is quite evident that this work could not be accomplished in a short time, and as the Nine came from all the provinces of Erin it is only natural they would meet at Tara. We shall have more to say of the constitution and labours of this Commission hereafter.

Then, as some say, St. Sechnall of Dunshaughlin died about this time—that is, 447 or 448. The Four Masters give the former date, but it is a year late. His death would certainly bring Patrick to Meath if it were at all possible for him to reach it in time, and he might easily do so from Kildare. For Sechnall was his nephew and dearest friend; he was with him, as some say, from the beginning in Ireland; he accompanied Patrick on most of his missionary journeys through the West and North; he had composed a famous Latin poem in honour of his sainted uncle; he was his coadjutor and destined successor in the primacy of

Erin. So it must have been a hard blow to Patrick to lose him, whilst he was still comparatively young and vigorous. But Patrick was not the man to question the will of Providence or yield to vain regrets, yet surely he would go far to bury his beloved friend and companion; and, if Patrick did not sit by his sick bed, we may be sure he sought to bless him in the grave. It may be it was to see him or to bury him that Patrick went to Tara and thence to Dunshaughlin on this occasion.

But this date of 447 or 448, given by the Four Masters and the *Chronicon Scotorum*, is open to grave question. The Book of Leinster gives it under date of 457, the year in which Armagh was founded, when 'Sechnall and old Patrick rested,' and the two lists of Patrick's successors in the *Rolls Tripartite* give an episcopacy of thirteen years to Secundinus in Armagh; thus dating his coadjutorship from the 'first' founding of the See of Armagh in 444 to his death in 457. But this merely means, as has been already stated, that so early as 444 Patrick had chosen Secundinus to be his assistant-bishop and destined successor in Armagh, or wherever else he might fix his primatial see. We shall return to the consideration of this question later on. In the same year, 457, the *Annals* in the Book of Leinster mark the death of old Patrick.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### ST. PATRICK IN SOUTH LEINSTER,

#### I.—PATRICK AND KING CRIMTHANN.

THE Tripartite does not mark intervals or interruptions in St. Patrick's missionary work, but it states very distinctly, after giving an account of his mission in Kildare, that Patrick went from Tara, and that he and Dubthach Maccu Lugair met at 'Domnach Mor Maige Criathar in Hy Cennselagh.' Magh Criathar was a territory in the barony of Rathvilly, or rather in that part of it which lies between Hacketstown and Clonmore, a beautiful district surrounded on the north, south, and east by the Wicklow Hills. Shearman places, however, Donaghmore further east on the seashore in the present parish of that name, about three miles north of Cahore Point.

But Patrick did not go at once to visit Dubthach at Donaghmore. The real order of this visitation of South Leinster is given in the Book of Armagh, where it is stated that Patrick first went into North Leinster, and Dunling's seven sons believed in him; then, it adds, 'after this he went to Crimthann, son of Enna Cennselach, and Crimthann believed at Rathvilly;<sup>1</sup> and Patrick, when baptising him, besought him to "let go" Cathbad's sons and Iserninus, together with them, and he obtained the boon.' This is a most interesting passage, and throws much light on Patrick's journeys in South Leinster. He came from Tara, and, according to his custom, went direct to the king's dun at Rathvilly. No doubt, wending southward, he visited the churches which he had already founded in Kildare, and perhaps it was on this occasion he baptised the rest of the seven sons of Dunling, for the baptism of two of them only is said to have taken place at Naas. His road to Rathvilly would lie through the beautiful valley of the Slaney over the fringes of the hills by Baltinglass. The ancient fort at Rathvilly, where the king dwelt, may still

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<sup>1</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 343.

be seen over the modern village—on a fine commanding height overlooking the pleasant waters of the Slaney, which here comes out into the freedom of the plain to rest a little after its rugged and turbulent course through the hills.

Crimthann was soon won over to the Gospel by Patrick's power in word and work. Doubtless he had heard how the kings of Naas and their brothers had given their adhesion to the new religion; he must have learned also of the many wonders wrought by Patrick in the plains of Kildare, and these things predisposed him to receive the new Gospel. An ancient poem, attributed to Dubthach, who was probably there at the time, tells us that:—

The King believed in Patrick without hard conditions.  
 He received him as a chaste, a holy soul's friend,  
 At Rathvilly.  
 The blessings which Patrick gave there never decay  
 Upon beautiful Mel, upon Dathi, and upon Crimthann.

The beautiful Mel, a daughter of the King of the Deisi, was the wife of Crimthann, and Prince Dathi was his son and successor on the throne. They were all baptised at the same time, and in the same Blessed Well which is still shown close to the ancient fort. This was a great victory for Patrick. Having won over the king, he would have little difficulty with his sub-chiefs. Some of them were already Christians, and the others would not be slow to follow the example of the king and his family.

Patrick utilised these favourable dispositions to procure the restoration of the exiled sons of Cathbad, who had been driven out of the country by the King's father. The phrase used in the Book of Armagh is that Patrick besought the king at his baptism 'to let them go,' and Bishop Fith (that is Iserminus) along with them. Perhaps he had some of them in bonds as hostages; but it is more likely that the meaning is that he let them go home to their own territories in the south of Carlow, and let Bishop Fith go there along with them. The context, too, implies as much, for it is immediately added that Cathbad's sons went thereafter to their own abode. 'They are the Fena of Fidh. And they came to meet Patrick and King Crimthann at Sci Patraic'—that is Patrick's Thorn.

Shearman says that the place of this meeting was near Killaveny in the barony of Shillelagh, in the extreme south-west of Wicklow. Near it, he says, there is a

Patrick's Well, which gives name to a townland ; and close to the well is Patrick's Bush, which has long been a place of pious pilgrimage. The townland, however, that bears this name is not in the barony of Shillelagh, Co. Wicklow, but in the barony of Rathvilly, Co. Carlow, some few miles to the north. This was undoubtedly the scene of the interview, and marks the direction of Patrick's missionary journey from Rathvilly, south-east towards Clonmore.

Moreover, at this interview King Crimthann made liberal provision both for the exiles and their bishop, giving them some of the finest land in Carlow. He gave them 'all the land under Grian Fothart, from Gabor Liphi as far as Suide Laigen'—that is to say, the present barony of Forth in Carlow, extending from the Wicklow Hills at Rathglass on the north, to Mount Leinster in the south. Iserninus also got a place for his church at a ford on the Slaney, called Aghade,<sup>1</sup> where the green meadows by the banks of that fair river might well console him for the loss of a wider prospect from his church on the summit of the hill at Kilcullen. It is hard to find a sweeter scene than that which the banks of the Slaney disclose at Aghade Bridge, which is built on the site of the ancient ford. Rich foliage of many hues, sparkling waters, flowery meads, and one lone ruin of the past, all combine to lend their charms to a landscape of harmonious beauty and repose.

Iserninus had previously set up in the barony of Forth, without any express authority from Patrick ; yet, without Patrick's help, his apostolic work in that district would have turned out to be a failure. But now he recognised in the most formal and canonical way the primacy and authority of Patrick over him and the Leinster churches. 'He knelt to Patrick,' and on his own behalf, and that of his monastic family,<sup>2</sup> he received his church and his church lands from Patrick, to whom the king had given them ; whereupon Patrick in his turn 'gave them to Bishop Fith, and to the sons of Cathbad, to be the See lands of their church.' The saint afterwards lived and died there with his first converts in Carlow. The year of his death is not recorded, but the date of his festival is

<sup>1</sup> Ath Fithot, or Ath Fathot = Aghade. It is six miles south of 'Patrick's Bush.'

<sup>2</sup> The phrase in the text of the Book of Armagh says that he knelt to Patrick for his *manche* and *annoit*. It means to do homage for his church and monastery.

marked in the Martyrology of Donegal at July 14th as that of the 'Bishop of Aghade (Ath Fithot), in Leinster.' What a singular commentary on the statement in the Book of Armagh:—"Patrick and Iserninus, that is Bishop Fith, were with Germanus in the city of Auxerre (Olsiodra). Germanus asked Iserninus to come to preach in Ireland; but he would not, although willing to go anywhere else to preach except Ireland. Then said Germanus to Patrick, 'Will you be obedient, and go to preach in Ireland?' Patrick said, 'Yes, if you wish it.' Then Germanus said, 'Let the task be upon you both, for Iserninus too will have to go to Ireland.'" And so it came to pass. The winds drove him hither; but Patrick had the reward of his obedience, whereas Iserninus, who set up for himself, and came first to Cliu, then to Toicule, and afterwards to Rath Falascich, and finally to Lathrach Da Arad, did not find success until he got Patrick's approbation and blessing.

We now come to the meeting between Patrick and Dubthach at Donaghmore Maige Criathar, in Hy Cennselagh. As we have already stated, Shearman identifies it with Donaghmore on the sea shore north of Cahore Point. He holds that Magh Criathar was the plain extending northwards from Cahore Point, and now forming the parish of Donaghmore. The word means the Plain of the Marsh, and would be perfectly applicable to that low-lying sandy sea-board so often flooded by the high tide. Dubthach was, it is true, of the Hy Lugair tribe, who originally dwelt in the south of the Co. Kildare; but his family had lost their possessions there, and the arch-poet has left a poem in which he tells us how the King of South Leinster gave him a new domain, 'sea-bound, slow-waved; eastward it was by the fishful sea.' He also calls it Formael, a district which Shearman identifies with Limbrick, in the parish of Kilmacavan, Co. Wexford, and which it appears extended eastwards as far as Donaghmore by the sea.

If these identifications be true, of which we have little doubt, Patrick's course from the scene of his interview with the king at 'Patrick's Bush' lay south-east by Tinahely through the parish of Crosspatrick, which is in both counties, and touched the ancient territory of Formael or Limbrick at its western extremity. There can be no doubt the Saint passed this way, for the name of the old church implies that Patrick founded it and set up the cross to mark the sacred site. It was situated close to the mearing of the Co. Wicklow on the road to Gorey. From this

point he passed by Limbrick to Dubthach's fort at Donaghmore by the sea. Traces of an ancient rath may still be observed near the ruined church, and it was usual for Patrick to build his church for safety sake near the rath or dun of the chieftain, as we know from many examples.

## II.—PATRICK VISITS DUBTHACH.

Patrick had now traversed a large portion of Hy Cennselagh ; but, although he had placed Iserminus at Aghade, we are not informed that he placed any bishop at Rathvilly or in any other portion of the royal territory. So he must now find a bishop for that territory, and it was not easy to do so, for his family had been quite depleted by previous appointments, and just then he had no candidate-bishop for the office in South Leinster.

The interview between the Saint and the arch-poet is highly interesting. The version given in the Book of Armagh is probably the most authentic.

When Patrick met Dubthach he besought the poet to recommend to him a suitable person to be made bishop from amongst his own disciples. The chief poet of Erin had a large school of bards under his direction. The course of training continued for many years, and the disciples usually accompanied the master when making his rounds. But Dubthach was now growing old, for he was chief poet of Erin when he first met Patrick at Tara some fifteen years before and rose up to do him honour against the king's command. Fiacc was there, too, a mere stripling at the time, but already in training for the bardic order. He was a nephew of the king-poet, being his sister's son, and hence was from the beginning a special favourite of Dubthach.

It would appear, too, that the old bard had destined Fiacc to be his successor in the office of chief poet of Erin, and on this occasion we find that Fiacc and 'his school' were making their bardic round in Connaught, and collecting the gifts of the nobles for themselves and the chief poet, which no one ventured to refuse to an order of men so dreaded, so influential, and, we may add, so rapacious. It is not unlikely, too, that Patrick in making this request had himself his eye on Fiacc as suitable material of a bishop, but he preferred that the suggestion should come from Dubthach rather than from himself. He asked for one of the bardic school, because the young Bards were

the best educated men of the time except, perhaps, the Druids; but Patrick would, of course, have nothing to do with the latter. Their memory was highly trained, they certainly knew how both to read and write, their minds were stored with the songs and traditions of the nation's past history, and their knowledge both of declamation and music would be of use in the ministry of the young Church of Erin.

So Patrick asked the chief poet to recommend him one of his bardic school, who would be 'a free man, of good lineage, without defect, without blemish, whose wealth is not too little or too much'<sup>1</sup>—that is, a man of moderate means. He added, too, in the language of St. Paul, that he should be a man of one wife, that is not twice married,<sup>2</sup> and the Book of Armagh makes Patrick add—what certainly St. Paul did not say—that he should have only one child born to him. The description, however, of a suitable candidate seemed to point especially to Fiacc, and so the arch-poet understood it, for he at once replied, "I know no such man of my 'school' or household, except it be Fiacc the Fair of Leinster, and he has gone from me—on his bardic rounds—into the lands of Connaught." The archpoet had pupils from all Ireland, and hence he describes Fiacc Finn, his nephew, as a Leinster man, and therefore specially suited to be a bishop in Leinster.

### III.—PATRICK ORDAINS FIACC OF SLETTY.

Just as they were speaking of Fiacc they saw the young poet and his company returning from their visitation in Connaught. It seemed to both quite providential, but neither Patrick nor Dubthach wished to ask the youthful bard directly to abandon the glorious prospect of becoming Chief Poet of Erin. Dubthach, however, suggested a means of getting Fiacc to volunteer for the service of the Church. "Proceed," he said, "as if to tonsure<sup>3</sup> me—the first step to make him a bishop—for the young man is very dutiful to me and he will be ready to be tonsured on my

<sup>1</sup> The meaning here is obscure. Some explain it of his powers of speech.

<sup>2</sup> So even the best Protestant commentators explain it—not as a positive but as a negative requirement.

<sup>3</sup> Then, as now, a man became a cleric when he was tonsured, thereby renouncing the world and taking the service of God in the ministry of the Church as his only inheritance. The step was not irrevocable, but it could not be easily revoked, especially by God-fearing men.



behalf"—that is, instead of Dubthach. So it came to pass. When Fiacc saw Patrick going to tonsure the king-bard he said, "What is being done?" They replied, "Dubthach is going to be tonsured." "And that is a foolish thing to do," he said, "for Erin has no poet like him, and if he were to become a bishop he must give up his profession and all its privileges." "You will be taken in his stead," said Patrick. "Very well," said Fiacc, "I shall be a much smaller loss to Erin and the Bardic Order." So Patrick tonsured him, shearing off his hair and beard, and giving him the peculiar monastic tonsure of the time, from ear to ear, which raised such a quarrel afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

'Then great grace came on Fiacc after his ordination,' and no wonder, for he had made a generous sacrifice of himself for the sake of the Church and of his beloved master; 'and he read all the ecclesiastical Ordo—that is, the Mass—in one night: but others say—what is much more likely—in fifteen days. And a bishop's rank was (afterwards) conferred upon him, and he thenceforward became the chief bishop of the men of Leinster, and his successors after him.'

If he learned to read the Ordo of the Mass in fifteen days, except he had some knowledge of Latin before, he must have been a remarkably clever man. But, in any case, the young poet must have been a scholar and would have little difficulty after some time in learning to read the liturgy of the Church. Patrick then gave him a case, or vestment box, with the usual ecclesiastical equipment; but particular reference is made to its containing a bell, a chalice<sup>2</sup>, a crozier, and what we now call altar-charts<sup>3</sup> or tablets, containing the invariable portions of the liturgy of the Mass.

This account of the ordination of St. Fiacc is undoubtedly authentic, for Muirchu, who narrates it in the Book of Armagh, expressly states that he transcribed it from the dictation of Aedh, bishop and anchorite of Sletty, who died in 698. This Bishop Aedh was of the same race as Fiacc—that is, of the Hy Bairrche, and succeeded him, though

<sup>1</sup> That is, when it was sought to get the Irish tonsure from ear to ear changed to the Roman tonsure of the whole crown.

<sup>2</sup> The Irish *meustir*=ministerium, that is the requisites for the Holy Sacrifice, especially the chalice and pyxis or ciborium. It is sometimes used to designate the latter alone.

<sup>3</sup> *Poolire* or *polaire*, variously translated. We have given the most natural rendering.

not immediately, in his church of Sletty, so that he got this account from men who were themselves disciples of St. Fiacc, and who would, no doubt, most carefully preserve the statements and traditions of their spiritual father and founder of their church of Sletty.

Then Fiacc established his See at Domnach Fiacc<sup>1</sup> in Hy Cennselagh, at a place which King Crimthann gave him at the request of Patrick. It was situated between Clonmore and Aghold, now Aghowle, but within the latter parish, which is in Wicklow. The Book of Armagh further tells us that Patrick left there with St. Fiacc seven of his own household to assist him in preaching the Gospel in South Leinster. Their names are given, and they were doubtless well known to the informants of Bishop Aedh of Sletty. They are—Mo Catoc of Inis Fail; Augustin of Inis Beg; Tecan, Diarmaid, Nainnid, Paul, and Fedilmid. They lived together in community life with Fiacc in his monastery at the foot of the hills, but went on missionary journeys to preach the Gospel throughout all South Leinster, and afterwards they established churches and monasteries of their own. We can get, however, only partial and uncertain glimpses of their history.<sup>2</sup>

Mo Catoc is, perhaps, the same person as Presbyter Catan, who is described as one of Patrick's two waiters, or guest ministers of his family.<sup>3</sup> The Book of Lecan speaks of this Catan as of Tamlacht Ard, and so does the Book of Leinster. Here, however, Mo Catoc, St. Fiacc's disciple, is described as of Inisfail, which was undoubtedly the small island (now joined with the mainland), called Beg Erin, or Begery in Wexford Harbour. From this we may infer that Catoc preached in the south-east part of Wexford, and afterwards retired to the little island oratory to end his days in peace and solitude, communing with God alone. His remains were enshrined there, and held in great veneration, until the appearance of the Danes on the coast, when they were removed for greater security to the kindred monastery founded by St. Fiacc at Sletty on the Barrow, near Carlow.

There is every reason to think that the Augustin here referred to is the same as Augustine, who accompanied Palladius to preach in Ireland, and afterwards returned with Benedict to the Pope to announce the death of their

<sup>1</sup> Called also Minbeg, between Clonmore and Aghold.—*Shearman*.

<sup>2</sup> *Loca Patriciana*, 223.

<sup>3</sup> In old Irish *foss*.

master in North Britain. They met Patrick, as we have seen, at Ivrea or Evreux—no matter where—and they would then naturally associate themselves with Patrick in the new attempt to preach the Gospel in Ireland. Augustin was probably a Briton, like St. Patrick himself, with a Roman name, and would naturally desire to be in that part of the country which was nearest to Britain, and maintained most frequent intercourse with its shores. So we find him also sent to preach in Wexford and establishing himself in Inisbeg, which is apparently another island in Wexford Harbour, but smaller than Inisfail. His relics, too, were enshrined there by the loving care of his followers, and were likewise translated to Sletty at a later period.

Tecan is perhaps the Tecce whom the Martyrology of Donegal merely names on the 9th of September. There is a Kiltegan east of Baltinglass in Wicklow, which gives title to a parish. The old churchyard is situated in a secluded spot in a deep mountain valley almost encompassed by hills. Its proximity to Domnach Fiacc makes it highly probable that it was Tecan who gave his name to this church rather than to Kiltegan, near Clonmel; but he may have founded both. Diarmaid, who was a relative of St. Fiacc,<sup>1</sup> was probably only a boy at this time, but like his associates he preached in Hy Cennselagh, and most likely founded the ancient church which still bears his name—'Kildiermit, situated on the east of Tara Hill over Courtown Harbour, in the north of Wexford.' The ruins of the ancient church are marked on the Ordnance map. It is improbable that this Diarmaid is the same as Diarmaid, son of Restitutus, the Lombard, and nephew of St. Patrick, who retired to Inisclorann in Lough Ree. There is no evidence of their identity, and the circumstances make it improbable. All St. Patrick's nephews were located in the ancient kingdom of Meath or on its confines, because they were his earliest associates in preaching the Gospel in Erin.

Of the Nainnid or Naindid, here named, nothing can be ascertained with certainty. Shearman speculated much about identifying him with Manchen the Master, and even with Gildas the Wise; but the speculations are baseless, and seem to be purely imaginary.

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<sup>1</sup> He was a great grandson of Dubthaeh, Fiacc being his nephew. See *Loca. Patr.*, 229.

Neither do we know anything with certainty of Paul or Paulinus, disciple of Fiacc. His name implies that he was of foreign origin, probably a disciple of St. Germanus, who accompanied St. Patrick to Ireland, but, not being familiar with the language, was not placed over any of the earlier Patrician foundations. Kilpool, near the town of Wicklow, perhaps bears his name and holds his relics, for we do not think that the early Celts in Ireland dedicated their churches to the saints of Scripture, but rather to the founders of the churches. They simply called them, as a general rule, by the name of their holy founders—a very natural thing for a simple people to do.

Shearman makes Fedilmid (Felimy), like Diarmaid, a great grandson of Dubthach. This is not unlikely, for when Fiacc set up his monastery and monastic school at the foot of the Wicklow Hills, nothing would be more natural than for the chieftains of his family to send their children there to be educated for the service of the Church. No church bearing his name is found in Hy Cennselagh, but Shearman holds that he went from his monastic school to visit his relatives in the North of Ireland, and that he is the founder and patron of the church of Kilmore, which has given title to the diocese of that name in Leitrim and Cavan. This is not improbable; but the question is a large one and cannot be discussed here.

#### IV.—FIACC FOUNDS SLETTY.

Now Fiacc abode at Domnach Fiacc in the south-western corner of Wicklow, 'until three score men of his community had fallen beside him'—had died and were buried there. The community was, no doubt, a large one. Fiacc was a great bishop; but he was also a poet and a scholar of the royal blood of Leinster, so that his school must have attracted a large number of monks and clerics from all parts of the province. We cannot exactly ascertain how long he remained at the foot of the Wicklow Hills, but his stay there must have been considerable if he saw fifty or his community buried in the cemetery around his church.

Then an angel came to him, and said—"To the west of the river (Barrow) in Cuil Maige (the Corner of the Plain) will be the place of thy resurrection. The place in which they shall find the boar, let it be there they shall put the refectory (of the monastery), and the spot in which

they will find the doe, let it be there they shall put their church." Fiacc knew well where Cuil Maige was beyond the river to the west, for it once belonged to his own royal race of the Hy Bairrche before King Crimthann had driven them far away even to the North of Ireland; but he was afraid to go there without the sanction of the king, and, as Patrick had placed him where he was, he said he would not leave it—even at an angel's bidding—without the sanction and authority of Patrick. In this Fiacc was quite right; he could not carve out a new diocese for himself, or even establish a new cathedral church, without the sanction of Patrick, who had given him his Orders and his mission.

Patrick, hearing this, went to Fiacc,<sup>1</sup> and marked out for him with his own hands the site of his new church and See beyond the Barrow. 'He consecrated it, and put his meeting-house there;' that is, he made it the cathedral church of Fiacc for the future. Crimthann, at the request of Patrick, had made a grant of the place to himself, for it was Patrick who had baptised Crimthann, and he had thus a special claim on the king's gratitude and obedience, and it was there in Sletty, we are told, that Crimthann was buried after he had been slain by his own grandson Eochaid Guinech, in revenge for the expulsion of the Hy Bairrche from their native principality in North Carlow and South Kildare on both sides of the Barrow. This shows that Fiacc, at least, had no sympathy with the parricide, else he would not have given a place in his church to the corpse of the king, who had been the unrelenting foe of all his family. It was fitting, too, that the king should be buried by Fiacc, at Sletty, for it was to Crimthann he owed the place of both his churches, although, in the case of Sletty particularly, it is expressly stated that it was to Patrick, not to Fiacc, the king had given it.

In a beautiful meadow on the right bank of the Barrow, almost directly opposite the residence of the present Bishop of Kildare, which is on the left bank—in that quiet 'corner' of the great plain of the Barrow, under the shadow of the hills of Slieve Margy, Fiacc spent the

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<sup>1</sup> Of course this was at a much later date than that of the present journey, and Patrick must have come from Armagh in his old age to do it. But Patrick greatly loved Fiacc and his uncle Dubthach, for they were the first to do him homage in Tara at the peril of their lives.

remaining years of his life in retirement and prayer. He was then an old man, broken down by years and labours, but he did not on that account intermit the journeys necessary for the government of his great diocese of South Leinster. It would seem from the curious story told in the Book of Armagh that even then he performed his visitations mostly on foot, and also that he was suffering from some physical infirmity which made his journeys very toilsome for him.

Bishop Sechnall (of Dunshaughlin), hearing of Fiacc's sore infirmity and difficult journeyings, went to his uncle at Armagh, and said to Patrick, "it were better for you to give your chariot to Fiacc, for he wants it more than you do." "I did not know that," said Patrick, "let him have it."<sup>1</sup> So Patrick sent the chariot and horses without a driver, we are told, all the way from Armagh to Sletty. The wise animals, however, knew well where to stop in friendly quarters. On the first day they went to Dunshaughlin, where the saint of that church took good care of them, and allowed them three days to rest and refresh themselves. Then they travelled still south to Manchan, who kept them also for three nights, and thence they went to Sletty. But the Tripartite gives fuller details of this marvellous journey, for it states that on the first day they went to the hermitage of St. Mochta, near the village of Louth; next day they went to Dunshaughlin; thence to Killashee, where the friendly St. Auxilius took good care of them. From Killashee they went to Kilmonach, which appears to be the church of Manchan, in South Kildare, and thence to Sletty. The story is useful as showing the stages that in all probability St. Patrick himself made on his journey southward to mark out the site of Sletty church and consecrate it, and it was on that occasion, we are told, that Sechnall suggested to his uncle Patrick to give his chariot to Fiacc.<sup>2</sup> But Patrick could not be expected to do so until he himself returned to Armagh, and then he sent back the team by the same road, and they returned of their own accord to Sletty.

Now Fiacc, notwithstanding his lameness, at first refused

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<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to see how the horses could have been sent to Fiacc, at Sletty, at the suggestion of Sechnall, who died so early. He might have suggested their being sent to Fiacc; the scribe probably added Sletty, with which Fiacc's name was chiefly associated.

<sup>2</sup> This version of the story, as given in the Tripartite, was evidently 'made up' at a later date.

the gift. He was unwilling to deprive Patrick of his own chariot and horses. The steeds, however, showed they meant to stay, for they kept going round the church of Fiacc until the angel said to him, "Patrick has sent them to thee because he has heard of thy infirmity." Then, and then only, Fiacc consented to keep them.<sup>1</sup>

But Sechnall's connection with this story can hardly be reconciled with Patrician chronology. For Sechnall died, according to one account, in 448, being 'the first bishop who went under the sod in Erin.' Another account dates his death at 458, but in either case he must have been gone long before Fiacc came to Sletty, if the latter remained long enough east of the Barrow to see three score of his community fall around him. Perhaps the tale really had its origin, not at Sletty, but at Domnach Fiacc. Still the reference to Armagh points to a date after the death of St. Sechnall, for although Sechnall is said to have been coadjutor and destined successor of Patrick for thirteen years, these years must be dated from 434 or 435, when perhaps Patrick placed him at Dunshaughlin. He was never a prelate resident in Armagh in any capacity.

Fiacc in his old age lived a life of extraordinary austerity. At the beginning of Lent he usually left his monastery unattended, taking with him only five barley loaves, and these strewn with ashes. He forbade any of his monks to follow him, but he was seen to go to the hills to the north-west of Sletty, a wild and solitary district. In one of these, called Drum Coblai, he had a cave which sheltered him. The hill itself has been indentified with the Doon of Clophook, which is just seven miles to the north-west of Sletty. Its eastern slope 'which is steep and beetling' rises abruptly to the height of 150 feet; at its base is the cave thirty-six feet deep by twelve in width. Close at hand there was an ancient church and cemetery, doubtless founded there in honour of the saint. Local tradition still remembers him; but as he was not seen coming or going to his church at Sletty, the wise people came to the conclusion that he had an underground passage through the mountains all the way to his own church. The fame of his sanctity and austerities still clings like the mists of morning to the mountain sides of Slieve Margy, where he spent his last and holiest days.

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<sup>1</sup> The infirmity referred to was either a sore in the leg caused by a cockchafer, or a 'fistula in the coxa,' which would be equally troublesome.

The poet-saint sleeps amid many miracles with kindred dust in his own church of Sletty, within view of the spires of Carlow. An ancient stone cross still standing is said to mark the spot on the right bank of the river—almost opposite the residence of his successor on its left bank—where his holy relics rest. He was one of the earliest of our native prelates, he led an austere and humble life, he was deeply attached to the person and to the memory of his beloved master St. Patrick, and his influence has been felt for many ages in all the churches of Leinster. His poetic *Life of St. Patrick*, to which we have already referred, is beyond doubt an authentic poem; and if so it is the earliest and most authentic of all the *Lives of the Saint*. In any case it is an invaluable monument of the history, the language, and the learning of the ancient Church of Ireland.

Fiacc when ordained had one son called Fiachra, who is said to have succeeded his father in the government of the church of Sletty. He had a church also, doubtless before his father's death, at a place called Cluain Fiachra, but the locality is uncertain. It may have been the old church which has given title to the parish of Kilferagh two miles south of Kilkenny, for the son of so great and holy a father would have little difficulty in getting the site of a church from any of the neighbouring chieftains.

One of Fiacc's successors in Sletty, as we have already stated, was Bishop<sup>1</sup> Aedh who died in 696, according to the *Chronicon Scotorum*. The *Book of Armagh* tells us that this Bishop Aedh of Sletty went to Armagh and brought a bequest to Segene of Armagh. Segene in his turn gave an offering to Aedh, and the latter 'gave that offering and his kin, and his church to Patrick for ever.' 'Aedh left his bequest with Conchad, and Conchad went to Armagh, and Fland Feblae gave his church to him (Conchad) and he took himself as abbot.'

This is a very curious passage—one of the last in the *Additions to Tirechan's Collections*. Segene was Comarb of Patrick in Armagh, and died there in 684. His immediate successor was Forannen for one year. He was succeeded by Fland Feblae, who ruled for twenty years, dying

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<sup>1</sup> The *Book of Armagh* calls him 'Slebhensis civitatis episcopus,' whilst the *Chronicon* merely calls him an anchorite; he was in reality both, like Fiacc himself, who was an anchorite and a Bishop. In that year 696 the sea from Erin to Alba was frozen over by the intense frost.



in 702. It appears, then, that when Conchad went to Armagh, bearing the bequest of Aedh of Sletty with him, which was doubtless some formal acknowledgment of the primacy of Armagh, made, perhaps, by will, Flann was about to be appointed Primate. So he gave his own church, which he then held, to the Leinster saint, and the latter accepted it, making formal recognition of Flann as his abbot, or ecclesiastical superior, both in Leinster and Ulster. This note must have been added by Tirechan, perhaps after the death of Bishop Aedh. It is valuable for this reason, that it seems to be the only formal recognition of the primacy of Armagh which was ever made by any of the Leinster prelates. It is singular, too, that although we have accounts of the visitation of the other provinces by the Primate, and of the dues paid to him in recognition of his primacy, we have no account of any visitation of Leinster made by the Primate of Armagh, although St. Patrick founded so many churches in that province.

#### V.—PATRICK FOUNDS OTHER CHURCHES IN SOUTH LEINSTER.

Of the subsequent proceedings of Patrick in South Leinster, after the ordination of Fiacc, we know little. He did, however, we are expressly told, travel through the country, and found many churches and cloisters therein. Several of these still bear his name, and give us indications of his whereabouts at the time.

Finally he left his blessing to the Hy Cennselagh and to all Leinster, after which (at a later period) 'he ordained Fiacc the Fair *in Sletty* unto the bishopric of the province,' as we have already explained. Fiacc was not metropolitan at first, and was never metropolitan in the modern sense of the word; but it seems that Patrick gave him some kind of general authority over the churches of South Leinster, both bishops and clergy. Indeed, this would be only natural, as several of them were the disciples of Fiacc, scholars of his own teaching and monks of his own obedience.

A glance at the Ordnance map will show us some of the places visited by Patrick during these unrecorded journeys in South Leinster. We find a Kilpatrick and a Toburpatrick in the parish of Kilgorman, close to the seashore, in the north-east angle of the County Wexford

We find another Kilpatrick in the parish of Kilnamanagh, barony of Ballaghkeen North, which shows that our Saint preached the Gospel south of Donaghmore, by the sea, for there are numerous traces of his journey through the north-east of Wexford: and, we believe, popular tradition is still vivid regarding his labours in this part of Hy Cennselagh. It is probable that St. Ibar, of Beg Eri, had already established a monastery in that island, or the neighbourhood, for he is one of the four saints who are said to have preached the Gospel in the south of Ireland before the advent of St. Patrick.<sup>1</sup> If so, Patrick would prefer not to preach in his parochia, or district, seeing that he had more than enough of work to do elsewhere. Besides we are told that the Wexford saint was rather jealous of Patrick's claim to jurisdiction over all Ireland, and was, only with great difficulty, persuaded to recognise it so far as it affected his own territory.

But the time now came for our Saint to cross the Barrow, and preach the Gospel beyond the hills of Slieve Margy. There were two famous fords across the river, one was at Athy, but there is nothing to show that Patrick returned so far north before going into Ossory. The second was the famous ford at Leighlin, which was the usual place for crossing the river from South Leinster into Ossory, by Bealach Gabrain; and there is every reason to think that it was at this point the Saint and his household crossed the stream, but the pass through the hills was about three miles south of the ford on the river, and the territory, from the pass on the west to the pass on the east of the Barrow, formed a part of Hy Cennselagh, as it still forms a part of the Co. Carlow. This great western highway to Cashel crossed the Nore at Ballyreddin, south of Kilkenny, and then bifurcated, one branch going northward on the right bank of the Nore, the other continuing westward, through the plain north of the King's River, into Munster, as we shall presently explain at greater length.

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<sup>1</sup> Ailbe of Emly, Ciaran of Saiger, Declan of Ardmore, and Ibar of Beg Eri, are said to have been pre-Patrician bishops in the south.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### ST. PATRICK IN OSSORY.

#### I.—MAGH RAIGHNE.

THE ancient kingdom of Ossory, in its widest sense, extended from the Suir, at Waterford, to the slopes of Slieve Bloom<sup>1</sup>—that is, about sixty miles north and south; but its average breadth from the Slieve Margy hills over the Barrow, to the confines of Munster, was not more than sixteen miles. It was nearly conterminous with the modern diocese of Ossory,<sup>2</sup> but not with the modern county of Kilkenny, for the Barrow bounds the county on the east for many miles; but it was not the river, but the long range of the Slieve Margy mountains, and their continuation south of Gowran, under the name of the Slieve Grian, or Copenagh Hills, that separated ancient Ossory from Hy Cennselagh. On the north, too, Ossory included the three baronies of Clarmallagh, Clandonagh, and Upper Woods, which now form the south-western part of Queen's County. That portion of the kingdom was called Upper Ossory, and sometimes Leath Osraige—that is, Half-Ossory.

The river Nore for the most part flowed through the centre of this fertile and extensive territory; but on the north-east for some distance it separated Ossory from Leix. The central portion of Ossory consists of a rich and picturesque undulating plain, extending from Bealach Gabhrain on the east, across the country, to Bealach Urlaidhe on the west; and from Kilkenny southward to Thomastown and Killamery on the border of Munster. It was the royal territory, and was known under the name of Magh Raighne; and hence the King of Ossory was sometimes called the King of Magh Raighne.

Now, the Tripartite has only two short paragraphs regarding St. Patrick's journey through Ossory, but though

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<sup>1</sup> From 'Bladhma to the sea' at Waterford.—*O'Heerin*.

<sup>2</sup> We do not here take account of the little parish of Seir Kieran (Saigher Ciarain), in King's County, which is completely isolated from the rest of the diocese.

brief they are significant:—‘He then went (from Hy Cennselagh) by Bealach Gabhrain into the land of Osraige, and founded churches and cloisters there. And he said that of them there would be most distinguished laymen and clerics, and that no province should prevail over them so long as they were obedient to him. After this Patrick bade them farewell, and he left with them relics of sainted men<sup>1</sup>; and a party of his household in the place where the relic-house (Martarthech) stands to-day in Magh Raighne.’ Then two incidents only of this journey are recorded:—‘At Druim Conchinn in Maing, the cross-beam (domain) of Patrick’s chariot broke as he was going to Munster. Another was made of the wood of that ridge. This broke, too, at once. Then a third was made; that broke also. Patrick declared that never would any building be made of the wood of that grove, which thing is fulfilled; even a skewer is not made of it. Patrick’s hermitage (disert) stands there, but it is waste.’ So far the Irish Tripartite.

Tirechan gives only three lines to this Ossorian mission:—‘He ascended<sup>2</sup> by Bealach Gabrain, and founded in Raighne the church of the Relic House.’ And then he goes straightway to Cashel.

Taking the Tripartite text as it stands, it appears to us clear that Patrick entered Ossory by the road that led from the Barrow through the pass of Gowran,<sup>3</sup> which was indeed the only way of entering Ossory from the east. He then followed the line of the present railway from Gowran to Kilkenny, making his way as usual to the royal residence of the principal chieftain of the district. The best local authorities assure us that the royal dun of Magh Raighne stood on that noble eminence over the Nore at Kilkenny, which is now occupied by the great castle of the Butlers; and Patrick, according to his usual custom, would found his church not far from the royal dun. We are not informed who the King of Ossory was at the time, or how he received Patrick and his associates; but we must infer from the narrative that he gave Patrick a site for his church, in which the Saint left so many relics that it came to be known as the

<sup>1</sup> Martrai Sruithi—that is, of ‘venerable men,’ as Sruith epscop means a sainted or venerable bishop.

<sup>2</sup> Et erexit se per Belut Gabrain.

<sup>3</sup> A pass between Slieve Margy and the Copenagh Hill—which is about four miles wide—that is, from ridge to ridge; the valley itself is much narrower. It was a very frequented pass, hence it is called the ‘noisy Bealach Gabrain’ in the Circuit of Muircertach.

'Martarthech,' or Relic House. The ancient name has disappeared; but there can hardly be any doubt<sup>1</sup> that this was the church known as Donaghmore, about two miles south of Kilkenny. Reference is made to this church in the Life of St. Canice of Kilkenny, who then dwelt at Aghaboe, and that reference seems to imply that it was an important church in the neighbourhood of Kilkenny, although its glory was afterwards eclipsed by the younger foundation of St. Canice himself.

We are told also that 'Patrick left a party of his household there' to minister in the church, and, doubtless, also to make it a missionary centre for the whole of Ossory, just as he had left several companions with Fiacc in Domnach Fiacc, east of the Barrow: but their names are not recorded, and it is best perhaps not to indulge in speculation. There was an old church and a holy well a little to the west of Kilkenny, called 'St. Rock's Well,' where a 'patron' used to be celebrated on the first Sunday of August. The first of August was the natalis of St. Patrick's nephew Rioc, of Inishboffin in Lough Ree, and this would seem to point to him as founder of this church, and one of Patrick's companions on this journey.

There are other traces of Patrick near Kilkenny. There is a Glun Patraic 'on the Kells road about two miles from Kilkenny'<sup>2</sup> and his knee-marks in the rock show where he prayed. In the demesne of Sheestown was a rock which was called Ciscaem-Patraic, because the marks of his footsteps were traced on the rock. There was another place near Kilkenny, but different from this, called 'St. Patrick's Steppes,' which belonged to St. John's monastery, and doubtless marked the course of the Apostle's journey. All these ancient memorials of the Saint near Kilkenny show that Donaghmore Maigh Raighne was undoubtedly the Martarthech referred to in the Tripartite.

## II.—PATRICK'S OTHER CHURCHES IN OSSORY.

It is stated, as we have seen, that Patrick founded 'other churches and cloisters in Ossory.' No doubt he made some missionary journeys through that territory, although it is now difficult to trace his course. There are three other

<sup>1</sup> An Inquisition taken at Kilkenny, 18th April, 1623, describes it as 'St. Patrick's Church of Donaghmore.' See *K. A. S.* for 1865, p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> *Loca Patriciana*, 276.

churches that bear the name of Donaghmore in the diocese of Ossory, and these, if not founded by himself in person, were doubtless founded under his authority by some of his household. One is near Rathdowney in the Queen's County; another was near Johnstown; and the third, close to Ballyragget, gives title to the parish. There is a Patrick's Well close to this old church at Ballyragget, which goes to show that Patrick visited this place in person and baptised his converts in the well. It is about ten miles from Kilkenny to the north. The beautiful valley of the upper Nore intervenes—that famous plain known in ancient times as the Airged Ros, in which Heremon built a royal palace on the brow of the bright-waved river known as Rathbeith; and it was there the great father of the northern kings closed his stormy life; and there, too, he was buried in the hearing of its murmuring waters.

The royal fort was just seven miles above Kilkenny on the right bank of the stream, and still bears almost the old name Rathbeagh. The site was a most picturesque one, for it gives a grand view of the 'fair wide plain of the Nore,' as O'Heerin calls it, towards the place where, a little higher up the stream, at Argad-Ros, silver armour, if not silver money, was fashioned for the men of Ireland some 650 years before the Christian era. It is not likely that if Patrick were at Kilkenny he would leave this beautiful and famous place unvisited. We may be sure he ascended the stream and founded in person Donaghmore at Ballyragget, and blessed with his own hands the holy well that still flows beside the ancient cemetery, and still bears his name.

### III.—PATRICK'S CHURCH OF DISERT.

In the second passage given above we are told that the place where the cross-tree of Patrick's chariot broke, as he was 'going to Munster'—not to Ossory—was at Druim Conchinn in Maing, or Mairce, as it is written in the Tripartite, 'Patrick's hermitage (disert) is there, but it is (now) waste.' Colgan thought, and such is our opinion also, that this Disert Patraic must be looked for in the west of Ossory, for it is expressly stated that he was then on his way (from Magh Raighne) to Munster. His route, therefore, would lie through the great plain of Raighne westward to Bealach Urlaidhe, which was the usual road from Ossory into Munster; that is, he went from Donaghmore west-

ward through the valley of the King's River. On this road, about four miles north of Callan, we find there was an ancient church called 'Disert' or the hermitage. It still gives its name to the 'Desart Demesne,' and a title to the Earl of Desart. The church has disappeared before the 'improvements' in the demesne; but 'Church field' still remains to mark the site, which being a 'disert,' or lonely place, chosen for retirement and prayer by the Saint, was, in all probability, some distance from the great highway to Munster. Shearman declares that there is no ridge there, and that the oak woods of Desart must have been too good at all times to merit the malediction of St. Patrick. There may be no ridge in the demesne of Desart itself, but there are many ridges a little to the south, and it was probably across one of these southern slopes that Patrick was passing when the crossbar broke. It is called the ridge of Conchinn, which Shearman says was the name of a ridge in Slieve Margy, and the Tripartite seems to state the same. But it is more likely that the ridge of Conchinn was somewhere on the boundary line between Ossory and Munster. Fer Conchenn, daughter of Fodb, 'dwelt in the sidh or fairy-hill of the men of Femen'.<sup>1</sup> Magh Femen was the plain around Slievenaman, and bordered the Ossorian territory near Mullinahone, from which a pass led by Callan into Ossory. We are safe, therefore, in assuming that the ridge of Conchinn was somewhere in this neighbourhood, and that it was there the cross-bar of Patrick's chariot broke, 'as he was going into Munster.'

We think also that 'Maircc' of the Tripartite does not designate Slieve Margy on the east of Ossory, but possibly the Slieve Ardagh range on its western extremity, which was the ancient boundary between Ossory and Munster, or, perhaps, the Dromderg ridge which unites with Slievenaman and may have been the Drum Conchinn referred to in the Tripartite, where the fairy lady dwelt in her enchanted palace.

If, however, Shearman's view be adopted, then Patrick, having left the County Carlow, went, as we have already explained, to Morett, in the Queen's County, where he founded a church close to the royal dun. Then, going southward, he came into Ossory by Slieve Margy, that is by the ancient road from Athy to Castlecomer. It was a little south of Castlecomer, at the place now called Dysart

<sup>1</sup>See *Dindseanchas of Crotta Cliach*, Rennes D. 441.

Bridge, that his chariot broke down, and it was there he built a hermitage, close to the impetuous Dineen, which has since nearly swept away the ancient cemetery. There, too, as tradition tells, he was going to curse the Hy Duach, but his disciples averted the curse by praying that it might fall not on the tribe-land but on the thatch of their stacks; and when he was again repeating the curse they made the tops of the rushes its object; and once more, when he essayed to curse, they said, 'let it be the red Dineen'; so it came to pass. The thatch of their stacks is often blown away; the tops of their rushes are withered by the same fierce blasts; and the rushing river, red with mountain mud, carries away everything before it, when the rains sweep over Slieve Margy. This, of course, is all mere tradition, which fathers on St. Patrick the wrath of their rushing waters and angry storms. It is more likely that Dysart was founded by St. Brendan than by St. Patrick, and so the inhabitants say, as we were informed on the spot.

It would appear from some passages in the life of St. Ciaran that Patrick crossed into Munster somewhere between Callan and Killamery. The ancient pass through Windgap led into Magh Femen; still it was not Patrick's purpose to go there but into the plain of Cashel; hence, he would cross on the line of the present road from Callan to Mullinahone, and thence proceed almost due west to Cashel. Mr. Hogan says that he must have crossed the borders near the place now called Harley Park, which is some three miles north of Mullinahone. It is, indeed, reasonable to believe that the Saint traversed all the western borders of Ossory, for we find Rath-Patrick and Cross-Patrick, which seem to be memorials of his presence, so far north as the barony of Galmoy. We find also a parish of Rathpatrick in the south-east of Ossory, and a Glun Padraic and Cnock Patrick in the parish of Kilcolum, but no details of the Saint's labours therein are forthcoming.

It is stated in the Tripartite that Patrick when leaving Ossory foretold that 'most distinguished laymen and clerics' would in after ages spring from the men of that territory. Speaking only of its clerics, there is no part of Ireland has produced more distinguished ecclesiastics than Ossory—scholars, saints, and martyrs—and there is no other district of the same area which has produced them in greater numbers. We have been assured by the



venerable prelate, the Most Rev. Dr. Brownrigg, who now rules in Ossory, that the single parish of Mooncoin, in the south of the diocese, has given more than 120 priests to the church, both at home and abroad, within the present generation. The Diocesan Seminary of Kilkenny, too, not only provides a supply of clerics for the diocese, but every year sends a considerable number of young priests, all natives of Ossory, to preach the Gospel in every English-speaking land. No part of Ireland has been more sorely tried in the past, yet no other district or diocese has shown at all times more unswerving loyalty to the Church, or furnished more conspicuous proofs of an enduring spiritual vitality. So the blessing of Patrick was surely an efficacious one for the Ossorians.

#### IV.—ST. PATRICK AND ST. CIARAN.

It is a very interesting question to investigate whether there were any Catholics in Ossory before St. Patrick came to preach there. If we include in Ossory the district around Seirkieran, at the roots of Slieve Bloom, the answer will, to a great extent, depend on the solution of the other question—whether St. Ciaran, of Seirkieran, came to preach the Gospel in Ossory before the advent of St. Patrick. This question has been keenly controverted—one party maintaining that St. Ciaran was born so early as the year A.D. 352, that is before the birth of St. Patrick himself, that he was educated abroad, and met St. Patrick at Rome some twenty years before the latter came to Ireland, and that it was in obedience to St. Patrick's prophetic counsel he came to Saigher, in the centre of Ireland, and there established his church, and preached the Gospel to the natives. The *Life of St. Ciaran*, published by Colgan, is the chief authority for this view; and it is said the genealogy of the saint confirms it. On the other hand, Todd states that this genealogy refutes that view, as Aengus Osraige flourished in the third century, and that Ciaran, if ninth in descent from him, must have belonged to the sixth century. Besides, Ciaran was at the College of Clonard, founded about A.D. 520, and his death is recorded in the *Annals* a little later still. The question is surrounded by many difficulties to which it is not easy to find a satisfactory solution.

The Tripartite makes no reference to any meeting or

colloquy between St. Patrick and St. Ciaran, the patron of Ossory. We must bear in mind, however, that Ciaran founded his monastery at Saigher, far away to the north, at the western base of Slieve Bloom. But the Life of Ciaran, if it be authentic, contains many important references to St. Patrick. Colgan attributes the Latin Life of St. Ciaran which he has published to St. Evin; and there is a very ancient Life extant which is in substantial agreement with it.<sup>1</sup> The saint was born at Traigh Ciarain, in Cape Clear Island, where his mother dwelt at a place called Dunanoir, on an isolated cliff over that wild sea. On the strand itself, close to an old church dedicated to his memory, Ciaran, after his return from Rome, erected a stone pillar, inscribed with an ancient cross. It stands there still by the sea, the first cross ever erected in Erin, an enduring memorial of the spiritual edifice which he was the first to build in Ossory. The Life states that he was thirty years old before he went abroad to pursue his sacred studies. He was ordained bishop in Rome, where he had remained twenty years engaged in sacred study, and then he came to Ireland to preach the Gospel with the blessing of the Pope and of St. Patrick also, who met him in Rome. Patrick told him to return to Ireland before himself, and travel to a place called Fuaran in the centre of Ireland on the confines of the North and South of Erin. There he was to found his monastery by that 'cold stream,' at the place where the bell which Patrick gave him would sweetly ring of its own accord. Ciaran followed out these instructions, and founded his monastery in the wild woods of Saigher thirty years before Patrick came to Ireland, and therefore about the year A.D. 402. His mother, Liadhan (Liadania) accompanied her son, or followed him, to Saigher, and founded a convent for holy nuns which she placed under his direction at the place that bears her name to the present day in the form Killyon (Cill Liadhan), some two miles north of Saigher. If all this be true, St. Ciaran must have been at least as old as St. Patrick, and yet his death is set down as later than 530. He would be in that case, as Colgan gravely states, about 192 years of age, when he went to sleep in the Lord.<sup>2</sup>

We can hardly accept these figures as accurate; yet, there is every reason to believe that Ciaran was a contem-

<sup>1</sup> It has been published by the Marquis of Ormonde. There is also a shorter Latin Life in the Salamanca MS.

<sup>2</sup> The Martyrology of Donegal says he was 360 years when he died.

porary of St. Patrick, that in all probability he was in Munster before our Saint went to preach there, and had received his mission and his education from a foreign source.

Ciaran is said to have been ninth in descent from Ængus Osraige, who flourished in the first century of our era, certainly before Cathair Mor, who in his will left a legacy to his grandson, if we accept the will as an authentic document. In that case the genealogies both of his father and mother would go to show that Ciaran was born before the end of the fourth century. The Life of the saint expressly states that he and three other bishops, Ailbe, Ibar, and Declan, preached in Ireland 'before the advent of Saint Patrick,' which may, however, be understood of his advent to their country in the South of Ireland. He is represented as the friend of Ængus, King of Cashel, long before the death of the latter, in 489.

On the other hand, he is also represented as contemporary of Brendan of Birr, and of St. Ciaran of Clonmacnoise, who was not born until A.D. 512; and also as present in the great school of Clonard, which was founded about 520. We need not, however, attach much importance to these stories of the miracles said to have been wrought when these saints visited each other. Both the visits and the miracles are oftentimes due to the imagination of the narrator, who frequently mixes up the stories of different saints bearing the same name. That Ciaran lived to a great age is certain, for he is represented as a decrepit old man before his death. If he lived as long as Patrick he might easily have come to Ireland before him to preach, and yet have lived some thirty years after him, and seen many of the saints of the fifth century. In the Life of St. Declan it is said that Ciaran yielded subjection and concord and supremacy to Patrick, both absent and present. There is no account of St. Ciaran's meeting St. Patrick in person; only it is stated in the Life that St. Ciaran visited Ængus shortly afterwards, and he frequently met Ailill, brother to Ængus, who succeeded to the throne of Cashel in 489. In our opinion the Life is substantially authentic.

#### V.—PATRICK IN CASHEL.

Cashel was the chief royal residence of Munster<sup>1</sup> in the time of St. Patrick, and for many centuries afterwards.

<sup>1</sup> There was another royal seat about five miles south of Cashel, at Knoek-graffon, on the Suir. It was in later ages held by the O'Sullivan's until they were driven out by the Anglo-Normans.

The name simply means the Stone fort by excellence, with special reference, no doubt, to the rock on which it was built. But the Book of Rights suggests that it meant the Stone of the tribute—Cais-il, because the Munster tribes paid their tribute on the Rock. Long before it became a royal residence it was called Sid-Druim, or Fairy Hill, a picturesque and appropriate name.

Cashel was the capital city of Munster (the ancient Mumha), and next to Tara, and, perhaps, to Armagh, was the most celebrated of the provincial courts. Munster itself was divided at this time into two chief divisions—North Munster, or Thomond, and South Munster, or Desmond. Cashel would be in East Munster, called Ormond at a later date; but in the time of St. Patrick it was recognised as the royal city of Desmond, or South Munster, with supremacy, however, over all other royal duns in the whole province.

Its relations to Ossory were peculiar. Ossory, properly speaking, belonged to Leinster, but it became a portion of the Munster kingdom in consequence of the murder of Fergus Scannal<sup>1</sup> by the Leinster men. The forfeiture of Ossory was decreed as an eric for that crime, with nominal subjection to the King of Cashel. Yet it is expressly declared in the Book of Rights that Ossory owes no tribute to the King of Cashel. In this respect it was placed on an equality with the royal tribes of Munster, who owed no tribute, but merely subjection and military service, to the King of Cashel, for which in return they were entitled to receive certain stipends and gifts from that potentate.

We thus find in Munster, as elsewhere, that some of the tribes were tributary to the ruling house of the province; but the chieftains of the royal family, who might in their turn become kings, and were eligible as such, paid no tribute, yielding only military service and entertainment of the king on his royal visitation. It is expressly stated that besides the Dalcais of Thomond, who were themselves of the royal race, there were several kings in Munster who paid no tribute, namely, the King of Hy Fidgente, the King of the noble Aine, and of Gleann Amhain. Neither did the chief of North Ossory, nor of

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<sup>1</sup>This took place at a later date, in 580. In the time of St. Patrick Munster had no claim on Ossory, but constant wars took place between Ossory and Munster.

South Ossory (that is, the King of Gabhran), nor the King of Loch Lein, a branch of the ruling family, nor the King of Raithleann, near Bandon, who belonged to the same race.

Besides these we find ten tributary tribes are specially mentioned, to whom we shall have occasion to refer during the progress of St. Patrick amongst them, so that in all there are enumerated no less than eighteen sub-kings, both tributary and non-tributary, who were subject to the King of Cashel.<sup>1</sup>

Oilioll Olum was the great father of all the kings of Munster. He had several sons, but the two most celebrated were Eoghan Mor and Cormac Cas. From the former sprang the Eoghanachts, or Eugenic line; from the latter the Dal Cais, or Dalcassian princes. Their father willed that they should take the sovereignty alternately in each line; but this arrangement was by no means regularly carried out.

When St. Patrick arrived in Munster, about the year A.D. 450, Ængus Mac Natfraich was King of Cashel, with supremacy over the entire province. His own immediate territory consisted of the vast undulating plain now comprising the baronies of Slieveardagh and Middlethird—a part of that golden vale the fertility of which is still renowned throughout Ireland. He was sixth in descent from Eoghan Mor, and his family were recognised as the head of all the Eoghanachts of Munster. His wife was Eithne, daughter of that Crimthann, King of the Hy Cennselagh, who received Patrick with such kindness in Leinster, so that the Saint might fairly expect to receive a warm welcome in Cashel also, at least from the queen of the royal Rock.

Ængus was a just and generous prince, famed throughout the land, and he had a long family of sons and daughters, who afterwards became the parents of many kings and saints in various parts of Ireland.

Patrick's road from Callan to Cashel lay due west from Mullinahone, with a bend to the south at Fethard, but we find no reference in the Tripartite to his founding churches on this journey. His invariable custom was to go straight

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<sup>1</sup> These are, in the order of the Book of Rights—the King of the Dal Cais, of Osraige (north), of Deise, of Uí Liathain, of Fermoy, of Muskerry, of Raithliann (Bandon), of Corca Luighe, of Drung, of Loch Lein, of the Ciarraidhe, of Leim na Con, of Gabhran (South Ossory), of Bruree, of Aine, of Uaithne, of Ara, and of Eile (O'Carroll).

to the royal dun and procure the conversion, or at least the toleration, of the chief before preaching to the tribesmen. It would appear that Patrick and his household arrived in the neighbourhood of the royal city in the evening and encamped there, waiting to seek an interview with the King in the morning. But when Ængus arose with the sun he found his palace in terror and confusion, for all the idols were overthrown during the night and were found lying flat on their faces. This would show that there were Druids at Cashel as well as at Tara, and that they had a temple of some kind with idols, probably of stone, on the royal Rock. Just then, it would appear, the King heard of the arrival of the strangers, and he came down from the Rock to receive them, for 'Patrick with his household found him beside the fort. Whereupon he gives the strangers welcome, and brings them into the fort to the place where Patrick's flagstone is to-day.' The flagstone often means the altar stone on which the Saint said Mass or erected his altar. It is not used in that sense here; it rather means the great stone on which he sat within the fort during his interview with the King. The Book of Armagh, however, seems to imply that it was the flag over which<sup>1</sup> he baptised the King and his brothers, the sons of Natfraich, so we may fairly assume it was there also he erected his altar and offered the Holy Sacrifice. 'He also left blessing and prosperity on the sons of Natfraich, and he blessed the fort, namely, Cashel, and he said that until Doom only one slaughter should take place there. And he abode seven years in Munster.' And the learned count that he celebrated Mass on every seventh ridge which he traversed in Munster. The word ridge here probably means something like the modern 'townland.' These were likely separated from each other by fences or ridges, which gave their name to the whole townland. The townland was held in rundale, and hence the necessity of marking off its boundaries by a fence.

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<sup>1</sup> Et baptizavit filios Natfraich i Tir Mumæ *super* petram Coithrighi hi Caissul. This passage seems to show that Patrick was still often called by his old Irish slave name. The King's sons seem to have stood on the stone whilst they received this spiritual inauguration into the heavenly kingdom. The stone, however, is there still, surmounted by an ancient weather-worn cross, also of stone. It was, doubtless, the stone on which the Kings of Cashel were inaugurated, and, perhaps, supported an idol, but it was blessed by St. Patrick, and thenceforward came to be used for the inauguration of the Christian Kings of Cashel, and thus became a symbol of the Christian faith.

The Tripartite then tells the famous story of Patrick's crozier piercing the foot of the King: 'while Patrick was baptising Ængus the spike of the crozier went through his foot.' When Patrick perceived this after the baptism he exclaimed, "Why didst thou not tell this to me?" "It seemed to me," said Ængus. "that it was a rite of the faith"—that is, a portion of the ceremony. "Thou shalt have its reward," saith Patrick. "Thy successor (comarba) (that is, of the race of Ængus and of Aillil, sons of Natfraich) shall not die of a wound from to-day for ever." And then the Tripartite adds:—"No one is King of Cashel until Patrick's successor instals him and confers rank (grad) upon him.' The word 'grad' here means kingly unction, a kind of ordination, such as bishops give to kings, ordaining them for their high office.

Patrick does not promise immunity from a mortal wound to Ængus himself, and we know that both the King and his wife Eithne were slain at the battle of Cellosnadh, or Kellstown, in the Co. Carlow, in 489. It was in Magh Fea, about four miles east of Leithlin. The Life of St. Ciaran points out that their untimely end was a divine chastisement on the queen for the crime of adultery, which she meditated but did not commit, and on the King for aiding the King of Hy Cennselagh in his unjust aggressions on the chiefs of northern Leinster. But it appears the queen did penance and confessed her sin to St. Ciaran; and, although the temporal penalty remained, she and her husband found mercy with God, and remission both of her sin and of the eternal punishment due to it.

A very widespread, living tradition tells another well-known story of Patrick's preaching, either on the Rock of Cashel or on Tara Hill. When trying to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity to his hearers, he saw the trefoil growing on the green sod beneath his feet, and taking it up in his hand, he pointed out how the triple leaf sprang from the single stem, even as the Three Divine Persons, really distinct from each other, were yet One in the unity of the Godhead. It was, of course, an imperfect, but yet, for a simple people, a very apt illustration of the great Mystery he was trying to explain. We can find no trace of this story in the ancient Lives of the Saint; still it has caught the popular imagination, and made St. Patrick's Shamrock the immortal symbol of Ireland's faith and nationality.

Ængus, 'the praiseworthy,' is called by an old poet,

quoted by the Four Masters 'a tree of spreading gold,' so many were the saints and kings and chieftains of his race. Even at this day there are no other Irish families so widely diffused both at home and abroad as the McCarthys, O'Keefes, O'Callaghans, and O'Sullivans; and they are all off-shoots of that spreading tree of gold. The Tripartite tells us that twenty-seven kings of the race of Ængus, and of his brother Ailill, ruled in Cashel 'under a crozier,'<sup>1</sup>—which seems to imply that they were duly anointed kings—until the time of Cenn-gedan, who was slain in 897, as the Four Masters tell us, by his own tribe. His death, as well as that of Cormac MacCullinan, at Ballaghmoon, in 907—and they were both Kings of Cashel of the race of Ængus—would seem to show that Patrick's prophecy, promising immunity for ever to the kings of his blood from mortal wounds, cannot have been fulfilled, except we understand it to mean that 'the wounds received in battle would not prove fatal after their return home.' Being a fighting race they must have got many a broken head, and even that partial immunity from the consequences of their wounds would be a very great privilege for them.

It is not stated in the Tripartite that St. Patrick founded any church at or near Cashel or appointed any 'Bishop of Cashel.' The real reason cannot be that Ængus would not gladly have given him a site for a church near the royal Rock, and land to support the church. Rather we must assume that St. Ailbe had already set up his See not far off at Emly and within the territory of the King of Cashel. Hence Patrick would be loath to set up a new jurisdiction, which might possibly give rise to serious troubles in the district. Patrick visited the King, who was still a catechumen, or perhaps half a pagan, and was well received by him and his sub-chiefs, from whom he got full authority to preach the gospel over the whole of Munster, which was what he chiefly sought.

As a fact Cashel continued to be the chief royal residence of the Kings of Munster down to the year 1100, that is, for some 640 years later. During all these centuries we have no mention in our native Annals of any bishop or archbishop of Cashel. Cormac Mac Cullinan is indeed some-

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<sup>1</sup> Colgan seems to think it means that they were clerics and had received tonsure—in monachos tonsi. We think it refers to the episcopal inauguration of these kings, described above; quite different from the tribal inauguration.



times described as archbishop or bishop of Cashel, but only by inaccurate later writers. He was a bishop, it is true, and for some years King of Cashel, but he is never called Bishop of Cashel. Cashel was still the seat not of the spiritual but of the temporal kingdom. In 1101, however, all was changed. The King of Cashel, Murtagh O'Brien, made a formal grant of the Royal Rock and the territory around it, in presence of all the nobles and clergy of Leath Mogha, to O'Dunan, 'noble bishop and chief senior of Munster.' Thenceforward Cashel became the seat of the Archbishops of Munster, of whom O'Dunan was the first, so far as the primate St. Celsus could make him an archbishop. Afterwards, at the Synod of Kells, in 1152, the Archbishop of Cashel received the pallium, and his successors have ever since been recognised as metropolitans of the ecclesiastical province of Cashel, which comprises practically the whole of Munster.

Cashel is a great limestone rock rising to the height of nearly a hundred feet above the surrounding plain. Its summit was barely large enough to contain the royal fort, and, at a later period, the ecclesiastical buildings, with an open courtyard of richest green in front. On this green stood, and still stands, 'St. Patrick's Stone' now surmounted by an ancient cross. But the stone stood here for ages before St. Patrick, and was, without doubt, the stone on which the ancient Kings of Cashel were inaugurated. At the same sacred spot Ængus received his own inauguration as a Christian king by receiving the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, through which he was 'ordained' a king in the new kingdom of Christ.

As St. Patrick stood by that great stone surrounded by the kings and sub-kings of Munster, and cast his eyes towards the South and West, he saw spread out before him the most fertile plain in Ireland, stretching far away to the distant hills from Slievefelim in the north to the Galty Mountains in the south. It was a glorious land, which he had already well-nigh won for Christ, when he had baptised the King and his family. But he resolved to complete the work and visit in person every part of that fertile, far-reaching plain, well-wooded and well-watered, for he could see from where he stood the noble Suir, sweeping southwards through the woods, its waters here and there gleaming bright in the sunshine.

## VI.—PATRICK IN MUSKERRY.

Leaving, then, the Royal Rock and King Ængus, Patrick proceeded westward to Muskerry by the road that now leads to Tipperary.<sup>1</sup> On this road we find many traces of his presence. The ancient parish west of Cashel, called St. Patrick's Rock, doubtless takes its name either from the Lecc Phatraic, already described, or from some other rock where he set up his altar and built a church, but we are not told that he left any of his family as Bishop of Cashel. It would appear that in this Patrick acted prudently, for it is said that Ailbe had already established his see at Emly, not very far to the west, and claimed some kind of jurisdiction over the royal territory. Afterwards, it is said, he made due submission to the higher authority of Patrick, but on this occasion he does not appear at all at Cashel.

At a much later period, the Cistercians founded a noble abbey in the rich meadows at the foot of the Rock—and its lonely ruins are now a very striking feature in a scene so fertile and so fair. But there was no church there then, although, doubtless, a priest was left to say Mass for the King at Patrick's flagstone on the Rock itself.

The Muskerry (Muscraige) into which Patrick journeyed from the plain of Cashel, by crossing the Suir at Golden, is called Muscraige Breogain in the Tripartite. It takes its name of Muskerry from Cairbre Musc, son of Conaire Mor, a king of Ireland in the opening years of the first century. His race was widely spread through Munster, for O'Heerin mentions six<sup>2</sup> different territories, which bore his name and were inhabited by his descendants. We may be sure that if they were not powerful by valour and numbers they would not be permitted to keep the golden vale between Cashel and Tipperary. Their territory there was, strictly speaking, conterminous with the barony of Clanwilliam, whose fair and fertile fields attracted the followers of William FitzAdelm De Burgo, from whom it

<sup>1</sup>It was called from an early period Bothar Mor, and was the scene of many a fierce conflict in later times. *Four Masters*, A.D. 1560. The view from the Rock of Cashel to the south-west, in the line of the Bothar Mor, shows the whole of the Golden Vale, the richest landscape in Ireland.

<sup>2</sup>They were Muscraige Mitine, Muscraige Luachra, Muscraige Tir Maige, Muscraige Treitheirne, Muscraige Iiathae Femin, and Muscraige Thine in the north of Munster.

received a new name, and who in their turn, at a later date, were dispossessed by the greedy soldiers of Cromwell.

‘Patrick founded many churches and cloisters in Muscraige Breoghain,’ some of which bear his name to this day. There is a parish called Kilpatrick, with an old cemetery and holy well, in the barony of Kilnamanagh Lower, close to the railway, about three miles north-east of Limerick Junction. There is another Kilpatrick giving name to a townland in the parish of Lattin, on the other side of the Junction, about three miles to the south-west.

#### VII.—PATRICK AT KILFEACLE.

But special reference is made in the Tripartite to the church of Kil-fiacla, now Kilfeacle, that is the Church of the Tooth, which is about three miles from Tipperary on the road to Cashel, and which, therefore, marks the route of the Apostle when journeying westward from Cashel into Muskerry. One day, as Patrick was washing his hands in a ford *there*, a tooth fell out of his head into the ford. Patrick went on a hill to the north of the ford, and (missing his loose tooth) sent to seek it, when straightway the messenger saw the tooth ‘shining bright like the sun in the ford.’ So he brought it back to Patrick, and therefore the ford was called Athfiacla, the Ford of the Tooth; and when Patrick founded the church close at hand he left the tooth there, and, moreover, four of his household, namely—Cuircthe and Loscan, Cailech and Beoan, and, bidding them farewell, he left his blessing with them in Muskerry.

From this narrative we may infer that the four clerics of Patrick’s family wished to keep the tooth as a relic of their beloved master. It would seem also that Patrick made Kilfeacle the principal church in that district, and left four of his disciples there to preach and found other churches in Clanwilliam. Tipperary—in Irish, Tibraid Arann—though an ancient parish, rose to importance only at a later date, when King John built a castle there to guard the ford of the Ara, on the great southern road from Tipperary to Cork.

There is a stream flowing northward by the old church of Kilfeacle to join the Multeen River on its way to the Suir. It was doubtless at the ford on this stream that Patrick lost the tooth which gave its name both to the ford

itself and to the parish. On the western bank of the Suir, some two miles to the east of Kilfeacle, William de Burgo, the conqueror of Connaught, founded a Priory for Augustinian Canons, where he himself, with his great-grandson, Walter, Earl of Ulster, and the renowned Red Earl, the first of all the Burkes, after stormy lives, sleep in peace beside the Suir, in the hearing of its murmuring waters. The old abbey is a roofless ruin, the monks are gone, and the Burkes are gone; but the Suir still calmly flows through fields as fair and woods as green as when Patrick blessed the beautiful and bounteous river at the Ford of Golden so long ago.

After this, we are told, Patrick went north-westward 'to Arada Cliach, and abode in Ochtar-Cuillen in Hy Cuanach.' Cullen is still the name of a parish and a village, just one mile west of the Junction, on the borders of Tipperary and Limerick. Coonagh is the name of the modern barony, which, no doubt, anciently included the parish of Cullen. Arada Cliach was the name of a considerable territory, which comprised the barony of Coonagh, and the east of Coshlea barony in the Co. Limerick, with that part of Clanwilliam west of Tipperary town, which lies between them. This territory belonged to the diocese of Emly, for St. Ailbe, its founder, was a member of its ruling family, and established his church in his own tribe land. The Cliu—of which Cliach is the genitive case—came originally, it is said, from South Leinster, under the guidance of a certain Laidir of the race of Fergus MacRoy. This Laidir was 'ara,' that is charioteer to the King of Leinster, hence the tribe name became Ara, or Arada Cliach. There was another branch of the same tribe located further to the north, who gave the name to the barony of Ara, now joined with that of Owney, east of the Shannon at Killaloe.

#### VIII.—PATRICK IN CULLEN.

But though the tribe took its name from this Arada Cliach, part of the territory belonged to the race of Eoghan Mor, who were established at Cashel. Hence we are told that when Patrick came to Cullen, the Eoghanacht of Eastern Cliach (Airthir Cliach), that is the portion of the territory bordering on the royal territory of Cashel, opposed him. Just then it came to pass that a dreadful mishap occurred, which Ailill's wife came to announce on the hill where Patrick was biding, saying. "Swine in their savagery

have devoured our son, O Ailill." Upon this Ailill said to Patrick, "I will believe if you bring my son to life again." Then Patrick ordered the bones of the half-eaten child to be gathered together, and he told Malach the Briton to restore the child to life. "I will not tempt the Lord," said Malach—that is by attempting to perform a miracle so extraordinary. Then Patrick said, "Sad is that word of thine, O Malach; thy cloister will not be lofty on earth; thy house will be the (small) house of one man." He was to have neither companions nor successors as the penalty of his distrust in God. 'That cloister of his was in the north-eastern angle of the southern Deisi; it was called Cell Malaich, but five cows could hardly be fed on the land belonging to his church.' Thereupon Patrick ordered Bishops Ibar and Ailbe to bring the boy to life, and he himself besought the Lord along with them. Then the boy was brought to life through Patrick's prayer. It is added that the boy, when restored to life, preached to the hosts and to the multitudes in Patrick's presence. Ailill and his wife also believed, as well they might; and the Hy Coonagh, too, believed and were baptised in that town. In the same place in which the boy was brought to life is the seat of the aforesaid four persons, Patrick and Ailbe and Ibar, and the little boy.<sup>1</sup> It was on that occasion that Patrick said, "God heals by the physician's hand." We may add that the small cloister of Malach Brit is not Kilmallock but Kilmaloo, which is accurately described as in the north-eastern angle of the southern Deisi, now known as Decies within the Drum, near Ardmore in the county Waterford.

#### IX.—PATRICK AND THE PRE-PATRICIAN BISHOPS.

Now this alleged meeting of Patrick, Ailbe, and Ibar on this occasion close to Emly and in the midst of what appears to be a pagan population, gives rise to some very interesting questions. Ailbe and Ibar are two of the four<sup>2</sup> prelates who are called pre-Patrician bishops, and have been recognised as such by eminent authorities like Usher and Colgan. Yet the death of Ibar is marked in the Annals of Ulster A.D. 500, and the rest of St. Ailbe is

<sup>1</sup> Colgan says that there were four great stones set up to commemorate the event.

<sup>2</sup> The other two are Ciaran of Saigher and Declan of Ardmore.

marked in the same Annals at 526, and again, but with hesitation, at 533 and 541, showing that the real date was rather uncertain. Still, it is clear that he lived into the sixth century, for St. Ibar is recognised as his senior, and he died first of them all.

The fact seems to be that both Ailbe and Ibar, as well as Declan of Ardmore and Ciaran of Saigher, were not disciples of Patrick in the ordinary sense. They did not belong to his familia, they were not ordained or consecrated by him, and, in all probability, they were preaching in the south of Ireland before his arrival there. But their authority was somewhat doubtful, and their success was only partial. When Patrick came to preach in Munster they were induced to recognise his apostolic authority and supreme jurisdiction in Ireland. The evidence of facts, too, was in his favour, for his apostolic mission was already successful throughout the greater part of Ireland, whilst they had made little or no impression even in their own province, as the facts here narrated go to show. It was Patrick converted and baptised the King of Cashel, and that of itself gave him a claim to pre-eminence in the southern province. Now we find him preaching in the tribe-land of Ailbe himself, which afterwards became his diocese of Emly; yet it is Patrick who takes the lead, and it is through his prayers that the half-devoured child was resuscitated. We are told also that Patrick and King Ængus, with all the people, ordained that the archbishopric of Munster should be in the city and see of St. Ailbe, who was then by them ordained archbishop for ever. This savours of a later date, and is a very suspicious-looking statement, written apparently at a time when efforts were being made in the twelfth century to secure the recognition of Cashel as the archiepiscopal See of Munster.<sup>1</sup> There was, it appears, more reluctance on the part of Ibar to consent to the recognition of the primatial authority of Patrick, for 'he was unwilling to receive a patron for Ireland from any foreign nation;' and one can hardly blame him when they had so many saints of their own at home. He belonged to a northern tribe and was apparently educated in Wales, with which the saints of the north had at a very early period frequent intercourse. Hence he gets credit for

<sup>1</sup> It must be admitted, however, that the word 'archbishop' is often not used in its technical sense, but simply means high bishop or noble bishop; and the pre-eminence here is not given to Cashel (which did not exist as a See) but to Emly, which was Ailbe's church and diocese.

saying, in consequence of his disagreement with Patrick, that, no doubt through his influence in the North—he was of the Hy Eochach of Ulad—“he would leave the roads full and the kitchens empty in Armagh.” Whereupon Patrick replied, “Thou shalt not be in Ireland at all.” “It is in Ireland (Eri) I shall be,” replied Ibar; and so it came to pass that word of both saints was verified, for Ibar set up in Beg Erin in Wexford Harbour, and there, about the year 485, he built his little cell and oratory, around which grew up in a few years a great school of saints and scholars. These tales go to show that these four saints were in Munster before St. Patrick, and that there was some jealousy of the British saint who came amongst them claiming pre-eminence and exercising apostolic authority over the whole Church of Ireland.

Then the Tripartite tells us, in connection with Patrick's stay in Cullen, that four persons stole his horses ‘in the north,’ but Patrick forgave them. The leader of the four was Cainchomrac, a leech, another was an artisan, a third was a servant, and the fourth a groom of the attendant or servant, whose name was Aedh. Patrick called this Aedh and blessed his hands, and said that from that day his name should be Lamh-Aedh, or Hugh of the (blessed) Hand; and it is from him that the Lamhraige descend, who, apparently, give their name to the parish of Killamery, on the borders of Cashel and Ossory. There is a story told in the Life of St. Ciaran, which seems to refer to this stealing of the horses of Patrick, and conveys a striking moral lesson. After the conversion and baptism of Ængus at Cashel, a certain Mac Erc, of the Hy Duach of Ossory (stole and) killed a horse belonging to Patrick. When Ængus heard this he was wrathful, and seized the man with the intention of putting him to death. Whereupon Ciaran, at the request of the culprit's friends, came to the king to intercede for the criminal, offering at the same time to pay his eric in gold. The gold was paid, but when the prisoner was liberated it disappeared. Then the king, in great anger, said to Ciaran—“not gold but the shadow of it you have given me for this man.” “All these precious metals,” replied the saint, “are not realities, only shadows made of nothing.” Whereupon the king threatened the saint, but forthwith he became blind, and was glad to have his sight restored by Ciaran's prayer, and thought no more of his gold.

It seems a complete reconciliation was afterwards effected, for we are told that both Patrick and Ængus, with

a great host of chiefs and followers, went to visit Ciaran at his monastery, and Ciaran had eight oxen killed for their refecton : but, as the host was very large, it needed a miracle to multiply the food so as to feed them all. Ciaran, too, by his prayer, changed the water of his well, even Fuaran, into wine to refresh his guests. As this was the well that Patrick had told Ciaran of some fifty years before, it was only fitting that its waters should now give gladness to the heart of the Saint and his companions. This is the only personal interview between Patrick and Ciaran recorded in the life of either. It may be that when the king went north to arrest and punish the horse-stealers of Upper Ossory both he and Patrick, with the king's retainers, went on to Seir Ciaran to visit the monastery of that saint before they returned to Cashel.

It is said that Patrick performed another miracle before he left Cullen. Aillil's wife was pregnant, and sore sickness overtook her. "What is wrong?"—said Patrick. The woman answered, "I saw an herb in the air, and on earth I never saw its like;" and, she added, except she got that herb to eat and thus gratify her longing—"I shall die, and my child in my womb will die." "What was the herb like?"—said Patrick. "Like rushes," said the woman. Then Patrick blessed some rushes, and they became a leek. The woman ate thereof, and became well: and she brought forth a son, and Patrick declared that women who eat the leek in similar circumstances will find their longing gratified. The blessing might cure the longing without any miracle at all.

The Tripartite here tells us that Patrick desired to remain beside Clar at the Rath of Cairbre and Broccan, but a certain Colman, the owner, doubtless, would not allow him to remain there; wherefore Patrick foretold that neither king nor bishop would ever come of his race. He added also that the place would yet be his, which was verified; and there he left a man of his household, namely, Coeman, of Cella Rath.

Clar, or Slieve-Claire, is a conspicuous flat-topped hill—whence its name—west of Galbally, and south of the little parish of Cullen. There is, as we have said, a Kilpatrick, which gives name to a townland in the parish of Lattin, south of Cullen, and this most likely marks the site of the church in question; if not, it certainly marks the route of the Saint westward towards Slieve-Claire, which is now called, we believe, Slieve Reagh.



If we are right in this identification of the locality described in the Tripartite, it would bring St. Patrick very near the place that St. Ailbe had chosen to be his own. It is probable, however, that although St. Ailbe was then preaching in his native territory of Arada Cliach he had not yet selected the seat of his episcopal See. The Tripartite tells us that he came in contact with St. Patrick at Cullen, but there is no reference to his See, which was not yet, so far as we can judge, definitely established at Emyl. The relation of the two saints, however, needs further elucidation, which we are not at present able to furnish.

It would not be right to assume that Colman's refusal to allow Patrick to found a church at the Rath of Cairbre was in any way instigated by Ailbe, although the circumstances are suspicious.

#### X.—PATRICK AT PALLAS GREEN.

Not getting then the site of his church and cloister from Colman at Clar, Patrick sought it elsewhere, and went west of Cullen to Grian in Arada Cliach, but still within the same district. Now Dola, the owner, opposed them there, and would give Patrick no place for a church, whereupon Patrick said that he himself would have no home there, or at best it would be a poor one; that its people would be only two or three, 'and even these will be slaves, and of a lowly race, and the rest will migrate from it'—which they did to the neighbouring territory of eastern Cliach, and 'they are called Dal-mo-Dola to the present day.' It is not easy to say whether it was those who migrated, or those who stayed that have given their name to the parish of Oola, near the junction, but in any case it is only a very small town, and quite unknown to fame.<sup>1</sup>

Patrick was angry at this reception, and when a certain Nena went to him, he refused to see him, saying, 'of Nena will be nothing'—with a neat play on the Irish words. Nipa ni Nena—which was verified; for his descendants were slaves with their kindred in Muskerry Mitine, in the west of Cork. It is probable they were driven out by the Eoghanachts of Eastern Ara Cliach. They are called the Menraighe.

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<sup>1</sup> Quite near the village may be noticed a rising ground, which was, no doubt, the residence of the chief at the time. The remains of his dun are there still.

But although the head men of Pallas Green received Patrick so badly, their wives were not of the same spirit, and they bewailed the Saint's departure without, so far as we can judge, founding a church, or leaving them a blessing. Then Patrick was softened, and blessed the women-folk, and he said moreover that their children begotten 'of foreign husbands would be dignified;' but it is implied that the offspring of the native men would be contemptible and under a ban. It is not safe for anyone to oppose the progress of the Gospel.

Then going a little to the South, Patrick came to Kiltely—so called from the hill Tedel, which was also in Arada Cliach. When he was leaving this place—bidding them farewell—two youths of his family remained behind, it seems on purpose, for they were found sleeping in a brake. "Here will be their resurrection," said Patrick, 'and so it came to pass. They died soon afterwards, and were buried in the church of Kiltely, which belongs to Patrick'—doubtless because he, or some of his household, founded it. On the whole, the people of Arada Cliach around Emly, treated Patrick shabbily. Perhaps they had some secret dislike to the foreign Bishop, who came amongst them claiming to be superior even to their own kinsman, Ailbe (of Emly). No word, however, is said of the See of Emly here, for it was not yet founded by St. Ailbe, although on this journey, as we have seen, he recognised the primacy of Patrick, and made formal submission to him. Patrick, on his part, if we can credit the Life of St. Ailbe, or rather of St. Declan, recognised Ailbe as 'Archbishop' of Munster, in an informal sense, however, just as Fiacc was recognised as 'Archbishop' of the men of Leinster. We have referred to this subject elsewhere, and declared our opinion that Ailbe was preaching in Munster before the advent of St. Patrick, with, however, only very partial success. It would appear, too, from this narrative in the Tripartite that the people of this district did not receive St. Patrick well; and this only goes to confirm what we have said, that having already a Bishop of their own, they were not anxious to receive the Saint amongst them. Ailbe himself, however, knew better, and recognising the apostolic authority and missionary success of Patrick, yielded him due obedience, and was by Patrick canonically constituted chief Bishop of East Munster.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### ST. PATRICK IN THE DIOCESE OF LIMERICK.

#### I.—PATRICK FOUNDS DONAGHMORE.

FROM KILTEELY in Ara Cliach Patrick went into the sub-kingdom of Hy Fidgente,<sup>1</sup> as it is called in the Tripartite. The territory took its name from a certain Fiach, or Fidach, who was a grandson of Oilioll Flanbeg, King of Munster, and it got the name of Fidgente from a wooden horse which he is said to have exhibited at Colman's fair on the Curragh of Kildare. It was, therefore, royal tribe-land, exempt from tribute to the King of Cashel, and at that time it appears to have comprehended nearly the whole of the territory now included in the diocese of Limerick. The term Hy Fidgente was not then confined to the country west of the Maigue and Morning Star, for we know that the Church of Donaghmore, near Limerick, was in it; and the Tripartite clearly implies that Patrick leaving Ara Cliach came at once into the territory of Hy Fidgente, and into that part of it now known as the barony of Clanwilliam. The boundary line between the dioceses of Emly and Limerick really represents the division between those two ancient kingdoms; that is to say, it ran from near Limerick, east of Donaghmore, by Lough Gur to Ardpatrick, or, in other words, nearly due south from Limerick to the Ballyhoura hills. Bruree and Croom were the principal forts of the king of this extensive district; but, no doubt, he had strong places in other parts of his territory likewise. It is clear that Patrick did not go south on this occasion towards Bruree, but rather due west towards Knockainy Hill. Knockainy, a famous fairy hill, was on the borders between the two territories, and just at the base of the hill on the north there is a Patrick's Well, which we may fairly assume was blessed by the apostle for the baptism of the people around Lough Gur—a district that still bears abundant evidence that it was a favourite residence of the ancient chiefs of the Hy Fidgente.

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<sup>1</sup> The diocese of Emly still represents the ancient territory of Ara Cliach. The Hy Fidgente territory belongs to the diocese of Limerick.

From this point Patrick went, so far as we can judge, due north to Knockea, or, as it is called in the Tripartite, Mullagh Cae. There is no probability, in O'Donovan's opinion, that this was Seefin Hill, south of Ardpatrick. The whole context shows that Patrick was rather going north from Killeely, that he travelled through Magh Aine to Donaghmore, and that Mullagh Cae was on his road thither. Magh Aine, which became a sub-kingdom afterwards, designated the large and fertile plain extending from Knockainy northwards to Limerick. It may be regarded as roughly co-extensive with the barony of Clanwilliam.

We quite agree with a local authority that 'Knockea Hill, near Ballingrude in the parish of Fedamore,<sup>1</sup> must be regarded as the Mullagh Cae of the Tripartite.' It has the same name, it was on the direct route of the Saint to Donaghmore, it contains many traces of ancient dwellings on its slopes and summit, and if it were not the palace of the King of Hy Fidgeinte, he must have dwelt not far off to the west at Croom on the Maigue.

## II.—THE FEAST OF KNOCKEA.

The subsequent narrative of the Tripartite gives us a lively picture of the social life of the times. There was a great feast being prepared for the king and his nobles on the summit of the hill, which is described as to the south of Carn Feradaigh—a famous cairn, but not yet certainly identified. We can only infer, from the many battles fought there, that it was on the highway from Limerick to Cork.

It is stated in the Tripartite that Loman, or Lonan, son of Mac Erc, made this feast for Patrick, and it appears that Deacon Mantan, who doubtless had some skill in cookery, at least so far as to please Patrick, was helping to prepare the feast at the king's house or rath. Just then a train of jugglers or mountebanks, who were always welcome at such assemblies, appeared upon the scene, and at once demanded food. Bards, jugglers, and strollers of every kind were privileged people on these occasions, and were often most unreasonable and importunate in their demands. Still no one ventured to refuse them, through fear of their

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. John Begley in the I. E. Record for 1896, who has written a very intelligent article on St. Patrick's mission in the Co. Limerick.

lampoons, which were often scurrilous and bitter, and were recited by the itinerant strollers all over the country. It was a principle both of prudence and of honour, at all cost, to yield them their demands.

Now, the food was not ready, but the strollers were hungry, 'and would take no excuse.' The King himself does not appear to have been present at the time, so Patrick said to the strollers, "go to the King (Loman) and to Deacon Mantan, they will help me," that is, save him from the dishonour of a refusal. But the King and the Deacon would not give them a share of the banquet before anyone else partook of it, saying not unnaturally—'It is not public criers that shall bless for us the beginning of our banquet'—it was intended for St. Patrick and his clerics, not for such strollers.

Patrick, however, saw that the poor jugglers were really hungry, and at all cost he wished, in a spirit of genuine charity, to give them food even before he got it himself. Just then he saw a youth accompanied by his mother coming to the King's feast with a cooked ram on his shoulder, for provisions were requisitioned in this way for the royal banquets when the guests were numerous. Thereupon Patrick said :—

The boy who arriveth from the North,  
To him the victory (of charity) hath been given,  
Unto Cothraige (that is Patrick) he is near to help him,  
With his wether on his back.

Then Patrick asked the boy to give him the wether that he might give it to the hungry jugglers, and thus save his own honour and the episcopal character for charity and hospitality. The boy at once gave it gladly; although his mother was reluctant to give it for fear of the King. Then Patrick gave the jugglers the mutton, and forthwith 'the earth swallowed them up,' which is, perhaps, a strong way of saying that having eaten the King's sheep they at once disappeared, vanishing as completely as if the earth had swallowed them up. Derg, son of Scirire of Deisi, was their leader. Still, Patrick resented the refusal of the King to give the food at his request; and he said of Loman's race there never would be king, nor crown prince, nor bishop. He said, also, that the cloister or house of Deacon Mantan on earth would not be lofty, and that sheep and swine would trample on his grave. But to Nessian the

charitable he said—"Thou art mighty of race." and he baptised him afterwards, and ordained him a deacon, and founded a church for him, that is Mungret, the ruins of which still survive, though, perhaps, not of that early date. Neither did Nesson's mother escape the penalty of her timorous reluctance to be charitable. Patrick said she would not enjoy the privilege of a grave in her son's church, and 'that is true,' the writer adds; 'her grave is in the ground to the west of Mungret, and the bell out of the great cahir or church steeple of Mungret is not heard in that place, yet they are not far distant, only a wall separates them.'

It is clear that Patrick, besides saving his honour for Irish hospitality, wished to impress upon all his followers the great lesson that charity is the first of all virtues, and that the call of urgent need should never be refused in any circumstances whatsoever.

Going thence northward, Patrick founded the church of Domnach Mor Maige Aine about three miles to south of the modern city of Limerick.

If Mantan, the Deacon referred to above, be founder of Kilmantan of Wicklow—as seems likely—Colgan tells us that he visited his church there, and found the site of the church a refuge for sheep, swine, and other animals—but the same has, alas! too often happened to many of our ancient and holy churches. Still, the coincidence is striking. This Mantan is said to have landed with St. Patrick at Wicklow in the beginning, where, as we have seen, he lost a tooth from a blow of a stone—whence his name. This sin on this occasion clearly manifested a spirit of disobedience as well as a want of charity, and hence the temporal penalty with which it was afterwards visited.

The Saint remained there, it would seem, for some time instructing and baptising the people of Hy Fidgente. Word of this was brought to their kinsmen north of the Shannon, so fearing that Patrick would not venture to cross the great river the men of Thomond to the north of Luimnech came in their 'sea fleets' to meet him at Donaghmore, then called Dun-n-Oac-Fene; and Patrick baptised them in Tirglass to the south east of the dun. This is not Terryglass (Tir-da-glas) in north Ormond, which is far away from Luimnech to the north east, but it is the place now called Patrick's Well, which is accurately described as south-east of Donaghmore.

At their head was Cairthenn, son of Blatt (or Bloid), King of the Dal-cais of Thomond, who believed in the Lord and was baptised by Patrick at Sangel.<sup>1</sup> His children up to that time had been in one way or another deformed from their birth, but by Patrick's blessing the next son, Eochu Baillderg,<sup>2</sup> was born a shapely child, fit to inherit his father's kingdom. There is still an ancient graveyard near Limerick to the north-east, which is said to be the site of this church of Sangel, or as it is now called Singland. It was close to the palace of Cairthinn Finn, King of the Dalcassians, whom with his infant son, Eochu Baillderg, Patrick baptised on that occasion. Through the blessing of Patrick, this Eochu became the founder of a mighty race of kings and saints, whose forts and towers and churches are scattered over Clare, lending to that historic county a romantic interest, sacred and profane, which few other counties in Ireland can rival.

### III.—PATRICK AT KNOCKPATRICK.

We are then told that Patrick went to Fininne, to the north-west of Domnach Mor, a hill from which is seen the country to the north of the Shannon (Luimnech). It is, doubtless, said to be north-west because the traveller goes first to the river, which is to the north from Donaghmore, and then travels west to Fininne. There can be no doubt that it is the hill a little south of Foynes, now called Knockpatrick. It rises to the height of 574 feet over the level of the river, and it is the only hill south of the Shannon from which Patrick could obtain that far-reaching view over the County Clare described in the Life of St. Senan. It is said he viewed the land and blessed it northwards as far as Slieve Elne, and eastwards as far as Echte—now Slieve Aughty, between Clare and Galway. Pointing also 'to the green island in the west, in the mouth of the sea,' that is Scatterry Island, he foretold how Senan would dwell therein, and be the light of God's household there, and the head of the counsel of all their country round about. Patrick's Well is still to be seen at Knockpatrick,

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<sup>1</sup> It was a different angel from Victor (sain angel) that conversed with Patrick on that day.' Hence the name.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick formed him of a clot of gore, and that spot remained, hence the name—a foolish story.

and the ruins, or rather the site of the ancient church, is marked on the map, and is surrounded by a very extensive graveyard.

It is probable that there was another Donaghmore in this neighbourhood, and that it was near Patrick's Well, for it is said in the Life of St. Senan that Bolc of the Cinel Dine, King of the Corca Baiscinn, came over the river from the north in a great sea fleet, and invited Patrick to cross Luimnech, and preach and baptise in his country. But Patrick baptised them in the well or in the river, as the Life says, and then blessed themselves and their country from the top of the hill of Knockpatrick. It is more likely this visit took place at Foynes than at Limerick, and that there was a second church called Donaghmore which Patrick founded in that district for the Western Hy Fidge, which by its description seems to be different from the Domnach Mor Maige Aine referred to before—this is called Domnach Mor Cinel Dine. It was most likely the church whose site may still be traced on the summit of that hill overlooking the rushing tides of the Shannon, and which appears to have been for ages a favourite burying place for the people of that district. It is a very commanding site, rising so high over the river, and affording a noble prospect of the wide-spreading Shannon, with the dark hills of Clare in the distance.

From Knockpatrick we are told that Patrick went southwards towards Slieve Luachair, but he did not cross Luachair to go into West Munster. He prophesied, however, of Brenainn or Brendan Maccu Ailte, who was to be born there thirty years afterwards. The text has cxx., but the c. is clearly a mistake of the transcriber for x. As Brendan was born in A.D. 484, this would give us 453 or 454 as the year of Patrick's preaching in West Limerick, which we know from other sources must be very near the truth. Slieve Luachair was the great range of hills that bound the plain of Limerick on the south, sweeping round in a semicircle from the Shannon at Tarbert, and gradually growing wilder and higher towards Abbeyseale, east of which they rise up as a great mountain wall all along the south of Limerick to Charleville. Patrick had no desire to bring himself and his family over this wild range into the remoter valleys to the west of Kerry, especially as he knew that Brendan was the destined evangelist of that country in which he was to be born within a period of thirty years. Kerry is one of the two or three counties in Ireland into



which St. Patrick never penetrated; Clare is another, and we find few traces of the Saint either in Cork or Waterford, except, perhaps, on their northern borders.

#### IV.—PATRICK IN SOUTH LIMERICK.

We have nothing but local tradition to guide us as to Patrick's movements in South Limerick. It appears he went due south from the Shannon to the village of Ardagh, three miles north of Newcastle West. It is the only place in the south-west of the County Limerick where his name lives in the memories of the people; and it was, probably, when turning eastward from Luachair that he foretold the birth of Brendan. He can be traced thence to Ballingarry, 'and near Clooncagh church there is a small enclosure, where, it is said, he remained for one night.' It is not improbable that he took an opportunity on the journey eastward of visiting the royal burg of Bruree, but no express mention is made of the fact. It was, however, directly on his way from Ballingarry to the southern Ardpatrick beyond the pass at Charleville. Just at this point he passed out of the territory of Hy Fidgeinte and came into that of the Southern Deisi.

At Ardpatrick we are told he desired to found a cloister or monastery; and he even marked out the site of his church, and left there his flag-stone—that is the altar-slab on which he said Mass; but the local dynast, Derball, son of Aedh, opposed him, and said, in mockery it seems—"If you can remove the mountain there before us so that I can see Loch Lungae over it to the south in the plain of Fir Maige Feine (Fermoy) I will believe." 'Cenn-Febrat is the name of that mountain, which immediately began to melt, and Belach Legtha, or the Pass of Melting, is the name of the pass that was then opened.' But yet, when the mountain began to melt before his eyes, the impious man declared, "Even though thou do it I will not believe." Whereupon Patrick said to him, "There will not be till Doom either king or bishop of thy race, and the men of Munster will peel (that is, plunder) you every seventh year like an onion."

It is a strange story; yet it is not more difficult to 'melt' a mountain than to cast it into the sea, and both can be done for adequate cause by the apostle who has faith as a grain of mustard seed. To deny it is to deny the Gospel. The road from Ardpatrick to Fermoy runs

through a deep glen east of Seefin Mountain, which must be the 'Pass of the Melting.' There is, however, no lake now, we believe, on the other side of the mountain, so that Loch Lungae must have been drained in the course of time.

#### V.—PATRICK AMONGST THE DEISI.

Although not expressly stated, it is likely that Patrick crossed the hills by this pass, and then journeyed eastward through the territory of the Deisi, a wide-spread and warlike tribe that dwelt between the mountains and the southern sea, reaching eastward as far as Creadan Head, over Waterford Harbour.

These Deisi were originally a Meath tribe that dwelt in the barony of 'Deece,' which takes its name from them. But they were expelled from their territory in the third century by Cormac Mac Art, whose life they attempted, and were forced to take refuge for a time in the South of Ireland. O'Donovan says they subdued all the country from the river Suir to the sea, and from Lismore to Waterford Harbour. In the fifth century, not long before the advent of St. Patrick, Ængus, King of Cashel, gave them the vast and fertile plain called Femen in the Tripartite, south of Slievenaman, towards the east of the Galty Mountains.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, too, from the Tripartite that a branch of this tribe, called the Deisi Beg, had pushed westward as far as Ardpatrick, and northwards to Knockainy,<sup>2</sup> but being surrounded by the Munster men, they were often pillaged and 'peeled' like an onion, and finally expelled from that part of the country. The Northern Deisi may, therefore, be the men who occupied the Baronies of Iffa and Offa East and Iffa and Offa West, in the south of Tipperary, while the Southern<sup>3</sup> Deisi occupied the whole of the County Waterford. It is clear, therefore, that St. Patrick, crossing the mountains at Seefin, went eastward through the territory of the Deisi, probably by Mitchelstown and Clogheen, towards the Suir, at Ardfinnan.

<sup>1</sup>The modern diocese of Lismore shows the ancient bounds of the whole Deisi territory, both north and south of the mountains. It included not only the county Waterford, but all South Tipperary, and a small portion of East Cork, near Mitchelstown.

<sup>2</sup>See *Four Masters*, A.D. 1560. Note where Cuchullin describes Knockainy as situated in Deisi Beg.

<sup>3</sup>It is, perhaps, more likely that the phrase 'Southern Deisi,' in the Tripartite is to be understood of the Deisi of Waterford, in opposition to the Deisi of Meath.

Somewhere there Patrick was kept awaiting the king of the country, namely, Fergair, son of Ross. On his arrival the Saint said to him—"Thou hast come slowly." "The country is very stiff," said the King; sure enough it was a stiff country between the Knockmealdown Mountains and the Galtys, and so Patrick said; but he did not believe the excuse to be genuine, for he added—"a king shall never come from thee." "What (really) delayed you to-day?"—said Patrick. "Rain delayed us," said the King. "Your tribal gatherings shall be showery," said Patrick.

'Patrick's Well is in that place, and there is the church of Mac Clarid, one of Patrick's household. Moreover, the Deisi held their gatherings at night, for Patrick left that word upon them, since it was at night they came to him.' In this way, doubtless, they hoped to escape the penalties threatened by Patrick.<sup>1</sup>

There is a Patrick's Well in the parish of Inislounaght, near Clonmel, which is, probably, the place here referred to. If so, it is likely that Patrick crossed the river Tar at Clogheen, and the Suir at Ardfinnan, and so came to Patrick's Well. This view is confirmed by the narrative: 'Patrick cursed the streams of that place because his books had been drowned in them—thrown, perhaps, into the river at the ford—and the fishermen had refused to give him fish.' And, although they were fruitful hitherto, he said that there would be no mills on these streams, but 'the mills of the foreigners would be nigh to them'—perhaps at Clonmel or Waterford. The 'foreigners' were, doubtless, the Danes. But he blessed the Suir and its banks; and that river is fruitful except where the other streams enter it. These streams must be either the river Tar or the Nar, or both, for they enter the Suir from different directions quite close to each other. If Patrick went from Ardfinnan to Clonmel, he would pass by the parish of Tubbrid, famous for all time as the birth-place and parish of Geoffrey Keating, the greatest of our Irish historians.

In the Life of St. Declan it is said that having himself yielded due submission to Patrick at Cashel, at his return he besought the chieftain of the Deisi, who dwelt at a place

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<sup>1</sup> There are many living traditions of Patrick on the northern slopes of Knockmealdown Mountains; and it is said he even went as far as Ardmore to visit St. Declan, but there is no reference to this visit in Tirechan or the Tripartite.

called Hynneon, to go with his followers, and meet the Apostle, to receive baptism at his hands, and gain his blessing for himself and his tribesmen. But the stubborn chieftain refused, and Declan found it necessary to choose another leader named Fearghal, who duly submitted to Patrick, and gave him large grants of land not far from the Suir, perhaps at Donaghmore, where the name implies that Patrick founded a church. The name of this unbelieving chieftain is called Lebanny, and he is, perhaps, the same who came late to visit Patrick, and may afterwards have refused to receive baptism for himself and his people at his hands. The place where he dwelt is called Hynneon, which, according to Hennesy, is identical with Mullaghoney, about two miles north-west of Clonmel. Perhaps Rathronan, in that neighbourhood, contains the same name. Knockgraffon, still further north, was, certainly, a royal palace at that time, and this chieftain of the Deisi may have dwelt there.<sup>1</sup>

From Clonmel of the Deisi Patrick returned north; most likely by Cashel.

The Tripartite never brings Patrick twice through the same territory on his missionary journeys, its main object being to show the new districts which he evangelized and the churches which he founded. Patrick did not, we think, cross the Blackwater at all, nor enter any part of the Co. Waterford, for St. Declan had that as his own special territory, and had already preached the Gospel with success in the diocese of Ardmore, which included the district now known as Decies within Drum. The old church and beautiful round tower of Ardmore still mark the site of his cathedral, on a commanding eminence overlooking the southern sea.

#### VI.—PATRICK IN NORTH ORMOND.

From Cashel Patrick came unto Muscraige Thire, which comprised the modern baronies of Upper and Lower Ormond along the eastern shore of Lough Derg. His purpose was to baptise and preach, and establish the faith therein, probably about the year 454. He met there—it is not stated where—three brothers, the dynasts of that region, namely, Fuirc, Munnech and Mechar, sons of Fora, son of Connla. Munnech believed at once—before all the

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<sup>1</sup> See O'Hanlon, Vol. III., p. 331.

rest. Mechar also believed, yet not so promptly, but the furious Fuirc opposed Patrick, and hence, though a hoary man, and apparently the eldest of the three, he was postponed to the others, 'and his race was nowhere in the kingdom;' a thing, adds the bardic historian, not lamentable.

Now Munnech had twelve sons, who all came to visit Patrick, but they all came late except Muscan. Wherefore Patrick, the man of God, destined his father's kingdom for him in preference to all the others, 'and that rule still remains unaltered,' that is, the succession of his family, as the reward of his promptness in the service of God. It is a striking lesson for all time.

Now Coninn, one of the brothers, excused himself on the ground that he was building a fence; whereupon Patrick said his family would never effectively secure their homes or their fields with walls or fences. 'If they dig the earth and make a fosse it gapes; if they put up a fence it soon falls; if they build crannogs in a bog they never stand firmly.'<sup>1</sup> Another of the twelve, Cellachan, said he came late because of his debts—'whether due to him or due by him I know not'—says the writer. It was probably the former, and he was collecting them. Then Patrick said "when my amnesty in Munster is over, if thou shalt do harm, even though others may escape, you and your family will not escape, but must either give up the delinquent or pay his eric—seven cumals." That is, the penalties of the law would be rigorously exacted in their case, as he himself exacted them in the case of his debtors. The amnesty shows that Patrick insisted on a truce to the incessant tribal wars during his presence in any territory—a most necessary and excellent lesson of Christian charity. Carthach, another brother, said he would come and believe at once, but he was awaiting to know whether his foster-father would forbid him to do so or not. The excuse was an ingenious and plausible one, for it was difficult to blame the youth for waiting to ascertain the wishes of his foster-father. Wherefore Patrick said his descendants would be expert and subtle in worldly questions, but they would be separated from this kingdom—of Muskerry apparently—that is, have no share in its government. So to each he 'said a word,' meting out suitable temporal penalties for their

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<sup>1</sup> Crannogs, built on poles driven into the mud, were often built in lakes and marshes for safety sake.

negligence, 'and that word has been fulfilled,' adds the writer.

It is clear from the foregoing passage that when Patrick was preaching in Munster he required the kings of the province to keep peace with each other—an inestimable blessing, if it could be effectually carried out. Reference is made in an old poem, quoted in the Tripartite, to another rule of Patrick, imposed by him on Munster, as well as on all the rest of Ireland. This 'rule' seems to be the payment of some tribute to the church of Armagh, in recognition of its Primacy as the See of Patrick and the Mother Church of all Ireland.

When Cothraige, that is Patrick, imposed a rule upon Virginal Ireland, on the host of the isle he conferred a lasting blessing :—

This is the blessing, he gave it up to seven times,  
 On everyone who shall keep his rule and his law,  
 Whoever breaks the rule—awful example—  
 He said they would not see him in the land of the Saints.  
 And that his race would not be in esteem ever after,  
 And his race would never have its reprisal.  
 Patrick's rule in great Munster was imposed on every clan,  
 Until Dungalach of the race of Failbe Flann broke it,  
 Dungalach, son of Faelgus, the grandson of true Natfraich.  
 It is he who first transgressed Patrick's rule in the beginning.  
 It is told in old tales, every multitude knows it,  
 His successorship is not in Cashel of the Kings,  
 Though he won battles, of his offspring there is not  
 A high bishop, nor an erenagh, nor a prince, nor a sage,  
 There is no illustrious man of his strange race,  
 If there is none now, neither will there be any found till the Day  
 of Doom.

The rivalry between Conn's Half and Mogh's Half of Erin made it very difficult for Patrick and his successors in Armagh to secure at all times a recognition of their spiritual primacy in Munster. The princes of the South feared that this recognition might involve a recognition of the claim to temporal supremacy also, as a right of the northern kings. Hence the tribute to Armagh was not paid with regularity, and the primates were rarely in a position to enforce their claims, either by the spiritual or temporal sword. We are told, indeed, that Ængus formally recognised this obligation when he was baptised by Patrick in Cashel, and that on behalf of himself and the Kings of Munster for ever he promised to fulfil it faith-

fully. But we see that at a later period Dungalach, grandson of another Natfraich, who was himself a grandson of Failbe Flann, repudiated this supremacy of Armagh, and refused to pay the tribute. He appears to be the King of Hy Liathain, whose death is recorded A.D. 760, by the Four Masters. But in the twelfth century, as we shall see, the primacy of St. Celsus was recognised throughout the South, and he levied the tax of Patrick in all the churches that were recognised as Patrician churches founded by the Saint—of these Ardpatrick appears to have been the chief, and Celsus for some time made it his home.

The subsequent work of Patrick during his stay in Munster is then summed up—‘He founded churches and cloisters; he ordained folk of every grade; he healed all manner of sick people; and he raised the dead to life. Then he bade the Munstermen farewell, and left his blessing with them,’ when he came to Brosnacha river, which was practically the northern limit of their territory. The story of the parting is very touching.

Patrick went to the Brosnacha, and the men of Munster went after him ‘as if each of them would outstrip the other,’ when they heard he was going to leave them. Nay, whole households—men, women and children—fared after Patrick to the river; and when they overtook him at the stream, they uttered a great shout and a cry of joy,<sup>1</sup> because they saw him once more before he left them; and it was from that great cheering, so full of joy, that the river got its name. And then, in presence of all the people, Patrick brought to life one Fot, son of Derach, a youth of the age of twenty-seven.<sup>2</sup> And he fed the whole multitude at the Craibechea, by blessing a bushel of corn which was given to him by Bishop Trian, a pilgrim of the Romans, whence it was called the Feast of the Bushel. After that he blessed them once more, saying :—

A blessing on the Men of Munster,  
On men, boys, and women.  
A blessing on the land  
That gives them fruit ;  
A blessing on every treasure  
That shall grow on their plains,  
So that no one shall want help ;  
God’s blessing be on Munster ;

<sup>1</sup> *Broscair*, Colgan says, means joy.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Not twenty-seven years dead’—that is not stated. The other is the more likely meaning. The figures are merely given XXVII.

A blessing on their hills,  
 On their hearth stones,  
 A blessing on their glens,  
 A blessing on their highlands,  
 Like sand of the sea under ships  
 Be the number of their homes,  
 On slopes, on plains,  
 On mountains, on peaks.

There can hardly be any doubt that the scene of this touching farewell was the place now called Riverstown, which was then a ford on the Brosna river, less than a mile to the south of the modern Birr. It was the great pass from Munster to the north, and to this day the diocese of Meath comes close to the town of Birr, which is itself in the diocese of Killaloe, whose boundary at the present day represents the ancient limits of the kingdom of Thomond.

But the barony of Ballybritt, which extends eastwards from Birr to the northern extremity of Slieve Bloom, was certainly in the ancient Munster, and is still, with the exception of Seirkieran, in the diocese of Killaloe. Now, it is expressly stated that Patrick went from Munster, not into Meath, but into Offaley. Hence we must conclude that he crossed the river either at Riverstown, or, what is more likely, further south at the village of Brosna, seeing that he passed not into Meath, but through Ely O'Carroll, along the western slopes of the mountain, until he came to its northern extremity, where he passed into Offaley.<sup>1</sup>

#### VII.—PATRICK IN OFFALEY.

This ancient and famous kingdom extended from the northern edge of Slieve Bloom eastward to the Hill of Allen, in Kildare, and from Croghan Hill in the north to the Heath of Maryborough, where it joined Leix, on its southern border. With the exception of the Hill of Croghan and the Ridge of Killeigh, it is one vast plain, interspersed with bogs and fertile cluains, as level as the sea, so that looking north from Portarlinton, not a single eminence, except the Hill of Croghan, is conspicuous enough to catch the eye. It is one wide expanse of moorland and lime-

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<sup>1</sup> The river Brosna, from Birr westward to the Shannon, was the boundary of Munster where it touched Meath; from Birr southward, it was the boundary between Muskerry and Ely O'Carroll; but the latter was a part of Munster, though not of Muskerry.



stone plain, through which the sluggish feeders of the infant Barrow carry off the drainage of the bogs.

Cathair Mor, the famous Leinster King, who flourished in the second century of the Christian era, bequeathed this territory, as well as a great part of western Kildare, to his eldest son, Ros Failge; and his descendants held the land in the time of St. Patrick. Now, the ruling prince at that time was called Failge Berraide; and when he heard that Patrick was coming into his territory he boastfully declared that he would kill the tailcend in revenge for Cenn Cruach, or Crom Cruach, Failge's god, whom Patrick had overthrown at Magh Slecht, in Leitrim.<sup>1</sup>

Patrick's servants heard of those vain boastings: still they concealed their fears from Patrick, who knew nothing of the special danger to which he was exposed in Offaley. But his devoted charioteer, Odran, resolved to save the life of his beloved master, if necessary at the sacrifice of his own. So when they came round the point of Slieve Bloom at Brittas into Offaley, Odran said to Patrick, "I am now a long time driving for you, my good master Patrick; will you take my place to-day and let me sit to rest myself in your place?" Patrick readily granted this request of his old and faithful servant. So they drove northward from Brittas to Killeigh, so far as we can judge, and from Killeigh to the place now called Geashill, but which was then named Bridam—it is in fact the same name under another form. No doubt there was a royal dun at this place, for it was always one of the strongholds of Offaley, and many a bloody struggle took place in its neighbourhood between the Gael and the Saxon in later ages. There it was that the accursed Failge Berraide approaching the chariot of the Saint, gave suddenly a spear thrust to Odran, who sat in Patrick's seat,<sup>2</sup> and thus received the deadly blow intended for his master. Patrick at once cried out in anger, "My curse"—"on the tree of Bridam," said the dying Odran, who thus diverted the curse of his master from his slayer to the tree. Patrick

<sup>1</sup> "He heard of pagan altars dishonoured and overthrown, etc. . . .  
Then swear he by his demons, with proud and wicked will,  
That he would lie 'neath tree and sky;  
Would watch in light and murk night,  
And that impostor kill."—Poem by Rev. M. Watson, S.J.

<sup>2</sup> It would appear that Patrick was leading the team on foot, as his charioteer used to do. The tracks were bad, and it was necessary very often to lead the team.

yielded too when he saw the great charity of his servant. "Be it so," he said. 'Still,' says the Tripartite, 'Failge died at once and went down to hell,' 'But as to Failge<sup>1</sup> Ross,' who appears to have been his brother, 'he meditated no guile against the Saint, and it is his children who are in the land to-day.' He was the ancestor of the three great families, the O'Conors, the O'Dempseys, and the O'Dunns, who in after times ruled all the land. The O'Conors, the eldest branch of the line, held the kingship for many centuries, and dwelt chiefly at Geashill and at Croghan, where they had a strong fort on the southern slope of the hill. They did not dwell at Philipstown, which was an Anglo-Norman stronghold. O'Dunn's chief fortress was on the southern border at the foot of Slieve Bloom and the O'Dempsey, who became Viscount Clanmaliere in the time of Charles the First, had his chief fortress at Ballykeane, about six miles north-west of Portarlington. Patrick blessed their common ancestor, Failge Ross, and the writer of the Tripartite adds that from him is the sovereignty of the land for ever. It was so then and for many centuries afterwards, but Cromwell and King William made many changes in Erin never dreamt of by the holy men who wrote the Tripartite. Still the Gael may get their own again and verify the prophecy.

Patrick was badly treated in Offaley, and, if we can judge from the brief narrative of his journey, he made only a short stay there, merely passing through it. We are not told that he founded a single church or left a single one of his disciples in that territory; yet we find a few traces of him in the district, but very slight ones they are.

#### VIII.—KILLEIGH OF OFFALEY.

Killeigh is called in Irish Cell Achadh Droma-Fada—the Church of the Field of the Long Ridge; and most appropriately, for a long ridge rises up from the great plain just over the church, and it would appear that over this long ridge lay the great highway to the north. So Patrick must have passed there, and Colgan thinks the church was founded by his disciple, St. Sinell of the Hy Garrchon of Inver Dea—the first man whom Patrick baptised in Erin. 'Sinell, son of Finchad, is the first who believed in God in Ireland through Patrick's preaching.

<sup>1</sup> 'Failge' was a family or gentile name, from their ancestor.

And Patrick bestowed a blessing on him and on his offspring.' We are not told his age at that time, in 432, but his death is marked at 549, so he must have lived to a very great age, perhaps to be one hundred and thirty years old before he died—not three hundred and thirty, as some manuscripts have it, doubtless through an error of the scribes. He was of the royal blood of the Leinster kings, and migrated from the unbelievers of the Hy Garrchon to his kinsmen in the west of Leinster. It is doubtful if he was there at Killeigh when Patrick passed by. Most probably he was not, for the inhabitants seem to have been still pagans. But his church afterwards became the centre of a great school and monastery, and also a home for many pious pilgrims from foreign lands. The Litany of *Aengus* commemorates 'thrice fifty holy bishops with twelve pilgrims under Senchill the Elder, a priest, and Senchill the Younger (perhaps his nephew or son), a bishop; and twelve other bishops, who settled in Cell Achadh Droma-Fada in Hy Failgi.' The 'Pious Rules and Practices' of this ancient and holy community are still extant in the original Irish, and go to show that it must have been one of the most famous establishments of the kind in Ireland; it certainly was, after Kildare, the most famous in North Leinster. We know, too, from the entries in the Annals that its abbots, scribes, and anchorites continued to flourish down to the time when Lord Leonard Grey plundered the church of Killeigh, and carried off its organs and its stained glass for the use of the young Collegiate Church of Maynooth, which was founded by the great Earl of Kildare in the opening years of the sixteenth century, whilst Henry VIII. was still a good Catholic, if not in morals at least in doctrine. It was at her castle of Killeigh, too, that Lady Margaret, daughter of O'Carroll of Ely, and wife of O'Conor Faly, gave the famous feast to which all the Bards and Sages of Erin were invited on the festival day of the founder of the church, the 5th of April, 1451. Never since or before was such a feast given to the scholars of Erin, and those who could not attend on the first occasion were invited to a second feast, which was given in the same year by the same noble lady. She died a nun in the convent of Killeigh; and the old chronicler, who, doubtless, shared her bounty, whilst he asks a prayer for her soul and the blessing of all the saints 'from Jerusalem to Inisglora in Erris on her going to heaven,' winds up with a hearty 'curse on the

sore in her breast that killed Lady Margaret.' She probably died of cancer.<sup>1</sup>

If St. Sinell was at Killeigh when Patrick was going north, we may be sure that he gave a hearty welcome to the beloved master who first preached to him the saving truths of faith and cleansed his soul in the laver of regeneration.

#### IX.—PATRICK AT CROGHAN HILL.

The Hill of Croghan—Cruachan Bri Eile—is situated on the northern verge of Offaley, but within that ancient territory. It is a very conspicuous hill, rising from the vast plain around it; and from its summit the King of Offaley could easily see every part of his wide domain. The northern road passed near it, and that road, or causeway, leading through the bog near the hill was the battle-ground of many a hard fight, and still gives name to a townland near the ruins of the ancient castle that commanded the pass.

We may then regard the 'green smooth Hill of Croghan' as the chief stronghold of that cattle-abounding land. It was probably the place where the Kings of Offaley were inaugurated, although O'Donovan says he could find no trace of the Inauguration Stone on the summit of the hill. The ruins of the ancient church founded by St. Macaille, a nephew of St. Patrick, are still to be seen on its south-eastern shoulder, and a small mound, though now much defaced, once occupied its summit. It was probably the grave-mound of the famous warrior, Congal, whose remains are said to rest on Bri Eile; or else it may be the monument of Eile, daughter of Eochaidh Fedlech, who gave her name to this beautiful hill. At the foot of the hill is St. Patrick's Well, which shows that the Saint was there, and that he used its waters to baptise the men of Offaley. The good people of the neighbourhood point out the place where the Saint's horse, running down the hill, leaped on the rock, and left the mark of his knee and of his shoes. The water of the holy well cannot, it is said, be boiled or even warmed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a full account of Lady Margaret's feast see *Four Masters*, anno 1451, Note. The learned of Erin—'philosophers, poets, guests, strangers, religious persons, soldiers, mendicants, and poor orders,' to the number of 2,700 persons, never got such a spread before.

<sup>2</sup> See the late Dr. Comerford's *Kildare and Leighlin*, vol. ii., 321, from which many of the foregoing particulars are taken.

But Queen Eile's Hill is sacred to the memory of a still more famous Irish maiden, the great St. Brigid of Kildare. We believe it to be almost quite certain that it was in St. Maccaille's church, on the south-eastern slope of the hill, that the Virgin Saint of Kildare received the veil from Bishop Maccaile. As we have already pointed out,<sup>1</sup> St. Brigid was born about the year A.D. 436. The Irish Life in the Book of Lismore says she received the veil from Bishops Mel and Maccaile in her eighteenth year in 'Telcha Mide.' Now this 'tulach' of Meath, which has given its name to the barony of Fartullagh, was at that time considered a part of Meath, but afterwards it became a part of the sub-territory of Offaley. It was just on the boundary line between the two territories, and the fortune of war transferred it from one kingdom to the other. We are, therefore, justified in concluding that it was there St. Brigid received the veil from St. Maccaile, and there, too, in the little church that once stood on the brow of the hill, the virgin saint's touch, as she took her vows, made the dry wood of the altar green again in all the freshness of its vernal bloom.

At this point, near the head waters of the Boyne, Patrick had completed the entire circuit of all the land of Erin. Some twenty-one years before he had landed at the mouth of the Boyne on his way to Tara, friendless and unknown, except to his own immediate companions. Now he returned to the sources of the same historic river, having successfully carried the Gospel message through all the provinces of Erin. He had preached not only in the plains of royal Meath, east and west, but he had crossed the Shannon, and from the centre of the idolatry of the west at Magh Slecht, he had triumphantly carried the Cross of Christ to the very summit of Cruachan Aigle, over the western sea. He had penetrated to the farthest valleys of Inishowen, where the northern surges break on Malin Head. He had gone round through Antrim and Tyrone with the same message of peace; he had met the unrelenting Kings of Laigen at their own doors, and baptised them; he had stood on the Rock of Cashel, and won its sovereign to the service of Christ; at the peril of his life he had passed through Offaley; and now, triumphant in the might of the Cross of Christ, he stood on the summit of Croghan Hill, and was able to see the fountains of the infant Boyne, at

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter on St. Patrick in Clogher.

whose mouth he had landed so many years ago, and look northward over the fertile plains of Meath and Bregia, where the prelates whom he had appointed over the churches of the royal kingdom could now point to a young and fervent generation of youths and maidens growing up around them in all the ardent fervour of the infant Church of Ireland. We may be sure that on that day he murmured a fervent 'Deo Gratias' to the good God who had made his ministry so marvellously successful through all the land of Erin—and surely the children of Ireland to the end of our nation's life have good cause to join in that fervent prayer of their spiritual father.

The Annals of Ulster, and the Four Masters also, state that the Feis of Tara was celebrated by King Laeghaire in A.D. 454; and Petrie adds that it was the only Feis celebrated by Laeghaire during the whole of his reign. If so, it was a national event of supreme importance; and we may fairly assume that Patrick, the spiritual Head of all Erin, would make an effort to be present at that great National assembly.

It is not without solid reasons, therefore, that we may assign to 454 the completion of Patrick's missionary circuit of the whole island. He would thus appear before the King and his nobles clothed with all the authority of his marvellously successful apostolate. He would have powerful friends from all parts of Ireland at the Convention, and hardly anyone, not even the unbelieving King himself, would venture to dispute his authority.

No doubt most of the bishops whom he had appointed to various sees throughout the island would also be present at the national parliament; and it is not unlikely that it is to this period we should refer the formal promulgation of the great Code of Laws known as the Senchus Mor. The Commission appointed by Patrick for the purification of the ancient Code had, it is true, been appointed as early as 438; and it is said they had completed their labours in 441. Still, the new Christian Code could not have received a formal national approval except in the Feis of Tara before the Kings and Chiefs of all Christian Ireland; and hence it is not unreasonable to suppose that this was one of the purposes for which the great assembly was convoked, at which for the first time the Apostle of Erin and many of the prelates whom he had ordained would take a part in the great council of the nation.

This will be then the most suitable place to give a

short account of that great reform of the Brehon Laws which was accomplished under the guidance of St. Patrick. The Brehon Code is no longer, it is true, in force in Ireland ; but almost the whole body of the Laws has been recently published in five volumes quarto, with a glossary, and these volumes serve to throw great light on our national history and ancient institutions. The Introduction to the first volume of this great compilation, called the *Senchus Mor*, gives an excellent summary of the history of that great work. We can only afford a brief sketch of it here, but long enough to occupy the next chapter, which will show the manifold wisdom and indefatigable zeal of Patrick in providing for the urgent needs of his own time and the future development of the Irish Church and the Irish people with a view to their best temporal interests, but, above all, in accordance with the unchangeable maxims of the Gospel.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### ST. PATRICK REFORMS THE BREHON CODE.

#### I.—ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE BREHON CODE.

ONE of St. Patrick's greatest works was his reform and ratification of the ancient Brehon Laws as embodied in the great compilation known as the *Senchus Mor*, or *Great Antiquity*. His labours in this respect claim special attention, for the Brehon Code prevailed in the greater part of Ireland down to the year A.D. 1600, and even still its influence is felt in the feelings and habits of the people. The laws of a nation necessarily exercise a great and permanent influence in forming the mind and character of the people; nor can the provisions of the Brehon Code be safely ignored even now by those whose duty it is to legislate for Ireland.

As explained before, the Brehon Code which St. Patrick found in Ireland, owed its existence mainly to three sources—first, to decisions of the ancient judges (of whom the most distinguished was *Sen*, son of *Aighe*), given in accordance with the principles of natural justice, and handed down by tradition; secondly, to the enactments of the Triennial Parliament, known as the *Great Feis of Tara*; thirdly, to the customary laws, which grew up in the course of ages, and regulated the social relations of the people, according to the principles of a patriarchal society, of which the hereditary chief was the head. This great Code naturally contained many provisions that regulated the druidical rights, privileges, and worship, all of which had to be expunged. The Irish, too, were a passionate and warlike race, who rarely forgave injuries or insults, until they were atoned for according to a strict law of retaliation, which was by no means in accordance with the mild and forgiving spirit of the Gospel. In so far as the Brehon Code was founded on this principle, it was necessary for St. Patrick to abolish or amend its provisions. Moreover, the new Church claimed its own rights and privileges, for which it was important to secure formal legal sanction, and have it embodied in



the great Code of the Nation. This was of itself a difficult and important task.

During the pre-Christian period in Ireland the customary laws by which the Celtic tribes were governed were formulated in brief sententious rhymes, which were transmitted, at first orally, and afterwards, it seems, in writing, by each generation of poets to their successors. Up to the first century of the Christian era the poets had thus not only the custody of the laws, but also the exclusive right of expounding them and of pronouncing judgments. Even when the king undertook to adjudicate, the file, or poet, was his official assessor, and the king was guided by his advice in administering justice. The poets were exceedingly jealous of this great privilege, and lest outsiders might acquire a knowledge of law they preserved the archaic legal formulæ with the greatest secrecy and tenacity. So that at the time of the birth of Christ the language of the lawyers was quite unintelligible, even to the chiefs and princes of the kingdom.

This was very strikingly shown in the reign of Conor Mac Nessa, King of Ulster, about that period, on the occasion of a legal discussion between two rival poet-judges, which took place in the presence of the king and his nobles. The rival claimants for the gown of the poet-judge were so learned and obscure in the language which they used, that neither the king himself nor any of his courtiers could understand the strange and mystic language in which they conducted the discussion. Thereupon the men of Erin resolved to put an end to this system of esoteric learning, and so it was ordained by the king and his nobles that thenceforward the office of judge should not be confined to the poets alone, but should be open to all who duly qualified themselves by acquiring the learning requisite for the office of Brehon or Judge of Erin.

It was, however, in the third century of the Christian era, during the reign of Cormac Mac Art, that the Brehon Code seems to have been first digested and reduced to writing. Cormac, son of Art, and grandson of Conn the Hundred Fighter, reigned from A.D. 227 to 267,<sup>1</sup> and was, perhaps, the greatest and most celebrated of the old Milesian kings. During his long reign of forty years the arts of war and peace flourished greatly throughout all the kingdom. He was the first king who established a stand-

<sup>1</sup> *Four Masters.*

ing army for the protection of his kingdom—they were the celebrated Feini, whose exploits under their great leader, Finn, the son of Cumhal, are so celebrated in the romantic stories of Ireland. By their aid he curbed the power of the provincial kings during his reign, although after his death the dissensions among the Fenians themselves led to the bloody fight of Gavra, and greatly weakened the military strength of the kingdom. It was Cormac, too, who first introduced water mills for grinding corn into Ireland. He built the great Rath of Tara, which still bears his name, and also the Great Hall of Banquets called the Teach Midehuarta, in which the National Triennial Assembly was celebrated by him with great splendour and magnificence. The site of that splendid hall can still be traced on the Hill of Tara, and actual measurements made on the spot by Dr. Petrie prove beyond doubt the accuracy of the statements made regarding all its arrangements in an ancient Irish poem copied into the Book of Leinster—a work written so far back as the twelfth century. Many writers attribute the founding of the Feis of Tara to the pre-historic times of Ollamh Fodhla; but if the Feis of Tara dates back so far, it seems to have fallen into disuse, and to have been re-established by Cormac with more than its ancient splendour.

This National Assembly of the men of Erin met every three years for a week, at November Day, for the three-fold purpose of enacting laws, of verifying the chronicles of Erin, and of causing them to be transcribed, when thus verified, into the Saltair of Tara, which was the official record, now unfortunately lost, of the entire kingdom, and was always kept in the custody of the High King at Tara. Cormac was himself a great jurist and scholar, and the authorship of the greater part of the Book of Aicill contained amongst the Brehon Laws is in that work itself attributed to the pen of Cormac, who wrote it after he had retired from the affairs of state to enjoy quiet in his old age. We may fairly assume, then, that the pagan Code of the ancient Laws of Ireland was reduced to written form in the reign of Cormac Mac Art, and from his time remained almost unchanged until the conversion of the kingdom by St. Patrick. It was then that the ancient tracts now published by the Brehon Law Commission were subjected to a new revision, and again formally sanctioned as the great code of the Irish nation. How it was brought about we are told in the ancient introduction prefixed to the Senchus

Mor itself, and it is a most interesting and undoubtedly authentic narrative.

This *Senchus Mor* is the principal of all the Brehon Law treatises, and, according to the old Celtic custom, the place and time of its composition are first of all stated. The place of the *Senchus* was Tara 'in the summer and autumn, on account of its cleanness and pleasantness during these seasons.' But during the winter and spring the revisers adjourned their sessions to 'Rath-guthaird, where the stone of Patrick is at this day in Glenn-na-mbodhur, near Nithne-monnach, on account of the nearness of its firewood and its water, and on account of its warmth in the winter's cold.' These indications point to one of the large raths on the banks of the River Nith, quite close to the village of Nobber, in Meath, where 'Patrick's Stone' is still pointed out, and marked on the Ordnance Map. It was to the north of Tara, close to wood and water, and well sheltered from the bitter wintry winds to which Tara was so much exposed from its elevated situation.

The time of composition was the reign of Laeghaire, the son of Niall, King of Erin, and Theodosius was monarch of the world at the time. The exact date of the composition of the *Senchus Mor* is not fixed in the Introduction to that venerable record, but the Four Masters fix the period: The age of Christ 438. The tenth year of Laeghaire the *Senchus* and the *Feinechus* were purified and written. So also the *Chronicon Scotorum* tells us that in 438 the *Senchus Mor* was written—the year in which Auxilius, Secundinus, and Isernius were sent to aid Patrick in preaching to the Irish. The work, however, really occupied three years, from 438 to 441, and was not, we may assume, formally promulgated until the Feis of Tara.

## II.—THE AUTHORS OF THE REVISION.

The Introduction then tells us the cause why the *Senchus* was written, and the persons who were engaged in its composition. The cause was to bring the laws of Erin and the Gospel preached by Patrick into harmony; for it was found that, as in the case of murder, so in many other laws also, the Brehon code was not in accordance with the Gospel preached by Patrick, and hence Laeghaire said, "It is necessary for you, O men of Erin, that every other law should be settled and arranged by us as well as

this." "It is better to do so," said Patrick; whereupon King Laeghaire appointed the first Brehon Law Commission, consisting of nine persons, to whom was entrusted by the men of Erin the task of revising and purifying all the laws of the kingdom. The Commission consisted of Patrick and Benen and Cairnech, three bishops; Laeghaire and Corc and Daire, three kings; Rossa and Dubthach and Fergus, three poet-judges.

Benen was, it appears, secretary to the Commission. He was the favourite disciple of Patrick, a skilful scribe, and a sweet singer, and afterwards became assistant bishop to Patrick in the See of Armagh. Cairnech was the patron saint of Tuilen, now Dulane in Meath, and is said to have been a native of Cornwall. He died about the year 470.

Laeghaire was, of course, the High King of Tara, Corc was King of Munster, and Daire was the King of Ulster of that name who gave the site of Armagh to Patrick for his cathedral church.

Of the poets, Dubthach was the celebrated Dubthach Mac ua Lugair, who rose up to do honour to St. Patrick at Tara on the occasion of his first visit to King Laeghaire's court, and afterwards became one of his earliest and most influential converts. Rossa Mac Trichem was also a poet, but his speciality was that, like Dubthach, he was an Ollave or doctor of the Bearla Feini, which was the ancient technical dialect of the lawyers. Fergus is simply described as a poet, one of the bardic order, which was too numerous and too influential not to be represented on this Commission.

When the Commission was thus duly constituted, Dubthach, the royal chronicler and poet of Tara, was ordered by the king to exhibit 'the judgments and all the poetry of Erin and every law which prevailed amongst the men of Erin through the law of nature and the law of the seers, and in the judgments of the island of Erin and in the poets.' This was the ancient code existing in its rudimentary form from time immemorial, afterwards perfected and arranged by the poets and the judges, and sanctioned at various times in the Feis of Tara. Then Dubthach, in obedience to the king's command, exhibited to Patrick and to his associates 'all the judgments of true nature, which the Holy Ghost had spoken through the mouths of the Brehons and the just poets of the men of Erin, from the first occupation of the island down to the

preaching of the faith.<sup>1</sup> Whatever clashed with the truths of the Gospel was rejected, or purified to bring it into harmony with the Christian law; but 'what did not clash with the word of God in the written law and in the New Testament and with the consciences of the believers was confirmed in the Brehon laws by Patrick and by the ecclesiastics and by the chieftains of Erin.' Hence the new code was called the *Cain Patraic*, or Patrick's Law, and 'was written in a book which is the *Senchus Mor*, and no human Brehon of the *Gaedhil* is able to abrogate anything that is in the *Senchus Mor*.'

Such was the origin of this famous code, as set forth in the preface to the work itself, and corroborated by the text of the volume. This preface or introduction is not, indeed, so old as the text, but even in its present form it bears intrinsic evidence that it was written more than one thousand years ago. It is true that various objections have been raised to this account of the recension and codification of our ancient laws as set forth in the Introduction to the *Senchus*. These difficulties, however, are mostly chronological, and are found to disappear on closer examination.

It has been urged, for instance, that St. Benignus could not have been old enough to act on this Commission in A.D. 438, seeing that he was merely a boy when baptised by St. Patrick in A.D. 432. The answer is simple. In 438 he would have been at least a youth of twenty-one, and as we know from other sources that he was an accomplished scholar and the favourite disciple of St. Patrick, he is just the person whom the Saint would naturally select to act as secretary to the Commission, and in this way he would, of course, be set down as one of its members.

Then, again, it is said that King Corc could not have been then alive, since we read that his grandson Ængus Mac Natfraich was baptised by St. Patrick when the latter visited Munster. But as Ængus was quite a youth when baptised by St. Patrick, about A.D. 445, and only came to the throne in A.D. 453, according to Keating, there is nothing to prevent his grandfather being alive and King of Munster from 438 to 441.

Another alleged anachronism has arisen from confounding St. Cairnech of Dulane, who flourished in the

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<sup>1</sup> The oracles of natural justice are justly attributed to the Holy Ghost, who is Author of natural as well as supernatural law.

fifth century and was a contemporary of St. Patrick, with St. Cairnech of Druim Lighean,<sup>1</sup> who died about the year 530. There is no ground, therefore, for not accepting the deliberate opinion of our two greatest Celtic scholars, O'Donovan and O'Curry, who most carefully examined this question, that these objections against the alleged origin of the Senchus are not well founded, and that 'there is no reason to doubt the statement that the nine authors of the Senchus Mor were contemporaries and were all alive at the time when the work is said to have been composed.' Neither, we may add, is there any solid reason to doubt the fact of their joint authorship of this great compilation in the sense already explained, so that in the Senchus we have a most venerable and most authentic memorial of the laws and institutes of ancient Ireland, dating in its substance from pre-Christian times, and merely digested and purified by the historic Commission presided over by our national Apostle.

The text of the laws is beyond doubt very ancient. O'Donovan believed that both the text and the poem of Dubthach Mac Ua Lugair, quoted in the Introduction to the Senchus, are the genuine production of the age of St. Patrick. It may be said that O'Curry was of the same opinion, and Todd, a most competent critic, thought that portions of the text of the Senchus are of a very high antiquity, and that even the more recent portions cannot be of later date than the ninth or tenth century. Petrie, too, observes that the Senchus is frequently quoted in Cormac's Glossary to explain the meaning of certain terms; and Cormac's Glossary, if not, as some think, the work of the king-bishop himself, was certainly composed not later than a century after his death. And Graves, the late Protestant Bishop of Limerick, has pointed out that portions of the text of the Senchus are in regular Irish verse—a fact which of itself goes far to corroborate the statement made in the Introduction, that the original text was really the work of the bards, and that it was merely arranged and purified in the time of St. Patrick by Dubthach and his brother poets, who 'put a thread of poetry round the Senchus for St. Patrick,' as it is quaintly expressed in the Introduction to that work.

The commentary and glosses are, of course, of more recent composition, for they represent accretions to the

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<sup>1</sup> Now Drumleene on the western bank of Lough Foyle, near Lifford.

original text made by different writers at different times, and belonging to different schools of law. But the same original and authoritative text is recognised by them all, with only these minor variations that must have inevitably arisen from the mistakes of commentators and copyists. For the antiquarian, however, as well as for the historian, even these commentaries, by various hands and of various dates, will be full of interest and instruction, embodying as they do unconscious references or allusions to the manners and customs of so many various times and localities.

The Brehon Laws were, however, never codified or reduced to a system deduced from first principles. The very nature of their growth, arising from the social needs of the time, forbids this idea. We have them, so to speak, in their historical, not in their scientific, development. They were written, too, for men perfectly familiar, not only with the manners and customs of the times, but also with all the fundamental principles and the daily practice of the Brehon Code. And hence we find so many things and terms left unexplained in the text and the commentary, which nevertheless were perfectly familiar to the law students of those days.

This is one of the great difficulties in dealing with the Brehon Laws. Not only is the language technical and archaic in the highest degree, but the very life and civilization, of which it was the expression, have completely passed away. We are living in an entirely different world, and we have lost beyond hope of recovery the key to the interpretation of these laws, which perished with the Brehons of the seventeenth century. 'The key for expounding both the text and the gloss was, so late as the reign of Charles the First, possessed by the Mac Egans, who kept the law school in Tipperary, and I dread,' says C. O'Connor of Belanagar, 'that since that time it has been lost.'

This also explains why it is that so many terms were left untranslated by eminent scholars like O'Donovan and O'Curry. They were no longer terms living in the language, and there was no glossary to explain them. The complete and careful study of the laws themselves could alone furnish the key—a task which they did not live to accomplish. Even still the latest editor can only guess at the meaning of many of the words.

But all these things go to prove the undoubted authenticity of these ancient laws. The language itself is the best proof that they are what they claim to be, the ancient

laws of Erin handed down at first by oral tradition from immemorial times, and afterwards collected and purified by the authors, who have transmitted them in their present shape to our day. The language of the text is not the middle, nor even the old Irish—it is something older still, manifestly bringing us back to pre-Christian times, and still showing fragments of the ancient rhymes in which it was handed down by the poet-judges from generation to generation, even before the art of writing was introduced into Erin.

It has been confidently said by many writers that it was St. Patrick who first introduced the use of letters into Ireland. As if, forsooth, during the centuries that the Romans were in Britain and Gaul no tincture of their civilization could cross our narrow seas, at a time, too, when many exiles from Ireland were forced to spend years in these countries, and great kings like Cathair Mor and Cormac Mac Art had foreign soldiers in their service, and held frequent intercourse, sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile, with these countries.

### III.—LEGAL RELATIONS BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE.

The relations between the Church and the Irish tribes were very intimate, but also somewhat peculiar.

The Brehon Code places the King and the Bishop on terms of equality in the social scale, the Bishop being the spiritual, and the King the temporal head of the tribe. Hence an equal 'dire'-fine was fixed for a King and for a Bishop; or, as it is elsewhere explained, the honour-price of both was equal in the estimation of the law. Even at the social board the haunch, as the choice joint, was reserved by law for the King, the Bishop, and the Ollave, or literary doctor.

It has been often said that there were no tithes in Ireland before Henry II. introduced them. Such statements are unfounded, for the Brehon Code prescribes payment of 'tithes, first fruits, and offerings' to the clergy, on the ground that the payment of these dues are a return for spiritual benefits, and also such payment averts plagues, and maintains amity between the rulers and the people, and averts strife and wars. The dependence of the monk on his abbot was also legally recognised, so that no contract of the monk was valid in law without the consent of his abbot. But if a Bishop 'stumbled' he was, like a false-judging King, to be degraded, and he forfeited thereby all claim to 'dire'-fine or honour-price.



So, likewise, the word of a King, Bishop, or Ollave was accepted as higher than the oath of any of the inferior orders, both clerical and lay. The furniture and relics of a church were also specially protected against seizure by distress; and the regulations regarding distresses were all made with the advice and concurrence of the Church. Clerics were also by law exempted from the duty imposed on other spectators, of intervening by the strong hand to prevent unjust aggression of the weak. Recourse to violent methods was deemed inconsistent with their sacred character.

But ecclesiastics, though specially privileged in many ways, were not exempt from distraint if they failed to fulfil their obligations. Their cattle could be seized and a 'gad-tye be put upon their bell-houses'; and they might be warned not to officiate in public until they had satisfied the claims of justice.

The observance of Sundays and Festival days was also recognised by law, and a better dress than ordinary was prescribed to be worn by the higher classes, according to their station, on those days.

The Church enjoyed certain lands within the termon, whose tenants were bound to pay rent in kind to the ecclesiastics of the Church. On the other hand the clergy of the church were bound to give the tenants 'preaching' and 'offering' (mass), to give them 'right repentance' and 'instruct their children.' Tithes, first fruits, and offerings were due from the tenants; spiritual service from the Church. Restitution was to be made for any illegal seizure of Church property; on the other hand, the Church was bound to feed the poor, who had neither tribe, nor land, nor cattle.

These regulations in the laws are most minute, and are based on the teaching of the New Testament, with special application to the peculiar circumstances of the country. From this point of view the Code is conceived in a truly Christian spirit; its provisions are admirably designed to promote charity and good will; but they are sometimes very complex and hard for us to understand.

#### IV.—THE LAWS OF FOSTERAGE.

Although the practice of Fosterage was by no means peculiar to the Celtic tribes, it is still little understood, and its influence in the formation of our national character seems to have been quite ignored. In Ireland the custom

of sending out the children of the chieftain class to be fostered by some family of the tribe, seems to have been universally prevalent in the Celtic districts, and continued to exist, in parts of the country, even so late as the seventeenth century, when it gradually fell into disuse.

The laws which regulate the practice of Fosterage are of great value for rightly understanding the social relations and the educational system, if it can be so called, in vogue with our Celtic forefathers. There were two kinds of Fosterage recognised by the law; one for payment, *altrum ar iarraith*; and one from affection, *altrum ar airiur*; but it is with the former, as might be expected, the law principally deals. It seems to have been an accepted principle that "the Fosterage of every son is according to his price of Fosterage." Hence the law is very minute in its provisions, and—what is specially interesting to us—it sets forth with great exactness the mutual obligations of the natural father and the foster father, and regulates the food, clothing and education, which is to be given both to male and female foster children. The price of Fosterage for the farming classes was, generally speaking, three 'seds,' something less than three cows in value; for the chieftain classes the price varied with the rank of the parents, until it reached thirty cows in the case of a king's son. The food was generally stirabout, with butter or honey as a savour. No legal provision seems to have been made for the literary education of the foster-children; but the law is imperative on giving them useful technical education according to their position in life. The youths of the farming classes were to be taught to herd lambs, calves, kids and young pigs; and also kiln-drying, wool-combing and wood-cutting—the useful arts of domestic life. The girls of the same class were taught to grind with the 'quern' or hand-mill, to sieve the meal and knead the dough for baking. The daughters of the chieftain classes were required to sew, cut out, and embroider; and the chieftains' sons were taught military and athletic exercises—horsemanship, spear-throwing, shooting, chess-playing and swimming. If the foster-father neglected his duty in procuring the prescribed instruction for the children, he was by law subjected to a heavy fine, payable to the father, or afterwards to the child himself, to whom the wrong was done.

The foster-father was, moreover, responsible for injuries to the child arising from his neglect, and was also

responsible for the injuries done by the boy which the foster-parent might have prevented. On the other hand, he was entitled to a portion of the eric-fine, payable for any injury inflicted, without his knowledge and against his will, on his foster-children, just as if they were his own children.

The fosterage terminated at the age of fourteen for girls, and seventeen for boys. The foster-father sent a gift with the youth when returning home. This was intended to remind both the foster-child and his parents that in poverty or in old age the foster-parents were entitled by law and affection to be maintained like the natural parents by the foster-children. This was a most beautiful provision of the law. It tended to preserve and deepen the bonds of family affection between the various members of the tribe, and cement them together, in rude and turbulent times, by the tenderest and closest ties. And we know from Irish history that the greatest affection subsisted between the foster-child and his adopted family, and that it was deemed as impious for him to wrong any one of them as if they were members of his own family. In this respect the spirit of the Celtic code is beautifully expressed in Ferguson's well-known ballad, "The Welshmen of Tirawley."

We can say only a few words of

#### V.—THE BREHON AGRARIAN CODE.

The tracts on the Agrarian Laws and on Social Connections are decidedly the most interesting and instructive parts of the *Senchus Mor*, and deserve a word of special mention here. The Brehon Land Laws, though now extinct for more than three centuries, still profoundly affect the thoughts and habits of Celtic Ireland, especially in the south and west. The Irish people never took kindly to the Feudal system; it was in direct opposition to all their inherited instincts and most cherished traditions. It is true, indeed, that some few of the old proprietors who still survived, and many of the best of the new landlords, acted rather in accordance with the spirit of the old tenure than the letter of the new; but after all, these were but exceptions. The rule was a strict exaction of all the legal rights deriving from an absolute and unsympathetic ownership of the soil, which was wholly unknown to the Brehon Code. This oppression burned into the souls of

the people a bitter and undying hatred of Irish landlordism, which is the real efficient cause of that marvellous uprising against landlordism as an institution which we have witnessed in our own days.

In order to understand the Brehon Land Laws, we must always bear in mind certain fixed principles that were regarded as fundamental laws of all tenure by the Celtic tribes.

(a) There was no such thing recognised as absolute ownership of the land by any individual in his private capacity. The land of the Celtic tribes essentially belonged to the community, although it was held by the various members under varying conditions of tenure. From this principle two important consequences followed—First, upon failure of lawful occupants in any family, the land reverted to the tribe, and was then disposed of by the chieftain as head of the tribe, but in a definite manner fixed by law. Secondly, no member of the tribe could alienate to strangers any portion of the tribe land without the consent of the community.

(b) A second principle to be borne in mind is that the nominal owner, in letting his land, invariably supplied to the tenant the stock necessary to graze and work the farm, getting in return, as rent, a certain fixed annual share of the stock raised on the farm.

This cattle rent, however, seems rather to have been paid for the use of the stock, than for the use of the land. For, every tribesman legally qualified had a right to a share of the soil. His chief difficulty when beginning life was to find the stock to graze and work his land, and this he usually got from the head of the tribe or some of the inferior chieftains, who must, therefore, be regarded rather as great stock-masters than as landlords, in the modern sense of the term. The chieftain, indeed, represented the tribe in all its agrarian operations with its own members and with other tribes, and this of course gave him much power and influence in the sub-division of the land; but still he had no absolute ownership even of his own estate, and was therefore very far, indeed, from being a landlord, in the modern sense of the word.

Even his office of chieftain was not of private and strictly hereditary right. It was partly hereditary and partly elective. The candidates should be of the blood royal of the tribe, but the tribesmen elected the individual who was to succeed, and who as heir apparent was called

the *tanaist*, and as such enjoyed a recognised official position.

There were two principal forms of tenure in ancient Ireland—*saer-stock* tenure, and *daer-stock* tenure. The lawyers do not give any formal definitions of these terms in the *Senchus*. They were writing for persons to whom both these things were perfectly well known from every-day experience, and while the jurists are most minute in their commentaries and glosses on all the various incidents of these tenures, they give us no scientific explanation of the terms. We may, however, gather an explanation of their nature from various incidental references made to the subject.

Saer-stock and daer-stock tenure have been sometimes translated as 'free' and 'base' or villein tenure respectively, but quite inaccurately. In fact, no terms borrowed from the feudal tenures can adequately describe the Celtic tenures, which were of an essentially different character, as was pointed out above. The main difference between these tenures is very clearly expressed in the commentary. In saer-stock tenure the tenant got stock from his king, or chieftain, and gave no security in return. In this case the tenant was generally a member of one of the ruling families, and as such entitled to this honourable privilege. But he was bound to give to his chief in return a cattle-rent proportionate to the stock received, but only for a certain number of years. He was also bound to give 'manual labour,' especially when the chief was building his dun, or gathering his harvest, and to accompany his chief on military expeditions for a certain period each year, if called upon, and, moreover, owed 'full homage,' that is personal attendance and dutiful obeisance, which was rendered to the chief in person at certain stated times.

Although this form of tenure appears to have been the more honourable, it was commonly regarded also as the more burdensome, especially on account of the manual labour and homage payable to the chief. It seems, however, to have been compulsory on certain families in the tribe. In some cases only it was optional, that is when the land was held in saer-stock tenure of inferior lords, who had not the same right to compel homage and service as the *righ*, or king-chief.

The daer-stock tenure was purely optional, and prevailed far more widely amongst the tribes of Celtic Ire-

land. Under this tenancy the tenant was obliged to give security for the stock received, and he was, moreover, bound to pay yearly a certain food-rent fixed by law and proportionate to the stock received. The original stock, too, was to be returned to the lord at the termination of the tenancy; whereas, under the saer-stock tenure, the original debt was extinguished by an annual payment every year, for seven years, of one-third of the stock which the tenant received when entering on his tenancy.

One of the most interesting features in the laws relating to daer-stock tenure is the penalty which it provides for arbitrary eviction on the one hand, or for desertion of the farm on the other. The tenancy was, it is true, legally a tenancy at will, and might, therefore, be determined by the act of either party. It was provided, however, that if the landlord called back his stock and thus terminated the tenancy, when there was no fault on the tenant's part, the tenant was then entitled to retain as a fine for disturbance one-third of the returnable stock, and, furthermore, his own 'honour-price,' if the landlord treated the tenant with contempt. Neither was he bound to pay any food-rent for that year, so that the landlord was severely fined for any such arbitrary eviction, to which consequently he very rarely had recourse.

On the other hand, if the tenant chose to determine the tenancy against the will of the chief or stock-owner, he was bound to pay back to the chief double the amount of stock which he had originally received, and, moreover, a double food-rent for the last year of the tenancy. Thus, without giving absolute security of tenure, the law made it the interest of both parties to try and get on well together, and thereby protected both without injuring either.

Another admirable provision of the law fined the tenant who was able but unwilling to pay his food-rent or service, by compelling him to pay a double rent, when he was a defaulter, and also a quantity of cattle proportionate to the 'honour-price' of his chief or landlord. But, if the tenant failed to pay from causes over which he had no control, he was acquitted of all liability by simply restoring the cattle which he had originally received from the landlord. 'No one,' says the text, 'should be oppressed when in difficulty;' that is, the gloss adds, 'one is not to be oppressed about a thing which he is not capable of

rendering in his difficulty, that is in his poverty, whether he be chief or tenant.' The very last provision in this admirable law of daer-stock tenure ordains that 'if the tenant be indigent, he may repay the value of the seds (or stock) which he received by service according to arbitration, so that there be no fraud.' How much more wisely did the Brehon Law deal with the land question than any code yet devised by Imperial England.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### ST. PATRICK IN ULIDIA.

#### I.—PATRICK'S JOURNEY NORTHWARD.

THE narrative of the Tripartite seems to imply that Patrick went from Offaley to Ulidia—that is East Ulster, without making any stay at Tara or elsewhere in Meath. His road would take him near Dunshaughlin; and he certainly would not pass that episcopal city without visiting his nephew Secundinus, if he were then alive.

Now two very ancient authorities<sup>1</sup> represent him as assistant bishop to his uncle for thirteen years. If these years are to be counted from 438, when the *Chronicon Scotorum* assures us that he came to Ireland as bishop, his death could not well have occurred before 451. Old Patrick, 'the tutor of our Elder,' is represented as next coadjutor to St. Patrick for two years. Benignus succeeded for ten years as destined successor of Patrick, which would bring us near 467, which is set down as the year of his death. We must bear in mind that in all these cases there is no question of actual succession to Patrick; they were merely assistant bishops, and destined successors of the great Saint, who long outlived them all. This is clearly stated in the catalogue of St. Patrick's household given in the Tripartite, and is also implied in the ancient lists of St. Patrick's successors, given both in the *Book of Leinster* and the *Lebar Brecc*, for the fifty-eight full years assigned to Patrick's apostolate in Ireland, dating from 432, clearly include the periods assigned to his three immediate 'successors.' Moreover, again, as we shall presently see, there are good reasons for thinking that Sechnall accompanied Patrick on his journey northward, on this occasion, from Meath to Down. It probably took place in 455, so that it is not unlikely Sechnall lived until 457, as the *Book of Leinster* states, and such is our opinion.<sup>2</sup>

After narrating the attempt to take Patrick's life in Offaley, when Odran was slain in his stead, the Tripartite

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<sup>1</sup> *Lebar Brecc* and *Book of Leinster*. See *Rolls Tripartite*, p. 547.

<sup>2</sup> See *Rolls Trip.*, p. 513.



passes on immediately to mention his journey into Uladh, or Ulidia, by the ancient road called Midluachair.<sup>1</sup> We know from the *Dindsenchas*<sup>2</sup> that this was one of the five great roads leading from Tara, and, according to Petrie, it was the north-eastern road going to Ulidia, by Duleek and Drogheda. Now, various references in our Annals show that it passed from Tara to Slane, crossing the Boyne by the celebrated fords of Slane, and then it went due north by Collon, Ardee, Dundalk, and the Moira Pass, on the line of the present railway. This was undoubtedly the road of Midluachair, by which Patrick went either from Tara, or perhaps from Slane, into the land of Uladh, as the Tripartite tells us.

## II.—PATRICK AND TRIAN THE CRUEL.

On the way, at some place which is not determined, he met with certain wrights who were felling a tree. They were slaves, and from the severity of their labour the palms of their hands were blistered, and the blood was oozing through the broken skin. "Who are you?" said Patrick. "We are slaves," they said, "to Trian, son of Fiacc, son of Amalgaid, a brother of Trichem (of Down). We are in bondage and in great tribulation, and are not even allowed to sharpen our axes against a grindstone, lest the labour might be lightened for us; and so, as you see, the blood comes through our hands."

This was a case not only of cruel usage of the poor slaves,<sup>3</sup> but of cruelty that was needless and deliberate. Patrick at once gave them some relief by blessing the iron tools with a blessing 'that sharpened them for their work, even better than a flagstone would have done.' But he did more—he went at once to the king at Rath Trena to remonstrate with him. Unfortunately, we cannot exactly identify the place. Trian, Trichem, and Dichu were three brothers. Dichu, St. Patrick's first friend in Ulidia, dwelt somewhere near Saul. Trichem dwelt at Down, so we may safely infer that Trian dwelt beside or near a lake, as the narrative shows, on the road to Down from the south, or south-west. It was probably either at Castle-

<sup>1</sup> In the genitive Midhluachra.

<sup>2</sup> The Rennes *Dindsenchas*, by Whitley Stokes, p. 455.

<sup>3</sup> There can be no doubt that slaves and even hostages of the noblest families were subject to great hardships in Ireland. St. Patrick had personal experience of the hard lot of the former.

wellan or Dundrum, for there was a lake at both places, and, indeed, not one but several sheets of water were in that neighbourhood.

Patrick approaching begged the cruel chief to have pity on his slaves; 'but Trian did nothing for him.' Then 'Patrick fasted against him,' that is, kept urging his request at the door of the chieftain's dun, taking neither food nor drink until his petition would be granted. Still the rude chief churlishly refused the request of the man of God. Thereupon Patrick turned away on the morrow from the fort, having fasted in vain: but, instead of casting the dust off his feet against it, as the Gospel directs, he cast his spittle on a rock by the wayside—no doubt in anger—and lo, the rock broke into three parts, and one part was flung away a thousand paces. "One-third of the fasting," said Patrick, "be upon the rock, one-third on the king and on his fort, and one-third on the district." To some extent he spared the guilty prince; but he added, "there will never be of him either King or Crown Prince. He himself shall perish soon, and he shall go down to the bitter hell."

And so it came to pass—all the sooner because Trian, instead of repenting, committed a new crime against God and his Apostle. He himself in person went to bind and beat the poor wood-cutting slaves, who had told Patrick of their harsh treatment. This new crime sealed his doom. On the way his horses dashed wildly into the lake by the roadside, carrying with them the chariot with Trian and his charioteer along with him. 'That was his last fall,' says the Chronicle. He was heard of no more; but the lake has borne his name. It is still called Loch Trena; though the unhappy chief will never come out of the lake until the eve of the judgment day, 'and he will not come to happiness even then.' If Patrick worked miracles at all, or by divine authority denounced God's vengeance on oppressors, there could hardly be any crime more worthy of just chastisement than this. It was a lesson greatly needed, and must have produced an excellent effect on savage masters like Trian.

But, although divine vengeance so promptly and so terribly overtook the wicked King Trian, his family, at least partially, escaped the doom. The king's wife, seeing what had happened, went to Patrick and fell on her knees in penitential sorrow. Then Patrick, accepting her sincere penance, blessed her womb and her children—

namely, Setne, son of Trian, and Jarlaide, his brother, also son of Trian. 'Sechnall baptised Setne, Patrick baptised Jarlaide'; and Patrick said that he would afterwards be a successor of his. And so, indeed, he was. He succeeded Benignus as Coadjutor Bishop of Armagh after the death of the latter in 467; and, according to the ancient lists already referred to, continued in that office for fourteen years, so that he must have died about the year 481. So Patrick put four coadjutors, or assistant bishops, under the sod before himself; but the next, Cormac, was destined to outlive his master, only, however, for a very brief period.

The incidents here related beget some chronological difficulties. The narrative seems to imply that it was on this occasion that Sechnall baptised Setne, son of Trian. If so, either Sechnall must have lived after Patrick's return from the South of Ireland, or the visit here mentioned must have taken place at an earlier date. Yet, no reference is made to any such visit of our Apostle to the County Down after his first departure from Dichu to go to Tara. As we have said, the date of Sechnall's death, as given in the *Chronicon Scotorum*, is too early; it must be placed at least thirteen years subsequent to his appointment to the see of Dunshaughlin, which probably took place after his return from foreign parts. In that case he might have accompanied Patrick on this occasion from Dunshaughlin to Down; and it was probably during the journey, while they were wending their way north through the Pass of Moira, that the famous interview took place at which Sechnall presented his poem in praise of Patrick to the Saint, keeping back his name to the end.

### III.—MACCUIL'S PENANCE.

To this period of Patrick's life the Tripartite refers the wonderful conversion of Maccuil, who afterwards became Bishop of the Isle of Man. The narrative, as given in the Tripartite, is brief, but Muirchu, in the Book of Armagh, gives a much fuller and, apparently, an earlier account, which we reproduce here.

This Maccuil Maccu Greccae, as he is called, dwelt in Uladh,<sup>1</sup> and was an impious and cruel tyrant, so that he got the nick-name of the Cyclops. He is described in a

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<sup>1</sup> In regionibus Ulathorum,

series of Latin epithets as evil-minded, violent in speech, wicked in his deeds, wrathful in purpose, cruel of heart, unclean in body; a pagan, without conscience or remorse. He lived at a place called *Druim Maccu Echach*, a mountainous and remote stronghold, from which he preyed like a wild beast on all the strangers who happened to pass that way, robbing and slaughtering them without mercy.

Just at this time it was that Patrick, glorious in the light of faith, and strong in his confidence in the divine goodness, happened to pass that way, near the stronghold of the tyrant. Whereupon the wicked chief, purposing to destroy the Saint, said to his followers, "Look here, that deceiver and beguiler of men, who has deceived and seduced so many by his magical acts, is now coming this way. Let us go, then, and try if he has indeed any power from that God in whom he glories." So these wicked men resolved to tempt Patrick in this fashion—one of the party, *Garvan* by name, pretended to be dangerously ill, and they covered him with a cloak or mantle, intending to ask Patrick to heal him, in order that he might thus show a specimen of his alleged miraculous cures. Hence, when Patrick, with his household, came up, they said:—"Lo, one of us has just now got grievously sick—come and chant thy incantations over him, and perchance he may be healed."<sup>1</sup> But Patrick, knowing their guile, at once replied, without flinching, "It would not be strange if he were sick indeed." The word alarmed them. So raising the cloak from the face of the pretended sick man they found him dead. Whereupon all cried out at once, "Surely this is a man of God. We have done evil in tempting him."

Then Patrick, turning to *Maccuil*, said, "Why have you sought to tempt me?" The wicked tyrant, terror-stricken, replied, "I am sorry for this evil deed. Whatever you bid me I shall do, and I surrender myself into the hands of that great God whom you preach." It was a conversion like *St. Paul's*, complete and instantaneous. Then Patrick replied, "Believe thou in my God, even the Lord Jesus Christ; confess thy sins, and be baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Thereupon he believed, repented, and was bap-

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<sup>1</sup> The *Tripartite* says he pretended to be dead, but the story as given by *Muirchu* is more likely the true one.

tised; he confessed, too, that he had intended to slay<sup>1</sup> Patrick, and asked the Saint to award him penance for that great crime. "No," said Patrick, "I will not judge you, but God will judge you. Go now from this place, unarmed, to the sea-shore, and leave this land of Ireland, taking nothing with you but one poor garment to cover your body; neither eating nor drinking of the produce of the island (of Inch), and bearing this mark of your penance on your head. When you come to the sea-shore lock your feet in iron fetters—as the hostages were locked—flinging the key into the sea, and set out in a currach of one hide—the smallest made—without helm or oar, leaving the wind and sea to bear you wherever it is God's will that they should carry you. There dwell, doing God's high will." At once Maccuil replied, "I will do as you have said—but, what of this poor dead man." "He will rise up without pain," said Patrick; whereupon the Saint, in that same hour, restored Garvan to life.

Then Maccuil set out straight for the seaside, going to the right hand; that is to the south or south-east of Magh Inis, now called Lecale.<sup>2</sup> There he entered his skiff, locking his feet in fetters, and flinging the key into the sea, without food or companion, or helm or oar, he committed his little boat to the great deep, to be borne whither God willed. A north wind springing up carried him southward, toward the island called Euonia, or Eubonia, that is, the Isle of Man, where he was found by the two holy men, who at that time were preaching the Word of God in the island, namely, Conindri and Rumili. They had converted the islanders to the Christian faith by their preaching, and had baptised almost all the people, being the first, it is said, to preach the Gospel in the island. And now seeing this poor man of one garment, with feet bound, in the boat, they pitied him, and taking him out, they brought him home with joy. He lighting thus on the holy fathers, as God willed, formed himself, body and soul, according to the rule of these holy bishops, until at length he became their successor, in their high office in the island—where he is called Maccuil di Mane, or Maccuil of Man, Bishop and Prelate of (the church of) Arddae Huimnonn—

<sup>1</sup> St. Patrick intimates even when writing his Confession, towards the end of his life, that he still was in danger of death, and ardently desired martyrdom.—Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> A glance at the map will show that Lecale is almost an island.

which seems to signify the Hill of Man—'whose prayers we pray may help us,' the Tripartite piously adds.

There are some things worthy of note regarding this wonderful story of the conversion of Maccuil. The Isle of Man had in ancient times a much closer connection with Ireland, and especially with Ulster, than with any part of Great Britain. Sixty per cent of its place names are of Celtic origin. The Irish Sea God Manannan Mac Lir was, according to the oldest tales, King of Man. The Firbolgs fled for refuge to Man and other islands of the sea when they were driven out of Ireland. At a later period, A.D. 322, when the Ultonians were driven into Down and Antrim by the three Collas, many of them crossed the sea and took refuge in Man; sometimes, also, intermarriages took place between the Picts of Ulster and the Picts of Man. These facts would help to explain why Maccuil, a prince of Uladh, would be so well received and so kindly treated in the island.

The Book of Armagh states that Conindri and Rumili were the first who preached the Word of God in Man, and baptised the people. We may accept the statement as true, for although Jocelyn says that a certain Germanus, a disciple of St. Patrick, was left there by our national Apostle to preach the Gospel, his statement is not confirmed by any of our native authorities, nor do we find any disciple of St. Patrick bearing that name, although of course, as is well known, his great master, the illustrious Bishop of Auxerre, was called Germanus. A writer in the Irish Ecclesiastical Record is inclined to identify the Germanus mentioned by Jocelyn with St. Coeman, son of Breacan of Wales, who was, it seems, a disciple of St. Patrick. But the identification is at best only a conjecture unsupported by evidence. With more probability he seeks to identify Conindri of the Book of Armagh with Coindre of Domnachcoindre, whose feast is assigned to the 17th of September; and Rumili is supposed to be identical with Romulus or Romarius, whom some ancient authorities mention on the 18th of November. But these, too, are only conjectures, although it is extremely probable that the two holy bishops whom Muirchu declares were the first to preach in the Isle of Man were Irish saints from some part of the north of Ireland, trained, perhaps, in some monastery of Wales, or it may be at Candida Casa.

The whole course of the narrative in the Book of Armagh seems to imply that Maccuil dwelt in Lecale,

although we cannot now identify the site of his lofty dun. It was probably somewhere on the hills near Killard, if that be not itself the locality referred to. The fact of St. Patrick sending the penitent chief straight to the sea-shore without food or drink, and bidding him to embark in a currach at the right hand of Magh Inis, would seem to imply that he dwelt somewhere near the shore, at the mouth of Strangford Lough, where the ebbing tide would soon carry his light craft out to sea towards the Isle of Man, whither she was borne; although it can hardly be described as to the south of Magh Inis. But his course at first was certainly to the south, and that is all that is implied.

Tradition still connects this south-eastern angle of Lecale with St. Patrick and the Isle of Man. There is in the parish of Dunsfort, west of Killard Point, a townland called Sheepland, by the sea-shore. Here we find a Patrick's Well, which was greatly venerated in the past, as the many votive rags on its margin testified. A few perches from the well, overhanging the sea, is a road-shaped rock, which people say St. Patrick made for his own accommodation when coming from the Isle of Man, and they even show the part of the rock, now covered with white lichen, on which he hung his casula or cloak after his long journey. The tradition is chiefly valuable as connecting this point of the coast with St. Patrick and the Isle of Man.<sup>1</sup> We are then fairly warranted in assuming that Dunsfort represents the strong abode of the wicked chief Maccuil, and that 'Patrick's Road' marks the spot whence he started as a penitent to the Isle of Man; nor is it improbable that the Saint afterwards paid a visit to the island, setting out from the same holy spot.

#### IV.—SABBATH-BREAKERS OF DRUMBO.

The next incident referred to in our Apostle's life clearly took place somewhere near Downpatrick, and most probably on the occasion of this visit to Lecale. It is narrated, both by Muirchu and the Tripartite, in immediate sequence to the history of Maccuil's conversion.

Patrick, we are told, was once resting or sleeping, of a Sunday afternoon, we may presume, over the sea near the saltwater marsh, which is north of Drumbo, but not far from it. In Latin the ridge is called *Collum Bovis* or Ox-

<sup>1</sup> See *O'Lavery*, Vol. I., page 180.

Neck, doubtless from a real or fancied resemblance between the neck of the beast and of the landscape.

The Apostle, weary with his labours and vigils, was disturbed during his brief slumber by the clamours of a number of men working close at hand, where they were building a rath on the day of rest. Patrick sent for them and requested them to observe the Sunday's rest, as God and His Church commanded. But they refused, and even mocked the Saint in their folly. "Then," said Patrick, "by my word, you may labour if you will, but it will profit you nothing." His word was soon fulfilled. On the following night a great wind raised the sea, whose swelling tide utterly destroyed the work which the gentiles had raised on the sabbath.

There is considerable difference of opinion as to the exact scene of this interesting incident. It cannot, of course, be Drumbo in the north of County Down, which is far from the sea. Reeves and some others are inclined to think it was the inner Bay of Dundrum, which is only about five miles west of Downpatrick. But to us it appears that this Drumbo, or Ox-Neck, as it is called in Latin, must be near Quoile Bridge, which is only a short mile north of Saul. It was the place where St. Patrick first landed in Ulster, at that little islet now crossed by the road to Strangford, where the stream from the well near Saul church falls into the sea. It is a 'Salsugo' or Salt-marsh, in which the waters of the Quoile River mingle with the sea, and at times still flood all the meadows up to Downpatrick. At this point there was a fearsad, or ford, where the bridge now stands, which was the usual crossing place from Lecale to the northern districts. It was there, at that same Drumbo, that the strife took place for the body of St. Patrick, when the men of Oriel wished to bring it to Armagh, and the men of Lecale refused to allow them. Great floods at spring tides do still rise high in the estuary; and, if a strong wind blew in from Strangford Lough with a high tide, the swelling waves might well overwhelm a work hurriedly raised on the shore. It is most likely this rath was being built to guard the ford against the men of the north, and hence would be built near the sea. It is likely, too, that the rath was built close to the pier, which now stands on the estuary near the Bridge of Quoile, that the high ground over the shores was the Collum Bovis of the text, and that Patrick was then lodging somewhere near at hand 'over the sea,' which



at this point, as we have said, is only a very short distance from his Church of Saul.

The Salt-marsh here referred to seems to have been a kind of proper name, which is explained by another incident related in the Book of Armagh. There was in Magh Inis or Lecale a harsh and greedy man, whose avarice led him to wrong Patrick. For when the two oxen that Patrick drove in his chariot were resting one day after a journey in Patrick's meadow and under his own eyes, this wicked man drove them away from the field as if it were his own. "By my troth," said Patrick in anger, "that field will never profit thee aught;" which was fulfilled, for the sea came over it, and it became a 'Salsugo,' or Salt-marsh, and so remains to the present day. It is not unlikely that this was the same Salt-marsh already referred to, nigh to which Patrick was resting when the Gentiles began to erect on Sunday that rath which was overthrown by the waves.

#### V.—PATRICK AND KING EOCHAIÐ MAC MUIREDACH.

The next incident referred to by the Tripartite may have occurred during a later visit which Patrick paid to Lecale after the foundation of Armagh; but such is not our opinion. Here we find Patrick in conflict with Eochaid, son of Muiredach, who was, it seems, at the time, either prince or king of Uladh. Muiredach, who was ninth in descent from Fiatach Finn, of the line of Heremon, died in 479, when his son Eochaid succeeded to the throne. It is not stated where this prince had his dun or palace, but the probability seems that he dwelt at Dun-Leth-Glaise, which was from the earliest times the strongest fortress in the country. So early as the time of Conor Mac Nessa it was called Rath Celtchair because it was the stronghold of the chief who bore that name; and from its position it was almost impregnable. For the rath was a natural circular mound rising on all sides steeply from the Sea-marsh, by which it is still partially, as it was then completely, surrounded.<sup>1</sup> Besides, Eochaid, being of the Dal Fiatach line, would be more likely to have his residence in Lecale, which was always the inheritance of his family, than in Kinelarty or

<sup>1</sup> *Monticulus circumclusus palude pelagi.*—*Jocelyn.* An arm of the sea from Lough Strangford then surrounded it completely, and to some extent the high tidal waters still flow round it.

Iveagh, which belonged to the rival families of the Clanna Rury, of the line of Ir.<sup>1</sup>

Now Patrick was hostile to prince Eochaid, and not without good reason. For two young maidens, doubtless of noble family, had offered their virginity to the Lord by the ministration of Patrick, who himself, so far as we can judge, gave them the veil. Whereupon the wicked king bound them on the sea-shore under the rising waves because they refused to worship his idols and get married. Word of this gross outrage was brought to Patrick, who at once went to entreat the king to set the maidens free; 'but he got them not from the king.' Then Patrick, justly angered, pronounced against him the judgment of God—'that no king of Uladh would ever descend from him; and, moreover, that of his race there never would be men enough to form an army or a folk-mote in Uladh, that they would be scattered and dispersed, that his own life would be short, and his end would be violent.' "Thy brother Cairell, too, whom you smote with a rod for helping me, will become the king in thy stead, and from him will descend the kings and princes who will rule over thy children and all the land of Uladh."

'And that has been fulfilled,' adds the Tripartite, 'for in accordance with Patrick's word, the race of the Uladhs for ever are sprung from Deman, son of Cairell, son of Muir-dach.' But as often happened before, the prayers of a penitent woman softened this hard doom. Eochaid's wife threw herself on her knees at Patrick's feet and besought him to spare her children. Then Patrick blessed the sorrowful suppliant, and the child that then lay in her womb, who afterwards became the great Saint Domangart, from whom Slieve Donard takes its name. We are told by Ængus that the name of this lady was Derinilla, and that she was the mother, not only of St. Domangart, but also of Ailleanus, of Aidan, of St. Mura of Fahan, of Mochumma of Drumbo, and of Cillen of Achadhcail on the shore of the estuary of Dundrum. The second and third of these saints appear to have founded churches in Leinster and Connaught, whence their mother was called Derinilla of the Four Provinces, because one or more of her sons was in each.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Ulidian kings of the Dal Fiatach line had also a stronghold at Dun-Eathach, now Duneighter, near Lisburn, on the northern bounds of their territory; but the narrative here seems to point to Lecale.

<sup>2</sup> Cethuir-chicheach. See Reeves' *Antiquities*, p. 236. But O'Donovan in the Martyrology of Donegal renders it Dermill of 'the four paps.'

## VI.—ST. DOMANGART OF SLIEVE DONARD.

St. Domangart was, however, the most famous of all these saints; and the Tripartite adds the curious statement that 'Patrick left him (alive) in his body, and that he will live therein for ever.' Elsewhere the Tripartite states that Domangart is one of the keepers whom Patrick placed on the highest hill-tops of Erin, to watch over the land until doomsday, that he dwells *in* Slieve Slange—called from him Slieve Donard—and that he will upraise Patrick's relics shortly before the doom. His church is Rath Muirbuilc on the side of Slieve Slange,<sup>1</sup> 'and there is a *larac* with its belongings, and a pitcher of beer before him on every Easter, and he gives them to the mass-folk on Easter Tuesday always.' This is a very curious passage; and what is stranger still, it is confirmed by a still living tradition. The saint's church of Rath Muirbuilc, now called Maghera, was at the foot of the mountain near the sea, but he had also an oratory on the very summit of the hill. The tradition is that a subterranean passage connects the two, that the saint dwells within the mountain, and was seen there in his robes by some men who entered the cave at the foot of the hill, but they were warned off by the saint; that he still says Mass on his altar on the lone mountain summit, and so keeps his long vigil till the day of doom, praying for Erin and watching far and wide over the land. No doubt the *larac* and the beer are the provisions of which even saints must eat, more or less, whilst they are in the flesh, and they are provided for His servant on Slieve Donard by the same Power Divine that fed Elias and Anthony in the wilderness. But how he 'gives the fragments to the mass folk on Easter Tuesday always' does not appear.

There are still two ruined caves on the hill, one of which was the reputed monument erected in pre-historic times to Slainge, son of Partholan, who was buried there. The other was the oratory of St. Domangart, where he certainly said Mass and prayed of old; and where pious pilgrims still kneel to perform their devotions in honour of the saint. In one sense at least he has for many a year kept watch over his beloved Uladh by land and sea. Many a foe has swept that fair land with fire and sword since John De

<sup>1</sup> So called from the mythical hero.

Curci first swooped down on the fields of Lecale. Later still, a strange race and a new religion destroyed all the ancient shrines of Uladh, and the chiefs of the Clanna Fiatach and Clanna Rury are lords of the land no more; but, during all the dreadful time, faithful souls of the ancient race were found to climb the steeps of Slieve Donard, and pray at his mountain shrine, gathering new strength and courage before its broken altar. There at least they were free to pray; and as they rose from their knees, and looked out over that glorious vision by land and sea, where the saints of their own race so often prayed, and their warriors bled, a new light shone in their eyes, and a new hope filled their hearts, which nerved them to continue the long struggle with their ruthless tyrants. No, the saint was not dead; they felt his presence on the holy mountain; he gave them strength and courage, and food for their souls if not for their bodies also.

The death of Domangart is given under date of 507. If that be the true date and if he were indeed a child in his mother's womb at the time of St. Patrick's quarrel with his father, that event most probably took place before the founding of Armagh, and is given here in its natural sequence.

It may be that at the time old King Muiredach was still alive, and that Eochaid was merely the tanist heir-apparent, but with great power within his father's territory—and such is our opinion.

#### VII.—PATRICK IN FIR ROISS.

After this we are told Patrick went back to Fir Roiss, and began to build a monastery, or dwelling, 'in Druim Mor of Fir Roiss, over Cluain Cain.' Ross, or Fir Roiss, was the name of ancient territory extending from near Castleblaney, southwards, to Ardec.<sup>1</sup> Patrick had already passed through that territory, on his journey from Clogher to Meath, some ten years before. It was a fair and pleasant land of green swelling hills and fertile vales, with great abundance of wood and water. On its southern borders was the stream where Cuchullin, the bravest hero of the Gael, kept the ford against the invading hosts of Meave. Fir Roiss included also the north-east angle of Meath, as far probably

<sup>1</sup> The first part of the name is still retained in Farney (Feara mhag); the second in Carrickmacross.

as Siddan, where the Fir Cule dwelt, and we know that Patrick, at his departure from the place, left a special blessing to the men of Fir Cule and Fir Roiss, by whom he was, on the whole, kindly received. No doubt, on that visit the men of Fir Roiss promised to give Patrick welcome if he returned amongst them once more, and so he did.

Why Patrick preferred Fir Roiss to Lecale as the seat of his Primatial Chair is not quite clear, except it be that its central position—not far from Tara, too—would render it a more convenient place. No doubt also, he was attracted by the great natural beauty and fertility of the country. He had a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, for, like all the saints, he saw in the fair face of nature a mirror, which reflected for him the power and wisdom and goodness of God. The quiet beauty of Aghagower, in the Co. Mayo, had attracted him long before, and he thought of building ‘his City’ there, but was forbidden by an angel. Later on, when he saw the various beauties of that sweet landscape, by the winding banks of Erne, he meditated building his City there, making it, as he said, the Rome of Ireland, with the Erne as its Tiber—but the malice of a rude prince drove him away. And now he had journeyed round all the provinces of Erin, and, doubtless, he felt again what he had said before :—

I would wish to remain here on  
A little land. After faring round  
Churches and waters I am weary,  
And I fain would rest.

It was no wonder, indeed, that he was weary. He was now about eighty years of age. He had spent twenty-three years on his missionary journeys throughout Erin—where there were no roads, no bridges, but fords; no hotels, but a tent in the open; no rest from preaching, baptising, ordaining, and building. So once more he said, in his heart, “I would wish to remain here on a little land. I am old and weary, and fain would rest.”

The Tripartite tells us the place which he loved—it was in Dromore of Fir Roiss, over Cloonkeen. Dromore and Cloonkeen are there still—the Long Ridge, commanding a wide view of a rich and varied landscape, with the Beautiful Meadow at its feet, watered by many streams; fragrant of sweet flowers; vocal with the songs of birds. There he would build his cloister; and now that his long

day's work was nearly done, he would spend the remnant of his life in peace and in prayerful repose.

But it was not the will of God. The angel came to him and said, "Not here hath it been granted to thee to abide." "Where then," said Patrick, "am I destined to stay?" "Go to Armagh, in the North," said the angel. "But see," said Patrick, "how beautiful is the meadow down below,"—as if he said what a pity to leave it. "Let that be its name then," said the angel, "even Cluain Cain, the Beautiful Meadow; and it will not be lost to the Church; a pilgrim of the Britons will come and set up there, and it will be thine afterwards"—that is, within his jurisdiction. Then the holy, much-enduring old man, bowing his head in submission to the Divine Will, said, "I give thanks to God—*Deo gratias ago*." Through good and ill that word was always on his lips, and now that he was bidden to leave the Beautiful Meadow, on which he had set his heart, he still said "*Deo gratias*"—thanks be to God.

But though Patrick himself was bidden by God's Angel to go north and establish his own See in Armagh, he was yet desirous to found a church near Louth. So he went eastward of Louth to the place that still bears his name, that is Ardpatrik, and there he desired to found a convent, or cloister. The Dal Runtir, amongst whom, as it appears, he first wished to settle, were sore grieved at his departure from amongst them, and followed Patrick eastward of Louth, still seeking to detain him amongst themselves; but, unable to do this, they gave him over, as it were, to a kindred tribe at Ardpatrik. Patrick was touched by their deep devotion to himself, and he blessed them with an abundant blessing—promising them famous laymen and great ecclesiastics, and home rule under their own chiefs, seeing that they had left their homes to follow Patrick.

It would seem that when the Saint first thought of setting up at Cloonkeen, St. Mochta, 'the pilgrim of the Britons,' was not yet there. But he must have come shortly after, for Patrick used to come every day from the east, that is from Ardpatrik, whilst Mochta used to go from the west beyond Louth—where the old Abbey was—and so they met every day for conversation at Lecc Mochtai, that is Mochta's Flagstone, which was nearly mid-way between them. In this sweet companionship of his fellow-countryman Patrick was well pleased, so that it seems he put off his

journey to the north for a time. There one day, as the two saints sat together in holy converse, the Angel came and laid a letter on the flagstone between them. Patrick, taking up the letter, read out its contents:—

Mochta, pious and faithful,  
 Let him remain where he has set up,  
 Patrick goes north at the King's word,  
 To rest in smooth Armagh.

The divine message touched the conscience of both the saints. At once they resolved to part, and Patrick gave up to Mochta the twelve lepers whom he left at Ardpatrick; and Mochta, faithful to his master's trust, used himself in person to carry to them every day from Louth the rations assigned to them. It was a dangerous thing to visit so often the stricken lepers; but Mochta resolved at all cost to keep the promise made to Patrick.

This is a fitting place to say a word of Mochta himself. Adamnan gives us a brief, but pregnant description of the saint, which corroborates the language of the Tripartite. He describes Mochta as 'a British pilgrim or stranger, a holy man, the disciple of St. Patrick the Bishop.' How far he was a disciple of St. Patrick is rather uncertain. The ancient but anonymous Life of St. Mochta describes him as of British origin, born in the household of a certain British Druid named Hoam, with whom the child and his parents came to Ireland, where the Druid found himself a home in Co. Louth; that is, the ancient Hy Connail territory. Either in Britain or Ireland the boy got some knowledge of Christianity—perhaps from his parents—and by the advice of an angel went to Rome, where the Pope made him Bishop and sent him back to Ireland to preach the Gospel.

Whether he went to Rome or not, he certainly built himself a monastery in the woods of Hy Meith, in the Co. Monaghan, which was known as Kilmore, or the great church, and appears to have been situated somewhere near Castleblaney in the Co. Monaghan. But his neighbours there, jealous of the stranger, treated the saint badly, forcing him, in fact, to leave the country. He distributed his worldly goods to his monks, telling them that God would take care of them. "As for myself," he said, "I shall keep nothing but the fountain at our door; it will follow me and my monks wherever we shall go." He went straight to the place called Louth, whither the fountain

followed him, and, gathering strength in its progress, it became the beautiful river Fane, which, starting from its humble fountain at Kilmore, followed the saint through Monaghan and Louth, so that it was, as he said, a boon and a blessing to himself and his monks for future ages.

This curious story is not without a value of its own, for it clearly implies that if we patiently follow back the course of the Fane river from the plain of Louth, we shall come to the site of Mochta's primitive monastery in the woods of Hy Meith, where the beautiful river has its source. It tells us, too, what happened to the saint. When the rude natives drove him and his monks away, he gave them all the earthly goods he had, keeping nothing for himself. Only he followed the stream—or, as the *Life* phrases it, the stream followed him—until both arrived in a more plenteous and hospitable country, in those beautiful meadows around the present town of Louth, which Patrick so reluctantly abandoned.

It is evident, then, that for a short time both Mochta and Patrick were near neighbours, until the latter was directed by God's Angel to go to Armagh. St. Patrick was, however, the elder of the two; and, no doubt, gave much goodly counsel to his fellow-countryman at Louth. There was, it seems, an understanding between them, that whoever died first should assign the care of his monastic family and their possessions to the survivor. Mochta lived longest; but still at his death he recognised the primacy and jurisdiction of Patrick's successor, who from that day to this has always exercised his jurisdiction over the beautiful plains of Louth southward to the Boyne.

Mochta's monastery, too, grew to be a great school; and its monastic annals were of high authority amongst the scholars of Erin. The chieftains of Oriel endowed it with lavish generosity; and when the evil day came and the last abbot of Louth was forced to surrender his possessions to the Crown, there were few richer monasteries in the kingdom than the ancient house of St. Mochta, and few, we may add, had made a better use of their wealth.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ST. PATRICK IN ARMAGH.

#### I.—PRE-CHRISTIAN ARMAGH.

WE now come to Patrick's labours in his own Royal City of Armagh, which occupied the last thirty years of his life, and are, in many respects, the most important and fruitful of his apostolate in Ireland. First of all, however, it is well to give a brief sketch of pre-Christian Armagh before we come to speak of the founding of Patrick's primatial City.

There can be no doubt that the name Armagh means 'Macha's Height,' not the Height of the Plain, as Usher thought, for the Book of Armagh itself gives the Latin equivalent as *Altitudo Machae*, which settles the question. Why, however, the Ridge of the Willows, as Daire called it, came to be known as Macha's Height is more open to discussion. In our opinion the narrative of the founding of the pre-Christian Armagh given in the *Dindsenchas* is at once the most ancient and the most natural. In substance it is as follows:—

There were three kings equally entitled to the joint sovereignty of Ireland, to wit—Dithorba, son of Dimman of Usnach, Aed the Red, son of Badurn of Tirhugh in Donegal, and Cimbaeth, son of Fintan, of Magh Inis, now Lecale, County Down. These three princes, being sons of three brothers, had an equal right to the kingship of Erin; wherefore, for the sake of peace, it was agreed that each should rule the kingdom in turn for seven years, and then peaceably yield the throne to the next brother. This arrangement, too, was solemnly sanctioned and guaranteed by seven Druids, seven Bards, and seven Kings. Under this agreement each king had ruled for three terms, that is, twenty-one years in all, when it came to pass that Aed the Red was drowned just at the close of his own term, in the waterfall at Ballyshannon, which has ever since borne his name, as we have already explained.

He left one child only, the maiden Macha of the Golden Hair, who claimed to inherit his kingly rights. Now, when Cimbaeth and Dithorba had completed their years of kingship and the turn of her father arrived again, if he had been alive, Macha claimed the sovereignty as her father's representative. But they refused to yield it to a woman; whereupon Macha, like a queen, gathered her own and her father's friends, who routed her uncles' forces, and took the throne by right of the strong arm. When her term of seven years was over she declined to resign what she had won by force, and, moreover, she routed the rival claimants in the great battle of Corann, driving them into the wilds of Boirenn.

Nay, more, she had, it is said, recourse to a stratagem, to seize the fugitive princes, which is more creditable to her cunning and valour than to her modesty. To secure her own power Macha, having disposed of Dithorba, now married Cimbaeth, the remaining claimant to the sovereignty, and thus became undisputed mistress of the whole island. It appears that Cimbaeth dwelt somewhere near Armagh, for we are told that Macha carried thither the captive sons of Dithorba to build her a royal rath, which would be the home of her race for ever. She traced the site of the fortress with the golden brooch from her own fair neck—eo muin—whence the palace got the name of Emain, or in Latin Emania, and it became after Tara the most famous of all the royal raths of Erin. According to the Dindsenchas this took place 405 years before the birth of Christ, but the more accurate computation of Tighernach assigns its foundation to some 330 years before the Christian era.

The existing remains of Navan Fort fully bear out the traditional accounts of its ancient strength and splendour. In mere extent it is one of the largest, if not the very largest, fort in Ireland. There was a double line of circumvallation around the hill—one around the summit, which contained the royal buildings properly so called; the other, of much greater extent, surrounded a large area of the hill, and was, no doubt, intended for the tents of the troops and camp followers, whose duty it was to keep watch and ward over the royal enclosure on the summit. A glance at those portions of the ancient moat still remaining will show at once the great strength and extent of the fortified enclosure, especially in ancient days, where there were neither shells nor Mauser rifles to disturb the defenders. If it

were to be taken at all it must be taken by the strong hand in face of almost insurmountable difficulties.

We have personally examined the chief royal forts of ancient Erin, and, so far as we can judge, there were only three other fortresses comparable to Emania in extent and natural strength. Tara was older; its area too, is greater, for it included many separate raths; but its natural position and artificial defences do not appear to be at all equal to those of Emania. Cuchullin's fort at Castletown, near Dundalk, was, in our opinion, the strongest of all the royal raths of Erin, except, perhaps, Downpatrick, but the area was rather limited; its sides, however, were very steep,<sup>1</sup> thus rendering it almost inaccessible to a foe who could not elude the vigilance of the defenders. The fort most like that of Emania is the celebrated stronghold of Finn M'Cool, on the summit of Dun Allen, near Old Kilcullen, in the County Kildare.<sup>2</sup> It is grandly situated on the very summit of a round hill rising over the plain to a height of 600 feet, and commanding a magnificent prospect of the surrounding country. There was only a single line of circumvallation enclosing an area of some fifteen acres; but the ditch was deep and the fence was high, so that, in our humble opinion, it was, for a numerous garrison like the Feine, the strongest and most commanding position in Erin. Cruachan, in the County Roscommon, another great and famous royal stronghold, was not at all comparable to these, either in its artificial defences or the strength of its natural position.

This fort of Emania, built by Queen Macha of the Golden Hair, will be for ever renowned as the greatest school of chivalry in ancient Erin. The fame of the Red Branch Knights will never die. The tragic story of the fate of the sons of Uisnach still gilds the ancient rath with a glory that no storm-clouds can darken. It is the very seat and centre of all the bardic legends that float around King Connor and Cuchullin, Fergus, and Conal Cerneach. Those heroes of ancient Uladh stand out in heroic lineaments like the men who fought and fell around Troy. There is nothing mean or commonplace in all their glorious story. They were noble, even when criminal. They could

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<sup>1</sup> In this respect it is somewhat like the great fort of Downpatrick (Dunda-leth-Glaisse), but the latter had the additional advantage of being surrounded by water—as it is even to the present day.

<sup>2</sup> We are strongly of opinion that that is the real site of Finn's fort.

not break their faith—even the least of them. They renounced their allegiance to a perjured prince for the sake of the hapless maiden whose woeful tale still lights up the Royal Hill, and who was faithful to her love in life and in death, so that even Christian chronicles can show no more pathetic, no more loving, no truer woman than the ill-fated Deirdre of Emania. The grandest tales of Erin still hover over the fateful ridge of Macha's glorious Hill. The story of its queens and warriors touch our hearts with more than Homeric power. We are caught, despite ourselves, by the nobility and grandeur of those heroic figures who peopled the ancient dun. Whether real or imaginary, it matters little—they are very real for us; and their fame lights up the Height of Macha with a glory that can never fade.

Emania was destroyed by the three Collas after the great battle of Achad-leth-deirg in the year A.D. 332, and was waste and silent, therefore, in the time of St. Patrick. Twice, at least, in after times, the Ultonians sought to return to the palace of their fathers, but were again and again overthrown in battle, and the remnant were driven back to Ulidia.

But even in the time of its greatest glory it does not appear that the King himself dwelt at Emania. It was the palace of the Red Branch Knights. So far as we can judge, Emain Macha, in the time of Conor Mac Nessa, was not the royal palace of the Ulidian Kings. It seems that the fortress was set apart as a kind of great barracks for the heroes of the Red Branch, who formed the royal regiment of guards at the time. The King himself appears to have dwelt in a palace, which tradition still points out somewhat nearer to Armagh, and not far off was the college of the Royal Druids, whose sacred enclosure can still be traced, about one mile to the north-east of Armagh, but within view both of Emania and of the royal dun, which was still nearer to the college of the Druids. We cannot here examine these points in detail, but we wish to point out distinctly that Emania was at least two miles to the west of Armagh, that the dun of King Daire was about a mile to the north-west of the city of Patrick, and that the Druids had their college near the royal court. It is well, then, to bear in mind that the sacred sites of Christian Armagh were quite distinct from the Pagan forts, and that when Patrick asked the Ridge of the Willows for his church, he asked a commanding site, no doubt, not far from the royal dun, but still quite outside

its bounds, and further still from that Height of Macha which has given its name even to Patrick's Christian stronghold.

## II.—FOUNDATION OF ARMAGH.

We now come to narrate the foundation of the Primatial See in Armagh; and the chief events which occurred during St. Patrick's sojourn in his Royal City. In many respects it is the most interesting and important chapter of the laborious and varied life of our national Apostle.

The narrative in the Tripartite, and also in the Book of Armagh, gives a brief, but a very graphic, account of Patrick's arrival and introduction to the chieftain of the district.

'Thereafter,' says the Tripartite, 'Patrick went at the word of the Angel (from Louth) to Armagh, to the place where Rath Dari—that is, Dari's Fortress—stands to-day.' The Book of Armagh more accurately calls the chieftain Daire, and describes him as a rich and honourable man, who dwelt 'in regionibus Orientalium,' or, as it was then called in Irish, Orior; and the name is still retained, although now applied to a portion of the Co. Armagh still further to the east. The Tripartite says that this Daire was son of Finchad, son of Eogan, son of Niallan; and in virtue of his descent he was chief of the Hy Niallain (a race sprung from Colla da Crioch), whose name is still preserved in the two great baronies of North Armagh, Oneilland East and Oneilland West. They were the ruling race of Eastern Orghialla; just as the race of Crimthann, sprung from the same stock, were the royal race of Western Orghialla; and as Clogher was the royal seat of the latter, so Armagh was the royal seat of the former tribe.

Having come to Armagh, Patrick, according to his custom, went straight to the royal dun and asked Daire to give him a site for his church. Said Daire then in reply: "What place dost thou desire?" "I wish," said Patrick, "to get the high ground, called the Ridge of the Willows, that I may build thereon my church."—"It is the place where Armagh stands to-day," adds the Tripartite—that is, the ancient Cathedral of Armagh. But Daire was unwilling to give to Patrick that commanding eminence which was, in fact, higher than his own royal fort about a mile away to the north-west. So he replied: 'I will not give you

the Ridge of the Willows; but I will give you a site for your church in the lower ground'—the place where Fertæ<sup>1</sup> Martyrum, adds the writer, that is, the Grave of the Martyrs, stands to-day. Patrick accepted the gift, and built his first church there, and dwelt therein with his family, 'close to Ardmacha' for a good while.

Now, while dwelling there a strange thing came to pass. Daire, still greedy of what he had given to God, sent his horse or horses<sup>2</sup> to graze in the grassy meadow which surrounded the Church of the Martyrs. Then Patrick was angry because Daire thus trespassed on God's acre; and he said: "You have acted foolishly in sending your horses to disturb the little field which you gave to God." But the chief relented not, whereupon the same night his horses died in the churchyard field. The King's gillie, going to his master in the morning, said:—"The Christian has killed thy horses because they grazed on the grass growing round his church." Then Daire, in great wrath, said: "Let him be slain; go ye now and kill him on the spot." But lo! whilst they were making ready to carry out the King's orders a deadly sickness—'a sudden colic,' the Tripartite calls it—seized upon Daire, so that he was at death's door—'death was nigh to him,' says the Tripartite. Then his wife said to him that the cause of his death was the unjust attack made upon Patrick; and she forbade her servants to carry out the orders of the King. Moreover, she sent two of her attendants to the 'Christian,' and they, concealing the illness of Daire, merely asked holy water for the Queen. "Only for her," said Patrick, "Daire's resurrection from death would never take place." So for the wife's sake he blessed the water, and gave it to the messengers, who carried it to the Queen. When she sprinkled the water over her husband he became well again, and, moreover, the horses that were dead when sprinkled with the same holy water also came to life.

This was a sharp lesson for Daire, and what happened afterwards showed that he needed it. He went to pay a grateful visit to Patrick, and carried with him as a present a great brazen cauldron 'brought from over the sea'—a gift not unworthy of a king, and likely to be useful to the Saint, whose familia was large. Handing it over to Patrick

<sup>1</sup> Muirchu used the plural form, the Tripartite has the singular *Fertæ*, which we shall use henceforward. It primarily meant a grave, then the graveyard, then this particular Church of the Martyrs, then the relics themselves.

<sup>2</sup> The Book of Armagh gives the singular, the Tripartite the plural.

he said—"It is yours." "Gratzacham," said Patrick—that is, 'Gratias agam,' let me thank you. The phrase 'Deo gratias,' or 'Gratias agam,' was always on his lips, and so he used it now to thank the king for the cauldron. But the rude Irish chief did not understand it. For the time he said nothing, but when he went home he said "He is a rude man to say no word of thanks for my wonderful three-measure cauldron, except 'Gratzacham.' Go," he said in anger to his servants, "and bring it back to me again." They went and told Patrick that they were ordered to take home the pot. "Gratzacham," said Patrick; "take it with you." They took it and brought it home. "What did the Christian say to you when you asked for the pot?" said Daire. "He only said 'Gratzacham,'" they replied. "'Gratzacham' when it is given," said Daire; and "'Gratzacham' when it is taken away. The word must be good; bring it back to him again." Daire himself went with the bearers and said to Patrick, "Lo, the pot is thine; thou art a man of constancy and courage. Moreover, I will give now that plot of land on the Hill of the Willows which you asked for before. It is thine; go and dwell there." 'And that hill is the city now called Ard Macha,' that is, Macha's Height—a name of old renown in pagan times, but of world-wide fame since Patrick made it the seat of his Primatial City and the Rome of the Church of Ireland.

The next paragraph, both in the Book of Armagh and the Tripartite, is most significant, and deserves to be recorded word for word. We give the version in the Book of Armagh:—

Then the two went out together—Patrick, to wit, and Daire—to examine that wonderful oblation and most pleasing gift, and together they walked up the hill, and on the summit they found a doe with her fawn lying on the spot where now stands the altar of the left-hand chapel<sup>1</sup> in Armagh; and the companions of Patrick wished to seize and slay the doe and her fawn. But Patrick said 'No.' He would not permit it. Nay, more, he himself took the fawn and carried it on his own shoulders, and the doe followed him quite tamely and confidently, just as a ewe follows the shepherd when he carries her lamb, until he let the fawn loose in a brake situated to the north of Ard Macha, where even up to our own time there are not wanting marvellous signs, as the learned say.

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<sup>1</sup> Ecclesia Sinistralis.

But the greatest sign of all has happened in our own time. For this northern hill, which in the time of St. Patrick was a wooded brake, is now the site of the new Cathedral of St. Patrick, the largest and the most commanding church in Ireland. Its site is indeed unrivalled; it is even higher ground, and is certainly more striking, because more isolated, than the site of Patrick's first cathedral on Macha's Hill, and was procured with no less difficulty. It is a glorious building, too, in every respect, but its most striking features are the twin western towers overlooking the city and the old cathedral, whose square stunted tower, though venerable from its antiquity, has no such architectural features to enhance its commanding position.<sup>1</sup>

Patrick would not allow his followers to hurt the startled doe. Like the Good Shepherd, he carried the fawn on his own shoulders to a place of rest. A wild fawn it was, like the wild people round about him; the more need he had to teach them a lesson of pity and forbearance. Patrick, who saw through the mystic veil of the future, no doubt saw, too, how that doe with her fawn was a figure of his own church of Armagh, destined to be hunted and persecuted so often in the future—'so often doomed to death, yet fated not to die'—and he, too, must have got a vision of the glory that awaited his church on that northern hill in the far distant ages. All the facts are typical of the history of the Church of Armagh, and it is clear that the ancient annalists who recorded them felt them to be such.

The Tripartite, in describing the visit of Daire and Patrick to the crown of Macha's Hill, gives us more information than the Book of Armagh. They were attended by the nobles of Orior, and they went up the hill 'to mark it out and bless it and consecrate it.' In another paragraph, which seems to have been misplaced, we are told how the 'consecration' took place—that is the dedication of the site. The way in which Patrick measured the rath (or site of his church) was this:—'The angel before him, and Patrick behind the angel with his household, and with Ireland's Elders, and with the Staff of Jesus in his hand; and he said that great would be the crime of him who should sin therein, even as great should be the reward of him who would do God's will therein. Then Patrick laid

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<sup>1</sup>A fuller account of this noble cathedral and of its dedication in July, 1904, will be found in an Appendix.



out the *ferta*<sup>1</sup> or cemetery of the church. Seven score feet in its circular enclosure—probably its diameter—with seven and twenty feet in the great house, and seventeen feet in the kitchen, and seven feet in the oratory, and in that way it was he used to found his convents or cloisters always.'

The sacred function here described appears to have been that which is now called the Blessing and Laying of the Foundation Stone.<sup>1</sup> It is, like the Dedication of the Church, a very ancient ceremonial to which St. Athanasius appears to refer in his reply to the charge that he had made use of an undedicated church. He pleads the necessity of the case, and adds that the building was called<sup>2</sup> 'The Lord's House from the laying of its foundations.' It essentially includes the marking out and blessing of the sacred enclosure, the erection of the Cross, and taking possession of the place by the bishop or his delegate in the name of God and the Church, for the purposes of public worship. The presence of the king and his nobles with the clergy and the people added great solemnity to the sacred function, making a great public act of faith. Patrick, with mitre and crozier, represented the Church, and the angel going before him referred, doubtless, to the invisible presence of Victor, his own guardian Angel, who was his guide and counsellor in all the great events of his life, and now fitly appears to Patrick to bring the approbation of heaven to the most solemn act of his life—the foundation of his Primatial Church and See on the 'fair crown of that sacred Hill.'

Patrick, too, most fitly took occasion to explain the nature of the ceremony to his rude audience, dwelling particularly on the sanctity of the place which they had given to God, and on the awful nature of the crime of profaning it; whilst, on the other hand, he pointed out the special reward that would be given to those who would do God's will therein, either by aiding in the erection of the church, or joining in the public worship of God within that sacred enclosure.

As to the dimensions given above, they are taken from

<sup>1</sup> Here *ferta* means the church-yard or consecrated area.

<sup>2</sup> See *Dict. Chr. Antiq.* p. 428. We know that it was Patrick's custom to measure and bless the site of his churches, and we saw before that Fiacc would not accept the site of his church of Sletty until Patrick came to mark out his *lis* for him and consecrate it. The '*lis*' means the consecrated site of the church and churchyard.

Stokes' translation of the Tripartite. But in our opinion the Irish word 'traiged,' which certainly means feet or the tracks of the feet, must be understood here of the foot-prints left by a walker measuring the ground. In that case the seven score 'feet' will mean the space covered by the man who left after him seven score tracks or footprints—in other words, seven score single paces or yards. Then the diameter of the 'lis' or enclosure would be one hundred and forty yards; and that would, of course, include the cemetery. The 'great house,' that is the church, would be about sixty-eight feet in length, if we take the pace or track to be about two feet and a half. The kitchen, including, no doubt, the refectory, would be about forty-two feet in length, and the 'airegal,' or sacristy, adjoining the church would be something like eleven feet long. The word 'ferta' here appears to mean in its secondary sense the cemetery or the entire area of the enclosure, which in Irish is called the 'lis.'

These measurements bear out the statement that such was Patrick's manner of founding his monastic churches. Sixty feet long by twenty-six feet wide was the standard measurement of the largest Patrician churches<sup>1</sup>; and if, in the case of Armagh, the dimensions were somewhat enlarged, it is only what we should expect from the importance of the primatial church and its surroundings.

### III.—THE CHURCHES OF ARMAGH.

It will help to explain the further history of St. Patrick in Armagh if we here give a brief sketch of the principal ecclesiastical foundations on the Sacred Hill. The learned Bishop Reeves is here our safest guide.

I.—The oldest church of Armagh was certainly that called Na Ferta in the Tripartite, and Fertæ Martyrum in the book of Armagh. In our opinion the expression does not mean here either the 'graves'<sup>2</sup> or the 'miracles'; but it means the 'relics' of the martyrs which St. Patrick had obtained from Rome to be used as the law and custom of the time required in the consecration

<sup>1</sup> See Petrie's *Round Towers*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> The relics, no doubt, were taken from the 'graves' of the martyrs, and often worked miracles, hence the secondary meanings.

of his churches. These relics were kept<sup>1</sup> in the first church which Patrick founded in the lower ground at the foot of the hill, and hence the church itself came to be called *Fertæ Martyrum*, or simply *Na Fertá*, that is, the Church of the Relics. As Patrick remained there 'a long time' at the church in 'the lower ground,' it must have been built some years before the Great Church on the Hill. Reeves thinks that it was situated in the place now known as Scotch Street.

II.—The great Stone Church on the hill called *Damhliac*, was, probably, a much later erection. We have no evidence to show that it was originally built of stone; but it is highly probable, for Patrick wished to make it his primatial church, and, therefore, would seek to build it of the most enduring materials. Then the name itself seems to imply that from the very beginning it was a great stone church. There is no doubt that it occupied the site of the present Protestant cathedral church of Armagh.

III.—Near it on the north was built the church called *Saball*, or the *Barn*, a much smaller church intended for the daily use of the monastic family. It got its name either from the original *Saball*, near *Downpatrick*, which ran north and south, or from its being intended to be a reproduction and memorial of that church, which was always especially dear to St. Patrick. It is called *Ecclesia Sinistralis* in the *Book of Armagh*, for, looking to the sacred east, the left hand is to the north, and the right to the south; hence came the name of the church which was near the northern transept of the cathedral, or, perhaps, occupied its site.

At a later period, during the Danish wars, a Round Tower or *Cloictech* was built on the Sacred Hill, and, if it occupied the usual position, it would be some thirty or forty feet from the north-west angle of the Great Stone Church. But there was no tower there in the time of St. Patrick, nor long after.

IV.—There was also a *Damhliac Toga*, or Stone Church of the Elections. This building served the purpose of a chapter house, and was, no doubt, of much later date than the Great Stone Church. Its site cannot now be accurately determined. There were many other buildings also on the Sacred Hill; as, for instance, a sacristy (*airegal*) adjoining the Great Church, and the Great House of the Abbot, or Archbishop's Palace; there was a Scriptorium called in Irish the *Tech Sreaptra*, for copying and

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<sup>1</sup> Whilst Patrick was travelling through the country on his missionary journeys he carried these relics with him in a small box, or other reliquary, for he needed them every day when he was consecrating the altar stones for his churches. But after he came to settle down at Armagh the relics would naturally be preserved in a church. Hence its name.

preserving the manuscript books ; there was, of course, a kitchen—in Irish, *Cuicin*—with its refectory adjoining ; and there was a Prison (*Carcar*) for delinquent or refractory persons, whether clerical or lay. Then there was a *Relec* or Cemetery on the south of the Great Church, which was also called the Grave-yard of the Kings, so many persons of royal blood were interred within it, of whom the most celebrated—Brian Boru—was interred there after the battle of Clontarf. Reference is also made in the *Annals* to the *Culdee's House*, to the *Hospice*, or *Fort of the Guests*, and to the *Fidh-nemedh*, or *Sacred Grove*, which is mentioned in the *Tripartite*

It is highly probable that all these buildings occupied the level area of the hill, and were surrounded by a strong rampart of earth after the fashion of the Irish *raths*, and this enclosed space itself is called a *rath* in the *Tripartite*. The entrance was by a strong gate, to which reference is made in the *Annals*. Reeves thinks it was on the eastern side, so that the sacred Hill was approached from the present Market-street by a rather steep ascent, at the top of which stood a cross just outside the gate of the *rath*, to mark the *termon* or limit of the consecrated enclosure.

In later times, as Armagh grew larger, when monks and scholars flocked to Patrick's sacred City from all quarters, a second earthen rampart was raised round the hill at its base, just as the second rampart surrounded the Navan Fort enclosing a large space for soldiers and cattle and horses. This wide area was afterwards divided into *trians* or wards where the different 'nations' had their quarters—Saxons and Gaels—whose names are still preserved in Scotch street, English street, and Irish street.

#### V.—THE DATE OF THE FOUNDING OF ARMAGH.

The exact date of Patrick's founding his Primatial City of Armagh has given rise to considerable discussion, owing to the apparently contradictory statements in some of our most venerable authorities.

In the *Additions to Tirechan* it is expressly stated that Trim was founded in the twenty-fifth year before the Church of Armagh was founded. Now the former was founded in 433, therefore Armagh was founded in 457, for the twenty-five years were not complete, and that is the date commonly accepted as the true one. But that date marks the foundation of the Great Church on Macha's Hill, and we are told in the *Tripartite* that Patrick and his family remained 'a long time' in the Church of *Na Ferta* in

the valley before he founded Armagh itself on the Ridge of the Willows. When, then, was Na Ferta itself founded? The Annals of Ulster say Ard-macha was founded in A.D. 444, 1,194 years from the founding of Rome. On the other hand, the Four Masters corroborate the author of the Additions to Tirechan, for they distinctly assert that Ard Macha was founded by St. Patrick in 457, it having been granted to him by Daire. We think these statements can be reconciled by taking the Ulster Annals to refer to the Church of Na Ferta, Patrick's first foundation in Armagh, and understanding the Four Masters to refer to the Great Church on the Hill, as is quite manifest from their words.

This view is corroborated by Tirechan's phrase that Patrick, after baptising the Hy Tuirtre, having left Macha, came into Cremorne<sup>1</sup> (Maugdornu), and he ordained Victoricus Bishop of Macha, and founded there a great church. No doubt 'Machia' seems to mean the territory of Hy Meith Macha, but that certainly bordered on Armagh, if it did not include it. It is very likely, then, that Patrick paid a passing visit to Armagh on that occasion. The date also corresponds, for 444, as far as we can judge, would be the year in which Patrick passed through Hy Meith Macha, after preaching and baptising in the Hy Tuirtre territory west of Lough Neagh. We think it most likely, therefore, that the Church of Na Ferta was founded in 444, but that the great primatial church on the Hill of Macha was not founded until 457.

There is an incident regarding St. Patrick which is narrated in the Life of St. Colman of Dromore, and as it took place about this time, may be fittingly inserted here. Our version is taken from the Life of St. Colman in the Salamanca Manuscript:—"It came to pass that as St. Patrick was on a certain occasion journeying from Armagh to Saul, he received hospitality on the way from a bishop, who in honour of so great a guest, resigned to Patrick at his departure next day both himself and his monastery. But Patrick, always despising mere worldly goods, said—'Not for me you and your territory are destined by God, but for one who sixty years to come will found his monastery in that neighbouring valley which I saw this morning before I celebrated Mass a multitude of angels frequenting as I looked out through the window of this church of yours.'

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<sup>1</sup> *Relicta Machia, venit in Maugdornu.*

And Patrick said the same to another bishop of that neighbourhood who wished to give up to him his church and his territory."

From this we may infer that Patrick claimed no immediate spiritual jurisdiction over the territory of Iveagh, and that he willed that territory to be reserved for a bishop of the native race—that is, St. Colman of Dromore, who founded his See there about the year 514—that is, some sixty years after the time St. Patrick founded the See of Armagh. St. Colman, who was nephew of the elder St. Colman of Kilroot, belonged to the great tribe of the Dal-Araide, whose cradle was the southern portion of the Co. Antrim between Larne and Lough Neagh; and a small portion of their original territory still belongs to the diocese of Dromore. Seapatrick, which is merely a modern form of the ancient *Suide Patraic*, that is Patrick's Seat, is another memorial of the Saint's visit to that territory. There is good reason to think that by Dromore was his usual route from Saul to Armagh, and from Armagh to Saul, and there can be hardly any doubt that Patrick frequently passed that way during the thirty years which he spent in Armagh. But Iveagh was in the territory of the Uladh, and therefore outside the temporal jurisdiction of the chief of Armagh; hence Patrick did not wish to complicate matters by claiming immediate spiritual jurisdiction in a territory where the jealous chiefs of the Dal-Araide, the Picts of Erin, might be disposed to question his authority, so long as he was located at Armagh.

There is some evidence to show that the chiefs of that race were inclined to set up for themselves in matters spiritual as well as temporal, and hence we find reference to St. Colman of Kilroot, disciple of St. Ailbe, to St. Colman of Dromore, nephew of the first Colman, and to other local saints as the spiritual authority amongst the Dal-Araide, even at the time when St. Patrick dwelt in his old age at Armagh; for the elder Colman at least must have belonged to that period. Hence, we find, too, that the diocese of Dromore, though rather small, has its own independent jurisdiction ever since.

#### V.—THE BOUNDARIES OF ARMAGH.

Patrick having erected his cathedral church, naturally thought of defining the diocese that would be subject to his own immediate jurisdiction. His usual practice was to

establish a bishop near the chieftain's dun in each sub-kingdom, for he knew well that the men of one tribe would be very reluctant to submit themselves to a spiritual jurisdiction seated in another tribe. Now the great kingdom of Oriel, founded by the Collas, had, at that time, as was shown before, its chief royal seat at Clogher; wherefore Patrick, in accordance with his usual practice, had gone there several years before and set Bishop McCartan over the see which he had founded close to the royal residence.

But Oriel (Orghialla) was a very extensive territory, and really included two great kingdoms, those of Eastern and of Western Oriel. The name of Eastern Oriel is still retained in that of two modern baronies of Upper and Lower Orior, in the Co. of Armagh, and reference is made to it also in the Tripartite, where it is said the Daire and the nobles of Orior (Oirthir) attended St. Patrick when he was measuring and consecrating the site of his cathedral church on the hill of Armagh.

In this sense of the word, Oirthir, or Eastern Oriel, appears to have included six territories or sub-kingdoms; of these the King of the Ui Niallan, 'of shining fame,' appears to have been the nominal chief, and he dwelt at Armagh, partly on account of its ancient fame as the royal seat of Ulster, and partly, no doubt, because the land around it is amongst the best in the province. Therefore Patrick resolved, under the guidance of the Angel, to set up his own cathedral church in the same seat of ancient royalty, and thus include all Eastern Oriel within his own diocese of Armagh, as he had already assigned Western Oriel to the See of Clogher.

There was some reason to fear that all the sub-chiefs might not sanction this arrangement,<sup>1</sup> and it would appear that Patrick was not himself free from all apprehension on the subject. But, according to the Tripartite, as he was resting at the end of a night—the early dawn—at Tipra Cerna, in Tir Tiprat, the Angel went to him and awoke him. Then Patrick, somewhat alarmed, said to the Angel, "Is there aught in which I am wont to offend God, or is His anger roused against me?" "There is not," said the Angel, "but it has been ordained for thee by God, if it seems good to thee, that no one else shall have a share in

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<sup>1</sup> It was the custom to give a bishop to every tribe, and that principle is formally recognised in a very ancient Rule, attributed to St. Patrick. He generally acted upon it himself.

Ireland save thee alone—(that is, that he should have primatial jurisdiction over the whole country)—and the extent of thine own termon, or boundary of thy See, from God is from Dromma Breg to Sliab Mis, and to Bri Airigi.” “But, surely,” replied Patrick “Sons of Life will come after me, and I desire that they should have honour from God—(that is, jurisdiction)—after me in the land.” “That is charitable of you,” said the Angel, in reply, “but God hath given all Ireland to thee, and every freema: that abides in Ireland shall be thine”—that is subject to thy primatial jurisdiction. “I give God thanks,” said Patrick.

A somewhat different account is found in the *Liber Angeli*, in the Book of Armagh, a treatise which was intended to set out the prerogatives and privileges of the See of Armagh, and hence is more or less open to suspicion as a record of fact. It is true, indeed, that the Angel came to Patrick to make known to him the will of God at all the most critical times in his life, and Patrick's Confession assures us that he had such celestial visitants more than once. This occasion, too, was certainly an important one, when there was question of defining the extent of his own episcopal jurisdiction. On the other hand, the Book of the Angel appears to have been written for a purpose, after the death of Patrick himself, and is, consequently, open to grave suspicion in narrating the angelic visions alleged to have been vouchsafed to the Saint.

The account of this particular vision is very circumstantial and plausible.

On a certain occasion, it tells us, Patrick went from his city of Armagh to baptise, teach, and cure a great number of people at the well (Tipra Cerna, as above), which is close to the eastern part of the aforesaid city. And he went before dawn of day to await the crowds who gathered there, and as he was weary from his vigils, sleep overpowered him at the well. Then the Angel came quickly from heaven and awoke him from sleep. “Lo, I am here,” said Patrick. “Have I done ought wrong in the sight of God? If so I crave His pardon.” “No,” said the Angel; “not so, but God has sent me to console you, seeing that you have converted all the Irish to the true faith in Him; for you have brought them to God by hard labour and much preaching, luminous with the grace of the Holy Spirit, and most beneficial to all these tribes of Ireland. And you have laboured at all times; in many



dangers from the heathen ; in cold and hunger and thirst ; journeying daily from tribe to tribe, for the salvation of all. Now God sees your present place, which we see close at hand on the hill—how small it is, with your little church, and how it is hemmed in by the people of the place, and how its confines do not suffice to be a place of refuge for all. Therefore it is that God assigns very wide bounds to your City or Sec of Armagh, which you love so beyond all other lands of Erin, namely, from the Ben of Berbix (a pinna Berbicis) to Sliab Mis, and from Sliab Mis to Bri Erigi, and from Bri Erigi to Dromma Breg (ad Dorsos Breg) ; such if you wish will be the extent of your diocese. And, moreover, God has given to you, and to this your City of Armagh, all the tribes of Erin, to be under your jurisdiction (in modum parochiae).” Then Patrick, falling on his face, gave thanks to God for giving him such glory.

Now, here we have the primatial jurisdiction which extends over all Erin, clearly distinguished from the diocesan jurisdiction which is bounded by the mountains named above.

These boundaries would almost define the limits of the diocese of Armagh at the present. In our opinion Pinna Berbicis is the Latin of Ben Boirche<sup>1</sup>—the ‘wether’s head’—so called, doubtless, from a supposed resemblance. Sliab Mis is the well-known mountain in the Co. Antrim, but here it seems to denote the whole range beyond Lough Neagh to the east, and in this wide sense the limit may be accepted. Then Bri Erigi we take to be the Height of Errigal, a name which is still retained in that of the parish of Errigal Keiran,<sup>2</sup> in the heart of Tyrone, but belonging to the diocese of Armagh. The word Bri means a conspicuous flat or round-topped hill, and designates, we think, the great hill now called Slievemore, which is in the parish of Errigal, and on the extreme western border of the diocese of Armagh. The Dromma Breg, or Ridges of Bregia, extend across the north-east of Meath and south-west of Louth, forming the boundary of the diocese of Armagh at that point. The name itself is still retained in that of Slieve Breg, north of Slane, the highest

<sup>1</sup> The Notes in Fiacc’s Hymn say the peak gets its name from Bairch, the herdsman of a King of Uladh, who used to dwell there ; but the Scholiasts are often very imaginative, and such double derivations are quite common, as for instance in the Dindsenchas.

<sup>2</sup> Or Errigal Keerogue, as it is in the Ordnance Map.

point of which, called the Moat, rises to the height of 753 feet, and is, we believe, that Dromman Breg on whose summit St. Patrick placed a man to watch over that fair Bregian plain until the Day of Doom

The Book of the Angel then gives some further declarations made by St. Patrick, apparently on this occasion, which do not tend to confirm the authenticity of the alleged vision.

Patrick also said to the Lord, represented by his Angel—"I foresee, O my Lord, that many chosen souls will, through Thy ineffable grace and holy word, arise in this island, who will be as dear to me as if they were my own children, and who will devoutly serve Thee as Thy friends, and they will surely need for themselves some kind of a diocese of their own for the necessary maintenance of their churches and monasteries after my time. Therefore, it is fitting and just that I should share with these perfect religious of Ireland the abundant gifts undoubtedly bestowed upon me, so that I and they may enjoy together the richness of God's goodness, which have been all given to us to spend in divine charity." The object of this appears to be to point out that the monastic houses and even the other bishops held their lands and sees, not on strict right, but rather by grace of the successors of St. Patrick.

He also said—"Will not that be enough for me which pious Christian men may freely vow or freely bestow on me from their own lands and goods, according to their own good pleasure?" But this generosity is qualified in the next paragraph, where Patrick is represented as saying to the Angel—"Am I not content to be the apostolic teacher and chief leader of all the nations of Erin, especially as I retain a special tax to be duly paid to me, which has been granted to me by Heaven, and is justly and truly due from all the free churches of the provinces of this island. Moreover, a tax has, without any doubt, been imposed on all the monasteries of Coenobites in favour of the Rector of Armagh for ever." It is not here stated expressly that the Angel ratified these claims; but it is clearly implied that Patrick claimed these rights for himself and his successors for ever, in virtue of the jurisdiction which God had granted to him over all the churches and tribes of Erin.

These extracts clearly show, in our opinion, that the Book of the Angel, and the visions which it records.

cannot be relied on as strictly authentic. They were inserted by some later scribe, after the death of Patrick, to lend authority to the claims of his successors as regards their diocesan and primatial jurisdiction. The rights claimed were undeniable, but this was an attempt to give them a special sanction from Patrick and the Angel, which would render them altogether unquestionable.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### ST. PATRICK'S LABOURS IN ARMAGH.

#### I.—HIS DAILY LABOURS.

PATRICK'S life during his residence in Armagh during this last period of his career was in many respects quite different from the more active years of his earlier missionary life in Ireland. From his arrival in Ireland in 432, to his foundation of Armagh in 457, his life was that of an active missionary prelate, as the whole course of this narrative hitherto has amply shown. He shrank from no labour, he was deterred by no obstacles, he feared no dangers. In this, as in many other respects, his life and labours bear a striking resemblance to the life and labours of St. Paul during his missionary journeys.

But when he had settled down in Armagh, his course of life was of necessity greatly changed. Thenceforward the routine of his life did not in any essential points differ from that of other great prelates with an enormous diocese to govern. We may be sure he never neglected the daily celebration of the Divine Office and of the Sacred Mysteries. To the former he was bound as a priest; as a man of prayer, living in constant communion with God, we may be sure he would not neglect the latter.

Then, it is a primary obligation on all prelates to visit from time to time personally, or by deputy, the churches within their jurisdiction. As it is said in the Book of Armagh, all Ireland was Patrick's parochia, or diocese, as it was called later on. If any grave matter occurred in any of the churches of the Irish Tribes, especially in those founded by himself, Patrick would not neglect either to visit the place in person, or send his Coadjutor to investigate the case and apply a suitable remedy. In fact we find, as in the case of Ardagh, that if any rumours of a grave scandal occurring in any of his churches reached his ears, Patrick, in spite of his years, made an effort to visit the place himself, and apply a suitable remedy. In this matter his life affords a noble lesson of unwearied zeal to all Irish bishops for all time.

Then, again, when Patrick founded his Primatial See of Armagh that city became a place of pilgrimage for fervent

Christians, not only from all parts of Ireland but also from Britain and Gaul. References are made in the Book of Armagh to these pilgrimages, and, as it was customary to see the Irish Saint and get his blessing, just as people now go to Rome to see the Pope and get his blessing, the Saint must have spent many an hour in receiving, and blessing, and giving counsel to priests and prelates from all parts of Ireland, and sometimes from Gaul and Britain.

Then Patrick had, moreover, the ordinary work of a prelate in the diocese under his immediate jurisdiction in relation to his clergy, his monks, his nuns, his students, his flock generally; and although we know he had the assistance of a Coadjutor in his declining years to aid him in the performance of his manifold duties, still to the last his must have been an anxious and laborious life, burdened with many cares and crowded with many toils.

We must bear in mind, too, that at this time Patrick was very old, though, doubtless, very hale, in consequence of his temperate life, spent for the most part in the open air. But in the midst of all his toils he was, as he tells us himself, sustained by God, to whom he justly attributes all the success of his manifold labours. This was in truth the whole secret of his marvellous work in Ireland. He was a man of prayer, who always lived in the presence of God, and, conscious of the Divine Commission and the Divine help, he faced every danger and overcame every obstacle. Such is in fact the whole tenor of his Confession; and, as we have said more than once, Patrick's conversion of Ireland in face of the difficulties he had to encounter cannot be rationally explained on any other hypothesis. It was the work of God through the agency of a devoted man, 'for whom the love and service of Christ my Lord,' as he said, was the one all-absorbing purpose of his life.

He had, however, to deal with some things that caused him great trouble, even in the midst of his own religious family, if we can credit the story told in the Tripartite regarding Lupita when she dwelt at Armagh, which it is our duty, as faithful historians, to reproduce here.

## II.—STORY OF LUPITA OR LUPAIT.

'Patrick,' we are told, 'was enraged with his sister, namely, Lupait, for the sin of lust which she committed, so that she became pregnant. When Patrick came into the church from the east—perhaps from Saul—Lupait

went to meet him, and she cast herself down on her knees before the chariot in the place where the cross stands in Both Arcall.' This was probably the termon cross of Armagh on the eastern road, for there was a cross on each road to mark the limit of the Church's territory in the suburbs of Armagh. "Drive the chariot over her," says Patrick; 'and the chariot went over her three times, for each time she would come and place herself in front of it. Wherefore she went to heaven there at the Ferta, and she was afterwards buried by Patrick, and her requiem was sung'—in Armagh, no doubt. 'Colman, son of Ailill, of the Hy Bressail, was the man who brought this ruin on Lupait at Imdual. Aedan, son of Colman and Lupait, was the saint of Inis Lothair, for Lupait when dying besought Patrick not to take away heaven from Colman and his offspring; and Patrick relenting, it would appear, did not take heaven from them. He only said they would be always weakly. Now, the children of Colman are the Hui Failain and the Hui Duib-Dare.'

This is a very strange passage, and must not be set aside merely because it attributes sin to a sister of Patrick, who is herself described as a saint in our calendars. Some great saints have been great sinners, and the time of this story was a rude age, with a people newly converted from paganism, many of whom, no doubt, from time to time, relapsed, as the Corinthian Christians did, into their old carnal sins. Neither can we reject the story because it sets St. Patrick in what seems to be a cruel and odious light. St. Patrick was a man of God; he was zealous for the observance of God's law; and when that law was violated, especially by persons of his own kindred, he was capable of doing harsh things, which, no doubt, he would afterwards regret. Neither is it likely that this story was a pure invention, for no Irish writer would be likely to invent such a story, either regarding Patrick or Lupait, and it is very circumstantial in many of the details.

Still, in so far as the story refers to St. Lupait or Lupita, the sister of St. Patrick, it must at once be set aside as intrinsically impossible. For this Lupita was nearly of the same age as St. Patrick himself. She was carried off a captive with him when he was only sixteen years of age. She was sold as a slave and dwelt in Conaille Muirthemne during the years that St. Patrick herded swine in Antrim. Therefore, at the time that Patrick founded Armagh she must have been more than seventy

years of age, and hence, even if she were not indeed altogether free from the lusts of the flesh, she was certainly incapable of bearing children. We must, therefore, accept the suggestion of Colgan that either the name Lupait was introduced by the copyist on his own authority, or, what appears to us to be more likely, that there is question not of Lupait, the sister of the Saint, but of a younger Lupait, perhaps a niece or daughter of the first, who came to dwell with the Saint at Armagh. The word, 'Siur,' sister, might also mean a relation, and the odious crime might thus be attributed to St. Lupita, sister of St. Patrick, which was really committed by a younger relative.

The circumstantial details given in the Tripartite tell strongly in favour of the substantial authenticity of the story. That a young chief of the blood royal like Colman should succeed in attempting to seduce a young religious in that rude age is by no means improbable. We think, however, the severity with which Patrick treated the erring maiden when she sought his pardon, is greatly exaggerated. He would, doubtless, pass her by unheeded in his anger, but the statement of his driving his chariot over her three times is clearly an exaggeration of later times.<sup>1</sup> The maiden's heart was broken, that is clear enough; yet like a true woman she besought the Saint to spare her child and her seducer, and the Saint granted the petition, and forebore to inflict on them any heavier doom. By her self-sacrifice she saved them from the punishment of the sin<sup>2</sup> of the parents.

### III.—VESTMENT-MAKING AND EMBROIDERY.

In bright contrast with the strange story related of Lupait is that which tells us later on how Patrick had four holy nuns who spent their lives making vestments and altar clothes for the churches at Armagh and elsewhere. These things could not be purchased at the time, a regular supply could not be got over the sea, so if they were to be

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick appears to have heard of the scandal before his arrival. Lupait cast herself in the narrow track to implore pardon. Patrick said: "Drive on," and the maiden may have been hurt. Again and again she threw herself before him, and again and again he said: "Drive on, don't mind her." It is easy to see how the exaggerations could arise from facts like these.

<sup>2</sup> Colman, son of Ailill of the Hy Bressail, was a member of the ruling family of that tribe, which dwelt south-east of Lough Neagh, and was afterwards called the Clanbrassil. Colgan does not know where Inis Lothair was—perhaps it was in Lough Neagh.

had at all Patrick must have them made for himself. The four holy nuns whose names are given as thus working for God and for Patrick are—Cochmaiss and Tigris and Lupait and Darerca. It is not said that they all worked together at Armagh, indeed the contrary would seem to be implied; but they are enumerated amongst those holy workers who devoted their lives to the service of Patrick's churches. Three of those named were his own sisters, and the fourth seems to have been a royal maiden from Ulidia. The Lupait here referred to was not the Lupait whose sad story has been just recorded. Aubrey de Vere has given us a beautiful picture of their assiduous labour for God :

Beneath a pine three vestals sat close-veiled ;  
 A song these childless sang of Bethlehem's Child,  
 Low-toned, and worked their Altar-cloth, a Lamb  
 All white on golden blazon ; near it bled  
 The Bird that with her own blood feeds her young.  
 Red drops her holy breast affused. These three  
 Were daughters of three Kings.

—*The Arraignment of St Patrick.*

#### IV.—RELICS FOR ARMAGH.

The Tripartite gives a curious account of the way in which St. Patrick procured relics of the saints and martyrs from Rome to be used in the consecration of his Irish churches. To make it intelligible we must bear in mind the law and practice as to the use and veneration of the relics of the saints.

We know from the testimony of the most learned of the Greek and Latin Fathers that great veneration was paid to the relics of the martyrs from the earliest ages of the Church's history, and great efficacy was attributed to their possession or application. St. Ambrose, A.D. 393, speaks of the relics of the martyrs, Vitalis and Agricola, as ' trophies of the cross, whose virtue you perceive in their works.' St. Chrysostom says, ' let us fall down before their remains, let us embrace their coffins, for the coffins of the martyrs can acquire great virtue.' St. Basil says that ' the ashes of the Forty Martyrs when thrown into a stream carried blessings to all the neighbouring coasts. Like towers closely set, they afford protection against the incursions of our enemies'—and numberless quotations of a similar kind might be cited.

The custom of erecting altars over the bodies of the martyrs had its origin in the catacombs, and afterwards it



became customary to build churches and altars over the place where the martyrs suffered ; but in these cases it was always required that some of the relics should be really preserved in or under the altar.<sup>1</sup> And St. Jerome expressly states that the Popes used in person to offer sacrifice over the bodies of St. Peter and Paul, whose tombs were the altars of Christ. This custom became so universal that it was made obligatory by law in all cases, as it is still, to have the relics of the martyrs under the altar or inserted in the altar stone or table itself, and it was ordered that wherever churches or altars had been dedicated without those 'sacred pledges' of the saints, they were as soon as possible to be supplied with them.

This practice and legislation was in full force when St. Patrick came to Ireland ; and he, of course, as far as possible, complied with the requirements of the Church. He brought both books and relics with him when first he came to preach to Ireland ; but the supply soon became exhausted, and he found it necessary to procure more. Rome was naturally the great place to send for a supply of relics ; and we know that during the fifth and sixth centuries it had become a common practice to send from all parts of Europe to Rome for relics to be used in the consecration of churches and altars, and the *Liber Diurnus* of the Roman Pontiffs contains a copy of the form of application to be made in all such cases.<sup>2</sup>

When these relics were brought to any place for the consecration of a new church, it was prescribed that vigils should be kept and prayers recited before the relics during the whole of the preceding night ; and when a quantity of relics were kept in any place they were to be preserved in a shrine or other reliquary, with the utmost reverence and care. From time to time, especially on the great festivals of the Church, they were to be exposed to the devotion of the people, and the clergy were required, particularly on Sundays, to recite certain prayers and psalms before the relics, by way of invoking the intercession of the saints in heaven. Numberless decrees of Councils, some of them dating from the earliest times, point to these observances as not only laudable but obligatory ; and they are set out at great length and with much learning by a Protestant writer in the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*.

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Carthage, A.D. 401, 7th canon.

<sup>2</sup> See *Dictionary of Chris. Biography*, sub. voce, p. 1,774.

Now, when Patrick was going through the country of necessity he carried his relics about with him in some kind of portable pix, or theca, or reliquary, or sacrarium, for these terms have been all applied to sacred vessels used for this purpose. But now that he had finally settled at Armagh he established a fixed place for keeping his relics, and, in our opinion, his first church of Na Ferta took its name from the fact that the relics of the martyrs were kept there. Then, as we have said, when they began to run short, he had to procure a fresh supply from Rome, which was the spiritual treasury of the whole Christian world for this purpose. So he had either to go himself to Rome, or send some person, to procure relics for him in the Holy City.

The Tripartite represents Patrick himself as going to Rome to procure his relics, and relates the fact in a very curious fashion.

"One day," it tells us, "the Angel—Victor, no doubt—came to Patrick in Armagh and said to him, 'To-day the relics of the apostles (and martyrs) are to be divided in Rome so as to provide for the needs of the various churches of Christendom,' and as Patrick was then old, and besides could not, in human fashion, travel to Rome in a day or two, the Angel added, "I will carry you thither," so that he might get a share of the relics.<sup>1</sup>

'Now, there were seen at the Southern (termon) Cross of Aenach Macha, four chariots, which were brought to Patrick that he might set out on this Roman journey.' We are also told that at the Northern Cross of Armagh he saw our Saviour himself, as He will come to judge the world on the day of judgment; that is, in great power and majesty. So Patrick no longer hesitated, but leaving Sechnall, his beloved nephew and coadjutor 'in the bishopric with the men of Ireland,' he himself entered one of the chariots, and in the first day's journey he was carried all the way to Comar Tri n Uisce—that is, apparently, the confluence of the Suir, Nore, and Barrow, near Waterford. There Patrick found a ship from Burdigala of Letavia—the modern Bordeaux.<sup>2</sup> Embarking in this, he was, after a time, carried up the Tiber, even to Rome itself. Just then

<sup>1</sup> 'Juxta ecclesiarum exigentiam dividerentur.'—*Golgan*.

<sup>2</sup> We need not wonder that a ship of Bordeaux should come to Port Laigne (Waterford) in the fifth century, for Ireland's ports were well known to foreign merchants from the time of Tacitus, and wine especially would be needed for the Holy Sacrifice. Wicklow and Waterford were the most frequented ports, but Waterford was at the time more Christianised.

sleep or torpor came over the people of Rome, so that Patrick carried off as much of the holy relics as he wanted for the needs of his Irish churches, and they were all taken to Armagh by the counsel of God and the counsel of the men of Ireland. They included three hundred and three score and five relics, together with the relics of Peter and Paul, and of Laurence and Stephen, and of many others. They also included a sheet with Christ's blood thereon, and with the hair of Mary the Virgin. Patrick brought the whole collection to Armagh, according to the will of God, and of his angel, and of the men of Ireland.

This story, as it stands, must be rejected, first of all because it is inconsistent with the Confession of Patrick, for the Saint very clearly states that although he was anxious to go to 'the Britains' to visit his native country and relations (parentes), yea, and go further, even to Gaul itself, to visit his (spiritual) brethren, and see once more the face of the Saints of God, yet he was restrained by the Spirit of God, who testified to him that he should not go, but spend the remainder of his days in Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Then the miraculous mode of travelling shows that the writer of the narrative was conscious of the difficulty of bringing St. Patrick to Rome in the ordinary way.

As to the pious theft of the relics we have ample evidence that the surreptitious abstraction of relics was quite common at the time, and had to be forbidden under severe penalties by various Popes and Councils. But it seems to be entirely a gratuitous statement to make St. Patrick guilty of a pious fraud of this kind, seeing that he could easily have got the relics without it.

We may, then, fairly assume that the narrative is imaginary, so far as it brings St. Patrick himself to Rome. On the other hand, we may readily admit, indeed we must admit, that he sent some one to Rome to procure relics for the purposes already explained, and it is only natural to conclude that these relics would be preserved in Armagh.

The Tripartite adds that a letter was brought from the Pontiff to Patrick directing that there should be vigils before the relics with lamps and lights in the nights always, and Mass and psalm-singing by day, and prayer in the night, and that they should be exposed every year for the multitudes to venerate them. All this was the common law and

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<sup>1</sup> The passage is rather obscure, and the Latin is corrupt, but there can be no doubt as to the drift of the meaning to be conveyed.

practice of the time, and it applied not merely to the eve of the dedication of the church where the relics were exposed to the veneration of the faithful, but to every church or chapel which was set apart for the custody of celebrated relics. Of this we have ample evidence in the teaching of the Fathers as well as in the decrees of the early Councils.

As we have said, some church at Armagh, most probably the Na Ferta, was chosen to be the repository of the sacred relics sent to Patrick from Rome, and they were enclosed in a reliquary or receptacle, called in the Book of Armagh by the curious name of a sarcophagus,<sup>1</sup> which is described in the margin as 'du ferti martyr' (*i.e.*) the graves or relics of the martyrs. Nay, more, in the Book of the Angel we have the very psalms prescribed to be said every Sunday when going in procession from Armagh on the Hill to these Graves of the Martyrs,<sup>2</sup> an injunction which, as we know, was quite in conformity with the practice of the universal church at the time.

#### V.—PATRICK'S COADJUTORS.

The statement of the Tripartite that when Patrick was setting out for Rome from Armagh he left Sechnall<sup>3</sup> in charge thereof during his absence, raises difficulties of another kind. Was St. Sechnall alive after Patrick had founded Armagh, about the year 455? This is an interesting question of itself and open to considerable discussion, but, as we have already referred to it more than once, we need not further discuss it here.

On the other hand the Annals of Ulster assign Sechnall's death to 447,<sup>4</sup> and he is described as the first Bishop that went under the sod in Ireland,<sup>5</sup> which would go to show an early date for his death. The question is surrounded with

<sup>1</sup> In the text of the Book of Armagh 'Sargifagum Martyrum.'

<sup>2</sup> Fundamentum orationis in unaquaque die dominica in Alto Machae ad Sargifagum Martyrum adeundem ab eoque revertendum scil: Domine clamavi, &c., &c. Rolls' *Trip.*, vol. ii., p. 356.

<sup>3</sup> The Scholiast in the Preface to Sechnall's hymn in the Lebar Brecc states that Patrick sent Sechnall to Rome for the relics, which is much more probable, or if not Sechnall, someone else to get them in Patrick's name. In this way the procuring of the relics would come to be attributed to Patrick himself.

<sup>4</sup> A.D. 447. Repose of Secundinus the Holy in the 75th year of his age.

<sup>5</sup> The Life of St. Declan says of Sechnall—'De quo fertur quod ipse primus episcopus sub humo Hiberniæ exivit.'

considerable difficulty, and cannot, we fear, be determined in the present state of our knowledge.

The whole narrative regarding Sechnall's poem in praise of his uncle, as given both in the Tripartite and by the Scholiast, represents him as meeting St. Patrick in Armagh, and the story about Fiacc's chariot tends in the same direction.

It was about this time also, whilst Patrick was sojourning at Armagh, that Sechnall made the panegyric in praise of his uncle, which is referred to elsewhere. "When shall I make a panegyric for thee?" said Sechnall. "The time for that is not yet come," said Patrick, who did not wish to be praised during his life. "But it must be made," said Sechnall. "Then by my word," said Patrick, "the sooner it is done the better," for Patrick knew that Sechnall's death was not far off; and he was the first bishop who went under the sod in Ireland.

The occasion of writing the poem is then explained. Sechnall had said to some of Patrick's household at Ferta Martar<sup>1</sup>—the first church founded by Patrick—"Patrick is a good man; were it not for one thing he is a most excellent man." That remark went out amongst Patrick's family, so that he himself coming to hear it asked Sechnall what it meant. "I meant," said Sechnall, "O my father, that you did not preach charity, that is the giving of alms and offerings." "But my little son," said Patrick, "it is for charity's sake that I do not preach that charity. For if I preached it I should not leave a yoke of two horses for any of the saints present or future that are to come after me. Everything would be given to me, my share and their shares."

Then Sechnall felt he had done Patrick a wrong, and he resolved to make amends by writing after the fashion of the Irish Bards this *amlra* or eulogy on St. Patrick. So Sechnall, having composed his hymn, came to Patrick with it, and it appears they met at the Pass of Midluachair, now the Moira Pass, as Patrick was coming southwards into the territory of Conaille.

Patrick, on his journey southward, was resting at the foot of the mountain when Sechnall hastened up to meet him, coming apparently from the opposite direction.

<sup>1</sup> This is an incidental proof of the authenticity of the story, for Na Ferta was the earliest church founded at Armagh. The church on the hill was not, in all probability, founded during Sechnall's life.

The 'mountain' appears to refer to Slieve Gullion, which overhangs the pass, and in that case the west of the mountain would mean the slopes of Slieve Gullion overlooking the road which led through the pass from Forkhill to Armagh.

When they met in the pass they blessed each other, and Sechnall, addressing Patrick, who was still resting himself by the wayside, said, "I wish you would listen to a eulogy which I have made for a certain man of God." "Welcome to me," said Patrick, "is the praise of God's household." Then Sechnall began after the manner of the bards and recited the poem, suppressing the stanza which mentioned Patrick's name as the subject of the poem. Patrick listened until Sechnall came to the verse which describes the subject of the poet's eulogy, as—*Maximus namque in regno cœlorum*; that is, 'the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.' Then it seems Patrick began to grow uneasy, either because he thought the epithet too strong, or it seemed to be intended to apply to himself. So he rose from the place where he was sitting by the public highway or pass called Elda, and when Sechnall asked why he interrupted the reading, Patrick replied, "Let us go to a quieter place, you can finish the reading of your poem there." As they walked on to a quieter spot Patrick said, "How can it be said of anyone that he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" "Oh," replied Sechnall, "the superlative is there put for a strong positive; it only means that he excels most of his race, whether Britons or Scots." Just then they came to the place called Dallmuine, where Patrick once more prayed and sat down, whereupon Sechnall recited for him the remainder of the poem, including the stanza naming Patrick as its subject. Patrick now submitted to the eulogy, and even wished joy to Sechnall as the author of the poem.

"Now," said Sechnall, after the manner of the Bards, "I claim the reward of my poem;" but it was not a sordid reward. The text of the Rolls' Tripartite is either corrupt or very obscure, and Colgan's version does not make clearer the exact nature of the reward. But we gather from it, and from the explanation of the Scholiast, that Patrick first promised that as many of those who recited the hymn would go to heaven as there were hairs in the woollen chasuble of Sechnall. But Sechnall was not content with that. Then Patrick promised that every disciple of his who kept up the custom of reciting the poem every morn-

ing and evening would go to heaven. "It is good," said Sechnall, "but the poem is long and difficult." "Then," said Patrick, "he shall still be saved if he keep up the custom of reciting the three last stanzas or even the three last lines; yea, even the three last words." "I give thanks to God," said Sechnall.

The hymn, which came to be known as Patrick's Hymn, having such a promise, came to be recited in after times by most of the holy men of Ireland, both in monasteries and private families, and it was known to produce marvellous results. Once, says the Tripartite, Colman Elo recited it three times in his refectory. Patrick, long dead, came from heaven and stood with the brethren in the refectory whilst they were reciting the hymn. But all did not see him, for one who was present, not a brother but a layman, cried out, 'Have ye no other prayer to recite but this one?' Then Patrick departed at the word of the foolish man.

Once again when Cainnech was at sea, perhaps going to Iona, he saw a crowd of demons passing his boat through the air. "When you return tell me," said Cainnech, "where you were." The demons obeyed the Saint and said, "We went out to meet the soul of a rich man who, with his sons and sons-in-law, used to celebrate every year Patrick's feast with a great banquet, at which, it seems, they usually ate and drank more than was good for them." "But," said the devil, "he used to repeat everyday two or three stanzas of Patrick's Hymn; and although I declare to your holiness that it was rather a satire than a panegyric (from the way he recited them), still by that we have been vanquished and the sinner has been saved."

## VI.—FOOD FOR THE SCHOLARS.

The next and one of the last incidents related in the Tripartite gives us a glimpse of St. Patrick's efforts to establish and maintain a school in his young church at Armagh. It is true indeed that the locality is not exactly determined, but the circumstances point to Armagh as the most likely scene of the narrative.

A pious couple, named Berach and Brig, brought to Patrick three cheeses made of curds with a quantity of butter also. "These," they said, "are for the boys." "Good, indeed," said Patrick, for he, doubtless, well knew how soon his hungry scholars would dispose of them.

Thereupon a foreign Druid, Galldrui, he is called, who had, it seems, come to visit Patrick from Britain or elsewhere, said—"I will believe in your religion if you turn these cheeses into stone." And Patrick by the power of God, did turn them into stones. "Now turn them back again into cheeses," said the Druid. 'Patrick did so.' "Turn them once more into stones," said the incredulous Druid, and once more Patrick changed the cheeses into stone. "Now turn them back again into cheeses." "No," said Patrick, "they shall remain stones for ever in commemoration of this deed—of God's power and your incredulity—until shall hither come another servant of God to take charge of them." 'He meant Dichuill, who is in Ernaide.' Then at length the Wizard believed in God and St. Patrick.

Patrick, perhaps in anger, threw his hand-bell from him into a thick brake which grew in the place; and, as it remained there, a young birch tree grew up through its handle—that is through the hole formed by the handle. When, in after times, Dichuill came to the place, he found the iron bell, with the birch growing through it, hence its name, *Bethechan*, and he took it to his oratory, where it still remains. And there, too, near the oratory, stand the *two* stones that were made out of the cheeses. But the third stone—there were three cheeses—was carried to Louth by Dichuill when he became abbot there. 'It stands to-day in Gort Conaich, and is to be sought in the church.'

It would be very interesting to know exactly the site of this miracle. If it was not Armagh it must have been somewhere in the neighbourhood of Louth, and, doubtless, took place whilst Patrick was sojourning there. Colgan thinks the Dichuill here referred to was Dichuill of Cluain Braoin, whose festival is assigned in the Martyrology of Donegal to the 1st of May. Cluain Braoin was, he tells us, in the neighbourhood of Louth, where the saint had his first oratory, but when he became Abbot of Louth he took the bell with him, and the cheese-stone, which he kept in the church, to be, as Patrick said, a memorial of the miracle for coming ages. The Church (or the stone) stands to-day, says the Tripartite, in Gort Conaich. We cannot find the name near Louth, but there is a townland called Gortconny in the parish of Ramoan, Co. Antrim, which, however, can hardly have been the place here referred to by the author of the Tripartite. The narrative shows one



thing at least, that in the time of St Patrick the Irish made their cheeses at home, although now it is the fashion to import them from England. Butter, too, as we know from the Lives of several of our early saints, was always extensively made in Ireland, and was highly valued as an article of food. The Brehon laws prescribe a ration of butter for the sons of chiefs, when they were at school; from which we may fairly infer that it was more or less of a luxury for the lads of inferior degree. On this occasion, although Patrick changed the cheeses that were destined for the scholars into stones—when the honour of God demanded it—he did not touch their butter, which no doubt, they greatly relished.

This story of the cheeses and butter, according to the Scholiast on Sechnall's Hymn, is closely connected with the first recitation of the Hymn. We are told that when Sechnall had finished reciting the Hymn, Berach and Brig came up, bringing food to Patrick, to wit, cheese and butter. Whereupon Patrick said "wherever this Hymn shall be sung before dinner, no scarcity of food shall be there"; because it would appear that on this occasion it brought up the cheese and butter. "And," added Patrick, "the new house in which it shall be sung first of all, shall have Patrick and the saints of Erin to watch over it." If this story be true, then the miracles of the cheeses changed into stone would have taken place somewhere near the pass at Forkhill, on the road to Armagh, and the youngsters would be some students in the train of Patrick, although there is no other reference to them here.

#### VII.—NUNS AT ARMAGH.

Then we are told of another strange event, which throws more light on St. Patrick's sojourn in Armagh. It probably happened some years after his first sojourn there, when his name and fame had spread far and wide over Christendom;—"Once on a time there came nine daughters of the King of the Lombards, and a daughter of the King of Britain on their pilgrimage to Patrick. They stayed at the east of Armagh in the place where Coll na n-Ingen (the Maidens' Hazel) stands to-day. They sent to Patrick to ask if they might go to see him (to Armagh). Patrick said to the messengers, 'Three of the virgins will go to heaven, and do ye bury them in the place where they are—namely, at Coll na n-Ingen. Let the rest of the

virgins go to Druim Fendeda (or the Champion's Ridge), and let one of them go as far as the hillock in the east.—and this thing was done.”

The story is a strange one, but by no means improbable. It was an age of pilgrimage, when companies, both of men and maidens, left their homes to go and find some place of penance where they might dwell alone with God. ‘Seven daughters’ of a British King went all the way to the Aran Islands in the Bay of Galway on pilgrimage, and their memory is still revered, and their graves and holy well are still pointed out to the visitor by the islanders. There were kings of the Lombards—Longobardi—beyond the Rhine, long before they conquered for themselves that territory in the north of Italy which still bears their name. There is some evidence that one of St. Patrick's sisters was married to a Lombard, and that many of his family settled in Ireland. We are not to be surprised, therefore, if the daughters of a regulus of the Longobardi, hearing that Patrick had become a great saint, and had now settled at Armagh in the North of Ireland, should seek out the Apostle, who may have been a relative, in order to live near him on their earthly pilgrimage, and thus ensure for themselves a place nigh to him in heaven.

But the monastic rules regarding the admission of women to the monastic cities were very strict, although at that time, under the first order of saints, they were not so rigorous as they afterwards became.

“Three of them,” said Patrick, “will die and go to heaven from the place where they are”—for no doubt they were worn out after their long journeys by land and sea to find out their guide and spiritual father. The others cannot come here to his sacred city on the Hill—it was for men only—but let them go to the Champions' Ridge near Armagh, and settle there in their own convent. One, however, he directed to go as far as the hillock to the east of Armagh—and it was, so far as we can learn, near to the City—and settle there.

This was the virgin Cruimtheris, who set up at Cengoba, the hillock to the east; and Benen used to carry food to her every evening from Patrick. Benen's virtue had been proved, so that Patrick might well entrust this charitable mission to him. Moreover, Patrick planted for her an apple-tree, which he had taken from a field to the north of that place, in a fertile field near the holy virgin's cell, called Achad inna Élta, the Field of the Doe; and hence that field

afterwards came to be called Aball Patraic, or Patrick's Orchard, in Cengoba. The milk of the doe, with the apples from the orchard, fed the holy virgin and the little lapdog that remained with her in Cengoba. We may fairly ask, was that Field of the Doe the spot where the doe hunted from the Hill of the Willows found rest; where the holy virgin Cruimtheris had her little cell; and where that other milk-white Hind hunted from old Armagh has at last found a refuge and a home? It is surely passing strange that the hunted doe should have fled to the north-east, where Tulach na Licce stand to-day; strange that the royal maiden should have been bidden by Patrick to remain alone at the hillock towards the east; that a doe should give her milk; and that Patrick and Benen should feed her during all the years of her pilgrimage at Armagh. It was surely the royal hill where the hunted doe, the Spouse of Christ, so long the nursling of the woods, and the outcast of men, has found at last a refuge and a home.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### ST. PATRICK'S SYNODS.

#### I.—PATRICK'S CANON IN THE BOOK OF ARMAGH.

PATRICK, having now established his primatial See, found it necessary to convene a Synod for (*a*) the purpose of ascertaining and defining the nature and extent of his own jurisdiction; (*b*) for recognising and proclaiming the due subjection of the Irish Church of Patrick to the See of St. Peter at Rome; (*c*) for making such statutes and regulations as the special circumstances of the Irish Church rendered necessary. Patrick knew well that such national or provincial synods were held from time to time throughout the Universal Church, as a matter of obligation incumbent on the metropolitan who summoned them, and on all the prelates of the province or exarchate, who were bound to attend them. "Such councils were the essential framework, as it were, and bond of union and of good government in the Church, and became part of its ordinary machinery early in the second century, and, probably, from the very beginning, but are first mentioned of the East by Firmilianus, of Caeserea, in Cappadocia, where they regularly, and, of necessity (*necessario*) recurred in Asia once a year for purposes of discipline, and of the west by St. Cyprian at the same period."<sup>1</sup>

We may be quite sure, therefore, that Patrick, so exact in the discharge of all his duties, would take an early opportunity of convening the Irish prelates to confer with himself on the needs of the Irish Church, and make suitable regulations or Canons for its discipline and government. We know, too, that such was the fact. The Book of Armagh makes reference to some of the more important Canons enacted by Patrick and his fellow-prelates; and we have more than one collection of Canons handed down to us from the earliest times, as enacted by Patrick in these Synods.

It is only natural to suppose that these Synods were held at Armagh, although, perhaps, one was held at the

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<sup>1</sup> See *Dict. Chris. Ant.*, 473.

great Feis of Tara, which was celebrated by Laeghaire, as the Four Masters tell us, in 454.

The famous Canon in the Book of Armagh stands in the names of 'Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus, and Benignus.' Now, if Secundinus died so early as 447,<sup>1</sup> this Synod must have been held at an earlier date, perhaps 444, when, according to the Annals of Ulster, Armagh was founded. But, in our opinion, Secundinus lived until 457, and, therefore, might have assisted at this Synod, if it were held at the Feis of Tara, or even so late as 457 in Armagh.

In discussing this question, it is necessary to distinguish carefully between what we may call the 'Armagh Canon,' attributed to 'Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus, and Benignus,' and the 'Canons of the Synod of Patrick,' which, in its own Acts, is described as 'the Synod of the Bishops, that is, of Patricius, Auxilius, and Iserninus.'<sup>2</sup> Here Secundinus is left out, so also is Benignus, which shows that both were probably dead at this time, for otherwise, being destined Heirs of Patrick, their names would certainly not be omitted. Whence we infer that the Synod was celebrated most probably at Armagh, and after 467, the year in which Benignus died.

Then there is what is called the 'Irish Collection of Canons,' which does not purport to be the legislation of any particular Synod, but, as its name implies, a collection of canon law used in the Irish Church, and which, as we might naturally expect, includes not only the Canons of the Synods of Patrick and his colleagues, but also many other Canons from the general legislation of the Church appropriate to the needs of the Irish Church. This 'Irish Collection' of Canons was published about the year 700; and is itself distinct from the 'Canons of the Irish Synod' held in 694 or 695, but not, of course, by Patrick.

Of all the Patrician Canons, by far the most important is that found in the Book of Armagh,<sup>3</sup> and which, for brevity sake, we may call the Armagh Canon. It contains two parts—the first asserting the primatial rights of Armagh to which we have referred elsewhere; the second asserting the supremacy of the Chair of St. Peter in Rome over the See of Armagh itself, as well as over all prelates and judges

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of Ulster*; but it really is 448, as these Annals date from the Incarnation of our Lord.

<sup>2</sup> Incipit Synodus Episcoporum, id est Patritii, Auxilii, Isernini—*Haddan and Stubbs*, Vol. ii., Part ii.

<sup>3</sup> Folio 21, bb.

in Ireland. The fact that Secundinus is mentioned as one of those who issued the decree proves that it was issued before his death, and, therefore, at the latest, before 457. On the other hand, as special reference is made to the prerogatives of the See of Armagh, it cannot have been issued before the year 444, which is the earliest date assigned to the foundation of Armagh.<sup>1</sup> The second part is as follows: 'Also, if any very difficult cause shall arise, unknown to all the judges of the tribes of the Scots, it is duly to be referred to the See of the Archbishop of the Irish, that is Patrick, and to the examination of that prelate. But if in that See with its sages it cannot be easily decided, then the cause of the matter aforesaid, we decree, is to be referred to the Apostolic See, that is, to the Chair of Peter, having authority over the City of Rome.'<sup>2</sup>

This Armagh Canon clearly recognises the Chair of Peter, the Apostle, which rules in Rome, as the supreme judge of controversies for the Irish Church in all matters of doctrine, morals, and discipline—whatever grave cause may arise—and that is, in briefest form, the essence of the supremacy of the Holy See. Armagh had its own primacy; but if the matter could not be settled in Armagh, then it was to be referred to Rome. That is all; but it settles the question.

It has been said, however, that this decree from the Book of Armagh proves nothing regarding the primacy of Rome, but that Patrick acted wisely in appointing some Court of Appeal, the best and wisest in Christendom, when the Irish prelates could not settle the matter themselves.

It will be observed, however, that the decree directs them, *as a matter of obligation*, to refer it to the Apostolic Chair—the Chair of Peter the Apostle—and that this was the real ground of the reference, namely, that it was the Apostolic See. And so the Irish prelates understood in

<sup>1</sup> *Ili sunt qui de hoc decreverunt, id est, Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus, Benignus.*

<sup>2</sup> Usher's translation is practically the same as our own; here it is:—'whenever any cause that is very difficult and unknown unto all the judges of the Scottish nations shall arise, it is rightly to be referred to the See of the Archbishop of the Irish (that is to say, of Patrick), and to the examination of the prelate thereof. But, if there by him and his wise men a cause of this nature cannot easily be made up, we have decreed it shall be sent to the See Apostolic—that is to say, to the Chair of the Apostle Peter, which hath the authority of the City of Rome.' This translation is exact and literal, and we make no objection to it. See Usher's Dissertation on the religion of the ancient Irish, page 84.

after times, for when a really grave question arose regarding the date of Easter and the form of the tonsure, the Synod of Magh-Lene in 630 decided, as St. Cummian of Clonfert tells us in his Letter on the Paschal Question, to refer the dispute to Rome, 'in accordance with the canonical decree, that if questions of grave moment arise, they shall be referred to the head of Cities.' 'Wherefore we sent such as we knew to be wise and humble men to Rome to ascertain the Roman theory and practice, with a view to a final settlement of the question.'

The Canons known as the Irish Collection were not, so far as we can judge, collected in their present form before the year 700, hence their way of formulating the Canon of the Book of Armagh is somewhat different, but not less expressive. 'Patrick decrees:—If any grave controversies arise in this island, they shall be referred to the Apostolic See.'<sup>1</sup> Exactly; Patrick was the author of the Canon, with the assent of Auxilius, Secundinus, and Benignus; and then long after their death it was embodied in the form in which we now have it in the Collection of Irish Canons. But the Book of Armagh gives the original form, and the original authors of the decree, and its authority is altogether independent of the authority of the Collection of Irish Canons.

## II.—THE SYNOD OF PATRICK, AUXILIUS, AND ISERNINUS.

This is sometimes called St. Patrick's First Synod. It was most probably held at Armagh. We find no reference to Secundinus, who was, doubtless, dead at the time, nor to Benignus, although he lived until 468. Iserninus, of old Kilcullen, takes their place; he died in 469. Auxilius of Killossy (now Killashee) died, it is said, in 460. So we may fairly infer that this Synod was held in Armagh about the year 459, when the Irish Church was regularly constituted, and the primacy of Patrick in Armagh was universally recognised.

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<sup>1</sup> Patricius Ait: 'Si quae difficiles quaestiones in hoc insula orientur ad Sedem Apostolicam referantur.'

In the Book of Armagh, as we have seen, the words are:—'Ili sunt qui de hoc decreverunt, id est, Auxilius, Patritius, Secundinus, Benignus.' Auxilius is placed first, perhaps as an outsider, enjoying more or less independent jurisdiction, and yet assenting to the decrees regarding the primacy and the appeal to Rome, in both of which Patrick and his coadjutors concurred.

This Synod issued thirty-four Canons, the authenticity of which is generally recognised. They are found in the Irish Collection of Canons,<sup>1</sup> published so early as the opening of the eighth century. Moreover, the decrees themselves furnish unmistakable proofs of their own authenticity. It may be that minor changes took place in the text when all the Irish Canons were collected together, but that does not interfere with the substantial authenticity of the decrees themselves. Patrick would certainly convene a Synod at the earliest suitable opportunity, and we may take it that we have the results of his work in this Synod, which bears his own name and that of his colleagues, Auxilius and Iserninus. We may assume, too, that it was held at Armagh in the year 458 or 459. It is not likely, indeed, that Patrick would attempt to frame any set of Canons before he had completed his missionary circuit through the five provinces and established his primatial See. It was only then he could know the wants of the whole country, and the practical difficulties that would arise in the infant Church of Ireland. Secundinus was dead; but Patrick called to his counsels many other bishops, and particularly those two prelates, Auxilius and Iserninus, who, like himself, had been trained in the canon law in Gaul and Italy, and had received a formal commission to help him in preaching the Gospel in Ireland.

This appears to us to be the real reason why these two prelates are specially named in the Acts of the Synod. Patrick represented himself and all the bishops whom he had consecrated, whether British or Irish; but Auxilius and Iserninus were ordained priests at the time that Patrick was consecrated Bishop for the Irish mission. This does not imply that many other Irish prelates were not present at the Synod, but it was considered unnecessary to mention their names, as Patrick spoke in the name of them all.

On the other hand, Auxilius and Iserninus had a kind of independent mission in Ireland, though subordinate to Patrick. We are told that they were invited by Germanus to accompany him to Ireland, but they declined to go at that time. Afterwards, however, hearing of his success, they accepted the mission, and were sent to aid Patrick in Ireland. They had, therefore, both superior knowledge of the canon law, and also an extrinsic authority from

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<sup>1</sup> *Codex Canonum Hibernensium.*



the Holy See, as far as we can judge, which lent special weight to their decisions in reference to the Irish Church.

The Synod contains thirty-four decrees,<sup>1</sup> which are commonly admitted as authentic by the best critics. Todd, indeed, and some other writers following him, hold that the sixth decree, which directs clerics to cut their hair *more Romano*; and the twenty-third decree, which speaks of offerings made to the Bishops on the occasion of their visitation as a *mos antiquus*, point to a much later period of the Irish Church, when the dispute about the tonsure had arisen, and there was time for a custom to have become 'antiquus' in Ireland. But this reasoning has no foundation. The sixth decree merely directs the clerics to cut their hair after the clerical fashion practised in Rome, and not let it grow long in the way referred to in the tenth decree of the Synod.<sup>2</sup> The *mos antiquus*, too, as to the offerings does not imply an ancient custom in the Irish Church, but in the universal Church, which is a very different thing. There is not a word to show that the reference is to the Irish Church; in fact, if the custom existed, the decree would be needless. Its object is to bring the Irish Church into harmony with the custom of the Universal Church in making offerings to the bishop on the occasion of his visitation, of which he alone had the right to dispose, either for the necessary uses of the Church or the benefit of the poor, as he might judge proper.<sup>3</sup>

The decrees of this Synod throw great light on the condition of the young Church of Ireland, and, at the same time, furnish intrinsic evidence of their own authenticity. Slavery, with all its attendant evils, was still quite common at the time.<sup>4</sup> St. Patrick and his sister were sold as slaves into Ireland. St. Brigid was the daughter of a captive; and she herself had in her youth to bear the hard lot of a captive maiden, as we know from her Life. The value of a female captive in cattle, was in fact the chief standard of exchange in the country, and is called a *cumal* in the Brehon Laws.

Now, Christianity did not abolish slavery at once without regard to the rights of others; and hence we find that the very first Canon of Patrick's Synod declares that if any one

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> 'Comam habere,' that is, 'long flowing hair.'

<sup>3</sup> See Canon 25.

<sup>4</sup> Canon 32.

seeks the redemption of a slave, without lawful authority, he deserves to be excommunicated. But if he had the sanction of the master, he might collect the price of the captive, and thus redeem him, giving the balance, however, to be disposed of as the Bishop thought proper. From this we infer that systematic efforts were made to procure the liberation of the Christian captives, by collecting amongst the faithful the price of the slave, and if any balance remained it was 'to be placed on the altar of the bishop.' Gold and silver must have been in circulation at the time, probably by weight, for although cattle was the general medium of exchange, they could not be placed on 'the altar of the bishop.'

Measures<sup>1</sup> were taken, too, to keep clerics of all grades to their own churches and their own dioceses. The clerics were, for the most part, recruited from the professional classes—from the Bards, Brehons and Poets, and these privileged classes were in the habit of ranging freely through the whole country, their professional character not only securing them against insult or injury, but also procuring them hospitality. The canon law, however, could not allow vagrancy of this kind, and hence the second Canon directs every lector 'to know the church in which he is to sing the holy office;' and the third Canon directs in general terms that there must be no vagrant clerics amongst the people. 'Clericus vagus non sit in plebe.' Rambling clerics were never tolerated in the Church at any period of her history.

Following out this principle, the twenty-seventh Canon ordains that no strange cleric shall presume to baptise or make offering—that is, say Mass—or do anything else amongst the flock of another bishop (without his leave) under penalty of excommunication. The twenty-fourth Canon is to the same effect, that he must not do these things—nor consecrate, nor build a church without the permission of the bishop, 'for he who gets permission from the gentiles or pagans is an alien from the church.' This shows that some intruding clerics, perhaps themselves bishops, came into another prelate's diocese, relying on the authority of the pagan chief—the Christian chief would not give it—and presumed not only to baptise and 'offer sacrifice,' but also to consecrate and build churches. This Canon also goes to show that the bishops of the

<sup>1</sup>Canons 24 and 27.

time had each his own diocese, and that it was unlawful to trespass on his territorial jurisdiction—a very important point to bear in mind.

We have already referred to the sixth Canon, which forbids any cleric, from 'the porter to the priest,' to be seen without his tunic, like laymen, at the risk of unveiling his nakedness, and commands him to have his hair shorn *more Romano*; and a married woman must not walk unveiled—otherwise let both the cleric and the married woman be alike despised by the people, and separated from the Church. The text is given below.<sup>1</sup> The reference in the first part of this Canon is certainly not to the Roman, as distinguished from the Irish or British tonsure, but to the wearing of the hair long after the manner of laics, as it is expressed in the tenth Canon, where he is forbidden *comam nutrire*—to wear long hair. By the 'uxor' or married woman, according to some critics, must be understood the wife of the 'cleric,' and we find '*ejus*' inserted after '*uxor*' in some of the printed copies of the Synod. In others it is certainly omitted, for Martene does not give it. But it really makes little difference. The clerics in the lower grades might marry then as now, if they were content to remain in the lower grades of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but not if they ascended to what are now called 'Holy Orders,' that is deaconship and priesthood.

And in these higher grades it must have frequently happened that married men were ordained priests and even bishops, and ministered as such, on condition of living apart from their wives. The wife in that case took the veil like a nun, which was the sign of her continence. So the decree would simply mean that if the cleric went clothed as a laic, and his (former) wife put aside her veil, then they were to be despised by the people, and separated from the church, as both had broken their vows. That, in our opinion, is the clear meaning of the Canon, which must have been a necessary one in the infant Church of Ireland.

Another wise regulation for the young Church forbids a monk and nun to remain even in different parts of the same hospice, or to travel in the same car, or to hold prolonged

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<sup>1</sup> Quicumque clericus ab hostiario usque ad sacerdotem sine tunica visus fuerit atque turpitudinem ventris et nuditatem non tegat, et si non more Romano capilli ejus tonsi sint, et uxor (ejus) si non velato capite ambulaverit, pariter a laicis contemnentur et ab Ecclesia separentur.

conversations together—and such has always been the rule and spirit of the Church.

Some of the Canons show that many of the people were still pagan. If a cleric became security for such a pagan, he is still bound to pay the debt if the pagan fails to do so, rather than resist by force of arms. But it was not permitted 'to receive offerings from pagans or excommunicated persons.' It was also strictly forbidden to have recourse to soothsayers, like the pagans, or to believe in witches, as they did.<sup>1</sup>

No woman, who had once vowed her virginity to God, was allowed afterwards to marry; and Christian women, with lawful husbands, might not separate from them on the pretence that they were not Christian—that is, so long as the husband did not seek to pervert or corrupt his wife. It is, in fact, the celebrated case made by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians. Neither was it lawful to defraud a pagan of any just debt on the ground that he was a pagan. So we see how St. Patrick gave no license to Christians to repudiate their obligations towards the pagans, either in marriage, or in contracts, or as sureties. But if Christians had controversies amongst themselves, they are directed to have them settled in the Church, that is, by the priest or bishop, rather than go before non-Christian Brehons, for we must assume that some of them still remained in the land.

The 30th Canon is very important, because of itself it completely refutes the idea that the early bishops in Ireland had not dioceses strictly circumscribed according to the general law and practice of the Church. It declares that 'no bishop who goes from his own *parochia* or diocese into another diocese shall presume to ordain there, except he have received the permission of him who is within his own principality; nor can he on Sunday, without the same permission, offer the Holy Sacrifice except by receiving it. Let him be content to obey.' This Canon of itself clearly shows, first, that each bishop had his own diocese—his *parochia* or *principatus*—in which no other bishop could officiate without his sanction. It was the law from the beginning, as it is the law still, and it disposes effectually of all the foolish talk of there being no strict diocesan jurisdiction and circumscription in ancient Erin.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Canon 14.

<sup>2</sup> It is true, indeed, that the diocese or *parochia* at the time was co-terminous, as a rule, with the territory of the 'king' or chief—a fact which is

Clerics coming from Britain to Ireland might live amongst the people, but were forbidden to minister except they had commendatory letters from their own prelates at home.

There is a Second Synod attributed to St. Patrick, containing 34 Canons, the authenticity of which, however, is more than doubtful. In their present shape they certainly cannot be regarded as the work of any synod held by St. Patrick. Some of the Canons are found in the Irish Collection, but are not there attributed to St. Patrick, but rather to Roman Synods, the decrees of which were adopted in a later Irish Synod. There is, in fact, nothing specially Irish about those Canons, nor anything that would indicate their Irish origin. The only reason for attributing them to St. Patrick is the closing sentence—‘Patrick’s Synod ends (here).’<sup>1</sup>

The Canons appear to be of French origin; at least they were found in a French library at Angers in France and sent by Sirmonde to David Rothe, Bishop of Ossory, who sent them to Usher, from whom Spelman received them for insertion in his own great collection.

### III.—THE IRISH COLLECTION OF CANONS.

The Irish Collection, to which we need not further refer here, is a compilation of much later date, but full of interest from the light it throws on the history of the early Irish Church. Its most important Canons are those taken from the ‘Synod of Patricius, Auxilius and Iserninus,’ and also from the Book of Armagh, as has been already explained. But it contains several other Canons of great interest, which it attributes, and no doubt with justice, to St. Patrick himself.

For instance, we have the following Canons attributed to Patrick in the most formal way in the Collection.

Patrick the Bishop saith—‘He who sins in Orders (sub gradu) ought to be excommunicated, because great is the dignity of this name (of priest); yet he can redeem his soul by penance; but to return to his former grade is difficult. I know not, however, but God knows (how difficult it is).’ This Canon expresses the whole tenor of

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evident, even in our own times; for the actual circumscription of our dioceses very closely corresponds with the circumscription of the ancient minor kingdoms, as set forth in the Book of Rights.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Finit Patricii Synodus.’

Patrick's dealings with erring ecclesiastics. He left them sometimes, after an excommunication more or less formal, to be punished as it might please God, but he did not exclude them utterly from the ministry or the communion of the faithful.

Again Patrick saith—' If any difficult questions should arise in this Island let them be referred to the Apostolic See.' This is a mere summary of the Canon contained in the Book of Armagh, brief but accurate.

Then we have attributed to Patrick a noble exposition in a few words of the duties of ecclesiastical judges. Regarding the judges of the Church, what manner of men they ought to be, Patrick saith—' The judges of the Church must have the fear of God, not of men, because the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. The judges of the Church should have the wisdom of God, not worldly wisdom, because the wisdom of this world is folly in the sight of God. The judges of the Church must not accept gifts, because gifts blind the eyes of wise men and pervert the words of the just. In their judgments there must be no accepting of persons, because there is no such accepting of persons before God. They must have before their minds, not the cunning of secular wisdom, but the precedents of the Divine law. The servants of God should be wise but not astute. They should not be quick to judge before they know the nature of the evil, for the Scripture saith, do not judge in haste. The judges of the Church should be sparing in their words; above all things, they should never utter a word that is false, for falsehood is in them a grave crime, but they must judge in all things justly, because as they judge others, by the same standard shall they themselves be judged.' It is obvious that noble principles like these, solemnly inculcated by the great Teacher of the Irish tribes, must have exercised a very great influence in teaching, not only the ecclesiastical judges, but all classes of the people, respect for law and for the rights of others, which is, indeed, the foundation of all true religion and civilization, and was, above all, needful in a country like Ireland, where the want of a strong central government offered a strong temptation to rapacity and crime.

He also forbade the secular tribunals to encroach on the jurisdiction of the Church (*judicia ecclesiæ*). Then, going still higher, he lays down the following admirable maxims for the guidance of the petty kings.

Patricius saith—‘The duty of a just king is to judge no one unjustly; to be the defender of the widow, the orphan, and the stranger; to punish thefts and adulteries; not to encourage unchaste buffoons; not to exalt wicked men, but root out the impious from the land; to put to death parricides and perjurers; to protect the churches and give alms to the poor; to select wise ministers and prudent counsellors; to give no sanction to druids or pythonesses or augurers; to defend his country in strength and justice against all adversaries; at all times to put his confidence in God, neither puffed up by prosperity nor cast down by adversity; to profess the Catholic faith in God; to restrain his sons from evil deeds; to give stated times to prayer, and not waste it in unseasonable banquets.’ This, he says, is the justice of a king which secures peace to the people, protection to the nation, the defence of the poor, the care of the infirm, the happiness of the community, with all other temporal blessings which they can desire, including mildness of climate, calmness on sea, fruitfulness of the earth, comfort for the poor, wealth for children to inherit, abundant crops, fruitful trees, and hopes of future happiness.

Those noble principles, so eloquently expounded in the Canon, were inculcated by Patrick in his preaching, formulated in his laws, and enforced by all the weight of his authority. It is no wonder they were so potent in creating that young Christian Ireland which became the home of so many saints and scholars and the admiration of all Christian Europe.

#### IV.—THE PREROGATIVES OF ARMAGH.

There is a paragraph in that part of the Book of Armagh known as the Book of the Angel, in which the writer speaks of ‘The Special Reverence due to Armagh, and the Honour (or prerogatives) of the Prelate of that City.’ They are worth noting, if not exactly as the authentic canon law of the Church of Ireland, still as the expression of what the prelates and clergy of Armagh believed and claimed as of right for themselves and the Royal City of St. Patrick, in virtue of his primatial jurisdiction.

I. Now this city has been constituted by God supreme and free from all service (*libera*); and it has been specially dedicated by God’s Angel and by the holy apostolic man, Patrick the Bishop.

II. By special privilege, therefore, and by the authority of

the chief Pontiff, its founder, it is the head (præest) of all the churches and monasteries of the Irish without exception. Furthermore, it ought to be venerated in honour of the greatest of the martyrs, Peter and Paul, Stephen, Laurence, and the others (whose relics it contains).<sup>1</sup> How very great then is the veneration and honour due to it by all.

III. But, more than this, it is to be venerated on account of that priceless treasure which it possesses by a secret arrangement, namely, the most precious Blood of Jesus Christ, in the linen winding sheet, together with the relics of other saints preserved in the Southern Church, where repose the bodies of the holy pilgrims from afar beyond the sea, together with Patrick and the other holy men.

IV. Wherefore, in consequence of this, its aforesaid pre-eminence, it is not lawful to set up as co-ordinate with it the authority of any church of the Scots, or of any prelate, or abbot, in opposition to its ruler (heredem); yea, rather its authority is rightly invoked even on oath against all churches, and the rulers thereof, whenever real necessity may require it.<sup>2</sup>

V. Again: Every free church and city of episcopal grade throughout the whole Island of the Scots, and every place which is called Domnach (Dominicus) appears to have been, through the mercy of God, founded by our holy Doctor, and, according to the word of the Angel, ought to be under the special jurisdiction or custody (societate) of Patrick the Bishop, and the comarb of his city of Armagh, because, as we have said above, God granted the whole Island to him.

VI. Again: We ought to know that any monk of any church, if he returns to Patrick's Church of Armagh, does not break his religious vow, especially if he devote himself (to the service of Patrick) with the consent of his former abbot.

VII. Wherefore, no one is to be blamed or to be excommunicated if he go to the church of Patrick through love of him, because he it is who will judge all the men of Ireland in the last terrible day in presence of Christ.

The Liber Angeli then recounts the privileges of the prelate of Armagh on his primatial visitations. It is headed:—

CONCERNING THE PREROGATIVES (HONORES) OF THE PRELATE OF ARMAGH, WHO OCCUPIES THE SEAT OF THE CHIEF PASTOR.

I. If the aforesaid high priest shall come in the evening to the place where he is to be received, one refection fit for the comfort

<sup>1</sup> The relics were, as we have seen, contained in the church called Na Feita.

<sup>2</sup> The text here is obscure. It appears to mean that an oath on the relics or insignia of Patrick was to be recognised as lawful and conclusive in any case of dispute between other prelates or other churches. It was one way of asserting the primatial authority over other churches.



of the visitors to the number of a hundred shall be supplied, together with forage for their horses, not to speak of entertainment for the strangers, and the sick, and the nurses of the foundlings, and others, whether good or bad.

And if anyone shall refuse to furnish the aforesaid prelate with this hospitality, and close his doors against him, he shall be compelled to pay by way of fine the price of seven handmaids, or do seven years of penance.

Moreover, if anyone shall despise or profane the consecrated relics<sup>1</sup> of the Saint, that is, of Patrick, he shall pay twofold for the injury done. But if the contempt was shown to the relics or insignia of other saints the fine shall be two *cumals*<sup>2</sup>—that is, the price of two handmaidens to be paid to the Heir of Patrick, the holy Doctor.

Furthermore: Whosoever, of malice aforethought, shall inflict any wrong or injury on the religious family or diocese of Patrick, or shall despise his insignia, shall come for trial before the just tribunal of Patrick, which will investigate the whole cause without regard to any inferior tribunal whatsoever.

The last of these Armagh Canons is by far the most important, because it shows that no matter how much they were intended to extend the prerogatives of the primatial See, they still recognised the papal supremacy as of superior binding force in Ireland, as was elsewhere explained.

The extracts given above show very clearly that St. Patrick and his comarbs were regarded, at least in the 8th century, as possessing a primatial jurisdiction over the whole of Ireland, and he certainly claimed and exercised the same himself. Throughout the Confession he speaks of the Irish as a people whom he had won for God at the end of the world, and in the opening of the Letter to Coroticus he professed himself to be, however unworthy, the divinely appointed Bishop of Ireland. No man ever had a better right to the title and the jurisdiction it involved than St. Patrick had in Ireland. He was sent to preach to the Irish by the Pope; he converted them to Christ by sixty years of incessant labour; he ordained, practically speaking, all the priests and bishops in Ireland; so that he had every claim to be regarded as supreme in his jurisdiction over the whole country. As it is expressed in the Book of the Angel, he was Apostolic Teacher and Chief

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<sup>1</sup> The relics of Patrick here referred to were his Crozier, the Staff of Jesus, his Book, and his Bell, of which we shall say more hereafter.

<sup>2</sup> The *cumal* meant, it seems, originally the price of a slave girl.

Guide of all the tribes of Ireland,<sup>1</sup> and, therefore, it was said he also obtained from God the privilege of judging all the men of Erin on the last day.

Fiacc also recognises expressly that the spiritual sovereignty of all the land resided in Armagh, just as the temporal sovereignty was at Tara; and Sechnall in his Hymn truly says that the Irish Church, of which God had made him the Apostle, was built on Patrick, as the Universal Church is built on Peter. And, so far as we can judge, no Irish ecclesiastic<sup>2</sup> ever questioned this primacy of Patrick's See down to the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion, and it was then for the first time questioned, not by Irishmen, but by Englishmen, for their own purposes.

Neither was it in those days a mere primacy of honour. It was a real primacy of jurisdiction, as set forth in the Book of Armagh, involving (*a*), the right of visitation; (*b*), the right of appeal; (*c*), the right of tribute. During periods of violence the exercise of these rights might remain for a time in abeyance; but we have ample evidence that the 'Law of Patrick,' that is, the right of tribute and visitation, was recognised and exercised in all the provinces of Ireland except Leinster. We find no express reference to any visitation of the churches of Leinster by the Primate or his representative, which was probably due to the almost constant state of warfare that existed between Ulster and Leinster, so that it was unsafe for the Primate to venture into that province. But even there the right was recognised, and the venerable Gelasius presided as Primate at the Synod of Clane in the year 1162.<sup>3</sup>

Another striking proof of the recognition of the primacy throughout all Erin is derived from the fact that Brian Boru himself, from Mogh's Half, solemnly recognised Armagh as the seat of the primacy, and laid his offerings on the altar of the great Church in recognition of that primacy. We know also, from the testimony of St. Bernard, that Celsus, in virtue of his primatial authority, appointed a second archbishop in the South of Ireland, although the appointment could not at the time be deemed canonical until the new archbishop was recognised by the Pope and

<sup>1</sup> Apostolicus doctor et dux principalis omnibus Hiberniacum gentibus.

<sup>2</sup> The bishops of the Danish towns of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick were not Irish ecclesiastics, and their colonies were not then Irish towns.

<sup>3</sup> It is said that Patrick, in honour of his dear daughter, St. Brigid, granted to Leinster exemption from the 'Law of Patrick.'

received the pallium, as he afterwards did, at the Council of Kells.

We need not here refer to the subsequent claims to the primacy set up by the English prelates of Dublin. Even though they obtained some title thereto from the Crown, such title would, of course, be uncanonical, except in so far as it was sanctioned by the Pope. When the rival claimants afterwards, at different times, referred the matter to Rome, the decision was always in favour of the successors of St. Patrick. He alone was recognised as the 'Primas,' the first of all the prelates in Ireland, for many centuries both in honour and jurisdiction; but, in later times in Ireland, as elsewhere, it has become merely a primacy of honour.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### ST. PATRICK'S SICKNESS, DEATH, AND BURIAL.

#### I.—HIS SICKNESS.

MUIRCHU tells us, in the Book of Armagh, that when Patrick felt the end of his long and laborious life drawing nigh, he was minded to go from Saul, where he happened to be at the time, and repair to his dear church of Armagh, that he might die amongst his own, and there find the place of his resurrection. But such was not the will of God. As Patrick was setting out for Armagh, the Angel of God said to him, "Return to the place from whence you have come, that is, to Saul. There you shall die and enter on the way of your fathers, but your petitions have been granted by God, that is to say :—

"First.—'That in Armagh shall be the seat of your jurisdiction.'

"Second.—'That whoever on the day of his death shall recite the Hymn composed in your honour, you shall have the right to fix the penalty due to his sins.'

"Third.—'That the children of Dichu, who received you with so much kindness, shall obtain mercy and not perish for ever.'

"Fourth.—'That all the Irish in the Day of Judgment shall be judged by you, that is, all those whose Apostle you have been, even as the Lord said to the Twelve Apostles, you shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

As Patrick was the Apostle of the Irish, God gave him the same privilege to judge his own people as He had promised to the Twelve to judge the tribes of Israel.

It would seem from the language in the Tripartite that Patrick was very anxious to return and die in his own city of Armagh :—

I have chosen a place for my resurrection,  
Armagh is my Church ;  
I have no power over my freedom (his own acts),  
It is bondage to the end.

It is Armagh that I love,  
 My dear thorpe, my dear hill ;  
 A dun which my soul haunteth ;  
 Emania of the heroes will be waste.

But the Angel consoled the aged Apostle. "No," he said, "it will not be waste ; thy crozier will be for ever in Armagh, and great will be the power and dignity of thy Church"—a prediction which has surely been fulfilled, for though false priests and ruthless foes have desolated Patrick's Royal City again and again, it has risen anew from its ashes. Patrick's power has never failed. Patrick's crozier has never been broken. His successors have been driven repeatedly from the Royal Hill, as the Popes have been driven from Rome ; they have been hunted, imprisoned, and slain ; but the succession has not failed ; the crozier was always there, as the Angel foretold. And in our own time we have seen the great twin towers rise in pride and strength over Patrick's City, proclaiming to all the world that Patrick is still enthroned on Macha's Hill, clothed in larger glory, for the Comarb of Peter has robed his seat in the crimson of Rome, in which it was never draped before. These truths were brought home to the minds of thinking men in a very striking way on the 24th July, 1904, when for the first time in Irish history, two Cardinals, one the heir of Patrick, the other a special delegate from the Pope himself, accompanied by all the Prelates of Ireland, with many also from England and Scotland, and surrounded by the representative clergy and laity of all the land, met on Macha's Hill to dedicate<sup>1</sup> the beautiful new Cathedral of Armagh for the worship of God, under the invocation of St. Patrick.

We have no particulars of the last illness of our great Apostle. At the age of 120 years he must have been very feeble in body, only longing for the hour when God would call him home. He might well say, with Simeon : ' Now, thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace.' His long day's work was done. He had finished his course and kept the Faith, and saved the people whom the Lord had given him. ' And now,' he says in his Confession, ' I give up my soul to my faithful God, whose poor minister I am, but it was He Himself chose me for this work. What return shall I make to Him for all that He has given to me—what shall I say or what shall

<sup>1</sup> A fuller account of this memorable ceremonial will be given in an Appendix.

I promise to my Lord? He, the searcher of hearts, knows that I have long been desirous to drink of His chalice and die for His sake, if it were only His will. One thing only I ask from my Lord, that I shall never lose His people whom He has won for Himself here at the ends of the earth. I pray the Lord to give me perseverance and make me His faithful witness to the end of my life; and let all believe that whatever little I have done is the gift of God. And this is my Confession before I die.'

The Tripartite then gives its own eulogy of Patrick. 'A righteous man verily was this man, with purity of nature like the Patriarchs. A true pilgrim, like Abraham. Mild, forgiving from the heart, like Moses. A praiseworthy psalmist like David. A student of wisdom, like Solomon. A choice vessel for proclaiming righteousness, like Paul the Apostle. A man, full of the grace and fervour of the Holy Spirit, like John the youthful. A fair herb-garden, with plants of virtues. A vine branch of fruitfulness. A flashing fire, with the fervour of the warming and healing of the Sons of Life, for kindling and for enflaming charity. A lion in strength and might. A dove for gentleness and simplicity. A serpent for prudence and cunning in what is good. Gentle, humble, merciful unto the Sons of Life. Gloomy and ungentle to the Sons of Death. A laborious and faithful servant unto Christ. A king for dignity and power as to binding and loosing, as to liberating and enslaving, as to death-giving and life-giving.'

Then, having in one sentence, summed up the labours of the Saint, the writer adds the brief statement that 'Patrick received Christ's body from Bishop Tassach according to the Angel Victor's counsel; and then sent forth his holy spirit to heaven in the hundred and twentieth year of his age. His body is here still on earth in honour and veneration.'<sup>1</sup>

Tassach was bishop of the neighbouring church of Raholp. That church was founded by St. Patrick himself, who placed Tassach over it, and, it would seem, gave him some intimation that he was destined to give his beloved master the Sacrifice at the approach of death. It is some two miles north-east of Saul, and about 100 yards from the road which leads from Downpatrick to Ballyculter. The

<sup>1</sup>This would seem to imply that the tomb of Patrick was then well known, doubtless after the Invention by Columcille, and was held in honour and veneration by all the faithful.

ruins of a church are there still, but hardly date back to the time of St. Patrick. The ancient name was Rath-colpa, and Reeves says that the elevation of church area over the surrounding field would go to show that it was built within an ancient rath, from which it doubtless took its name.

## II.—DATE OF PATRICK'S DEATH.

Almost all the ancient authorities are unanimous in stating that Patrick had reached the great age of 120 years at the time of his death, but there is some difference of opinion in fixing the exact year.

Tighernach's Annals, the Annals of Ulster, the Four Masters, the Chronicon Scotorum,<sup>1</sup> and the Lebar Brecc. all agree in assigning the date of Patrick's death to the year A.D. 493. 'Patritius the arch-apostle of the Scoti (or Irish) rested on the 16th day of the calends of April (17th March) in the 120th year of his age, and also, the 60th year after he had come to Ireland to baptise the Scoti.'<sup>2</sup> Such is the statement in the Annals of Ulster, and it certainly records the opinion of our oldest and best authorities, such as Colgan, Usher, O'Flaherty Ware Todd, and quite a host of other writers. One strong argument in favour of 493 being the exact year is derived from the fact that in that year the 17th of March was a Wednesday, and the ancient authorities all give Wednesday as the day of the Apostle's death.

Lanigan's view that the Saint died in A.D. 465 may be dismissed as a novel opinion of his own, unsupported by any authority. The so-called Annals of Innisfallen which he quotes in his favour are notoriously post-dated by many years, and have no weight as an authority in chronology. Lanigan foolishly identified St. Patrick with Sen Patrick, quite a different person, who really died in A.D. 457, on the 24th of August, on which day the Felire of Ængus marks the death of Old Patrick, champion of battles, 'lovable tutor of our Sage.'

The Bollandists give the date of Patrick's death as A.D. 460, but as Lanigan observes, it is a mere guess, not

<sup>1</sup>A.D. 489 is marked in the margin, but a verse quoted from the Irish poet expressly states it was 'four hundred fair ninety and three exact years after Christ.'

<sup>2</sup>The year in the margin is marked 492, but the criteria for the Calends of January—Friday moon 27—show that it was really the year 493. The early part of these Annals date not from the Nativity but the Incarnation, and hence are a year late.

based on any authority, and like his own guess may be summarily set aside. Stokes, the editor of the Tripartite, speaks of his death as having 'probably' taken place in or about 463, and Professor Bury adopts the same opinion. Stokes describes Patrick as 'coming to Ireland in 432, when he was sixty years old,' and later on he says that he spent sixty years in Ireland, partly as a priest and partly as bishop. But there is no evidence that he ever laboured in Ireland as a simple priest; whence we infer that he was sixty when he came to Ireland as bishop, for so he describes himself, and having laboured sixty years, died in 493, in the 120th year of his age.

A recent writer<sup>1</sup> thinks his age was 61 at the time of his death, but his opinion appears to be based on the statement in Tirechan that '436 years are reckoned from the Passion of Christ to the death of Patrick' or, as others have it, 432. He assumes that the Passion of Christ occurred in A.D. 29, and adding that to 432 we get 461, 'the true year.'<sup>2</sup> Now no year between 460 and 470 can be the true year of Patrick's death, if it were only for this one simple reason, that in that case he would set about converting Ireland when he was between eighty and ninety years of age!

We need not concern ourselves about the minor points; the real thing is to explain the entry as we now have it in Tirechan. To understand it we must take it altogether. 'Now from the Passion of Christ are reckoned to the death of Patrick 436 (or it may be 432 years). Laeghaire reigned, however, either two or five years after the death of Patrick. The whole time of his reign, *as we think*, was thirty-six years.' It appears to us that no weight can be attached to this sentence, *as it stands*, because, either through the fault of the copyists or the ignorance of the original scribe, it cannot be reconciled with itself. For according to the Four Masters and all our authorities, Laeghaire died in 458, not *after*, therefore, but some years *before* the death of Patrick, according to the numerals given in the text. Then again the writer does not appear to be certain about his dates, for he says, speaking of the years of the king's reign, it was 32 or 36, as we think. It was really only 30 years, from 428 to 458.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Dr. White.

<sup>2</sup> A passione autem Christi colliguntur anni ccccxxvi usque ad mortem Patricii. Duobus autem vel v annis regnavit Laeghaire post mortem Patricii. Omne autem regni illius tempus xxxvi (anni) *ut putamus*.

<sup>3</sup> *Four Masters. Sub Annis.*



So we cannot accept the text before us here as accurate.<sup>1</sup>

The true explanation seems to be that Tirechan put down the death of the great St. Patrick at the year which he found was assigned, not to his death, but to the death of Sen-Patrick. This will be obvious on closer examination of the dates given by Tirechan himself. His statement that four hundred and thirty-six years intervened between the Passion of Christ and the death of Patrick, which, he adds, occurred either two or five years before the death of Laeghaire, cannot be accepted. But if it is understood of Sen-Patrick's death it fits in well enough, for he probably died about two years before the death of the High King, although it is now perhaps impossible to fix the exact year. In our opinion, therefore, this entry as to the death of 'Patrick,' which Tirechan got either from the Book or the lips of Bishop Ultan, must be understood as having reference to Old Patrick, who died about that time, not to the great Patrick, Bishop of Hiberio, as he calls himself, who died long after.

Again, all the ancient authorities fix 432 as the date of St. Patrick's advent to Ireland as bishop. All give him sixty years of an apostolate here. Whereas if he died in 461 or 463 or 465 he must have been about ninety years when as bishop he undertook to preach the Gospel throughout Ireland, from Tara by Croaghpatrick to Inishowen—a consequence which cannot be accepted for a moment.

There was an ancient tradition that Patrick was born on a Wednesday, baptised on a Wednesday, and died on a Wednesday. We can take it then as fairly certain that his death took place on Wednesday, the 17th March, 493, for it is expressly stated by many of our most venerable authorities, nor is it at all likely that the feast day of so

<sup>1</sup> Dr. White says the Ultonian Annals support the year 461 as that of Patrick's death. What they say is this—'Here (A.D. 461) some record the repose of Patrick'—but under date of 493 they have the full and correct entry as follows:—

'A.D. 492 (recte 493).

Patritius archiapostolus (vel archiepiscopus et apostolus) Scottorum quievit c<sup>mo</sup> xx<sup>mo</sup> anno ætatis suæ 16 Kal. Aprilis, lx<sup>o</sup> quo venit ad Hiberniam anno ad baptizandos Scotos.' Or in English—

(492) 'Patrick the arch-apostle (or archbishop and apostle) of the Scots rested on the sixteenth day before the Kalends of April, in 120th year of his age, and also the 60th year after he had come to Ireland to baptise the Scots.'

With this entry before him, it is difficult to see how Dr. White could assert that the Ultonian Annals support the view that Patrick died A.D. 461.

great a saint would have passed out of public memory. But we have not the same satisfactory evidence about his birth and baptism on a Wednesday, although Usher is inclined to accept the statement as true, and he quotes the 'Book of Sligo' to that effect. In the *Felire of Aengus*, at the 5th of April, it is said that 'the baptism of noble Patrick was performed in Erin;' but this seems to refer, as the Scholiast says, to the baptism of Sinell, his first convert in Erin, or perhaps it was designed to commemorate some great baptismal ceremony, such as we know took place at Tara when Erc Mac Degeo was baptised on the Royal Hill.

### III.—ST. BRIGID'S WINDING SHEET FOR PATRICK.

In the Third and Fourth Lives of St. Brigid of Kildare we find a very interesting statement regarding that saint's promise to make a winding sheet for the blessed body of St. Patrick. It would appear that Brigid with several of her nuns paid a visit to St. Patrick when he was bidding at Saul in his old age. One day, whilst Patrick was preaching to the people in the presence of Brigid and her nuns, a luminous cloud came down from the sky and stood for a while poised in mid-air, close to the assembly. Then sweeping slowly onward, the cloud settled over the fort of Leth Glaisse, or Downpatrick, to the amazement of all the beholders.

Full of awe, they feared to ask Patrick what the cloud signified, but they asked Brigid, and at Patrick's bidding Brigid told them the meaning of the vision. "Patrick's Angel," she said, "is borne in that cloud of glory, and he has come here first to show us that Patrick will die here, and his body will remain here for some days; and then the Angel went to the fort or hill of Down to show that Patrick's body will be taken from this to be buried in Down, and there it will remain until the day of judgment. I, too, and another saint to be called Columcille, shall rest in the same grave, and we shall rise together from that tomb on the last day."

Then all the people were amazed and gave praise to God, and Patrick asked Brigid to weave with her own hands the winding sheet in which his body would rest in the tomb. Brigid faithfully promised to do so, and had the holy shroud ready against the day of Patrick's death, and in that shroud his body was laid. This statement in

the Lives of St. Brigid is also valuable because it describes exactly what took place after the death of Patrick at Saul, and so far confirms the statements in the Tripartite and the Book of Armagh. But the tone of the prophecy, as a prophecy, is very artificial, and rather indicates what was known than what was foretold to the writer.

#### IV.—DEATH OF PATRICK.

As might be expected, tidings of the death of St. Patrick at Saul were heard throughout all Ireland with the deepest grief, and his obsequies were celebrated at his own little church of Saul with great solemnity. The narrative, too, is very touching, for it tells us in its own simple way how heaven and earth kept watch around his bier, and joy and sorrow struggled for the mastery.

St. Patrick's body was kept in the little church of Saul unburied for twelve days. No doubt, this long delay was arranged in order to give time to bishops and chiefs from all parts of Ireland to be present in person, or send representatives to be present, at the funeral of the spiritual chief and father of all the tribes of Erin. And we are told that for these twelve nights, during which the elders of Erin were watching around the bier of their great Apostle, 'there was no night in Magh Inis, but an angelic radiance lit up the plain.'<sup>1</sup> We are also told that 'Ireland's elders heard the singing of angelic choirs, and that a great host of heaven's angels came to wake his body on the night of his death.'<sup>2</sup> A similar statement is made by Muirchu in the Book of Armagh. 'On the first night of his obsequies,' he says, 'the angels themselves kept watch over the Saint's body and chaunted the usual psalms, the human watchers having all fallen asleep.' But on the other nights men kept watch around the body, praying and singing psalms. Moreover, when the choir of angels went to heaven they left behind them in the chamber of death a sweet fragrance, as it were, of honey and wine, so that the word of the patriarch was fulfilled: 'Behold the smell of my son is as the smell of a plentiful field which the Lord hath blessed.'

The idea of a heavenly radiance lighting up Magh Inis might come from the great number of lights that burned

<sup>1</sup> *Tripartite.*

<sup>2</sup> *Lebar Brecc Homily.*

round the bier both day and night; and no doubt the great crowd of strangers who encamped around the little church would also have their own lights, which would be seen far and wide over the plain; for Saul is on high ground, and the lights within and around the little church would be seen from all parts far over the plain. Yet surely it would not be strange if a radiance from heaven shone round that little church which contained the body of one who had done so much for God and for Ireland. And if Victor was in the habit of visiting Patrick so often during life, we should naturally expect him to come with a heavenly choir to chant the psalms of the Church over his blessed body. But it was only on the first night, before strangers had yet arrived, and the monks of the little monastery, worn out with their own watchings, had fallen asleep; then the angels took their place, and sang the strains of heaven around the holy bier where Patrick lay, wrapped up in the shroud that holy Brigid had wrought for him with her own hands. The history of the saints of Erin gives us glimpses of many a beautiful death, precious in the sight of the Lord; but it affords no holier, or more touching sight than this—that bier bearing Patrick's blessed body in the little church of Saul, where he said his first Mass in the North; the shroud which the blessed Brigid wove for that poor body, spent with sixty years of missionary toil; the monks of Patrick's family chanting with streaming eyes the psalms of requiem for the soul of him whom they loved so well; the listening angels taking their places in the choir, as the monks fell asleep from their long vigils; the priests and prelates crowding at day's dawn from all parts to the obsequies of their spiritual father; the vast plain filled with the lights at night, and their voices rising all the day in Mass and psalms for the dead—such a scene Ireland had never seen before, and surely never will see again.

#### V.—BURIAL OF PATRICK.

Now, when the obsequies were over, and the last psalm was chanted, and the last Mass was said, the bishops and clergy were in sore distress to devise means to bury their beloved father in peace. They knew that it was his own wish to be buried at Saul, or near it, for so God's Angel had directed. It was his first, and, in some respects, his best-beloved church. It was said, too, that he had promised Dichu and his sons that as they gave him a home

and a church when he first came amongst them, homeless and weary of the sea, he would lay his bones amongst them for ever.<sup>1</sup> The high-spirited Ultonians of Magh Inis loved their dead father with a deep and tender love, and rather than see his holy body taken away from them they were ready to shed the last drop of their blood.

On the other hand, the men of Orior, and the fierce warriors of O'Neilland, who dwelt around Armagh, when they heard of the Saint's death, said:—'He is ours, our bishop and our father; he chose Macha's Hill to be his seat for ever; there he ruled in life, and there he must rest in death.' So the warlike sons of Colla and the Hy Neill gathered together all their warriors, and came to Lecale, determined at any cost to carry back with them the body of their beloved Bishop to Armagh. They encamped, it would seem, on the northern shore of the estuary,<sup>2</sup> at the ford of Quoile, not venturing to disturb the obsequies, but waiting until the funeral would be over to carry off the blessed body of the Saint.

Now, it would appear that the prelates and chiefs of Lecale did a wise thing. They waited quietly until the rushing tide of Strangford Lough had filled up the estuary at Quoile Ford with its swelling waters, which the men of Armagh could not cross. Then, instead of burying the Saint in the little churchyard at Saul, which would be open to an attack from the men of the North, they hurriedly placed the body on its bier, and, bearing it to Downpatrick, buried it in a deep grave on the hill close to the impregnable fort of the sons of Trichem, which, as it was almost surrounded by water, was practically unassailable. There they buried Patrick in the very stronghold of Dun-leth-glaisse, which afterwards, in honour of the Saint, changed its name, and has been called Downpatrick ever since.

We have here given what appears to us to be the natural and true account of the burial of St. Patrick, and is also in accordance with the express statements of the ancient

<sup>1</sup> It is recorded in the Book of Armagh that one of the last petitions of the dying Saint was for God's blessing on Dichu's family. The chieftain was, probably, dead at the time. See above 'Patrick's Petitions to the Angel.'

<sup>2</sup> Tirechan says they were preparing for the fight during the whole twelve days of the obsequies. 'But on the twelfth day, as each of the hosts saw Patrick's body on its bier amongst themselves, they did not come to blows.' Some stratagem may have been adopted to beguile the men of Armagh. An empty coffin might have been brought to them.

authorities, which we may now examine a little more at length.

It is only in recent times that any writer has ventured to set aside the ancient tradition, which always proclaimed that St. Patrick was buried in Downpatrick. The desire to start something new is characteristic of our age; some apparently plausible reasons were assigned for saying that Patrick was really buried in Armagh; while others seemed to show that his grave was to be sought in the little churchyard of Saul, two miles east of Downpatrick. He certainly died there; but we think it can be clearly shown that he was not buried there.

Muirchu's testimony is express on the point; and moreover it is contained in the Book of Armagh itself. He says that before his death the Angel, foreknowing, doubtless, the danger of strife, had said to Patrick, "Let two wild oxen be chosen (to carry the bier); let them go wherever they will, where they shall stop a church shall be built in honour of thy poor body." This was done according to the counsel of the Angel. The wild steers were brought to Saul, all the way from Clogher, in Tyrone, and when they were yoked to the bier 'they went out,' says Muirchu, 'from Saul under God's guidance to *Dun-leth-glaisse, where Patrick was buried.*'<sup>1</sup>

Then the Angel added: "Lest the relics of your body be taken from the grave let a cubit of earth rest over the body." The cubit here means a man's cubit, that is the height (or depth) which a man standing up can reach with his arm, that is, between seven and eight feet, so that Patrick was buried to that depth in the soil; and it was done secretly in order that no man might know where he rested, except a trusted few, for otherwise the men of Oriel might come at night and try to bear off the body.

At a later date, when they were building the church of Downpatrick in honour of the Saint, the workmen in making their excavations happened to come near the grave, whereupon fire burst forth, and they touched no more that sacred spot.

Then Muirchu refers to the imminent danger of a bloody strife at Drumbo, between the Hy Neill and men of Orior on one part and the Ultonians on the other. for the body of Patrick; but, through the mercy of God, he

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<sup>1</sup> Et exierunt Dei nutu regente ad Dun Leth Glaisse ubi sepultus est Patritius.

says, the swelling waves rushed up the estuary, separating the combatants, and rendering it impossible for either party to cross the ford.

Meanwhile the clergy had buried Patrick at Dun, but still the Hy Neill, when the flood subsided, resolved to cross the ford, and, if possible, bear off the body. Then, lo! there appeared before them two oxen, drawing what seemed to be a bier with the body of the Saint, whereupon the multitude, thinking they had secured their treasure, joyfully followed the wain as far as Cabcenne, where the supposed body disappeared from their eyes. Muirchu calls it a 'felix seductio,' and it was, probably, a ruse designed by the clergy to draw off the men of Orior and Armagh: if it were not a story devised at a later period to soothe the wounded vanity of the warriors of the Hy Neill.<sup>1</sup>

It has been objected to this statement of Muirchu that Tirechan says of Patrick that he was like Moses in this also; that 'where his bones are no one knows.' From what we have said that statement appears to be quite true. The *exact* spot where Patrick was buried was kept carefully concealed; and after a time when those who had buried him had died, no one knew exactly where his bones rested, until, it is said, the place was divinely revealed to Columcille. That this is the real meaning of Tirechan is obvious from what he adds immediately, that 'Columcille showed the sepulchre of Patrick, confirming where he is (according to tradition) namely, in Saul of Patrick—that is, in the church quite close to the sea, where the gathering of the relics is—that is, of the bones of Columcille from Britain, —and the gathering of all the saints of Erin on the day of judgment.'<sup>2</sup>

The sepulchre was near Saul then, yet not in the church of Saul, but in the church very near the sea, that is, the church of Downpatrick, which was surrounded by the sea at high water, whereas the church of Saul was about a mile from the sea at its nearest point.

<sup>1</sup> It is not at all clear that the men of Orior did not make an attempt later on to get St. Patrick's body, for we read, A.D. 495—two years after his death—that Dun-leth-glaisse was stormed.—*Annals of Ulster*.

<sup>2</sup> Columcille's relics were brought from Scotland to be interred in Patrick's grave in Down, and there, too, would be the gathering of all the saints of Erin on the day of judgment, to be judged by Patrick after the general resurrection.

## VI.—PATRICK'S CHARACTERISTIC VIRTUES.

We have no difficulty in realizing the moral grandeur of St. Patrick's character, because it is revealed to us in all its features not only in his active life and labours, but even still more strikingly in his Confession. In the Confession we see his character reflected as in a mirror, so that we can have no doubt as to what manner of man he was. It was written, he tells us, for that very purpose, to enable all his brethren and friends to know his 'quality'—*scire qualitatem meam*—and clearly see the workings of his heart. Hence it is not, and never was, designed to be in any sense a biographical memoir of the Saint. It does not deal with the external facts of his life (except incidentally), but with 'the fixed purpose of his soul'—*votum animæ meæ*. From this point of view, in spite of its rugged language and rude Latinity, it is a most beautiful revelation of Patrick's lofty character and exalted virtues.

Hence it is that, apart from other considerations, and judging it by intrinsic evidence alone, all competent critics have recognised its authenticity. The language might be the work of a forger; but the spirit that breathes in every line is the manifest outpouring of a heart filled with the Holy Ghost, and inspired with one great purpose to live, and, if need be, to die, for the conversion of the tribes of Erin. We will not here enlarge on the critical proofs, both intrinsic and extrinsic, in favour of the authenticity of the Confession, because, as we have said, it has not been questioned, so far as we know, by any competent critic.

We said the Confession is a mirror which, consciously or unconsciously, reveals all the characteristic virtues of Patrick's noble character. First of all, as might be expected in the case of so great a saint, we note his wonderful humility. In his early youth he says he knew not the true God, with thousands of others he was carried into captivity 'as we deserved, because we did not keep God's commandments, and were disobedient to our priests, who admonished us about our salvation.' It was in captivity that God opened the understanding of his unbelief so as to recall his sins to mind, and turn his whole heart to God. He was a stone sunk in the mire when God, in his mercy, raised him up and placed him in the



topmost wall.<sup>1</sup> At the end of the Confession, too, after recounting his labours in the cause of God, he emphatically declares that 'whatever little thing in his ignorance he had accomplished no one should think or believe it to be aught else than the gift of God.'

Then, again, Patrick is revealed to us in the Confession as a man who maintained at all times an intimate union with God by unceasing prayer. We can almost listen to the 'unspeakable groanings' of the Spirit of God communing with his soul. That wondrous spirit of prayer he first acquired in the woods on the slopes of Slemish, where a hundred times a day, and as many times at night, he bent his knees to pray in the midst of the frost and snow and rain; yet felt his spirit all aglow with divine fervour. In every crisis and in every danger his heart turned to God in prayer. During his long journeys from church to church he communed with God in silent prayer. It is said he read the whole psalter every day with his religious family; and we know that he spent one whole Lent on the windy summit of Croaghpatrick, and another in a lonely island in Lough Derg, like our Saviour in the desert, wholly given to fasting and prayer. At Armagh he spent entire nights in prayerful vigils until his wearied body sought repose for a time before the dawn. 'His conversation was in heaven'; and it is no wonder at all that God's Angels spoke to him in familiar converse.

Another characteristic virtue of Patrick, exhibited in his whole life and labours and in the very striking language of his Confession, was his burning zeal for the salvation of souls, and his passionate love for the flock committed to his charge by God. In this respect there is a very striking resemblance between the Irish Apostle and the Doctor of the Gentiles. Though most anxious to revisit his native country and friends in Britain, and to see once more the faces of his brethren, the saints of God in Gaul, he felt himself constrained by the Holy Spirit to remain in Ireland, lest he should lose any part of the fruit of his labours during his absence. He declares that for the sake of his flock he was ready to shed his blood and let his body be cast out, unburied, to be torn by wild beasts and birds of prey, and to drink to the dregs the chalice of Christ, his Lord, rather than he should lose any of the flock which he had gained

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<sup>1</sup> We need not, and, indeed we ought not, accept this language as strictly true, except in a high spiritual sense. But it shows the humility of Patrick.

for God at the ends of the earth. In the Epistle to Coroticus we find him animated with the same passionate love for his flock—"My brothers and my children, most beautiful and most loving"—he cries out in grief and bitterness of heart, "whom I have begotten for Christ, what can I do for you? am I unworthy in the sight of God and men to be able to help you?" For their sake, too, lest the infidels should have any grounds for defaming his ministry, or impeding the progress of the Gospel and the salvation of souls, he declares that he gave his ministry to all without fee or reward, except what he hoped to obtain in heaven. "Though I have baptised so many thousands of men did I ever hope to get from them so much as half a scruple? Tell me when, and I will restore it. Though God ordained so many clerics throughout the land through my poor ministry, did I ever ask from any of them the price of my sandals?—tell me and I will restore it." Disinterestedness like this is quite equal to that of St. Paul, and conveys a no less striking lesson for all Patrick's successors in the ministry of the Irish Church. Is it any wonder that the people of Ireland, with the knowledge of these facts in their minds from the beginning, should love their great Apostle with a deep and passionate love which is certainly not excelled in the case of any other saint in the Calendar, except the Blessed Virgin Mary.

#### VII.—PATRICK'S PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

It would be interesting for us if we could ascertain anything for certain regarding Patrick's personal appearance and physique. But neither from his own writings, nor in the early Lives, do we find anything to give us the remotest idea of his personal appearance.

Jocelyn, however, has something to say on the subject, which he may have gathered from the floating traditions still surviving amongst the monks of Down; and although they were seven centuries later than Patrick, they were still seven centuries nearer to him than we are. He tells us that Patrick was not tall, but of rather low stature, and hence he sometimes called himself a little man (*homuncio*), not only, we presume, in a metaphorical, but also in a literal sense. The fact that he had his strong man, MacCartan of Clogher, to carry him over the flooded rivers, seems to confirm that statement of Jocelyn. When young, he adds, Patrick walked on foot; when older, he made his journeys

in a chariot, from which he also preached to the people. He raised his right hand in blessing and his left in 'cursing,' and in both his prayer was visibly efficacious. Like a true monk, he gave some time to manual labour, especially to gardening (*agriculturæ*) and fishing, and took a part himself in building his churches, in this matter setting an example to all his disciples; but, above all things, he was indefatigable in preaching, baptising and ordaining.

Over his tunic he wore a white or grey habit of undyed wool, with the usual hood worn by monks. From the Confession we infer that he wore not shoes, but sandals. Whatever offerings he received he gave all for the needs of the Church. He knew four languages—British, Irish, French and Latin, which is not to be wondered at since he spent several years in the countries where they were spoken. He was himself an excellent scribe, and Jocelyn tells us that besides the *Canoin Patraic*—which he takes to be, not the Book of Armagh, but a collection of Canons—he also wrote in Irish a Book of Prophecies. This shows at least that there was a number of prophecies in Irish attributed to Patrick in circulation when Jocelyn wrote, but there is no evidence of their authenticity. On solemn occasions he was in the habit of using the strong affirmation—'Mo De broth,' which, according to Jocelyn and Cormac, a much better authority, means 'as God is my Judge.'<sup>1</sup>

During his long and laborious life no reference is made to any illness, which goes to show that if he was a small man, like many other small men, he was hardy and energetic, discouraged by no obstacles and deterred by no dangers.

That he was, though small, a man of imposing presence may, we think, be fairly inferred from the awe which, we are told, his very countenance inspired, not only in the ordinary beholders, but even in the boldest of Erin's kinglets. Of course, there was always a Divine majesty in his countenance, arising from the perpetual indwelling of the Holy Spirit; but here we rather speak of that dignity of gracious manhood, which would impress the rude chieftains even more than the subtler radiance of holiness manifesting itself through the expression and play of gesture and features.

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<sup>1</sup>Cormac says the correct form is 'máin Duiú braut,' *i.e.*, 'My God judge (is).' See *Rolls Tripartite*, 571.

That Patrick had a powerful, far-reaching voice seems to be a matter of fair inference from the story told of his 'uplifting his voice' at Guth-Ard to forbid the adoration of Crom Cruach. His 'shout' was heard from afar over the water, and appears, with the threatened stroke of the Staff of Jesus, to have paralysed the idolators and overthrown their idols.

It would appear, also, that Patrick had the Celtic love of music deep in his heart; and hence he not only protected the Bards and purified their songs, but it would seem that he also established a school of Church music in Armagh, of which he made the sweet-voiced Benignus the teacher and head. It was, doubtless, this known love of music made later Bards tell how when Ossian in his old age was blind and helpless, Patrick took him in, kept him in his household at Armagh, and sought to win the heart of the old warrior poet from the wild strains of battle and victory to the diviner music of the Church's oldest hymns.

We have few specimens of Patrick's preaching. The fullest is that beautiful instruction which he gave the royal daughters of King Laeghaire on the green margin of Clebach Well. It is brief; but it is wonderfully powerful and comprehensive, and uttered, as it was without doubt, with all the mingled energy and pathos of Patrick's great heart, we are not surprised at the extraordinary effect which it produced. Equally marvellous effects are elsewhere recorded as the outcome of his sermons; but we have not, on those occasions, the advantage of knowing the purport of the Saint's address.

That Patrick was a man of excellent health and great physical energy cannot, we think, be fairly questioned. A man who lives to the age of one hundred and twenty years, must have had a great store of health and physical vigour, and have abstained from all sensual indulgence likely to impair it. No doubt, this longevity in Patrick's case was, to a great extent, due to the hardy, frugal life of his youth, passed in the open air in the woods and brakes of Slemish. Then, as a monk in France and Italy for some thirty years, he passed through another great and healthful discipline of abstemious self-denial. So, also, in Ireland for thirty years, he lived, for the most part, a frugal life in the open air during the whole prolonged period of his missionary activities.

That Patrick was a man of very ardent temperament cannot, we think, be denied. The natural ardour of his

character was in fact the basis of his supernatural energy in the service of God. In this respect, as in many others, he was very like St. Paul. If we are to put any trust in the Lives of the Saint, he was not only ardent, but hot-tempered and prone to anger when scandal was given to the weak, or the doing of God's work was impeded by wicked men. We think the Confession, and especially the Epistle to Coroticus, clearly reveal this trait in St. Patrick's character. It is very frequently the case with zealous men; their fiery zeal brooks no delays, and is apt to get chafed into wrath by sinful opposition. We see traces of this fiery energy even in St. Paul, and when he denounces the incestuous Corinthian, his language is quite as vigorous as that attributed in the Lives to our own National Apostle.<sup>1</sup>

To deliver up to Satan is, from any point of view, quite as strong a proceeding, as the 'cursing' attributed to St. Patrick. In both cases the evil effects might, at least to some extent, be averted by penance. If, however, the criminal continued contumacious, then St. Patrick, like St. Paul, would have no hesitation in denouncing God's vengeance against God's enemies in very strong language.

What is harder to explain is Patrick's alleged severity in the case of repenting sinners. The strongest cases are those of St. Lupita and St. Olcan, both of which seem to have happened at Armagh. In the former case grave scandal was given by a female closely connected with the Church; in the latter case a bishop transgressed the ecclesiastical law in a very important matter. The order 'to drive over them' we regard as a manifest exaggeration, for which not even Patrick's zeal in the service of God could offer any adequate excuse. An Irish scribe, however, would easily deduce that phraseology from the language, which Patrick probably used, namely, 'Drive on; don't heed them.' No doubt Patrick soon relented, as quick-tempered people nearly always do, when the angry impulse is over; but in these things Patrick would be himself the first to deny that he was altogether blameless—that is, if he really acted as some of the writers allege.

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<sup>1</sup> Our Saviour himself denounced the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in language at least equally vehement.

## VIII.—SUMMARY OF HIS LABOURS.

The Tripartite gives the following brief summary of Patrick's labours:—

After founding churches in plenty, after consecrating monasteries, after baptising the men of Ireland, after great endurance and great labour, after destroying idols and images, after rebuking many kings who did not do his will, and raising up those who did his will, after ordaining three hundred and three score and ten bishops, after ordaining three thousand priests and folk of every grade in the Church besides, after fasting and prayer, after mercy and clemency, after gentleness and mildness to the Sons of Life, after love of God and his neighbours, he received Christ's Body from the Bishop Tassach, and he then sent his spirit to heaven.

Though brief, it is a very complete summary of Patrick's manifold labours. The author does not give the number of churches founded by Patrick, but Nennius, in the ninth century, gives it at 365, while Jocelyn puts it down as 700. Again, Nennius says that the number of bishops consecrated by Patrick was 365; the Tripartite here gives it as 370, and Jocelyn has it as 350—whom, he says, Patrick consecrated with his own hand. Both Jocelyn and the Tripartite give the number of priests whom Patrick ordained as 3,000. in round numbers, we may assume; but Jocelyn raises the figure to 5,000.

No doubt it will appear strange to many persons that Patrick should consecrate 350 bishops in Ireland, whilst in our own times we have not more than twenty-seven or twenty-eight independent Sees. But in ancient times bishops were much more numerous than they are under the present discipline of the Church. Every town of any importance had at that time its own bishop.

In Ireland, too, we must bear in mind that in Patrick's time there was a great number of tribes and sub-tribes, practically independent, each of which would claim to have its own bishop, and be thus as independent in spirituals as in temporals. At present we have in Ireland more than 300 baronies, which usually represent the ancient sub-tribes, so that it is not to be wondered at if Patrick found it necessary to appoint some 350 bishops in Ireland during his primacy—for it is not said that they were all alive at one time. The number of priests also appears large, but it probably includes the clergy of all grades in the

Church—both Secular and Regular, as we now say. No doubt a large number dwelt in religious houses of some kind, which the Tripartite usually calls cloisters<sup>1</sup> or habitations, but sometimes monasteries.<sup>2</sup> These monasteries included first the *less* or *liss*, that is the enclosing rampart, then a *tech mor* or great house, a *cuile* or kitchen, and an *aregal* or oratory for the little community of monks or clerics. The great house served the purpose of a living house, and probably a sleeping house, for the monk generally slept in his habit on a bed of rushes, with a rug or blanket over him.

Although the figures given above might at first sight appear to be exaggerated, they are in substance confirmed by statements made by Patrick himself in his Confession. He says that he ordained clerics everywhere; and that Ireland (Hiberione), which previously had no knowledge of God and had always worshipped idols and things unclean, was now become the people of the Lord, and were called the Sons of God. In this sentence Patrick clearly claims the conversion of the country as a whole. He also refers to his preaching and baptising and ordaining priests even in the remotest districts, where no Christian priest had ever penetrated before. It was surely true; for Patrick had not only preached the Gospel in the great inland plains but penetrated into the fastnesses of the western hills, surmounted the soaring cone of Cruachan Aigle, crossed the great rivers of the West and North, stood on the brow of the Grianan Ely, saw the wild waves that break around the northern shores from Malin Head to Ben More, and thence carried the Gospel through the Wicklow Hills as far south as Knockmealdown, and south-west to the hills of Slieve Luachair.

No other man before or since ever travelled so far or accomplished so much for God and for Ireland, in the face of so many difficulties and dangers, as was accomplished by St. Patrick. St. Paul, in self-defence, gives an account of his own labours. St. Patrick, also in self-defence, refers to his own toils and perils and success in preaching the Gospel, and in truth they were not less, so far as we can judge, than those of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Twelve times he tells us his life was imperilled, and even to the last he was in danger of death or captivity

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<sup>1</sup> Congbail.

<sup>2</sup> Manistrech.

from relentless foes of the Gospel, so that God's angel was sent to console him in his tribulations, and assure him that God would give him all the tribes of Erin to be his own—those tribes whom he had converted to the Lord by arduous labours and mighty preaching at all times in the face of manifold dangers from the Pagans, in heat and cold, in hunger and thirst, daily journeying with tireless zeal from tribe to tribe for the conversion of them all. No wonder the 'tribes of Erin' at home and abroad still cherish the memory of Patrick deep in their hearts, and love him with such a passionate and enduring love.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE WRITINGS OF ST. PATRICK.

HERE we merely propose to give a sketch in a general way of Patrick's writings in Latin and Irish. A critical examination of the whole subject is beyond our scope, but a brief account of the writings of our national Apostle is necessary for the fulfilment of the task we have proposed to ourselves. Here we give merely a sketch of the purport of the Saint's writings; later on, if space allows, we shall give the text, both of the Latin and Irish writings of the Saint, with a few brief notes on the most important textual difficulties.

#### I.—THE CONFESSION.

The first and most important of the writings of St. Patrick is the celebrated document known as his CONFESSION. Its authenticity, both from internal and external evidence, is beyond any reasonable doubt. It was evidently in the hands of all the ancient writers of his Life, who cite it textually in many passages, and, without hesitation, recognise its authority. The modern critics also, almost without exception, accept it as the genuine composition of our national Apostle. The internal evidence is of itself convincing—its peculiar style; its soul-stirring sincerity; its incidental allusions; its spiritual fullness, manifestly proceeding from a soul animated by the Spirit of God—all go to prove that it is, indeed, the outpouring of the great heart of our own St. Patrick. No forger could ever write in such a spirit—so fervent, so touching, so sympathetic. Like the Epistles of St. Paul, it proves its own authorship; so that the most sceptical critic cannot doubt its authenticity, for he is silenced when he reads it.

We find copies of the Confession in several ancient manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the earliest now extant is that contained in the Book of Armagh, where it is described as one of the 'Books of St. Patrick, the Bishop,'<sup>2</sup> which seems

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<sup>1</sup> Six in all. In the Book of Armagh, incomplete, but the oldest; the Vedast, or Vaast; the British Museum MS.; the two Bodleian MSS., and the Rouen MS.

<sup>2</sup> *Incipiunt Libri Sancti Patritii Episcopi.*

of itself to imply that the Saint left other 'Books' also, although they are not contained in that work. We find it also quoted under the same title as the 'Liber Patritii Episcopi'—both in the Second and Third Lives, as given by Colgan. In the Fourth Life it is cited as one of the 'Books of (his) Epistles,'<sup>1</sup> and Probus, in the Fifth Life, cites it textually, showing that he had the Confession in some form before him when he wrote. Jocelyn also quotes textually from the Confession—whether directly or from the Tripartite is not easy to determine; but the author of the Tripartite formally quotes passages from the 'Book of his own Epistles.'<sup>2</sup> There can be no doubt, therefore, that the Confession was in the hands of all these ancient writers, and that it was accepted without question by them all as the genuine composition of St. Patrick.

Manuscript copies of the Confession are also found in various public libraries—in that of St. Vedast's Monastery near Beauvais; in the Cottonian Library of the British Museum; in the Bodleian at Oxford, and in the Library of Salisbury, as well as in many others named by Hardy in his Catalogue.

It has been frequently published also—by Ware, in 1656; by the Bollandists, in 1668; by Charles O'Connor, in 1814; by Betham, in 1826; by Villaneuva, in 1835; by Haddan and Stubbs, in 1878, and very accurately, after careful collation, by Stokes, in 1887,<sup>3</sup> and quite recently by Rev. N. J. D. White, D.D. But Colgan, no doubt to his great regret, could find no copy of the Confession, which was so invaluable for the perfect accomplishment of his own great task. Of course, we have, especially of late years, several translations and explanations of the Confession in the English language, although by no means always accurate, and sometimes not even quite intelligible.

Nor is this to be wondered at; for the style of the Confession, as St. Patrick himself admits, is often rude and sometimes scarcely grammatical in its structure. The vernacular for him was the debased provincial Latin of Roman Britain. Even that he almost lost during his six years captivity in Ireland; and in Gaul he gave himself

<sup>1</sup> Ex Libris Epistolatum.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ut constat ex Libro Epistolarum ipsius,' and then the writer cites the words.

<sup>3</sup> The text given by Haddan and Stubbs is not, perhaps, so accurate as that of Stokes, but it contains all the various readings at foot, which is a matter of great importance.

not to the cultivation of the ancient classical writers, but to the much more important study of sacred Scripture. In Ireland, too, he preached in Gaedhlic to his audiences, for they could understand nothing else; and he only used the Latin in the recitation of his Psalms, in the Mass, and the Sacramental Ritual of the Church.<sup>1</sup> Hence his Latin style was always rude; and although full of vigour, and pregnant with Scriptural language and allusions, it is frequently so harsh and ungrammatical that, even without the faults of the transcribers, it must have been difficult at all times to ascertain the meaning, as it assuredly is for us, in many passages.

Still this Confession is, after the Holy Scripture, the most precious literary heirloom of the children of St. Patrick, both from a historical and, above all, from a religious point of view. It reveals to us the whole spiritual beauty of the man—the moral greatness, as well as the fatherly tenderness of his character. But it does much more, it establishes beyond question his own existence, and sheds a flood of light on the whole history of his times. Without it the sceptical critics of modern times would surely call his very existence into question—but now any critic worthy of the name must first explain the existence of that document. Even still, as we know, some of the smaller fry of critics would strive to dissect the Apostle, and give us three Patricks instead of one: as they would dissect also his glorious toil, according to their own crude fancies. But the Confession by itself refutes them all. It shows us one God-like man—like to St. Paul—our father and our Apostle, ‘the Bishop of Ireland,’<sup>2</sup> who gave his labour and his mind and his life to bring the Gael, or the Scots, as he calls them, to the knowledge of the Gospel; who loved them with the yearning love of a father; who thought of them all from the first to the last; who, like Moses, struggled with the Angel of God to secure a promise of their final perseverance, and sought to be allowed to befriend them even on the last day as the merciful assessor of their Judge. From this point of view the Confession is our most precious inheritance, because it establishes beyond dispute the existence and personal identity of one National Apostle of all Ireland; and also

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<sup>1</sup> He also wrote in Latin to Coroticus and his soldiers, who, like himself were acquainted with the debased Latinity of the Roman province of Britain.

<sup>2</sup> Hiberio or Hiberione, as Patrick calls it.

sets his character before us in the clearest and most striking way, for it is he himself who holds the mirror that reveals all the workings of his heart.

It may be useful here to call attention to some things in connection with the mission of St. Patrick, which the Confession clearly establishes. We shall note them in the order of the text itself, as given in the *Rolls Tripartite*.

First, then, we note that St. Patrick, in describing himself as 'an unlettered sinner,' 'the least of all the faithful,' 'and despicable in the estimation of many,' shows his own humility, which is manifest in every page, but also covertly alludes to the opprobrious terms which some of his adversaries had applied to him. Elsewhere he calls himself 'indoctus' or unlearned, and says that those who opposed his undertaking the Irish mission did so not exactly out of malice but rather on the plea that he was a 'rustic,' unequal to a task so weighty and so dangerous. In the *Letter to Coroticus* he also describes himself as 'a sinner without learning;' and there can be no doubt from the whole tenor of the Confession that the Saint was fully conscious of his own literary deficiencies, and especially of the rudeness of his Latin style, for which he apologises by stating that in his youth he had not the educational opportunities of others, who had no cause to drop the use of their mother tongue, as he had, 'whose speech was changed into the tongue of the stranger;' and he might have added, at an age when most educated young men spend their time in the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of their native language. During those years of collegiate education, from sixteen to twenty-two, Patrick was herding swine and striving to speak Irish in the glens and on the hills of Antrim. Yet these very years, that left him a bad Latinist, were instrumental in preparing him for his great work in Ireland, by bringing about his own sanctification, and enabling him to acquire that knowledge of the Irish tongue which was essential for his work in Ireland.

The Confession, too, clearly proves that the Saint was a native of some part of Britain, which he describes as his native country, and the home of parents or relations.<sup>1</sup> It shows us also how deeply he was attached to his flock, seeing that for their sake he would not pay even a passing

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<sup>1</sup> *Patria* ; *Parentes*.

visit to Britain or Gaul, lest in his absence their salvation should be in aught imperilled. From this we may also infer that from the time Patrick came to preach in Ireland he never left the country for any purpose, or under any pretext.

The Confession shows us also the manifold dangers to which he was exposed, and the hardships he had to endure during all his years in Ireland, as we have elsewhere pointed out.

The Confession likewise shows that although Patrick was an indifferent Latinist, he was thoroughly acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testament. He constantly uses the language of Scripture, whether consciously or unconsciously; and always uses it with telling effect. He was, like St. Paul, filled with the spirit of the Scriptures, and his language is, as it were, a very outpouring of the language of Scripture.

So far as we can judge, the version with which he was familiar was the *Vetus Itala*, or old Latin version. St. Jerome's corrected version was certainly in use during the first quarter of the fourth century; but it was not yet in general use, and it is most likely that the version used in the schools of Gaul at that time was the older Italian Vulgate.

From the spiritual point of view, the Confession deserves careful study, and is eminently calculated to elevate the mind and improve the heart. As we have already stated, it is in no sense a biographical memoir; there is no reference to any places in Italy or Gaul; even in Ireland there is no reference to Tara or his own Armagh, or to Saul, the church of his earliest love; or to his teachers by name, or to his friends, or to his associates in the great work of converting the Irish people—all this is left a blank, and shows the absurdity of deducing any argument from his *silence* about what is called the Roman Mission.

There are some other important points which we can infer from the Confession. It seems to us clearly to prove that Patrick was about sixty years of age when he came to preach in Ireland, that he came but once to Ireland as an Apostle and never left it; that he converted the whole island to the Christian faith, that he penetrated where no one had ever been before to preach the Gospel, and that he was exposed, even to the end of his life, to perils of various kinds, which we cannot now realise.

## II.—THE EPISTLE TO COROTICUS.

The EPISTLE TO COROTICUS was also called 'The Second Book of St. Patrick,' and sometimes 'The Second Book of St. Patrick's Epistles'—the First Book being the Confession. It is, without doubt, the genuine composition of the Saint, for, not only is the style and 'flavour' of both 'Letters' the same, but sometimes entire phrases are reproduced from the Confession, showing that both came from the same mind and the same hand. It is not found in the Book of Armagh, although Muirchu's story of the 'King of Aloo' shows that he was aware of the existence of this Letter. We have, however, several early MS. copies dating as far back as the tenth century.

It is much more likely that this Coroticus was King of Dumbarton, or Ail-Cluade, that is of the Strathclyde Britons, than of Cardigan, in South Wales. The Strathclyde Britons were fellow-citizens of Patrick, as we have seen, which gives point to the reference in this Letter where he says he will call them fellow-citizens no longer, on account of their crimes and associations with the 'apostate Picts and Scots'—a phrase that shows of itself that the reference is rather to a King of Strathclyde, who was their neighbour, than to a certain Ceredig, in South Wales, who was far away from them. Those Picts and Scots (of Scotland) were converted by the preaching of St. Ninian, of Candida Casa, but afterwards fell away from the faith, or, at most, were only half-Christian, like Coroticus himself.

The incursion on the Irish shores which called forth this indignant letter of Patrick, probably took place towards the close of our Saint's life, and very likely somewhere on the coast of Down or Antrim; most probably the former. Patrick may have been in Saul at the time, and would thus have an opportunity of hearing all about the bloody raid of the pirates from the Clyde. The raiders were merciless in the extreme. The white garments of the neophytes were stained with their own blood and the blood of their slaughtered companions. Numbers of men and women were carried off into slavery, whilst the holy oil of Confirmation was yet glistening on their foreheads. The Letter is written in a spirit of mingled grief and indignation, extremely touching, because it reveals in a most striking way the deep and ardent affection which Patrick

had for his flock. He entrusted the delivery of the Letter to a priest—whom he tells us he had taught from his infancy<sup>1</sup>—with instructions to read it for the soldiers of the tyrant, and then hand them the document itself to be perused at their leisure. It was a perilous task for the messenger to undertake, for it contained what was virtually an excommunication of Coroticus himself and his abettors, since the Saint called upon all true Christians not to receive their alms, nor associate with them, nor take food or drink in their company.

Many incidental references are made by the Saint in this Letter to his own personal history. It was purely for God's sake he preached the Gospel to the Irish people—forgetful of all the claims of flesh and blood—to the nation who once took him captive and harried the men-servants and maid-servants of his father's house. By birth the son of a Decurion, for their sake he sold or forfeited his nobility, making himself a slave of Christ for the service of a foreign nation. It was the custom with the Gaulish and Roman Christians to pay large sums for the ransom of Christian captives—"but you—you mercilessly slay them or sell them to infidels, sending the living members of Christ, as it were, into a brothel. Have you any fear of God; what Christian can aid you and abet you in your crimes?"

Then, in language of passionate grief, he bewails the fate of the captives. "Oh! my most beautiful and loving brothers and children, whom in countless numbers I have begotten for Christ, what shall I do for you? Am I so unworthy in the sight of God and men that I cannot help you? Is it a crime to have been born in Ireland? And have not we the same God as they have? I sorrow for you; yet I rejoice, for, if you have been taken out of the world, yet you were believers through me, and are gone to paradise." And, last of all, he commands his Letter to be read in the presence of all the people, yea, and in the hearing of Coroticus himself, that God may inspire them with a desire to amend their wicked lives, and liberate, at least, the women captives, who were baptised in Christ. The Letter, like the Confession, abounds in quotations from the Old Italian Version of the Scriptures.

Muirchu, in the Book of Armagh, has a reference to this conflict of Patrick with the King of 'Aloo,' whom he

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Mochae, of Nendrum.

calls Coirthech, and Corictic. Both, however, are the same name. As the impenitent tyrant was sitting on his throne, listening to the chanting of a magic or druidical song, at a certain point of the recitation he came down from his throne, and, in the sight of all, was changed into the shape of a fox, which, running off like a stream of water, disappeared for ever from the eyes of men.

### III.—THE FAED FIADA, OR DEER'S CRY.

This poem is called in Irish the FEAD FIADA, or Cry of the Deer, because it was chanted by the Apostle and his companions, when they sought, under the appearance of a deer and her fawns, to escape the deadly ambushes prepared for them by King Laeghaire, on their way from the Hill of Slane to Tara, at the early dawn of Erin's First Easter Sunday morning. It is also called the Lorica, or Corslet of Patrick, because it was a shield to protect him and his against the wiles of Laeghaire and his Druids.

Prayer was always at every crisis of his life the sword and shield of Patrick, to protect himself and strike down the enemies of God. He was not insensible to danger on this occasion, for he knew that the Druids sought his life with implacable malice, and, moreover, possessed dreadful magical powers to injure those who were not specially protected by God. Hence faith and prayer were more than ever necessary for Patrick at this supreme crisis of his life; wherefore, we are told, he made this poem in Irish, "to be a corslet of faith for the protection of body and soul against devils, and human beings, and vices; and whoever shall sing it every day, with pious meditation on God, devils shall not stay before him."

The demons claimed dominion over the elements, and sometimes, by God's high permission, made use of their agency to work their own evil purposes on men. Patrick, in this poem, first of all appeals to the Holy Trinity, the Triune God, to protect him against all dangers, and weaken the might of the wicked. And, as the Druids sometimes wrought evil by the powers of nature, Patrick invokes all these creatures of God to be with him in this struggle and aid him against the wiles of the demon. That is the keynote of the whole poem.

We have not the same certainty of the authenticity of this poem as we have of the Confession and of the Epistle to Coroticus. Very high authorities, however, declare that



it is the genuine work of our Saint, and, certainly, neither in language or sentiment is it unworthy of him, or inconsistent with the date to which it is ascribed.

Colgan refers to other writings attributed to St. Patrick, but we do not think that any of them can be regarded as authentic. We have explained elsewhere in what sense the *Canoin Patraic*, which we take to be the Book of Armagh, must be attributed to St. Patrick. It is a compilation, containing his genuine writings, and also the most authentic accounts of his life, but is his work in no other sense. If it be taken to mean the 'Canons of St. Patrick,' we have already explained in a special chapter how far, in our opinion, the so-called collection of Irish Canons can be fairly regarded as the work of St. Patrick.

As to the Irish Prophecies of St. Patrick, mentioned by Jocelyn, we believe the work is no longer in existence. He calls it a *libellus* or little treatise, but we find no reference to it in any of the earlier authorities. Such books of prophecies attributed to Patrick, to Brigid, and to Columcille, have, we suspect, been in circulation in Ireland for many centuries, but are destitute of any authority whatsoever. No doubt, Patrick was a prophet, and we have recorded in the *Tripartite* many prophecies of his, which appear to have been fulfilled in a very wonderful way, but we cannot go further in attributing prophecies, oral or written, to our national Saint.

There is also a 'Rule' attributed to St. Patrick, which has been lately printed by Mr. J. G. O'Keeffe, in the *Journal of the School of Irish Learning, Dublin*. It is a brief document, and ancient, probably derived from some original Rule written by St. Patrick. In its present form it cannot, we think, be regarded as the genuine production of our Saint.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Colgan refers to this Rule in his *Notes on the Life of St. Patrick*.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL OF ARMAGH.<sup>1</sup>

#### I.—HIS ITINERANT SCHOOL.

AS we have already seen, during the course of this work, St. Patrick had organised, from the beginning, a kind of itinerant or peripatetic school for the instruction of young clerics, destined for the ministry of the Irish Church. With far-seeing wisdom, he perceived that if his work in Hiberio was to endure, he should make provision for the training up of a native ministry, who would be qualified to continue and perfect the work of his own apostolate in Ireland. When the Saint came to Ireland in 432 he took along with him a large number (*multitudo*) of holy bishops, and priests, and deacons, and exorcists, and door-keepers, and readers, and youths also whom he had ordained<sup>2</sup>—that is destined for the service of the Church, by having them, at least, duly tonsured.

The bishops and priests, as we know, he placed over various churches in Meath and Connaught during the nine years that he was preaching in those wide territories. Meantime, the school of 'youths,' whom he had brought with him to Ireland from Gaul and Britain, accompanied the Apostle on his missionary journeys, and received in that way an excellent training for the ministry. They became familiar with the Irish tongue; they were present at the catechetical instructions given by the Saint, or his assistant priests and prelates; they took a share, according to their respective orders, in public worship and the administration of the Sacraments; they were taught to read and chant the Divine Office with the clergy; and in this way they received an excellent practical training for the work of the ministry.

But from the beginning Patrick resolved to recruit this school with pupils of Irish birth. Benignus, from the banks of the Boyue, was one of the first to join it. Later on Guasacht, son of Milcho, Ailbe of Shancoe, Bron,

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<sup>1</sup> Much of this chapter is taken from the chapter on the Schools of Armagh, in the author's *Insula Sanctorum et Doctorum*, p. 58, 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Tirechan*, p. 303.

MacRime, Fiacc of Sletty, and a host of other Irish boys were admitted to this itinerant school of Patrick, and trained in the way we have indicated above. They were excellent candidates for the ministry. Many of them belonged to the schools of the Bards or Brehons, and had not only a thorough knowledge of their own tongue, but had highly trained memories, and without doubt, were skilled in the use of letters and well able to read and write in the native fashion. Admission to this school soon became an object of ambition for the sons of the petty chieftains, for their parents and themselves soon perceived that to be head of a tribal church was not only desirable from a spiritual, but also from a temporal point of view.

The greatest difficulty found in practice was to provide books for the students of this school. The supply originally given to Patrick by St. Celestine, as old authors say, was soon exhausted; and then Patrick was forced—either himself or his attendant prelates—to write ‘alphabets’ for his pupils. The ‘alphabet’ was simply a catechism, or compendium of Christian doctrine, which was given to the young cleric to get by rote, and was of course, duly expounded for him by the teachers of the school, so that in a short time he became qualified to teach others all that he had learned himself.

In the same way, copies of the *Lebar n Uird*, or *Liber Ordinis*, that is the *Ordo* of the Mass, and also of the *Lebar Baptismi*, or Ritual, were multiplied and expounded for the students, who were thus enabled to celebrate Mass and administer the Sacraments under the guidance of their elders, until they were themselves deemed qualified to be placed over churches of their own. Sometimes when Patrick found a prelate specially qualified to instruct others he gave him the means of establishing a school of his own: as he did in the case of Bishop Mucna of Domnachmore, near Killala, to whom he gave the ‘Seven Books of the Law,’ with full authority to ‘ordain bishops and priests and deacons in that region.’ This Mucna was a brother of Cethech or Cethechus of Baslic, and was himself most probably educated in Gaul or Britain. We find reference made to *Manchen the Master*, or *Mancen*—so the Irish Tripartite has it—as dwelling there also; whence we may infer that Bishop Mucna was authorised by Patrick to establish a kind of theological seminary at Domnachmore ‘over the Wood of Focluth’ by the western sea, probably the first of the kind established in Ireland.

## II.—THE SCHOOL AT ARMAGH.

Now, however, that Patrick had established his own primatial See at Armagh, his first care would be to establish a seminary for the education of his own clergy, and also for the training of such professors and students as might come to the primatial City from all parts of Ireland. We may assume, therefore, that the School of Armagh dates from the very foundation of the See of Armagh. It has always been regarded as one of the primary duties of every bishop to make suitable provision for the education of his clergy, as far as possible under his own immediate supervision. We have seen how Patrick, from the very beginning, sought to discharge that imperative duty, so far as circumstances permitted. Now that he had settled down by direction of God's Angel in the city of Armagh, we may be sure he took measures at once to found the School of his primatial See.

This School of Armagh was, of course, primarily a theological seminary for the professional education of the clergy. This is quite natural; the seat of authority should be also the fountain of sound doctrine. But theology in those days was taught in a very different way from that with which we are familiar in our own times. The theology of the schools in the time of St. Patrick and of his successors for many years, mainly consisted in the study of Sacred Scripture and the Writings of the Fathers, as known to them. The Sacred Scripture was always in the hands of our ancient scholars. They read and re-read it; they meditated upon it; they discussed it in their conferences; they recited it for their prayers. It was light for their minds and food for their souls, their hope, their consolation, their abiding joy. The beautiful psalm 'Beati immaculati in via' was ever on their lips and deep in their hearts. Every one of them might say 'Oh, how I have loved thy law, O Lord! it is my meditation all the day. Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my paths.' It was the 'Seven Books of the Law' Patrick left to Bishop Mucna for his school over Foeluth Wood. The Books of the Law were his own study and meditation night and day. In his Confession he thinks and writes in the language of the Law, and so we must infer the Books of the Law of the Lord were the foundation of all the studies at Armagh.

Then the study of the Fathers and the narratives of the Lives of Saints were next in order of importance. The Lives of the Saints show us the Gospel reduced to practice, and were constantly read in our Irish schools. In the Book of Armagh we have a copy of the beautiful Life of St. Martin, by Sulpicius Severus, which shows us how highly it was prized by St. Patrick and his disciples. At a later period the 'Morals of St. Gregory the Great' became a famous class book in all our Irish schools, but it could not have been in their hands at this early date. In their Scriptural studies, it would appear, from references at a later period, that the Irish teachers chiefly followed St. Jerome, whose works had a very wide circulation, and were greatly esteemed throughout the whole Church.

In what is now called Dogmatic Theology, that is, the history, exposition, and defence of the doctrines of the Church, they relied chiefly on the apologetic writings of the early Latin Fathers, and, of course, they could not follow safer guides. But the system was entirely different from our own. It is, however, a difference which regards the form rather than the matter, for in all cases the matter is derived from divine revelation. "The Fathers enforced and explained the great principles of Christian doctrine and morality, with rhetorical fulness and vigour, exhibiting much fecundity of thought and richness of imagery, but not attending so closely as the great Scholastics to scientific arrangement, or the accurate development of their principles, and the logical cogency of their proofs. Each of these systems has its own merits and defects; the former is better suited for the instruction and exhortation of the faithful, the latter for the refutation of error; the Positive Theology was of spontaneous growth; the Scholastic system has been elaborately constructed; the one is a stately tree that, with the years of its life, has gradually grown in size and beauty to be the pride of the forest; the other is a Gothic cathedral that, from its broad and deep foundations, has been laboriously built up, stone by stone, into the glory of its majestic proportions and the strength of its perfect unity.<sup>1</sup>

From the contents of the Book of Armagh itself we can get glimpses of other studies pursued in the School of Armagh from its earliest period. Besides the historical

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<sup>1</sup> *Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars*, p. 117.

documents connected with St. Patrick and his Church of Armagh, we also find :—

- 1 A complete copy of the New Testament ;
- 2 St Jerome's Preface to his version of the Four Gospels ;
- 3 The Ten Canons of the Concordances of the Gospels ;
- 4 A Brief Interpretation of each of the Gospels ;
- 5 St. Martin's Life by Sulpicius Severus ;
- 6 The Dialogues and Epistles of the same about St. Martin ;
- 7 The Apocryphal Epistle to the Laodiceans.

We know that there was also a ' School of Psalm-Singing ' or Plain Chant, at Armagh, for Benen is described as Patrick's Psalmist, that is, the teacher and conductor of his choir in the public offices of the Church. We know, too, that Patrick had what we may call a technical school of ecclesiastical art, in which his smiths and his bronze-workers produced all the various articles in stone, iron, and bronze, necessary for the service of the altar and the use of the church, such as bells, altar-stones, chalices, patens, book-covers, reliquaries, and so forth. In ancient Ireland these crafts were hereditary in certain families, but Patrick appears to have set apart certain members of his clerical family for this purpose, whose duty it would be to train apprentices to continue their work, who also belonged to the clerical order. There was also a school of embroidery for making the vestments and altar cloths used by the clergy in their ministrations ; and we are told the names of the nuns who gave their lives to the work, and, doubtless, trained their successors. A class of scribes or copyists would also be deemed an essential department in a large school like Armagh. In his old age Patrick could no longer write ' Alphabets ' himself for his favourite pupils ; but he would take good care to have certain clerics of his school specially trained for that most important work. At a later period frequent reference is made in the Annals to those scribes of Armagh ; and the choice scribe of the school not unfrequently was raised to the supreme dignity of Heir of Patrick.

It is not unlikely that Benignus, skilled as he was both in the learning of the Church and of the Gael, was the first Rector of the School of Armagh, which in the sixth century attracted most distinguished scholars and great numbers of students from Britain as well as from all parts of Ireland. Gildas the Wise is described as Rector or Regent of the School of Armagh in the opening years of

the sixth century by his biographer, Caradoc of Llancarvan. The dates are uncertain, but it appears that Gildas returned to Wales in 508, where he heard that his brother Huel was slain by King Arthur. Gildas is described as 'a holy preacher of the Gospel, who went from Wales to Ireland, and there converted many to the true faith.' He is likewise known as 'the Historian of the Britons,' and deserved the name, for his chief work, 'The Destruction of Britain,'<sup>2</sup> has come down to us; and is by no means complimentary to the military chiefs of his own nation. It is fairly certain that this Gildas the Historian is identical with Gildas who was for many years Rector of the great School of Armagh, whose fame largely helped to make the College of Armagh so well known to his own countrymen. We cannot pursue the subject further here, except to note that so great was the number of students flocking to Armagh in the sixth and seventh centuries that the city came to be divided, for peace sake, we presume, into three wards or thirds, named respectively the Trian Mor, the Trian Masain, and the Trian Saxon, the last taking its name from the crowds of students from Saxon-land, who took up their abode therein, where, according to the express testimony of the Venerable Beke, they were all supplied gratuitously with books, education, and maintenance. No more honourable testimony has been ever borne to Irish hospitality and love of learning than this. In later ages the men of Saxon-land made an ungrateful return, when they utterly destroyed the Catholic schools of Erin, and drove away, pitilessly, both professors and students to seek shelter and education in foreign lands, from which it was made penal to return home, except at the peril of their lives.

St. Patrick's School of Armagh, in spite of foreign and domestic wars, continued to flourish down to the period of the Anglo-Norman invasion. In the Synod of Clane, held in 1162, it was enacted that no person should be allowed to teach Divinity in any school in Ireland who had not, as we now say, graduated in Armagh.

To aid in making Armagh worthy of its scholastic renown, we find that in 1169—the very year in which the Anglo-Normans first landed at Bannow Bay, Rory O'Connor, the last King of Ireland, granted 'ten cows every year from himself and from every King that should

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<sup>2</sup> The full title is :—*De Excidio Britan & Liber Quærulus.*

succeed him for ever to the Chief-professor of Ard-macha, in honour of St. Patrick, to instruct the youths of Erin and Alba in learning.' The Chief Professor at the time was Florence O'Gorman, 'head moderator of this school and of all the schools in Ireland, a man well skilled in Divinity, and deeply learned in all the sciences.' He ruled the schools of Armagh under Gelasius, the Heir of Patrick, for twenty years, until his death in 1174. Not too soon he died; four years afterwards John De Curci and his irebooters swooped down on Patrick's Royal City; they plundered its shrines, carried off its most sacred books and reliquaries; drove away its students or slaughtered them all—priests, professors, and scholars—and so the glory of the primatial City and its ancient school was extinguished in a deluge of blood. Shall we ever see the torch of sacred learning kindled once more on Macha's Hill in all its ancient radiance? Time alone can tell; we have seen even stranger things come to pass, in our own generation.

### III.—ST. PATRICK AND THE SCHOOLS OF THE BARDS.

We may with propriety say a word here about Patrick's dealings with the Bards of ancient Erin. Nothing else in his whole career shows in a more striking way his practical wisdom and consummate prudence. The Bards, as we have seen, were one of the three privileged orders in ancient Erin, a class of great influence and of old renown, who might be made either powerful friends or unrelenting foes. They were, until their lampoons and extortions became intolerable, very popular with all classes, and being a kind of close hereditary college or corporation, were formidable from their profession, their numbers, and their organised power. As a class they had no special interest like the Druids in opposing the spread of the new religion in Erin. Dubthach Mac Ua Lugair, the Arch Poet of Erin, was the very first to rise up to do honour to Patrick and accept his doctrine. Afterwards he became Patrick's fast friend, and most sagacious counsellor. He was ready, as in the case of Fiacc of Sletty, to hand over to Patrick his most promising pupils for the service of the infant Church. In the reform of the Brehon Laws his services were simply invaluable, for as Chief Poet he had a professional knowledge of the whole Brehon Code, and was thus enabled to exhibit, as we are told, to Patrick, 'all the judg-



ments and all the poetry of the men of Erin, and expound every law which prevailed amongst the men of Erin, through the law of nature and the law of the seers, and in the judgments of the island of Erin and in the poets.' Chiefly through his assistance Patrick was enabled to produce an expurgated code of the ancient laws of Erin, and secure its adoption by the King and the chiefs of Erin. For such services Patrick was duly grateful to Dubthach, and to all the Bardic Order, and he always welcomed its junior members into the service of the infant Church.

This friendly alliance of Patrick with the Bards is recognised in all our national traditions, and finds expression in the ancient tales of the Saint's kindly relations with Ossian, the most renowned of all the Bards of ancient Erin. He was the sole survivor of the great warriors who fell in the fatal field of Gavra (Gabhra), leading a kind of enchanted life in the new and strange order of things which arose in Erin. He was friendless and alone, living in the past rather than in the present, waking always notes of woe when his feeble fingers touched the strings that were once attuned to the fierce joys of battle or the melting lays of love.

Then Patrick, in the mild spirit of the Gospel, took the forlorn old warrior into his own family, soothed him in the sorrows that clouded his age, let him rave as he would of the olden glories of pagan Erin, and then gently brought him back to the present, lighting up the old man's heart with the light of faith, and consoling his stricken spirit with the hope of a happier life beyond the grave.

“ And now I tread a darker brink,  
Far down unfriendlier waters moan,  
And now, of vanished times I think,  
Now of that bourne unknown.

“ Say, Patrick of the mystic lore,  
Shall I, when this old head lies low,  
My Oscar see, and Fionn, once more,  
And run beside that Doe?”

And Patrick cried, “ Oisín ! the thirst  
Of God is in thy breast ;  
He who hath dealt thy heart the wound,  
Ere long will give it rest.”

AUBREY DE VERE.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE HOUSEHOLD OF ST. PATRICK.

#### I.—LIST OF THE OFFICIALS.

ONE of the most interesting chapters of the Tripartite Life gives us a brief account of the household or family of St. Patrick. The list comprised twenty-four persons, who are described as 'in Orders,' though we need not assume that they were all in Holy Orders. The same list, with very slight variations, is given in the Book of Leinster and in the Lebar Brecc, so that it must be regarded as a very ancient and authentic catalogue. It is particularly valuable on account of the light which it throws on the social life of the period, and the many difficulties of St. Patrick's missionary career in Ireland.

In order to understand the document we must bear in mind that Ireland at the time was, as St. Patrick himself says, a 'barbarous' country, that is, one entirely beyond the pale of Roman civilisation. It contained no towns, no roads, no bridges, no hotels, in the modern sense of the words. The people lived a simple, primitive life, subsisting for the most part on the produce of their flocks and herds, with some tillage, and also the spoils of the chase and the fishings of their rivers. It is certain, indeed, that there was some, but not much, foreign commerce, for as the ports of Erin were known to merchants in the days of Tacitus, they must have become still better known in the reign of Niall the Great and his successors.

But they had, of course, before Patrick's time, no Christian churches, no appliances of public worship, no sacred books. Whatever Patrick and his companions did not bring with them for the equipment of their churches, they must of necessity produce themselves, as best they could from their own resources.

Then, again, in their missionary journeys through the country, though Patrick and his companions would, no doubt, sometimes accept the hospitality of their new converts, it was not always tendered to them, and it would not, even if tendered, have been always safe to accept it. The Apostle tells us himself that his life was often in

danger, and we know that at least one attempt to poison him was made by the Druids at the table of the High-King. It was, therefore, necessary for the Saint and his companions to carry tents and waggons with them for their accommodation. When a longer stay than usual was made in a desirable place they built for themselves sheds of wood or wattles, as at Drumlease, in Leitrim, which took its name from those sheds.

No doubt, too, they found it, generally speaking, both safe and desirable, from many reasons, to cook their own food. These considerations will serve to explain the list of clerical officials belonging to St. Patrick's household.

The following is the catalogue, as given in the *Tripartite*:—

Sechnall, his bishop (epscop).

Mochta, his priest (saccart).

Bishop Erc, his judge (breithen).

Bishop Mac Cairthinn, his champion (trenfer).

Benen, his psalmist (salmchetlaig).

Coeman of Cell Riada, his chamberlain (maccoem).

Sinell of Cell Dareis, his bell-ringer (astire).

Athcen of Both Donnaig, his cook (coice).

Presbyter Mescan of Domnach Mescain at Fochain, his brewer (scoaire).

Presbyter Bescna of Domnach Dala, his chaplain, or rather his sacristan (sacart meisi).

Presbyter Catan and Presbyter Acan, his two attendants at table (da foss).

Odran of Disert Odrain in Hui Failgi, his charioteer (ara).

Presbyter Manach, his fire-woodman (fer connadaig).

Rottan, his cowherd (buachaill).

His three smiths, namely, Maec Ceht; (Laeban) of Domnach Laebain; it is he that made the (bell called) Findfaidech, and Fortebern in Rath Adine—or, as it is elsewhere, Rath Semni.

His three wrights (cerda), Essa, and Bite, and Tassach.

His three embroideresses (druinecha), Lupait and Erc, daughter of Daire, and Cruimtheris in Cengoba.

He had also three masons, not given here, namely, Caeman, Cruineach, and Luireach the Strong.<sup>1</sup>

The provincial kings, we are told, all had similar households; and it was not fitting that the High Bishop of all Erin should have less. As a fact, they were all necessary officials.

<sup>1</sup> See Brash, page 3.

## II.—PATRICK'S BISHOP.

Sechnall, 'his bishop,' was, as we have seen, his own nephew, whom he placed over the church of Dunshaughlin, in the county Meath. But, as Patrick had so many priests and bishops to ordain, so many churches to consecrate, and so many other episcopal duties to discharge, it became necessary for him to have a coadjutor, or assistant bishop, who would assist him in his functions, and act generally as his vicar in the government of the Irish Church. Hence it was that Patrick chose Sechnall as his coadjutor and destined 'successor.' So we find the name of Sechnall, son of Restitutus, as first in the list of 'Patrick's successors'; but this merely implies that he was his coadjutor, and, therefore, his destined successor; and it is said that he held the office for thirteen years. We think, as the Book of Leinster implies, that he lived until 457, which would allow him thirteen years as assistant bishop to St. Patrick. For, as he, with his associates, came to Ireland 'to help St. Patrick,' and as he was the senior of them all, he would be set down as assistant bishop almost from the time of his arrival in Ireland until his death. The Life of St. Declan tells us that it was said he was the first bishop buried in the soil of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> May he rest in peace. It is said that Sechnall was seventy-five years old at the time of his death. In that case, he would have been born about the same time as Patrick himself—that is about 373.

## III.—PATRICK'S PRIEST.

The next official mentioned is Mochta, 'his priest.' This was the Abbot of Louth, and one of the oldest and dearest disciples of St. Patrick. He was, like Patrick himself, a Briton, who, it is said, came to Ireland in his youth, landing, probably, at Carlingford or Dundalk. Going inland, he founded a monastery in the woods of Hy Meith, before he came to Louth. His functions in relation to St. Patrick were, probably, as Colgan thinks, those of arch-priest in the Western Church at the time. This official was originally the senior priest of the diocese by ordination, but afterwards became a dignitary 'whose functions correspond to those of vicar-general in the city,

<sup>1</sup> De quo fertur quod ipse primus episcopus sub humo Hiberniæ exivit.

or rural dean in the country districts.' It was also his privilege to assist the bishop both at the throne and altar in the more solemn episcopal functions. He was, in fact, the first dignitary of the diocese after the bishop.

The holy and venerable Mochta was, from every point of view, entitled to be arch-priest to St. Patrick. He was, probably, by ordination, amongst the oldest of the disciples of Patrick. He was, also, his countryman and intimate personal friend, remarkable, too, for great learning and great holiness, and thus in every sense worthy of the high honour of being the priest to St. Patrick. It is said, also, that he was the last survivor of the personal disciples of our great Apostle, and lived on to the year A.D. 535, when he must have been as old as Saint Patrick himself was at the time of his own death. Louth is not more than twenty miles from Armagh, and is still a parish of the Primate's diocese, so that Patrick and his priest might frequently meet without inconvenience at the most solemn functions of the Church. His office as arch-priest goes to show that Mochta was simply a presbyter abbot, like the great St. Columba, and, doubtless through humility, never accepted the higher grade of bishop. It is not improbable that he was also confessor, or soul's friend, to St. Patrick.

#### IV.—PATRICK'S JUDGE.

The third official of Patrick's household was 'Bishop Erc, his judge.' This was the celebrated Bishop Erc of Slane, who was by profession a Brehon, or judge, before his baptism and subsequent elevation to the episcopate. When he rose up to do honour to Patrick at his interview with King Laeghaire on the Hill of Slane he is described as a mere youth, one of the king's pages in the royal retinue, and, no doubt, attached to the school of Brehons at Tara. Like the young poet Fiacc of Sletty, he was after some time promoted to the episcopal rank, and made bishop of that very place where Patrick blessed him for his faith and courtesy. But he still continued his legal studies, and hence was a most suitable person to be chosen by Patrick as his judge or assessor in all cases connected with the Brehon code that might be carried before his tribunal. Such a dignitary was, in fact, indispensable to Patrick, especially after the purification of the Brehon code by the Commission of Nine, of which Erc

himself was a member. He became famous as a righteous and painstaking judge, and his selection by Patrick as chief judge of his ecclesiastical court shows the practical wisdom of the Saint in his government of the Irish Church. In the *Lebar Brecc* the following quatrain, in Gaedhlic of course, is added after the name of Erc:—

Bishop Erc—  
 Whatever he adjudged was just.  
 Everyone who passes a just judgment  
 Bishop Erc's blessing succours him.

It is a very beautiful thought that the righteous judge still looked down from his high place in heaven and watched over the judgments of the Brehons of Erin, giving his patronage and blessing to every righteous judge in the land. Bishop Erc was the spiritual father of the great St. Brendan of Clonfert, and in his old age he must have resigned his see of Slane, for we find him chiefly residing in the west of Kerry beyond Tralee, which seems to have been his native territory, though he came of the royal line of Ulster's kings.

We also find that he was an intimate friend of the great St. Brigid of Kildare. Under his protection the holy virgin went on a missionary journey through a great part of Munster, and dwelt some time with her nuns in a little convent nigh to where Bishop Erc dwelt in the South. That place was certainly Termon Eirc, as it is still called, by the sea near Ardfert. But he afterwards returned to his own little church at Slane, where he died<sup>1</sup> A.D. 512. His hermitage still stands in a lonely glade within the demesne of Slane, close to the river—a sweet, retired spot for the old Brehon to end his days in peace and prayer.

#### V.—PATRICK'S CHAMPION.

'Bishop Macc Cairthinn, his champion,' is the next entry in the household list. The Irish term simply means his strong man—a *tren fer*. Now Patrick had need

<sup>1</sup> 'Cujus nunc reliquiæ adorantur in illa civitate que vocatur Slane.'—Muirchu. This seems to imply that the relics of Bishop Erc were enshrined and venerated at Slane in the time of Muirchu.

<sup>2</sup> There is no evidence of stone bridges in Celtic Ireland, but at some important passes there were wicker bridges laid on piles, and at a later period strong wooden bridges were constructed during the eleventh and the first half of the twelfth century. See Joyce's *Social Ireland*.

of a strong man. There were no bridges in Ireland,<sup>2</sup> and many could not be crossed on a chariot, for the ground was broken and rough. But stepping-stones were placed at these fords, which, however, were sometimes too far apart for an old man to step lightly over, and the flood was sometimes high, and the middle reaches of the streams were often deep and dangerous. Here it was that an active young giant like Bishop MacCartan came to aid his master. If the stream was shallow he led him gently over from stone to stone, guiding his footsteps and bearing his weight, but, if it was deep and dangerous, he took the old man on his broad shoulders and bore him lightly over the flood from step to step, and when the steps were too far apart, or had been carried away by the flood, then he was tall enough and strong enough to carry Patrick through the rushing waters without so much as wetting the feet of his dear master. And we know that such was his custom, for it is stated in express terms—*ut solebat*

But the young giant might have been the champion of our Saint in another way too. Sometimes the rude chieftains of the time treated the companions of St. Patrick with violence and cruelty, as when the wicked Cairbre drove his servants into the river Sele, or Blackwater, near Telltown, in Meath. Sometimes he himself and all his companions were received with a shower of stones, as happened at Enniscrone, near Ballina, when the Saint was crossing the Moy, at Bertragh, where the accursed Gregaide received them with such a shower of missiles. Sometimes, too, the Druids and their hirelings were hostile and actually violent. It was well on such occasions for the aged Saint to have, close at hand, an active man of might, with a formidable staff, whose very look was apt to inspire fear, if not respect, into those who had no regard for grey hairs or holy apparel. If the danger was grave, St. Patrick knew how to use his spiritual arms, but for ordinary cases a big priest with a big stick and a strong arm was a useful and, indeed, a necessary companion in those lawless times.<sup>1</sup> St. Mac Cartan deserved his promotion when he got it; so he said himself; and so St. Patrick, like a sensible man, admitted; but like other superiors, he was rather unwilling to lose a trusty and faithful companion so long as he could avoid it.

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<sup>1</sup> St. Paul says that a bishop should be no striker; but St. Paul does not prohibit legitimate self-defence for priest or bishop, then or now, when there is no other law to protect him.

## VI.—BENIGNUS, HIS PSALM-SINGER.

We have already spoken much of Benignus. It is probable he belonged to a bardic family, and in this way had an hereditary gift of music and of song. The Gaels have been always passionately fond of music, and the bards were always a privileged class amongst them, with hereditary estates, and in earlier times an acknowledged right to make an official circuit of all the great houses of the country, where they received rich gifts and abounding hospitality.

No doubt St. Patrick was well aware of the attractive influence which the music of the Church would naturally exert over such a people. So he gave Benen charge of his church choirs, with the duty of training his young ecclesiastics in the psalmody of the Church. Moreover, Patrick himself, who had dwelt so long in the greatest monasteries of Gaul and Italy, would be well acquainted with the grave and noble psalmody of the Church, as it existed at that time, and we may fairly assume that Benignus taught the same solemn chants to his own church choirs. That he had a sweet and musical voice is shown from the incident recorded of Daire's daughter, who was melted into love 'by the voice of his chaunting.' And his sweet strains of heavenly melody must have had a softening influence on the wild warriors who gathered round him, and were, as we know, extremely susceptible to the manifold influences of music and song.

But Benignus was something more than Patrick's psalm-singer. He was a member, probably the secretary, of the great Commission of Nine, who were intrusted with the purification of the Brehon Laws. In that work he may be regarded as the representative of St. Patrick himself, whose manifold duties would render it impossible for him to give personal attention to minute details. Then, again, Benignus had of course a far better knowledge of the language, and a much wider acquaintance with the institutions of his native country than Patrick could possess, and so we may be sure that he took a leading part in successfully accomplishing the revision and purification of the Brehon Code.

The original composition of the Book of Rights is also attributed to St. Benignus. He composed it in poetry, or



rather he wrote out in enduring form the bardic poems which defined the rights and duties of the kings and chiefs throughout all the land of Erin. Those poems also, in some things, doubtless, needed revision to make them harmonise with the new Christian polity introduced by St. Patrick, and Benen would be naturally the person best qualified to accomplish the work. The very title of the book attributes it to Benignus. 'The Beginning of the Book of Rights (Leábhhar Na g-Ceart), which relates to the revenues and subsidies of Ireland, as ordered by Benen, son of Sescnen, Psalmist of Patrick, as is related in the Book of Glendaloch.' Such was the original title. This work was afterwards enlarged and corrected, as we now say, up to date, by Cormac Mac Cullinan, and at a later period by McLiag, the secretary of the renowned Brian Boru. But all these authorities themselves admit that the original work was completed by Benen, though, no doubt, with the aid of the Bards and Brehons around him at the time.

Benen was also a great missionary bishop, although we cannot now admit that he was the founder of Kilbannon, near Tuam, or of the beautiful little church that bears his name in Aranmore. But most likely it was he that Patrick left for some time at Drumlease, to watch over that infant church, which at the time Patrick designed to make his own primatial See. But providence had ordained otherwise, and Benen as well as Patrick had to leave that smiling valley at the head of Loch Gill far behind them for the colder coasts of the stormy North. Benen was greatly devoted to his beloved master, and, so far as we can judge, he never sought a church of his own, but always remained in Patrick's family. When Sen Patrick<sup>1</sup> died about the year A.D. 457 St. Patrick chose Benignus to be his coadjutor and destined successor; and thenceforward we may assume that he dwelt chiefly at Armagh. The duration of his episcopacy in Armagh, as Patrick's 'destined successor,' is set down as ten years in the Irish list of the Book of Leinster. So the date of his death given in the Annals of Ulster as A.D. 467 is correct, but as they date from the Incarnation, the year from the Nativity would be 468, which appears to be the exact year.

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<sup>1</sup> In some lists Sen Patrick is not mentioned at all, but Benen succeeds Secundinus immediately. In any case Sen Patrick only held office for two years.

The Martyrology of Donegal, in recording his death at Nov. 9th, says of him :—

Benignus, that is, Benen, son of Sescnen, disciple of Patrick, and his (destined) successor, that is Primate of Ard-Macha. He was of the race of Cian, son of Olioll Olum. Sodelbh, daughter of Cathaoir, son of Feidhlimidh Firurglass of Leinster, was his mother. The holy Benen was benign, was devout, he was a virgin without ever defiling his virginity ; for when he was psalm-singer at Armagh, along with his master St. Patrick, Earenat, daughter of Daire, loved him, and she was seized with a disease, so that she died suddenly ; and Benen brought consecrated water to her from Patrick, and he shook it upon her, and she arose alive and well, and she loved him spiritually afterwards, and she subsequently went to Patrick and confessed all her sins to him, and she offered afterwards her virginity to God, so that she went to heaven, and the name of God, and of Patrick and Benen was magnified through it.

It is a very touching and romantic story, which has caught the fancy of our poets and chroniclers, and, as the scribe in the Martyrology declares, gave glory to Patrick and to Benen after God : but none the less is the holy maiden's name glorified also, whose young heart was touched by human love, which, in the spirit of God, was purified and elevated to the highest sphere of sinless spiritual love in Christ. It has often happened since.

#### VII.—INFERIOR OFFICIALS.

Of the other inferior members of Patrick's household we know comparatively little.

His chamberlain was Coeman of Cill Riada, which is apparently Kilroot,<sup>1</sup> an ancient church that stood on the northern shore of Belfast Lough, a little beyond Carrickfergus. His special relations with Patrick are otherwise unknown.

Sinell of Cell da Reis is described as bell-ringer to the Saint. It was an important office, because in those days the bell was the symbol of jurisdiction, and the man who carried it represented the authority of Patrick himself, and doubtless enforced obedience to his orders, and maintained due decorum in all the ecclesiastical assemblies. There

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<sup>1</sup>In the Life of St. Ailbe, this church is called Cell Roid, and is said to have been founded by St. Colman the Elder. But Coeman may have preceded him there.

were two Sinells—one the elder, who appears to have been the person here referred to. His feast day was the 26th March, and his church was Killeigh, near Geashill in the Queen's County. Its founder was certainly a disciple of St. Patrick, and had a celebrated monastery and school at Killeigh, to which scholars and even bishops came on pilgrimage from foreign lands.

There was another Sinell, who was an anchorite in one of the islands of Lough Melvin, in the Co. Leitrim. The island is still called Inishtemple, and the ruins of an ancient church and churchyard still remain, and are much venerated by the people. Colgan thinks that he may have been the bell-ringer of Patrick, and retired there after the death of his beloved master, to spend the remnant of his days in prayer and penance. No doubt the bell used by Sinell was the famous 'Bell of the Will'<sup>1</sup> which is now in the National Museum in Dublin—a rude, quadrangular bell, with rounded angles, made of rivetted plates of hammered iron, about 6½ inches high, with the handle at the top. It was covered with a beautiful shrine, made in the beginning of the twelfth century by order of Domnall O'Loghlin, King of Ireland.

His 'cook' was Athcen of Both Domnaig. The name of this church now is Badony, the same in sound as the ancient name. It was an old church in the diocese of Derry, and Co. Tyrone, where St. Athcen, who is called also by the name of Cormac, has been long venerated as its holy founder. His festival was the 3rd of May. He was of the race of Colla Menn. Of course a cook would be an indispensable official for the household of Patrick, which was large and migratory for the most part. It is likely, too, that the 'cook' had not only to superintend the cooking of food, but also to provide it, which at times must have been a rather difficult task, although, no doubt, the chiefs and people, as a rule, gave generous supplies for the maintenance of the Saint and his family. Still we know that, especially in the beginning, the cook was often hard up for provisions, and the family he had to feed was large. His office was practically the same as bursar or œconomus in more modern times. His assistants used spits, gridirons, and hot stones for roasting; and had great cauldrons for boiling joints of meat and other provisions. A similar

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<sup>1</sup> Clog an udhachta. See Appendix.

official was, at a later period, to be found in all the great monasteries.

Presbyter Mescan, of Domnach Mescain, at Fohain, was 'his brewer.' It does not appear from this that either Patrick or the members of his household were total abstainers; and if they were to have beer at all, they could only have it by brewing<sup>1</sup> it themselves. There were no great breweries and no beer-shops in those days, and there was no excise duty. Every chief and farmer brewed what was necessary for himself and his retainers. The corn was ground with the quern or hand mill, and the malting and fermentation would be a comparatively easy process. Colgan thinks that Mescan is merely Mo-Escan, that is Escan with the prefix of endearment. The name of Escan is mentioned, on the 20th of November, by the martyrologists in connection with Both-chluain, which is described as in Leix, to the east of Clonenagh, or in Inis Mac Earca.<sup>2</sup>

Presbyter Bescna, of Domnach Dola, was 'his chaplain,' or rather sacristan. This, too, was an important office, for it would be the duty of the Sacristan to provide all necessaries for the Holy Sacrifice, and make due provision for the proper celebration of Divine worship on all Sundays and other festivals of the Church. Magh Dola, now Moyola, was the name of a plain and river in the Co. Derry, which flows into Lough Neagh; so, doubtless, the church (Domnach) of Dola, or Dula, was in the same plain. Colgan thinks that this Bescna is the Presbyter of Domnach Mor (of Magh Dola), whom the Martyrologies mention under date of November 11th. The church itself is in the diocese of Armagh, which goes far to confirm this conjecture, as it is not unlikely that Patrick located those officials of his family in churches near himself after the foundation of Armagh, when his missionary journeys were over, and he was in a position to make provision for his old and faithful servants.

Presbyter Catan and Presbyter Acan were 'his two guest ministers.' Their duty was to attend on Patrick and his guests, and see that they wanted nothing. The Irish saints were, as we know, very hospitable to strangers; and every monastery had its own guest minister spe-

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<sup>1</sup> The ancient Irish drinks were wine, mead, and ale (courmi)—the last being their usual beverage. It was mostly made of barley, and a supply was kept in every decent house; yeast or leaven was used in the brewing, and the ale seems to have been of excellent quality.

<sup>2</sup> *Martyrology of Donegal.*

cially deputed to look after their needs. It is the case still in all large religious houses. Colgan conjectures that the second name should be 'Cadoc,' and that the two saints in question were the son and nephew of Breacan, who are described as disciples of St. Patrick. The Book of Lecan describes Catan, or Cadan, as being of Tamlach-tain Ardda; but nothing more is known of them or of their locality.

Odran, of Disert Odrain in Offaley, was 'his charioteer.' This was the great-souled saint, who gave his own life to save his master when he was waylaid on his journey through Offaley, as has been already described. There is a town-land called Dysert in the north-west of Offaley, in the parish of Dunferth, which may, perhaps, mark the ancient Disert Odrain. The old churchyard very probably contains the martyr's grave. At an earlier period of his missionary career in Meath and Connaught, Patrick had another charioteer who died, we are told, at the foot of Croaghpatrick, and was buried by the sea at Murrisk. The cairn, which in Irish fashion was raised over his grave, is still shown, as we noted above. It would appear that in all his journeys Patrick used the ancient two-wheeled chariot—carbaid—to which sometimes one and sometimes two horses were yoked in difficult ground. The body, of wicker-work, with a frame of wood, was fixed to a tough holly axle-tree, shod with iron or bronze, and generally proved equal to the rough work on the ancient roads or tracks.

Presbyter Manach was 'his woodman.' Fuel, of course, would be wanted for Patrick's family: and that could only be had by cutting wood, which, however, was very abundant at the time. So this priest had charge of the wood-cutters—a highly useful, if not honourable, occupation, for otherwise they could neither cook their food or warm their tents.

Rottan was Patrick's 'cowherd,' for even saints need milk and butter and beef, when it can be had. St. Brigid of Kildare was a famous dairymaid, and we know that the chief wealth of every family, whether secular or religious, consisted in their cattle. On a journey Patrick's familia drove the cattle with them; but when stationary the cattle would, of course, be fed in the neighbourhood, and would need to be carefully looked after. No doubt the cowherd also looked after Patrick's horses, without which he could not possibly make his numerous missionary journeys

through the remotest parts of the country. We know the horses were stolen once or twice by evil men, and no doubt robbers would sometimes lift the cattle also if the cowherd and his assistants did not do their duty with vigilance.

#### VIII.—PATRICK'S ARTISANS.

Then Patrick had also three smiths, Mac Cecht, Laeban of Domnach Laebain, and Fortchern in Rath Adine. It was Laeban,<sup>1</sup> we are told, who made Patrick's famous bell, called the Findfaidech or sweet-sounding, but apparently different from the Bell of the Will. We speak of the latter elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> Rath Adine, where he dwelt, is called in the Book of Lecan Rath Semne, which was a famous dun on the western shore of the Bay of Larne, called in later times Island Magee. These smiths would also find much occupation in building churches for Patrick as well as in making bells, cauldrons, and other heavy work of a similar character, and generally of iron.

For more delicate metal work in gold, silver, and bronze, Patrick had three other 'artisans,' Essa, Bite, and Tassach. Essa appears to be the same person as Assicus, Bishop of Elphin, who was a most skilful artificer; Bite was his nephew and assistant at Elphin; and Tassach was no doubt the holy bishop who gave the Viaticum to Patrick in his dying hour. His church of Raholp was only two miles from Saul; and it is likely that Patrick placed him over that church that he might be near at hand to execute necessary works for his churches—such as chalices, patens, altar-stones, reliquaries, and book-covers.

Last of all are mentioned Patrick's three embroideresses, Lupait, Erc (or Ercnat), daughter of Daire, and Cruimtheris of Cengoba. Lupait, of whom we have spoken before, was Patrick's sister, and was sold as a slave into Ireland with her holy brother, when she was quite a child. Of Ercnat we have already spoken. When she was healed by Benen from her sore sickness she devoted her life ever after to the service of God's altar. Cruimtheris was, as we have seen, one of the nine daughters of a king of the Lombards, who came to Armagh on a pilgrimage. She dwelt at Cengoba, not far from the cathedral, for it is described as a hillock to the east of the

<sup>1</sup> Colgan says it was Mac Cecht.

<sup>2</sup> In the Appendix on the Relics of St. Patrick.

city, and there she and her nuns spent all their days in the service of God and His Church.

Such was the 'familia' or household which Patrick kept employed in the service of the Church. Many of them dwelt far from Armagh towards the end of Patrick's life; but they were always ready to carry out his wishes in working for God. It would appear that a somewhat similar staff was maintained at Armagh in later times, for the Primate was a great spiritual prince, and needed the service of them all. Hence, the writer in the Tripartite observes that an equal number of high officials sat down at the table of the King of Cashel in the time of Feidlimid Mac Crimthann, and we know that then, and long after, every Irish *ri*, or kinglet, had a similar staff of high officials to serve him both in peace and in war, who had ample domains at home, but were entitled to the hospitality of the King, when they came on state occasions, to render their official service to their royal master.

It will also be observed that this household of Patrick in Armagh was self-sufficing. They produced everything that was needed for domestic purposes, as well as for the service of the Church. They had no need to buy anything, except the wine for the use of the altar; everything else was their own work—churches, vestments, books, bells, food, clothing, fire, bronze and iron utensils; beer and mead for drink; fruit, corn, vegetables, fish—they procured everything of their own, and, in this respect, showed themselves far wiser and better Irishmen than their descendants in our own time.





## APPENDIX I.

### THE BIRTH-PLACE OF ST. PATRICK.

THE discussions in reference to this question afford a striking illustration of the erratic tendencies of the human mind when it ignores authority and trusts to its own wayward speculations. The author of Colgan's Fourth Life is perhaps the earliest writer who makes any reference to such speculations regarding the birth-place of St. Patrick. There were, he says, even at that early date, some persons who alleged that Patrick derived his origin from the Jews, who, when expelled by the Romans from Judæa, settled down amongst the Armoric Britons, and from them Patrick's *race* was derived. This opinion, however, the author rejects; yet he declares that Patrick's parents belonged to the Armoric Britons, but, migrating thence, they came to the region of Strathelyde where Patrick was born.<sup>1</sup>

The Scholiast on Fiacc, whilst expressly declaring that Nemthor, Patrick's birth-place, was in North Britain, namely Ail Cluade, adds that young Patrick with his parents, brother, and sisters, went from the Britons of Ail Cluade over the Ictian Sea southwards to visit their relatives in Armorica, and that it was from the Letavian Armorica that Patrick was carried off a captive to Ireland. The Scholiast here confounds the Armoric Britons of the Clyde with the Armoric Britons of Gaul or Letavia, who had no existence there at so early a date. No doubt they were kindred races; but the names Britannia and Britons were not at that time given to Armorica of Gaul.

It is in modern times, however, that certain writers have given loose reins to their speculations as to the birth-place of St. Patrick. This arose chiefly from unwillingness to give the honour of the Saint's birth to a country which had ceased to profess the faith of Patrick, and was bitterly hostile to Irish Catholics.

Philip O'Sullivan Beare, a man of learning and authority, declared in his 'Patriciana Decas,' that Patrick was born in Bretagne. He was the first writer of note who put forward that opinion, for no ancient writer known to us ever advanced it.

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<sup>1</sup> Parentes ejus in regionem Strato-Clude perrexerunt, in qua terra conceptus et natus est Patricius—which is highly probable.

Patrick Lynch, Secretary of the Gaelic Society, held in his 'Life of St. Patrick,' that the 'Nemthor' referred to by Fiacc and others as the birth-place of St. Patrick meant 'Holy Tours' of Gaul; but he advanced not a single authority to support that view. Moreover, the 'Turones' of Gaul was altogether a different name, and still more so was the more ancient form, Caesarodunum.

Lanigan modified this view, making not the western but a northern Britannia of Gaul, the birth-place of St. Patrick. He says that the 'Bonnavem Taberniae' of the Confession was the same town as Boulogne-Sur-Mer in Picardy, and was the birth-place of our Saint. But the Confession does not state that Bonnavem Taberniae was Patrick's birth-place; but that it was the place where his father had a villa from which he himself was carried off a captive, when he was some sixteen years old. Moreover, there is no similarity between the ancient name of Boulogne, that is, Gessoriacum, well known to the Romans, and Bonnavem Taberniae; and even the form Bononia, which Lanigan alleges was a later Roman name for Boulogne, is very different from the Celtic Bonnavem or Bannavem. Besides, Bononia or Gessoriacum was a flourishing sea-port all through the Roman period, and could never be described as a vicus or village, as Bonnavem Taberniae is called. Neither does Lanigan give any satisfactory explanation of Taberniae, which he attempts to identify with Tarvanna, a place some thirty miles from Boulogne. He also seeks to identify the Nentria Provincia, to which Probus asserts Bannavem belonged, with Neustria in Gaul. But this latter is a much later German name, and cannot be regarded as equivalent to Nentria of Probus.

Cashel Hoey followed Lanigan, but identified Taberniae with the modern Desvres, sometimes rendered Divernia—not Tabernia—in mediæval Latin; and he turns Nemthor of the Lives into Tournahem! By such a system of identifications one could prove anything. Besides, Divonia, not Divernia, was the ancient Latin form of Desvres.

Messrs. Handcock and O'Mahony, joint editors of the second volume of the Brehon Laws, would have Patrick born near Bristol; but they advance no argument of any weight to prove their contention. Nemthor of Fiacc, they say, is identified by the Scholiast with Ail-Cluade, but Ail Cluade was also called Caer-Britton; Bristol was likewise called Caer-Britton; therefore, Nemthor is Bristol—as if both places could not be called a Fortress of the Britons without being one and the same.

Some later writers have advanced even stranger opinions

regarding the birth-place of St. Patrick, but we can only briefly allude to them here :

The Rev. S. Malone has advocated what has been called the South Wales theory of St. Patrick's birth-place. At one time he asserted that 'Usktown stands forth as the birth-place of St. Patrick, proof against all objections derived from a linguistic, geographical, historical, or any other source.'<sup>1</sup> But at another time he says, 'with the evidence before us we cannot avoid connecting the particular spot of his birth with Bath on the banks of the middle Avon.'<sup>2</sup>

Father Alfred Barry<sup>3</sup> would make St. Patrick a native of North Wales, and asserts that the 'Rock-of-Clwyd referred to in the early authorities, was situated, on the banks of the River Clwyd in the vale of Clwyd, near the present town of Rhyl'—a statement we believe entirely unsupported by evidence.

Dr. O'Brien,<sup>4</sup> emeritus Professor of Maynooth College, goes all the way to Spain<sup>5</sup> to find out where St. Patrick was born. He has certainly the merit of discovering a new theory—but hardly anything else. We cannot admit that there is any ground for identifying the places mentioned in the Confession with the Spanish localities to which Dr. O'Brien has transferred them. No solid argument can be based on fanciful similarities between the names in question, and there is no other reason adduced to prove the thesis of the learned writer.

It is unnecessary for us to go over the ground already covered by the arguments briefly adduced in our second chapter. His Eminence Cardinal Moran, in his exhaustive article,<sup>6</sup> has fully discussed the whole question from every point of view ; and his arguments, we think, must bring conviction to every impartial and unprejudiced mind. We shall here merely notice a few of the objections commonly brought against accepting Kilpatrick on the Clyde as the birth-place of our national Apostle.

One objection often brought is that if St. Patrick were a Briton born on the banks of the Clyde, he would hardly describe Ireland, whose hills were visible from the Scottish shores, as 'a barbarous nation,' 'at the ends of the earth,' which he certainly does more than once. But this description from the Roman imperial point of view was quite

<sup>1</sup> *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, May, 1889.

<sup>2</sup> *Dublin Review*, 1886, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup> *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, December, 1893.

<sup>4</sup> *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, May, 1899.

<sup>5</sup> 'He was a native of a Greek speaking town (in Spain) Emporium,'

p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> *Dublin Review*, April, 1880.

accurate. Patrick was a Brito-Roman, the son of a Roman official, dwelling in or near a Roman municipium. Ireland was beyond the bounds of the Empire, and was in very truth at the end of the earth, for there was no known land beyond it, nothing but the boundless streams of ocean. It was also entirely beyond the pale of Roman civilization, and as such was regarded as a 'barbarous' country without any tincture of the civilization of Imperial Rome. Such a description of Ireland was therefore quite accurate and quite natural for a citizen of Imperial Rome such as Patrick declared himself to be. We may fairly assume, too, that it was the language which the British Romans used every day with reference to Ireland in their camps and cities. The Anglo-Normans of the Irish towns used similar language at a much later period of the wild Irish in their own neighbourhood, whom they described as wild, savage, and uncivilized—because they did not speak the English tongue, and dress themselves in the English fashion.

It has been also said that there could not have been at the period of Patrick's birth a Roman town, with a curia and decurions, using the Latin tongue, on the banks of the Clyde. People who speak thus do not know the full history of the Roman occupation of Britain.

There were many municipia at the time in Britain that might be regarded as almost Latin cities—in language, in customs, in civic life, in religion. Christianity was well known in some of them for at least 150 years, and was a 'legitimate' religion, with many followers favoured by the authorities for more than half a century. The Station at the Roman wall from the Firth to the Clyde was, as Skene has shown, one of their most important strongholds, garrisoned with a whole legion of troops, who had a standing camp at the western extremity of the wall, around which there naturally grew up a Roman Colony, with all the privileges of local self-government accorded to such municipal towns under the wise administration of Imperial Rome. That there was such a municipium at or near Ail-Cluade, the strongest point of the Roman frontier on the north, has been already shown, and we need not repeat the proofs here.

Then, again, it has been said that the Britain which Patrick describes in his Confession as his native country and the home of his parents might well refer to Armoric Britain, afterwards called Bretagne, or perhaps to that district around Boulogne-Sur-Mer where, according to Lanigan, a tribe called the Britanni dwelt. But the language of St. Patrick explodes these speculations. He says that he was most anxious to go to the '*Britannias*' as to his country and his parents, and not only that, but to go as far as '*Gallias*,' that

he might visit the brethren and see the face of the saints of his Lord whom he knew.<sup>1</sup> The word 'Britanniae' was never applied to any country but Great Britain; and it is here clearly distinguished from the 'Gauls' (Gallias), which included all the Roman Gaul, as Britanniae included all the five provinces of Roman Britain. The native country (patria) of St. Patrick was, therefore, some part of Roman Britain, and could not have been any part of Gaul which is so clearly distinguished from that Britain which was the Saint's birth-place and the home of his parents (parentes) or relations. Besides, the best authorities tell us that the name Britannia (Minor) was never applied to Bretagne or any other part of Gaul before the middle of the fifth century,<sup>2</sup> 'or about the year 458,' that is, eighty-six years after St. Patrick was born. The single sentence which we have quoted from the Confession refutes all arguments in favour of any part of Gaul as the native country of St. Patrick.

But it has been urged by Lanigan and others that Nemthur or Nemthur, which Fiacc tells us was the birth-place of Patrick, and is identified by Fiacc's Scholiast 'with Ail-Cluade, a city in North Britain,' is not referred to as such by any other ancient writer. The famous Rock had, however, many names—the Roman name of Theodosia, the Celtic name of Ail-Cluade, or, as Bede calls it, Alcluith, the British name of Dunbritton, and, moreover, what we may call the Welsh name of Nevthur, which anyone can perceive is the same as Nemthur. This name is found in a poem<sup>3</sup> of the Welsh bard, Taliessin, in the Black Book of Caermarthen, and clearly shows that it was applied to Ail-Cluade, as the Scholiast on Fiacc tells us. Neither Colgan, however, nor Lanigan had an opportunity of learning this most important identification. The Black Book of Caermarthen was not then published. It goes to show, too, that the name Nemthur, or Nevthur, as the Black Book has it, really means, 'Holy Rock' or Tower,<sup>4</sup> because there was a famous Shrine on the Rock dedicated to St. Patrick from immemorial ages.

The name Nentria which Probus uses in reference to

<sup>1</sup> Unde autem possem, etsi voluero amittere illas et pergere in Britannias et libentissime paratus irem quasi ad patriam et parentes; sed non id solum sed etiam usque ad Gallias visitare fratres, &c. &c.

<sup>2</sup> Lobineau, *Histoire de la Bretagne*, Vol. I. p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> When Rederech, the hero of the poem, set out from Wales to recover his Kingdom of Strathclyde, he sailed to Nevthur, where, on the banks of the Clyde, he fought a great battle and won his kingdom. See Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, Vol. II., p. 436.

<sup>4</sup> The Celtic *Tor* or *Tur*, in composition *Thor*, means a tower or tower-like rock; and the root *Nem* (Cymbric *Nen*) means 'holy.' The text of Fiacc shows that the *n* is not euphonic, but belongs to the root.

Patrick's birth-place is also easily explained. He declares, like all our ancient writers who have touched the subject, that Patrick was born in Britain (in *Britanniis natus est*), and that his parents were from Bannave in the district of Tiburnia, not far from the Western Sea, 'which village we have ascertained beyond doubt belonged to the province of Nentria, where giants are said to have dwelt of old.'<sup>1</sup>

It appears to us quite clear that this form Nentria is merely an attempt to latinize the Welsh form *Nevthur* or *Nemthur*, the district or province taking its name from the capital. There were doubtless 'giants' graves' of Celtic origin on the fringes of the hills around Dunbarton, just as they were in Ireland, and these graves would naturally lend countenance to the tradition that a wild race of gigantic stature once occupied the northern shores of the Clyde—which was doubtless true enough.

The Bannave of Probus is clearly a scribal error for Bannaven, or perhaps it is an attempt to give the name in the ablative case by dropping the *n*.<sup>2</sup> This *Regio Tiburnia* is the *Bonnavam Taberniae* of the Confession, the *Campus Tabernaculorum* of the Latin Lives, and the *Magh Tabern* of the Celtic or British Scribes. It means, simply, as we have already shown, the Plain of the Tents by the River-Mouth, a most apt description of the great plain occupied by the Roman camp at the junction of the Leven and the Clyde, and there, we conclude without hesitation, St. Patrick was born in the year A.D. 372 or 373.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Quem vicum indubitanter comperimus esse Nentriae Provinciae. Probus.

<sup>2</sup> De vico Bannave Tiburniae regionis—from the village Bannaven of the district of Tiburnia.

## APPENDIX II.

### THE BURIAL-PLACE OF ST. PATRICK.

THE birth-place of our national Saint has been the subject of much controversy; but till our own time his burial-place was not, we believe, seriously questioned. Recently, however, the ancient traditional claim of Downpatrick to possess the remains of St. Patrick has been rather lightly set aside, and it is sought to bestow on Armagh<sup>1</sup> the double honour of his tomb and his 'kingdom.' It is worth while, therefore, in the first place, to examine the evidence in favour of the Ulidian claim; and then to weigh the newly-found arguments in favour of Armagh. The subject is surrounded by many difficulties, and even so capable and impartial a critic as the late lamented Bishop Reeves admitted that the evidence in favour of Downpatrick was 'not altogether unexceptionable.' We shall, therefore, briefly examine the evidence and the objections, such as they are; and, at the same time, we shall touch on the wider question, whether the relics of Brigid and Columcille also repose in the sacred soil of Downpatrick.

In our opinion, the oldest, though perhaps not the clearest, reference to St. Patrick's burial at Down, is contained in Fiacc's Hymn, which is older even than Muirchu's Memoir contained in the Book of Armagh. The arguments hinted at by Todd and Stokes against the authenticity of this Hymn will be found to disappear on close examination. Fiacc says:—

In Armagh there is a kingdom, it long ago deserted Emain,  
A *great church* in Dun-leth-glaisse; that Tara is a waste, is not  
pleasant to me.<sup>2</sup>

The Lives of St. Patrick generally declare that the angel told him his 'kingdom,' or spiritual sovereignty, was to remain in Armagh, but that his body was to rest in Downpatrick; that is, of course, Dun-leth-glaisse, or, as it has been written in later times, Dun-da-leth-glaisse, that is, the Fort of the Two-Half-Chains—alluding, it is said, to the broken fetters of the two sons of Dichu, who were kept in

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<sup>1</sup> See the Rev. T. Olden's paper, read before the Royal Irish Academy, 27th February, 1893.

<sup>2</sup> "In Ard Macha fil iigi iscian doreracht Emain, iscell mor Dun leth-glaisse nimdil ciddithrub Temair." See Stokes' text and translation as above.

bondage by King Laeghaire, but whose bonds were broken miraculously by St. Patrick, and carried by them to their father's stronghold at Down. The only meaning of the reference to the *great church* of Down in this couplet, in connection with our Apostle, must arise from the fact that he was buried there. Its church cannot be conceived as *great* for any other reason in connection with St. Patrick. His spiritual sovereignty continued in Armagh, but his body remained at Down.

Still more explicit is Muirchu's statement in the Book of Armagh, dating at least from the end of the eighth century. This author, writing in that very book which was always esteemed as the most cherished treasure of the Church of Armagh, declares expressly that, when Patrick felt the hour of his death approaching, he was anxious to return to Armagh so that he might die there, 'because he loved it before all other lands.'<sup>1</sup> But the angel Victor sent another angel to the Saint to tell him to return to Saul, where he was then staying; that his petitions to the Lord were granted; and that at Saul—his earliest foundation—he was destined to die. As the end approached, Tassach of Rathcolp gave him the 'Sacrifice,' and there the Saint gave up his holy soul to God. But the same angel told them to harness, after the obsequies, two wild steers to a waggon, and let them go whither they would with the Saint's body. This was done, and 'they came, by divine guidance, to Dun-leth-glaisse, where Patrick was buried.'<sup>2</sup> Then we are told of the contest with the men of Oriel for his remains. It is impossible to have more explicit testimony than this of the burial in Down.

Again, in the Tripartite, we have the same testimony in a somewhat different form. "Go back," says Victor, "to the place from which thou hast come, namely, to Saul (the barn church); for it is there thou shalt die, and not in Armagh." "Let," he added, "two unbroken young oxen, of the cattle of Conall, be brought out of Findabair, that is from Clochar, and let thy body be put into a little car behind them, and be thou put a man's cubit into the grave, that thy remains and thy relics be not taken out of it." Thus was it done after his death. The oxen brought him as far as the stead, 'wherein to-day standeth Dun-leth-glasi, and he was buried in that place with honour and veneration.'<sup>3</sup>

Now, here is practically the same statement given by our two most ancient and perfectly independent authorities—

<sup>1</sup> Quam prae omnibus terris dilexit.

<sup>2</sup> Et exierunt, Dei nutu regente, ad Dun-leth-glaisse, ubi sepultus est Patricius.

<sup>3</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, vol. i., p. 254.



one written in Latin, and the other in Gaelic; and the substance of that statement is: first, that St. Patrick, feeling his end approaching, wished to return to Armagh, the city of his love, that he might die there; secondly, that instead, he was commanded to return to Saul, which shows that he was already on the road for Armagh; thirdly, that he died at Saul; and, fourthly, that he was buried not there, but some two miles distant at Dun-da-leth-glaisse, or Downpatrick.

It is worth noting also that a command was given to bury him deep in the ground—five cubits according to one account, or a man's cubit according to this Tripartite account which seems to mean the height or depth that a man standing up could reach with his arm, that is, between seven and eight feet in either case. And the reason is given—'that thy remains may not be taken out of the grave,' either by the men of Oriel or by any other marauders: a very wise and necessary precaution, as subsequent events clearly proved.

The later Lives of St. Patrick, by Probus and Jocelyn—the former writing in a German monastery in the ninth century, and the latter in an English monastery of the twelfth—repeat the same statements, which at least go to prove that the tradition in favour of Downpatrick was universal and unquestioned in the time of those writers. Moreover, there is collateral evidence of a very early date. Usher quotes from an early Life of St. Brigid a paragraph which states that St. Patrick was buried in Dun-leth-glaisse, and that his body will remain there until the day of judgment.<sup>1</sup> And in the *Testamentum Patricii*, a work also of very ancient date, we have in Irish and Latin the couplet:—

Dun i mbia m-eseirgi a Raith Celtair Mic Duach,  
Dunum, ubi erit mea resurrectio in colle Celtaris filii Duach,

in which the Saint proclaims that it is in Down his resurrection will be.

The 'hill' of Celtar, to which this verse refers, is the great rath a little to the north of the modern cathedral of Downpatrick, which still rises to a height of about sixty feet above the plain, with a circumference of more than seven hundred yards, surrounded by a treble line of circumvallations. A right royal fort it was in size and strength, and fitly took its name from Celtar of the Battles, who was either its builder or its most renowned defender. This hero

<sup>1</sup> Sepultus est in Arce *Ladglaisse*, vel *Lcathglaysse*, et ibi usque ad diem iudicii corpus ejus permanebit. (Works, vol. vi., p. 457, as quoted by Reeves.)

was one of the knights of the Red Branch, who flourished about the beginning of the Christian era. His fort was called Dun Celtair, and sometimes Rath Celtair, and also Aras Celtair, or the habitation of Celtair. This 'habitation—or *civitas*, as it is called in Latin—is described in the Life of St. Brigid, by Animosus, as situated *in regione Ulteriorum prope mare*, which explains the statement of Tirechan, who describes the church of St. Patrick's grave as *juxta mare proxima*—close by the sea—because at that time a small arm of the sea from Strangford Lough flowed almost quite up to the ancient Dun and the church beside it. There are other considerations also which leave no reasonable doubt that St. Patrick was buried at Downpatrick.

The men of Orior and the Hy Niall around them though very anxious to possess the body of St. Patrick, and quite ready to engage in a bloody conflict in order to secure it, never claimed to have succeeded in their purpose. On the contrary, the Book of Armagh, belonging to their own great church, whose prerogatives it would naturally exalt, expressly testifies that the Saint was buried, not at Armagh, as he wished, but at Downpatrick; and that, too, by the direction of an angel. If there was any doubt about the matter, if they had even a shadow of claim in their favour, is it likely that the scribes who wrote the Book of Armagh, and naturally make the most of its privileges and rights, would not also claim this great honour instead of yielding the glory to Downpatrick? They certainly never failed to exalt the prerogatives of their own church, as they had a right to do; but, on the other hand, they never claimed to possess the body of their great Apostle, which is of itself a conclusive argument that history and tradition always pointed to Down as the place of his burial. And the fact that the authors of the Book of Armagh so distinctly admit it, is a strong proof of their honesty as historians; for we may well believe them in other things, when they are so truthful in what tells against the renown of their own royal city. In Armagh was his 'kingdom,' as Fiacc says, but in Down was the 'great church' that contained his remains.

Now this brings us to examine the objections or arguments on the other side, if we can call them such. First of all, there is Tirechan's statement in the Book of Armagh, where he says Patrick was in four things like to Moses; and the fourth is, that 'where his bones are no one knows.'<sup>1</sup> Therefore it certainly follows that they were not in Tirechan's time known to be in Armagh: in fact, Armagh, as we have seen, never claimed to possess them. Tirechan, however,

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<sup>1</sup> Ubi sunt ossa ejus nemo novit.

explains what he means clearly enough in the following paragraph, which has not been faithfully rendered by Rev. Mr. Olden, in his paper read before the Royal Irish Academy, and which is meant to be explanatory of the statement that 'no one knows where his bones are':—

Two hostile bands [he says] contended during twelve days for the body of the blessed Patrick, and they saw no night intervene during these twelve days, but daylight always; and on the twelfth day they came to actual conflict; but the two hosts, seeing the body on its bier with each party, gave up the conflict. Columcille, inspired by the Holy Ghost, pointed out the sepulchre of Patrick, and proves where it is; namely, in Saul of Patrick; that is, in the *church nigh to the sea*, where the gathering of the relics is—that is, of the bones of Columcille from Britain, and the gathering of all the saints of Erin in the day of judgment.

As this is an important passage, we append the Latin text below, as given by Dr. Stokes in his edition of the *Tripartite*.

Ubi sunt ossa ejus nemo novit. Duo hostes duodecim diebus corpus Sancti Patricii contenderunt, et noctem inter se duodecim diebus non viderunt sed diem semper; et in duodecima die ad praelium venerunt, et corpus in grabato duo hostes viderunt apud se, et non pugnaverunt. Columcille, Spiritu Sancto instigante, sepulturam Patricii ostendit (et) ubi est confirmat, id est, in Sabul Patricii, id est in ecclesia juxta mare proxima, ubi est conductio martirum, id est ossuum Columcille de Britannia, et conductio omnium sanctorum Hiberniae in die judicii. (Vol., ii. p. 332.)

This passage gives rise to several very interesting questions; and first of all we ask, is ours the correct translation, and what is its true meaning? Now any scholar can compare the translation with the text, and judge for himself.

The meaning also of Tirechan appears to us to be clear enough, although the Latin is rather rude. No one knew the *exact* place where Patrick's bones were deposited until Columcille pointed out the spot; and that spot is in Saul. *that is*, in the church near to the sea, where the relics of Colcumille were brought, and where all the saints of Ireland will be gathered, doubtless as assessors to Patrick, who is to judge the Irish on the day of judgment. 'In Saul' here clearly means in the neighbourhood of Saul, for it is explained to mean the church very near the sea, whither the relics of Columcille were brought from Britain. Downpatrick is only two miles from Saul; the church very near the sea is, as we have already shown, the church of Downpatrick. Saul had no church that could be described as quite close to the sea as Downpatrick was; and, moreover, it was to that church of Downpatrick the relics of Columcille and Brigid were afterwards brought—to the very spot which Columcille himself had pointed out as the grave of Patrick.

Taking this account of Tirechan in connection with the other early accounts given in the Tripartite, and in the Book of Armagh, we can fairly judge what took place after the death of Patrick. He died at Saul, as all admit, and news of his illness first, and afterwards of his death, was quickly carried over all the north, and bishops, priests, and people came in crowds from all quarters to be present at the obsequies of their beloved father in God, to whom they owed their salvation. The obsequies were prolonged for twelve days, to give them all time to arrive, and the lights in the little church around his body and without the church, where 'the elders of Ireland were watching him with hymns, and psalms, and canticles,' were so many and so bright, that 'there was no night in Magh Inis;' or, as it is elsewhere said, there was *almost* no darkness, but rather a bright angelic radiance—which is certainly not unlikely.

But meantime the men of Orior from Slieve Gullion to the Bann, and the fierce Hy Niall of Lough Neagh, had resolved, when the obsequies were over, to carry home, at any cost, the body of their beloved Patrick to his own cathedral of Armagh; and, on the other hand, the proud Ulidians were as sternly resolved to prevent them. With themselves he had founded his first church in Erin, that very Barn, where his remains now lay; with them he came to die by direction of God's angel; and with them he would be buried in spite of all the warriors of Orior. The two parties were watching each other all the time that the priests were praying; but as soon as the body was moved, the strongest party would try to carry it off. The men of Orior and O'Neilland were gathered on the northern shore of the estuary running up to Downpatrick from Strangford Lough, now called the Quoile river; the Ulidians stood watching them on its southern shore between Saul and Down. When all was ready, the body was placed by divine direction, it is said, on a wain, drawn by two unbroken steers, and it was to be buried at the spot where the steers would stop of their own accord. And now a battle was imminent, but the Ulidians wisely took the opportunity of setting out when there was a high tide in the estuary, and Providence divinely interposed and raised still higher the swelling waves, so that the men of Armagh could not cross the ford at the Quoile bridge, as it is now called, or Drumbo, as it seems to have been called at that time.<sup>1</sup> So the Ulidians utilised the favourable time; probably they had the grave already made nigh to their own royal fort, and before the tide receded, they had

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<sup>1</sup> Monsignor O'Laverty has, in our opinion, left no doubt as to the exact site of Drumbo—the Collis Bovis of the Book of Armagh.

the Saint's body buried seven feet deep with a huge flag over it, and the earth and the green sward over all, so as to leave no visible trace of the exact spot, for they feared that the men of Orior might come and remove the body, either by stealth or by the strong hand.

The men of Armagh, however, were resolved to cross the ford, and fight for the sacred treasure, which the Ulidians were guarding, when suddenly, to their great joy, there appeared amongst the men of Orior that very identical waggon drawn by two steers and bearing the Saint's body which they had seen coming from Saul to Drumbo. It was the Saint himself, as they thought, gave his body to Armagh, so they set out with great joy to return home; but, alas! when they came near to Armagh, to the river called Cabenne, the steers and waggon and body suddenly disappeared from their eyes, and were seen no more. Then the men of Orior and the Hy Niall knew that it was God's will that the Saint's body should not be in his own city on Macha's Height, so they made no further attempt to recover it. Whether the appearance of the second waggon was a real miracle, or a pious ruse to prevent bloodshed, or a later invention to gratify the disappointed vanity of the Hy Niall, it is now impossible to ascertain. The story, however, is quite consistent and natural, and clearly shows why, for greater security, the Saint was buried at Down, near the royal fortress, rather than at Saul, and why in a few years no man knew the exact spot where his bones were laid, until Columcille revealed it sixty years later, in A.D. 552. In that year we are informed by the scribe of the Ulster Annals—a high authority—who quotes from the Book of Cuanu, that:—

The relics (*minnu*) of Patrick were placed in a shrine at the end of threescore years after Patrick's death by Columcille. Three splendid *minnu* were found in his tomb; to wit, his Goblet, and the Angel's Gospel, and the Bell of the Testament. Columcille, at the bidding of the Angel, gave the Goblet to Down, the Bell of the Testament to Armagh, and kept the Angel's Gospel for himself; and the reason it is called the Angel's Gospel is, because it was from the Angel's hand that Columcille received it.

The first scribe of the Book of Cuanu was probably as ancient as Tirechan himself.

This entry is very interesting, because it not only explains and confirms Tirechan's statement regarding the burial of the Saint, but also goes to prove that the date of his death was 493, since his relics were enshrined threescore years after his death. The word *coach*, which has been translated 'goblet,' means a cup, and usually a wooden cup. The cup found by Columcille in the grave of St. Patrick was probably a chalice, and perhaps a wooden chalice, although the word

*cailech*, obviously a loan word from the Latin, is that which is used for 'chalice' in the Irish Tripartite. Chalice, both of glass and wood, were certainly used, although of course not exclusively, in the early ages of the Church.<sup>1</sup> St. Boniface is reported<sup>2</sup> to have said that in old times they had wooden chalices but golden priests; now, however, there were golden chalices but wooden priests. It was the custom, too, in the earlier ages of the Church, and to some extent the custom is still preserved, to bury with the deceased the insignia of his office. It would be more pagan than Christian-like to bury an ordinary drinking goblet with the Saint, and the clergy who stood round his bier would never permit it. But to bury a chalice with him—perhaps the very one he first used in the Barn-church at Saul—would be appropriate, if not usual. The three splendid *minna* found by Columcille in Patrick's grave would thus be the appropriate insignia of his high office—the chalice would typify the sacrificing priest, the Gospel the preacher, and the bell was always taken in the early Irish Church to signify the jurisdiction of the Saint, which extended at least as far as its sound could be heard.<sup>3</sup>

There seems to have been no church in Down when Patrick was buried there; but the church was afterwards built around his grave, although the exact spot where his body lay seems to have been doubtful. For we are told that the workmen, when digging the foundations of the church, suddenly beheld flames issuing from the grave, and thereupon withdrew, fearing the burning fire.<sup>4</sup> The grave was, doubtless, then closed in again, and no one dared to disturb it until Columcille was inspired to enshrine the holy relics.

Another reference to the alleged burial of the Saint at Saul occurs in Colgan's Fourth Life, where:—

It is related [says Rev. Mr. Olden] that a boy playing in the churchyard there lost his hoop in a chink in St. Patrick's grave, and having put down his hand to recover his plaything was unable to withdraw it. Upon this Bishop Loarn of Bright, a place near at hand, was sent for, and on his arrival addressed the Saint in the following words:—  
"Why, O Elder, dost thou hold the child's hand?"

This entire passage is founded on a mis-translation of an incident, which is correctly recorded in the Tripartite:—

Then Patrick went from Saul southwards, that he might preach to Ross, son of Trichem (the brother of Dichu of Saul). He it is that

<sup>1</sup> See Du Cange's *Glossary*, sub voce.

<sup>2</sup> By Walafridus Strabo, in his *Vita Bonafacii*, c. 24.

<sup>3</sup> See *Life of St. Brendan*, c. xiv.

<sup>4</sup> See Muirchu, in the Book of Armagh, p. 29<sup>a</sup>, Stokes' edition.

dwelt in Derlus, to the south of Downpatrick—there stands a small town there to-day, namely, Bright—ubi est episcopus Loarn, qui ausus est increpare Patricium tenentem manum pueri ludentis ecclesiam juxta suam.

The incident occurred during the lifetime of St. Patrick, for Loarn was of his 'familia,' and probably died before him; and, as Dr. Stokes observes, the phrase 'tenentem manum' in the Latin seems to be a translation of the Irish *gabail lama*, which is constantly used in the Tripartite to signify expelling or driving away—showing one off the premises. Loarn was Bishop of Bright, three miles south-east of Down, and the south of Saul. We are told that St. Patrick often resided at Saul during the intervals of his missionary labours; the boy doubtless disturbed him, and the Saint drove him away, perhaps with too much severity; and, therefore, his disciple 'rebuked' him for his harshness to the child. This story is intelligible, and even probable, for Patrick, if we can believe the Tripartite, was not always meek and patient. But the incident, as recorded in Colgan's Fourth Life, is evidently due to the imagination of a scribe who did not understand the record from which he was copying. The author of the Tripartite was apparently so much afraid of scandalizing anybody by the story, that he narrates the incident in Latin, and not in the vernacular. When Loarn was in Bright and Patrick in Saul there was, as we have said, neither church nor bishop in Downpatrick. That church became famous because it was Patrick's burial-place; and hence the first prelate of Down of whom we know anything is 'Fergus, Bishop of Dun-leth-glaisse,' who died in 583; that is, thirty years after Columcille had revealed St. Patrick's grave.

In Colgan's Latin Tripartite, as quoted by Bishop Reeves,<sup>1</sup> there is a passage which might be easily misunderstood. The angel Victor is described as saying to Patrick: 'Revertere ad monasterium Sabhallense, unde veneras, ibi et non Ardmachae migrabas ad Deum, tuumque sepelietur corpus.' But the last clause is not in the Irish Tripartite, as we have it; and if it were it could only mean in the neighbourhood of Saul; for, on the same page it is distinctly stated that the oxen carried his body from Saul to Dun-leth-glaisse, and that he was buried there with honour and veneration.

There is also a strange entry in the Annals of the Four Masters, A.D. 1203. 'It was revealed to Nicholas MacMaelisa (Comarb of Patrick), that the relics of Patrick, Columcille, and Bridgid were at Sal-hall; they were taken up by him, and great virtues and miracles were wrought by them, and

<sup>1</sup> *Antiquities of Down and Connor*, p. 224.

after having been honourably covered were deposited in a shrine.' The Dublin copy of the Ulster Annals has a similar entry. These entries seem to ignore the celebrated invention and translation of the same relics, which took place in the Cathedral of Down, in 1185, in presence of the Papal Legate, the Bishop of Down, and John de Courcy. Could the shrine have been lost or stolen in the meantime? Or was it, as some writers suggest, an Irish invention of the relics got up for Armagh, as a set-off against the Anglo-Norman invention by John de Courcy in Down? Or, what is much more probable, was the Saul of which there is question the church of that name which undoubtedly existed at Armagh, and which contained relics of the three saints originally brought from Down, but forgotten or hidden there during the wars of the Danes, and the subsequent disturbances in the primatial city?

There are several other arguments put forward in favour of the Saint's burial at Armagh. One of them, but not the main argument, is based on the assumed identity of our National Apostle with Sen Patrick, who is said to have died at Armagh. This is not a question into which we can now enter; but, inasmuch as no attempt is made to prove this identity, and the epithet itself implies distinction from the great St. Patrick, we may dismiss this argument without further discussion.

Then we are treated to another line of reasoning in favour of Armagh. Both Muirchu and Tirechan, it is said, agree in stating that 'at the time of his (Patrick's) death, Armagh claimed to possess his remains.' We could not find the least foundation for this extraordinary statement. On the contrary, both writers state that at or after the obsequies the men of Orior tried, but tried in vain, to secure the precious treasure. And hence Bishop Reeves, who was so well acquainted with the contents of the Book of Armagh, says that the claim of Down was in the early ages conceded by Armagh; that the Book of Armagh would scarcely introduce a fiction in favour of Down or Saul; and that the church of Armagh would never have acquiesced in a mock translation at Down in the twelfth century, if the general belief had not given sentence in favour of Down. Besides, neither Muirchu nor Tirechan anywhere states that 'Armagh claimed to possess his remains at the time of his death.' Muirchu distinctly states that he was buried in Down; and then adds that, through the mercy of God and the merits of Patrick, the sea swelled up between the opposing hosts of Orior and Uladh, so that bloodshed was prevented. 'Seduced,' he adds, 'by a lucky deception, they fancied they had secured the waggon and oxen that bore the Saint's blessed body, but



when they came to the River Cabenne the body disappeared.”<sup>1</sup> We have already explained Tirechan's statement at length, in which he declares that the burial-place of Patrick was shown by Columcille to be near Saul, in the church close to the sea, whither the relics of Columcille were also brought from Britain.

But it is urged that frequent reference is made to the shrine of Patrick, which was in the custody of his successors at Armagh during the ninth century. Yes; but it is beyond all reasonable doubt that the shrine in question contained not any part of the Saint's body, but the celebrated ‘Bell of the Will,’ which, as we have already seen, was given to Armagh by Columcille. That bell was the symbol of the primatial jurisdiction; and it was deemed so sacred and so precious, that it had a hereditary custodian assigned for its preservation. A new shrine was made to contain it, about the close of the eleventh century, and the inscription thereon records that it was made for Donnall M'Loughlin, King of Erin, *i.e.*, at his expense, and for Donnall M'Auley, the Comarb of Patrick, and for Cathalan O'Mailchallan, the custodian of the bell.<sup>2</sup> We know also from other sources<sup>3</sup> that these ancient bells were deemed very sacred, and that the violation of an oath, if taken on the bell, was deemed a most terrible crime, which was sure to bring the vengeance of the outraged saint on the head of the perjurer. There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the shrine of Patrick which Artri, Abbot of Armagh, carried into Connaught in 818, and which Forannen the Primate brought to Munster in 841, when driven by the Danes from his primatial city, was the enshrined Bell of the Will, the possession of which was the symbol and the pledge of the jurisdiction which he derived from St. Patrick.

As to the *obiter dictum* of St. Bernard, where he speaks of the primatial see of Patrick, ‘in which he presided when alive, and rests now that he is dead,’ it is obvious that it is a loose rhetorical expression designed rather to round the sentence than to make any definite assertion regarding the place of St. Patrick's burial, of which he probably knew nothing. And the same may be said of the statement of another foreign writer, William of Newbridge, who informs us that the primacy was bestowed on Armagh in honour of St. Patrick, and the other indigenous saints whose remains

<sup>1</sup> Sed felici seducti sunt fallacia, putantes se duos boves et planstrum invenire et corpus sanctum rapere aestimabant, et cum corpore . . . ad fluvium Cabenne pervenerunt, et corpus tunc illis non comparuit. (P. 299.)

<sup>2</sup> See Reeves' *Antiquities*, p. 371.

<sup>3</sup> See Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, p. 114.

rest there. Such a statement from a foreign source is too vague to weigh for a moment against the explicit testimony of our native annalists.

Lastly, a reference to the tomb of St. Patrick as existing at Armagh, is supposed to be made in the Book of Armagh, although it has hitherto escaped notice—even the great learning and critical acumen both of Todd and Reeves were unable to detect it. In that portion of the Book of Armagh, called the ‘Angel’s Book,’ the following passage occurs:—

The foundation of the prayer on every Sunday at Armagh on going to and returning from the Sarcophagus of the relics is ‘Domine clamavi ad Te’ to the end; ‘Ut quid Deus repulisti’ to the end; and ‘Beati immaculati’ to the end of the blessing, and with the twelve Gradual Psalms it finishes.<sup>1</sup>

It is surprising what a superstructure it is sought to build up on this passage of bad Latin in the original.

The words ‘sargifagum martyrum,’ are glossed in the margin by the Irish *du ferti martur*—that is, to the ‘Grave of the Relics.’ Now, it is argued, this ‘Grave of the Relics’ must have been a place of pilgrimage, for the prayers of the ‘Station’ are here prescribed. The place which bore the name of the *Ferta* at Armagh was so called from this grave, and it was the place where St. Patrick established his first church at Armagh. He lived there a long time before he removed to the greater church on the hill; and when he died he must have been buried there, for there seems no other adequate reason for calling it the Grave of the Relics, and for making it a place of pilgrimage, than the fact that it possessed *his* relics.

It is surprising that the people who argue in this fashion did not first read the Tripartite, where they would find a very clear and simple explanation of the name and of the pilgrimage. *Ferta* means a grave, but as a proper name it means here the cemetery—in fact, both church and churchyard, as the following passage with reference to this very *Ferta* clearly shows:—‘In this wise then Patrick measured the *Ferta*, namely, sevenscore feet in the enclosure, and seven and twenty feet in the great-house, seventeen feet in the kitchen, and seven feet in the oratory.’<sup>2</sup>

The writer then proceeds to tell us that an angel told Patrick ‘this day the relics of the Apostles are divided in

<sup>1</sup> Fundamentum orationis in unaquaque die Dominica in Alta Macha ad Sargifagum Martyrum adeundum ab eoque revertendum id est, ‘Domine clamavi ad Te’ usque in finem; ‘Ut quid Deus repulisti’ in finem, et ‘Beati Immaculati’ usque in finem benedictionis, et duodecim psalmi graduum. Finit.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 1., p. 237.

Rome for the four quarters of the Globe ;' and thereupon he carried Patrick through the air, and afterwards, with the help of a ship of Bordeaux, brought the Saint to Rome, whence Patrick carried away as much as he wanted of the relics.

Afterwards these relics were taken to Armagh by the counsel of God, and the counsel of the men of Ireland. Three hundred and threescore and five relics, together with the relics of Paul, and Peter, and Laurence, and Stephen, and many others. And a sheet was there with Christ's Blood, and with the hair of Mary the Virgin. And Patrick left the whole of that collection in Armagh according to the will of God, and of the Angel, and of the men of Ireland.

Furthermore, a letter was brought to him from the Abbot of Rome, directing that there should be 'watching of the relics with lamps and lights in the night always, and mass and psalm-singing by day, and prayer in the night, and that they should be exposed every year for the multitudes (to venerate them'). These relics were, of course, kept in the only church then to be had at Armagh ; that is, the church afterwards called the *Ferta*, and which on that account came to be called *Ferta Martyr*, or the *Fertae Martyrum*, as Muirchu has it, or the *Sarcophagus Martyrum*, as the Book of the Angel has it. Thus the simple narrative of the Tripartite overthrows all the ingenious speculations put before the Royal Irish Academy as to the origin of the name. St. Patrick had numbers of churches and altars to consecrate, for which purpose he needed relics ; he either sent for them or brought them from Rome : they were kept in his church at Armagh in a *Ferta*, or sarcophagus, or sepulchre made for the purpose, hence called *Ferta Martyrum*, which name afterwards passed to the church itself as it became a place of public pilgrimage for the faithful to venerate the relics.

We have seen that there is very conclusive evidence that St. Patrick was buried, not at Saul or at Armagh, but at Downpatrick. Now, there is a very ancient and general tradition that the relics of St. Columcille and of St. Brigid were also enclosed in the same tomb with those of our National Apostle. We now come to examine what historical evidence can be adduced in favour of this wide-spread tradition.

First of all, it is perfectly certain that St. Columba died in his monastery at Iona, about the year 597, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and that he was buried by his devoted disciples in the monastery where he died. The testimony of his biographer Adarnan, a holy and learned man, with reference to those facts, cannot for a moment be called in question by any competent scholar. His blessed body, rolled up in clean linen, was placed in a *busta*, or *ratabusta* according to the common text, and was then buried with

all due veneration.<sup>1</sup> Lower down in the same chapter this *humatio* is described as a *sepultio*, and in the next section as a *sepultura*; so that the writer clearly meant that the remains of the saint were enclosed in a coffin, and then buried in the earth; but he nowhere indicates the exact spot where the grave was made. The word *ratabusta* is not found in Du Cange, nor anywhere else, so far as we know. It is probably an error of the scribe, who wrote 'in ratabusta' for 'intra busta,' the latter phrase according to its classical usage meaning a grave rather than a coffin. It matters little, indeed, because the meaning is in either case that the body of the saint was buried in an ordinary grave.

Adamnan, however, though so explicit as to the burial, makes no reference to any enshrining, or translation, or disturbance of Columba's relics; so that it is only natural to assume that, up to the period when he wrote, Columba's grave was undisturbed. Adamnan became abbot in 679; and the Life of Columba was certainly written during his tenure of office as abbot; but in all probability not before the year 690. After that period he spent most of his time in Ireland; whereas certain references to Iona indicate that the Life was written during his abbacy in that island.

Now, although Tirechan expressly declares that his Annotations were derived from the oral information, or from the book of Bishop Ultan, who died about 657, we need not assume that they were written during the lifetime of his master, and perhaps not even until many years after his death. Tirechan himself most probably lived on to the end of the seventh century; and he might well have composed his Annotations during the last ten years of his life. The statement which he makes, that there was a 'conductio martirum, id est, ossuum Columcille de Britannia' to Downpatrick, appears to be an explanation given by Tirechan himself to identify the 'church very near to the sea,' as that to which the bones of Columcille were carried from Britain. Bishop Reeves, indeed, thought these words were at first a gloss on Tirechan's text, which was afterwards inserted in the text by the copyist; but even in that case the gloss must have been there before 807, when the Book of Armagh was copied. Our own opinion is that the words were an explanation given either by Tirechan or his copyist; that they cannot have been written before 690; and possibly may have been added by some copyist during the eighth century, but not later. Hence we infer that the bones of

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<sup>1</sup> Venerabile corpus mundis involutum sindonibus, et praeeparata positum in ratabusta, debita humatur cum veneratione (Book iii., c. 23).

Columcille, or some notable portion of them, were actually transferred to Downpatrick at some time during the eighth century; and most probably about the beginning of that century.

But here several difficulties crop up, which it is necessary to explain.

The question occurs at once, if the relics of Columcille were transferred to Downpatrick so early as the beginning of the eighth century, or perhaps even earlier, how are we to explain certain entries in our national annals of a later date? For instance, when the Danes desolated Iona, in 824, we are told by Walafridus Strabo, who probably got his information from one of the companions of the martyred abbot, that when Blathmac refused to surrender the hidden treasure—

Pretiosa metalla

Reddere cogentes, queis Sanctae Columbae  
Ossa jacent, quam quippe suis de sedibus arcam  
Tollentes tumulo terra posuere cavato,  
Cespite sub denso, guarì jam pestis iniquae;  
Hanc praedam cupiere Dani.

the saint was most cruelly martyred by the greedy pirates. But how reconcile this story with an earlier translation to Downpatrick?

The answer appears to be that a portion of the saint's relics were retained at Iona, when the rest were carried to Downpatrick; that this portion was enshrined, as might have been expected, during the eighth century, in a precious shrine—*preciosa metalla*—an expression that could hardly be used of the plain *busta*, or wooden coffin, in which they were first interred. In other words, it was the *shrine* of the relics of St. Columba that was hidden away; a shrine richly adorned, as we know was then the custom, with gold and precious stones, but which at the same time did not contain all the relics of the saint, but only that portion of them preserved at Iona, when the rest were transferred to Downpatrick about the beginning of the eighth, or the close of the seventh century.

It is stated in the Annals of Ulster that some four years later, in A.D. 828, 'Diarmait, Abbot of Ia, went to Alba with the reliquaries of Columcille.' This seems to imply that they were carried from Ireland, to which they had been brought in 824, back again to Alba, or Scotland, by the newly-elected Abbot of Iona. Now the word *minna*, which is used by the annalist, so far as we know, is not applied to designate the corporeal relics of a saint; but it usually designates what may be called the extrinsic relics of the saint; that is, things intimately connected with him during

life, but at the same time quite distinct from his bones or ashes. The late learned Bishop Reeves adopted this view as to the meaning of the word *minna*,<sup>1</sup> as used in the Annals; and, if this be true, the conveyance of the *minna* of Columcille from Erin to Alba and back again, more than once, does not mean that his blessed bones, or any part of them—the ‘*martira*’ of the saint—were taken from Downpatrick, but that certain extrinsic relics of Columba—his bell, his psalter, his cowl, or his staff, it may be—were carried hither and thither by the abbots of Iona. We venture to think that this is the true view of the various translations of the *minna* of St. Columba reported in the Annals; and it will go far to reconcile the apparently conflicting statements of Tirechan and of the writers who come after him.

All these subsequent writers of the Annals are, in our opinion, to be understood in the same sense. For example, in A.D. 830, the *minna* of Columcille were again brought back to Ireland; and once more, in 848, the *minna* of the saint were carried to Ireland, which shows that they must have returned to Iona in the meantime. Again, in 877, the ‘*shrine of Columcille, with all his minna, arrived in Ireland to escape the foreigners.*’<sup>2</sup> In all these cases we have reference to a *scrin*, or shrine, of the saint, containing, it may be, some small portion of the relics of his sacred body; but it is quite evident that its chief contents were the *minna*, which, according to the usage of the Annals, must not be understood as *martra*—or *martira* in Latin—that is corporeal relics, but rather of extrinsic relics connected with the saint during life, of the character which we have already explained. It is quite obvious that all those translations of the *minna* of Columcille would, in that case, be quite compatible with the quiet rest of his corporeal relics in Downpatrick.

With regard to St. Brigid’s remains there is somewhat more doubt and uncertainty. That she was at first interred in her own church at Kildare, on the left-hand side of the high altar, is beyond question. This is expressly stated in her *Life by Cogitosus*.<sup>3</sup> He declares that in that church ‘the glorious bodies of both, that is, of Bishop Conlaeth and of this virgin Saint Brigid, repose on the right and left hand of the decorated altar, placed within tombs richly adorned with various decorations of gold and silver, and gems and precious stones, with crowns of gold and silver pendant from above.’ As this passage is very important, and has in our

<sup>1</sup> See Adamnan’s *Vita Columbae*, page 316, note.

<sup>2</sup> *Annals of Hister*.

<sup>3</sup> See *Vita S. Brigidae*, chap. xiv.

opinion been greatly misunderstood, we have translated it literally, and subjoin the Latin text in the note.<sup>1</sup>

From this passage Petrie makes a very strange deduction. He assumes that the 'monuments' which are here described were *shrines*, in which the bodies of the saints, or rather their relics, were enshrined, according to the custom that certainly became very general during the course of the eighth century. And as the Annals of Ulster, under date of A.D. 799, tell us that the relics of St. Conlaeth were placed in a shrine (*scrin*) in that year, he infers that the Life of Brigid, by Cogitosus, must have been written *after* that year, but before 835; when, as we know from the same Annals of Ulster, Kildare was plundered by Gentiles from Inver-Dea, and half the church burned. It is clear that the beautiful tombs would not be left intact in that raid, if they existed at the time.

But 'monumenta' are not shrines at all. The word, both in classical and mediæval Latin, when used in this connection, means a tomb, monument, or grave, in which the dead were buried. On the other hand, the *shrine* or *scrinium*, or *scrin*, as it is called in Irish, was a small and highly ornamented metal case for containing the relics or some memorial of a saint, of which we have several examples still existing. But they cannot with propriety be called 'monumenta,' and we do not recollect that the word has ever been applied to any of them. Then, again, Cogitosus describes the *bodies* of the saints as resting within the monuments; whereas, whenever there is question of enshrining, the word always used is *relics*; that is, *reliquiæ* in Latin, and *martra* (a loan word) in the Irish, to express corporeal relics.

In our opinion, therefore, Cogitosus in this passage describes the tombs in which the saints were buried—where, as he says, their bodies reposed in his time; whence we infer that he must have written *before* any enshrining took place, and therefore, in all probability, long before the enshrining of St. Conlaeth's relics in 799, as described in the Ulster Annals. It is much more likely that Cogitosus died, as Dr. Graves thinks, about the year A.D. 670, or perhaps somewhat later. It is certain, however, that in his time the body of St. Brigid was reposing in a splendid monument within her own church at Kildare.

But the next, that is the eighth century, was the great

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<sup>1</sup> Nec de miraculo in reparatione Ecclesiae tacendum est, in qua gloriosa amborum, hoc est episcopi Conlaeth et hujus virginis S. Brigidae corpora a dextris et a sinistris altaris decorati, in monumentis posita ornatis vario cultu auri, et argenti et gemmarum, et pretiosi lapidis, atque coronis aureis et argenteis desuper pendentibus, requiescunt. (Messingham's *Florilegium*.)

period for enshrining the relics of the saints. We find no less than twelve instances expressly recorded in the Annals during that century. Doubtless, there would be great reluctance to disturb the bodies of the two saints that lay within their splendid tombs on either side of the high altar of the great Church of Kildare—tombs at which wonderful miracles frequently took place—'quas nos virtutes non solum audivimus, sed etiam oculis nostris vidimus'—says Cogitosus, speaking of his own time.

That reluctance, however, would be overcome at the approach of the Danes. They had been hovering round the Irish coasts for some years. Rechra was burned by the Gentiles in 794; Sci was pillaged and wasted in the same year; Inis-Patraic was burned in 797; the shrine of Dachonna was also broken by them (the Gentiles), and they committed other great devastations both in Erin and in Alba.<sup>1</sup> It was high time, therefore, to put the relics of St. Brigid and St. Conlaeth, as well as the gold, and silver, and precious stones, which adorned their tombs, in a more portable form to save them from the plunderers. So we are told that in 799 "the relics of Conlaeth were placed in a shrine of gold and silver."<sup>2</sup> But, strange to say, there is no reference here to the enshrining of the relics of St. Brigid. Surely they did not leave her body in the tomb, when they took up and, for greater security, enshrined the remains of her companion saint in a shrine of gold and silver.

We think the only probable explanation of this omission is the fact that the relics of St. Brigid must at that time, or perhaps a very short time previously, have been taken up from the grave and carried for greater security to Downpatrick. At this time, as we know, Patrick, Brigid, and Columcille, were recognised as the national patrons of the Irish Church, and of the Irish people. The remains of Patrick and Columcille were already reposing together in Downpatrick—what more natural than that, if they were to be disturbed at all, the remains of the third great patron of Ireland should also be carried thither to repose in the same grave? This, however, would be done as quietly as possible, not only for fear of the Danes, but also for fear of the people, who certainly would not readily permit the transfer. So we have no reference to the date of this translation in our annals, as it was not a public fact; but afterwards we find it expressly stated by those who must have known that it was true.

The principal authority for this translation to Down-

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 797.

<sup>2</sup> *Positio reliquiarum Conlaid hi scrin oir agus argait*



patrick is the author of the Fourth Life of St. Brigid, as published by Colgan. Colgan himself attributes the authorship of the Life to a certain Animchad, latinised Animosus, who appears to have been first a monk and afterwards Bishop of Kildare, and whose death is assigned in the *Chronicon Scotorum* to the year A.D. 979. The author of the Life was manifestly, as may be gathered from his prologue, a monk of Kildare, and therefore must have been well acquainted with the tradition of the translation of the saint's relics then current amongst his community.

In one passage of this Life it is expressly stated that St. Patrick was buried in Down, and that St. Brigid also, and the relics of the Blessed Columcille, were many years afterwards placed in the same tomb.<sup>1</sup> This passage, however, is suspiciously like an interpolation in the text of Animosus, and as such has been printed between brackets in the Fourth Life of St. Brigid. But, in the same chapter, there is given an alleged prediction of St. Brigid, that she herself with Patrick and Columcille would arise from the *same* tomb on the day of judgment; which proves that, at the time of the writer, the bodies of those three saints were supposed to be within the same tomb in Downpatrick. The evidence, indeed, is not quite satisfactory; but still it goes far to show the existence of this belief in Kildare so early as the middle of the tenth century.

It will be observed that we place the translation of the remains both of Brigid and Columcille to Downpatrick at an earlier date than that commonly assigned. However, we have given our reasons, which will doubtless be estimated at their proper value. There is one fact which goes far to show that the remains of St. Brigid were not transferred to Downpatrick until a somewhat later period. It is this, that we find the same ecclesiastic, Ceallach, son of Ailill,<sup>2</sup> was abbot both of Iona and Kildare at the very time that the ravages of the Danes were most severely felt at Kildare. What more natural than that this eminent man should transfer the holy remains to Downpatrick, a place of comparative security, where, as he well knew, the remains of the great apostle of the Picts had already been transferred? There is much plausibility in this view; and the only thing that makes us hesitate to accept it is, that there is no mention of the enshrining of St. Brigid's relics in 799, when the relics of St. Conlaeth were certainly enshrined. This, in our

<sup>1</sup> Ubi sepultus est (in arce Leth-glaisse) ipse Sanctus Patritius, Beata Brigida et reliquiae beatissimi Abbatis Columbæ post multos annos collectæ in sepulchro.

<sup>2</sup> He died, A.D. 865.

opinion, goes far to show that the remains of St. Brigid had been already carried elsewhere, although for prudential reasons their destination was not made public at the time.

This brings us to the later Invention and Translation of the relics of our three great national patrons towards the close of the twelfth century.

It is remarkable that our native annalists make no reference to this discovery of the relics of the three saints in Downpatrick. The Four Masters, for instance, although careful to give an account of the visit of Cardinal Papiron in 1151, and the Synod over which he presided in 1152, and also of Cardinal Vivian's visit in 1177, make no reference at all to the visit of Cardinal Vivian in 1186. Gerald Barry, however, a contemporary writer, and at that very time in Ireland with Prince John, expressly declares that the bodies of the three saints, Patrick, Brigid, and Columcille, were found in his time in the city of Down—in the very year that Prince John first came to Ireland—hidden, as it were, in a triple hole or cave—Patrick lying in the middle, with the other two on either side. Thereupon, under the direction of John de Curci, then ruling in Ulster, these three noble treasures were by a divine revelation made known and translated.<sup>1</sup>

Cardinal Vivian came to Ireland as Papal Legate in the beginning of the year 1177, and met John de Curci in Down. He afterwards held a Synod in Dublin, on the 13th of March, the first Sunday of Lent, to which the Four Masters refer; but the Masters make no subsequent reference to his reappearance in Ireland in 1186; nor does any other Irish annalist, so far as we are aware. This invention and translation of the relics of the three saints is narrated in minute detail by several modern writers. It is, however, greatly to be regretted that the contemporary evidence is very unsatisfactory as to these circumstantial details. Usher quotes John Brompton, Ralph of Chester, and others; but these were English and later writers, who knew very little about Ireland. Gerald Barry's testimony as to the substantial fact is most valuable; but he gives no details; and the verses usually given as quoted by him are not found in the best MSS. of the *Topographia*; that is:—

In Burgo Duno tumulo tumulantur in uno  
Brigida, Patritius, atque Columba pius.

<sup>1</sup> Apud Ultoniam in eadem civitate Dunensi scilicet ipsorum tria corpora sunt recondita. Ubi et his nostris temporibus anno scilicet quo Dominus Joannes primo in Hiberniam venit, quasi in spelunca triplici, Patricio in medio jacente, aliis duobus hinc inde, Joannes vero de Curci tunc ibi praesidente, et hoc procurante, tres nobiles thesauri, divina revelatione inventa sunt et translata. (*Top. Hib.*, ch. xviii., Rolls Edition.)

Messingham, who has collected so many other important documents in his *Florilegium*, gives us also the Lessons for the Feast of this Invention and Translation, which was first celebrated on the 9th of June. 1186. They furnish, perhaps, the weightiest evidence in favour of the truth of the details connected with this remarkable event. Here is the substance of these historical Lessons :—

It is said [*fertur*] that at the time of the conquest of Ireland by the English, there was a certain Malachias, a man of great merit, and of holy life and conversation, who was Bishop of Down, where the bodies of the aforesaid saints were buried. This bishop being instant in prayer, almost daily besought the Lord that He would deign to make known to him, in His own time, where that precious treasure, the relics of the aforesaid saints, was hidden. One night, whilst he was thus most earnestly praying in the Church of Down, he saw, as it were, a ray of sunlight beaming through the church up to the place of burial of the bodies of the aforesaid saints. The bishop, greatly rejoicing in this vision, prayed still more earnestly that the ray of light might not depart until he should find the hidden relics. Thereupon, rising up, he took quickly the necessary tools, and going to that bright spot he dug there until he found the bones of the three aforesaid bodies. Then on the spot where the light was shining he enclosed the bones separately in wooden shells [*illu in tabulis separatim inserbat*], and thus enclosed [*tabulata*] replaced them under ground in the same spot.

Then the Bishop narrates his vision to John de Curci, the Conqueror of Ulster, 'a man much given to the service of God,' by whose advice and assistance supplication was made to the Pope for the translation of the relics. The Pope graciously assented, and sent over John, a Cardinal Priest, under the title of St. Stephen on the Caelian Mount, as Apostolic Legate in Ireland, who, on the 9th day of June, with all due reverence and devotion, transferred the holy relics from the spot in which they were laid by Malachias the Bishop to an honourable place specially prepared for them in the church. There were present at this translation, besides the Legate, fifteen bishops, with very many abbots, provosts, deans, archdeacons, priors, and other orthodox men, who, in solemn assembly, decreed that the festival of this Translation was thenceforward to be observed on the 9th of June, the feast of St. Columba, which latter was to be transferred to the day after the octave of the Feast of the Translation.

It has been frequently insinuated that this Invention and Translation, was a political device, arranged by John de Curci and the bishop, to reconcile the Ultonians to the conquest, by giving it a kind of heavenly sanction in their eyes. But John de Curci was not a schemer: and the Bishop Malachias was a native Irishman, who was no friend

of the conquest or the conquerors. Indeed, if the bishop were an Anglo-Norman the entire business would look very suspicious; but, as it stands, the narrative is entirely trustworthy, for the revelation is made to this Celtic bishop, and as we Catholics know often happened before, in answer to humble and fervent prayer.

It has been said also that if the remains of Columba and Brigid were carried to Down in the eighth or the ninth century, and were enclosed in the grave of St. Patrick, a spot so sacred could not be utterly forgotten even by the clergy of the church. There is an obvious answer to this: that during the depredations of the Danes, the churches were burnt, not unfrequently burnt to ashes, and the clergy were often all slaughtered. What grave of our early saints is known outside the Aran Islands? Hardly a single one. The same motive, too, that led to bringing the remains to Down would lead to the place where they were buried being kept a profound secret, except from a very few. Thus in the course of generations, the knowledge of the place might be utterly lost, although it was well known that the sacred remains were hidden somewhere within the Church of Down. Similar events have led, even in more recent times, to the same uncertainty as of old. Hence, although the relics of Patrick, Brigid, and Columba were then buried in Down, no one now can tell the exact spot where these holy relics repose.

There is, indeed, in the cemetery attached to the Protestant Cathedral, or the Abbey, as it is still called by the people, an ancient grave, which is commonly reputed to be the grave of St. Patrick. It is now hollowed out by the excavations of pious Catholics, who, when about to emigrate, always carry away with them a small portion of 'the clay from St. Patrick's grave.' It is said that over this grave there was formerly erected a granite cross to mark the sacred spot, but it was carried off and broken in pieces by certain bigots amongst the Orangemen of Downpatrick, who afterwards, as might be expected, all came to a bad end. No one can regret if St. Patrick showed his power on men like these. This grave, however, could not have been the original grave of St. Patrick, nor that into which the remains of the Trias Thaumaturga were enclosed in 1186; for, in both cases, the grave was within the cathedral, and no church ever stood over the present grave.

But a certain writer in the *Ulster Examiner*, under date of Feb. 9th, 1870, declared that, thirty years before, a man of the name of Millar told him that he remembered the time when the cathedral was restored (in 1790); that three stone coffins were discovered near the high altar; that these holy

remains, supposed to be those of the three saints, were transferred to a new grave in the churchyard, and to mark the spot an ancient market cross was carried there and placed over the grave—that very cross, we must assume, that was afterwards broken to pieces by the Orangemen. It is a point that deserves further investigation, which we must leave to the zeal of the local antiquaries.

### APPENDIX III.

#### ST. PATRICK'S RELATIONS IN IRELAND.

THIS is a question which Colgan, who had studied it very carefully, admits is a complex and difficult one. The difficulty arises not merely from errors of transcribers, but also from the discrepancy amongst our most ancient and venerable authorities. Yet it is an interesting inquiry to try and ascertain who were the foreign prelates associated with St. Patrick in the conversion of the Irish nation; how many were of his own blood; where were the churches over which he placed them; and what were the festival days on which they were venerated by the faithful.

To the cursory reader of the Lives of St. Patrick it will appear strange to find reference to so many sisters of the Saint, and to the great number of his nephews especially who became bishops in Ireland. Many persons are inclined to think such statements are highly improbable in themselves; and even learned men like Lanigan—who speaks of these stories as 'stuff'—are disposed to believe that there must be much exaggeration in the current accounts of the family connections of St. Patrick in Ireland.

In our view such speculations are always misleading; and the only safe course is to examine carefully the ancient authorities, comparing, criticising, and, if need be, correcting them by comparison with each other, and with external authorities, but never rejecting them wholesale as unworthy of credence. The more carefully a man studies those ancient documents the more will he find them honest and trustworthy in substance, although by no means free from error in statement or exaggeration in language. It is in this spirit we shall deal with the ancient writers, who speak of the blood-relations of St. Patrick in Ireland.

Let us now examine the authorities. One of the earliest is the Scholiast on Fiacc. He says that Patrick had five sisters, namely Lupait, Tigris, Liamain, and Darerca, and the name of the fifth, Cinnenum: his (Patrick's) brother was Deacon Sannan.<sup>1</sup> Deacon Sannan is the only brother<sup>2</sup> of St. Patrick to whom any reference is made by ancient writers, and it is commonly said that Patrick Junior was

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<sup>1</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 412.

<sup>2</sup> See Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 412.

the son of Sannan, and was a member of Patrick's household or religious family in Ireland. Of him and his namesake, Old Patrick, we shall speak in Appendix IV.

The same five sisters are noticed in the Book of Lecan,<sup>1</sup> except that instead of Cinnenum we have Ricend—Liamain being omitted apparently by an oversight. But explicit reference is made to five. It would appear from his mode of expression that the Scholiast on *Filcc* was rather doubtful as to the name Cinnenum; and it certainly does not seem to be appropriate as a woman's name, but of that we shall presently say more.

Now, returning to the Lives of St. Patrick and the most ancient of our Calendars, we find the following references to the children of these five sisters of Patrick. *Inechan*—an ancient authority surely—speaking of Loman of Trim, says that his family was of British origin, that he was the son of Gollit, whom Colgan thinks the same as Gallus, and that his mother was the sister of Patrick.<sup>2</sup> He adds that the following brothers of Loman—brothers apparently by father and mother—were bishops:—

Munis of Forgneby the Cuirni; Broccaid of Imbliuch Ech in Ciarraige of Connaught; Broccan in Brechnag or Breaghwy, in Hy Dorthim; and Mugenoc of Cill Dumi Gluinn in South Bregia.

Here we have in all five brothers, four and Loman of Trim, who were apparently all sons of Gollit, the Briton, and nephews of St. Patrick. Their sees too were all in Meath or Bregia except the See of Broccaid, which was amongst the Ciarraige of Connaught.

The Tripartite, referring to the foundation of the church of Trim, which took place, it tells us, twenty-five years before Armagh was founded, likewise declares that Loman was of the Britons, that his father was Gollit, that his mother was own sister to Patrick, and that the four bishops named above were brothers of Loman. It also places them in the same sees respectively, so that we must accept as a well-established fact that Gollit had five sons who were bishops, and that their mother was a uterine sister of Patrick.

Neither, however, of these two authorities mentions Tigris as the mother of those five bishops, but Jocelyn expressly says that Tigris was the mother of four of them—Loman, Broccaid, Broccan, and Mugenoc. He omits, however, the name of Munis as a son of Gollit and Tigris, and apparently confounds her with another sister, namely Darerca. He says that Tigris had no less than seventeen

<sup>1</sup> Page 89a.

<sup>2</sup> Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 335.

sons and five daughters, as will be explained below.<sup>1</sup> She certainly had the five sons, all bishops, named above, but no mention is made of any of her daughters in the older authorities.

Liamain, called in Latin, Liemanina, had, it appears, a still more numerous family. No reference is made to her name in the Lives themselves, but from the Martyrologies we gather that she was, by Restitutus the Lombard, the mother of Sechnall of Dunshaughlin, of Neetan of Kill-unche, and of Fennor near Slane, of Auxilius of Killosey near Naas, and also of Dabonna, Mogornon, Darioe and Presbyter Lugnath.<sup>2</sup> The Tripartite adds two other sons of Restitutus the Lombard—Diarmait, whom Patrick placed over the church of Druim Corcortri near Navan, and Coimid Maccu Baird (the Lombard), who became bishop of Cloonshanville near Frenchpark. We have therefore good authority for assuming that Liemanina and Restitutus had nine sons, eight of whom were bishops whose names are given, and whose sees can be determined.

We now come to Darerca. Recurring again to the Tripartite, we find that 'when Patrick went on the sea from the land of Britain to journey to Ireland, Bishop Muinis came after him and after his brothers, Bishop Mel of Ardagh and Rioc of Inis-bo-finne, and they are sons of Conis and Darerca, Patrick's sister, as the households of their churches say, and that is not to be denied.' There are moreover sisters of those bishops, namely, Eiche of Cell Glass (Kilglass), to the south of Ardagh in Tefia, and Lalloe of Senlis in Connaught, and it is *thought* that she (Darerca) is also the mother of Bard's sons, so that she has seven (or in Colgan's version seventeen) sons and two daughters.<sup>3</sup>

Here it is distinctly stated that Conis and Darerca had four sons—Muinis, Mel—Melchu, 'his brother,' is mentioned further on—and Rioc of Inisboffin in Lough Ree. The Bishop Muinis here referred to certainly seems from the context to be Munis of Forgney, whom Tirechan distinctly states to have been a son of Gollit. Colgan, however, thinks the Tripartite is here right, and that Munis, son of Gollit, must be sought for elsewhere, most likely, he thinks, at Tedel in Ara Chach, where Patrick certainly left one of 'his family,' called in Irish Muin and in Latin, Munis. With that opinion we are inclined to agree.

<sup>1</sup> Jocelyn as a reliable authority cannot be compared with either Tirechan or the Tripartite.

<sup>2</sup> Lugnath had a church on the eastern shore of Lough Carra, Co. Mayo. His well, Toberloona, and the site of his church are there still. He himself is probably buried in Inchagoill, in Lough Corrib.

<sup>3</sup> Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 83.



But Darerca had other sons besides these four. The Martyrologies, especially the *Opuscula* of Ængus, give the names of four more who can be distinctly traced. These are: <sup>1</sup> Crummine of Lecna, Midnu or Midgnu, Carantoc, and Bishop Maccaille, who gave the veil to St. Brigid. Colgan objects to some more of the names, but admits the above.

Now here a grave difficulty arises. From the lists already given we gather that Tigris was mother of nine saints, bishops all, it would seem; Liemania was the mother of nine, all bishops except Presbyter Lugnath; and Darerca apparently of eight bishops at least. But many ancient authorities assert explicitly that Darerca was the mother of seventeen holy bishops; and those who by some authorities are described as sons of Liemania are by others called sons of Darerca. Whence Colgan infers that Liemania and Darerca were merely two names of the same person—that the proper name was Liamain or Liemania—who was first married to Restitutus the Lombard, and after his death was married to Conis the Briton, and thenceforward was generally known as Darerca, which is an epithet or cognomen rather than a proper name. This view would also seem to have been adopted by the author of the *Tripartite*, for he says “it is thought—putatur—that she was also the mother of the sons of ‘Bard,’ that is the ‘Lombard.’” In that case Darerca would indeed be the mother of no less than seventeen holy bishops, if not of one or two priests in addition, besides the two holy nuns Eiche and Lalloc, who are admitted by all to have been her daughters.

Of course in that case, although the sisters of St. Patrick went under five names, there would be only four different persons, or, leaving out Cinnenum, about whom there is some doubt, there would be really only three, Lupait, Tigris, and Darerca, and this is expressly asserted by Jocelyn.

We now come to Lupait. Her name is once or twice put by mistake for Liemania, as for instance in the *Book of Leinster*,<sup>2</sup> where the family of Liemania are set down as children of Lupait. It is, however, clearly an error of transcription.

Lupait was never married. She was taken captive with St. Patrick in his boyhood, carried over to Ireland, and sold as a slave in Conaille Muirthemni, that is in the Co. Louth. Of her subsequent history up to the time of the return of St. Patrick to Ireland we know nothing.<sup>3</sup> She appears,

<sup>1</sup> See *Rolls Tripartite*, p. 551, and *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Page 372, line 21.

<sup>3</sup> We attach no importance to the story of her meeting Patrick in the house of Milcho.

however, in Longford with her nephew, St. Mel, whom St. Patrick had placed over the church of Ardagh. At that time she must have been at the lowest calculation over fifty years of age. Nevertheless calumny did not spare her, and some evil tongues accused her of undue intimacy with her own nephew. The newly converted Pagan population were as yet unable to understand the chastity of priests and nuns, who lived near to each other, just as there are Protestants who do not understand it to-day. The rumour reached the ears of St. Patrick, and he went to ascertain if there were any grounds for 'this error of the rabble.' As Patrick approached Ardagh, Bishop Mel went fishing in the furrows of his field after rain, and apparently caught salmon, for that 'dry' fishing came to be regarded as a proof of his innocence and passed into a proverb. Lupita carried fire in her mantle or 'chasuble,' and the fire harmed it not, so that this 'fatuus ignis,' or harmless fire, also passed into a proverb as a proof of innocence.

Still St. Patrick judged it well to remove all cause even for suspicion of evil, and laid down an excellent maxim not only for religious but for all unmarried persons. "Let men and women be apart, so that we may not give opportunity to the weak, and so that by us the Lord's name be not blasphemed, which thing be far from us." So he put Bri Leith, now Slieve Golry, between Mel and his aunt, leaving him at Ardagh on the east, and putting her at Druim Chea on the west side of the mountain, where, as we have elsewhere explained, she ruled over a holy community of nuns for many years.

When St. Patrick in his old age went to dwell at Armagh Lupita lived there also in a convent near the church. She and her sister Tigris with another holy maiden, Erc, daughter of Daire, devoted all their time to the holy and appropriate work of making vestments for the use of the clergy. Hence she is described as one of the three embroideresses of the family of Patrick—the other two being Erc, daughter of Daire, and Cruimtheris of Cengoba near Armagh. There is a strange story told in the Tripartite, apparently of some one of the nuns of Armagh, who is described as a 'sister' of Patrick, and is by the scribe strangely called 'Lupait.'

We have elsewhere given the curious story of this 'Lupait,' but the guilty maid cannot have been Lupait, sister of St. Patrick, for at that time she could not have been less than seventy-five years of age, if she were alive at all at the time. There may have been another relation of Patrick at Armagh who bore the same name, and might be called by Irish usage a *siur*, for the term is applicable to any near relation, or it might mean a religious sister, in the same sense as we use it

still to express a nun, and then there would be no difficulty, for she too might bear the name of Lupat—if this be indeed the true name of the penitent in question, whose sin was great and whose penitence was also great. The unhappy woman might have thrown herself in shame and sorrow before the car of the Saint, and a 'drive on' might easily be exaggerated into a 'drive over her;' but the story as it stands cannot be admitted, for it would make Patrick responsible for her death. Patrick in his anger may have refused at first to forgive her, but her pitiful prayer for Colman and her child show that she did not die at once, but probably died soon after of grief and shame for her own misconduct.

With regard to Cinnenn, the so-called fifth sister of St. Patrick, there is more difficulty as to herself and her children. The Book of Lecan, as we have seen, calls her Ricend, and the Lebar Brecc Homily calls her Richell,<sup>1</sup> which is probably the true name. Colgan seems to think she is the patroness of the church of Kilricill, four miles east of Loughrea, in the diocese of Clonfert. It is apparently the same name, and although we have no written account of St. Patrick going so far south in the Co. Galway, we find a Patrick's Well at Bullaun, three miles to the west of Kilricill, on the line of route which the apostle might be supposed to take on his journey to Headford, near to which he undoubtedly founded a church.

In the Additions to Tirechan we find reference to 'Rigell mater duLuæ Chroibige,'<sup>2</sup> and in the Tripartite itself we find the latter described as Do-Lue of Croibeich, who with Lugaid, son of Oengus, son of Natfraech, is said to be of Patrick's household, and 'both are in Druim-Inesclaind in Delbna.' Rigell is also described in the same place as mother of Lonan, son of Senach, who is in Caill-Mallech, now Killolagh in the Co. Westmeath. There is some ground therefore for thinking that Richell, the fifth sister of Patrick, is identical with Rigell, mother of Lonan and Do-Lue, two saints of Meath. The father of both was 'Senach de genere Comgil,' as he is described in the Notes to Tirechan. Then, it is furthermore expressly stated that Patrick found in Bretach (in Inishoven) 'three Dechnans, that is Deacons, sister's sons of Patrick,'<sup>3</sup> who likely accompanied Eoghan, son of Niall, from Tara to the North. It is not unlikely, though by no means certain, that these also were sons of Rigell. So the fifth sister would have five sons, all given to the service of

<sup>1</sup> Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 432.

<sup>2</sup> Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 349.

<sup>3</sup> *Tripartite*, p. 156.

the Irish church. We know also that Patrick set over the church of Domnach Maige Slecht near Fenagh, Co. Leitrim, a relative of his own—cognatus—who was called Mabran, otherwise known as Barbarus Patricii—Patrick's Boor, if we may so translate that rather uncomplimentary epithet for a bishop and a prophet. It is not stated, however, that he was a nephew of Patrick. This may be said to exhaust the list of St. Patrick's episcopal relatives, although there are two or three others who may be regarded as doubtful cases, so that in all it seems there were between twenty-eight and thirty of his nephews amongst the prelates of the early Irish Church, and at least two nieces who were nuns.

#### ST. LOMAN OF TRIM.

St. Loman of Trim, to be carefully distinguished from another St. Loman of Lough Gill in the Co. Sligo, is the first of St. Patrick's nephews who meets us in Ireland. He was also, so far as we can judge, the first Bishop whom St. Patrick placed over an Irish see, and that Church of Trim was the first which the Saint founded in Ireland, twenty-five years before the founding of Armagh.

Patrick having resolved to smite the paganism and idolatry of Ireland in the very seat of its supreme power, determined to make his way to the Court of King Laeghaire at Tara. So bidding farewell to his friend Dichu, son of Trichem, at Saul, he put to sea and, crossing the wide bay of Dundalk, he soon brought his ship<sup>1</sup> to anchor at the mouth of the river Boyne, then called Inver Colptha, from the famous Colptha, son of Milesius, who was drowned there when crossing the bar. This was at the beginning of Lent, 433, for Patrick had not been duly authorised to come to Ireland until the summer of 432.

The Saint, having disembarked at the mouth of the river, resolved to make his way to Tara by land, but it is likely he spent the greater part of the Lent in that neighbourhood, engaged as usual in penitential exercises, for he did not reach Slane until Holy Saturday. At his departure he left Loman in charge of the boat, with instructions to row up the Boyne, 'until he should get to the place where Ath-Trim stands to-day.' It is likely both Patrick and Loman had heard that there were friendly Britons in that neighbourhood who would receive Loman hospitably and protect him from danger. The Saint, too, had an idea that Trim was not far from Tara, which was his own destination, and thus he hoped to secure his boat, and find it readily again.

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<sup>1</sup> Others say his 'fleet'—perhaps of two or three boats.

From Trim to Drogheda the Boyne flows for 25 miles through fertile plains and swelling uplands, all haunted with the thrilling memories and historic monuments of more than two thousand years. It is not, strictly speaking, navigable, but the light boats of the time could be easily pushed over the fords or shallows. Loman had to row against the stream, and, as his course was first west and then south, most probably against the wind also. Jocelyn would represent his progress up the river against stream and wind as a miracle in itself. It was more likely the result of one or two days' hard rowing by Loman and his companions. Late at night, it seems, they came to the Ford of Trim and rested where they were, for in the morning we are told that young Fortchern, son of Feidlimid, who dwelt in the fort of Trim, and kept the Ford, going down to the river in the early morning, found Loman 'with his Gospel before him' either in his boat or on the bank. And at once it seems Loman proceeded to explain to the young chieftain the message of the Gospel. 'And a marvel it was to him the doctrine which he heard,' but, touched by grace, he believed and was baptised.

Now, the mother of this young prince was a British lady,<sup>1</sup> and no doubt she taught both to her son and to her husband Feidlimid the British tongue. This will explain how it came to pass that Fortchern was able to understand the language of Loman. Now, that lady herself, noting the absence of her son, and seeing him talking to strangers at the Ford, came down herself to the river seeking her son. And finding out that the strangers were Britons, her own countrymen, she made welcome to the clerics, for of the Britons was she—namely, Scoth, daughter of the King of the Britons.<sup>2</sup>

Now, her husband, Feidlimid, who was the son of King Laeghaire, the great ruler of Tara, by a British lady, came to meet the strangers, and he, addressing them in the British tongue, gave them hearty welcome. Then he had speech of Loman, who explained to him, as he did to his son, the glad tidings of the Gospel, and Feidlimid, too, believed, and was baptised. Moreover, with all the fervent zeal of a sincere and generous heart, he made over Ath-Trim to God and to Patrick and to Loman and to his own son Fortchern, who, it seems, resolved to join Loman in preaching the Gospel of Christ. It is one of the most beautiful and striking scenes recorded in the Life of St. Patrick, that meeting of Loman with that holy family by the Ford of Trim.

<sup>1</sup> 'Brittonissa,'—Tirechan.

<sup>2</sup> Tirechan says the mother of Feidlimid was also a British lady, and that she had the beautiful name, Scoth Noe—the fresh flower.

In the meantime, as we know, Patrick went first to Slane, and afterwards to Tara, where on Easter Day he had that celebrated conflict with the Druids of the King which is recorded in all the Lives of the Saint, and is justly regarded as the most remarkable event in his career. It was in fact the crisis and the victory of the Christian faith in Ireland.

On that very day, it would appear, he went down from Tara to Trim to ascertain how Loman and his companions had fared on their journey up the river. It may be that Loman had sent a messenger to Patrick at Tara to announce his own good fortune; and Patrick was very naturally anxious to visit the British lady who had received his nephew so kindly, and with her family had embraced the faith so fervently. So he went himself in person and founded Ath-Trim twenty-five years before the founding of Armagh, and there he left his disciple Loman.<sup>1</sup> 'Of the Britons, moreover, was the race of Loman, son of Gollit, and his mother was own sister to Patrick.' That happy mother was, as we have seen elsewhere, Tigris, and she was also the mother of Broccaid, Broccan, and Mugenoc, holy prelates, two of whom were, it appears, placed by St. Patrick over churches in Meath, and the third at Emlagh, in Connaught.

Of the subsequent history of Loman of Trim, little is known. He may have been a bishop before his arrival in Ireland<sup>2</sup>; if not he was in all probability consecrated by St. Patrick before his departure from Meath.

After 'some time' his death drew nigh, and then he went with 'his foster son Fortchern to have speech of Broccaid his brother,' that is to pay him a friendly visit at Emlagh Ech amongst the Ciarraige of Connaught. Returning home to Trim 'he bequeathed his church to Patrick and to Fortchern,' who was still comparatively young. But Fortchern, with truly Catholic instinct, refused at first to enter upon this inheritance, for the lands were the inheritance of his father, and if he now succeeded as bishop it would seem that it was not by virtue of a canonical election but of hereditary descent—which would set a very dangerous example to other churches. Still Loman, no doubt with the assent of Patrick, said—"Thou shalt not receive my blessing except thou receivest the abbacy of my church." Then Fortchern, loth to forfeit the blessing of his spiritual father, consented to accept the abbacy; but, yet true to his own noble resolve, he resigned it after three days to Cathlaid, who appears to have been a pilgrim from the Britons. So the early succession in Trim was British; and British

<sup>1</sup> *Tripartite*.

<sup>2</sup> In Tircchan's list he is set down as a priest.

influence prevailed long centuries afterwards at the Ford of the Ridge. The site of the Patrician Church has completely disappeared, but Trim has a noble modern church, and is full of venerable ruins which eloquently attest the faith and power of the conquering Normans.

Fortchern went further south to Leinster, and established himself in the neighbourhood of Tullow in the Co. Carlow. There he built himself a church close to a blessed well which still bears his name, and in which the great St. Finnian of Clonard was baptised. That old church has disappeared; but the well is flowing yet beneath the hill which gives its name to the town, for in ancient books it is always known as Tullagh-Fortchirn—the true name of that neat and prosperous town, which still retains its ancient character as a centre of holiness and religion.



## APPENDIX IV.

### THE 'THREE PATRICKS.'

SOME few recent writers have done much to confuse the history of our national Apostle, and detract from the reverence which is so justly due to him as the spiritual father of the Irish people, by mixing up the events recorded concerning the 'Three Patricks' in our ancient annals, and in the Lives of St. Patrick. These writers complain that the ancient authorities are 'so confused and inconsistent' in their facts and dates, that it is impossible to reconcile their statements with the commonly received narrative of the life of St. Patrick, and so they undertake, of their own authority, to divide and distribute the various events narrated in the life of our great Apostle amongst the three saints who bore the name of Patrick. The result, as might be expected, is only to make confusion worse confounded, and to cause superficial readers to turn away with something like disgust from their vain speculations.<sup>1</sup>

As a fact, however, the confusion will be found to exist not in ancient authorities but in the minds of the modern scribes who undertake to criticise them; and, with a view of presenting something new, very often mistranslate and misrepresent them. We do not mean to deny that both as to facts and dates there are many inaccuracies and inconsistencies recorded in the existing copies of those ancient and venerable documents. But they have reference to minor points, and in most cases have arisen from the ignorance and errors of transcribers. On the other hand, we assert that there is between them a very striking agreement in all substantial points, and that their statements afford no foundation whatever for dislocating the history of our national Apostle in this extraordinary fashion.

With a view to establish this statement we propose to give a brief sketch of the history of the 'Three Patricks,' which will show how carefully the early writers distinguished between them, and how little ground there is for attributing to any of them but one, the great glory of being the national Apostle of Ireland.

The phrase 'Three Patricks' is not found in the early Lives of our Irish saints, except once, where it is said 'Three

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<sup>1</sup> The late Father Sherman's 'Essay on the Three Patricks' is a fair specimen of this kind of historical criticism.



Patricks' were together in a certain island of the Tyrrhene Sea,<sup>1</sup> and where it seems to mean simply men of Patrician dignity, that is Patricii. The 'Three Patricks' to whom modern writers refer, and whom they mix up so much together, are Patrick Senior or Sen-Patrick, Patrick the Great, son of Calpurn, and Patrick Junior, his nephew.

Palladius also got the name Patrick as an alias from one ancient writer; but the main facts of his life are so well ascertained, that there can be no ground for mixing up his history with that of our national Apostle.

### I.—HISTORY OF PALLADIUS.

WE do not know to what country Palladius belonged, although the great interest which he took in the churches both of Britain and of Ireland would seem to imply that he or his family was in some way connected with the former country, either by birth or official station. We know, however, for certain, on the authority of the contemporary chronicler, St. Prosper of Aquitaine, two most important facts in his history: the first is, that he was in 429 Archdeacon of St. Celestine in Rome, and that it was at his instance the Pope sent St. Germanus to Britain to root out the Pelagian heresy from that country. The second fact is, that he himself was consecrated a bishop by Pope Celestine two years afterwards, in 431, and was sent as first bishop to the Scots, that is the Irish, who believed in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

The Irish authorities then take up the narrative, and tell us exactly what afterwards happened.

The Book of Armagh says that Palladius was unable to convert the Irish 'because no one can receive anything on earth, except it be given to him from heaven'; and also because 'the wild and savage men' to whom he preached would not readily receive his doctrine, and he himself was unwilling in the face of these difficulties to remain in a strange land, but preferred to return home to him who had sent him. However, on this return journey, after having crossed the first (or Irish) Sea, and begun his land journey, he died in the territory of the Britons.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tripartite*, apud Colgan, 106. He thinks they became Gallic or Italian Bishops

<sup>2</sup> Prosper Aquitan. anno 431.

<sup>3</sup> The *Vita Sec.* makes him die 'in Pictavorum finibus'—that is the region of the Picts—Fordun. The Additions to Tirechan say that Palladius, also called Patrick, (as a title of honour) martyrrium passus est apud Scottos—meaning here no doubt not the Scots of Ireland, but of Scotland,

The Scholiast on Fiacc's Hymn enters into further details: for he adds that in Ireland Palladius founded some churches, namely Teach na Roman, that is the House of the Romans, Killine, and others. But, not being well received by the people, he was compelled to go round the Irish coasts towards the north, until at length he was driven by a tempest to the farthest part of Mohaidh towards the south, where he founded the church of Fordun (in the Mearns), and was known under the name of Plede.<sup>1</sup> This passage clearly implies that the tempest drove the saint round the west and north of Scotland—a wild inhospitable coast on which he did not wish to land until he reached the estuary of the Dee.

Then Colgan's Second Life enters into further details of the Irish Mission of Palladius. He landed, we are informed, on the territory of the men of Leinster, where Nathi Mac Garrehan was chief, and who rudely opposed him. But others listened to his preaching, and he baptised them and built for them three churches in that same district, one of which is Cellfine, in which he left books that he got from St. Celestine, and a box containing relics of St. Peter and St. Paul and other saints, and waxen tablets, on which he used to write, and which bear his name Pallere, or Pallad-ere. The second church was Teach na Roman; and the third was Donnach Ardec, or Donnach Aracha, in which are buried the holy men of the family of Palladius—Silvester and Salonius (Solinus), who are honoured there. Shortly afterwards he died in the plain of Girginn, in the place which is called Fordun, but others say he was crowned with martyrdom there.

This extract defines the territory in which Palladius preached, the churches which he founded, and gives the name of the chieftain who opposed him, as he also opposed St. Patrick. Nathi was son of Garchu, and ruled over the territory or tribe known as the Hy-Garrehan from his father's name. They dwelt on the sea plain from Wicklow to Bray Head; and hence we find that both Palladius and Patrick must, as Keating expressly tells us, have landed at Inver Dea, which is now known as the Vartry River. It is exactly such a harbour as would suit the light craft of the time—a stretch of fine sand on which they could draw up their boats or run them into the river as would be found most convenient. The Fourth Life gives one further

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<sup>1</sup> 'He fared round Ireland to the north, and a mighty storm came upon him, and he reached the south-eastern extremity of the Molad, and he founded a church there named Fordun, and Plelus is his name there.'

particular; that:—"others say that Palladius was crowned with martyrdom in Hibernia"—the common statement being, however, that he died in the region of the Picts.

These few paragraphs really contain all we know about Palladius. His Mission in Ireland was a failure: he himself felt it to be so: he founded three churches, indeed, in one district, but founded no more; and then disappointed and broken-spirited he tried to return home, but met his end either from natural causes or from violence in the region of the Picts, that is at Fordun in Magh Geirginn. The narrative is clear, is natural in the circumstances, and is substantially the same in all the authorities.

It is clear, therefore, that Palladius had little or no share in the work of the great St. Patrick. And that is emphatically stated in the Annotations to Tirechan as given in the Book of Armagh, and in the very passage which informs us that Palladius was sometimes known by the name of Patrick. Here it is:—

*Palladius episcopus primo mittitur, qui Patricius alio nomine appellabatur, qui martyrium passus est apud Scottos, ut tradunt sancti antiqui. Deinde Patritius Secundus ab angelo Dei Victor nomine, et a Caelestino Papa, mittitur. Cui Hibernia tota credit, qui eam pene totam baptizavit.*

It was Patrick, therefore, second of that name, not Palladius, whose teaching all Ireland received, and by whom almost all Ireland was baptised.

If it be asked how was it that these different saints bore this name of Patrick, the answer is that it was not a personal name, but an honorary title at first given to laymen, and afterwards to eminent ecclesiastics. The nearest example is the title of Monsignor now given to distinguished ecclesiastics whom the Pope wishes to honour. Something similar took place in the fourth and fifth centuries. The ancient and honourable title of Patricius or Patrician, which under the Republic was only applied to noble Romans, under the Empire came to be an official title given at first to eminent officials of the Empire, and afterwards, when the Empire became Christian, to eminent ecclesiastics also.

## II.—PATRICIUS SENIOR OR SEN-PATRAIC.

THE name of this venerable man has been the cause of much confusion in Patrician hagiology; and in bungling hands has tended to do—what he certainly would not wish to do himself—to diminish the well deserved fame of our great Apostle. Who then was this Sen-Patraic? We can only collect the principal notices regarding him which are to be

found in our Annals and in the Lives of St. Patrick; and leave our readers to draw their own conclusions.

The earliest and most valuable reference to Sen-Patraic is found in the metrical Calendar of Ængus, under date of August 24:—

‘ With the series of the host of Zenonius,  
—Tidings of them have been heard—  
Old Patrick, champion of battle,  
The amiable tutor of our Elder.’

On this the Scholiast in the Lebar Brecc has the following note:—‘ Old-Patrick, that is in Glastonbury of the Gael in Saxon-land. Old-Patrick of Ros-Dela in Mag Locha; but it is truer that he is in Glastonbury of the Gael in the south of Saxon-land. For Irishmen formerly used to dwell there in pilgrimage. But his relics are in Old-Patrick’s tomb in Armagh.’

From this we gather that Old-Patrick was at one time a monk of Glastonbury; that he was in some sense a tutor of our great Apostle; that he became bishop of Ros-Dela, now Rosdalla, in Westmeath; and that he was buried at Armagh. But the Book of Leinster gives us a third very important reference, in which it describes Sen-Patraic as:—‘ Ostiarius of St. Patrick, and Abbot of Armagh.’ These are the only facts of the life of the saint that can be said to be known with certainty.

As to his death we find it noted at different times in our Annals; and these obituary notices have led to much confusion. The Annals of Ulster, under date of A.D. 457, have the entry ‘ quies Senis Patricii ut alii libri dicunt ’—marking curiously enough the Synod of Chalcedon (451) as held in the same year. In the Book of Leinster the year is not given, but the entry—Secundinus et Senex Patricius quieverunt—is given after the foundation of Armagh, and before the death of Ailill Molt in 463, whilst the entry—‘ Patricius Scottorum episcopus quievit ’—is found further on after the battle of Cellosnaid. The Book of Leinster, therefore, clearly distinguishes between the death of Sen-Patraic, and that of the ‘ Bishop of the Scots,’ the great St. Patrick, which it fixes at a much later date, without giving the exact year.

In the *Annales Cambriae* we find the following entry—‘ Annus XIII. Sanctus Patricius ad Dominum migratur,’ whilst the birth of St. Brigid<sup>1</sup> is marked in the tenth, and

<sup>1</sup> St. Brigid was born in A.D. 453 (An. Ulster), so that this would place the death of St. Patricius, A.D. 456.

the rest of Benignus in the twenty-fourth year of the same era. This 'Sanctus Patricius' was therefore Old-Patrick; but as he was a Welsh Saint, it is only natural that Cambrian Annals should note his death, and, by omitting any reference to his great namesake, try to make him out to be the great saint of Ireland—a thing that has been often attempted since by the Welshmen.

Several lists of St. Patrick's 'successors' are given in our old books, with the length of their episcopacy in Armagh, but to reconcile the dates would be a hopeless task, owing to the errors of transcribers in copying the Roman numbers. But the order of succession is practically identical; and in one of these lists Old-Patrick is given as Bishop-Abbot after Sechnall and before Benignus. As Sechnall or Secundinus was the first bishop who 'went under the sod' in Ireland, this list clearly shows that the earlier prelates noticed therein as 'successors' of St. Patrick in Armagh were really co-adjutor Bishops whom, after the foundation of Armagh, St. Patrick left in the primatial city to rule his church and his abbey during his own prolonged missionary journeys. In the list in Book of Leinster the incumbency of Sechnall is given as thirteen years, that of Old-Patrick as two, and that of Benignus as two, of Jarlath fourteen, and of Cormac twelve, whilst St. Patrick himself gets credit for presiding for fifty-eight years—that is from his coming to Ireland to his death—thus clearly showing that his life in Ireland was contemporaneous with the lives of his five immediate 'successors,' who were merely his co-adjutors in succession in Armagh.

The point we want to insist on is, that the very catalogue in the Book of Leinster which represents these saints as *comarbada* of the great St. Patrick shows that he outlived them all except St. Cormac.

The list in the Lebar Brecc begins by stating that Patrick rested in the hundred and twentieth year of his age; and then amongst his comarbs it puts Sechnall first and Benignus second, omitting all reference to the abbacy of Sen-Patraic. The chronological tract in the Lebar Brecc states that Patrick completed his victorious course in the nineteenth year of Cormac, Patrick's comarb or 'successor.' The exact year given is perhaps not accurate, but it serves to explain what we find elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> after the statement that Patrick, Bishop of the Scots rested—the next entry:—'Cormac, first abbot of

<sup>1</sup> Sen-Patraic is not given in the list of Patrick's successors in the Lebar Brecc.

<sup>2</sup> Annals from the *Book of Leinster*. Rolls *Tripartite*, p. 513.

Armagh.' He was therefore the sixth Bishop of Armagh, but at the same time the first Abbot-Bishop after St. Patrick having independent jurisdiction.

From these entries, therefore, we get a glimpse of the real history of Sen-Patraic, and we can also infer very clearly the share he had in the conversion of Ireland. He was a Welshman by birth, and, if not an uncle, was certainly an older man than his namesake, the great Apostle of Ireland. He spent some time in the monastery of Glastonbury, which then and long afterwards was much frequented by Irish saints and scholars, so that it came to be called Glastonbury of the Gael. It is clear that, if not a near relation of our Apostle, he made his acquaintance most probably during the time that St. Patrick was in Wales with St. Germanus in 429. There grew up a close intimacy between the older and the younger saint, so that the former came to be called 'the beloved tutor of our Elder.' It was only natural, therefore, that when St. Patrick came to Ireland in 432, bringing with him associates for the great task before him in Ireland, the older Patrick should volunteer to be one of the companions of his beloved *dalta*, now duly authorised to preach the Gospel to the Irish. Of his subsequent career we know little, except that in the familia or ecclesiastical household of St. Patrick he occupied the responsible office of *ostiarius* or sacristan to the Saint, that he was subsequently made by St. Patrick Bishop of Ros-Dela in the parish of Durrow, in the County Westmeath, and that after the death of Sechnall, who had for many years been assistant bishop to Saint Patrick, the latter appointed the venerable old man to take the place of Sechnall in Armagh as Bishop-Abbot and co-adjutor to himself. But he held the office only a very short time, not more than two years. Shortly after Armagh was founded as the primatial see, and there of course he was buried by St. Patrick, and there his relics were for ages held in veneration by the faithful Christians of the Royal City on Macha's Height. How greatly the old man loved his pupil St. Patrick, and how tenderly he was attached to him, is shown by the old story which tells that after death the soul of Old-Patrick did not ascend to heaven, but waited for the death of his beloved *dalta*, and then both ascended in joy and glory to their thrones in heaven. This is a clear, consecutive story, proved to be true by the brief statements in our annals; and it shows also that Old-Patrick had no doubt a very meritorious but, at the same time, only a very subordinate part in the great work of the conversion of Ireland.

If further proof were needed, that it is to St. Patrick, and to him alone, the great work of the conversion of Ireland

must, as a whole, be ascribed, we can find it in the Confession of the Saint, and in the express testimony of all our ancient authorities without exception. To this view of the case, however, we can at present make only very brief reference.

### III.—THE GREAT ST. PATRICK.

ST. PATRICK appears greatest, where he is humblest, in his own Confession. No competent Irish scholar has ever ventured to question the authenticity of this work, because it bears on all things the stamp of its own genuineness. It never could in any hypothesis be conceived as the work of a forger or impostor, because its author was manifestly a saint like Paul. Now, throughout the Confession, the Saint, though speaking like St. Paul in self-defence and with the utmost humility, represents the conversion of Ireland as his own work through the goodness and mercy of God. "I am," he says, "greatly the debtor of God, who has given to me this great grace, that through me many peoples should be born again unto God, and that clerics should be everywhere ordained for them—a nation lately coming to the faith whom God has raised up at the very ends of the earth." And a little further on he describes the Irish as a people who never before had any knowledge of God, and up to that time had always worshipped idols and unclean things, but now are become the people of the Lord, and sons of God—nay, the sons of the Scots and the daughters of their kings are seen to become monks and virgins of Christ. In these passages, therefore, the Apostle describes the entire conversion of the Irish nation as his own work through the grace of God.

And again he describes how he spent himself in their service.—'Amongst you I went everywhere for your sake, in many dangers, even to the uttermost parts, beyond which no one dwells, and where no one had ever come to baptise or ordain clerics, or confirm the people, but through the gift of God, diligently and willingly for your salvation I have regenerated all.' And therefore he prays so earnestly that it may never happen that he should lose any of those souls whom he had won for God at the end of the world. Whoever admits the authenticity of the Confession must also admit that there was only one Patrick, who, by the special grace and calling of God, converted the Irish nation.

And it was always the conviction of the Irish nation testified throughout all their history, that there was one and only one Patrick to whom they owed their conversion, and whom they have always loved with a passionate yearning love. Such love does not take a historical shadow for its

object ; it is born of a living reality, and can only grow up around a great historical figure brought into the most intimate relations with the whole nation. The pilgrimages to Armagh, to Croaghpatrick, to Lough Derg, of which all our history is full, testify to the historical individuality of our great father in Christ. The references in the Lives of our early saints and our national Annals tell the same story. The very wells—the holy wells in all parts of Ireland that bear the name of Patrick—would alone be sufficient to prove that there was one great saint who blessed them, who used them, who baptised the people in their limpid waters, and whose name has ever since been kept in the memory of the people by annual pilgrimages to the fountains sanctified by his presence and his blessing.

#### IV.—PATRICK JUNIOR.

OF Patrick Junior we know little for certain. He is said to have been the son of Deacon Sannan—St. Patrick's only brother, according to the Scholiast on Fiacc's Hymn. Jocelyn assures us that after the death of his holy uncle he returned to Britain, and retired there to the ancient and famous monastery of Glastonbury where he wrote his Life of St. Patrick. Colgan identifies it as the Second amongst the Lives published by himself, and remarks that the writer was well skilled in the Irish language, for he uses several Gaelic phrases, and must have written after the death of St. Patrick, since he describes the Saint as being sixty years when he came to preach in Ireland, and spending sixty more in this country before his death.<sup>1</sup> In its present form the Life is incomplete, but so far as it goes it is of great historical value. From a reference the author makes to Fiacc, it would appear he survived that saint, and must therefore have lived somewhat later than 510, the probable year of Fiacc's death.

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<sup>1</sup> Ch. 22.



## APPENDIX V.

### THE RELICS OF ST. PATRICK.

WE use the word 'Relics' here in its widest sense to include all those things that are specially worthy of veneration on account of their intimate connection with our National Apostle. They are of two classes, (1) the *martra*, or corporeal relics of the Saint; and (2) the *minna* or extrinsic relics which are worthy of veneration because they were the personal implements used by the Saint in discharge of his duties, and hence came to be regarded as the insignia or symbols of his high office as the Head of the Irish Church. Hence, also, these holy *minna*, sanctified by the use of the Saint, came to be held in the highest veneration, and, as the sacred symbols of the primatial office, were regarded as indispensable for the exercise of the primatial functions. The prelate who had the *minna* of St. Patrick in this way came to be regarded as the true comarb of Patrick; without them no one was regarded as his lawful successor.

The most venerable of the *minna* of St. Patrick, from this point of view, was the Staff of Jesus.

#### I.—THE STAFF OF JESUS, OR BACHALL-IOSA.

The early history of this most venerable relic has been admirably summed up by Colgan in a special dissertation on the subject. It is not long, but it is clear and accurate so far as it goes.

Following the chronological order, the earliest writer who refers to the Staff of Jesus is probably the author of the Third Life. He merely states that Patrick 'having set out on his journey to Rome went to a certain hermit, who dwelt in a certain place; from him Patrick received the Staff, which had been in the hand of Jesus Christ, our Lord, that under its guidance or companionship he might be prosperous in his (missionary) journey, and the Staff remains to this day in the City of Armagh, and is called the Baculus Jesu, or Staff of Jesus.'

It will be noticed that the writer here does not determine in any way the place where the person from whom Patrick received the Staff dwelt, beyond saying that he was a hermit dwelling in a certain place.

The Fourth Life goes further, and says that Patrick on his voyage through the Tyrrhene Sea 'received the Staff

of Jesus from a certain youth who dwelt in a certain island, and there had given hospitality to Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> It adds, however, that the Lord spoke to Patrick on the mountain, and commanded him to come to Ireland. The 'island' and the 'youth' are not determined; but the statement of a special command given to Patrick by our Lord himself is strikingly borne out by his own words in the Confession, where he says that Christ the Lord commanded him to come to Ireland and spend the rest of his life with his converts in that country.<sup>2</sup>

Jocelyn amplifies these brief accounts,—saying that the hermit or solitary was one Justus in name and in deed, that he gave to Patrick the Staff which the Lord Jesus, who had appeared to him, held in His own hand, and ordered to be given to Patrick as soon as he came to the island. There were other solitaries also, he adds, in the island, some young and some old, but all dwelling apart; the younger hermits told Patrick that they used to give hospitality to all comers, and on one occasion they gave it to a Person who had the Staff in His hand, and this Person said, after partaking of their hospitality, "I am Jesus Christ, whose members you have been ministering to, even as now you have done to Myself"—thereupon He gave the Staff which He held in His hand to their superior, with instructions to give it to a certain stranger called Patrick who would come there in later times.—Having thus spoken He ascended into Heaven, but He left to them of that generation the gift of perpetual youth in reward of their charity; whilst the peaceful old men whom Patrick saw were their children, who did not enjoy the same privilege. So Patrick took the Staff from the Elder, and having remained for some days with the holy solitaries bade them farewell and went on his way rejoicing.

It will be observed here that there is no question of a personal appearance of our Saviour to Patrick, nor any special mandate given to him to preach the gospel in Ireland.

But the Tripartite gives a fuller, and perhaps, more satisfactory, explanation than any of the other Lives. According to this venerable authority Patrick on his voyage through the Tyrrhene Sea came to a certain island, and found there a new house, in which a young married couple dwelt, but he saw also an old woman scarcely able to crawl along

<sup>1</sup> *Hospitium Christo, tribuente*—the participle appears to be the present, but the reference is clearly to the past.

<sup>2</sup> *Et non ego sed Christus Dominus, qui mihi imperavit ut venirem esse cum illis residuum ætatis meæ.* The construction is patrician.

the ground. The young man then informed him that long ago when exercising hospitality they had received Jesus Christ Himself as their guest, that He, in return for their charity, gave them and their house a blessing, which preserved both from decay, but that the blessing was not given to their children, who were not then born. In consequence the children grew old in the ordinary way, and the old crone whom he saw was the granddaughter of the speaker, that is the daughter of his daughter, who was a still older and more decrepit woman.

The Staff which our Saviour held in His hands He then gave to the young man, His host, with instructions to keep it safely for a certain stranger who would thereafter visit them, and was the destined apostle of Ireland. And so he offered the Staff to Patrick. But Patrick said, "No, I will not take it except the Lord Himself confirms this donation as His own." He then spent three days with them, and thereafter he came to the mountain called Hermon, where the Lord himself condescended to appear to him, and commanded him to preach the Gospel to the Irish people, and at the same time gave him the staff, which is 'now everywhere called the Staff of Jesus,' to be his stay in weakness, and his defence in adversity. Then follows a long catalogue of all the wonders which Patrick had accomplished during his missionary career by the instrumentality of the Staff of Jesus. So far the Lives.

Now, it appears to us the one strong point in this narrative—for it is substantially one narrative—is that the Special Mission from Jesus Christ referred to as given to Patrick, directly or indirectly, is confirmed by his own language in the Confession, for that language undoubtedly implies an immediate supernatural mission from his Divine Master, He who admits this will have little difficulty in admitting that our Lord would at the same time, and naturally, as it were, give him a Crozier to be a proof of that mission, for the Crozier is the symbol of episcopal authority; and if the mission was thus extraordinary and supernatural we might naturally expect that the Crozier too would be given in a supernatural way. Such, at least, was the belief in Ireland down to the time of Henry VIII., for all the authorities admit that the Staff was held in the highest veneration, and all without exception call it the Staff of Jesus—many of them, too, explaining the origin of the name.

St. Bernard first of all calls especial attention to the Crozier, gold-covered and adorned with most precious gems, which Nigellus the pseudo-primate carried off with him from Armagh, and along with the Book of Patrick exhibited as undoubted proofs of his own claim to the primacy. "For,"

he adds, "the foolish people thought that he who possessed these venerable relics was indeed the true successor of St. Patrick."

Gerald Barry, too, refers to the Staff of Jesus as the most famous and wonder-working Crozier in all Ireland. It was by it, he says, that St. Patrick is said to have driven all venomous reptiles from the island; and, although its origin is doubtful, its virtue is undoubted (*certissima*). 'In our times, and by our people, this celebrated treasure has been taken away from Armagh and brought to Dublin.'<sup>1</sup> There for more than 300 years it was preserved and venerated as of old in Armagh. It was kept in the Cathedral of Christ Church until George Browne, the apostate friar and first Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, had it forcibly taken from the Cathedral and publicly burned in High Street, to the great horror and indignation of all the people.

## II.—THE BELL OF THE WILL.

The second of Patrick's *minna* is the Bell of the Will; in later Irish called the Clog-Phadruig. It is one of the three relics of Patrick which were discovered by Columcille in the tomb of the Saint at Downpatrick sixty years after his death, and was assigned by him to the custody of the Church of Armagh. As we know, this statement is made in the Annals of Ulster, under date of the year 552, and the writer quotes as his authority the very ancient Book of Cuana. Why it has been called the Bell of the Will is not stated; but it is supposed to be so called because it is the Bell referred to in an ancient document known as the Testamentum S. Patritii, which assigns this Bell to the custody of the Church of Armagh. Of this Testamentum Patritii we shall have something more to say later on.

In a Paper read before the Royal Irish Academy in 1863 the learned Reeves gives a full account of this Bell of the Will from every point of view. Here we merely summarize his conclusions, as many of the points discussed by him have been already referred to in this work.

In a very ancient poem attributed to Columcille the author refers to this Bell in striking language, which shows the

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<sup>1</sup> We also find similar references made to the Staff by Henry of Saltrey, and also in the Office of St. Patrick (Paris, 1622), but it is unnecessary to quote them here.

reverence in which it was held, and also alludes to its Invention by Columcille in the tomb of St. Patrick :—

My love to thee, O smooth melodious Bell,  
Which was on the Tailcenn's breast ;  
Which was permitted me by the guileless Christ—  
The raising and delivering of it.

I command for the safe keeping of my bell  
Eight who shall be noble, illustrious;  
A priest and a deacon amongst them,  
That my Bell may not deteriorate.

The instructions attributed to Columcille, whether really given by him or not, were faithfully carried out, and to that precaution we, doubtless, owe the preservation of this most sacred Bell down to our own time, as we shall presently see.

The Bell itself is one of the primitive type in Ireland—quadrilateral in shape 'and formed of two pieces of sheet-iron, which are bent over so as to meet, and are fastened together by large-headed iron rivets.' It would appear that, at a later period, it was coated with bronze to preserve the iron from corrosion. 'Its height is, with the handle,  $7\frac{3}{4}$  inches—exclusive of the handle,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The breadth of the crown is 5, and the width  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The entire weight is 3 lbs. 11 oz.' It is at present preserved with its shrine in the National Museum, Kildare Street, Dublin.

The maker of this, the original Bell used by St. Patrick, and bequeathed by him to his Church of Armagh, was, it would appear, the artificer Mac Cecht, one of the three smiths employed by Patrick to make his bells. He had three artificers, as we know from the Tripartite, Mac Cecht, Laeban, and Fortchern—smiths they were for iron work, not cerda, or artificers for the finer work in bronze. The three smiths, however, were members of Patrick's religious family, and, as we have already seen, he gave each of them a church wherein to dwell—whether parochial or episcopal is not stated.

This Bell of the Will, made for Patrick's use by one of his own family, used, too, by himself, for many years in Armagh, if not also elsewhere, to summon his own flock to religious functions, became the symbol of his power, and, in the estimation of his people, its sound was the very voice of Patrick, if not of God himself, calling them to His worship. Hence it also became an object of the highest veneration; and that veneration was greatly intensified when the Bell was found by Columcille on the very breast of Patrick in his tomb, and was by the Saint of Iona restored to the Church of Armagh,

in accordance with the dying wishes of Patrick himself.<sup>1</sup> It thus came to be regarded as one of the great treasures of the church of Armagh; it was one of the symbols of the primatial authority; and, of course, it was preserved with the greatest care and jealousy.

But Armagh was liable to be burned at any time; and was burned often—churches, schools, books, and reliquaries. Hence, at an early date a special keeper was assigned for the safe custody of the Bell of the Will, who was bound to preserve it at all times and in all places, under the most sacred obligation, at the risk of life and limb. Eight persons, amongst them a priest and deacon, the old poem attributed to Columcille prescribes for its safe custody. We know, at least, that an official custodian of the Bell was appointed: that he had lands assigned for his support, and doubtless he had assistants to ensure the safe custody of the precious treasure. He would be bound, *ex-offi io*, to bring the Bell to Armagh on great occasions, and also he was specially bound to accompany the Comarb of Patrick on his official visitations in Ulster, Munster, and Connaught, for without the Bell, and the Staff, and the Canon of Patrick, the primate would not be recognised as the real Comarb of the Saint.

Now, in course of time, the Bell began to grow the worse of the wear, and it became necessary to provide a suitable cover or shrine which would serve at once to protect it from injury, and also show the high veneration in which it was held. So a truly noble shrine was wrought for the Bell of the Will—the joint work of the High King, the Primate, and the ablest artist whom the North of Ireland could produce.

The great work was accomplished in the highest style of artistic beauty. An inscription in uncial letters on the shrine itself tells who were the authors of the work. "It was executed at the expense of the King of Erin, Domnall O'Lachlainn, for the Heir of Patrick (Domnall, son of Amalgaid), for Cathalan O'Maelchalland, Custodian of the Bell; and Cudulig O'Inmainen, with his sons, were the men who made the cover." Though last not least, most skilful wrights, your workmanship to this day is in its own way unapproached and unapproachable.

We need not describe this beautiful cover or shrine at length. It can be seen in Dublin, and reflects the highest credit on all concerned in its execution. It was wrought between

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick died at Saul and was buried at Down. The Ulidians, unwilling to give the Bell to Armagh, caused it to be buried with the Saint. But Columcille, knowing the will of Patrick, had it restored to Armagh.

1090 and 1105, so that no foreign hand had anything to do with it. Of itself it affords a very striking proof of the fertility of design and delicacy of execution of our Celtic artists at the beginning of the 12th century.

Miss Stokes, a very competent authority, describes the shrine as a fine example of goldsmith's work made at the close of the eleventh century. "It is made of brass on which the ornamented parts are fastened down with rivets. The front is adorned with silver-gilt plates, and knot-work in golden filigree. The silver work is partly covered with scrolls, some in alto-relievo, some in bas-relief. It is also decorated with gems and crystal, and on the sides are animal forms elongated and twisted into interlaced scrolls."

"The sides of the shrine are in more perfect condition than the front, owing to the substantial character of the work." And, quoting Stuart's *Armagh* Petrie adds that the left side exhibits above and below the circle which surrounds the handle ornaments of fine gold, representing serpents curiously and elegantly intertwined in most intricate folds, and in various knots. Below the knob and ring by which it is suspended, there are eight serpents, so singularly enfolded and intermingled with one another that it requires minute attention and considerable discrimination to trace each separately, and to distinguish it from its fellows. The whole description is full and accurate, but we cannot reproduce it here.

The O'Mulchallans (O Maelchalland) were, as the inscriptions imply, hereditary keepers or custodians of the Bell of the Will. In virtue of his office the Keeper inherited certain erenach lands belonging to the Church of Armagh as his family property, subject to deprivation by the Primate for failure of the due discharge of the duties of the office. These lands were situated near Stewartstown in the Co. Tyrone, and, as the property of the Keeper of the Bell, were called Baile Chluig or Ballyclog. As one of the high officials of the Church of Armagh the Keeper also enjoyed great consideration, and on more than one occasion he and all his retainers were exempted from the effects of interdicts and other diocesan penalties inflicted on their neighbours. At a subsequent period the Primate transferred the custody of the Bell to the O'Mellans; but it again reverted in the seventeenth century to the representatives of its ancient custodians, who in latter times were known as Mulhollands.

O'Curry thought that the Bell of the Will was identical with that known as the *Finnfaidhech*, or Sweet-sounding, referred to in the Tripartite as the work of Laeban, one of Patrick's three smiths. But Petrie shows that they were two distinct bells, and that the sweet-sounding bell with other relics of St. Patrick were carried off by John de Curci, and the

Bell was never given back to Armagh, although the Canon of Patrick, that is, the Book of Armagh, was returned later on. Most likely the Keeper of the Bell of the Will had it in his own custody, west of Lough Neagh, when John de Curci swooped down on Armagh, and so the beautiful Bell fortunately escaped profanation, if not utter destruction, like the Staff of Jesus at the hands of the English.

The Bell of the Will, like the Cathach of St. Columba and the Misach of Cairnecht, was, it would appear, sometimes used as a battle standard, that is, it was carried within its shrine by the Keeper into the field of battle, in order to secure the special aid of Patrick for those who fought under its protection. It was also used for the ratification of compacts and of solemn promises, the violation of which, if they had been sworn on the Bell of Patrick, was regarded as the profanation of the relic itself, which was sure to bring upon its authors some dreadful chastisement from the dishonoured Saint. For instance, the Annals of Ulster, A.D. 1044.—Niall, King of Ailech, carried off from the men of Hy Meath and Cuailne 1200 cows and a number of captives 'in revenge for the violation of the Bell of the Will.' The avengers in these cases looked upon themselves as authorised by Patrick himself to vindicate his honour and punish the profanation of his *minna*.

### III.—THE CANON OF ST. PATRICK.

The third of the *minna* of the Saint was known as the *Canoin Patraic*, now known as the Book of Armagh, which was always held in the highest veneration as in part at least written by the Saint himself, and, moreover, as the official record of his own Church of Armagh, setting forth Patrick's copy of the whole of the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> the facts of his life, the letters which he wrote, the maxims he inculcated, the chief canons he enacted, the prerogatives of his see, and the bounds of his diocese.

We have elsewhere referred to the contents of this famous volume at some length, so that we need not refer to it here, except very briefly. It is described as a small vellum quarto,  $7\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  in breadth,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  in thickness. The writing is mostly in double columns, and all seems to be the work of the same scribe, Ferdomnach, who died in A.D. 845. But as the scribe wrote, as he tells us himself, at the dictation of Torbach, Heir of Patrick, who held the primacy only for

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<sup>1</sup> The only complete copy coming down from the Scribes of our ancient Irish Church. The rest were all destroyed by the Danes. It also contains the spurious epistle to the Laodiceans.



one year, namely 807, we are forced to infer that the entire volume was written, or rather copied, in that year from an older copy which even then was suffering from the injuries of time. The older MS. in the hands of the Primate was in all probability the original, partly written by St. Patrick himself and partly by Muirchu, Tirechan, and the other original scribes of the venerable records.

Like the other *minna* of Patrick, this volume was held in the greatest veneration as being partly the work of the Saint, and a record of the most ancient and important documents connected with his church. Hence we find that at a very early date it was enshrined in an elaborate *cumdach*, as the Four Masters tell us.

A.D. 937. The Canoin Phadraig was covered by Donchadh, son of Flann, King of Ireland.

This *cumdach* is unfortunately no longer in existence. It was probably seized by John de Curci and his soldiers when they pillaged Armagh, and carried off the Canon of Patrick with many other venerable relics of the primatial church. The Primate himself was made a prisoner also, but he was sent home from Down, and the Canon of Patrick with him—stripped, however, it would seem, of its beautiful cover. That and the other reliquaries were never restored: 'the foreigners have them all to the present time,' adds the annalist. Some of them, however, like the Staff of Jesus, they wantonly destroyed at a later period.

Like the Bell of the Will, the Canon of St. Patrick had its own official custodian or steward. He was called the Maor or Steward, because he had the custody of the book, and, as in the case of the Bell, the office became hereditary in one family; they were allowed large lands for their maintenance, and took their surname from their office. Hence they were known as Mac Moyres—the descendants of the Keeper. Yet—the pity of it—when Oliver Plunket, the noblest Heir of Patrick that ever sat in his chair, was arraigned for high treason in 1681 before a hostile judge and jury in London, it was two of those very Mac Moyres, Florence and his brother John—whom the martyred prelate himself described as 'merciless perjurers'—that swore away his life, for they were amongst the chief faithless witnesses upon whose foresworn testimony he was convicted. And what is perhaps saddest of all, Florence Mac Moyre, at that time the official custodian of St. Patrick's Book, pawned it for the miserable sum of £5 to a Protestant gentleman, Arthur Brownlow, of Lurgan, to enable him to procure money to go to London to swear away the life of the gentle-hearted and blameless Primate. Patrick himself was willing, as he tells us, at any time to give his life for his flock.

Plunket gave it, but it was his own betrayal him the very men whose office obliged them to follow the Heir of Patrick and bear his insignia even unto death.

Mr. Brownlow was, however, a more faithful custodian of the Book of Armagh than its official keepers. He had the Book incased and carefully preserved in his private library down to the year 1853, when it was purchased by the late venerable and learned Dr. Reeves for the sum of £300. Reeves was perhaps the man in all Ireland most fitted to edit and publish the sacred volume, but he did not live to accomplish his task. The Book passed from him to Primate Beresford, a large and liberal-minded prelate, who presented it to Trinity College, Dublin, where it still remains. We understand that Dr. Gwynn, the Regius Professor of Divinity in the University, has continued the labour of Reeves, and that the work is now on the eve of publication.

#### IV.—THE SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK'S HAND.

Another interesting relic of our Saint is the Shrine of his Right Hand, which is at present in secure keeping amongst other sacred relics in the Museum of the Diocese of Down and Connor, at St. Malachy's College, Belfast. This shrine has had a strange and eventful history, to which we can only briefly refer here. On the 9th June, 1186, as we have seen already, Cardinal Vivian, the papal legate in Ireland, had the remains of our three great national patrons translated with all due solemnity to an honourable place prepared for them in the Church of Downpatrick. On this occasion the right hand of St. Patrick was placed in a shrine, and laid upon the High Altar of the church, where it remained till the pillaging of the sacred edifice by Edward Bruce in 1315. The shrine soon, however, found its way into the worthier keeping of a religious family named Magennis, of Castlewellan, with whom it was a precious heirloom for centuries. On the marriage, within comparatively recent times, of an only daughter of that house to a Charles Russell of Killough, it passed to him, and through his second wife to a Colonel Nugent, who fitly transferred it to Father James Taggart, parish priest of Portaferry. This good priest, at his death, left it to Mr. McHenry, of Carrstown, a descendant of the Russell mentioned above.

In 1840 the shrine was taken over by the Most Rev. Dr. Denvir, Bishop of Down and Connor, and deposited by him in the Diocesan Museum at Belfast. On being opened by his Lordship in 1856, the shrine was found to contain only pieces of wood. These probably originally enclosed the

bones of our Saint, which through the centuries had decayed or been removed.

The shrine itself is of massive silver, measures one foot three and a half inches in length, and takes the form of a hand and arm richly clothed in ecclesiastical fashion.

People full of faith in Patrick came from far and near to touch this remarkable shrine, in the hope of gaining, through his intercession, relief in their trying afflictions of mind or body.

## APPENDIX VI.

### THE PATRICIAN PILGRIMAGES.

THERE were in ancient times four famous pilgrimages to places sanctified by the fastings, prayers, and special blessing of St. Patrick, namely, Armagh, Downpatrick, Croaghpatrick, and Lough Derg. The two former, having been for many centuries in the hands of Protestants, have almost ceased to be places of pilgrimage, but the latter are as much frequented in our own times by pious pilgrims as at any time in the past; and of these we propose to give a somewhat fuller account.

#### I.—ARMAGH PILGRIMAGE.

Armagh, as the primatial See of Patrick, was, even during his own lifetime, regarded as the most sacred city of the Gael, because, as Fiace said, it was the seat of Patrick's Spiritual Sovereignty. With the flight of years the other centres of sovereignty in Ireland—Emania, Tara, Ailech, Cashel, and Cruachan—had all become waste and silent, so that the hearts of the people were turned all the more to the great centre of the spiritual authority at Armagh, until the day when Patrick's Heir was driven far from his sacred city, and no Catholic prelate or priest was allowed to dwell within its bounds. There were many circumstances to intensify this feeling. It was by command of God's Angel St. Patrick chose Armagh to be his residence and see. When he was marking out and blessing the site of his Cathedral on the Hill of Macha, the same Angel of God went before him to guide his footsteps and bless the ground with Patrick. On his journey thither, most probably on that occasion, as he neared Armagh, a great stone lay on the narrow road before his chariot, but the angels took away the stone, laying it on one side, where it stood for ages and was called Lec innan Aingel, says the Tripartite. 'And it was from that place, namely from Drumchaili, Patrick blessed Armagh out of his two hands'—not one but both his hands he raised aloft over against Armagh, begging God to give his blessing for all time to the city of his choice; and the Book of the Angel tells us that he 'loved his city of Armagh before all other places.' The same authority tells us that there was a well in the eastern part of the said city of Armagh, and Patrick used to go there to baptise the great multitudes of men and women, who doubtless came thither from all parts.

and to instruct them and cure them ' at the holy well. And there he was before the dawn of day awaiting the crowds when sleep overpowered his wearied limbs, and during his slumber he was favoured with the vision of the Angel, who announced the future greatness of the city and parochia of Armagh, as we have elsewhere explained.

It is no wonder, therefore, that its churches, and wells, and relics, and ramparts, all so intimately associated with Patrick, and so specially blessed by him and his guardian Angel, should become a favourite place of pilgrimage for all the children of the Gael.

We find, for instance, frequent reference in the *Annals* to princes and prelates from different parts of Ireland who died on their pilgrimage at Armagh. It is well known that in 1004 the great Brian Boru, the Emperor Scotorum, accompanied by the princes of Ireland, though warring at the time against the north, went in a penitential spirit to Armagh, and laid an offering of twenty-two ounces of gold on Patrick's altar. His secretary at the same time made an entry in the *Book of Armagh* in which he formally recognised, on behalf of his master, the supremacy of Patrick's see over all the land of Erin, including his own Southern province of Cashel or Maceria, as he somewhat quaintly renders the Irish name into Latin.

But in after ages, when Armagh fell into the hands of the English and became the residence of the Protestant primate, who had no love for shrines or pilgrimages, it was no longer possible to visit Armagh as a pilgrim. Catholic antiquaries might visit the city and the Cathedral of Patrick, but they dare not kneel to say a prayer lest they should be summarily expelled from its precincts. All that has been happily changed; and once more the pious pilgrim who comes to Armagh to honour Patrick will find new temples and shrines and altars, if not holier, certainly more beautiful and artistic than ancient Armagh ever saw in the palmiest days of its chequered history.

## II.—DOWNPATRICK PILGRIMAGE.

In Catholic times, Down, like Armagh, was a place of frequent pilgrimage to honour the tomb of St. Patrick. Even so early as the time of Columcille, who discovered and opened the tomb of Patrick, we find this pilgrimage was in vogue. Later on, when we are told that the relics of Brigid and Columcille himself were interred in the same tomb, the pilgrimage became still more celebrated. Although it would appear there was always some doubt as to the exact location of the tomb, there was never any doubt amongst the ancients

that the Saint was buried somewhere within the Cathedral precincts on the Hill of Downpatrick. As we have discussed this question more fully elsewhere in the Appendix on the Burial-Place of St. Patrick, we need not refer to it here. We have also referred at length to the two-fold invention of the relics of Patrick at Down, which was a great stimulus to the pilgrimage.

When the place passed into Protestant hands the pilgrimage practically came to an end: for the persecuted Catholics dared not venture into the enclosure of the Cathedral to pray over the grave of the beloved Saint. But it was never wholly given up, and still there is a grave in the churchyard said, on very poor authority, to be the grave of the three saints, whose relics were transferred there from the Protestant Cathedral, which is frequently visited by pilgrims, especially by those about to emigrate, who usually carry off a small portion of the blessed clay to their distant homes in America or Australia. We may venture to hope that their beloved Saint in heaven will not be insensible to this tender devotion, and will watch over them in far off lands, as, he tells us himself, God's Angel, Victor, watched over him in the land of his captivity.

### III.—CROAGHPATRICK PILGRIMAGE.

This famous pilgrimage had its origin in the fact that Patrick spent one whole Lent of forty days and nights on Cruachan Aigle, the beautiful conical hill that rises over the sea on the southern shore of Clew Bay. We have already given a full description of the hill itself; it only remains for us here to indicate the principal points connected with Patrick's sojourn on the 'Holy Mountain' which have rendered it so sacred a place in the estimation of all the people in the West of Ireland.

It would appear from the narrative in the Book of Armagh that Patrick went first from Aghagower to Murrisk, at the base of the mountain. There his car-driver, Totmael the Bald One, sickened and died, rather suddenly it would appear, and there they buried him in the ancient Irish fashion, raising a great cairn of stones over his grave, which is, we believe, still to be seen. The simple people of Murrisk had at the time little or no idea of a resurrection of the dead; so Patrick, standing by the great cairn, said—"Let him rest there until the world's end, but he will be visited by me in those last days"—and raised from the dead.<sup>1</sup>

Thereafter, Patrick, we are told, ascended the summit of

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<sup>1</sup> The ancient graveyard is there still, beside a small stream; hence it is called Glas-Patraic, and is the undoubted site of Totmael's grave.

the mountain, and remained upon it forty days and forty nights—that is the whole of Lent—but as a fact he spent more than forty days and forty nights on the Holy Hill, for he ascended it, we are told, on Shrove Saturday, *i.e.*, the Saturday before Ash Wednesday, and remained there until Holy Saturday, the eve of Easter Sunday. We can even fix the exact year and the day of the month on which St. Patrick ascended the Reek. The Annals of Ulster, under date A.D. 441, have this important entry—‘Leo ordained 42nd Bishop of the Church of Rome, and Patrick the Bishop was approved in the Catholic Faith.’ There is also a sentence in the Tripartite Life which helps to explain this entry. It is this—‘When Patrick was on Cruachan Aigle (that is on the Reek), he sent Munis (his nephew) to Rome with counsel for the Abbot of Rome’—that is the Pope—‘and relics were given to him’ to carry home to Patrick.

Now, St. Leo the Great was consecrated Pope in Rome on the 29th September, in the year A.D. 440. Croaghpatrick was a long and, at that time, a very difficult journey from Rome, so that news of the new Pope’s election could hardly reach Patrick in the far West before the early Spring of the following year. As soon as the news did reach him on the Reek, he felt it his duty to send off at once his own nephew, Bishop Munis, to congratulate the new Pope, to give an account of his own mission and preaching, and to beg the Pope’s blessing and authorisation to continue his work. This authority Munis readily received from the Pope, with many relics for the consecration of the altars in the new churches which Patrick was founding in Ireland, and we hear of him on his return journey at Clonmacnoise. That is the meaning of the phrase—that ‘Leo was ordained 42nd Bishop of Rome, and Patrick the Bishop was approved in the Catholic Faith’ in Ireland. It is an exceedingly important statement and, as might be expected, Protestant writers have not called attention to its full meaning. It is a very interesting fact connected with the history of this Holy Mountain that it was from its summit St. Patrick sent this wise message to Rome, and got back the Pope’s blessing.

The Tripartite tells us that during the time Patrick was on the Reek, he abode there in much discomfort, without drink and without food, from Shrove Saturday to Holy Saturday. There can be no doubt the Saint must have spent those days on the great mountain’s summit in much discomfort. He was exposed, day and night, to all the fury of the elements—wind and rain, sunshine at times, but not improbably much snow and hail also, in the early months of spring. He had the poor shelter of four stones round about him; and at night, when he sought to rest, his head was pillowed on a flag, the

five stones making the shape of a rude cross—great discomfort surely of body, and no doubt, too, much anguish of mind; but it is by the cross the saints reach their glory. Hence, all our ancient writers compare Patrick on the Reek to Moses on Mount Sinai. Both were bidden by God's angel to spend the forty days upon a holy hill; both fasted and prayed for their people: both fought against demons and druids; both, it is said, lived to the same great age of 120 years, and the sepulchre of both, the exact spot, no man knows—for, although we know that Patrick was buried at Downpatrick, the exact spot has been unknown for many ages, even from the day of his burial, since it was deliberately concealed lest his body might be stolen. There can be no doubt, too, that Patrick suffered much anguish of spirit on the Reek. He was fasting in prayer for his people, over whom the demons of paganism had ruled so long; and the demons resolved, so far as they could, to tempt and torment him. They tempted Christ himself, as we know—why not try to tempt his apostle? They covered the whole mountain top in the form of vast flocks of hideous black birds, so dense that Patrick could neither see sky nor earth nor sea. They swooped down upon him and over him with savage beaks and black wings; they filled the air with discordant screams, making day and night horrible with their cries.

Patrick chanted maledictive psalms against them to drive them away, but in vain; he prayed to God to disperse them, but they fled not; he groaned in spirit, and bitter tears coursed down his cheeks, and wet every hair of the priestly chasuble which he wore—still prayers and tears were in vain. Then he rang his bell loudly against them—it was said its voice had always power to drive away the demons—whereupon they gave way, and to complete their rout, he flung the blessed bell amongst them, and then they fled headlong down the side of the mountain, and over the wide seas beyond Achill and Clare, and were swallowed up in the great deeps, so that for seven years no evil thing was found within the holy shores of Ireland. The bell itself, rolling down the mountain, or from the excessive ringing, had a piece broken out of its edge, although such bells were made of wrought iron or bronze; but an angel brought it back again to Patrick, and when dying he left it to Brigid—who prized it greatly—hence it was called Brigid's Gaping, or Brigid's Broken Bell. This is a very ancient tale, and you may believe as much of it as you please. If it should seem strange why the voice of the bell should have more virtue than Patrick's prayers and tears, let us remind you that it was Patrick's Bell, the symbol of his spiritual authority, and, as it were, the voice of his supernatural power.



The bells from the earliest days in the Western Church were blessed, or, as it came to be said later on, they were baptised—that is sprinkled with holy water and salt, and anointed with the holy Chrism, and had a special name given to them. The very oldest form of blessing that we have shows that the bells were not only used for calling the people to the Divine Offices in the Church, but their sound was regarded also as powerful to drive away demons, and repel storms and lightning. In Ireland these blessed bells were especially esteemed; and one of them was always regarded as an essential part of the equipment of Bishop or Abbot. He was to have a bell, a book, a crozier or *bachul*, and a *menistir* or chalice, with its *paten*, and an altar stone; and when St. Patrick had St. Fiacc consecrated Bishop of Sletty, he gave him a case containing all these four articles. This explains why the voice of the blessed bell was so powerful, and why the demons could not bear its sound or its presence. The voice of Patrick's bell on the holy mountain was, as it were, the voice of God proclaiming the routing of the demons and the victory of the Cross. And hence, it is said in some of the Lives that all the men of Erin heard the voice of Patrick's Bell on the Reek—sounding the triumph of the Cross—and from the same lone height, in one sense at least, it may be said that its voice is still heard over all the land. It was heard on the 16th August just passed; and with the blessing of God the voice of Patrick's Bell will be heard every year by all who dwell along these western shores, far over land and sea. It is no new sound; it verily and indeed is the voice of Patrick's Bell that you will hear coming down to us through the ages, and sounding once more from the Reek over all the land.

In the might of God, and by the power of God, Patrick drove off the demons from the Reek and from the West—let us hope for ever. He was victorious, but worn out after the long conflict, and his Angel Victor suggested that he might now leave the sacred Hill and return to Aghagower to celebrate Easter.

And to console Patrick the whole mountain summit was filled with beautiful white birds, which sang most melodious strains: and the voices of the mountain and the sea were mingled with their melody; so that the Reek became for a time, as it were, the paradise of God, and gave one a foretaste of the joys of heaven. "Now get thee gone," said the Angel, "you have suffered, but you have been comforted. These white birds are God's saints and angels come to visit you and to console you; and the spirits of all the saints of Erin, present, past, and future, are here by God's high command to visit their father, and to join him in blessing all this

land, and show him what a bountiful harvest his labours will reap for God in this land of Erin." The Book of Armagh goes no further, but the Tripartite and the later authorities add much more.

Taking Colgan's version of the narrative, he tells us that God's angel promised to Patrick that through his prayers and labours as many souls would be saved as would fill all the space over land and sea so far as his eye could reach—more numerous far than all the flocks of birds he beheld. Furthermore, by his prayers and merits seven souls every Thursday and twelve every Saturday were to be taken out of Purgatory until the day of doom; and thirdly, whoever recited the last stanza of Patrick's Hymn in a spirit of penance would endure no torments in the world to come. Moreover he prayed, and it was granted to him, that as many souls should be saved from torments as there were hairs in his chasuble, also that those Whitely Stokes calls the Outlanders should never obtain permanent dominion over the men of Erin; that the sea would spread over Ireland seven years before the judgment day, to save its people from the awful temptation and terrors of the reign of Antichrist; and that Patrick himself would be like the Apostles over Israel, and judge the men of Erin on the Last Day; and this too was granted, but not without great difficulty. Such is the substance of the wrestling of Patrick on the Holy Hill, and the wonderful favours he obtained for the men of Erin by his strong prayers. What wonder, then, that the Reek has been esteemed the holiest hill in all Erin; that it has been from the beginning a place of pilgrimage, and that somehow an idea has got abroad that whoever did penance, like Patrick, on this Holy Hill would have his special blessing, and by the powerful prayers of the Saint, escape eternal punishment?

But Patrick was not content with praying for his beloved flock, and watching over them during his own life: he left holy men of his family, it is said, to watch over the men of Erin until the Day of Doom. One he left, first of all, on the Reek itself, to watch over all this western land and over the islands of the main, and his bell, they say, is often heard, although he himself cannot be seen. Another he left on Ben Bulbin, which, after the Reek, is the most beautiful hill in Erin, and he watches over the north-west; a third he left on Slieve Donard, who gave his name to that grand mountain overlooking all the north-east; a fourth on Drumman Breg, to watch over the plains of Meath; a fifth at Clonard, and a sixth on Slieve Cua, the great ridge overlooking at once the plains of Tipperary and the beautiful valley of the Blackwater. Well, all we can say is, if the men of Patrick's family

have not kept watch and ward on these lonely heights for the past fourteen hundred years, God's Angel-guardians have done it; for, otherwise, the Irish race and the faith of St. Patrick would have been utterly rooted out of the land.

It is a common belief that it was from the Reek that St. Patrick drove all the poisonous reptiles and serpents into the sea, so that none has ever since been found in Erin. We find no trace of this ancient tradition in the Book of Armagh or in the Tripartite, or other more ancient Lives of the Saint. Still the tradition is very ancient.

Jocelyn, in his Life of St. Patrick, written towards the close of the twelfth century, expressly states that from the day the Saint blessed the Reek, and from the Reek all the land of Ireland, with all the men of Erin, no poisonous thing has appeared in Ireland. Patrick expelled them all by the strength of his prayers, and the virtue of the Staff of Jesus which he bore in his hand.

Gerald Barry, who wrote some years later, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, refers to the same popular belief as almost universal. He himself, however, does not attribute the absence of all poisonous reptiles to the power of Patrick and his crozier. He says rather that it is due to certain properties in the air and in the soil of the land which render it fatal to all venomous things; and he quotes Venerable Bede, who wrote in the eighth century and states the same. The Welshman declares, furthermore, that if anything poisonous was brought from other lands, it perished at once, when it touched the soil of Ireland. We will not attempt to settle this controversy, or decide on the truth of the alleged facts. For eight hundred years at least the popular voice has attributed this immunity to the merits of St. Patrick and his blessing of Ireland from the Reek. That he drove away the demons of infidelity and paganism, corporeal or incorporeal, cannot be questioned; and Jocelyn says he drove away the toads and serpents also, in order that the demons, if they returned, might have no congenial abode in which to take refuge.

Patrick having received all these great favours from God descended the mountain on Holy Saturday, and returned to Aghagower, where he celebrated the great Easter festival with his beloved friends, Senach the Bishop, Mathona the Nun, and Aengus the student, who was then learning his catechism and his psalms.

It is hardly necessary to observe that pilgrimages for the purpose of visiting in a spirit of faith and penance holy places sanctified by the penance and by the labours of our Saviour and His Saints, have been in use from the earliest days of Christianity, and will continue to the end of time. They

are the natural outcome of Christian piety, and they have always proved to be a most efficacious means of enlivening Christian faith and deepening Christian devotion. Pilgrimages to the sacred scenes in the Holy Land were made long before the time of St. Helena, and, one way or another, are still made every year by members of every Church that calls itself Christian.

Now, we find the pilgrimage to the Reek existing from the very beginning. The ancient road by which the pilgrims crossed over the hills from Aghagower to the Reek can still be traced, worn bare, as it were, by the feet of so many generations of Patrick's spiritual children. No doubt the celebrity and sanctity of the place in popular estimation arose not only from the fact that St. Patrick prayed and fasted there for forty days, and blessed the hill itself, and the people, and all the land from its summit, but also from the promise of pardon said to be made in favour of all those who performed the pilgrimage in a true spirit of penance. In the Tripartite Life the first privilege St. Patrick is said to have asked and obtained from God, is that any of the Irish who did penance even in his last hour would escape the fire of hell. That is, no doubt, perfectly true, if there be real penance; but in popular estimation it came to mean that penance at the Reek was an almost certain means of salvation, through the influence of the prayers, example, and merits of Patrick. Moreover, if any sinners were likely to obtain the special favour of the saint, it would be those who trod in his sacred footsteps, praying and enduring, where he himself had prayed and endured so much. This is a perfectly sound and just view. Penance—sincere penance—performed anywhere will wash away sin, even in the latest hour of a man's life; but the penance is far more likely to be sincere, and the graces from which it springs are far more likely to be given abundantly, in the midst of those places which Patrick sanctified, and through the efficacy of his intercession for such devoted disciples. He prayed for all the souls of Erin; but, naturally enough, he prays especially for those who honour, and love, and trust him. On the soundest theological principles, therefore, a pilgrimage to the Reek is likely to be a most efficacious means of obtaining mercy and pardon through the prayers and merits and blessings of Patrick. And Colgan tells us, in a note to the promise referred to above, that the Reek was constantly visited by pious pilgrimages with great devotion, from all parts of the Kingdom, and many miracles used to be wrought there. That was some three hundred years ago. But the pilgrimage was an old one many centuries before the time of Colgan, for Jocelyn tells us in the twelfth century that crowds of people were in

the habit of watching and fasting on the summit of the Reek, believing confidently that by so doing they would never enter the gates of hell, for 'that privilege was obtained from God by the prayers and merits of St. Patrick'—and that hope is no doubt the chief motive of the pilgrimage. Even in those ancient days it was considered a great crime to molest any persons on their way to the Reek; and we are told in the Annals of Loch Ce that King Hugh O'Connor cut off the hands and feet of a highwayman who sought to rob one of the pilgrims. Sometimes, too, the pilgrims suffered greatly, like St. Patrick, not only on their journey thither, but on the Reek itself. St. Patrick's Day also, being within Lent, was a favourite day for the pilgrimage, and we are told in the Annals 'that thirty of the fasting folk' perished in a thunder storm on the mountain in the year A.D. 1113, on the night of the 17th of March. But like those who die in Jerusalem on pilgrimage, no doubt their lot was considered a happy one.

It was doubtless the hardships and dangers attendant on the pilgrimage to such a steep and lofty mountain that induced the late Archbishop, Most Rev. Dr. MacEvilly, to apply to the Pope for authority to change the place of pilgrimage to some more convenient spot. The petition was granted on the 27th May, 1883, and at the same time a plenary indulgence was granted on any day during the three summer months to all who would visit the church designated by the Ordinary; and a partial indulgence of 100 days for every single visit paid to that church during the three months named—June, July, and August. There is nothing, we believe, to prevent the Ordinary still 'designating' the little oratory<sup>1</sup> on the summit of the mountain, and we did so last Summer, with very wonderful results. We should not wish to see this ancient pilgrimage discontinued. We know His Eminence Cardinal Moran is of the same mind. Moreover, it is practically impossible to transfer the scene of such pilgrimages to other places, and so it has proved here. The blessing of God and Patrick has been on the ancient pilgrimage, and on the pilgrims too. It will be with them still, and, for our part, we shall authorise the celebration to take place every year on the very summit of the Reek; and we believe it will bring graces and blessings to all those who ascend in fact and make the pilgrimage, or if they cannot

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<sup>1</sup> That little oratory called Templepatrick was a small shed, built of dry stones, and open to the wind. The author and his administrator, Rev. M. M'Donald, of Westport, have just completed a new oratory, solidly built of concrete, which will be dedicated on July 30, as these sheets are going through the press. It will, of course, be also called Templepatrick, and will be dedicated to our national Apostle.

ascend in fact, will ascend in spirit with the pilgrims to pray on Patrick's Holy Mountain. We can say for ourselves, that the vision of this sacred hill has been constantly before our mind for many years during all our Irish studies. We have come to love the Reek with a kind of personal love, not merely on account of its graceful symmetry and soaring pride, but also because it is Patrick's Holy Mountain—the scene of his penance and of his passionate yearning prayers for our fathers and for us. It is to us, moreover, the symbol of Ireland's enduring faith; and, fronting the stormy west, unchanged and unchangeable, it is also the symbol of the constancy and success with which the Irish people faced the storms of persecution during many woeful centuries. It is the proudest and the most beautiful of the everlasting hills that are the crown and glory of this western land of ours. When the skies are clear and the soaring cone can be seen in its own solitary grandeur, no eye will turn to gaze upon it without delight.—Even when the rain clouds shroud its brow we know that it is still there, and that when the storms have swept over it, it will reveal itself once more in all its calm beauty and majestic strength. It is, therefore, the fitting type of Ireland's Faith, and of Ireland's Nationhood, which nothing has ever shaken, and with God's blessing nothing can ever destroy.

As might be expected, the country around the Reek is teeming with living traditions of our Saint. One who has dwelt in the midst of them from his earliest years<sup>1</sup> supplies us with a few that may be of interest to our readers. In the first place we shall give the unwritten 'Order of the Croaghpatrick Station,' as he himself has learned it:—

At the base of the cone of the mountain, as one ascends from Murrisk, or from Aghagower, is met the first 'garden,' or heap of stones. Around this the pilgrim, provided with seven pebbles for the purpose of counting his circuits, walks barefooted seven times, all the while repeating appropriate prayers—generally the Rosary. He then, wearing his shoes, if he so desires, struggles to the summit, and there, starting from the little chapel, walks barefooted around a beaten pathway, saying his Rosary as before. Instead of the fifteen rounds barefooted, one round on bare knees will suffice. This done, the pilgrim approaches the altar of the oratory of Templepatrick on his bare knees.

The next portion of the station consists in going to the second 'garden,' which is on the west, or Lecanvey side of the Reek, where there are three piles of stones, round all of which, taken together, the pilgrim walks barefooted, all the while praying, and then seven times in like manner around each of the piles taken separately. Thus the station is finished. Many pilgrims, however, finish by a visit to Kilgeever Well, but this is not part of the Croaghpatrick station.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rev. James Campbell, till lately Prefect of Studies at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam.

Our informant vouches for the truth of the following remarkable example of filial devotion, and of faith in the power of Patrick :

About 30 years ago a respectably dressed man, carrying a bag, came to a house at the foot of the mountain, and begged lodging for the night, which was willingly given. He manifested the greatest anxiety about the bag, which, it was noticed, he never allowed from his own keeping. On being questioned regarding his conduct he frankly gave his explanation. The bag contained the bones of his mother, who died some years before in America. The good woman had, it appears, some time before her death, promised to perform a station upon the Reek, but the hand of death forestalled her pious intention. Her devoted son was determined the promise should be kept, as far as possible, and so, bearing the mortal remains of his dead mother upon his shoulder, he himself therewith made the station upon the Holy Mountain.

#### MURRISK PATRON.

When St. Patrick came down from the mountain, on Holy Saturday, it is said that he and his followers knelt to give thanks in a field at the foot, now called the 'Old Patron Field.' It is immediately to the right of the path leading from the public road at Murrisk to the Reek. A 'Patron' is still held in this field to commemorate the Saint's Thanksgiving Prayer.

The road to the Reek is now called 'Boher Na Miasa,' *i.e.*, the Road of the Dishes, because it is said refreshment was there provided for St. Patrick and his people as they came down from the Holy Mountain.

#### THE BLACK BELL.

The Black Bell of St. Patrick used to be exhibited on the top of Croaghpatrick on Garland Friday. A charge of two pence was made to each pilgrim to be allowed to see the Bell, for which they had a very great veneration.

This Bell remained for centuries as an heirloom with an old family named Geraghty. From Murrisk it passed to Curvay, in the parish of Aghagower, where it was purchased, about 1870, by Sir William Wilde, when staying at Roe Island. It is said Sir William presented it to the Dublin Museum. In 1883 it was lent to the British Museum to be shown at the International Exhibition in London in that year.

We have not space to write of many other interesting local traditions, for example, of Patrick's slaughter of the White Bull, which led to the conversion of the chieftain, Carn Dhu, on the last Friday in July, now called 'Garland Friday'; of the bringing to life of Glashna, at a place called Glashpatrick near the sea-shore; of the remarkable faith and the devoted attachment to Patrick's holy mountain of Robert Benn—or 'Bob of the Reek,' as he was known to all the country around—a modern stylite, who voluntarily spent the last fifteen years of his life as much as possible upon Croaghpatrick, and whose mortal remains at present

rest upon its highest summit.<sup>†</sup> Near to the grave of this holy man, the chapel of St. Patrick is at present rising in simple grandeur—a fitting crown upon the head of our Irish Mount Sinai.

#### IV.—LOUGH DERG PILGRIMAGE.

##### I.—THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF LOUGH DERG.

From Pettigoe, 'the honestest little town in all the North,' which snugly nestles between three of those low, round, fertile hills so characteristic of Ulster scenery, the road runs nearly due north, for four miles, to Lough Derg. We started from the village early, and walked to the lake. As you advance into Donegal, the land looks colder and more barren, the houses grow less frequent, cultivation is confined to scanty patches of potatoes and oats that seemed in no hurry to ripen, even in mid-September. A little further on there are no houses to be seen, and moorland hills rise threateningly in advance, as if to bar the traveller's further progress. You have, however, all the way the companionship of a turbulent and tortuous stream, that plays some curious pranks in its downward journey from its home in the mountains—now running along the road, two or three times crossing it, then receding and disappearing, only to show its noisy and turbid waters a few moments afterwards.

From the hill's crest the entire lake bursts at once upon the view; and a dreary and desolate expanse of water it is, about thirteen miles in circumference, containing 2,140 statute acres. The encircling hills are heathy and barren, rising from 400 to 700 feet above the level of the lake. On the north-east, the superfluous waters force their way through a narrow gorge to join the River Foyle. The hills near the lake are in reality the boundary line between the watershed of northern and southern Ulster. Lough Derg itself supplies the head water of the Foyle, while the stream at our feet flows down to the Erne valley to join the sea at Ballyshannon. The basin of the lake is a huge quarry of the metamorphic rock known as mica slate, or schist, upheaved in ages azoic by some fiery agent, so that the stratification is now almost perpendicular to the surface. It crops up all round the shore, and through the lake into numerous rocky islets and hidden reefs, whose projecting points are sharp as iron spikes, and render the navigation of the lake a matter of great caution.

There is no grandeur in the surrounding scenery; everywhere is the same wilderness of heather, the same dreary

<sup>†</sup> Where they were found by the builders of the new Templepatrick.



moorland hills—no variety in their outline, no steep cliff or bold escarpment to vary the scene, not even a single patch of green to relieve the eye, except in one corner where there is a small, paralysed plantation of stunted Scotch firs. Not a living thing was to be seen when we visited the place—neither man nor beast nor game on the mountains, nor bird on the lake. We were, however, told afterwards that hares and moor-fowl do contrive to live there, and a certain kind of small mountain sheep with long horns and black faces, a leg of whose mutton a hungry man might easily dispose of at a single meal. So much for the *fauna*. There was no *flora* except moss and heather. In fact, nature here clothes herself in sackcloth and ashes; the very aspect of the place induces solemn thought, and makes it meetest shrine for penance. It seemed to us, too, that the bare, whitewashed houses on the 'Station Island' were somewhat out of tone with nature's wild surroundings. Seeing no person to apply to, and unwilling to return with our task unaccomplished, we resolved to try and reach the island ourselves in a boat which we found on the shore. We had nearly succeeded, when the freshening breeze compelled us to desist, and we were very glad to find rest and shelter under the lea of a kind of insular promontory, connected with the shore by a narrow ford, where, fortunately, we were discovered by the owners of the boat, who rowed us up to the island in the teeth of a very stiff wind.

## II.—THE STATION ISLAND

is a mere rock, rising only a few feet above the water, and apparently not much more than half an Irish acre in extent. It is a hundred and twenty yards long, and varies in breadth from twenty to forty yards. There are now two neat churches, St. Patrick's and St. Mary's, St. Patrick's being the 'prison chapel;' a commodious dwelling-house for the three or four priests who reside on the island during 'station time;' an excellent hospice for the pilgrims, and also five or six lodging-houses, where they get some rest and refreshment during their stay—but many never dream of going regularly to bed. These houses are untenanted, but not now uncared for, during the greater part of the year. Their owners only make a small charge per day for such accommodation as they afford. The prison chapel has now taken the place of the original cave called St. Patrick's Purgatory. There are also seven 'penitential beds' of stone between the church and the 'prison.' Their position is marked with much accuracy on Ware's map of the island, drawn more than 200 years ago, and they are dedicated respectively to Saints Patrick, Brigid, Columcille, Brendan, Molaise, Catherine

and Dabeog or Fintan ; the two latter are the patron saints of the island. The Four Masters invariably call Lough Derg 'Termon Dabeog,' or the Abbey-land of St. Dabeog. These stone beds were originally little penitential cells, where the saints of old spent many a weary vigil in prayer and penance. Now they are merely circular spaces paved with stone, or the naked rock, and surrounded by a low wall, about a foot and a half high. The 'station' begins at 'St. Patrick's Bed,' in the centre of which there is an upright circular stone shaft, about four feet high, and eight inches in diameter, with spiral flutings and a plain iron cross fixed on the top. This stone shaft is said to be the genuine 'clogh-oir,' or golden-stone, from which the diocese of Clogher has derived its name. It was originally a pagan idol, and, like Apollo Pythius, seems to have delivered oracular responses, until it was exorcised and blessed by our Apostle. Two circular iron bands, nearly eaten away by rust, lend some colour to the idea that this stone was originally covered with metal plates, which were secured by these iron clamps. This seems to be the only ancient relic in Station Island. There are four inscribed stones in the south wall of the prison chapel; two of them were headstones over the graves of Friar Doherty and Friar M'Grath, whose names are written in English characters of the last century. The third stone contains the names of four of the saints (the remaining names are now undecipherable) to whom the 'beds' are dedicated; but they are written in characters by no means archaic. The 'cave' of Station Island was long ago filled up, and a neat belfry of cut stone is now erected on the spot. Peter Lombard describes from hearsay what that 'cave' or 'prison' was in his time (1620): "A few paces to the north of the church is the cave—a narrow building roofed with stone which could contain twelve, or at most fourteen, persons kneeling two-and-two. There was a small window, near which those were placed who were bound to read the Breviary." Ware marks the spot on his map and gives the dimensions of the cave, 16½ feet long by 2 feet 1 inch wide. "The walls," he says, "were of freestone, the roof of large flags covered over with green turf." It must be borne in mind that this was only an *artificial* 'cave,' constructed, when the 'station' was transferred to this island, in imitation of the genuine cave on Saints' Island, which was the real St. Patrick's Purgatory.

The boatmen also pointed out the rock on the margin of the lake, and within a few paces of the cave, bearing the mark of St. Patrick's knee where he prayed (and where the penitents always conclude the station), when he killed the great serpent who, my informant added, had followed him all the way from Croaghpatrick. Here is the story taken

from an old Irish MS. of the O'Clérighs, and given by O'Connellan in the notes to his translation of the Four Masters :—

“ An extraordinary, monstrous serpent, called the ‘Caol,’ was in the habit of thus passing its time. It came to Finnough (Lough Derg) every morning, where it remained until night, and then proceeded to Gleann-na-Caoile near Lough Erne, and there during the night it consumed a great deal of the produce of that locality until the religious champion of God, St. Patrick, came to Ireland, and, hearing of this monster, he went straight to Finnough, where the serpent then was on an island in the lake, and immediately it took to the water and with its devouring mouth open it set all the lake in commotion . . . and finally directed its course to the shore (of the island) and, opening its mouth, it cast forth its internal poisonous matter, like a shower of hailstones, over the lake, but chiefly towards the place where the Saint and his clergy stood. The Saint, however, having prayed to God, cast his crozier at the serpent, which pierced its breast, so that it turned its back at him, and its blood flowed so profusely that it turned all the water of the lake red. After that St. Patrick said that Finnough (the fair lake) would be called Lough Dearg (the red lake) thenceforth until the Day of Judgment.”

The Bollandist writer calls the Irish a ‘*natio poetarum fabulis facilis credere,*’ and we confess we plead guilty to the soft impeachment so far as to profess our belief that this fanciful legend is founded on a substratum of truth.

Unfortunately, the wind blew so briskly that we tried in vain to reach the Saints' Island, which is two miles to the north-west of Station Island. It is considerably larger than the latter, and was anciently connected with the shore by a wooden bridge. The boatmen pointed out distinctly the site of the old monastery, whose foundations can scarcely now be traced, and on the highest point of the island they showed me where a few trees marked the ancient cemetery in which was the cave called St. Patrick's Purgatory, ‘*quæ est in cæmeterio extra frontem ecclesiæ,*’ says Henry of Saltrey. The ‘cave,’ however, was long ago filled up and its site quite forgotten. Wright tells us in his work on St. Patrick's Purgatory (London, 1824), that a certain Frenchman from Bretagne employed workmen during two summers to discover the original cave, but without success.

## III.—ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY.

The history of this Purgatory of St. Patrick is very curious and interesting. The first recorded account of the place is from the pen of Henry, a Benedictine monk of Saltrey, in Huntingdonshire, England, who wrote a treatise 'De Purgatorio S. Patritii,' about the year 1152. He declares that he received his information from Gilbert, a monk of Luda, or Louth, in Lincoln, who himself received all the details from a certain 'Oenus Miles,' or a soldier-knight called Owen, who served in the armies of King Stephen. Owen was an Irishman, and made a pilgrimage to the Purgatory, all of which he in confidence communicated to Gilbert. Henry of Saltrey adds that Owen's account was confirmed by the testimony of Patrick, third of that name, who was bishop of the place where Lough Derg is situated, and who also declared that 'many of those who visited the cave never returned, and even those who return pine away because of the great torments they suffered.'<sup>1</sup> There is no bishop of the name of Patrick at this time in the lists given by Ware either for the diocese of Clogher or Raphoe. Henry of Saltrey's story is to this effect: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, visibly appearing to Saint Patrick, led him into a desert place, and there showed him a circular cave (fossam rotundam) dark inside, and at the same time said to him, whoever, armed with the true faith, and truly penitent, will enter that cave and remain in it for the space of a day and a night, will be purged from the sins of his whole life—in modern language, obtain a plenary indulgence—and moreover, passing through it, if his faith fail not—(si in fide constanter egisset)—he will witness not only the torments of the damned but also the joys of the blessed." He then adds, that after this vision, St. Patrick in great joy built a church on that spot, and made the *Canons of St. Augustine guardians of the same*, and he surrounded the cave, which is in the church-yard in front of the church, with a wall, and closed it with a—

Dore bowden with iron and stele,  
And locke and key made thereto,  
That no men should the dore undo.

*Metrical Version.*

He gave the key to the prior of the convent, without whose permission no man could enter the cavern. Owen then narrates what he himself witnessed in the cavern—how he met fifteen venerable men clothed in white, who received

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Kelly's notes to *Cambrisensis Eversus*.

him kindly, and told him to act manfully or he would perish body and soul, that he would be assaulted by demons who would by torments strive to drive him back :—

But if they will thee beat or bind,  
 Look thou have these words in thy mind —  
 Jesus, as thou art full of might,  
 Have mercy on a sinful knight.

*Metrical Version.*

So when he was attacked by the demons, who were about to throw him into hell, the invocation of the Holy Name saved him. He then had to cross a *high, narrow, slippery* bridge, called the bridge of the three impossibilities, but strengthened by faith and prayer, he crosses it safely. Next he comes to a bright crystal wall, having a door adorned with gold and jewels, through which he is admitted to the terrestrial paradise where the *unwise* Adam and Eve dwelt when on earth, and where many persons still remain free from sensible pain (a *pœnis liberi sumus*), but not yet admitted to the joys of heaven (*Nondum tamen ad supernam sanctorum lætitiã ascendere digni sumus*). Owen was very anxious to remain there, but was not permitted. Then a 'Bishop' showed him the celestial paradise and the *hill* leading thereto, after which he is let out of the cave, safe and sound, to the great joy of the clergy. His life was ever afterwards changed for the better; he went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and lived many years after his return, when at length he died a holy death.

It cannot be denied that if this is merely an allegory it contains an excellent moral lesson. The Bollandist writer remarks that we must not suppose Owen Miles saw all this '*oculis corporeis, sed imaginationi sunt subjecta quae ita prorsus hominem afficiunt ac si corporeo intuitu fuerunt usurpata*' (Boll. Acta SS. 17 Martii).

Before any person was permitted to enter this cavern—and few even of those who made the pilgrimage had the courage to enter it—it was necessary, in the first place, to get the permission of the bishop by letter addressed to the Prior, and the bishop always dissuaded the pilgrims from attempting it. Having presented the bishop's letter to the Prior, the latter also dissuaded the adventurous individual, but if he persisted in his purpose, he had to remain five days in retreat; then a Requiem Mass was celebrated, at which he received the Holy Communion, and he finally made his will. After these somewhat terrifying preliminaries, if he was still determined to visit the cavern, the clergy, in solemn procession, accompanied him to the pit's mouth, singing the litanies, the Prior unlocked the door, the adventurer

took holy water, signed himself with the sign of the Cross, and entered the cave, which was closed after him. Next day the clergy went again to the pit's mouth; if there was no appearance of the pilgrim, he was given up for lost, but if he did appear, he was taken out, the clergy with great joy conducted him to the church, where he spent fifteen days more in thanksgiving for his deliverance, which was almost regarded as a mark of predestination.<sup>1</sup>

We have not space to discuss whether this alleged vision of St. Patrick was an imposture, or a reality, or a delusion. Lanigan calls Henry of Saltrey's account 'stuff,' which he would not condescend to refute. A Spanish Benedictine, called Feijoo, wrote a treatise against the genuineness of St. Patrick's Purgatory, which was received with great approbation on the Continent. Their arguments may be briefly summed up:—

1. There is no evidence that St. Patrick was ever in Lough Derg at all.

2. There were no Canons Regular of St. Augustine in Ireland before the beginning of the 12th century; and, therefore, they could not have been made guardians of St. Patrick's Purgatory in the 5th century.

3. It is heretical to speak of the terrestrial paradise as the abode of souls, and distinct from Purgatory and Heaven; the II Council of Lyons, and the Council of Florence, according to Feijoo, at least implicitly, condemn this error.

In our opinion these arguments are by no means conclusive. It does not surely follow, because we have no *written* record of the fact, that St. Patrick never visited Lough Derg. Have we written records of all the places he visited during his seven years' sojourn in Connaught? We have a strong and vivid traditional record that he visited Lough Derg, and this tradition is confirmed by Lanigan's own account of how our Apostle, when in the district of Tyrconnell, went back eastward towards Lough Erne, the very place where Lough Derg is situated. We know, too, that our Saint was in the habit of withdrawing to lonely and retired places for the purpose of prayer and penance, and no place could be more suitable for that purpose than an island in Lough Derg.

The Bollandists answer the second objection. It is true there were no Canons Regular in Ireland before Iniar of Armagh introduced them to his great Church of St. Peter and Paul, built about 1126; but as the Canons Regular reformed or re-peopled most of the old Irish monasteries desolated during the Danish wars, the custom gradually grew up of calling their monastic predecessors also in those

<sup>1</sup> *Acta SS., loco citato.*

houses Canons Regular, and even St. Patrick himself was called a Canon Regular, and his festival specially celebrated in their Order. As to the charge of heresy no one expects that the vision of a rough soldier like Owen would conform to strict theological accuracy. The Councils mentioned, too, were held since the time of Henry of Saltrey.

St. Patrick most likely did visit the lake, and may have spent some time in one of the islands, or in this lonely cave. He certainly was frequently favoured with heavenly visions, whether the one recorded by Henry is genuine or not. At any rate the place was sanctified by his presence. St. Dabheoc, who founded a monastery there about the year 490, and his disciples, would follow St. Patrick's example and use the cavern as a *duirtcach*, or solitary praying-cell; 'some had visions, like those recorded, others imagined they had, and, perhaps, some pretended they had;' and thus the origin and history of the cave might easily be explained without insinuating, as Dr. Lanigan does, that St. Patrick's Purgatory on Lough Derg was got up as a rival to Patrick's Purgatory at Croaghpatrick, mentioned by Jocelyn.

Henry of Saltrey's story, improved by Cambrensis after his peculiar fashion, and copied by Mathew Paris, soon made St. Patrick's Purgatory famous all over the Continent. Three metrical French versions of Henry's story were published in the 13th century, and two English ones, one in the 14th and one in the 15th century; copies are in the British Museum. It was celebrated in an Italian romance called 'Guerino detto il meschino,' and Calderon made the 'Purgatorio de San Patritio' <sup>1</sup> famous throughout all Europe. Illustrious pilgrims from every country came in crowds to Lough Derg. It was, like our own, an age of pilgrimages. Great men in those days committed great crimes, for which they had the grace to do rigorous penance. In 1358, Edward III. granted to one Malatesta, a Hungarian knight, and to Nicholas de Brecario, of Ferrara, in Italy, a safe conduct through England, on their way to St. Patrick's Purgatory. Richard II. granted a similar safe conduct to Raymond, Viscount of Perilleux, a knight of Rhodes, with a train of twenty men and thirty horses.<sup>2</sup>

Froissart gives an account of Sir W. Lysle and another knight's visit to the cave when Richard was in England. Raymond of Perhilos, a Spanish nobleman, visited St. Patrick's Purgatory, and his experiences there, even more

<sup>1</sup> One of the first of his works translated by Denis Florence MacCarthy—selected partly, no doubt, for the sake of its subject.

<sup>2</sup> Rhvmer's *Foedera*.

marvellous than those of the knight Owen, are given at length in O'Sullivan Beare. The Four Masters, under date of the year 1516, tell of a French knight, who, on his return from Lough Derg, stopped at Donegal with O'Donnell, and, in return for his generous hospitality, sent him a ship, with large guns, which enabled him to retake the Castle of Sligo from O'Connor Sligo. But it seems the very fame of the place led to abuses.

A Dutch monk, from the monastery of Eymstede, came in pilgrimage to Lough Derg. With great difficulty he got the requisite permission from the Bishops, Prior, and Prince of the territory, to enter the cavern—'omnes enim petierunt pecuniam'—and he had none to give. However, he was let down into the cave by a rope, taking with him a little bread and water; but, whether from a want of faith or of imagination, he saw nothing in the cavern. Going forthwith to Rome, he declared the whole story of the cave was a fraud, and, by way of proof, narrated his own adventures in Lough Derg. Accordingly, in 1494, Alexander VI. issued a Brief, directed to the Guardian of the Convent of Donegal, and the official of the Deanery of Lough Erne, ordering the suppression of the pilgrimage and the destruction of the cave—'quia fuit occasio turpis avaritiæ.' The aforementioned monk was himself the bearer of this Brief to Ireland. On the 17th March, 1497, the orders of the Pope were executed; the pilgrimage was suppressed and the cave destroyed.

Strange to say, the Four Masters, writing little more than a century afterwards at Donegal, make no mention of this suppression. But it is recorded in the Annals of Ulster, by Cathal M'Guire, their author, who was 'Dean of Lough Erne and Deputy of the Bishop for fifteen years before his death,' and who was one of those who aided in the execution of the Pope's order.

The pilgrimage, however, soon revived; very probably it was never wholly suppressed, for we find the visit of the French knight recorded by the Four Masters in 1516. It is not easy, however, to determine when the formal transfer of the station to Station Island took place, or when the guardianship of the place passed to the Franciscans. In Peter Lombard's time the change of place had occurred, but not of guardianship. The Canons Regular were still on Saints' Island, but the Prior of the Purgatory lived on Station Island. It is not improbable that the change took place on the revival of the pilgrimage after the Pope's prohibition. In 1632, some years after the plantation of Ulster by the English and Scotch 'Undertakers,' by order of Adam Loftus and Richard Boyle, Lords Justices, Sir James Balfour and Sir William Steward 'drove the friars from the island, caused



their dwelling to be demolished, and the cell (on Station Island) to be broken open, in which state it hath lain ever since, so that the pilgrimage is now come to nothing,' says Boate (in his *Natural History*), who wrote in Cromwell's time. But as soon as the fury of the persecution had blown over, the pilgrimage was again resumed, for in the 2nd of Queen Anne, it was enacted that—"whereas the superstitions of Popery are greatly increased and upheld by the pretended sanctity of places, and especially of the place called St. Patrick's Purgatory, in the County Donegal, be it enacted that all such meetings shall be deemed riots and unlawful assemblies, and all sheriffs, &c., &c., are hereby required to be diligent in putting the laws in force against all such offenders."

The pilgrimage, however, flourished all through the 18th century. Dr. Burke, the learned author of *Hibernia Dominicana*, who himself visited the island in 1748, and greatly extolled its fame and sanctity, tells us that Benedict XIII. when a cardinal, preached a sermon in Rome, in which he praised and approved of the penitential austerities of Lough Derg.

#### IV.—DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES DURING THE PILGRIMAGE.<sup>1</sup>

'Unless you shall do Penance, you shall all likewise perish.'

—Luke, xiii., 3.

The station commences with a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in St. Patrick's Church.

The pilgrim then proceeds to 'St. Patrick's Cross,' near the same church, and, kneeling, repeats there one Pater, one Ave, and Creed.

Next he goes to 'St. Brigid's Cross,' where, kneeling, he recites three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed.

Then, standing with his back to the Cross, and with outstretched arms, he thrice renounces the devil, the world, and the flesh.

He then makes seven circuits of St. Patrick's Church, repeating in each circuit one decade of the Rosary, and adding a Creed to the last decade.

He next proceeds to the penitential cell, or 'bed,' nearest to St. Mary's Church, called St. Brigid's Bed, and says three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed, whilst thrice making the circuit of this Bed on the outside. The same prayers are repeated while kneeling outside the entrance of the Bed, the same repeated while making three circuits of it on the inside; and the same prayers are repeated while kneeling at the Cross inside the Bed.

The same penitential exercises are performed successively at St. Brendan's Bed, St. Catherine's and St. Columba's.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from Canon O'Connor's learned work, 'St. Patrick's Purgatory.'

Around the large penitential Bed six circuits are then made on the outside, while repeating nine Paters, nine Aves, and one Creed. The Pilgrim then kneels at the first entrance of this Bed, and recites three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed. He next repeats three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed, while making the inside circuit of it; and again three Paters, three Aves, and a Creed, kneeling in the centre. He now proceeds to the second entrance of this Bed (which entrance is the one nearer to St. Patrick's Church), and kneeling, recites three Paters, three Aves, and one Creed. The same prayers are recited whilst making the inner circuit of it; and the same, kneeling in the centre.

The Pilgrim now goes to the water's edge, where five Paters, five Aves, and one Creed are repeated, standing, and the same prayers, kneeling.

After this he returns to St. Patrick's Cross, from which he had first set out; and here says, on his knees, one Pater, one Ave, and one Creed.

He then enters St. Patrick's Church, where the station is concluded by saying five Paters, five Aves, and a Creed for the Pope's intention.

Three stations with the foregoing prayers are performed each day, each station being usually followed by five decades of the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin.

The Pilgrim enters 'Prison' on the evening of the first day, and there makes the stations for the second day by reciting the prayers of each station as already given.

On the second day of the pilgrimage each one goes to Confession. In addition to the foregoing exercises the Pilgrim assists each day at Morning Prayer, Mass, Meditation, Visit to the Blessed Sacrament, Evening Prayer, Sermon, and Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament.

Any information regarding the fast, etc., may be easily obtained on the Island.

The station opens each year on the 1st of June, and closes on the Festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, the 15th August.

There is a large ferry boat which can contain some sixty pilgrims and makes the passage from the main to the island in ten or twelve minutes. The charges are only a few pence.

Pilgrims are strictly interdicted the use of intoxicating drinks upon the island, or within three miles of it, or anywhere during the three days of the Station. They are also forbidden to carry off memorials of any kind, even water from the lake, lest they might give rise to superstitious practices at home.

The fast consists of one meal of meagre food each day, except there is need for some relaxation, which is readily granted by the Prior, who is always in residence during station time. All persons on the island are subject to the Prior, who is himself responsible to the Bishop for the due observance of all rules and regulations made for the proper conduct of the pilgrimage.

One thing is certain: this pilgrimage has done much

during the most disastrous centuries of our history to keep alive in the hearts of the people the spirit of our holy faith and its characteristic practices. Our enemies themselves attest 'how much the superstitions of popery are greatly upheld by the pretended sanctity of that place called St. Patrick's Purgatory, in the County Donegal.' In the midst of a district peopled by the bigoted, transplanted Puritans, the plundered and persecuted pilgrims found a shrine where the poor friars taught them the lesson of patient endurance at the foot of the Cross, and poured into their breaking hearts the cordial of spiritual strength and vitality. And every priest in the neighbouring counties knows well from experience what lasting fruits of penance are to this day produced by a pilgrimage to the holy island. It is, in truth, a sacred spot, that barren rock, rising from dark waters, and surrounded by bleak and frowning hills. The rough stone is worn smooth by the bare knees of the generations of penitents who prayed and fasted there. Many a mile they travelled, poor, toil-worn, and foot-sore, to reach that lonely island. Many a bitter tear of penance was mingled with the waters of the lake. Many a weary vigil they passed in that 'prison' chapel or on those 'beds' of stone. Ay, and many a darkened soul got light, many a sinful, sorrow-laden heart found there abiding consolation. These thoughts thronged our mind as we left the shore sacred to solitude and penance; and the poet's prayer rose unbidden to our lips:—

God of this Irish isle,  
 Blessed and old,  
 Bright in the morning smile  
 Is the lake's fold;  
 Here where thy saints have trod,  
 Here where they prayed,  
 Hear me! O saving God!  
 May I be saved.

#### V.—ST. PATRICK'S WELLS.

The various wells throughout the country associated with the name and work of Patrick are almost countless in number, and they are all more or less places of pilgrimage. We are not in a position now to give a list of these holy wells, but at some future time we may perhaps be able to do so.

## APPENDIX VII.

### TEXT OF ST. PATRICK'S WRITINGS.

#### I.—HIS LATIN WRITINGS.

##### I.—THE CONFESSION.<sup>1</sup>

INCIPIUNT LIBRI SANCTI  
PATRICII EPISCOPI.<sup>2</sup>

HERE BEGIN THE BOOKS OF  
HOLY PATRICK THE BISHOP.

I. Ego Patricius peccator, rusticissimus et minimus omnium fidelium et contemptibilis sum apud plurimos.

Patrem habui Calpornium diaconum, filium quendam Potiti presbyteri, qui fuit uico Bannauem Taberniae. Uillulam enim prope habuit, ubi ego capturam dedi.

Annorum eram tunc fere xii. Deum uerum ignorabam, et Hiberione in captiuitate adductus sum, cum tot milia hominum, secundum merita nostra, quia *a Deo recessimus et praeceptum eius non custodiuimus*, et sacerdotibus nostris non oboedientes fuimus, qui nostram salutem admonebant. Et Dominus *induxit super nos iram animationis suae et dispersit nos in gentibus*

I, Patrick, a sinner, the most rustic and the least of all the faithful, and in the estimation of very many deemed contemptible, had for my father Calpornius, a deacon, the son of Potitus, a presbyter, who belonged to the village of Bannauem Taberniae; for close thereto he had a small villa,<sup>3</sup> where I was made a captive.

At the time I was barely sixteen years of age. I knew not the true God; and I was led to Ireland in captivity with many thousand persons according to our deserts, for we turned away from God and kept not His commandments, and we were not obedient to our priests who used to admonish us about our salvation. And the Lord brought upon us the indignation of His wrath, and

<sup>1</sup> See page 553, present work.

<sup>2</sup> The text we have adopted is chiefly that of the Rolls Tripartite, with some emendations from Dr. White's very carefully collated text. We have followed him in giving the scriptural phraseology in italics. Dr. White has also given an excellent translation which in some points we have likewise adopted. See 'Proceedings of the R. I. A.' Vol. XXV., Sec. C.

<sup>3</sup> 'Enon' is not found in the MSS.; the word is 'enim.'

multis etiam usque ad ultimum terrae ubi nunc paruitas mea esse uidetur inter alienigenas.

2. Et ibi Dominus aperuit sensum incredulitatis meae ut uel sero rememorarem dilecta mea et ut conuerterem toto corde ad Dominum Deum meum qui respexit humilitatem meam et misertus est adoliscentiæ, et ignorantiae meae, et custodiuit me antequam scirem eum, et antequam saperem uel distinguerem inter bonum et malum, et muniuit me et consulatus est me ut pater filium,

3. Unde autem tacere non possum, neque expedit quidem, tanta beneficia et tantam gratiam quam mihi Dominus praestare dignatus est in terra captiuitatis meae; quia haec est retributio nostra ut post correptionem uel agnitionem Dei exaltare et confiteri mirabilia eius coram omni natione quae est sub omni caelo.

4. Quia non est alius Deus, nec umquam fuit, nec ante nec erit post haec, praeter Deum Patrem ingenitum, sine principio, a quo est omne principium, omnia tenentem, ut dicimus, et eius Filium Iesum Christum, qui cum Patre scilicet semper fuisse testamur ante originem saeculi spiritualiter apud Patrem inenarrabiliter genitum ante omne principium. Et per ipsum facta sunt uisibilia et inuisibilia, homi-

scattered us amongst many nations even to the utmost part of the earth, where now my littleness may be seen amongst strangers.

And there the Lord opened the understanding of my unbelief, so that at length I might recall to mind my sins and be converted with all my heart to the Lord my God, who hath regarded my humility and taken pity on my youth and my ignorance, and kept watch over me before I knew Him, and before I had discretion, or could distinguish between good and evil; and He protected me and consoled me as a father does his son.

Wherefore I cannot conceal, nor is it indeed fitting, the great favours, and the great grace which the Lord has vouchsafed to bestow on me in the land of my captivity; for this is the return we make, that after our chastening or after our recognition of God we should exalt and proclaim His wondrous ways before every nation which is under heaven.

For there is no other God, nor has there been heretofore, nor will there be hereafter, except God the Father unbegotten, without beginning, from whom is all beginning, upholding all things, as we say, and His Son Jesus Christ, whom we likewise confess to have always been with the Father—before the world's beginning spiritually and ineffably of the Father begotten before all beginning; and by Him were made all things

nem factum. morte deuicta, in caelis ad Patrem *receptum*. Et dedit illi omnem potestatem super omne nomen caelestium, et terrestrium et infernorum, et omnis lingua confiteatur ei quia Dominus et Deus est Iesus Christus quem credimus. Et expectamus aduentum ipsius mox futurum iudex uiuorum atque mortuorum. *Qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua*. Et effudit in nobis abunde Spiritum Sanctum, donum et pignus immortalitatis, qui facit credentes et oboedientes ut sint filii Dei et coheredes Christi, quem confitemur et adoramus unum Deum in Trinitate Sacri Nominis.

5. Ipse enim dixit per prophetam, *Inuoca me in die tribulationis tuae et liberabo te et magnificabis me*. Et iterum inquit, *Opera autem Dei reuelare et confiteri honorificum est*.

6. Tamen etsi in multis imperfectus sum opto fratribus et cognatis meis scire qualitatem meam ut possint perspicere uotum animae meae.

7. Non ignoro testimonium Domini mei qui in psalmo testatur, *Perdes eos qui*

visible and invisible, (who) was made man and having triumphed over death was taken up to the Father in heaven. And to Him (the Father) gave all power above every name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue should confess to him that Jesus Christ is the Lord and God in whom we believe, and whose coming we expect will soon take place, the Judge of the quick and the dead, who will render to every one according to his works; and who hath poured out on us abundantly the Holy Ghost, the gift and pledge of our immortality, who maketh those who believe and obey become children of God and joint-heirs with Christ, whom we confess and adore as one God in the Trinity of the Sacred Name.

For He himself through the prophet saith, 'call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify Me.' And again He saith: 'But (it is) honourable to reveal and confess the works of God.'

Yet though in many things I am imperfect I wish my brethren and kinsfolk to know what manner of man I am, so that they may be able to perceive the purpose of my soul.

I am not ignorant of the testimony of my Lord, who witnesseth in the psalm:

*loquuntur mendacium.* Et iterum inquit, *Os quod mentitur occidit animam.* Et idem Dominus in euangelio inquit, *Verbum otiosum quod locuti fuerint homines reddent rationem de eo in die iudicii.*

8. Unde autem uehementer debueram *cum timore et tremore* metuere hanc sententiam in die illa ubi nemo se poterit subtrahere uel abscondere; sed omnes omnino *reddituri* sumus *rationem* etiam minimorum peccatorum *ante tribunal Domini Christi.*

9. Quapropter olim cogitauit scribere, sed et usque nunc hessitauit; timui enim ne incederem in linguam hominum, quia non dedici sicut et caeteri qui optime itaque iura et sacras literas utraque pari modo combiberunt, et sermones illorum ex infantia numquam mutauerunt, sed magis ad perfectum semper addiderunt.

Nam *sermo et loquela* nostra translata est in linguam alienam, sicut facile potest probari ex salua scripturae meae, qualiter sum ego in sermonibus instructus atque eruditus; quia inquit Sapiens:—*Per linguam dinoscetur et sensus et scientia et doctrina ueritatis.*

10. Sed quid prodest excussatio iuxta ueritatem,

'Thou wilt destroy those who speak a lie,' and again He saith: 'the mouth that belieeth killeth the soul.' And the same Lord (saith): 'The idle word that men shall speak they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment.'

Wherefore then, I ought greatly with fear and trembling dread that sentence on that day, when no one shall be able to absent or conceal himself, but when all of us—every one—shall have to give an account of even his smallest sins before the judgment seat of Christ the Lord,

For this reason I have long been thinking of writing (this Confession), but up to the present I hesitated; for I feared lest I should transgress against the tongue of (learned) men, seeing that I am not learned like others, who in the best style therefore have drunk in both laws and sacred letters in equal perfection; and who from their infancy never changed their mother tongue; but were rather making it always more perfect.

My speech, however, and my style were changed into the tongue of the stranger, as it can easily be perceived in the flavour of my writings how I am trained and instructed in languages, for as the wise man saith: 'By the tongue wisdom will be discerned, and understanding, and knowledge, and learning of the truth.'

But what availeth an excuse though in accordance with

praesertim cum praesumptione? quatinus modo ipse adpeto in senectute mea quod in iuuentute non comparavi: quod obstiterunt peccata mea ut confirmarem quod ante perlegeram. Sed quis me credit etsi dixerò quod ante praefatus sum?

Adolescens, immo pene puer imberbis, capturam dedi, antequam scirem uel quid adpeterem uel quid uitare debueram. Unde ergo hodie erubesco et uehementer pertimeo denudare imperitiam meam, quia non desertus breuitate sermonem explicare nequeo; sicut enim Spiritus gestit et animas et sensus monstrat adfectus.

II. Sed si itaque datum mihi fuisset sicut et caeteris, uerumtamen non silerem *propter retributionem*. Et si forte uidetur apud aliquantos me in hoc praeponere cum mea inscientia et *tardiori lingua*; sed scriptum est, *Linguae balbutientes uelociter discent loqui pacem*. Quanto magis nos adpetere debemus qui sumus, inquit, *aepistola Christi, in salutem, usque ad ultimum terrae*, etsi non deserta, sed ratum fortissimum *scriptum in cordibus uestris, non atramento sed Spiritu Dei uiui*. Et iterum Spiritus testatur, *Et rustica-*

truth, if it is joined to presumption. As if, forsooth, now in my old age I were seeking that (elegance of style) which I did not acquire in my youth, for my sins prevented me from mastering that which I had not acquired earlier in life. But who has given me credence even when I repeat what I have said before?

When a mere youth, nay a beardless boy, I was taken captive before I knew what I ought to seek or to avoid. And therefore even to-day I am ashamed and greatly dread to make known my inexperience, because not being learned I cannot explain it in a few words; for as the Spirit desireth, both mind and sense disclose its affections.

Yet even had I that gift of speech like others,<sup>1</sup> still I would not be silent on account of the reward.<sup>2</sup> And if it should seem to some people that I am (unduly) thrusting myself forward in this matter with my want of knowledge and slower tongue, yet it is written: 'The stammering tongues shall quickly learn to speak peace;' how much rather should we covet to do this who are ourselves the epistle of Christ for salvation unto the ends of the earth; and although not an eloquent one still an effective and most powerful (letter) written in

<sup>1</sup> And therefore have no need to defend myself against the charge of presumption.

<sup>2</sup> Promised to those who reveal the gift of God.



*tionem ab Altissimo creata est.*

12. Unde ego primus rusticus, profuga, indoctus scilicet qui nescio in posterum providere; sed illud scio certissime quia utique *priusquam humiliarer*, ego eram velut lapis qui iacet in *luto profundo*: et venit qui *potens est*, et in sua misericordia sustulit me, et quidem scilicet sursum adlevavit et collocavit me in summo pariete.

Et inde fortiter debueram exelamare ad *retribuendum* quoque *aliquid Domino* pro tantis beneficiis eius, hic et in aeternum, quae mens hominum aestimare non potest.

13. Unde autem ammiramini *magni et pusilli qui timetis Deum*, et vos dominicati rethorici, audite et scrutamini. Quis me stultum excitavit de medio eorum qui videntur esse sapientes et legis periti et *potentes in sermone* et in omni re? Et me quidem detestabilem huius mundi prae caeteris inspiravit, si talis essem; dummodo autem ut *cum metu et reverentia* et *sine querella* fideliter prodessem genti ad quam *caritas Christi* transtulit et donavit me, in uita mea, si dignus fuero denique ut cum humilitate et ueraciter deseruirem illis.

14. In *mensura* itaque *fidei*

your hearts, not with ink but by the Spirit of the Living God. And again the Spirit witnesseth: 'Rusticity, too, was ordained by the Most High.'

Whence I, at first a rustic and an exile, unlearned surely as one who knows not how to provide for the future—yet this I do most certainly know, that before I was humbled, I was like a stone which lies in the deep mire, and He that is mighty came and in His mercy lifted me up, and placed me on the top of the wall. And therefore I ought to cry out and render something to the Lord for these benefits so great both here and for eternity, that the mind of man cannot estimate them.

Wherefore, be ye filled with wonder both small and great, who fear God, and ye too, lordly rhetoricians, hear and search out. Who was it that exalted me, fool though I be, from the midst of those who seemed to be wise and skilled in the law, and powerful in word and in everything else? And me truly despicable in this world He inspired beyond others, though being such, that with fear and reverence, and without blame I should faithfully serve the nation to whom the love of Christ transferred me and bestowed me for my life, if I should be worthy—that in humility and truth I should serve them.

Wherefore in the measure

Trinitatis oportet distinguere, *sine reprehensione* periculi notum facere *donum Dei* et *consulationem aeternam*, sine timore fiducialiter Dei nomen ubique expandere, ut etiam *post obitum meum* exagallias relinquere fratribus et filiis meis quos in Domino ego baptizavi, tot milia hominum.

15. Et non eram dignus neque talis ut hoc Dominus seruulo suo concederet post erumpnas et tantas moles, post captiuitatem, post annos multos, in gentem illam tantam gratiam mihi donaret, quod ego aliquando in iuuentute mea numquam speraui neque cogitauit.

16. Sed postquam Hiberione deueneram, cotidie itaque pecora pascebam, et frequens in die orabam; magis ac magis accedebat amor Dei et timor ipsius, et fides augebatur et spiritus agebatur, ut in die una usque ad centum orationes et in nocte prope similiter, ut etiam in siluis et monte manebam. Ante lucem excitabar ad orationem per niuem per gelu per pluuiam; et nihil mali sentiebam, neque ulla pigritia erat in me, sicut modo uideo, quia tunc *spiritus in me fervebat*.

17. Et ibi scilicet quadam nocte in somno audiui uocem dicentem mihi, Bene ieiunas.

of our faith in the Trinity it is fitting to explain and without censure of rashness make known the gift of God and the everlasting hope, moreover without fear to spread everywhere the name of God with confidence, so that after my death I may leave a legacy to my brethren and my sons whom I baptised in the Lord—so in my thousands of men.

Neither was I worthy, nor such that the Lord should grant this to His poor servant after calamities, and trials so great, after captivity, after so many years,—that he should bestow on me this great grace in favour of that nation—a thing that formerly in my youth I never hoped for or thought of.

Now after I came to Hiberione (Ireland) daily I herded flocks,<sup>1</sup> and often during the day I prayed. Love of God and His fear increased more and more, and my faith grew, and my spirit was stirred up, so that in a single day I said as many as a hundred prayers and at night likewise, though I abode in the woods and in the mountain. Before the dawn I used to be aroused to prayer in snow and frost and rain, nor was there any tepidity in me, such as I now feel, because then the spirit was fervent within me.

And there truly one night I heard in my sleep a voice saying: 'Thou fastest well,

<sup>1</sup> 'Peco-a' may include cattle, sheep, and swine.

cito iturus ad patriam tuam. Et iterum post paululum tempus audiui *responsum* dicentem mihi. Ecce nauis tua parata est. Et non erat prope, sed forte habebat *centum milia passus*. Et ibi numquam fueram, nec ibi noium quemquam de hominibus habebam. Et deinde postmodum conuersus sum in fugam, et intermissi hominem cum quo fueram .vi. annis; et ueni in uirtute Dei qui *uiam meam* ad bonum *dirigebat*, et nihil metuebam donec perueni ad nauem illam.

18. Et illa die qua perueni profecta est nauis de loco suo. Et locutus sum ut haberem unde nauigarem cum illis; et gubernatori displicuit illi, et acriter cum indignatione respondit. Nequaquam tu nobiscum adpetes ire.

Et cum haec audiissem sepe raui me ab illis ut uenirem ad tegorionem ubi hospitabam; et in itinere caepi orare; et antequam orationem consummarem audini unum ex illis, et fortiter exclamabat post me, Ueni cito quia uocant te homines isti; et statim ad illos reuersus sum.

Et coeperunt mihi dicere, Ueni, quia ex fide recipimus te. Fac nobiscum amicitiam quomodo uoueris. Et in illa die itaque reppuli *sugere mammellas*

thou art soon to go to thy fatherland.' And again after a little time I heard the divine voice saying to me: 'Lo thy ship is ready.' And it was not near at hand but distant about 200 miles. And I had never been there; nor had I knowledge of any person there. And thereupon after a little I betook myself to flight, and left the man with whom I had been for six years, and I came in the strength of God, who prospered my way for good; and I had no cause to fear anything until I came to that ship.

And on the very day I arrived the ship left its place, and I asked that I might have leave to sail with them; <sup>1</sup> but it displeased the captain, and he replied harshly with anger: 'on no account seek thou to come with us.'

When I heard this, I left them to go to the hut where I was lodging; and on the way I began to pray; and before I had finished my prayer I heard one of them calling loudly after me: 'Come quickly, these men are calling thee,' and forthwith I returned to them.

And they began to say to me: 'Come, we take thee in good faith, make friendship with us as thou pleasest.' And on that day I refused to suck their

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<sup>1</sup> Et locutus sum ut haberem unde nauigarem cum illis. The language is dubious; the above seems the most natural meaning.

eorum<sup>1</sup> propter timorem Dei ; sed ueruntamen ab illis speraui uenire in fidem Iesu Christi, quia genteserant, et ob hoc obtinui cum illis, et protinus nauigauius.

19. Et post triduum terram caepimus, et xxviii dies per disertum iter fecimus, et cibus defuit illis et fames *inualuit super eos*. Et alio die coepit gubernator mihi dicere, Quid, Christiane, tu dicis ? Deus tuus magnus et omnipotens est : quare ergo pro nobis orare non potes ? quia nos a fame periclitamur ; difficile est enim unquam ut aliquem hominem uideamus. Ego enim euidenter dixi illis, *Conuertemini ex fide et ex toto corde ad Dominum Deum meum, cui nihil est impossibile*. ut hodie cibum mittat uobis in uiam uestram usque dum satiamini, quia ubique habundat illi.

Et adiuuante Deo ita factum est. Ecce grex porcorum in uia ante oculos nostros apparuit, et multos ex illis interecerunt et ibi .ii. noctes manserunt ; et bene reffecti, et canes eorum repleti sunt, quia multi ex illis *defecerunt* et secus uiam *semiuiui relict*i sunt.

Et post haec summas gratias egerunt Deo, et ego honorificatus sum sub oculis eorum, et ex hac die abun-

breasts through fear of God ; but still I hoped that some of them would come to the faith of Christ, for they were heathen, and on that account I stayed with them—and forthwith we set sail.

And after three days we made land, and for 28 days we journeyed through a desert, and food failed them, and hunger overtook them. And one day the shipmaster said to me : 'What sayest thou, Christian ! thy God is great and almighty : why then can you not pray for us ? for we are in danger of starvation. It will be hard for us if ever we see a human being again.' Then I said plainly to them : 'Turn earnestly and with all your hearts to the Lord my God, to whom nothing is impossible, that He may send you food for your journey until you be filled, for everywhere he hath abundance.'

And by God's help it so came to pass. Lo, a herd of swine appeared on the road before our eyes : and they killed many of them : and spent two nights there ; and were well refreshed, and their dogs also were sated, for many of them had fainted (from hunger) and were left half-dead by the way.

And thereafter they gave greatest thanks to God, and I became honoured in their eyes ; and from that day

<sup>1</sup> Sugere mammellas eorum—the phrase was sometimes used to express intimate friendship.

danter cibum habuerunt. Etiam *mel siluistre* inuenierunt, et mihi *partem obtulerunt*. Et unus ex illis dixit, *Hoc immolaticum est*. Deo gratias, exinde nihil gustavi.

20. Eadem vero nocte eram dormiens, et fortiter temptavit me Satanas, quod memor ero *quandiu fuero in hoc corpore*. Et cecidit super me ueluti saxum ingens, et nihil membrorum meorum praeualui. Sed unde mihi uenit ignoro in spiritum ut Heliam uocarem? Et in hoc uidi in caelum solem oriri, et dum clamarem Heliam, Heliam, uiribus meis, ecce splendor solis illius decidit super me, et statim discussit a me omnem grauitudinem. Et credo quod a Christo Domino meo subuentus sum, et Spiritus eius iam tunc clamabat pro me. Et spero quod sic erit *in die presurae* meae, sicut in aeuangelio inquit: *In illa die, Dominus testatur, Non uos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus Patris uestri qui loquitur in uobis*.

21. Et iterum post annos multos adhuc capturam dedi. Ea nocte prima itaque mansi cum illis. *Responsum* autem *diuinum* audiui dicentem mihi; 'Duobus autem mensibus eris cum illis.' Quod ita factum est. Nocte illa sexagesima

they had food in abundance. They also found wild honey and offered me a part. But one of them said: 'It is an idol-offering'—thanks be to God, I took none of it thereafter.

Now on that same night when I was sleeping, Satan tempted me strongly, which I shall remember as long as I am in this body. And there fell on me as it were a huge rock, and I had no power in my limbs. But whence came it into my spirit I know not<sup>1</sup> that I should invoke Helias. And thereupon I saw the sun rise in the heaven, and whilst I kept invoking Helias, Helias, with all my might, lo, the splendour of the sun fell upon me and shook off from me all the weight. And I believe I was aided by Christ my Lord, and that His Spirit was even then calling out on my behalf. And I hope that it will be so in the day of my distress; as in the Gospel He says: 'In that day it is not you that speak but the Spirit of your father that speaketh in you.'

And a second time after many years<sup>2</sup> up to that I became a captive. On that first night then I remained with them; I heard a Divine voice saying to me: 'For two months yet thou shalt be with them.' And so it

<sup>1</sup> The word 'ignoro' omitted in some MSS. seems necessary to complete the sense.

<sup>2</sup> 'After many years'—from his first capture.

*liberauit me Dominus de manibus eorum.*

22. Etiam in itinere praeuidit nobis cibum et ignem et siccitatem cotidie donec decimo die peruenimus omnes. Sicut superius insinuaui, xx et .iiii. dies per disertum iter fecimus. Et ea nocte qua peruenimus omni de cibo nihil habuimus.

23. Et iterum post paucos annos in Britannis eram cum parentibus meis, qui me ut filium susceperunt et ex fide rogauerunt me, ut uel modo ego post tantas tribulationes quas ego pertuli nusquam ab illis discederem.

Et ibi scilicet *uidi in uisu noctis* uirum uenientem quasi de Hiberione, cui nomen Victoricus, cum aepistolis innumerabilibus. Et dedit mihi unam ex his, et legi principium aepistolae continentem, 'Uox Hyberionacum'; et dum recitabam principium aepistolae putabam ipso momento audire uocem ipsorum qui erant iuxta siluam Focluti quae est prope mare occidentale; et sic exclamauerunt quasi ex *uno ore*. Rogamus te, sancte puer, ut uenias

came to pass, on the sixtieth night thereafter the Lord delivered me out of their hands. Moreover on our journey He provided us with food and fire and shelter every day until on the tenth day we all reached our destination. As I explained above, for 28 days<sup>1</sup> we marched through a desert. And on that night on which we arrived at our destination, we had no more food left.

And (now) once more after some years (of absence) I was in Britain with my family (parentibus)<sup>2</sup> who received me as a son, and earnestly besought me that now at least after so many tribulations which I had endured I should never go away from them.

Now there it was I saw, in a vision of the night, a man coming as if from Ireland, whose name was Victorius, with very many letters. And he gave one of them to me, and I read the beginning of the letter purporting to be the 'Voice of the Irish,' and whilst I was reading out the beginning of the letter I thought that at that moment I heard the voices of those who dwelt beside the wood of Focluth which is by the western sea; and thus they

<sup>1</sup> There is a difference of reading here in the MSS. Some have the 'fourteenth,' others the 'tenth' day.

<sup>2</sup> Above we have—'et iterum post annos *multos* adhuc capturam dedi; here we have, 'et iterum post annos *paucos* in Britannis eram cum parentibus meis.' I would venture to translate the latter—'and once more, for a few years afterwards I remained with my parents in Britain.

et adhuc ambulas inter nos.

Et ualde *conpunctus sum corde* et amplius non potui legere, et sic expertus sum. Deo gratias, quia post plurimos annos praestitit illis Dominus secundum clamorem illorum.

24. Et, alia nocte, *nescio, Deus scit*, utrum in me an iuxta me, uerbis peritissimis quos ego audiui et non potui intellegere, nissi ad posterum orationis, sic effatus est, *Qui dedit animam suam pro te*, ipse est qui loquitur in te. Et sic exper[ge]fuc]tus sum gaudibundus.

25. Et iterum uidi in me ipsum orantem, et erat quasi intra corpus meum, et audiui super me, hoc est super *interiorem hominem*, et ibi fortiter orabat gemitibus. Et inter haec *stupebam* et ammirabam et cogitabam quis esset qui in me orabat; sed ad postremum orationis sic effatus est ut sit Spiritus; et sic exper[ge]fac]tus sum, et recordatus sum apostolo dicente, *Spiritus adiuuat infirmitates orationis nostrae. Nam quod oremus sicut oportet nescimus, sed ipse Spiritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus inenarrabilibus quae uerbis expremi non possunt.* Et

cried, as if with one mouth: 'We beseech thee, holy youth, to come and walk once more amongst us.'<sup>1</sup>

And I was greatly touched in heart, and could read no more, and so I awoke. Thanks be to God that after very many years<sup>2</sup> the Lord granted to them according to their earnest cry.

And on another night, whether within or beside me I know not, God knoweth, in the clearest words, which I heard but could not understand until the end of the prayer He spoke out thus: 'He who laid down His life for thee, He it is who speaketh within thee.' And so I awoke full of joy. And once more I saw Him praying in me and He was as it were within my body; and I heard him over me, that is over the interior man; and there strongly He prayed with groanings. And meanwhile I was astonished and marvelled, and considered who it was who prayed within me; but at the end of the prayer He spoke out to the effect that he was the Spirit; and so I awoke and remembered the Apostle saying: 'The Spirit helpeth the infirmities of our prayer. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself asketh for us

<sup>1</sup> 'Adhuc' in the text clearly qualifies not 'uenias' but 'ambules', which is the true reading.

<sup>2</sup> 'Post plurimos annos'—showing that a long term of years intervened.

iterum, *Dominus aduocatus noster postulat pro nobis.*

26. Et quando temptatus sum ab aliquantibus senioribus meis qui uenerunt ob peccata mea contra laboriosum episcopatum meum— utique in illo die fortiter *impulsus sum ut caderem* hic et in aeternum; sed Dominus pepercit *proselito et peregrino propter nomen suum*, benigne et ualde mihi subuenit in hac conculcatione quod in labem et in obprobrium non male deueni. Deum oro, ut *non illis* in peccatum *reputetur* occasio.

27. Nam post annos triginta *inuenerunt* me, et aduersus uerbum quod confessus fueram antequam essem diaconus. — Propter anxietatem mesto animo insinuauit amicissimo meo quae in pueritia mea una die gesseram, immo in una hora, quia necdum praeculebam. *Nescio, Deus scit*, si habebam tunc annos quindecim, et Deum uiuum non credebam, neque ex infantia mea; sed in morte et in incredulitate mansi donec ualde castigatus sum, et in ueritate humiliatus

with unspeakable groanings, which cannot be uttered in words. And again: 'The Lord our advocate maketh intercession for us.'

And<sup>1</sup> when I was tempted by certain of my elders, who came and (urged) my sins against my laborious episcopate—truly in that day I was strongly pushed that I might fall here and for ever: but the Lord graciously had pity on the stranger and sojourner for His name's sake, and He helped me greatly in that humiliation, so that I did not utterly fall into disgrace and reproach. I pray God that the occasion be not reckoned to them as a sin. For after thirty years they found me and (it was) against a word which I had confessed before I became a deacon<sup>2</sup>—on account of my anxiety with sorrowful mind I confided to my dearest friend what I had done one day in my youth, nay in one hour, for I was not yet strong (in virtue). I cannot tell—God knoweth it—if I was then fifteen years old, and I did not believe in the living God, nor had I from my infancy; but I remained in death and unbelief until I was greatly

<sup>1</sup> This long passage down to 'noctem' is omitted from the copy in the Book of Armagh, deliberately, no doubt, lest it might seem to reflect on the holiness of the great Apostle—a very foolish thought.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick, when about to become a deacon, confided the sin which he had committed about the age of fifteen to a friend in order to quiet his own scruples. The friend, thirty years afterwards, alleged that sin against Patrick's promotion to the episcopate. At that time the age for receiving deaconship was 30. So Patrick when he was consecrated Bishop must have been 60 years of age. There is no question of sacramental confession; it was counsel Patrick sought in confidence—'insinuauit amicissimo meo.'



sum a fame et nuditate et cotidie.

28. Contra, Hiberione non sponte pergebam *donec* prope deficiebam. Sed haec potius bene mihi fuit, quia ex hoc emendatus sum a Domino; et aptavit me ut hodie essem quod aliquando longe a me erat, ut ego curas haberem aut satagerem pro salute aliorum, quando autem tunc etiam de me ipso non cogitabam.

29. Igitur in illo die quo *reprobatus* sum a memoratis supradictis, ad noctem illam *vidi in visu noctis*. Scriptum erat contra faciem meam sine honore. Et inter haec audiui *responsum divinum* dicentem mihi. Male vidimus faciem designati nudato nomine. Nec sic praedixit, Male vidisti, sed Male vidimus; quasi ibi se iunxisset. Sicut dixit, *Qui vos tangit quasi qui tangit pupillam oculi mei*.

30. Idcirco gratias ago ei *qui me in omnibus confortavit* ut non me inpediret a perfectione quam statueram et de mea quoque opera quod a

chastened and humbled in truth by hunger, and nakedness, and that, too daily.<sup>1</sup> Towards<sup>2</sup> Ireland of my own accord I made no move until I was almost worn out. But these things were rather a gain to me, because thereby I was corrected by the Lord; and he prepared me to become to-day what once was far from me—that I should care for and procure the salvation of others, whereas at that time I did not think even about myself.

On that day, then, on which I was rejected by the those referred to above, during that night I had a vision of the night. There was a writing opposite my face without honour.<sup>3</sup> And meanwhile I heard a divine voice saying to me: 'With pain We have seen the face of the (bishop) designate + spoiled of his name.' He did not say 'Thou hast seen with pain,' but 'We have seen with pain,' as if in that matter He had joined Himself with me; as He hath said: 'He that toucheth you is as he that toucheth the apple of Mine eye.'

Wherefore I give thanks to Him, who hast strengthened me in all things, so as not to hinder me from that journey on which I had resolved, and

<sup>1</sup> 'Daily' is sometimes connected with the following sentence.

<sup>2</sup> 'Contra Hiberionem' (or Hiberione), non sponte pergebam'—the reading is uncertain and the phrase obscure. We have given the most natural rendering.

<sup>3</sup> That is, a writing dishonouring me, as unworthy of the episcopate.

<sup>4</sup> 'D-signatus' means one elected to an office, which he has not yet entered on.

Christo Domino meo didiceram, sed magis ex eo *sensi in me uirtutem* non paruam. et *fides mea probata* est coram Deo et hominibus.

31. Unde autem *audenter dico* non me reprehendit conscientia mea hic et in futurum. *Testem Deum* habeo *quia non sum mentitus* in sermonibus quos ego retuli uobis.

32. Sed magis doleo pro amicissimo meo cur hoc meruimus audire tale responsum. Cui ego credidi etiam animam! Et comperi ab aliquantis fratribus ante *defensionem* illam, quod ego non interfui, nec in Britannia eram, nec a me orietur, ut et ille in mea absentia pro me pulsaret. Etiam mihi ipse ore suo dixerat, Ecce dandus es tu ad gradum episcopatus. Quo non eram dignus. Sed unde uenit illi postmodum, ut coram cunctis, bonis et malis, et me publice *dehonestaret*, quod ante sponte et laetus indulerat, et Dominus qui *maior omnibus est*?

33. Satis dico; Sed tamen non debeo abscondere *donum Dei* quod largitus est nobis in *terra captiuitatis meae*, quia tunc fortiter inquisiui eum, et ibi inueni illum, et seruauit me ab omnibus iniquitatibus. Sic credo, *propter inhabitantem Spiritum eius*, qui *opera-*

from that undertaking which I had learnt from Christ my Lord; nay rather I felt within me no small virtue coming from Him and my faith has been approved before God and men.<sup>1</sup>

Wherefore then I say boldly my conscience does not blame me here or hereafter. I call God to witness that I have not lied in those statements I have made to you. But rather do I grieve for my very dear friend, that we should have deserved to hear such a voice from God as that. And I discovered from some of the brethren before that investigation—for I myself was not present, nor was I in Britain, nor was it at my request—that he fought for me in my absence. Even he himself with his own lips had said to me: 'Lo, thou art to be raised to the rank of bishop, of which I was not worthy. How then did it occur to him afterwards to put me to shame before everybody, good and bad, in respect to that (office) which before of his own accord and gladly he conceded to me, and the Lord, too, did, who is greater than all.

I have said enough; but yet I ought not conceal the gift of God which he hath bestowed on me in the land of my captivity, because then I zealously sought Him, and there I found Him; and He preserved me from all iniquities, as I believe on

<sup>1</sup> By the success of his mission in Ireland.

*tus est* usque in hanc diem in me. *Audenter* rursus. Sed scit Deus si mihi homo hoc effatus fuisset, forsitan tacuissem propter *caritatem Christi*.

34. Unde ergo indefessam gratiam ago Deo meo qui me fidelem seruauit *in die temptationis* meae, ita ut hodie confidenter offeram illi sacrificium, ut *hostiam uiuentem*, animam meam Christo Domino meo, qui me *seruauit ab omnibus angustiis meis*, ut et dicam: *Quis ego sum, Domine*, uel quae est *uocatio* mea, qui mihi tantam diuinitatem aperuisti? ita ut hodie in gentibus constanter *exaltarem et magnificarem nomen tuum* ubicumque loco fuero; nec non in secundis, sed etiam in pressuris; ut quicquid mihi euenerit, siue bonum siue malum, aequaliter debeo suscipere, et Deo gratias semper agere, qui mihi ostendit ut indubitabilem eum sine fine crederem, et qui me audierit, ut et ego inscius *in nouissimis diebus* hoc opus tam pium et tam mirificum adire adgrederer, ita ut imitarem quispiam illos quos ante Dominus iam olim praedixerat praenuntiatiuros euangelium suum *in testimonium omnibus gentibus ante finem mundi*. Quod ita ergo ut uidimus, itaque suppletum est. Ecce testes sumus quia euangelium praedicatum est usque ubi nemo ultra est.

account of His indwelling Spirit who hath worked in me until this day. Daringly again (I speak out). But God knoweth, if man had said this to me perchance I would have held my peace for the love of Christ.

Hence therefore I render ceaseless thanks to my God who kept me faithful in the day of my temptation, so that to-day with confidence I offer sacrifice to Him, as a living victim, even my soul to Christ my Lord, who hath saved me from all my troubles, so that I can say:—who am I, O Lord, or what is my vocation, that thou hast opened to me this so great dignity, so that to-day amongst the nations I constantly exalt and magnify Thy name wherever I may be, as I will in prosperity as also in adversity; so that whatever befall me, good or bad, I ought to receive with equal mind, and always give thanks to God who showed me that I might to the end put my trust in Him as un-failing; and who hath heard me, so that I, though ignorant, should, in these last days undertake to set about this work so holy and so wonderful, and thus I might in some degree imitate those whom the Lord long ago foretold would proclaim his Gospel for a testimony unto all nations before the end of the world. And accordingly, as we see, this too has been fulfilled. So, we are witnesses that the Gospel has been preached to the places beyond which no one dwells.

35. Longum est autem totum per singula enarrare laborem meum, uel per partes. Breuiter dicam qualiter piissimus Deus de seruitute sepe [me] liberauit et de periculis xii quibus periclitata est anima mea, praeter insidias multas, et quae uerbis *expremere non ualeo*, ne iniuriam legentibus faciam; sed Deum auctorem habeo qui nouit omnia etiam antequam fiant, ut me *pauperculum pupillum idiotam* tamen *responsum diuinum* creberrime admon.

36. Unde mihi haec sapientia, quae in me non erat, qui nec *numerum dierum noueram*, neque Deum *sapiebam*? Unde mihi postmodum donum tam magnum tam salubre Deum agnoscere uel diligere, sed ut patriam et parentes amitterem?

37. Et munera multa mihi offerebantur cum fletu et lacrimis. Et offendi illos, necnon contra uotum, aliquantos de senioribus meis; sed, gubernante Deo, nullo modo consensi neque adqueui illis; non mea gratia, sed Deus qui uincit in me, et resistit illis omnibus ut ego ueneram ad Hibernas gentes euangelium praedicare, et ab incredulis contumelias perferre, ut *audirem obprobrium peregrinationis meae* et persecutiones multas *usque ad uincula*, et ut darem *ingenuitatem* meam pro utili-

Now it were long to narrate all my labour in all its details, or even partially I shall briefly say in what manner the most gracious God often rescued me from slavery and from the twelve perils by which my life was endangered, besides many ambushes, and plots which I cannot declare in words, lest I should weary my readers. But I have God as much surety who knows all things even before they happen, that His Divine voice very often admonished me, poor, humble, unlearned (as I am).

Whence came to me this wisdom which was not in me, who neither knew the number of (my) the days,<sup>1</sup> nor relished God? Whence afterwards came to me that gift, so great and salutary, to know God and love Him, nay, also to give up fatherland and parents?

And many gifts were offered to me with weeping and tears. And I displeased them, and also, against my wish, some of my elders; but through God's guidance in no way did I yield them consent or acquiesce (in their desires). Not my grace it was, but God who conquered in me and resisted them all so that I came to the Irish tribes to preach the Gospel and to bear insults from the unbelievers, so as to hear the reproach of my going abroad (amongst them), and (bear) many persecutions even unto

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to Psalm 38., 5.

tate aliorum; et si dignus fuero *promptus* sum, ut etiam *animam meam* incunctanter et *libentissime* pro nomine eius, et ibi opto *inpendere eam usque ad mortem* si Dominus mihi indulgeret.

38. Quia ualde *debitor* sum Deo qui mihi tantam gratiam donauit ut populi multi per me in Deum renascerentur et postmodum consummarentur, et ut clerici ubique illis ordinarentur, ad plebem nuper uenientem ad credulitatem quam sumpsit Dominus *ab extremis terrae*, sicut olim promisserat per profetas suos: *Ad te gentes uenient ab extremis terrae, et dicent. Sicut falsa comparauerunt patres nostri idola et non est in eis utilitas.* Et iterum: *Posui te lumen in gentibus ut sis in salutem usque ad extremum terrae.*

39. Et ibi uolo *expectare promissum* ipsius qui utique numquam fallit, sicut in aeuangelio pollicetur: *Uenient ab oriente et occidente et ab austro et ab aquilone, et recumbent cum Abraam et Issac et Iacob*; sicut credimus ab omni mundo uenturi sunt credentes.

40. Idcirco itaque oportet

bonds, and that I should give up my free state for the profit of others. And if I should be worthy I am ready to (give up) even my life most willingly and unhesitatingly for His name's sake, and there I desire to spend it until I die, if the Lord would grant it to me.

Because I am immensely a debtor to God, who granted me this great grace that many peoples through me should be regenerated unto God, and afterwards confirmed, and that clerics should be everywhere ordained for them—for a people newly come to belief, whom God took from the ends of the earth, as heretofore He foretold by his prophets: 'To thee the Gentiles shall come from the ends of the earth, and shall say, as our fathers have got for themselves false idols, and there is no profit in them.'<sup>1</sup> And again: 'I have set thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be for salvation to the utmost part of the earth.'

And there I wish to wait for His promise who verily never disappoints; as He promises in the Gospel—'They shall come from the east and the west and from the south and from the north and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; as we believe that believers will come from all parts of the world.'

For that reason, then,

<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 16, 19. Acts 13, 14.

bene et diligenter piscare, sicut Dominus praemonet et docet dicens: *Uenite post me et faciam uos fieri piscatores hominum.* Et iterum dicit per prophetas: *Ecce mitto piscatores et uenatores multos, dicit Deus, et caetera.*

Unde autem ualde oportebat retia nostra tendere ita ut *multitudo copiosa* et turba Deo caperetur, et ubique essent clerici qui bapuzarent et exhortarent populum indigentem et dissiderantem. sicut Dominus in aeuanguelio ammonet et docet dicens: *Euntes ergo nunc docete omnes gentes bapuzantes eas in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti; docentes eos obseruare omnia quaecunq; mandauit uobis: et ecce ego uobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem saeculi.* Et iterum dicit: *Euntes ergo in mundum uniuersum praedicate aeuangeliu[m] omni creaturae; qui crediderit et bapuzatus fuerit saluus erit, qui uero non crediderit condemnabitur.* Et iterum: *Praedicabitur hoc euangelium regni in uniuerso mundo in testimoniu[m] omnibus gentibus; et tunc ueniet finis.*

Et item Dominus per prophetam praenuntians inquit: *Et erit in nouissimis diebus, dicit Dominus, effundam de Spiritu meo super omnem carnem, et prophetabunt*

we ought to fish well and diligently as the Lord forewarns and teaches, saying: 'Come after me and I will make you fishers of men.' and again He saith through the prophets: 'Behold. I send fishers and many hunters,' and so forth.

Wherefore then it was very necessary that we should spread our nets, so that a great multitude and a throng should be taken for God, and that everywhere there should be clergy to baptise and exhort the poor and needy people, as the Lord in the Gospel warns and teaches, saying: 'Going, therefore, now teach ye all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.' And again he saith: 'Going, therefore, into the whole world, preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.' And again: 'This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come.'

And in like manner the Lord foretelling by the prophet saith: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith the Lord, I will pour out of my spirit upon all

*fili' uestri et filiae uestrae, et filii uestri uisiones uidebunt et seniores uestri somnia somniant; et quidem super seruos meos et super ancillas meas in diebus illis effundam de Spiritu meo et prophetabunt. Et in Osee dicit: Uocabo non plebem meam plebem meam, et non misericordiam consecutam misericordiam consecutam. Et erit in loco ubi dictum est: Non plebs mea uos, ibi uocabuntur filii Dei uiui.*

41. Unde autem Hiberione qui numquam notitiam Dei habuerunt, nissi idula et imunda usque nunc semper coluerunt, quomodo nuper facta est *plebs* Domini et *fili' Dei* nuncupantur? Filii Scottorum et filiae regulorum monachi et uirgines Christi esse uidentur.

42. Et etiam una benedicta Scotta genitiua, nobilis, pulcherrima, adulta erat, quam ego baptizauit; et post paucos dies una causa uenit ad nos; insinuauit nobis responsum accepisse a nutu Dei, et monuit etiam ut esset uirgo Christi et ipsa Deo proximaret. Deo gratias, sexta ab hac die optime et audissime arripuit illud quod

flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and upon my servants, indeed, and upon my handmaids, I will pour out in those days of my spirit and they shall prophesy.' And he saith in Osee: 'I will call them my people, who were not my people, and her that obtained mercy one which-had-not-obtained-mercy. And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said, ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God.'<sup>1</sup>

Whence Ireland, which never had the knowledge of God, but up to the present always adored idols and things unclean—how are they now made a people of the Lord, and are called the children of God? The sons of the Scots and the daughters of their chieftains are seen to become monks and virgins of Christ.

And especially there was one blessed lady of Scotie birth, noble rank, very beautiful, of full age, whom I myself baptised, and after a few days she came to me for a certain purpose. She told us in confidence<sup>2</sup> that she had received a secret admonition from God, and it warned her to become a Virgin of Christ and so come nearer to God.

<sup>1</sup> *Acts 2, 17. Romans 9, 25.*

<sup>2</sup> 'Insinuauit,'—the word Patrick uses above to express the telling of his own sin in confidence to his very dear friend,

etiam omnes uirgines Dei ita hoc faciunt; non sponte patrum earum, sed et persecutionem patiuntur et inproperia falsa a parentibus suis, et nihilominus plus augetur numerus, et de genere nostro qui ibi nati sunt nescimus numerum eorum, praeter uiduas et continentes.

Sed et illae maxime laborant quae seruitio detinentur. Usque ad terrores et minas assidue perferunt; sed Dominus gratiam dedit multis ex ancillis meis nam etsi uentantur tamen fortiter imitantur.

43. Unde autem etsi uoluero amittere illas, et ut peregrinus in Britannia — et libentissime paratus eram — quasi ad patriam et parentes, non id solum sed etiam usque ad Gallias, nisi tunc fratres et ut uiderem faciem sanctorum Domini mei; scit Deus quod ego ualde optabam. Sed *alligatus Spiritu qui mihi protestatur* si hoc fecero, ut futurum reum me esse designat, et timeo perdere laborem quem inchoaui; et non ego sed Christus Dominus qui me imperauit ut uenirem essemque cum illis residuum aetatis meae, *si Dominus uoluerit*, et custodierit me ab

Thanks be to God, on the sixth day afterwards, with best dispositions, and most eagerly, she realised that (Divine vocation), as all the virgins of Christ do in like manner, not with the sanction of their fathers, nay rather they endure persecution, and lying reproaches from their parents, and nevertheless their number is all the more increased; and we know not the number of our race who are thus regenerated besides the widows and the continent.

But they who are kept in slavery suffer especially. They constantly endure even unto terrors and threats; but the Lord hath given grace to many of my handmaidens, for although they are forbidden still they courageously follow the example (of the others).

Wherefore then, even if I wished to leave them, and proceeding to Britain—and very ready I was to do so—as (going) to my country and my parents, and not only that (but to go) even unto Gaul to visit the brethren, so that I might see the face of the saints of my God—God knows I greatly desired it. Yet I am bound in the Spirit who testifieth to me that if I should do this He would note me as guilty; and I fear to lose the labour which I began—yet not I would lose it but Christ the Lord, who commanded me that I should come and remain with them for the



omni uia mala, ut non *peccem* coram illo.

44. Spero autem hoc debueram; sed memetipsum non credo *quamdiu fuero in hoc corpore mortis*, quia fortis est qui cotidie nititur subvertere me a fide et proposita castitate religionis non fictae usque in finem uitae meae Christo Domino meo. Sed *caro inimica* semper trahit ad mortem, id est, ad inlecebras in infelicitate perficiendas. Et *scio ex parte* qua re uitam perfectam ego non egi sicut et caeteri credentes; sed confiteor Domino meo et non erubesco in conspectu ipsius, *quia non mentior*, ex quo cognoui eum *a iuuentute mea* creuit in me amor Dei et timor ipsius; et usque nunc fauente Domino *fidem seruaui*.

45. Rideat autem et insultet qui uoluerit, ego non silebo neque abscondo signa et mirabilia quae mihi a Domino ministrata sunt ante multos annos quam fuerunt, quasi qui nouit omnia etiam *ante tempora saecularia*.

46. Unde autem debuero sine cessatione Deo gratias agere, qui sepe indulsit insipientiae meae et negligentiae meae, et de loco non

rest of my life,<sup>1</sup> if the Lord should so will, and who hath preserved me from every evil way, so that I should not sin before Him.

Now I hope this as I ought; but I do not trust myself as long as I shall be in this body of death, because he is strong who daily strives to turn me away from the faith and from that chastity of sincere religion which I have proposed to myself (to keep) to the end of my life for Christ my Lord. But our enemy the flesh is always charming us to death, that is, to allurements to be enjoyed in woe. And partly I know in what thing I have not led a perfect life like other Christians; but I confess to my God, and I am not ashamed in His presence, for I lie not, from the time I came to know Him in my youth the love of God and His fear grew in me, and unto this hour through God's favour I have kept the faith.

Let who will laugh and mock, I will not be silent nor conceal the signs and wonders which were ministered to me by God many years before they came to pass, since He knoweth all things even before the world's beginnings.

Therefore I ought without ceasing give thanks to God, who oftentimes pardoned my folly and negligence, and moreover not in one place only

<sup>1</sup> This clearly shows that Patrick never left Ireland after he came to it to preach the Gospel.

in uno quoque ut non mihi uehementer irasceret qui *adiutor* datus sum, et non cito adqueui, secundum quod mihi ostensum fuerat, et sicut Spiritus *suggererat*. Et *misertus est* mihi Dominus in *milia milium*, quia uidit in me quod paratus eram, sed quod mihi pro his ne sciebam de statu meo quid facerem, quia multi hanc legationem prohibebant. Etiam inter seipsos post tergum meum narrabant et dicebant, Iste quare se mittit in periculum inter hostes qui Deum non nouerunt? Non ut causa malitiae, sed non sapiebat illis, sicut et ego ipse testor, intellegi, propter rusticitatem meam. Et non cito agnoui gratiam, quae tunc erat in me. Nunc mihi sapit quod ante debueram.

47. Nunc ergo simplicitate insinuauit fratribus et conseruis meis, qui mihi crediderunt, propter quod *praedixi et praedico* ad roborandam et confirmandam fidem uestram. Utinam ut et uos imitemini maiora, et potiora faciat! Hoc erit gloria mea, quia, *Filius sapiens gloria patris est*.

48. Uos scitis et Deus qualiter apud uos *conuersatus sum a iuuentute mea* et fide ueritatis et sinceritate cordis. Etiam ad gentes illas inter quas habito, ego fidem illis

He might be greatly angry with me who am given as a helper; yet I did not quickly yield assent to what was shown to me, and what the Spirit suggested. And the Lord showed mercy to me thousands of times, because He saw that I was ready, but that I did not know what in my state I should do in return, for many were opposing this embassy of mine. And behind my back they were talking among themselves and kept saying: —‘Why does he expose himself to danger amongst enemies, who know not God?’ Not for malice sake, but because they did not approve it, as I myself can testify, and understood, on account of my rusticity. And I did not quickly recognise the grace that was in me at the time. Now I have that wisdom, which I ought to have had before.

Now, therefore, I have simply disclosed (it to you) my brethren and fellow-servants, who have believed in me; for which reason I told you before and foretell to you now for the strengthening and confirming of your faith. Would that you too would imitate greater things and do better things. That will be my glory, for a wise son is the glory of his father. You know, and God also, in what way I have lived from my youth amongst you in faith of the truth and in sincerity of heart. Even towards the Gentiles, amongst

praestavi et praestabo. Deus scit, neminem illorum *circumveni*; nec cogito, propter Deum et ecclesiam ipsius, ne *excitem* illis et nobis omnibus *persecutionem*, et ne per me *blasphemaretur* nomen Domini; quia scriptum est: *Uae homini per quem nomen Domini blasphematur.*

49. *Nam etsi imperitus sum in omnibus, tamen conatus sum quippiam seruare me etiam et fratribus Christianis et uirginibus Christi et mulieribus religiosis, quae mihi ultronea munuscula donabant, et super altare iactabant ex ornamentis suis, et iterum reddebam illis. Et aduersus me scandalizabantur eum hoc faciebam. Sed ego (id faciebam) propter spem perennitatis, ut me in omnibus caute propterea conseruarem, ita ut me in aliquo titulo infideles non *caperent* uel ministerium seruitutis meae, nec etiam in minimo incredulus locum darem infamare siue detractare.*

50. Forte autem quando baptizavi tot milia hominum sperauerim ab aliquo illorum uel dimidio scriptulae? *Dicite mihi et reddam uobis.* Aut quando ordinauit ubique Dominus clericos per modicitatem meam et ministerium gratis distribui illis, si poposci ab aliquo illorum uel pretium

whom I dwell, I have kept faith with them, and will keep it. God knoweth, I have defrauded none of them, nor even think (of it) for God's sake, and the sake of His church, lest I should raise a persecution against them and against all of us, and lest through me the name of God should be blasphemed; for it is written: 'Woe to the man through whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed.'

But though I be rude in all things, still I have tried to some extent to keep watch over myself—even as regards the Christian brethren, and the Virgins of Christ, and the religious women, who used of their own accord to present me with their little gifts and laid on the altar some of their ornaments, which I returned to them. And they were scandalised because I did so. But I did it on account of my hope of immortality, that I might keep myself cautiously in all things, that the heathen on one ground or another ground might receive me or the ministry of my service, and that I should not even in the smallest thing give occasion to the unbelievers to defame or disparage.

Perchance then when I baptised so many thousands of men I hoped (to get) from any of them even half a scruple? Tell me, and I shall restore it to you. Or when the Lord ordained clergy everywhere by my mediocrity, and I gave them my ministrations gratis, did I

uel *calciamenti* mei, *dicite aduersus me et reddam uobis magis.*

51. Ego *inpendi pro uobis* ut me *caperent*; et inter uos et ubique pergebam causa nostra in multis periculis etiam usque ad exteras partes ubi nemo ultra erat, et ubi numquam aliquis peruenerat qui baptizaret, aut clericos ordinaret aut populum consummaret, donante Domino, diligenter et *libentissime* pro salute uestra *omnia gessi.*

52. Interim praemia dabam regibus praeter quod dabam mercedem filiis ipsorum, qui mecum ambulant et nihilominus comprehenderunt me cum comitibus meis. Et illa die audissime cupiebant interficere me; sed tempus nondum uenerat. Et omnia quaecumque nobiscum inuenerunt rapuerunt, et me ipsum ferro uinxerunt. Et quarto decimo die absoluit me Dominus de potestate eorum; et quicquid nostrum fuit redditum est nobis propter Deum et *necessarios amicos* quos ante praeuidimus.

53. Uos autem experti estis quantum ego erogavi illis qui indicabant per omnes regiones quos ego frequentius uisitabam; censeo enim non minimum quam pretium quindecim hominum distribui illis, ita ut me *fruemini*; et ego

ask from any of them so much as the price of my sandal?—tell it against me and I shall restore you more.

I spent (myself) for you that you might receive me, and both amongst yourselves and wherever I journeyed for your sake, through many perils even in remote parts where no man dwelt, and where no one had ever come to baptise or ordain clergy, or confirm the people, I have through God's goodness done everything carefully and most willingly for your salvation.

Sometimes, too, I used to give presents to the kinglets besides the hire I used to give their sons, who accompanied me, and nevertheless they seized me (once) with my companions. And on that day they most eagerly desired to kill me,<sup>1</sup> but my time had not yet come. And everything they found upon us they plundered, and myself they bound in iron bonds. And on the fourteenth day the Lord freed me from their power; and whatever was ours was restored to us for God's sake, and the sake of the good friends whom I had provided beforehand.

You know also of your own knowledge how much I spent on those who guided us through all the districts, which I used to visit more frequently, for I think that I distributed to them not less than the price of fifteen men,

<sup>1</sup> It was probably the occasion when Patrick was going from Tara to Tirawley.

*uobis semper fruatur in Deum. Non me poenitet, nec satis est mihi; adhuc impendo et superinpendam. Potens est Dominus ut det mihi postmodum ut meipsum impendar pro animabus uestris.*

54. *Ecce testem Deum inuoco in animam meam quia non mentior. Neque ut sit occasio adulationis uel auaritiæ scripserim uobis, neque ut honorem spero ab aliquo uestro. Sufficit enim honor qui nondum uidetur sed corde creditur. Fidelis autem qui promisit; nunquam mentitur.*

55. *Sed uideo iam in præsentis sæculo me supra modum exaltatum a Domino. Et non eram dignus neque talis ut hoc mihi præstaret, dum scio certissime quod mihi melius conuenit paupertas et calamitas quam diuitiæ et diliciæ. Sed et Christus Dominus pauper fuit pro nobis. Ego uero miser et infelix, etsi opes uoluero iam non habeo, neque meipsum iudico, quia quotidie spero aut internicionem aut circumueniri aut redigi in seruitutem, siue occasio cuiuslibet. Sed nihil horum uereor propter promissa caelorum; quia iactaui meipsum in manus Dei omnipotentis, quia ubique dominatur, sicut propheta dicit: Iacta cogitatum tuum in Deum et ipse te enutriet.*

56. *Ecce nunc commendo animam meam fidelissimo*

so that you might enjoy me and I might always enjoy you in God. I am not sorry for it, nor is it enough for me. Still I spend and will spend more. The Lord is powerful to grant me hereafter that I shall myself be spent for your souls.

Behold I call God as witness on my soul that I lie not. Nor was it that it might be an occasion of flattery or gain that I have written to you, nor do I hope for honour from any of you. Sufficient is the honour that is not seen but is believed in the heart. And He that promised is faithful; He never lies. But I see that in this present world I am exalted above measure by the Lord. And I was not worthy, nor am I such that he should grant this to me, since I know for certain that poverty and affliction become me better than riches and luxury. Nay, Christ the Lord was poor for our sake. But I, poor and wretched, even should I wish for wealth I have it not, nor do I judge myself, for daily I expect either a violent death or to be robbed and reduced to slavery, or the occurrence of some such calamity. But I fear none of these things on account of the promises of heaven! I have cast myself into the hands of Almighty God, for He rules everything, as the prophet saith: 'Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He Himself will sustain thee.'

Behold, now, I commend my soul to my most faithful

Deo meo, *pro quo legationem fungor* in ignobilitate mea, sed quia *personam non accipit* et *elegit* me ad hoc officium ut unus essem de *suis minimis* minister.

57. Unde autem *retribuam illi pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi?* Sed quid dicam uel quid promittam Domino meo? quia nihil uideo nisi ipse mihi dederit, sed *scrutatur corda et renes*, quia satis et nimis cupio et paratus eram ut donaret mihi *bibere calicem* eius sicut indulsit et caeteris amantibus se.

58. Quapropter non contingat mihi a Deo meo ut numquam amittam *plebem suam quam adquisiuit* in ultimis terrae. Oro Deum ut det mihi perseuerantiam, et dignetur ut reddam illi [me] *testem fidelem* usque ad transitum meum propter Deum meum.

59. Et si aliquid boni unquam initiatus sum propter Deum meum quem diligo, peto illi det mihi ut cum illis proscelitis et captiuis pro nomine suo effundam sanguinem meum etsi ipsam etiam caream sepulturam, aut miserissime cadauer per singula membra diuidatur canibus aut bestiis asperis, aut *uolucres caeli comederent* illud. Certissime reor si mihi hoc incurrisset lucratus sum animam cum corpore meo, quia sine ulla dubita-

God, whose ambassador I am in my lowliness, only because He accepteth no person and He chose me for this office that I should be His minister, but amongst the least.

And now what shall I render to the Lord for all the things He hath rendered to me? Nay what shall I say or what shall I promise to my Lord, for I see nothing except what He Himself has given to me; but He searcheth the heart and reins knoweth that fully and greatly do I desire and have been long ready, that He should grant me to drink of His cup, as He hath granted to others who love him.

Wherefore may it never happen to me from my God that I should ever lose His people whom He hath purchased at the ends of the earth. I pray God to grant me perseverance, and deign that I may render myself a faithful witness unto Him until my passing away for the sake of my God.

And if I ever accomplished anything good for the sake of my God whom I love I ask Him to grant me that I may shed my blood with the strangers and the captives for His name sake, even though I should want burial. or my body should most miserably be divided limb by limb for the dogs and wild beasts, or that the tows of the air should devour it. For surely, I think, if this should happen to me, I have gained my soul with my body.

tionem in die illa resurgemus in claritate solis, hoc est, in gloria Christi Iesu redemptoris nostri, quasi filii Dei vivi et coheredes Christi, et conformes futurae imaginis ipsius; quoniam ex ipso et per ipsum et in ipso sunt omnia: ipsi gloria in saecula saeculorum, Amen. In illo enim regnaturi sumus.

60. Nam sol iste quem videmus, Deo iubente, propter nos cotidie oritur, sed numquam regnabit neque permanebit splendor eius; sed et omnes qui adorant eum in poenam miseri male deuenient. Nos autem qui credimus et adoramus solem uerum Christum, qui numquam interibit neque fecerat uoluntatem ipsius, sed manebit in aeternum, quomodo et Christus manebit in aeternum qui regnat cum Deo Patre omnipotente et cum Spiritu Sancto ante saecula et nunc et per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen.

61. Ecce iterum iterumque breuiter exponam uerba confessionis meae. Testificor in ueritate et in exultatione cordis coram Deo et sanctis angelis eius, quia numquam habui aliquam occasionem praeter euangelium et promissa illius ut umquam redirem ad gentem illam, unde prius iix euaseram.

62. Sed precor credentibus et timentibus Deum, quicumque dignatus fuerit inspicere uel recipere hanc scripturam quam Patricius peccator in-

because without any doubt we shall rise on that day with the brightness of the sun, that is in the glory of Christ Jesus our Redeemer, as sons of the living God and co-heirs with Christ and conformed to His future likeness; for of Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever and ever, Amen: for in Him we shall all reign.

For that sun, which we see, by God's command rises daily for our sakes, but it will never reign, nor will its splendour endure; but all those who worship it shall go in misery to punishment. But we who believe in and worship Christ the true Sun, who will never perish, nor will anyone who doeth His will, but he will abide for ever, who reigneth with God the Father Almighty, and with the Holy Spirit before the ages now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Lo, again and again, I shall in brief set out the words of my confession. I testify in truth and in the joy of my heart before God and His holy angels that I never had any motive except the Gospel and its promises in ever returning to that nation from which I had previously with difficulty made my escape.

But I pray those who believe and fear God, who-soever will have deigned to look on this writing which Patrick the sinner and un-

doctus scilicet Hiberione conscripsit, ut nemo unquam dicat quod mea ignorantia, si aliquid pussillum egi uel demonstraerim secundum Dei placitum, sed arbitramini et uerissime credatur quod *donum Dei* fuisset. Et haec est confessio mea antequam moriar.

learned, no doubt, wrote in Ireland that no one shall ever say it was my ignorance (did it), if I have done any small thing or showed it (to others) in accordance with God's will; but think ye, and let it be most firmly believed, that it was the gift of God. And this is my confession before I die.

## II. EPISTLE TO COROTICUS.<sup>1</sup>

I. PATRICIUS peccator indotus scilicet:—Hiberione constitutum episcopum me esse fateor. Certissime reor a Deo *accepi id quod sum*. Inter barbaras itaque gentes habito *proselitus* et profuga ob amorem Dei. Testis est ille si ita est. Non quod optabam tam dure et tam aspere aliquid ex ore meo effundere. Sed cogor *zelo Dei* et *ueritatis Christi* excitatus, pro dilectione proximorum atque filiorum pro quibus *tradidi* patriam et parentes et *animam* meam *usque ad mortem*. Si dignus sum, uoui Deo meo docere gentes etsi contemnor a quibusdam.

2. Manu mea scripsi atque condidi uerba ista danda et tradenda, militibus mittenda Corotici; non dico ciuibus meis, ciuibus sanctorum

I. I, PATRICK the sinner, unlearned no doubt:—I confess that I have been established a bishop in Ireland.<sup>2</sup> Most assuredly I believe that I have received from God what I am. And so I dwell in the midst of barbarous heathens, a stranger and exile for the love of God. He is witness if this is so. Not that I desire to utter from my mouth anything so harshly and so roughly; but I am compelled, moved as I am by zeal for God and for the truth of Christ; by love for my nearest friends and sons, for whom I have not given up my fatherland and parents, yea, and my life unto death. I have vowed to my God to teach the heathen if I am worthy though by some I be despised.

2. With mine own hand have I written and composed these words to be given and handed to and sent to the soldiers of Coroticus;—I do

<sup>1</sup> See page 588, present work

<sup>2</sup> Or 'Bishop of Ireland.



Romanorum, sed ciuibus daemoniorum ob mala opera ipsorum. Ritu hostili in morte uiuunt, socii Scottorum atque Pictorum apostatarum, quasi sanguine uolentes saginari innocentium Christianorum, quos ego innumeros Deo genui atque in Christo confirmaui.

3. Postera die qua crismati neofiti in ueste candida—flagrabat in fronte ipsorum dum crudeliter trucidati atque mactati gladio supra-dictis,—misi epistolam cum sancto presbytero quem ego ex infantia docui cum clericis ut nobis aliquid indulgerent de praeda uel de captiuis baptizatis quos ceperunt. Cachinnos fecerunt de illis.

4. Idcirco nescio quod magis lugeam an qui interfecti uel quos ceperunt uel quos grauiter Zabulus inlaqueauit. Perenni poena gehennam pariter cum ipso mancipabunt quia utique: *qui facit peccatum seruus est et filius Zabuli* nuncupatur.

5. Quare propter sciat omnis homo timens Deum quod a me alieni sunt et a Christo Deo meo *pro quo legationem*

not say to my fellow-citizens, or to the fellow-citizens of the holy Romans, but to fellow-citizens of demons because of their evil works. In hostile guise, they are dead while they live, allies of the Scots and apostate Picts, as though wishing to gorge themselves with the blood of innocent Christians, whom I, in countless numbers, begot to God, and confirmed in Christ.

3. On the day following that on which the newly-baptised, in white array, were anointed with the chrism—it was still gleaming on their foreheads, while they were cruelly butchered and slaughtered with the sword by the above-mentioned persons—I sent a letter with a holy presbyter, whom I taught from his infancy, with some clerics, to request that they would allow us some of the booty, or of the baptised captives whom they had taken. They jeered at them.

4. Therefore I know not which I should the rather mourn, whether those who are slain, or those whom they captured, or those whom the devil grievously ensnared. In everlasting punishment they will become slaves of hell along with him, for verily whosoever committeth sin is a slave, and is called a son of the Devil.

5. Wherefore let every man that feareth God know that aliens they are from me and from Christ my

*fungor ; patricidæ, fratricidæ. lupi rapaces deuorantes plebem Domini ut cibum panis. Sicut ait : Iniqui dissipauerunt legem tuam Domine, quam in supremis temporibus Hiberione optime et benigne plantauerat, atque instruxerat, fauente Deo.*

6. Non usurpo. Partem habeo cum his quos *aduocauit et prædestinauit* euangelium prædicare in persecutionibus non paruis *usque ad extremum terræ*, etsi inuidet inimicus per tirannidem Corotici qui Deum non ueretur nec sacerdotes ipsius quos *elegit*, et indulsit illis summam diuinam sublimem potestatem quos *ligarent super terram ligatos esse et in caelis*.

7. Unde ergo quaeso plurimum, *sancti et humiles corde*, adulari talibus non licet nec cibum nec potum sumere cum ipsis, nec elemosinas ipsorum recipere debere donec crudeliter poenitentiam agentes effusis lacrimis satis Deo faciant, et liberent seruos Dei et ancillas Christi baptizatas, pro quibus mortuus est et crucifixus.

8. *Dona iniquorum reprobata Altissimus. Qui offert sacrificium ex substantia pauperum quasi qui uictimat filium in conspectu patris sui. Diuitias inquit quas congregauit iniuste euomentur de*

God, for whom I am an ambassador ; patricides, fratricides, raven ng wolves eating up the people of the Lord like bread-stuffs. As he saith : O Lord, the ungodly have destroyed Thy law, which in the last times He had excellently and kindly planted in Ireland, and built up by the favour of God.

6. I make no false claim. I have part with those whom He called and predestined to preach the Gospel amidst no small persecutions even unto the end of the earth, even though the enemy envies me by means of the tyranny of Coroticus, who fears neither God nor His priests whom He chose, and to whom He granted that highest divine sublime power, that whom they should bind on earth should be bound in heaven.

7. Whence, therefore, ye holy and men humble of heart I implore you earnestly—it is not right to pay court to such men, nor to take food or drink with them, nor ought one to accept their alms-givings, until by doing hard penance with shedding of tears they make amends before God, and liberate the servants of God and the baptised handmaidens of Christ, for whom He died and was crucified.

8. *The Most High approveth not the gifts of the wicked. He that offereth sacrifice of the goods of the poor is as one that sacrificeth the son in the presence of his father. The riches, he saith, which he had*

*uentre eius; trahit illum angelus mortis; iradragonum multabitur; interficiet illum lingua colubris; comedit eum ignis inextinguibilis. Ideoque Uae qui replent se his quae non sunt sua. Uel, Quid prodest homini ut totum mundum lucretur, et animae suae detrimentum patiatur.*

9. Longum est per singula discutere uel insinuare per totam legem carpere testimonia de tali cupiditate. Auaritia mortale erimen. *Non concupisces rem proximi tui. Non occides. Homicida non potest esse cum Christo. Qui odit fratrem suum homicida adscribitur. Uel, Qui non diligit fratrem suum in morte manet.* Quanto magis reus est qui manus suas coinquinauit in sanguine filiorum Dei quos nuper adquisiuit in ultimis terrae per exhortationem paruitatis nostrae?

10. Numquid sine Deo, uel secundum carnem Hiberione ueni? Quis me compulit—*Alligatus spiritu*—ut non uideam aliquem de cognatione mea? Numquid a me piam misericordiam quod ago erga gentem illam qui me aliquando ceperunt, et deuas-tauerunt seruos et ancillas domus patris mei? Ingenuus fui secundum carnem. De corione patre nascor. Uendidi enim nobilitatem meam—

*gathered unjustly will be vomited up from his belly. The angel of death draggeth him away. He will be tormented by the fury of dragons. The viper's tongue shall kill him; unquenchable fire devoureth him. And therefore, Woe to those who fill themselves with what is not their own. Or again, What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?*

9. It would be tedious to discuss or declare [them] one by one, to gather from the whole law testimonies concerning such greed. Avarice is a deadly sin: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods. Thou shalt not kill. A murderer cannot be with Christ. He that hateth his brother is reckoned a murderer.* Or, again, *He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.* How much more guilty is he that hath stained his hands with the blood of the sons of God, whom He recently gained in the ends of the earth through the exhortations of my littleness.

10. Did I come to Ireland without God, or according to the flesh? Who compelled me—I am bound by the spirit—not to see any one of my kinsfolk? Is it from me it is that I show godly compassion towards that nation who once took me captive and harried the menservants and maidservants of my father's house? I was free-born according to the flesh. I am born of a father who

non erubesco neque me poenitet — pro utilitate aliorum. Denique seruus sum in Christo genti exteræ ob gloriam ineffabilem *perennis uitæ quæ est in Christo Iesu Domino nostro.*

II. Et si mei me non cognoscunt, *propheta in patria sua honorem non habet.* Forte non sumus ex uno ouili neque unum Deum Patrem habemus; sicut ait: *Qui non est mecum contra me est et qui non congregat mecum spargit.* Non conuenit: *Unus destruit, alter ædificat.* Non quaero quæ mea sunt.

Non mea gratia sed Deus quidem *hanc sollicitudinem [dedit] in corde meo* ut unus essem de *uenatoribus* siue *piscatoribus* quos olim Deus *in nouissimis diebus* ante prænuntiauit.

12. Inuidetur mihi. Quid faciam Domine? Ualde despicio. Ecce oves tuæ circa me laniantur atque deprædantur a supradictis latrunculis, iubente Corotico hostili mente. Longe est a caritate Dei traditor Christianorum in manus Scottorum atque Pictorum. *Lupi rapaces* deglutierunt gregem Domini qui utique Hiberione cum summa diligentia optime crescebat; Et filii Scottorum et filiae regulorum monachi et uirgines Christi enumerare nequeo. Quam ob rem *inuria iustorum non te*

was a decurion, but I sold my nobility, I blush not to state it, nor am I sorry, for the profit of others. In short I am a slave in Christ to a foreign nation on account of the unspeakable glory of the eternal life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

II. And if my own know me not, a prophet hath no honour in his own country. Perchance we are not of one and the same fold nor have *one God and Father.* As He saith: *He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth.* It is not meet that one pulleth down and another buildeth up. I seek not mine own.

It was not my own grace, but God that put this earnest care into my heart, that I should be one of the hunters or fishers whom long ago God foretold would come in the last days.

12. I am envied. What shall I do, O Lord? I am exceedingly despised. Lo, around me are thy sheep torn to pieces and spoiled, and by the robbers afore-said, by the orders of Coroticus with hostile intent. Far from the love of God is he who betrays Christians into the hands of the Scots and Picts. Ravening wolves have swallowed up the flock of the Lord, which verily in Ireland was growing up excellently with the greatest care. And the sons of Scots and the daughters of chieftains

*placeat ; etiam usque ad inferos non placebit.*

13. Quis sanctorum non horreat iocundare uel conuiuium fruire cum talibus ? De spoliis defunctorum Christianorum repleuerunt domus suas. De rapinis uiuunt. Nesciunt miseri uenenum ; letalem cibum porrigunt ad amicos et filios suos : sicut Eua non intellexit quod utique mortem tradidit uiro suo. Sic sunt omnes qui male agunt ; *mortem perennem poenam operantur.*

14. Consuetudo Romanorum Gallorum Christianorum—Mittunt uiros sanctos idoneos ad Francos et caeteras gentes cum tot milia solidorum ad redimendos captiuos baptizatos ; tu toties interficis et uendis illos genti exteræ ignoranti Deum. Quasi in lupanar tradis *membra Christi.* Qualem spem habes in Deum uel qui te consentit aut qui te communicat uerbis adulationis ? Deus iudicabit ; scriptum est enim : *Non solum facientes mala, sed etiam consentientes dampnandi sunt.*

15. Nescio quid dicam uel quid loquar amplius de defunctis filiorum Dei quos gladius *supra modum* dure

who were monks and virgins of Christ I am unable to reckon. Wherefore, Be not pleased with the wrong done by the unjust ; even unto hell it shall not please thee.

13. Which of the saints would not shudder to jest or make a feast with such men ? They have filled their houses with the spoil of dead Christians. They live by plunder. Wretched men, they know not that it is poison, they offer the deadly food to their friends and sons : just as Eve did not understand that verily it was death that she handed to her husband. So are all they who do wrong. They work death eternal as their punishment.

14. The custom of the Roman Christian Gauls is this :—They send holy and fit men to the Franks and other heathens with many thousands of solidi to redeem baptised captives. Thou slayest as many and sellest them to a foreign nation that knows not God. Thou deliverest the members of Christ as it were to a brothel. What manner of hope in God hast thou, or whoso consents with thee, or who holds converse with thee in words of flattery ? God will judge ; for it is written, *Not only those who do evil, but those that consent with them, shall be damned.*

15. I know not what I should say, or what I should speak further about the departed ones of the sons of God,

tetigit. Scriptum est enim : *Flete cum fletibus.* Et iterum : *Si dolet unum membrum condoleant omnia membra.* Quapropter ecclesia plorat et planget filios et filias suas quas adhuc gladius nondum interfecit, sed prolongati et exportati in longa terrarum, ubi peccatum manifeste grauetur, impudenter habundat. Ibi uenundati ingenui homines, Christiani in seruitutem redacti sunt, praesertim indignissimorum pessimorum apostatarumque Pictorum.

16. Idcirco cum tristitia et merore uociferabo : O speciosissimi atque amantissimi fratres et filii quos in Christo genui, enumerare nequeo, quid faciam uobis ? Non sum dignus Deo neque hominibus subuenire. *Praeualuit iniquitas iniquorum super nos.* Quasi extranei facti sumus. Forte non credunt unum baptismum perceperimus uel unum Deum Patrem habemus. Indignum est illis de Hibernia nati sumus. Sicut ait : *Nonne unum Deum habetis ? Quid dereliquistis unusquisque proximum suum ?*

17. Idcirco doleo pro uobis doleo carissimi mihi ; sed iterum gaudeo intra meipsum. Non gratis laboraui uel peregrinatio mea in uacuum non fuit. Et contigit scelus tam horrendum et ineffabile !

whom the sword has touched sharply above measure. For it is written : *Weep with them that weep,* and, again, *If one member suffer, let all the members suffer with it.* The Church, therefore, bewails and will lament her sons and daughters whom the sword has not as yet slain, but who are banished and carried off to distant lands where sin in the light of day weighs heavy and shamefully abounds. There freemen are put up for sale, Christians are reduced to slavery, and, worst of all, to most wicked, most vile, and apostate Picts.

16. Therefore, in sadness and grief shall I cry aloud, O most lovely and loving brethren, and sons whom I begot in Christ, I cannot the number tell, what shall I do for you ? I am not worthy to come to the aid of either God or men. The wickedness of the wicked hath prevailed against us. We are become as it were strangers. Perchance they do not believe that we received one baptism, or that we have one God and Father. It is in their eyes a shameful thing that we were born in Ireland. As he saith, *Have ye not one God ? Why have ye each one forsaken his neighbour ?*

17. Therefore I grieve for you, I grieve, O ye most dear to me. But again, I rejoice within myself. I have not laboured for nothing, and my journey to a strange land was not in vain. And

Deo gratias, creduli baptizati de saeculo recessistis ad paradysum. Cerno uos. Migrare cepistis ubi *nox non erit, neque luctus, neque mors amplius, sed exultabitis sicut uituli ex uinculis resoluti, et conculcabitis iniquos, clerunt cinis sub pedibus uestris.*

18. Uos ergo regnabitis cum apostolis et prophetis atque martyribus; aeterna regna capiētis, sicut ipse testatur inquit; *Uenient ab oriente et occidente et recumbent cum Abraham et Isaac et Jacob in regno caelorum; Foris canes et uenefici et homicidae; et mendacibus et periuris pars eorum in stagnum ignis aeterni.* Non merito ait apostolus, *Ubi iustus uix saluus erit, peccator et impius transgressor legis ubi se recognoscat?*

19. Unde enim Coroticus cum suis sceleratissimis, rebellatores Christi, ubi se uidebunt? qui mulierculas baptizatas praemia distribuunt ob miserum regnum temporale, quod utique in momento transeat sicut nubes uel *fumus qui utique uento dispergitur.* Ita *peccatores fraudulentī a facie Domini peribunt, iusti autem epulentur in magna constantia cum Christo, iudicabunt nationes,*

yet, there has happened this crime so horrid and unspeakable! Thank God, it was when baptised believers that ye departed from the world to paradise. I can see you. Ye have begun to remove to where there shall be no night nor sorrow nor death any more. but ye shall leap like calves loosened from their bonds, and ye shall tread down the wicked, and they shall be ashes under your feet.

18. Ye therefore shall reign with apostles, and prophets, and martyrs. Ye shall take everlasting kingdoms, as He Himself witnesseth, saying: *They shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. Without are dogs and sorcerers and murderers; and liars and false swearers shall have their portion in the lake of everlasting fire.* Doth not the apostle rightly say: *Where the just man shall scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly transgressor of the law find himself?*

19. Well then, where shall Coroticus with his guilty followers, rebels against Christ, where shall they see themselves—they who distribute baptised damsels as rewards, and that for the sake of a miserable temporal kingdom, which verily passes away in a moment like a cloud or smoke which is verily dispersed by the wind? So shall the deceitful wicked perish at the presence of the Lord, but

et regibus iniquis dominabuntur in saecula saeculorum, Amen.

20. *Testificor coram Deo et angelis suis, quod ita erit sicut intimaui imperitiae meae. Non mea uerba, sed Dei et apostolorum atque prophetarum, quod ego Latinum exposui, qui numquam mentiti sunt. Qui crediderit saluus erit, qui uero non crediderit condemnabitur. Deus enim locutus est.*

21. Quaeso plurimum ut quicumque famulus Dei promptus fuerit ut sit gerulus litterarum harum, ut nequaquam subtrahatur a nemine, sed magis potius legatur coram cunctis plebibus. et praesente ipso Corotico. Quod si Deus inspirat illos ut quandoque Deo respiscant, ita ut uel sero poeniteant quod tam impie gesserunt.— Homicida erga fratres Domini —et liberent captiuas baptizatas quas ante ceperunt, ita ut mererentur Deo uiuere, et sani efficiantur hic et in aeternum. Pax Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto, Amen.

let the righteous feast in great constancy with Christ. They shall judge nations, and shall have dominion over ungodly kings for ever and ever. Amen.

20. I testify before God and His angels that it will be so as He has signified to my unskillfulness. The words are not mine, but of God and the apostles and prophets, who have never lied, which I have set forth in Latin. *He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned.* For God hath spoken.

21. I beseech earnestly that whatever servant of God be ready that he be the bearer of this letter, so that on no account it be suppressed by anyone, but much rather be read in the presence of all the people, yea, in the presence of Coroticus himself, if it so be that God may inspire them to amend their lives to God some time. so that even though late they may repent of their impious doings (murderer as he is in regard of the brethren of the Lord). and may liberate the baptised women captives whom they had taken, so that they may deserve to live to God, and be made whole. here and in eternity.

Peace to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.



II.—ST. PATRICK'S IRISH WRITINGS.—THE FAED FIADA,<sup>1</sup>  
OR DEER'S CRY.

## I.

Atomriug indiu  
Niurt trén togairm Trinoit,  
  
Cretim Treodataid foisj[ti]n  
Oendatad,  
In dúlemain dail.

## 2.

Atomriug indiu  
Niurt Gene Crist co n-a  
Bathius,  
  
Niurt Crochta co n-a Adnocul,  
  
Niurt n-Eseirge co Fresgabail,  
  
Niurt Tóniud do Brethemnas  
Bratha.

## 3.

Atomriug indiu  
Niurt Grád Hiruphin,  
  
In urlataid Aingel,  
[Ifrestul nan Archaingel]  
Hi frescisin Eseirge ar cenn  
fochraice,  
In ernaigthib Huasal Athrach,  
  
I tairchetlaib Fátha,  
  
Hi praiceptaib Apstal,  
In hiresaib Fuismedach,  
In endga noem Ingen,  
Hi ngnimaib Fer Fírean.

## I.

I bind to myself to-day  
The strong power of an invoca-  
tion of the Trinity,  
The faith of the Trinity in  
Unity,  
The Creator of the elements.

## 2.

I bind to myself to-day  
The power of the Incarnation  
of Christ with that of His  
Baptism,  
The power of the Crucifixion,  
with that of His Burial,  
The power of the Resurrection  
with the Ascension,  
The power of the Coming to  
the sentence of Judgment.

## 3.

I bind to myself to-day  
The power of the love of  
Seraphim,  
In the obedience of Angels,  
[In the service of Archangels.]  
In the hope of Resurrection  
unto reward,  
In the prayers of the noble  
Fathers,  
In the predictions of the  
Prophets,  
In the preaching of Apostles,  
In the faith of Confessors,  
In the purity of holy Virgins,  
In the acts of Righteous men.

<sup>1</sup> See page 560, present work.

We give the text and translation adopted by Haddan and Stubbs—  
Vol II., Part II., pp. 320-321.

4.

Atomriug indiu  
 Niurt nime,  
 Soilse gréne,  
 Etrochta snechtai,  
 Ane thened,  
 Déné lochet,  
 Luathe gæithe,  
 Fudomna mara,  
 Tairisem talmain,  
 Cobsaidecht ailech.

4.

I bind to myself to-day  
 The power of Heaven,  
 The light of the Sun,  
 The whiteness of Snow,  
 The force of Fire,  
 The flashing of Lightning,  
 The velocity of Wind,  
 The depth of the Sea,  
 The stability of the Earth,  
 The hardness of Rocks.

5.

Atomriug indiu  
 Niurt Dé dom luamaracht  
 Cumachta Dé dom chumga-  
 bail  
 Ciall Dé domm imthús  
 Rose Dé dom reimeise  
 Chuas Dé dom éstecht  
 Briathar Dé dom eriabrai  
 Lám Dé domm imdegail  
 Intech Dé dom remthechtas,  
 Seiath Dé dom dítin  
 Sochraite Dé domm anueul  
 Ar intledaib demna  
 Ar aslaigthib dualche  
 Ar irnechtaib aienid  
 Ar ceoh nduine mídús  
 thrastar dam  
 I céin ocus in ocus  
 I n-uathed ocus hi  
 sochaide.

5.

I bind to myself to-day  
 The power of God to guide  
 me  
 The might of God to uphold  
 me.  
 The wisdom of God to teach  
 me,  
 The eye of God to watch over  
 me,  
 The ear of God to hear me,  
 The word of God to give me  
 speech,  
 The hand of God to protect  
 me,  
 The way of God to prevent  
 me,  
 The shield of God to shelter  
 me,  
 The host of God to defend me,  
 Against the snares of  
 demons,  
 Against the temptations of  
 vices,  
 Against the lusts of nature,  
 Against every man who  
 meditates injury to me,  
 Whether far or near,  
 With few or with many.

## 6.

Tocuirius etrum thra na huile  
 nert so  
 Fri cech nert n-amnas  
 n-étrocar-  
 Fristí dom churp ocus  
 domm anmain  
 Fri tinchetla saibfáthe  
 Fri dubrechtu gentliuchta  
 Fri saibrechtu heretecda  
 Fri himcellacht n-idlachta  
 Fri brichta ban ocus goband  
 ocus druad  
 Fri cech fiss a ra chuiliu  
 anman duini,

## 6.

I have set around me all  
 these powers,  
 Against every hostile savage  
 power,  
 Directed against my body  
 and my soul,  
 Against the incantations of  
 false prophets,  
 Against the black laws of  
 heathenism.  
 Against the false laws of  
 heresy,  
 Against the deceits of  
 idolatry,  
 Against the spells of women  
 and smiths, and druids,  
 Against all knowledge  
 which blinds the soul of  
 man.

## 7.

Crist domm imdegail indui  
 Ar neim, ar loscud,  
 Ar badud, ar guin,  
 Conomthair ilar fochraice.

## 7.

Christ protect me to-day  
 Against poison, against  
 burning,  
 Against drowning, against  
 wound,  
 That I may receive abund-  
 ant reward.

## 8.

Crist lim. Crist rium,  
 Crist im degaid, Crist innium,  
 Crist íssum, Crist uasum,  
 Crist dessum, Crist tuathlum,  
 Crist illius,  
 Crist issius,  
 Crist i nerus.

## 8.

Christ with me, Christ before  
 me,  
 Christ behind me, Christ  
 within me,  
 Christ beneath me, Christ  
 above me,  
 Christ at my right, Christ at  
 my left,  
 Christ in the fort,  
 Christ in the chariot-seat,  
 Christ in the poop.

9.	9.
Crist i cridiu cech duine imm imrorda, Crist i n-gin cech óen rodóm labrathar, Crist in cech rusc nom dercaedar, Crist in cech cluais rodám cloathar.	Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

10.	10.
Atomriug indiu Niurt trén togairm Trinoit,  Cretim Treodataid foisitín Oendatad, In dulemain [dail].	I bind to myself to-day, The strong power of an in- vocation of the Trinity, The faith of the Trinity in Unity, The Creator of [the elements].

11.	11.
Domini est salus, Domini est salus, Christi est salus. Salus tua Domine sit semper nobiscum.	Salvation is of the Lord, Salvation is of the Lord, Salvation is of Christ, May thy salvation, O Lord, be ever with us.

III.—DOUBTFUL OR APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS ATTRIBUTED  
TO ST. PATRICK.

I.—CANONS ATTRIBUTED TO THE SAINT.<sup>1</sup>

(A). *Canons attributed to a Synod of Bishops, consisting of  
S. Patrick, Auxilius, and Isserninus.*

INCIPIT SINODUS EPISCOPORUM, ID EST PATRICII  
AUXILII, ISSERNINI.—Gratias agimus Deo Patri, et Filio, et  
Spiritu Sancto. *Presbiteris et diaconibus et omni clero*  
PATRICIUS, AUXILIUS, ISSERNINUS, EPISCOPI salutem.

Satius nobis neglegentes pramonere, quam culpam quæ

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XXVIII present work.

We follow text given in Haddan and Stubbs, Vol. II., Book II.,  
Pages 328-338.

facta sunt ; Solomone dicente, “ Melius est arguere [quam] irasci.” Exempla difinitionis nostræ inferius conscripta sunt, et sic inchoant :—

1. Si quis in questionem captivis quæsierit in plebe suo jure, sine permissione, meruit excommunicari.

2. Lectores denique cognoscant, unusquisque, ecclesiam in qua psallat.

3. Clericus vagus non sit in plebe.

4. Si quis permissionem acciperit, et collectum sit pretium, non plus exigit quam quod necessitas poscit.

5. Si quid supra manserit, ponat super altare pontificis, ut detur alii indigenti.

6. Quicumque clericus ab hostiario usque ad sacerdotem sine tunica visus fuerit, atque turpitudinem ventris et nuditatem non tegat, et si non more Romano capilli ejus tonsi sint, et uxor (ejus) si non velato capite ambulaverit, pariter a laicis contempnentur, et ab Ecclesia separentur.

7. Quicumque clericus ussus, neglegentiæ causa, ad collectas mane vel vespere non occurrerit, alienus habeatur, nisi forte jugo servitutis sit detentus.

8. Clericus si pro gentili homine fideiutor fuerit in quacunque quantitate, et si contigerit (quod mirum non est) per astutiam aliquam gentilis ille clerico fallat, rebus suis clericus ille solvat debitum ; nam si armis compugnaverit cum illo, merito extra Ecclesiam computetur.

9. Monachus et virgo, unus ab hinc, et alia ab aliunde, in uno hospicio non commaneant, nec in uno curru a villa in villam discurrant, nec adsidue invicem confabulationem exerceant.

10. Si [quis] inceptum boni operis ostenderit in psallendo, et nunc intermisit, et comam habeat ; ab Ecclesia excludendus, nisi statui priori se restituerit.

11. Quicumque clericus ab aliquo excommunicatus fuerit, et alius eum susciperit, ambo cœquali pœnitentia utantur.

12. Quicumque Christianus excommunicatus fuerit, nec ejus elemosina recipiatur.

13. Elemosinam a gentibus offerendam in Ecclesiam recipi non licet.

14. Christianus qui occiderit, aut fornicationem fecerit, aut more gentilium ad aruspiciem juraverit, per singula cremina annum pœnitentiæ agat ; impleto, cum testibus veniat, anno pœnitentiæ, et postea resolvetur a sacerdote.

15. Et qui furtum fecerit, demedium pœniteat ; viginti diebus cum pane ; et, si fieri potest, rapta repræsenteret ; sic in Ecclesiam renuetur.

16. Christianus qui crediderit esse lamiam in sæculo, quæ interpretatur striga, anathema[ti]zandus, quicumque super animam famam istam imposuerit ; nec ante in Ecclesiam

recipiendus, quam ut idem creminis, quod fecit, sua iterum voce revocet, et sic pœnitentiam cum omni diligentia agat.

17. Virgo quæ voverit Deo permanet kasta, et postea nubserit carnalem sponsum, excommonis sit, donec convertatur: si conversa fuerit, et dimiserit adulterium, pœnitentiam agat; et postea non in una domo nec in una villa habitent.

18. Si quis excommonis fuerit, nec nocte pascharum in ecclesiam non introeat, donec pœnitentiam recipiet.

19. Mulier Christiana, quæ acciperit virum honestis nuptis, et postmodum discesserit a primo, et junxerit se adulterio; quæ hæc fecit, excommonis sit.

20. Christianus qui fraudat debitum cujuslibet ritu gentilium, excommonis sit, donec solvat debitum.

21. Christianus cui dereliquerit aliquis, et provocat eum in iudicium, et non in Ecclesiam, ut ibi examinetur causa; qui sic fecerit, alienus sit.

22. Si quis tradiderit filiam suam viro honestis nuptis, et amaverit alium, et consentit filiæ suæ, et acceperit dotem, ambo ab Ecclesia excludantur.

23. Si quis presbiterorum ecclesiam ædificaverit, non offerat antequam adducat suum pontificem, ut eam consecret; quia sic decet.

24. Si quis advena ingressus fuerit plebem, non ante baptizet, neque offerat, neque consecret, nec ecclesiam ædificet, [do]nec permissionem accipiat ab Episcopo: nam qui a gentibus sperat permissionem, alienus sit.

25. Si quæ a religionis hominibus donata fuerint, diebus illis quibus pontifex in singulis habitaverit Ecclesiis, pontificalia dona (sicut mos antiquus) ordinare ad Episcopum pertinebunt, sive ad usum necessarium, sive egentibus distribuendum, prout ipse Episcopus moderabit.

26. Si quis vero clericus contra venerit, et dona invadere fuerit deprehensus, ut turpis lucri cupidus ab Ecclesia sequestretur.

27. Clericus Episcopi in plebe quislibet novus ingressor, baptizare et offerre illum non licet, nec aliquid agere; qui si sic non faciat, excommonis sit.

28. Si quis clericorum excommonis fuerit, solus, non in eadem domo cum fratribus, orationem facit, nec offer[r]e nec consecrare licet, donec se faciat emendatum; qui si sic non fecerit, dupliciter vindicetur.

29. Si quis fratrum accipere gratiam Dei voluerit, non ante baptizetur quam ut XLmum agat.

30. Episcopus quislibet qui de sua in alteram progreditur parruchiam, nec ordinare præsumat, nisi permissionem acceperit ab eo, qui in suo principatu est; die Dominica offerat tantum susceptione, et obsequi hic contentus sit

31. Si quis conduxerit e duobus clericis, quos discordare convenit per discordiam aliquam, prolatum uni e duobus hostem ad interficiendum, homicidam congruum est nominari: qui clericus ab omnibus rectis habetur alienus.

32. Si quis clericorum voluerit iuvare captivo, cum suo pretio illi subveniat; nam si per furtum illum inviolaverit, blasphemantur multi clerici per unum latronem; qui sic fecerit, excommunis sit.

33. Clericus qui de Britanis ad nos venit sine epistola, etsi habitat in plebe, non licitum ministrare.

34. Diaconus nobiscum similiter, qui inconsultu suo abbate sine literis in aliam parruchiam absentat, nec cibum ministrare decet; et a suo presbitero, quem contempsit, per pœnitentiam vindicetur. Et monachus inconsultu abbate vagulus debet vindicari.

Finiunt Sinodi Distituta.

(B).—*Single Canons attributed to S. Patrick.*

I. PATRICIUS, DE UNITATE ET SUBDITORUM \* \* \*. Quis ergo audet scindere unitatem, quam nemo hominum solvere vel reprehendere potest? "Multitudinis autem credentium erat cor unum et anima una, et nulla erat separatio in eis, nec quisquam ex bonis suis dicebat esse aliquid, sed erant illis omnia eommonia: [...] gratia quoque erat magna super illos omnes; nec vero in eis aliquis indigens; nam quicumque possessores agrorum aut domorum erant, vendentes adferebant pretia illorum et ponebant ante Apostolorum [pedes], et dividebatur unicuique ut opus erat [.....] Quidam autem vir, nomine Annanias, cum Safirra uxore sua [...]; et adferens partem aliquam ante pedes Apostolorum [...]: dixit autem Petrus illi, Annanias, cur implevit Satanas cor tuum ad mentiendum Spiritui Sancto, ut fraudem faceres de pretio agri? Nonne manens tibi manebat, et venditum in tua potestate erat? Quare posuisti in corde tuo facere hoc malum? Non es hominibus mentitus sed Deo. Audiens autem Annanias hæc verba cecidit et expiravit." [MS. C.C.C.C. 279 (*olim* O. 20), fol. 59-62; and partly in S., I. 54; and W., I. 3. 4.]

2.—*Canon of S. Patrick from the Book of Armagh.*

Item quicumque similiter per industriam atque injuriam vel nequitiam malum quodque opus contra familiam seu paruchiam ejus perfecerit, aut prædicta ejus insignia dispexerit, ad libertatem examinis ejusdem Airddmachæ præsulis recte judicantis perveniet caussa totius negotionis, cæteris aliorum iudicibus prætermisissis.

Item quæcumque causa valde difficilis exorta fuerit atque

ignota cunctis Scotorum gentium iudicibus, ad cathedram Archiepiscopi Hibernensium id est Patricii, atque hujus antestitis examinationem recte refferenda.

Si vero in illa cum suis sapientibus facile sanari non poterit causa prædictæ negotiationis ad sedem Apostolicam decrevimus esse mittendam, id est ad Petri Apostoli cathedram auctoritatem Romæ urbis habentem.

Hii sunt qui de hoc decreverunt, id est. Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus, Benignus. Post vero exitum Patricii sancti alumpni sui valde ejusdem libros conscripserunt.

(C).—*Canons of a Second Synod attributed to S. Patrick.*

I. *De habitatione cum fratribus peccatoribus.*

De eo quod mandastis de habitatione cum fratribus peccatoribus, audite Apostolum dicentem, "Cum hujusmodi ne cibum quidem sumere." Non ejus escas sumas cum eo. Cæterum si bos sis et trituras, hoc est, si doctor es et doces, "non obturatur tibi os," et "dignus es mercede tua;" sed "oleum peccatoris non impinguet caput tuum" sed corripe adhuc et argue.

II.—*De oblationibus eorum.*

Contentus tegmento et alimento tuo, cætera dona iniquorum reprobata, quia non sumit lucerna nisi quod alitur.

III. *De pœnitentia post ruinas.*

Statuitur ut abbas videat, cui attribuetur potestas alligandi et solvendi; sed aptior est, juxta Scripturæ exempla, veniam. Si vero cum fletu et lamentatione et lugubri cum veste sub custodia, pœnitentia brevis quam longa, et remissa cum temperamentis.

IV. [*De excommunicato repellendo*].

Audi Dominum dicentem, "Si tibi non audierit, sit tibi velut gentilis et publicanus." Non maledices sed repelles excommunicatum a communione, et mensa, et missa, et pace; et si hæreticus est, post unam correptionem devota.

V. *De suspectis causis.*

Audi Dominum dicentem, "Sinite utraque crescere usque ad messem;"—hoc est, "donec veniat, Qui manifestabit consilia cordium:"—ne iudicium ante diem iudicii facias. Vide Iudam ad nœnsam Domini, et latronem in paradiso.



VI. *De vindictis Ecclesiæ.*

Audi item Dominum dicentem, "Qui effuderit sanguinem innocentem, sanguis ipsius effundetur;" sed ab eo qui portat gladium; dictator autem vindictæ innocens habetur. De cæteris autem per legem Evangelicam, ab eo loco in quo ait, "Et eum qui aufert aliquid a te, ne repetas;" sed libenter, si ipse quid referat, humiliter recipias.

VII. *De baptismatis incertis*

Statuunt ne rebaptizati [sint], qui symboli traditione[m] a quocunque acceperunt, quia non inficit semen seminantis iniquitas. Sin vero, non est rebaptizare sed baptizare. Non baluendos autem lapsos a fide credamus, nisi per impositionem manus accepi[antur].

VIII. *De reis autem abstractis ab Ecclesia.*

Non ad reorum defensionem facta est Ecclesia; sed iudiciis persuadendum est, ut spiritali morte eos occiderent, qui ad sinum matris Ecclesiæ confugiunt.

IX. *De lapsis post gradum.*

Audi canonica instituta. Qui cum gradu cecidit, sine gradu surgat. Contentus nomine tantum, amittat ministerium: nisi qui tantum a conspectu Domini peccans non recessit.

X. *desideratur.*XI. *De separatione sexuum post lapsum.*

Consideret unusquisque in conscientia sua, si amor et desiderium cessavit peccati, quia corpus mortuum non inficit corpus alterius mortui; sin vero, separentur.

XII. *De oblatione pro defunctis.*

Audi Apostolum dicentem, "Est autem peccatum ad mortem, non pro illo dico ut roget quis." Et Dominus, "Nolite donare sanctum canibus." Qui enim in vita sua non merebitur sacrificium accipere, quomodo post mortem illi poterit adjuvare?

XIII. *De sacrificio.*

In nocte Paschæ, si fas est ferre foras, non foras fertur, sed fidelibus deferatur. Quid aliud significat quod in una domo sumitur agnus, quam [quod] sub uno fidei culmine creditur et communicator Christus?

XIV. *De abstinentia votiva vel lega'i a cibis.*

Statutum, ut [post] Christi adventum sponsi nullas ratas leges inveniat jejunii. Quid autem inter Novatianum et Christianum interest. nisi quod Novatianus indesinenter, Christianus vero per tempus abstineat; ut locus, et tempus et persona per omnia observetur.

XV. *De relinquenda vel docenda patria.*

Docenda patria prius, per exemplum Domini; et derelinquenda postea si non proficiet, juxta exemplum Apostoli. Sed qui potest facere, licet periclitatur, ubique doceat, et se ostendat; qui vero non potest, taceat et abscondat. Alius quippe ab Jesu in domum suam mittitur, alius sequi jubetur.

XVI. *De falsis Episcopis.*

Qui non secundum Apostolum electus est ab altero Episcopo, est damnandus; deinde ad reliquam plebem declinandus et degradandus.

XVII. *De præposito monachorum.*

Monachi sunt, qui solitarii sine terrenis opibus habitant sub potestate Episcopi vel abbatis. Non sunt autem monachi, sed vactro-periti (hoc est, contemptores solliciti). Ad vitam perfectam in ætate perfecta (hoc est, a viginti annis) debet unusquisque constringi, non adtescendo sed voto perficiendo; ut est illud, "Unusquisque sicut proposuit corde suo faciat;" et, "Ut vota mea reddam in conspectu Domini," et reliqua. Quo voto vivitur, situs locorum coartat, si superabundantia in omnibus devitetur in vita; quia in frigore et nuditate, in fame et siti, in vigiliis et jejniis, vocati sunt.

XVIII. *De tribus seminibus Evangeliorum.*

Centesimum Episcopi et doctores, qui omnibus omnia sunt; sexagesimum clerici, et viduæ, qui continentes sunt; tricesimum laici, qui fideles sunt, qui perfecte Trinitatem credunt. His amplius non est in messe Domini. Monachos vero et virgines cum centesimis jungimus.

XIX. *Qua ætate baptizandi sunt.*

Octavo die chatechumeni sunt; postea, solemnitatibus Domini baptizantur, id est, Pascha, et Pentecoste, et Epiphania.

XX. *De parrociis.*

Cum monachis non est dicendum, quorum malum est inauditum, qui unitatem vero plebis non incongrue suscepimus.

XXI. *De retinendis vel dimittendis monachis.*

Unusquisque fructum suum in Ecclesia, in qua, imbutus est, perfruatur; nisi causa majoris profectus ad alterius ferre permissa abbatis cogat. Si vero ex[t]i[t]erit causa utilior, cum benedictione dicatur, "Ecce Angus Dei;" non quod sua sunt singuli quærentes, sed quæ Iesu Christi: vocationis autem causam non permittunt subditos discurrere.

XXII. *De sumenda Eucharistia post lapsum.*

Post examinationem carceris sumenda est; maxime autem in nocte Paschæ, in qua qui non communicat, fidelis non est. Ideo brevia sunt et stricta apud eos spatia, ne anima fidelis intereat tanto tempore jejuna medicinæ; Domino dicente, "Nisi manducaveritis carnem Filii hominis, non habebitis vitam in vobis."

XXIII. *De juramento.*

"Non jurare omnino." De hoc consequente lectionis series docet non adjurandum esse creaturam aliam, nisi Creatorem: ut prophetis mos est,—"Vivit Dominus," et, "Vivit anima mea," et, "Vivit Dominus Cui assisto hodie." Finis autem contradictionis est nisi Domino. Omni enim quod amat homo, hoc et juratur.

XXIV. *De contentione duorum absque testibus.*

Statuunt, ut per quatuor sancta evangelia, antequam communicet, testatur, quid probatur; et deinde sub iudice fama relinquatur.

XXV. *De toro fratris defuncti.*

Audi decreta synodi.—"Superstes frater thorum defuncti fratris non ascendat:"—Domino dicente, "Erunt duo in carne una:" ergo uxor fratris tui soror tua est.

XXVI. *De meretrice conjuge.*

Audi Dominum dicentem,—"Qui adhæret meretrici, unum corpus efficitur." Item,—"Adultera lapidetur:"—id est, huic vitio moriatur, ut desinat crescere quæ non desinit mœchari. Item, si adulterata fuerit mulier, nunquid revertitur ad virum suum priorem. Item, "Non licet viro dimittere uxorem, nisi ob causam fornicationis:"—ac si dicat, ob hanc

causam; unde, si ducat alteram velut post mortem prioris, non vetant.

XXVII. *De voluntate virginis vel patris in conjugio.*

Quod vult pater, faciat virgo, quia caput mulieris vir. Sed requirenda est a patre voluntas virginis, dum "Deus reliquit hominem in manu consilii sui."

XXVIII. *De primis vel secundis votis.*

Eadem ratione observanda sunt prima vota, et prima conjugia, ut secundis prima non sint irrita, nisi fuerint adulterata.

XXIX. *De consanguinitate in conjugio.*

Intelligite quid Lex loquitur, non minus nec plus: quod autem observatur apud nos, ut quatuor genera dividantur, nec vidisse dicunt nec legisse.

XXX. *De vindicandis adsuetis.*

Nunquam vetitum; licet. Verum observandæ sunt leges jubilei, hoc est, quinquaginta anni, ut non adfirmetur inserta vice ratio temporis. Et ideo omnia negotia[tio] subscriptione Romanorum confirmanda est.

XXXI. *De gentilibus qui ante baptismum credunt, quam penitentiam habeant.*

Remittuntur quidem omnium peccata in baptismo; sed qui cum fidei conscientia infidelis temporarius vixit, ut fidelis peccator judicandus est.

Finit Patricii Synodus.

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II.—THE RULE OF PATRICK.<sup>1</sup>

RIAGAIL PATRAIC.

TRANSLATION.

i. Forata anmanda fer  
nErenn a timna Patraic.  
Primepscop cecha tuaithe  
accu fri huirdned a n-oessa  
graid, fri coisecrad a n-eclas,

i. It is on the souls of  
the men of Ireland from the  
Testament of Patrick:—  
each tribe to have a chief  
bishop for the ordination of

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<sup>1</sup> See page 561, present work.

We adopt the text and translation as given by Mr. J. G. O'Keefe in *Eriu*, the Journal of the School of Irish Learning, Dublin, Vol. I., Part II., 1904.

7 fri hanmchairdes do flaithib  
7 do airchindc[h]ib, fri  
noemad 7 bendachad a clainde  
iar mbathius.

2. Ar nach tuath 7 nach  
cenel oc na biat epscoip  
frisna gnimaib seo, atbail  
dliged a creidme 7 a n-irsi,  
conid i suide teit cech duine  
assa richt choir na tabair toeb  
fri hanmcharaid craibdech,<sup>1</sup>  
7 conid aire na bi crich la  
nech fri peccad eter fingail  
ocus duinorgain ocus etrad  
7 cech olc archena. Nach  
fer graid didiu oc na bi  
dliged na eolus timthirechta  
a graid 7 cona bi tualaing  
oiffrind na ceileabarta ar  
belaib rig 7 epscop, ni dlig  
saire na eneclainn fir graid i  
tuaith na i n-eclais.

3. Nach epscop dobeir  
uasaigrada for nech na bi  
tualaing [a] n-airberta eter  
chrad 7 leigend 7 anm-  
chairde na eolus rechta na  
riagla, is bidba bais do Dia 7  
do doinib in t-epscoip sin.  
Ar is imdergad do C[h]rist 7  
da eclais a comgrada do  
thabairt for neoch na bi  
tualaing a n-airberta fri nem  
7 talmain, co mbi brath  
do thuathaib 7 do ecailsib,  
conid aire dlegar secht

their clergy, for the conse-  
cration of their churches,  
and for the spiritual guidance  
of princes and chieftains,  
for the sanctification and  
blessing of their offspring  
after baptism.

2. For the tribe and the  
nation which have not bishops  
for these works, the law of  
their belief and of their  
faith dies, and then it is  
that each person, who does  
not trust to a pious soul-  
friend, forsakes his proper  
guise; and therefore there  
are no bounds with anyone  
to sin, both parricide and  
manslaughter, and lust and  
every other villainy. Any  
ordained man then who is  
mindful neither of the rule  
nor of the knowledge of  
service of his order so that  
he is not capable of the  
Offering or of celebrating  
the Hours before kings and  
bishops, he is not entitled  
to exemption,<sup>1</sup> or to the  
honour-price of one ordained,  
in tribe or church.

3. Any bishop who confers  
high orders on anyone who  
is unable to practise them  
in piety and reading and  
spiritual guidance, and who  
has not a knowledge of the  
law or of the rule, that  
bishop is guilty of death to  
God and to men. For it is  
an insult to Christ and to  
His Church to confer their  
orders on anyone who is  
incapable of using them  
towards Heaven and earth,

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, all the privileges of the clergy; no taxes, freedom from military service, &c.

mbliadna peinne 7 secht cumail fri henech in Duileman. Ar is ed foterá galar 7 angessa forsna clanna, cter eltraí 7 milliúda olchena, cen baithus ndligthech 7 cen dul fo laim n-epscoip i n-aimsir thechtai, ar ní thic comlainne in spirita noim, cipe a leire baistither in duine, mane te fo laim n-epscoip iar mbathus.

4. It e maccan co macu secht mbliadna ní bí acht a cursad ina chet-chinaid co n-abaind no c[h]ris no bois .i. trí beimenna [Col. 853] forru co m-bais no c[h]ris no abaind co cend secht mbliadnae. Nach fer graid tra tairmit[h]eid a grada co caillich for follus, asren dire a grad dond eclais saraiget[h]ar no is díles a tecmail lais do cech t[h]orba 7 is díles don tuaith a tecmail leo do fuillmiud 7 indile, 7 ní dlíg ní a raind ecaillsi De 'na degaid sin, mane penne do reir apad no anncharat chrabdig.

5. Ar ní fuil aitreib nime do annain duine nad baithister o baithus dlígt[h]ech re cech

so that it is ruin to peoples and churches: wherefore seven years of penance and seven cumals are necessary by way of reparation to the Creator. For it is this which causes plague and sickness to tribes, both . . . and other destructions, not having lawful baptism, and not going 'under the hand' of a bishop at the prescribed time; for the perfection of the Holy Spirit comes not, however fervently a person is baptised, unless he 'goes under the hand' of a bishop after baptism.

4. It is children up to boys of seven years who are only chastised for their first crime with scourge or belt or palm of hand, to wit, three blows on them with palm of hand or belt or scourge to the end of seven years.<sup>1</sup> Anyone in orders, however, who plainly transgresses his orders with a nun pays the fine of his orders to the church which he outrages, or it is the lawful property [? of the man himself] what falls to him of every profit, and it is the lawful property of the people what falls to them of dead cattle and live cattle. And he [the ordained man] is entitled to nothing on the part of the church of God after that, unless he does penance at the will of an abbot or a pious soul-friend.

5. For there is no heavenly abode for the soul of a person who is not baptised according

<sup>1</sup> i.e., till their seventh year.

ret, conid aire forata anmanda [fer] nErenn cona flaithib 7 a n-airechaib 7 a n-airchindchib co raib baithius 7 comna 7 gabail eclairce o cech eclais do manchaib techtaib, ar as oc tri[s]t 7 miscad Patraic co noemaib Erenn for cech flaith 7 for cech manach na timairg for a eclais saindiles baithius 7 comnai 7 gabail ecnoirce inti.

6. Nach epscop tra soertha tuatha 7 eclaisi, is e as anmchara dond aes graid, 7 is lais dogniad urddu techtai, 7 is e dobeir fortacht doib co roiset a n-dliged hi tuaith 7 i n-eclais, 7 is e timairg for cech eclais co raib a durrthech 7 a relec hi nglaine, 7 co raib in altoir cona haidmib techtaib ar c[h]ind ind oessa graid dogres.

7. Ocus cech airchindech fritai in lessa doboing .i. bis ind agaid in ordaighthi sea no ac nach bi ind eclas he dligid in t-epscop cumail de asa reir budesin no a reir neich bus chomgrad do, co raib fretra mbathius 7 comna 7 gabail eclairce do cech duine isa eclas techta hi, 7 co raib idbairt chuirp Crist for cech altoir. Ar is dith na huile chredme du na bia in cetharda sa. 7 nach duine fristargu 'na

to lawful baptism before everything; wherefore it is upon the souls [of the men] of Ireland with their princes and their erenachs and their chiefs that there be baptism and communion and the singing of the intercession by every church to proper *manach* tenants; for the curse and malediction of Patrick and the saints of Ireland is on every prince and every *manach* tenant who does not impose on his own special church baptism and communion and the chanting of the intercession therein.

6. Any bishop whom peoples and churches free, it is he who is spiritual adviser to the ordained folk; and it is with him they perform their prescribed offices; and it is he who gives help to them so that they may attain to their due in tribe and church; and it is he who constrains each church to have its oratory and its burial-ground purified, and that the altar has its proper fittings always in readiness for the ordained.

7. And each erenach who opposes the dues which he levies (?) that is, who is against this ordinance or to whom the church does not belong, the bishop is entitled to a cumal of it at his own will or at the will of one who is of equal rank, so that there be an equivalent of baptism and communion and the singing of the intercession to each person whose proper church it is; and so that

aigid, ni fuil suil do fri haitreib nune.

8. Ocus nach eclas oc na be tuara manach do baithis 7 comna 7 gabail ecnairece, ni dlig dechmad na boin cen-naithe na trian n-innai. [Col. 854.]

9. Ni dlig airchindech a reir for a manchu na dlig dire a seoit na toichneda a eclais side manibat oga a frithfolaid asa eclaisi di baithius 7 comna 7 gabail n-ecnairece, conid aire forata anmanda fer nErenn, maine elat dliged a creidme 7 a n-irse 7 mani diultat a n-Duilemain 7 ma frisailetar dul a n-angnais na noem, co raib ind eclas for tubus fir graid fri baithius 7 comna 7 gabail ecnairece manach eter biu 7 marbu 7 co roib oiffrenn for a altoir hi sollamnaib 7 primfeilib 7 domnaigib 7 co rabat aidmi oc cech altoir 7 terimpetoir 7 anarta coise-carthai.

10. Ar nach eclas oc na bi a techta ni dlig dire eclaisi

there be an offering of the Body of Christ on each altar ; for it is ruin of all belief where these four are not found ; and any person who shall oppose it, there is no hope for him of an abode in Heaven.

8. And any church in which there is no service to *manach* tenants for baptism and communion and the singing of the intercession ; it is not entitled to tithes or to the heriot cow or to a third of [each] bequest.

9. An erenach is not entitled [to impose] his will on his *manach* tenants, nor is he entitled to the fine of his 'sed' . . . of his church unless the reciprocal obligations of the church be fully discharged of baptism and communion and the singing of the intercession ; wherefore it is upon the souls of the men of Ireland, unless they evade the rule of their belief and their faith, and unless they deny their Creator, and if they hope to go in the company of the saints, that the church should be on the conscience of an ordained man for baptism and communion and the singing of the intercession for *manach* tenants both living and dead, and that there should be Offering on its altar on solemnities and chief feasts and Sundays, and that there should be fittings on each altar and portable altar and consecrated linen cloths.

10. For the church which has not its proper equipment



De 7 ni heclas, acht uam latrand 7 tadat a hainm la Crist.

11. Nach eclas hi mbi fer graid di minecailsib na tuaithe cenmotat moreclaisi d'igid tuarustul a graid .i. tech 7 airlisi 7 dergud 7 deig-cheltaib 7 acnamad rodfera cen turbaid cen dichell do neoch bes hi cumung na eclaisi .i. miach cona indiud 7 bo blicht in cech raithe 7 biad sollaman.

12. Aitire dogo fria laim de manchaib cech eclaisi bes fora chubus fri tuarustul coir eter logmbaithis 7 techta comna 7 gabail ecnairce na n-uile manach eter biu 7 marbu 7 oiffrend cecha domnaig 7 cecha prim-sollamain 7 cecha prim-feile 7 ceileabrad cecha tratha 7 tri coceaid cech tratha do chetal, mani thairmesca forcetul no aum-chairdes .i. ongad 7 baithis.

13. Ma beth tra do huaite ind aessa graid lasna tuatha, cia beit tri hecailsi no a cethair for cubus cech fir graid acht roso comand 7

is not entitled to the fine of God's church, and it is not a church, but its name according to Christ is a den of thieves and robbers.

11. Any church in which there is an ordained man of the small churches of the tribe apart from the great churches, he is entitled to the wage of his order, that is, house, and enclosure and bed and clothing, and his ration that is sufficient for him, without exemption, without neglect of all that is in the power of the church, that is, a sack with its 'kitchen,' and a milch cow each quarter, and the food of festivals.

12. A hostage, whom he shall choose from the *manach* tenants of each church which is on his conscience, [he shall have] as a security for just wage, both price of baptism and the dues of communion and the singing of the intercession of all the *manach* tenants living and dead; and Offering every Sunday and on every chief solemnity and every chief festival, and the celebration of each canonical Hour, and the singing of the three fifties<sup>1</sup> every canonical Hour, unless instruction and spiritual guidance, even unction and baptism, prevent [him].

13. If in the opinion of the tribe the ordained folk be too few, [it is lawful] that there be three churches or four on the conscience of each

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, the 150 Psalms.

baithius do anmain chaich 7  
oiffrend hi sollamnaib 7 feilib  
fora n-altoir.

14. It e a frithfolaidi-seom  
dond fir graid .i. la air  
n-indraic cech bliadna cona  
sil 7 a ithir 7 a lethgaból etaig  
do brutt no da leimid no do  
inur. Pruind chethruir ar  
noitlaic 7 chaise 7 chingcis.

15. Ma beith tra do uaisle  
ind fir graid 7 a airmidin  
doformagar a dligid 7 a saire  
forsanni doruirmisem.

16. Ar is ed ba dligid fer  
graid cecha chille, nair uad  
bi landire na eclaisi De acht  
du i mbi oes graid 7  
maiccleirig indraice at e  
endaic fri athigid n-ecalsa.

ordained man, provided that  
there come communion and  
baptism for the soul of each  
and Offering on solemnities  
and festivals on their altars.

14. These are his reciprocal  
duties to the ordained man :  
a proper day's ploughing  
each year, with its seed and  
its arable land, and half of  
material for mantle or for  
shirt or for tunic. Dinner  
for four at Christmas and  
Easter and Pentecost.

15. In proportion to the  
dignity of the ordained man  
his due and his exemption  
are increased over and above  
what we have enumerated.

16. For it is this that  
would be due : an ordained  
man to every church, since  
there is not full fine of the  
church of God save where  
there are ordained men and  
proper young clerics, and  
the innocent, for frequenting  
the church.

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, the *manach* tenant's.

## APPENDIX. VIII.

HYMN OF S. SECHNALL (SECUNDINUS) IN PRAISE  
OF S. PATRICK.

INCIPIT YMNUS SANCTI PATRICII, EPISCOPI SCOTORUM.

Audite, omnes amantes Deum, sancta merita  
 Uiri in Christo beati Patricii Episcopi :  
 Quomodo bonum ob actum simulatur angelis,  
 Perfectamque propter uitam aequatur Apostolis.

Beata Christi custodit mandata in omnibus ;  
 Cuius opera refulgent clara inter homines,  
 Sanctumque cuius sequuntur exemplum mirificum ;  
 Unde et in celis Patrem magnificent Dominum.

Constans in Dei timore et fide immobilis,  
 Super quem edificatur ut Petrus Ecclesia ;  
 Cuiusque Apostolatam a Deo sortitus est ;  
 In cuius porta aduersus inferni non preualent.

Dominus illum elegit, ut doceret barbaras  
 Nationes ; ut piscaret per doctrinae retia ;  
 Ut de seculo credentes traheret ad gratiam.  
 Dominumque sequerentur sedem ad aetheriam.

Electa Christi talenta uendit euangelica,  
 Quae Hibernas inter gentes cum usuris exigit :  
 Nauigii huius laboris, tum operae, pretium,  
 Cum Christo regni celestis possessurus gaudium.

Fidelis Dei minister, insignisque nuntius,  
 Apostolicum exemplum formamque praebet bonis ;  
 Qui tam uerbis quam et factis plebi praedicat Dei,  
 Ut quem dictis non conuertit, actu prouocet bono.

Gloriam habet cum Christo, honorem in seculo ;  
 Qui ab omnibus ut Dei veneratur angelus ;  
 Quem Deus misit ut Paulum ad gentes Apostolum,  
 Ut hominibus ducatum praeberet regno Dei.

<sup>1</sup> See page 4, present work.

We adopt the text of Haddan and Stubbs, Vol. II., Part II., page 324.

Humilis Dei ob metum spiritu et corpore,  
 Super quem bonum ob actum requiescit Dominus ;  
 Cuiusque iusta in carne Christi portat stigmata ;  
 In Cuius sola sustentans gloriatur in cruce.

Impiger credentes pascit dapibus celestibus,  
 Ne qui uidentur cum Christo in uia deficiant ;  
 Quibus erogat, ut panes, uerba euangelica ;  
 In cuius multiplicantur, ut manna, in manibus :

Kastam qui custodit carnem ob amorem Domini,  
 Quam carnem templum parauit Sanctoque Spiritui :  
 A Quo constanter cum mundis possidetur actibus,  
 Quam ut hostiam placentem uiuam offert Domino :

Lumenque mundi accensum ingens euangelicum,  
 In candelabro leuatum, toti fulgens seculo,  
 Ciuitas regis munita supra montem posita,  
 Copia in qua est multa quam Dominus possidet.

Maximus nanque in regno celorum uocabitur.  
 Qui quod uerbis docet sacris, factis adimplet bonis ;  
 Bono precedit exemplo formamque fidelium,  
 Mundoque in corde habet ad Deum fiduciam.

Nomen Domini audenter annunciat gentibus,  
 Quibus lauacri salutis aeternam dat gratiam ;  
 Pro quorum orat delictis ad Deum quotidie ;  
 Pro quibus ut Deo dignas immolatque hostias.

Omnem pro Diuina lege mundi spernit gloriam,  
 Qui cuncta ad cuius mensam estimat ciscilia :  
 Nec ingruenti mouetur mundi huius fulmine.  
 Sed in aduersis laetatur, cum pro Christo patitur.

Pastor bonus ac fidelis gregis euangelici ;  
 Quem Deus Dei elegit custodire populum,  
 Suamque pascere plebem Diuinis dogmatibus ;  
 Pro qua ad Christi exemplum suam tradidit animam.

Quem pro meritis Saluator prouexit pontificem,  
 Ut in celesti moneret clericos militia ;  
 Celestem quibus annonam erogat cum uestibus,  
 Quod in Diuinis impletur sacrisque affatibus.

Regis nuntius inuitans credentes ad nuptias ;  
 Qui ornatur uestimento nuptiale indutus ;  
 Qui celeste haurit unum in uasis celestibus,  
 Propinansque Dei plebem spirituali poculo.

Sacrum inuenit thesaurum sacro in uolumine,  
 Saluatorisque in carne Dietatem preuidit ;  
 Quem thesaurum emit sanctis perfectisque meritis ;  
 Israel uocatur huius anima uidens Deum.

Testis Domini fidelis in lege catholica,  
 Cuius uerba sunt Diuinis condita oraculis ;  
 Ne humane putrent carnes essaeque a uermibus,  
 Sed celeste salliuntur sapore ad uictimam.

Uerus cultor et insignis agri euangelici,  
 Cuius semina uidentur Christi euangelia ;  
 Quae Diuine serit ore in aures prudentium,  
 Quorumque corda ac mentes Sancto arat Spiritu.

Xp̄s : illum sibi legit in terris uicarium,  
 Qui de gemino captiuos liberat seruitio ;  
 Plerosque de seruitute quos redemit hominum,  
 Innumeros de Zabuli obsoluet dominio.

Ymnos cum Apocalipsi Psalmosque cantat Dei,  
 Quosque ad edificandum Dei tractat populum ;  
 Quam legem in Trinitate sacri credit Nominis,  
 Tribusque Personis Unam docetque Substantiam.

Zona Domini precinctus diebus et noctibus,  
 Sine intermissione Deum orat Dominum ;  
 Cuius ingentis laboris percepturus premium,  
 Cum Apostolis regnabit sanctus super Israel.  
 Audite omnes.

[In memoria eterna erit iustus ;  
 Ab auditione mala non timebit.

Patricii laudes semper dicamus.  
 Ut nos cum illo defendat Deus.

Hibernenses omnes clamant ad te pueri,  
 Ueni, sancte Patricii, saluos nos facere.]

## APPENDIX IX.

### THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW CATHEDRAL OF ST. PATRICK, ARMAGH.

SINCE the day when St. Patrick in person, with the Staff of Jesus in his hand, the Angel of God before him, and Ireland's Elders around him, blessed the site of his first Cathedral on Macha's Hill, Ireland has never witnessed a grander ceremonial than the dedication of the new Cathedral of Armagh by his Eminence Cardinal Logue, on July 24th, 1904. As the *Freeman's Journal* truly said next morning, there was nothing in the long and glorious religious records of Ireland, illumined by many a splendid ceremonial, to excel that wonderful celebration in ancient Armagh. Fully five hundred priests of all orders, all the bishops and archbishops of Ireland, the Archbishop of Westminster, the Archbishop of Edinburgh, with seven other prelates from England and Scotland, and one from far Australia, together with a vast crowd of laymen from all parts of Ireland and England, of all ranks, professions, and ages, from England's premier Duke down to the poor wayfarers from the remotest hills of the North, were present on that great day to do honour to God and our glorious patron, St. Patrick.

What lent special solemnity to the scene was the presence, for the first time in Irish history, of two illustrious Cardinals at the same ceremonial—one the Cardinal Primate, the Comarb of Patrick himself, and the other, Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli, Cardinal Bishop of Palestrina, and Legate *a latere* of his Holiness, Pope Pius X., especially commissioned to represent the Holy Father on this memorable day.

The following sermon, preached on the occasion by the author, will serve as an authentic account of the ceremonial, with all its religious and historical significance, especially in relation to St. Patrick:

“ You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you ; and I have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit ; and your fruit should remain ; that whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My Name He may give it you.”—JOHN, chapter xv., verse 16.

May it please your Eminences, my Lords Bishops, Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, and Dearly Beloved :—We are all assembled here to-day to take part in what is, perhaps, the most sublime and significant function in the majestic ritual of the Catholic Church. The high priest of this Archdiocese



+ Michael Card. Logue

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has consecrated this beautiful temple, and in the name of all the clergy, and of all the people, and of all Ireland, has given it over to God to be His House for ever—a House of Prayer and a House of Sacrifice, the Throne of His Grace and the Fountain of His Mercy; for, as God Himself has declared, 'His Eyes and His Heart will be here always.' Most fitly, too, this new cathedral in this primatial city of Armagh has been dedicated to God under the invocation of our National Apostle, St. Patrick. Under God, St. Patrick is the central figure here to-day, not only as Titular and Patron, but also, in a sense, as the primary founder of this church, for I look upon it as the latest outcome of his apostolic work in Ireland. There is, of course, no other name of saint or hero in our history so dear to the heart of the Irish people as St. Patrick's. It is a great name in Heaven, for the saints of his family are countless before the throne of God; and his name is a great and living power on earth also, not alone in Ireland, but wherever the children of the Irish race are scattered throughout the world. It is that great name that has built this church here in his own city of Armagh, and it is that name that has brought us all here to-day to bless this building, and give it over for ever to God and to St. Patrick. Wherefore it is of Patrick, and of his life and work in Ireland, that I shall speak to-day before this illustrious assemblage.

If ever there was an apostle outside the twelve and St. Paul, to whom the words of my text are applicable in the fullest sense, that man was St. Patrick. His vocation or call to the ministry was not the ordinary one manifested by special fitness and the voice of superiors; it was a personal supernatural call from God. His commission to preach in Ireland did not come from the Pope merely; it was an extraordinary commission, like that of St. Paul, from Christ Himself; he was called to leave his country to prepare himself for his work, and afterwards preach the Gospel in Ireland. With God's help he produced abundant fruit, and that fruit has remained in a very marvellous manner. And, lastly, God bestowed upon him not only the gift of efficacious prayer, but all the manifold supernatural powers which Our Saviour promised to the Twelve when sending them forth to preach the Gospel. These are the points to which I wish to chiefly direct your attention. In fact, that verse from St. John sums up the whole history of Patrick's life; it furnishes the key to his character; it, and it alone, explains his wonderful mission in Ireland.

If we read the Confession of the Saint—a work beyond doubt authentic—with these words of Our Saviour before our mind, we can see the man of God as he really was—humble, penitent, prayerful, of lofty purpose and dauntless courage,

heedless of self, zealous for God, passionately devoted to his flock. In the Confession he lays bare all the workings of his heart in rugged language, but with a directness that compels our assent. Yet it is a very wonderful story, which can only be fully understood by those who believe in Patrick's supernatural life and mission. 'You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you,' said Our Saviour to the Twelve. It was a personal supernatural call, and Patrick declares again and again in the Confession that he received a similar supernatural call to preach in Ireland. He was chosen by God, as Moses was chosen, to bring the Irish people out of the land of bondage into the light and freedom of the Kingdom of God. There were people then, as there are people now, who thought Patrick was mistaken in declaring that it was the Voice of God called him to preach in Ireland. They said, in effect, like the Jews of old, 'the Lord hath not appeared to thee; yours is a rash and dangerous undertaking, for which you are not fitted by any special training or education.' And Patrick for a time was sore perplexed; but he heard the voice of the Spirit of God within him clearly speaking to his heart. The Word of the Lord came to him, as it came to the prophets of old, 'at sundry times and in divers manners,' but always to the same effect; so that he felt constrained to obey the mandate of the Lord. The angel Victor came to him with letters innumerable calling him to Ireland; the voices of the children from Focluth Wood by the western sea were ever ringing in his ears; the Holy Spirit spoke to his heart, and he was assured in clearest words that 'He Who gave His Life for him, He it was that spoke within him.' When certain elders opposed his purpose of going to preach in Ireland, he tells us that the same Holy Spirit encouraged him to persevere in carrying out that purpose, 'which I have learned from Christ My Lord.' It has been said that these things are the fancies of an excited imagination, or the promptings of an ardent spirit; but Patrick himself believed, beyond doubt, that it was the Voice of God; and so also do we believe, and Ireland's history proves it.

'I have chosen you and I have appointed you.' The appointment or formal commission to teach only came to Patrick after thirty years of waiting and of preparation; and, like the call, it was supernatural. All the ancient Lives tell us that he got his crozier, the Staff of Jesus, from Christ Himself. St. Patrick says the same in effect. His nephew, Secundinus, who wrote a Hymn in praise of the Saint, the authenticity of which cannot be questioned, expressly says that Patrick, like Paul, had a special mission from God to preach, not to all nations, but to the tribes of Ireland. Of course, besides this extraordinary commission from God,

he had also the ordinary commission from the Pope, St. Celestine. All the ancient Lives of the Saint assert it; all our native annalists assert it; the Book of Armagh, the official record of the primatial see, asserts it; the ablest Protestant writers, like Usher, have admitted it.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the 'Roman Mission' was never questioned until our own times, and then only for controversial purposes, by certain scholars who had nothing to rely on but a purely negative argument—that if the Pope had sent him to preach in Ireland, Patrick would have certainly mentioned the fact in the Confession. He did not mention it just because it was perfectly well known to those whom he addressed: and, secondly, because his main purpose was to vindicate himself against the charge of rashness and presumption in undertaking a great and dangerous work, for which he was not qualified by early education and previous training. He admits candidly his own unworthiness and want of early education resulting from his captivity in Ireland. His defence is that the task was put upon him, not by man, but by God, that he had a divine mandate to preach in Ireland notwithstanding his unworthiness, for he admits that he was a stone sunk in the mire—and then he appeals to the success of his mission in Ireland as the clearest proof that his commission was divine, and that God was with him in his work. That is precisely what our Saviour Himself gives as the effect of His Own Mission of the apostles—that they should bring forth fruit, and that their fruit should remain. The argument of the Saint was irresistible—his statements were undeniable. He might appeal to the fact that, like Pelagius, he was commissioned by the Pope to preach in Ireland; but that commission in the case of Pelagius did not bring success, because the work was not assigned to him by God. Patrick claimed to have a still higher commission from Christ Himself, and he points to the marvellous fruit of his preaching in Ireland as the clearest proof that God was with him in his work.

But St. Paul, though divinely authorised to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, 'went to Jerusalem to see Peter, with whom he tarried fifteen days,' before he set out on his first public mission. No prelate of the Western Church in the fifth century would dream of setting out to preach in a new territory without the sanction of Peter, that is, the Pope. It was the Pope sent St. Ninian to preach to the Southern Piets, it was the Pope sent Pelagius to Ireland the year before he sent Patrick, and we all know it was the Pope sent

<sup>1</sup> Another learned scholar of Trinity College, Professor Bury, now of Cambridge, makes the same admission, throwing over Todd and all his school. He places St. Patrick's death in 461, not 463, as we inadvertently said elsewhere.

St. Augustine to England. Rome was the fountain from which England, Ireland, and Scotland received the faith. Those who adhered to Rome kept the faith; those who broke away from Rome lost it.

'I have chosen you and have appointed you that you should go and bring forth fruit.' In fulfilment of this command Patrick, like St. Paul, left home and friends and country and high station and worldly prospects. His country, 'patria,' was undoubtedly some part of Great Britain: he says so himself; his parents, or it may be his relations—'parentes'—were there; and they sought to keep him at home by every means that affectionate ingenuity could devise. When he returned home after his escape from Ireland they received him with the warmest and most sincere affection, and they earnestly besought him, that, after the many tribulations which he had endured, he would never leave them again. When he declared his fixed purpose to obey the divine command, they still implored him with prayers and tears to stay at home; and they offered him large gifts, he says, to induce him to stay with them. But, like St. Paul in similar circumstances, he would not listen to the claims of flesh and blood. He gave up his home, his country, his friends, and broke all the bonds of natural affection that he might hearken to the voice of God that called him away—'I have appointed you that you should go and bring forth fruit'—that was the only voice he heard—the only voice he obeyed. He went forth in the face of the most formidable difficulties to prepare himself for the task which God had imposed upon him. He had hitherto received no training in the schools of rhetoric or philosophy. He had almost forgotten the provincial Latin which was his mother tongue, and, as he admits himself, he never after acquired it properly. When other youths were at school or college he was herding swine on the hills of Antrim; and he was rather old to begin to learn now. Yet he had to learn much, not only secular knowledge, but moral theology, Scripture, ecclesiastical discipline, and rubrics—all that he was destined to teach afterwards to his clergy in Ireland. His counsellors in Britain thought it a rash and hopeless undertaking; but the Voice of God encouraged him; and the cry of the children from the wild woods by the western sea was ever ringing in his ears.

First, it would appear, he went to the great monastery of Martin at Tours—Martin was his mother's kinsman—there he was trained in the religious life, and received the clerical tonsure. Thence he made his way to Germanus of Auxerre, scholar, statesman and warrior—no longer, however, leading the armies of Rome, but the soldiers of the Cross. There, under the greatest prelate in France, he made much progress

in the sacred sciences, especially in the study of Scripture, with which he shows himself thoroughly familiar, both in its letter and spirit. Thence, by the advice of Germanus, he went further south to the great school of Arles, in which Germanus himself had studied, and from Arles most probably to Lerins, which was itself the fountain head of the learning of Arles. Finally, by the advice of Germanus, he sought out the great Pope Celestine, but the holy Pontiff at first declined to have Patrick consecrated for the Irish mission, because Pelagius had been sent there already by the Pope. When, however, it was ascertained that Pelagius had given up the Irish mission and died in Scotland, that obstacle was removed, and Patrick was duly consecrated, with the sanction of the Pope, and sent to preach in Ireland.

‘I have appointed you that you should go and bring forth fruit.’ Patrick was a very different man from Pelagius. Both were received in the same hostile spirit by the same savage chief when they landed in the County Wicklow. Pelagius, after some delay, turned and fled to Scotland; but Patrick was a man of courage and resolution, and though driven from Wicklow he was not dismayed or disheartened. After a short stay in Down he resolved to confront the high king with all his fierce chiefs and Druids on the Hill of Tara itself. He had his life in his hands, and he knew it, but trusted in God, and God visibly protected him. The enemies of the Gospel were overthrown, and the Saint received from the high king a reluctant permission to preach the Gospel throughout the whole island. It was a prolonged and laborious apostolate, encompassed with manifold dangers, but fruitful beyond the Saint’s most sanguine hopes. For sixty years Patrick laboured in Ireland, thirty of which he spent in missionary journeys throughout the whole island, and the last thirty he chiefly spent here in Armagh consolidating his work. It is not easy for us now to realise all the difficulties he had to face. There were no roads at the time but mere tracks, there were no bridges, no hotels. For the most part, he and his attendants—his family, as they are called—had to camp out and provide themselves with everything they needed. He had to build his churches, and to write his own books when the original supply was exhausted. He had to make his sacred vessels and altar stones, to train and educate his own clerics, at first in a kind of itinerant school, for all the grades of the sacred ministry; and he had to do all this throughout the whole country, north, south, east, and west. He penetrated through the misty hills and watery moors of Connaught and Ulster, where no Christian voice was ever heard before. We find his bed and his well in the heart of the Twelve Bennis in Connemara. He spent a whole Lent on the summit of Croagh-

patrick, fasting and praying for Ireland. We find traces of his sojourn in the islands of the great lakes and even of the far western ocean. Twelve times, he tells us, his life was in peril. On one occasion his devoted servant was slain by his side, because he was mistaken for the master. He was often insulted by the unbelievers, and once, at least, he was put in bonds. But he pursued his work undeterred by all these dangers and difficulties. God was with him. What he blessed was visibly blessed by God; what he banned withered up like the fig-tree cursed by our Saviour.

There is no more striking trait in the character of the great apostle than his disinterestedness in preaching the Gospel. He describes it himself in necessary self-defence. 'Though I baptised so many thousands of men,' he says, 'did I ever hope to get from any of them so much as half a scruple? Although the Lord ordained clerics everywhere by my poor ministry, did I not give that ministry gratis? If ever I asked from any of them so much as the price of a shoe, tell me and I will restore it.' Like St. Paul, he was a burden to no man, and preached the Gospel without hope of earthly reward. His converts, indeed, laid generous gifts upon the altar, which Patrick must have needed, not for himself, but to carry on the work of the ministry. He had to bestow gifts, he says, on the kings, and give wages to their sons to protect him in preaching the Gospel. We know from the example of Daire, who gave Patrick the site of his chief church on yonder hill, how hard it was to manage the wild chieftains of the time. But Patrick's prudent and steadfast courage conquered them; and from his heart he thanks God again and again, who blessed his labours with such abundant fruit. The whole island became Christian, and the hearts of the people were fervent in faith and strong in grace; 'the sons of the Scots became monks, and their daughters in crowds became virgins of Christ'—giving up all things for Him, so that the men of Erin, he tells us, who before worshipped idols and things unclean, now became 'the people of the Lord' and 'sons of the Living God.'

How dearly he loved this flock, which he won for Christ at the ends of the earth, he shows by word and deed. He would not leave them even for a short time to visit his friends in Britain, or see the faces of the saints in Gaul once more. When some members of his flock were maltreated by the tyrant Coroticus, he bewails them in the language of a mother robbed of her children, and fiercely denounces the vengeance of God on the tyrant and his accomplices. For their sake he lived and laboured; and for them he was ready to die; nay, even to have his body cast out unburied, to become a prey piecemeal

to the dogs and beasts and birds of heaven—he was ready to endure all for his flock if God so willed it.

Such was the Apostle sent by 'Pope Celestine and by God's Angel Victor,' as the Book of Armagh tells us, to convert our fathers to the faith. No wonder the fruit was abundant; and surely it was abiding. 'I have appointed you that you should go and should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.' Yes, the fruit of Patrick's preaching has remained in Ireland, I think I might venture to say, as it has remained nowhere else; for nowhere else, where the faith has remained as a nation's faith, were the trials and persecutions which the people endured for their faith so great and so prolonged as they were in Ireland. I now merely mention the fact that if the fruit brought forth by the preaching of an apostle has remained anywhere, it has remained in Ireland. It is a fact that no one has ever ventured to question. Not so in many places elsewhere. Where are now the great patriarchal churches of the East, founded by the Apostles themselves? Well, they exist, but it is only in name. The Moslem dwells in St. Sophia; the great churches of Cyprian and Augustine are no more: Canterbury has no Divine Victim on its altars; Iona is desolate; the sea-birds nestle in Lindisfarne; Melrose and Fountains Abbey attract tourists who admire their fallen glories; but they have no community of faith or feeling with the holy men who dwelt in their beautiful cloisters. Not so in Ireland. Here, as elsewhere, the material buildings were despoiled or overthrown; yet, thanks to God, all over the country, as in Armagh, they are rising up again in more than their ancient splendour. But the spiritual edifice reared in Ireland by St. Patrick has never been overthrown—and why? Because Patrick built his house upon the Rock, and that Rock was Peter, upon which Christ Himself built His Church. 'The rain fell and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, yet it fell not, because it was founded on the Rock.' In the collections of Tirechan in the Book of Armagh, dating back to the seventh century, we are told that after the death of Pelagius (who was also called Patricius or Patrick) 'the second Patrick was sent by the Angel of God, Victor by name, and by Celestine, the Pope; in him, Patrick, all Ireland believed.' Patrick brought the Gospel message from Rome to Ireland. When he heard in the far West of Ireland of the accession of Pope Leo the Great, the Saint sent his own nephew, Munis, from Croaghpatrick 'with counsel for the Abbot of Rome,' as the Annals of Ulster tell us; and his messenger brought back the blessing of the Pope on Patrick's work and the confirmation of his apostolate in Ireland. In the same Book of Armagh there

are four dicta or maxims of St. Patrick, which were ever on his lips, and one of them was—' Ut Christiani ita et Romani sitis'—as you are Christians (built on Christ), so be ye Romans (built on Peter)—you cannot be one except you are also the other. That maxim he inculcated all his life, and with his latest breath, on the Irish prelates and the Irish people; it was inserted amongst his dicta in the official record of his primatial church; and it was never forgotten by Patrick's bishops or by their successors. In the same Book of Armagh was inserted the famous Canon of Patrick's Synod, directing appeals in all the *causae majores*—the most difficult and important causes—to be sent to Rome. The acts of this Synod are recognised as authentic by the most competent authorities; and the Book of Armagh quotes it expressly as decreed by Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus, and Benignus—the two latter his dearest friends and coadjutors. So we find Patrick by this solemn synodical decree formally directing his successors and the other Irish prelates to transmit the *causae majores* to Rome, 'to be decided by the authority of the Apostolic See of Peter, which has jurisdiction over the City of Rome.'

In the seventh century, when such a grave cause arose in Ireland regarding the Paschal controversy, and the Irish prelates were divided amongst themselves, it was unanimously resolved, in accordance with the Canon of St. Patrick, as St. Cummian expressly states, to send delegates to Rome for a final decision of the question. 'They went as children to their mother;' they heard the teaching and saw the practice of Rome, which was found to be different from the Irish practice, and when they returned with their report the Roman usage was at once accepted by the Irish Church—Iona alone holding out for some time longer.

During the Danish wars communication with Rome was infrequent and difficult, but certainly did not cease, as I might easily show, if time allowed. No sooner, however, was the Irish Church free to reform herself than at once her prelates turned to Rome for light and guidance. Inar O'Hagan, the teacher of St. Malachi, and one of the authors of that reformation, died on his pilgrimage to Rome. St. Malachi, the great primate who reformed the Church of Armagh and of Down and of all Ireland, went in person to Rome to confer with the Pope, and Innocent II. put his own mitre on his head and his own stole about his neck, thereby constituting him his Legate; and thus with plenary powers sent him back to Ireland. At a later period Christian of Lismore, one of Malachi's friends and monks, became Papal legate; and so the good work of reformation sped apace under the guidance and by the authority of the Holy



See. Another Papal Legate, Cardinal Paparo, the first Cardinal that ever appeared in Ireland, presided at the great Synod of Kells, in 1152—before the Norman ever set foot in Ireland—in which the four Archbishops for the first time received their pallia from the Pope, and the Irish dioceses were determined in number and circumscription practically as they are at present. Since that Synod down to the present day, as everyone knows and admits, the Catholic Church in Ireland continued in most intimate communion with the Apostolic See. When the day of trial came, and the whole weight of the English power was brought to bear on Catholic Ireland in order to destroy the faith, it was communion with Rome that saved it. They were anchored in the Rock, and they clung to it immovable in the fierce storm that swept over them. 'Twas the wine from the Royal Pope that gave them spirit and life in their darkest hours : it was missionaries from Rome that kept the faith alive in the hearts of the people ; it was money from the papal treasuries that kept the Irish students in their foreign colleges, and the Irish prelates and priests at home from starving. Therefore, I say that Patrick's word has remained, because he built his house upon the Rock, and that Rock was Peter, on which Christ Himself declared He built the Church.

But there was, under God, another cause for the perseverance of the Irish people in the Faith, and that was the earnest, persevering, efficacious prayer of Patrick himself. Our Saviour had promised that 'whatsoever you ask the Father in My Name He will give it to you.' That promise was a part of Patrick's commission ; he realised it in a way that few saints have ever realised it ; and for him it was fulfilled in a very marvellous manner. I have already pointed out that Patrick claimed an immediate divine call, and subsequently a divine commission to preach the Gospel in Erin. He was thoroughly acquainted with the Sacred Scripture, he knew the promise of our Saviour given to the apostles, and he claimed its fulfilment in his own case with the most importunate insistence—'Whatever you ask the Father in My Name, that He will give you'—there was the promise. He resolved to ask for the preservance of the Irish people in the faith as a nation, and it was granted to him. Such is my view ; and it explains what otherwise it is difficult to explain—Patrick's wrestling in prayer with God on the Holy Mountain during his forty days' fast on its wind-swept summit. I have heard good men say— theologians, too—why spend the whole Lent on the windy summit of that desolate hill ? why so daring in his petitions ? why so extravagant in his demands ? why so insistent in their iteration ? My text explains it all—whatever you—

the Apostle of Ireland—ask the Father in My Name, that He will grant you. He cannot refuse it, because it has been promised by infallible Truth. That thought was in Patrick's mind; more than a mother's love for his flock was in his heart, and not only for his flock in his own time, but for their children to the end of the world. In prophetic spirit he saw the trials of the future; therefore, with the tears rolling down his cheeks, and the yells of tormented devils sounding in his ears, he besought the Lord for Whom he had suffered so much to hear his earnest, passionate prayers for his flock; and he would not even at the bidding of the Angel, leave the Holy Mountain until he got an assurance from God that they were heard and granted. Then he said 'Deo gratias,' and descended like Moses from the Irish Sinai.

There is a strange story told in the old Lives of the Saints that shows how dearly Patrick loved his Irish children. They tell us that he left seven of his own religious family—one on each of the commanding hills that overlook the land—to keep watch and ward over his beloved flock and their children until the day of doom. It is true in one sense at least that Patrick and the saints of his family in heaven have watched over and prayed for Ireland during all the dreadful years of the past, and it may be that God's Angel Guardians at Patrick's prayer are stationed by God on those lone summits, to watch over all the hills and valleys of holy Ireland. And he prayed not for Ireland merely, but for all those whom Irish apostles have brought to the faith in many far off lands. I need not tell this learned assemblage of the missionary labours of the Irish saints and scholars during the interval between St. Patrick's death and the Danish invasions, when they were the greatest christianising and civilizing influence in Western Europe. The same missionary zeal has manifested itself in our time. So that the children of St. Patrick have been the chief means of propagating the Catholic faith throughout all English-speaking countries.

I said in the beginning that I looked upon this splendid temple as the latest outcome of Patrick's spiritual work in Ireland—that he is, as it were, its primary founder. It is, I think, undeniable. Crolly, a great and good Primate, began the work on a scale of what, at the time, was daring magnificence, that is in 1840, and funds were collected from the clergy and people throughout all Ireland. Then the famine intervened, and the work was arrested. Dixon, learned and laborious, in 1854, took up the unfinished work, and inaugurated it by a Pontifical High Mass within its unroofed walls, which was celebrated in a fierce storm that might be regarded as a symbol of the fiercer storm of persecution from which the Catholics of the North were just then emerging.

But the builders weathered both storms ; the work went on steadily, large sums coming from America to help its progress. The venerable M'Gettigan built the twin towers that rise so proudly over this sacred hill, and blessed the church in 1873. Another illustrious son of Old Tirconnell has now completed the work in a style of the highest artistic elegance ; and to-day, in presence of the Papal Legate, his Eminence has given it over to God and St. Patrick. Still Patrick is the primary founder. His name is a power wherever the children of the Gael are scattered over the world. The primates I have named got the money to build and decorate this church because they are the spiritual Heirs of Patrick. He lives again in his successors ; their voice is the voice of Patrick, their power is the power of Patrick. In the past the prelate who got possession of the insignia of Patrick—his Crozier, his Bell, and his Book—was regarded as the living representative of Patrick, and heir to all his power and privileges. Armagh itself was St. Patrick's sacred city—a centre of learning and authority for all the land ; and it became a place of pilgrimage for all Ireland. The pilgrims deemed themselves happy if they died in Armagh and were buried in its sacred soil. The greatest of the Irish Kings, who fell at Clontarf, not only visited Patrick's city whilst living, and made rich offerings to Patrick's altar, but he ordered his body to be taken to Armagh and buried in its sacred soil.

Then succeeded evil days for the ancient faith and the ancient race. There was a time when the Catholics were driven from Armagh as the Jews were driven from Jerusalem : but it has happily passed away. The temple has been rebuilt, the priesthood restored, and the throne of Patrick again set up in his own city. His glory lightens over all those marble altars ; his name resounds from this pulpit ; it is his voice that has called you here, and it his hand and the Pope's that will bless you when this sermon is over. This vast assemblage—prelates, priests, and people—have come from afar, but it is one purpose inspires them all, to give glory to God and honour to Patrick and to Patrick's Heir. Our Holy Father the Pope, successor of that St. Celestine who sent St. Patrick to preach to our fathers, has sent here an illustrious Cardinal all the way from Rome, as his Legate, to preside in this assembly, to bring his blessing to us on this great day, and to show the whole world that this new temple, like that which Patrick first built in Armagh, is built upon the Rock, and that, as we are Christians, so we are Romans, as united and as devoted to the See of Peter now as our fathers have always been in the past. Last night I heard the letter read which Cardinal Vannutelli bears from Our Holy Father the Pope to his Eminence the Cardinal-Primate, and which I have

no doubt will be published in a few days. It is a beautiful and touching letter, and shows the ardent affection which Our Holy Father has for the Irish people. It would be impossible to read or to see anything more touching or more beautiful. I believe I can speak in the name of the Prelates here, of the clergy here, and of the people here, when I say that we return to Our Holy Father and to his Eminence the Cardinal Legate our most grateful and heartfelt thanks, and assure them that it is a favour we can never forget, and that the mission of his Eminence to this church to-day has been the means of binding us closer in intimate and loyal Union with the See of St. Peter.

And the Irish Bishops are here to-day to show their love for Patrick, and for the Heir of Patrick, and pay their homage to the Primate of all Ireland. The clergy, secular and regular, are here to-day in greater numbers than I have ever seen before to join their pastors in paying this loving homage to the Chair of our National Apostle. Many Prelates of England and Scotland are here, headed by the successor of St. Augustine, to testify to their union with us in faith and charity, and pay the homage of themselves and of their flocks to the memory of the great Saint who came to us from Britain, and whose spiritual children of Irish birth or blood are to-day the mainstay of their flocks in the Britain of Columba, Augustine, and Bede. In the same spirit, and for the same purpose, we see here to-day countless crowds of the laity of all ranks and conditions in life, from the first of England's nobles—noblest in blood—but nobler still in unswerving faith and stainless honour—down to the dusty wayfarers, who have come hither from Ulster's farthest hills and valleys to join in the ceremonial of this great day. Neither Armagh nor any other part of Ireland has ever seen an assemblage like this on a similar occasion. It was a great day recorded in our Annals when Cormac's beautiful chapel on the Rock of Cashel was consecrated by the Archbishop and Bishops of Munster, and 'the nobles of Ireland, both lay and ecclesiastical,' but it was really only a gathering of the South, whilst here to-day we have a gathering of all Ireland. There was another great assemblage when the Abbey Church of Mellifont was dedicated by the primate and the prelates and princes of Meath and Oriel, who gave generous offerings in gold, silver and embroidery for the use of the church; but their numbers were not as great, their offerings were not so large, their character was not so representative, as in this assembly gathered round the Cardinal Primate of Armagh. It is a celebration unique in its character, and will, I have no doubt, be recorded in our national annals down to remotest ages. Nor has this city of Armagh ever seen such

a church before. From the beginning it was a city of churches and of schools where Celt and Saxon met together to learn and pray. St. Patrick himself erected probably four churches, and it would appear that at one time there were no less than ten churches in all around the Sacred Hill. The first Cathedral built by Patrick himself on yonder hill, whose foundations he traced and blessed under the guidance of God's Angel, Victor, was a comparatively small and plain building. It was often destroyed, accidentally or deliberately, by fire, and as often restored. It was often profaned, and pillaged, and used as a barracks or a fortress by the victors. It has long passed from Catholic hands, and early in the last century was restored at great cost by the Protestant primates. But it can no longer vie either in its commanding site, or in grandeur of its proportions, or in the richness of its decorations with this noble temple.

It is no wonder, then, that this primatial city of holy Patrick should rejoice to-day. The ancient land of Oriel is glad. The hills of Old Tirconnell feel a thrill of joy—all Catholic Ireland at home, and the greater Ireland beyond the sea, exult in the advent of this glorious day, which gives over this national temple to God and St. Patrick. And they exult not only in the dedication of this splendid temple, but they also rejoice on this the episcopal jubilee of him who so worthily wields the crozier of St. Patrick. His Eminence is the 109th Primate who has sat in Patrick's Chair on this Royal Hill—a long and illustrious line including Saints and Confessors and Martyrs—great and holy names like Patrick and Benen, Celsus and Benignus, Malachi and Gelasius, Creagh, Plunkett, and M'Mahon, whose virtues and sufferings light up our chequered story as with a light from Heaven; but his Eminence is the only one of that illustrious line that sat in Patrick's Chair clothed in the purple of Rome.

My Lord Cardinal, Primate of All Ireland, and Heir of St. Patrick, we bring your Eminence cordial greetings to-day, not only from our cities and towns but from the remotest hills and valleys of holy Ireland; we offer you our hearty congratulations on this jubilee of your episcopal reign; and we pray God to prolong the life of your Eminence for many years to come. We rejoice that you have been spared to see this great church completed, and given over to God and to St. Patrick on the very crown of this Royal Hill. And looking back to-day from this mystic summit, where the milk-white Hind, 'so often doomed to death yet fated not to die,' like Patrick's hunted stag, has at length found shelter and repose; looking back through the perilous ages that are gone, is it not our duty, one and all, with grateful hearts to give a nation's thanks to God to-day who guided us with the

light of His grace and shielded us with the strength of His arm through the stress and the storm of the past? Not to us, O Lord, but to Thy name give the glory. We have sinned and we have suffered: but thou didst not cast away Thy inheritance, nor make void the prayers of Patrick on the Holy Mountain, nor the blessings wherewith, with uplifted hands, he blessed this primatial city, and his entire flock throughout this land of his love. And do Thou, O mighty Lord, deign to be with us and our children in the future as Thou wast with our fathers through all the terrible past: not on our own works, but on Thy great mercy and on the prayers of our blessed Mother Mary and of all the saints of Erin do we rely. To our father and to their father—our own St. Patrick, the patron of this City and of this Cathedral—we make this day in his own temple a special appeal. He loved his flock, as we know, with a love stronger than death, and we—we love him in return with a deep and tender and abiding love. O great Saint, watch over us, as thou hast watched over our fathers, pray for us as thou didst pray for them on this Holy Hill. May we learn from your bright example to fear the Lord our God, and walk in His ways, and love and serve the Lord our God with all our hearts and with all our souls. So this temple which we thy servants have built on this Holy Hill to the glory of God and the honour of thy name shall stand rooted in the Rock, a memorial for the coming ages of that love for the beauty of God's House which fills the hearts of thine own people, a memorial of their undying devotion to thee, their Spiritual Father, and a memorial also of that steadfast faith which has conquered the world, and their immortal hopes, which have conquered the grave.

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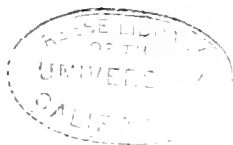


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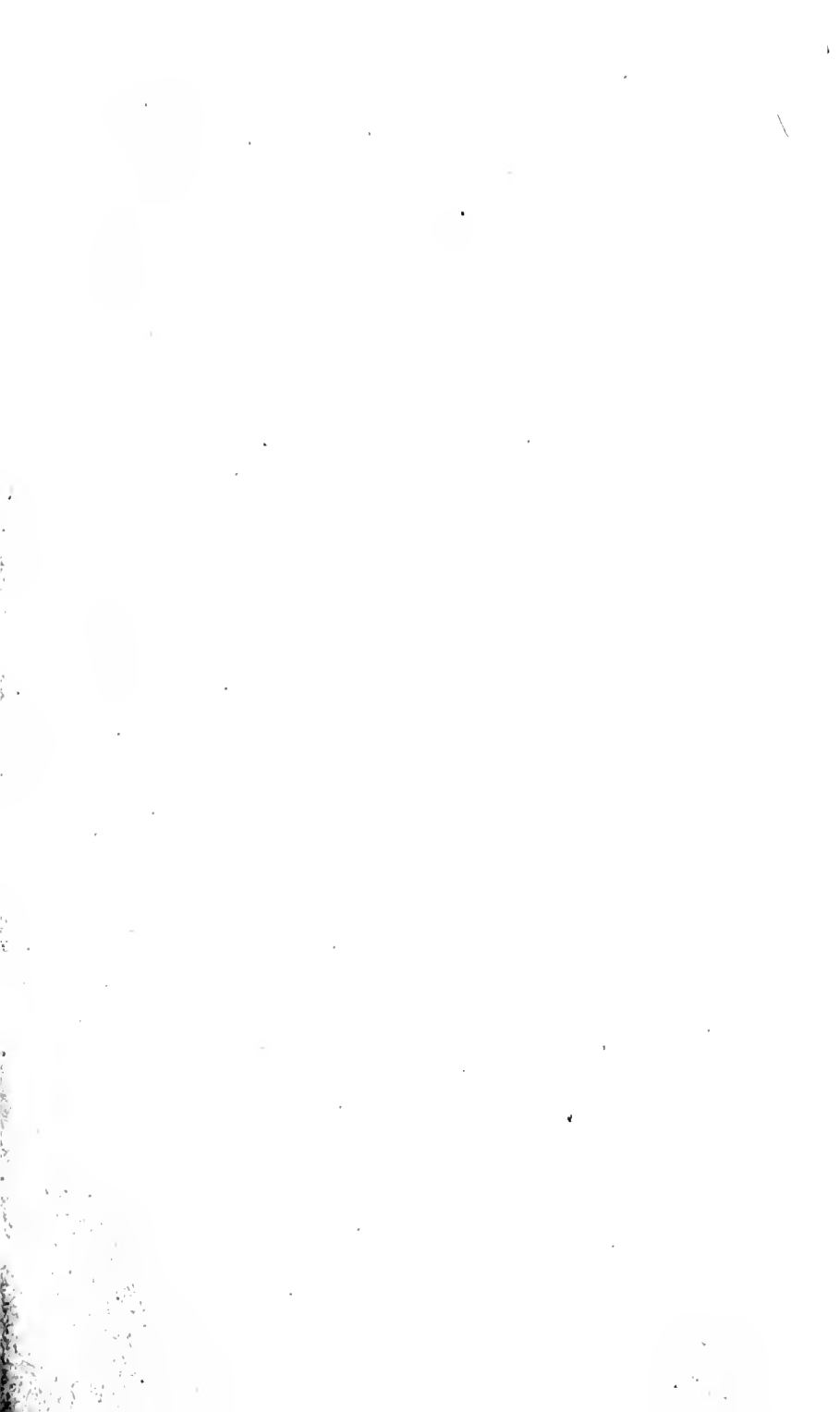
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