Critical dissertations on the origin, antiquities, language, government, manners, and religion, of the ancient Caledonians, their posterity the Picts, and the British and Irish Scots / By John Macpherson.

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CRITICAL DISSERTATIONS

ON THE

ORIGIN, ANTIQUITIES, LANGUAGE, GOVERNMENT, MANNERS, AND RELIGION,

OF THE

ANCIENT CALEDONIANS,
THEIR POSTERITY THE PICTS,

AND THE

BRITISH AND IRISH SCOTS.

By JOHN MACPHERSON, D. D.
Minister of SLATE, in the ISLE OF SKY.

LONDON:
Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT, in the Strand;
and J. BALFOUR, in Edinburgh.

MDCCLXVIII.

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TO THE HONOURABLE

CHARLES GREVILLE, Esq;

DEAR SIR,

MY Father, who was the author of the following Dissertations, would not, perhaps, have dedicated them to any man alive. He annexed, and with good reason, an idea of servility to addresses of this sort, and reckoned them the disgrace of literature. If I could not, from my soul, acquit myself of every selfish view, in presenting to you the posthumous works of a father I tenderly loved, you would not have heard from me in this public manner. You know, my dear friend, the sincerity of my affection for you: but even that affection should not induce me to dedi-

cate to you, had you already arrived at that eminence, in the ſtate, which the abilities and ſhining talents of your early youth ſeem ſo largely to promiſe, leſt what really is the voice of friendſhip and eſteem, ſhould be miſtaken, by the world, for that of flattery and intereſted deſigns. I am on the eve of ſetting out for a very diſtant quarter of the world: without aſking your permiſſion, I leave you this public teſtimony of my regard for you, not to ſecure your future favour, but to ſtand as a ſmall proof of that attachment, with which I am,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt affectionate Friend,

and moſt Obedient

Humble Servant,

JOHN MACPHERSON.

PREFACE.

THE following Diſſertations are the production of the leiſure hours of a clergyman in one of the remoteſt of the Scottiſh iſles. Excluded, by the peculiar ſituation of the place of his reſidence, from the ſociety of the learned, he indulged his ſingular paſſion for literature among a few good books. Though the natural bent of his genius turned towards the belles-lettres, he ſometimes amuſed himſelf in diſquiſitions of a more ſerious nature. Being maſter of the Celtic, in all its branches, he took pleaſure in tracing other languages to that general ſource of all the antient and modern tongues of Europe. From inveſtigations of this kind many diſcoveries in the ancient hiſtory of nations aroſe. This naturally led to the examination of the maſs of fiction, which almoſt every nation of Europe poſſeſſes for the hiſtory of their remoteſt anceſtors. The more he looked into theſe legendary fabrics of antiquity, the leſs he found them capable of bearing the teſt of criticiſm. He therefore reſolved to write ſome general diſſertations on that ſubject, which, if they could not eſta-

bliſh a new and more rational ſyſtem, would at leaſt expoſe the abſurdity of the old.

It was not altogether from a partiality to his own country that Dr. Macpherſon gave the firſt place to Scotland, in his diſquiſitions. Though the Scots have as juſt pretenſions to a high antiquity as any nation in Europe, yet their origin is peculiarly involved in darkneſs. It was the misfortune of North Britain to have been almoſt totally deſtitute of letters, at a time when monkiſh learning, and thoſe religious virtues which aroſe from aſcetic auſterities, greatly flouriſhed in Ireland, and among the Saxons in England. This was the caſe in the ſeventh and eighth centuries, the æra in which the Hibernian ſyſtems of antiquity were formed. The ſennachies and fileas of Ireland made then a property of the Scots of Britain, and, ſecure of not being contradicted by an illiterate, and I may ſay, an irreligious race of men, aſſumed to themſelves the dignity of being the mother-nation. The partiality of Bede for his holy cotemporaries of Ireland is well known. The good man believed and retailed whatever fictions were dictated to him by the religious of a nation for whom he had the greateſt regard for their orthodoxy.

The almoſt continual wars and animoſities which ſubſiſted between the Engliſh and Scots for many ages naturally gave birth to violent national prejudices on both ſides. The learned of England could not diveſt themſelves of that antipathy to their Northern neighbours

bours which had ſeized their whole nation. Though at variance with the Iriſh in every other point, they agreed with them wonderfully well in extenuating the national antiquities of the Scots. Some of thoſe gentlemen had the cruelty to extirpate the brave nation of antient Caledonians, leſt the deteſted Scots of later times ſhould derive any honour from the military reputation of a people who once poſſeſſed their country.

HAPPILY for the preſent times, thoſe prejudices which blinded both nations have, in a great meaſure, ſubſided. National averſions are loſt in the antiquity of thoſe national injuries from which they firſt aroſe. Whatever may tend to do honour to either nation is heard with candor, if not with pleaſure, by both. They are, in ſhort, now ſo much blended with one another, that whatever throws luſtre upon the one, ought to be reckoned an acquiſition of reputation to the other.—If to throw a new and ſtrong light on the antiquities of a nation, reflects any honour upon it, the Scots of the preſent age are much indebted to the induſtry and learning of Dr. Macpherſon. He travelled back, it is true, into the regions of antiquity with more advantages than others have done, and therefore his ſucceſs was proportionably greater. A few additional obſervations I am to make upon the general ſubject of the diſſertations, aroſe, if they have any merit, from the diſcoveries he had made to my hand.

SOME

Some time before the total dereliction of Britain by the Romans, in the reign of Honorius, we find that the Caledonians were diſtinguiſhed into two capital nations, the Deucaledones and Vecturiones. By theſe two branches I underſtand thoſe, who, a ſhort time thereafter, were known by the names of Picts and Scots. It was after the departure of the Romans, that the defenceleſs ſtate of the degenerated provincials gave the Picts an opportunity of extending themſelves to the Eaſtern counties to the South of the frith of Edinburgh. From the joint teſtimony of all writers who examined the ſubject, the Picts of the earlieſt ages poſſeſſed only the Eaſt and North-eaſt coaſt of Scotland. From their ſituation, with reſpect to the Scots of Jar-ghaël, their country was naturally called by the latter *An Dua-chaëldoch*, a word compounded of *An Dua*, or *Tua*, North, and *Caëldoch*, Caledonian country. Some of the South-weſt Highlanders of the counties of Perth and Argyle diſtinguiſh to this day thoſe of Roſs, Sutherland and Caithneſs, by the name of *An Dua-ghaël*, and their country by the appellation of *An Dua-ghaëldoch*. This appears ſo obviouſly the etymon of *Deu-caledones*, that nothing but a total ignorance of the Galic language could permit antiquaries to have overlooked it.

The etymon of *Vecturiones* is not ſo obvious. We learn from the moſt antient domeſtic records in Scotland, that a ridge of mountains, called Drum Albin, was the antient boundary of the Scottiſh territories towards the Eaſt. The author of the Diſſertations has clearly demonſtrated that Drum Albin is the chain of mountains

tains which runs from Lochlomond, near Dumbarton, to the frith of Taine, in the county of Roſs. This Dorſum Britanniæ, as it is called by Adamnan, abbot of Iona, runs through the Weſtern end of the diſtricts of Athol and Badenoch. That part of this ridge of hills which extends between theſe diſtricts, for a length of more than twenty miles, is called *Drum Uachtur*. This circumſtance is well known to many, beſides the natives of that country, as the military road through the Highlands paſſes that way. If we ſhould ſuppoſe that *Uachtur*, which is ſtill retained as the name of a part of Drum Albin, was once the general appellation of the whole, the etymon of Vecturiones is at once decyphered. *Uachtur*, though now taken perhaps in a more confined ſenſe than formerly, literally ſignifies *the upper country*. *Uachturich* is a word of the ſame import with Highlanders; and if the harſh Celtic termination is ſoftened into a Roman one, Vecturiones differs only in a changeable vowel from *Uachturich*.

We have reaſon to believe, from the unfavourable climate, and ſterile nature of the ſoil, in that part of Scotland which lies to the Weſt of Drum Albin, that the anceſtors of the Scots lived long in a very uncultivated ſtate; as deſtitute of great national events as of letters to tranſmit them to poſterity. Though the Scots of *Jar-ghaël* muſt, in the nature of things, have been very barbarous and unpoliſhed, as far back as the latter end of the fourth century, yet it is to be hoped they were leſs ſo than the Attacotti,

their neighbours, or rather a tribe of the Scots to the South of the Clyde. "In my youth," ſays the holy St. Jerome, "I ſaw in Gaul the Attacotti, a Britiſh people, feeding on human bodies. When they found in the woods flocks of ſheep or hogs, or herds of cattle, they uſed to cut off the buttocks of the herdſmen, and the breaſts of the women, looking upon thoſe parts of the body as the greateſt dainties *." I have ſuch a veneration for whatever has fallen from the holy father, that I cannot entertain a doubt of the truth of this ſtory, however incredible it might appear from an uninſpired writer. The Iriſh nation, not content to deprive their poſterity of Scotland of their antient biſhops, abbots, preſbyters and hiſtorians of any note, have alſo endeavoured to rob them of their barbarous and wild men. O'Connor, a learned diſſertator on the hiſtory of Ireland, has, in the name of his nation, claimed a right to the Attacotti. I wiſh I could give them to the gentleman; for as the infamous label of St. Jerome is tacked to them, they can do little honour to the Scots of the preſent age.

It was in the fifth century that the incurſions of the Scots, as a ſeparate nation, into the Southern Britain, rendered them objects of attention to the writers of other countries. It does not appear that letters were any part of the booty which they carried home with them from the deſerted Roman province. The ſeminary of monks eſtabliſhed by

* Hieronym. con. Jovinian. lib. 2.

Columba, an Iriſhman, in the iſland of Iona, in the ſixth age, ſeem to have been the only perſons, within the territories of the Scots, that could record events. If they kept any regiſters of tranſactions, they were deſtroyed or loſt, in the Norwegian conqueſt of the Hebrides by Harold Harfager, about the middle of the ninth century.

The ſubverſion of the Pictiſh kingdom is the firſt æra in which it can be ſuppoſed the Scots begun to have authentic records of their own. Soon after the conqueſt of Pictavia, the Saxons found means to extend their government to the frith of Edinburgh. The Picts and Saxons had alternately poſſeſſed, for ſome time before, the counties between the Forth and the Tweed. The moſt of the inhabitants of thoſe counties were of the Saxon race, and no doubt, in a great meaſure, they retained the language of their anceſtors. It was after the invaſions of the Danes had totally broke the power of the Saxons, that the Scots extended themſelves far to the South. The barbarity of thoſe Northern rovers who inceſſantly harraſſed England, as they themſelves were heathens, drove certainly a number of pious Saxon eccleſiaſtics into Scotland. It was they that introduced the cuſtom of recording events in monkiſh chronicles; and upon the authority of Bede, they all adopted the ſyſtem of the Hibernian extraction of the Scots nation.

The Scots lament the deſtruction of their antient annals by Edward the Firſt of England. Though

Edward's policy in this caſe was rude and barbarous, he did very little hurt to the genuine antiquities of the Scots. Many of the domeſtic tranſactions of the later ages were no doubt loſt; but what related to the origin of the nation was Bede's tale re-told.——I ſhall endeavour, in ſome meaſure, to account for that learned writer's miſtake.—A miſtake I call it, though it is more than probable that the venerable monk of Girwy had ſome holy reaſons for giving eaſy faith to the ſennachies of Ireland.

THERE is reaſon to believe, with Dr. Macpherſon, that the goſpel was firſt preached in Britain by miſſionaries from the Leſſer Aſia. The great zeal of Polycarp, biſhop of Smyrna, who ſuffered martyrdom in the year 170, it is certain, induced him to ſend apoſtles to Gaul. His diſpute with the ſee of Rome, about the very momentous affair of Eaſter, is well known. The zealous ſchiſmatic preferred the tradition of the Eaſtern church to the authority of St. Peter's chair.—An ardent deſire of propagating his doctrine, occaſioned his ſending miſſionaries to the very extremity of the weſt, and of courſe to Britain. The opinion of the Eaſtern church concerning Eaſter, which prevailed among the Picts and Scots, is a corroborating argument on this head, The ſee of Rome found means to recover the Southern Britons to the Catholic opinion upon this important point; but the barbarians of the North were obſtinately tenacious of the faith of their anceſtors.

Bede made many efforts to ſave the ſouls of his Northern neighbours, by endeavouring to bring them back to the true faith concerning Eaſter and the Tonſure. Naitan, the great monarch of the Picts, was at laſt overcome by the arguments of Ceolfrid, and, together with his nation, received into his religion theſe two articles, ſo neceſſary to ſalvation.—But the wicked and abandoned barbarians of Jar-ghael would not, it ſeems, be perſuaded out of their error. From their obſtinacy, no doubt, aroſe thoſe prejudices againſt them, which are very conſpicuous in the writings of the venerable Bede. Ireland at that time was deſervedly called the *Country of Saints*. The Catholic faith prevailed there in all its original purity. The momentous articles of Eaſter and the Tonſure were received with that devotion which ought to attend the deciſions of St. Peter's chair.—The venerable writer, ſo often mentioned, regarded the Iriſh with that partiality which good men have for the beſt of Chriſtians, and gave great faith to their traditions and records.

Bede was a very extraordinary perſon for the times in which he lived: pious and fervent, but calm in his zeal for religion, his writings throughout breathe the ſentiments of humanity and devotion. He certainly had more knowlege than all his cotemporaries joined together. But it appears to me, that he was neither critically inquiſitive, or knew much of national antiquities. The good man was much better employed. Miracles, viſions, dreams, martyrologies, Eaſter and the

the Tonſure, and, above all, St. Cuthbert and the ſee of Rome, engaged his whole attention and diverted his mind from a ſtudy more amuſing than important.

THE few ſcraps of antiquity which is contained in the firſt book of his eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, the venerable preſbyter borrowed from Gildas, or from his own religious cotemporaries of Ireland. Before I proceed to Gildas, it may not be improper to give one inſtance of the great partiality of Bede to the Iriſh. Egfrid, King of Northumberland, had been, in the year 685, with the greateſt part of his army, cut off by the Picts. This, ſays Bede, was a judgment from God, upon Egfrid and his ſubjects, for committing, the year before this fatal event, unheard of barbarities and ravages among the Hibernians, *a nation very harmleſs and innocent, and of a moſt friendly diſpoſition towards the Engliſh.*

BEDE, however, muſt be blamed for his ſervile copying after Gildas, a writer not worthy of ſuch attention. Gildas was one of the moſt paſſionate, peeviſh, and querulous of mankind. He not only was immoderately angry with the Scots * and Picts, who perhaps deſerved very ill at his hands, but even his friends

* *Exin Britannia*, ſo he calls that part of the iſland which had been ſubject to the Romans, *duabus gentibus tranſmarinis vehementer ſævis, Scottorum a Circio, Pictorum ab aquilone, calcabilis multos ſtupet, gemitque per annos.* Gild. cap. 15. Bede explains, that Gildas gave the epithet of *tranſmarini* to the Picts and Scots, becauſe they came from beyond the firths of Forth and Clyde. Bed. Hiſt. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 12.

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the Britons, and, above all, he was enraged againſt the Saxons. From an expreſſion in this author, ſome Engliſh * and many Iriſh antiquaries, to their great joy, thought they found an unanſwerable proof that the Scots came originally from Ireland; and that in no earlier period than the ſixth century. Gildas, ſpeaking of the Scots and Picts, ſays, *Revertuntur ergo impudentes graſſatores Hiberni domus, poſt non multum temporis reverſuri.*

THE epithet *impudentes* applied to *Hiberni* is not ſufficient to eſtabliſh the juſtneſs of this reading, though it might have ſome weight with men of wit. Bede was far from entertaining ſuch an unfavourable opinion of the inhabitants of the *holy iſle*. In an edition of Gildas, given to the public by Dr. Gale, the paſſage under conſideration, is read in a more grammatical way, and leſs to the diſcredit of Ireland: *revertuntur ergo impudentes graſſatores Hibernas domus*; ſo that Gildas meant no more than that the Scots returned home for the winter.

To juſtify this reading, it is to be obſerved, that the ancient Scots and their poſterity gave the name of *winter houſes*, the ſame exactly with the *Hibernas domus* of Gildas, to thoſe more comfortable habitations to which they retreated when the warmer ſeaſon of the year was over. In the ſummer they lived in the mountains and forreſts with their cattle, and to enjoy the pleaſure and advantage of hunting. The Arabian Bedowins, the ancient Nomades and Scythians, and

* Lhoyd and Stillingfleet.

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the preſent Tartars, give into the ſame practice. The Bedowins, in particular, gave the appellation of *winter houſes* to the habitations to which they retreated from the autumnal rains. Bede, a Saxon, was perhaps a ſtranger to this characteriſtical practice of the Scots, and not knowing what ſenſe to make of Gildas's *Hibernas domus*, he altered the old reading. This opinion ſeems deciſive, as he has retained the word *domus*, inſtead of the more proper word *domum*.

THE times in which Bede lived, were the golden age of Ireland. That kind of learning which then ſubſiſted in the world, flouriſhed much in that country. No enemies invaded it from abroad, and there was an unuſual tranquillity at home. National proſperity is the ſource of national pride. Averſe to have themſelves thought deſcended from the Scots of Albany, who were far from being a powerful nation at that time, they began to ſearch out for themſelves, anceſtors of a more dignified character. It is probable that the ſchiſmatic diſpoſition of the Scots, about Eaſter and the Tonſure, had its weight in inducing the Iriſh to inveſtigate their origin among a leſs perverſe people.

THAT the Iriſh ſyſtems of antiquity were formed after the holy ſcriptures were known in that country, is beyond all doubt. All their fictions on that head are ingrafted upon names in the old teſtament. This ſubject is diſcuſſed at large, in the Diſſertations now given to the public. I only mention it now to aſcertain

that the fable of the Hibernian extraction of the Scots of Albany was formed at the ſame time. The preſent identity of language and the ſimilarity of cuſtoms and manners which prevailed among the Albanian and Hibernian Scots of ancient times, made it evident that they were originally the ſame people; ſo it became neceſſary to be very particular in the time and manner of their ſeparation. The Iriſh fabricators of antiquities furniſhed Bede with that account he gave of the firſt ſettlement of the Scots in Jarghaël. If the Britiſh Scots had any national traditions of their own, which contradicted the *holy antiquaries* of Ireland, Bede, from a pious averſion to heretics, totally rejected them.

FROM what I have ſaid, it appears, that the Scots have been, hitherto, unfortunate in the writers of the ancient hiſtory of their country. There has been great expence of erudition on the ſubject, both by foreign and domeſtic antiquaries. But the grand deſideratum, in the diſquiſitions of thoſe learned men, was a thorough knowledge of the old Caledonian language, which goes now under the name of the Galic tongue. Dr. Macpherſon happily joined a critical knowledge, in that language, to his great learning in other reſpects. Something, therefore, more ſatisfactory ought to be expected from him than from thoſe who have gone before him, and were not poſſeſſed of the ſame advantages.

BEFORE the Doctor had thoroughly examined his ſubject, he paid great deference to the opinion of

Tacitus, concerning the Germanic extraction of the Caledonians. The colour of hair and ſize of body, which diſtinguiſhed them from the Britons of the South, were not concluſive arguments. Theſe circumſtances might depend more upon food and the peculiar nature of the ſoil and climate, than upon a different origin. The manifeſt difference in thoſe dialects of the Celtic, which the Scots of the mountains and the Welſh ſpeak to this day, ſeems more to argue their remote ſeparation from one another. Their living as ſeparate ſtates, from the earlieſt times, could not have effectuated ſuch a change: otherwiſe we cannot account for the identity of the Iriſh and Galic tongues, eſpecially as the nations who ſpeak thoſe languages were, in no period of antiquity that can be aſſigned, ſubject to the ſame government.

This was one of the arguments that muſt have influenced the judgment of the author of the Diſſertations in his firſt view of the ſubject. But this difference of language is eaſily accounted for. The little progreſs that navigation muſt have made in the North of Europe when Britain was firſt peopled, is a convincing argument, that the firſt migrations into this iſland, was from the neareſt continent, which was the Belgic diviſion of Gaul. Theſe migrations certainly happened in the earlieſt ſtage of ſociety. The ſubſiſtence of a colony of ſavages ariſes entirely from hunting: it therefore may be ſuppoſed that the Gauls found firſt their way to the Northern extremity of Britain, in purſuit of their game. In proportion as the original colony

advanced Northward, other emigrants from Gaul trod on their footſteps. Thus for a courſe of ages Gaul poured into Britain a ſucceſſion of colonies. The manners and language of the Gauls, in the mean time, ſuffered material changes at home. The arts of civil life gradually aroſe among them, and naturally introduced new ideas and new words into their language. It is to this advancing civilization of Gaul that we muſt aſcribe the difference between the Northern and Southern Britons. The latter imported with them the changed manners, and adulterated, though improved, language of the more modern Gauls: the former tenaciouſly retained the unpoliſhed cuſtoms and original language of their anceſtors.

It would be as preſumptuous, as it would be idle, to hope for the warm attention of the public to diſquiſitions of this kind. There are, however, ſome who, could they be culled out of the maſs of mankind, have more enlarged ideas; ſome that are as impartial with reſpect to times, as they are with regard to countries and individuals. For theſe, and theſe only, the author of the Diſſertations wrote. Diſregarding the inattention of the many, could he but ſecure the approbation of the judicious few.

These would be the ſentiments of the author, could he ſpeak for himſelf: but, I am ſorry to ſay, he is now inſenſible of praiſe or reproof. His death prevented his putting the laſt hand to this work. His

ſon, to whoſe care he left it, with a diffidence which ought to be natural to a very young man, choſe rather to give his father's diſſertations to the world as they ſtood, than to attempt any amendments, which perhaps might injure the memory of a parent he tenderly loved.

THE moſt of the nations of the modern Europe look back, with a bluſh, upon the ſtrange fabrics of fiction they poſſeſs for their ancient hiſtory. They conſider them as, at once, the monuments of the puerile credulity and folly of their anceſtors. The Scots of this age ſaw with unconcern, if not with pleaſure, forty of their ancient liſt of Kings expunged at once by Innes. This furious regicide, endeavoured to make amends to his countrymen, by giving them forty great Pictiſh monarchs for the long liſt of the petty Princes of Jarghaël, of whom he deprived them. The offer was rejected with that ſcorn it deſerved; and the monarchs of Pictavia, whoſe exiſtence depended upon the ſame, or even worſe, if poſſible, authority, than that upon which the fiction of the firſt forty Scottiſh Kings was built, ſunk away into their original nonentity.

IRELAND, tenacious as it has been of its ancient annals, begins to regard leſs the indigeſted fictions of her ſennachies. Men of ſenſe ſee the impoſſibility of tranſmitting events, through a ſeries of ages, without the aſſiſtance of letters. They could not poſſibly aſſign an earlier æra for the introduction of letters than the apoſtleſhip

apoſtleſhip of St. Patric, and conſequently, with Ware, they depended very little upon the accounts handed down concerning ages prior to the reign of Leogaire.

In this untoward ſituation of the Iriſh antiquities, ſtept forth O Connor to ſupport the falling fabric. The zeal of this gentleman can only be equalled by his dogmatiſm. He has crouded the bottoms of his pages with the authorities of O Flaherty, Keating, and Buchanan, who had as few lights to guide them through antiquity, as a writer of the preſent time can be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs. The two firſt are only remarkable for their confuſed manner of compiling the indigeſted fables of bards and ſileas; and the latter has ſcarcely any thing to recommend him but the elegance of his diction.

In vain has Mr. O Connor endeavoured to eſtabliſh an aboriginal knowledge of letters in Ireland. Innes had previouſly deſtroyed the credit of that ſyſtem, and Dr. Macpherſon has thrown it down for ever. From an additional diſſertation publiſhed lately by Mr. O Connor, he ſeems to have been extremely gauled by ſome obſervations made by the tranſlator of the works of Oſſian on the ancient hiſtory and poems of Ireland. If a judgment can be formed from O Connor's intemperate rage, he feels very ſore on that ſubject. His perſonal abuſe of Mr. Macpherſon ſeems to have proceeded from a very iraſcible diſpoſition, or was intended to draw an anſwer from that gentleman, which might

might give importance to his own work. In this, it is to be feared, he will not ſucceed. The tranſlator of the Galic poems is not much in the humour of doing an honour of that kind to adverſaries who uſe low ſcurrility in the place of argument and diſpaſſionate diſquiſition.

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DISSERTATION I.

The remote Antiquities of Nations either entirely fabulous, or full of Uncertainty.

IN an age ſo accurate as the preſent, it affords matter of ſome curioſity to obſerve thoſe marvellous fabrics of fiction, which bards and antiquaries have erected as monuments of the antiquity and illuſtrious origin of their nations.

LIVY has obſerved, that this credulous vanity of ancient times merits our indulgence rather than cenſure. The degree in which this indulgence is beſtowed, and the readineſs with which belief is given, depend on the various opinions, and different ſituations of mankind.

IN rude times, before the love of property takes ſuch abſolute dominion of the heart, that all its romantic and generous views are excluded, the moſt

exaggerated tales, which reflect honour on the antiquity and illuſtrious deſcent of a nation, are attended to with rapture, and regarded as genuine hiſtory.

However abſurd the credulity and romance of antiquity may appear to us, it is both ungenerous and unfair to turn them to ſevere ridicule, without firſt attending to our own weakneſſes: on a compariſon of both, it may be difficult to determine who is the greateſt object of contempt; the brave Barbarian, intoxicated with the bloody atchievements, and ideal antiquity of his nation, or the civilized ſceptic, refined into a diſbelief of every truth, and equally removed from the partialities and ſuperior virtues of the heart.

National pride, an attachment to the marvellous, and eaſineſs of aſſent, are the ſtrong characteriſtics of mankind in their illiterate ſtate. Hence it is, that, in their earlier periods, almoſt all the nations of the earth have ardently vied with each other, in the invention and belief of the moſt pompous and incredible tales, with regard to their origin and antiquity. A ſhort ſurvey of the antiquities of the moſt conſiderable nations of antient and later times, will eſtabliſh the truth of this obſervation.

To begin with the Romans, a people whom national dignity and ſuperiority have deſervedly placed at the head of mankind.—Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, and what is more ſurpriſing, Saluſt, Livy, Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus,

Halicarnaſſus, and almoſt all the ſucceeding hiſtorians, hold forth with one voice that the Romans were deſcended from Æneas: but the connection between that people and the Phrygian demi-god was no more than a perfect chimera. Homer's authority, together with the convincing arguments of a writer of great erudition *, have ſet this matter in the cleareſt light. Homer gives us a prediction of Neptune, in which we are plainly told, that as Priam's whole family were hated by Jove, Æneas himſelf and his lateſt poſterity ſhould reign over the Trojans †. "This teſtimony of Neptune, ſays Mr. Pope, ought to be conſidered as an authentic act, the fidelity and verity of which cannot be queſtioned."——Notwithſtanding the prophecy of the earth-ſhaking God, and in direct oppoſition to probability and true hiſtory, the Roman poets made their court to princes, ſenators, and a powerful nation, by drawing out their Phrygian deſcent in all the beautiful colours of their art. Even thoſe writers, in whom it was unpardonable to give a hearing to the moſt plauſible romance, could not but patronize a tale, which, as hiſtorians, they ſhould have deſpiſed; but which, as Romans, they fondly believed.

If we go from Italy into Greece, we ſhall find that the learned and polite nations of that country, had a conſiderable ſhare of the ſame vanity. According to the earlieſt accounts of time with them, their great

* See Bochart's Letter to Segrois. † Hom. Iliad. xx. ver. 306.

Princes and heroes were ſons or grandſons of ſome one divinity or other. An original ſo noble, became at length too eſtimable a bleſſing to remain the property of a few. It was fit that whole communities ſhould partake of its benefits; therefore the Arcadians gave ſcope to their ambition, and ſeriouſly aſſerted that their predeceſſors were older than Jupiter, or what it ſeems they thought ſtill more honourable, older than the moon herſelf. The Athenians ſeeing no good reaſon why any part of creation ſhould take precedency of them in point of antiquity, affirmed that their progenitors were co-eval with the ſun. Theſe two nations were the *Aborigines* of Greece, and the latter aſſumed the name of *Autochthones*, a name which ſtrongly characterizes their pride and ignorance.

On ſhifting the ſcene to the other diviſions of the old world, the ſame ambitious folly, and the ſame anility of belief preſent themſelves to our view.

Egypt was reputed the mother of wiſdom, and the kingdom of ſcience and knowledge: but whatever degree of wiſdom and learning the Egyptians had, they had alſo weakneſs enough to entertain the moſt extravagant notions concerning their own antiquity. They carried up the age of their empire to an immenſe height, and reckoned it their peculiar honour and felicity to have been governed by gods, for ages immemorial. Theſe gods, through time, became indolent, and ſo cloyed with power, that they thought proper to reſign the adminiſtration of Egyptian affairs into

into the hands of mortal kings. The mortality of kings was ſupplied by the regularity and perpetuity of ſucceſſion. Accordingly, we are told that between the commencement of their government and the reign of the laſt prieſt of Vulcan who ſat on the Egyptian throne, a ſeries of no leſs than three hundred and forty-one generations had paſſed away. This period of *mortal monarchs* was ſo intimately known to the literati of Egypt, that they ſpoke with confidence of every trivial occurrence that happened, and could aſcertain the exact duration of every particular reign. The courſe of things had very happily adapted this laſt branch of the hiſtory to their remembrance; for it was demonſtrable that the number of their monarchs correſponded preciſely with the number of generations in which they reigned. A circumſtance of this ſurprizing uniformity, though ſo oppoſite to the common inequalities of the natural courſe of reigns, muſt have afforded the higheſt gratification to the puerile and ſuperſtitious fancy of an Egyptian.

HERODOTUS relates this curious hiſtory very circumſtantially, and ſeems to have been no leſs convinced of its verity than he was impreſſed with its awfulneſs and grandeur. The prieſts of Memphis gave him the ſtrongeſt aſſurances that, agreeable to this faithful and exact calculation, the Egyptian empire had laſted eleven thouſand three hundred and forty years; and how was it poſſible for a hiſtorian of his character to diſbelieve a relation, however miraculous, which was ſolemnly atteſted by ſuch unexceptionable men. The infallible

infallible ſervants of Jupiter had conducted him into a large hall, where he ſaw with his own eyes the ſtatues of all the Vulcanian high prieſts, who had been enumerated to him. Every one of theſe ſacred perſonages was introduced to him in the very order in which they had filled the chair; and, what is a little remarkable, every one of them was the ſon of his immediate predeceſſor in the pontificate.

THESE were the ſentiments which the Egyptians entertained and profeſſed concerning their remote antiquities. The extravagance of this paſſion, inſtead of ſubſiding through a ſeries of ages, was conſtantly rapidly increaſing, until the unfortunate reign of *Pſammetichus*. That wiſe monarch, and his equally wiſe ſubjects, found themſelves under a neceſſity of acknowledging, that the Phrygians had exiſted before all other nations, and, of conſequence, had a right to take place of them. Herodotus relates this ſtory in all its ſtriking circumſtances. The profound gravity with which he carries on the relation, and his ſerious appeal to the prieſts of Vulcan at Memphis, ſerve only to eſtabliſh the conſiſtency of this hiſtorian's character *.

TROGUS POMPEIUS, another famous hiſtorian, informs us, that the Scythians were thoroughly ſatisfied that they themſelves had much juſter pretenſions to antiquity than either the Egyptians or Phrygians. The

* In Euterpe, c. 2.

phi-

philoſophical arguments with which theſe barbarians ſupported their claim to ſo ineſtimable a dignity, appear to have had conſiderable influence over the faith of Trogus; and to do them juſtice, they were neither leſs convincive nor more frivolous than thoſe on which *Pſammetichus* and *Herodotus* had relied ſo much, in the diſpute againſt the Phrygians *.

However ridiculous the Egyptian and Phrygian ſyſtems of antiquities may appear, it muſt be allowed that none of them was more pregnant with abſurdity than that of the Babylonians. *Beroſus*, a celebrated Chaldæan prieſt, ſaw the propriety of putting the antiquity of his own nation on a ſure and reſpectable footing. Accordingly, he applied himſelf to accurate and unwearied enquiry. The reſult of his labours was ſuitable to his moſt ſanguine expectations; for he found that the Babylonians had made aſtronomical obſervations for a hundred and ſeventy thouſand years before Alexander the Great made himſelf maſter of Aſia. Of conſequence, the Chaldæan nation muſt have exiſted for a ſpace of time equal at leaſt to that number of years; and what reaſonable perſon could think of reſiſting the power of ſuch a demonſtration †?

It may not be improper to return now into Europe, and inquire how far the Celtic nations were blinded by the pleaſing deluſions of fable, and overpowered

* See Juſtin's Abridg. of Trog. Pomp. † Diod. Sicul. lib. ii.

with national prepoſſeſſion. Thoſe *Celtes*, of whom the moſt conſiderable nations of modern Europe are ſprung, were originally ſo unconnected with the other parts of the world in which the uſe of letters prevailed, that their hiſtory, and in a manner their being, is later in proportion. It was only after their intermixture with the poliſhed part of mankind, that their manners became ſettled, and their notions of antiquity diſtinct. Formerly they, like all men in a barbarous ſtate, aſſociated in detached tribes, and wandered over the common field as chance or choice directed. In ſuch uncultivated and uncertain ſituations, a tale might amuſe for a ſeaſon, and the bard might occaſionally ſing; but the varieties of a migrating life could never allow the one to form into a tradition, nor permit the other to take any laſting hold of the memory. It is even a conſiderable time after a nation is formed that they think of looking back into antiquity by determinate ſteps. Ages and centuries are never the meaſures of time for the barbarian. He may be of opinion that his tribe is as old as any other, or may have originally deſcended from the ſun ‡, or ſprung ſpontaneouſly out of the ground, like the wood in which he purſues his game †; but without the aid of records, he can never trace back the origin of his diſtant predeceſſor, nor, were he in the humour of fiction, can he have any idea of framing a legendary one. On theſe accounts it is fruitleſs, and indeed ſuperfluous, to ſearch after the

‡ Charlevoix's Hiſt. of Indians. † Tacit. de Mor. Germ. cap. 1.

ideas

ideas or ſyſtems which the old Celtic nations formed with regard to their remote origin and hiſtory.

THESE natural obſtructions to the reſearches of a barbarous people, after a ſplendid origin, did not at all diſcourage the nations of Europe. Spain, in particular, claimed to herſelf an extraordinary proportion of antiquity and genealogical honour. Strabo informs us, that the *Turdetonians*, a nation of that country, could produce written monuments to ſupport their claim, together with many celebrated poems and laws couched in verſe, all of ſix thouſand years ſtanding. Our author obſerves, that theſe *Turdetonians* were the moſt learned people in Spain; and we may very ſafely add, that they were beyond compariſon the moſt antient people on earth, if Strabo's account of them be juſt: but that judicious writer acknowledges that the high antiquity of the *Turdetonians*, and the genuineneſs of their records, reſt entirely on the credit of their own teſtimony. It is a pity that theſe hiſtorical records, poems, and verſified laws, ſhould, after ſo long and ſucceſsful a ſtruggle with time, have in the end periſhed ſo prematurely, that not the ſmalleſt veſtige of them could be diſcovered for theſe fifteen hundred years paſt.

THOUGH the Turdetonian archives have ſunk in oblivion, time out of mind, yet the antiquities of Spain have been preſerved in the works of authors truly antient, and have been publiſhed from theſe by a new *Beroſus*. This faithful and moſt enlightened

hiſtorian found, by what he thought unqueſtionable evidence, that Jubal, the ſon of Japhet, and grandſon of Noah, ought to be placed at the head of the Spaniſh royal line. He alſo aſſerts, that the right of this grandſon of the patriarch, to the empire of Celtiberia, was founded on a donation of his grandfather, when he divided the world among his poſterity.

It is idle to take any further notice of the many curious anecdotes which this hiſtorian, if he deſerves that name, has extracted from fictitious records. But one cannot help being ſurprized how *Mariana*, one of the beſt hiſtorians of modern times, ſhould have given into the abſurdity of this ill informed and credulous author. The very firſt ſentence of Mariana's hiſtory acquaints us, that Jubal was undoubtedly the perſon who introduced its firſt inhabitants into Spain. In the next ſentence we are told, that all men of great learning and extenſive enquiry, were of this opinion. He proceeds then to inform us, that Jubal, after having ſettled many colonies, and built populous cities, applied himſelf to the arts of government, and ruled over his extenſive empire with great moderation and juſtice *.

Francio, an imaginary Trojan prince, the ſon of the celebrated Hector, was once thought the founder of the French empire. An origin derived from ſo illuſtrious a ſource, could not fail to elevate an airy and fantaſtic people into the utmoſt intemperance of national pride.

* Mariana, Lib. 1.

But

But the French of later times ſeem little inclined to believe their *Phrygian* pedigree, nor are they ſo injudicious as to avail themſelves of a paſſage in *Ammianus Marcellinus*, which might favour a pretenſion of this kind.

The old Germans had bards eſtabliſhed among them as far back as our authentic accounts of them reach. Theſe bards, upon the authority of rhimes, venerable on account of their antiquity, affirmed, that they had the honour of being deſcended from a God. The name of that God was *Tuiſco;* and ſo univerſal was the reverence paid to his memory, that every diſtinct nation of Germany adored him as their progenitor *.

Long after letters and chriſtianity had been introduced among the Germans, the ſame genealogical enthuſiaſm remained, though under a different form. No ſooner had the deformities of the old ſyſtem begun to appear, than the Saxons, Frieſlanders, and Brunſwickers, had the good fortune to diſcover that they were originally ſprung from three renowned generals who ſerved under Alexander the Great. It was thought abſolutely inconſiſtent with probability, that the Pruſſians, ſo celebrated for bravery, ſhould be the offspring of Celtic or Teutonic barbarians; accordingly an able antiquary reſcued their reputation, by tracing them up to Pruſſias, king of Bythynia.

But of all the inhabitants of the North of Europe, the Danes were certainly the moſt romantic in their

* Tacitus.

pretenſions to a remote origin and authentic records. Denmark was firſt inhabited by giants, ſays the eloquent Saxo Grammaticus. Theſe giants were of matchleſs ſtrength of body and vigour of mind. There were local demonſtrations of the one, and traditional proofs of the other. *Dan* was the father of the Daniſh nations, and *Argul*, his brother, gave being to the Engliſh. Theſe two great perſonages flouriſhed an innumerable ſeries of ages before the birth of Chriſt.

If any one ſhould aſk, how the hiſtory of *Dan*, and of his immediate poſterity were preſerved, *Saxo* will ſatisfy his curioſity on that head. Denmark, according to him, produced a ſucceſſion of excellent bards; whoſe buſineſs as well as amuſement it was to record the actions of its kings and heroes, in all the ſublimity of heroic compoſition: but as the productions of bards, however happy, may be deſtroyed or effaced by time, our author aſſures us, that the works of the Daniſh poets were liable to no ſuch inconvenience, as they were engraved upon ſolid rocks and obeliſks of the moſt durable nature. He even affirms, that he himſelf extracted thoſe numerous hiſtorical rhimes, which crowd his work, from thoſe permanent monuments of antiquity.

A learned archbiſhop has traced the kings of Sweden all the way up to Magog, a perſon whoſe cloſe connection with Noah fitted him highly for ſo eminent a ſtation.

THE Engliſh were once enthuſiaſtically fond of an ideal predeceſſor, and of an imaginary ſuperiority derived from him. Brutus, the ſon of Silvius, the grandſon of Aſcanius, and great grandſon of Æneas, was, to their great happineſs, reputed the parent and founder of their nation. Brutus, happily for England, had the misfortune to kill his father; ſo that he found it neceſſary to leave Italy, and make his way into Gaul. There he performed many ſignal exploits; but did not think it convenient to purſue his fortune long in that country, as he was directed by the oracle of Diana to viſit this iſland. Here he met with a monſtrous race of giants, who gave him a very hoſtile reception: but their enormous ſtrength of body, and the greatneſs of their numbers, ſerved only as a field for Brutus to diſplay his great military talents; for though a few battles were at firſt fought with various ſucceſs, yet in the end Brutus not only overcame, but exterminated this gigantic race. After acting ſo long in a military and victorious capacity, Brutus reſigned himſelf to the leſs laborious, but equally important occupation of a ruler and ſovereign. The greatneſs of his abilities was then no leſs diſplayed in the arts of peace than in his former conduct in the field. He reigned long over the extenſive empire of Britain, and at length cloſed a glorious adminiſtration, by dividing his territories between his three ſons. Theſe were *Locrinus*, *Camber*, and *Albanactus*. England devolved on *Locrinus*, being his eldeſt ſon; Wales was the patrimony of *Camber*; and Scotland fell to the ſhare of *Albanactus*.

EVEN

EVEN this tale had the good fortune to pleaſe an once credulous people. The Engliſh of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries embraced it with an enthuſiaſm peculiar to the romantic ſpirit of thoſe times. Edward the firſt claimed a ſuperiority over Scotland, on account of his more direct connection with Brutus. Accordingly, in the heat of thoſe diſputes which enſued on the death of Alexander the third of Scotland, Edward's agents urged ſtrenuouſly before the Pope, that in conſequence of the diviſion which Brutus made of his dominions, Scotland was from the beginning, and of conſequence ſhould remain, a fief of England.

THE ſtory of Brutus was far from wanting learned authority to ſupport its credit. Geoffrey of Monmouth gave it all the aid which profound erudition and the warmeſt zeal could beſtow. He affirms, that he found it fully demonſtrated, by the joint teſtimony of old Britiſh annals: and it cannot be denied but an eſſential part of the ſtory is found in Nennius, who wrote his *Eulogium Britanniæ* in the ninth century, about three hundred years before Geoffrey's time.

SELDEN has made ſome attempts to defend the tale of Brutus; and Cambden owns ingenuouſly that he himſelf had frequently ſtrained his invention to the utmoſt, in order to juſtify the moſt ſuſpicious parts, and reconcile the contradictions of this ſtory: after all, he could not perſuade himſelf to believe it; and it may be juſtly preſumed, that all the Engliſh anti-

quaries of the preſent and of ſucceeding times will explode it for ever.

It is now high time to examine the pretenſions which the Scots have to a remote antiquity: and after the fooliſh appearance which the ancient legends of the greateſt nations of the world have made, it cannot, without a miracle, be expected, that they alone ſhould be well informed of their genuine origin, or free of national credulity. They had no doubt an equal claim with other nations to a renowned anceſtry, and as remote an origin. A mountainous country, like Scotland, bids indeed the faireſt for inhabitants of great antiquity. A plain and fertile country is always ſubject to the inroads of their neighbours, and therefore often change their maſters. The ſterility of rocks, foreſts, and deſarts, are far from being inviting to an enemy; at the ſame time that their inacceſſibleneſs enables the natives eaſily to repel invaſions.—The Scots therefore had no cauſe to yield, in point of antiquity, to any other nation. If tradition had failed in handing down the particular æra and manner of their firſt ſettlement, they were ingenious to invent, and partial enough to give credit to a noble and fictitious origin. Accordingly, the procurators ſent by the ſtates of Scotland, to plead their cauſe againſt King Edward, before the court of Rome, contended ſtrenuouſly, that the Scots were deſcended from *Scota*, the daughter of Pharaoh King of Egypt.—That this Scota came into Scotland, together with her ſon Erc, whom ſhe had by Gathelus. That

Argadia,

Argadia, or rather *Jar-ghaël* *, derived its name from the progeny of that ſon and father. In fine, That the old name of *Albania* was changed into that of *Scotia*, as ſoon as the Scots were ſettled in that iſland; and that the Scots did ever ſince that period retain their name and independence, while the Britons of the ſouthern diviſion changed their name and maſters frequently. This is in ſubſtance the genealogical account of their nation, which the ſtates of Scotland tranſmitted by their agents to Pope *Boniface* the eighth, in the end of the thirteenth age.

Almost all the records and hiſtorical monuments of the Scots hiſtory have been deſtroyed through the barbarous policy of Edward Iſt of England of the Norman race, and the intemperate zeal of the Reformers. A few detached pieces, which have eſcaped thoſe revolutions, fatal to the antiquities of the nation, have been preſerved by the induſtrious Father Innes †. They throw little light on the genuine antiquities of Scotland, and ſerve only to reconcile us more to the deſtruction of thoſe annals of which they are thought to be a part. The principal thing in which they agree, is, that Fergus, the ſon of *Erc*, was the firſt King of Scotland. One of theſe pieces, called the Chronicle, in rhime, ſays, that the Scots came

* Jar-ghaël is that diviſion of the Weſtern Highlands which is partly comprehended within the county of Argyle. It plainly ſignifies the Weſtern Caledonians, in contradiſtinction to the Picts or Caledonians who poſſeſſed the Eaſt coaſt of Scotland. *Jar*, Weſt—*Gaël* or *Caël*, *Celtes*.

† See his Appendix to his Critical Eſſay on the Scottiſh Antiquities.

from Egypt into Spain, in the time of Moſes; that of him ſprung *Milo* King of Spain, whoſe ſon *Simon Bree* ſettled in Ireland.—That ſome of the poſterity of this Simon tranſmigrated from Ireland into Ergadia, about 443 years before Chriſt; and that the Scots lived there, in a moſt uncultivated ſtate, till Fergus, the ſon of Erc, brought thither the *fatal marble chair* from Ireland, and begun his glorious reign. Another of thoſe pieces ſays, that the Scots came into Ireland, from Scythia, in the fourth age of the world; that they and the Picts had one common origin; and that thoſe two nations were deſcended from the Albanians *.

The Iriſh, if we believe their antiquaries, are not inferior either to the Egyptians or Turdetonians, in the preſervation of the moſt antient and minute events in their country, or in their claim to remote antiquity. The antient hiſtory of Ireland is indeed ſo characteriſtical of the romantic extravagance of dark ages, and at the ſame time ſo connected with our ſubject, that the pretended antiquities of that nation muſt be indulged with a ſeparate diſcuſſion.

After the ſurvey which we have already made, it muſt be fairly acknowleged, that the very remote hiſtory of all nations is totally diſfigured with fable, and gives but little encouragement to diſtant inquiry. At the ſame time, it is to be regretted, how much of

* Critical Eſſay, p. 774.

the early hiſtory and antiquities of nations are loſt, and how indiſtinctly ſociety is ſeen in its rudeſt form. The tranſactions of mankind, in the firſt ages of ſociety, riſe from the affections of the heart; of conſequence, a knowlege of them would be highly intereſting, and afford amuſement, and even inſtruction, in theſe poliſhed times.

THOUGH no nation in Europe has excelled the Britiſh in other branches of literature, yet we muſt acknowlege their deficiency in writing of hiſtory. Our antient hiſtorians, from the unfavourable times in which they lived, were ignorant, and full of prejudice. The few men of abilities who wrote of late years, haſtening to thoſe great events which croud the latter part of our annals, have left our antient hiſtory in the ſame obſcurity in which they found it: looking with too much contempt on the origin of ſocieties, they have either, without examination, adopted the traditional tales of their predeceſſors, or altogether exploded them, without any diſquiſition. A writer of the greateſt merit, who has lately favoured the world with an intereſting part of the Scots hiſtory, has likewiſe fallen into this error. He, with great gravity, begins his work with the migration of the Scots from Ireland: a fiction in itſelf improbable, however venerable on account of its antiquity.

IT were much to be wiſhed, a writer of his abilities, both for elegance of diction and ſtrength of

judgment, had not been an abſolute ſtranger to the original language of his country; which would at leaſt have prevented him from giving his authority to ſo idle a romance. The diſcuſſion of this popular error, which I am to give in the ſequel of theſe diſſertations, will juſtify theſe ſtrictures on ſo eminent a hiſtorian as Dr. Robertſon.

DISSERTATION II.

General Obſervations on the firſt Migrations of Aſiatic Colonies into Europe.—The Gauls the Progenitors of the ancient Britiſh.—Of the Caledonians.—The Etymon of their Name.

IT was the opinion of the ancient poets and philoſophers, that mankind and other animals ſprung, like vegetables, out of the earth. Abſurd as a fiction of this kind may now appear, it was believed by writers, who, on other occaſions, diſplayed an uncommon ſtrength of underſtanding. Tacitus ſuppoſes that the firſt inhabitants of Britain * and Germany † were produced in this extraordinary way. The total ignorance of their own origin, which prevailed among them in the time of this celebrated hiſtorian, made him draw a concluſion, which requires no other refutation than expoſing it to public view.

BE this as it will, we learn, from the concurrent teſtimony of ſacred and profane hiſtory, that Aſia was the firſt diviſion of the world that was peopled: of courſe all the national migrations that have come to

* Tacit. in Vita Agric. c. 11. † De Mor. Germ. c. 1.

our

our knowledge move progreſſively from Eaſt to Weſt. The northern parts of Europe, which of old went under the general name of Scandinavia, appear to me to have been as ſoon at leaſt poſſeſſed by an Aſiatic colony, as ancient Gaul, Italy, or Spain. Man, in a ſtate of nature, was not capable to tranſport himſelf even acroſs the narrow firth of the Helleſpont. But as hunting has always been found to be the amuſement, as well as ſupport of barbarous life, we may conclude, that the firſt colonies of Scandinavia came gradually from the northern Aſia in purſuit of their game. In the winter ſeaſon, when the froſt renders all the great rivers and ſwamps of Ruſſia and Poland paſſable, thoſe migrations might eaſily have happened.

Navigation, though a very early invention, is long before it arrives at that degree of maturity which is neceſſary to give confidence to mankind to croſs an arm of the ſea. We may therefore conclude that Scandinavia was in ſome meaſure peopled before thoſe countries which border upon the Mediterranean. It is from this conſideration we muſt deduce the great difference we find between the Celtes of Gaul and the northern nations. Their manners and their language were in ſome manner ſimilar, and makes room for a conjecture that they were originally deſcended from the ſame ſtock, though perhaps ſeparate nations before they left Aſia.

The firſt race of Aſiatics, in the progreſs of their migrations, were naturally ſeparated by the Caſpian Sea; ſome directing their courſe to Tartary, and others to Aſia Minor. Of the Tartar race are deſcended the Scandinavians,

dinavians, under which name I comprehend the Danes, Swedes, weſtern Ruſſians, and Poles: the Celts of Gaul, Italy, and Spain, were a colony from the leſſer Aſia. The Celts extending themſelves to the North, and the Scandinavians moving towards the South, after, perhaps, a ſeries of ages, met on the confines of the modern Germany. The great diſtance of time from their ſeparation in Aſia, effected ſuch a change in their manners, language and cuſtoms, that their common origin was totally obliterated from their memory, and continual wars and animoſities ſubſiſted between them. This naturally occaſioned encroachments upon one another's territories, and that unavoidable mixture of people, which generally happens upon the frontiers of warlike nations, whoſe boundaries are often changed by the viciſſitudes of war. From this circumſtance proceeded the mixed manners and language, and perhaps the very name of the Germans *.

The Celtes of Gaul were, without doubt, the progenitors of the firſt inhabitants of Britain. The vicinity of the two countries, in a caſe of this kind, is a concluſive argument. At this diſtance it is impoſſible to form any conjecture concerning the time in which the firſt migration of the Gauls into Britain happened. It is equally impoſſible to find out by what national appellation they went at their firſt ſettlement in this iſland. Whether the firſt inhabitants of the northern diviſion of Britain were deſcended of the *Gauliſh* colony of the South, or came from the North of Ger-

* *Allemans*, the ancient name of the Germans, obviouſly ſignifies a compoſition of different nations.

many,

many, will fall to be diſcuſſed hereafter. I ſhall in this diſſertation confine myſelf to the Caledonians as we find them in Britain, when their wars with the Romans made them objects of attention to the writers of Rome.

THE Caledonians were the moſt powerful, and, to ſpeak with Galgacus, the moſt noble of all the nations that were of old ſettled in that diviſion of Britain, which has ſince obtained the name of Scotland. By the joint conſent of all the writers who give us any account of them, the Caledonians were reckoned the *Aborigines* of that country. Lucan * is the firſt writer that mentions them, but he had but a very imperfect idea of what part of Britain they poſſeſſed. He places them in the neighbourhood of the *Rutupian ſhore*, near Sandwich, or ſome other part of the coaſt of Kent. Even Pliny and Florus, whoſe intelligence concerning the ſeats of the Caledonians, ought to be more preciſe, than any poetical deſcription given by Lucan, are far from being diſtinct on that head. Tacitus is the firſt of the hiſtorians of Rome that has aſſigned its proper place to Caledonia.

FROM the united teſtimonies of Tacitus †, Dio and Solinus ‡, we find, that the ancient Caledonia comprehended all that country to the north of the firths of Forth and Clyde. The *Mæatæ* §, whom ſome have

* Luc. Phar. l. iii. v. 67, 68. † Tacit. Vita Agric. c. 25.

‡ Solin. Polyph. c. 35.

§ *Mæatæ* is probably derived from two Galic words *Moi*, plain, and *aitich*, inhabitants; or as an ingenious friend of mine obſerved, from *mœan*, middle, and *aitich*, inhabitants; alluding to their ſituation between the conquered Britons and the independant Caledonians.

reckoned

reckoned a branch of the Caledonians, poſſeſſed all that tract of land which intervened between Adrian's wall and the frontiers of Caledonia, properly ſo called. It is not now my buſineſs to enter into what has come to our knowledge of the military hiſtory of the Caledonians. The Roman writers who have given us an account of them are in the hands of every body. I ſhall confine myſelf entirely to ſome critical remarks on the etymon of their name, as this diſſertation is only intended to clear the ground for an hypotheſis, which I flatter myſelf ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the ſequel of this work.

ANTIQUARIES are much divided about the etymology of Caledonia. Buchanan *, though a native of the Highlands, and of courſe converſant with the Galic language, is not happy in his conjectures on that ſubject. *Calden*, according to him, ſignifies a hazel tree. From thence proceeds the famous Caledonian foreſt, and the name of Caledonia. It is amazing to obſerve how a man of his learning, and great abilities, could give in to ſuch a puerile conceit. But had Buchanan conſidered properly his native tongue, he would have found that *Caultin*, and not *Calden*, ſignifies a hazel tree; and that there is no ſuch a word as *Calden* to be met with in the Galic language.

DR. LLOYD, biſhop of St. Aſaph, derives Caledonia from *Cilydion*, a Britiſh word, ſignifying *borderers*. The Caledonians, ſays that learned prelate, bordered on

* Buch. Hiſt. l. 2.

the

the Roman province in Britain, and therefore were with great propriety called *borderers*. The biſhop did not conſider that the boundaries of the province were often changed. If we ſuppoſe the wall conſtructed by Adrian, marked out the limits of the Roman empire in Britain, then the *Brigantes*, *Ottadini* and *Mæatæ*, had a much better title to the name of *borderers* than the Caledonians. If the wall built by Antoninus Pius is to be looked upon as the boundary of the province, then it naturally ſhould follow, that the Caledonians did not acquire the name of *Cilydion*, or *borderers*, till after the conſtruction of that wall. But the paſſage mentioned from Lucan proves, that the name of Caledonians made ſome noiſe in the world as early as the reign of Nero. Thus the biſhop's etymon of Caledonia falls to the ground.

Camden, one of the beſt antiquaries that the world ever produced, has endeavoured to give the etymon of Caledonia. *Kaled*, obſerves that learned writer, is a Britiſh word, which ſignifies *hard*. In the plural number it makes *Kaledion*, and hence proceeds *Caledonii*, that is, a people, *hardy*, *rough*, *uncivilized*, as northern nations generally are: a people fierce in their temper, from the extreme coldneſs of their climate; a people bold, forward, and intrepid, from the abundance of their blood.

The ſeverity of this obſervation on the national character of the Caledonians does not at all favour the etymon produced by Camden. If the name of *Kaledion* was firſt framed by the Britons of the ſouth,

it may be juſtly queſtioned, whether they themſelves, before the reign of Nero, were leſs *hard*, *rough*, and *uncivilized*, than their neighbours of the north, or of courſe leſs intitled to that name. But as every thing that falls from ſo juſtly celebrated a writer, makes a great impreſſion: I confeſs this etymon had ſuch weight with me, that I long conſidered the word *Kaled* as the root of *Caledonii*. This led me further into the ſubject; and I ſubmit to the world, with great deference to the great merit of Camden, the additional obſervations I have made.

KALED †, in both the antient Britiſh and Galic languages, ſignifies *hard*. In both theſe languages *in*, or *yn*, ſignifies *a country*. From the monoſyllable *in* comes the diminutive *innis*, which in the Welſh and Galic is of the ſame import with the Engliſh word *iſland*. By joining *Kaled* and *in* together, we have *Caledin, a rough and mountainous country*; which is exactly the ſignification of *Alba* *, the only name by which the

† See Bullet's Memoires ſur la lang. Celt. under the word *Kaled*.

* That this is the proper ſignification of *Alba*, ſhall be ſhewn in the ſequel of theſe diſſertations. If the etymon given here of Caledonia ſhould appear a juſt one, I ſhall make no difficulty in ſuppoſing that the Calydonia of Greece is derived from the ſame Celtic ſource. Ætolia, of which the Grecian Calydonia was a part, was a very mountainous country. Three mountains in particular there, Taphioſus, Chalcis, and Corax, were, according to Strabo, immenſely high. The face of the country was very rugged, and the inhabitants hardy. Homer gives the characteriſtical epithet of *rocky* to Calydon, the capital of that country. Hom. Iliad. xi. ver. 640.

Highlanders diſtinguiſh Scotland to this day.—This etymon of Caledonia is at leaſt plauſible: but I muſt confeſs that the derivation given by Mr. Macpherſon, the tranſlator of the poems of Oſſian, is more ſimple and natural.

THE Highlanders, as he juſtly obſerves, call themſelves *Caël*. That diviſion of Scotland which they poſſeſs they univerſally call *Caëldoch*, that is to ſay, the country of the *Caël* or *Celtes*. The Romans, by a tranſpoſition of the letter *l*, in *Caël*, and changing the harſh *ch* of *doch*, into an harmonious termination, formed the name of *Caledonia*. From this etymon ariſes an obſervation, of which we ſhall make uſe in the ſequel of theſe diſſertations.

DURING the invaſions of the Romans, we find many other tribes, beſides the *Caledonians* and *Mæatæ*, in the north of Britain; though probably they were no more than ſubdiviſions of thoſe two illuſtrious nations. Every one of thoſe tribes were governed by an independent chief, or petty King. In Cæſar's time there were no leſs than four ſuch chieftains in Kent, and each of them veſted with regal authority. The political government of Caledonia was, in Domitian's reign, much the ſame with that of Kent during Cæſar's proconſulſhip.

WHEN the tribes of North Britain were attacked by the Romans, they entered into aſſociations, that by uniting their ſtrength, they might be the more able

to repel the common enemy. The particular name of that tribe, which either its ſuperior power or military reputation placed at the head of the aſſociation, was the general name given by the Romans to all the confederates.

Hence it is, that the Mæatæ and Caledonians have ingroſſed all the glory which belonged in common, though in an inferior degree, to all the other nations ſettled of old in North Britain. It was for the ſame reaſon that the name of *Mæatæ* was entirely forgotten by foreign writers after the third century, and that of the Caledonians themſelves but ſeldom mentioned after the fourth.

The *Mæatæ*, we have already obſerved, were one of thoſe tribes who were ſettled to the ſouth of the Clyde and the Forth. Ptolemy places the *Gadeni*, *Salgovæ*, *Novantes*, and *Damnii*, in the ſame diviſion of the country *. To the north of the Firths the ſame writer aſſigns their reſpective places to the *Caledonii*, *Epidii*, *Carini*, *Cantæ*, *Logæ*, and ſeveral other ſmall tribes. Without inſiſting upon the probability that Ptolemy, an Egyptian, was not ſo minutely acquainted with the internal ſtate of Britain as he pretends, at a time when the north of Europe was ſo little known to men of letters, we ſhall take it for granted, that all thoſe nations he mentions were of the ſame original ſtock; and to avoid confuſion, I

* Ptolem. lib. iii. c. 10.

ſhall,

ſhall, for the future, comprehend them all under the general name of Caledonians.

TACITUS divides the inhabitants of Britain into three claſſes; the Caledonians, *Silures*, and thoſe who inhabited the coaſt next to Gaul. He endeavours to trace thoſe three nations to others on the continent, from whom he ſuppoſed they had derived their origin. The Caledonians he concludes, from the ſize of their bodies, and the colour of their hair, were of a Germanic extraction. Though it muſt be confeſſed that this concluſion is far from being deciſive, from thoſe two circumſtances; yet there are many collateral arguments which corroborate the opinion of that great hiſtorian. Theſe, in ſome future diſſertation, I may throw together, and leave the whole to the judgment of the public.

*** This the author has done, in a diſſertation, intitled, A parallel between the Caledonians and Ancient Germans, which is printed in this work.

DISSERTATION III.

Of the Picts.—That they were the Poſterity of the Caledonians.

VIRGIL's obſervation, that Italy often changed its name, is equally applicable to the reſt of the kingdoms of Europe. That migrating diſpoſition which poſſeſſed mankind in their barbarous ſtate, occaſioned, of old, ſuch revolutions and intermixture of nations, that no appellation of any country was permanent.

BRITAINS, Caledonians, Mæatæ, Barbarians, and unconquered nations, are the names conſtantly given to the old inhabitants of North Britain, by Tacitus, Herodian, Dio, Spartian, Vopiſcus, and other antient writers. The ſucceſſors of theſe Britains, Caledonians, Mæats, and Barbarians, are called Picts, Scots, and Attacots, by ſome Roman writers of the fourth century. The cauſe of this change of names is, at this diſtance of time, little underſtood. Some Engliſh antiquaries affirm, that the old Caledonians were gradually exhauſted in their wars with the Romans: that

ſome

ſome foreign colonies occupied their almoſt depopulated country: and that theſe foreigners either aſſumed or received the name of Picts. If curioſity ſhould lead us to inquire from what quarter of the world theſe foreigners came; Biſhop Stillingfleet has already affirmed, that the *Cherſoneſus Cimbrica*, a part of the modern Denmark, was their original country. He has alſo told us, that they ſettled firſt in Caledonia about the middle, or rather near the end of the third century.

THE queſtion now is, whether this ſyſtem is well founded, or whether we have better reaſon to believe that the Picts were the real offspring of the old Caledonians?

BEFORE this queſtion can be fairly reſolved, it will be proper to review the hiſtory of North Britain, from the death of Severus to the reign of Conſtantius. Several eminent antiquaries ſay, that it was under the reign of this emperor the Picts, Scots, and Attacots, began to make any conſiderable figure in this iſland.

SOON after the death of Severus, Antoninus Caracalla, his ſon, entered into a negotiation with the Barbarians of Britain, and gave them peace upon receiving hoſtages. This, in ſubſtance, is the account given by Herodian, of the manner in which Antoninus put a period to the Caledonian war. He has not explained the conditions of the peace. But as he ſays, that Severus, oppreſſed with age, cares, and an inveterate diſtemper,

diſtemper, had not been able to finiſh the war, and that his ſon, on whom the command of the army employed in North Britain had devolved, was little ſolicitous about the further proſecution or ſucceſs of that war, it may be taken for granted, that the Caledonians were far from being exhauſted when the peace was ratified.

If we chuſe to follow Dio's account of this war, we can hardly believe that the Caledonians ſuſtained any conſiderable loſſes either before or after the death of Severus. If it be true that Severus deprived the Caledonians or their allies of their arms, and ſome portion of their territories, it is no leſs ſo, that the Caledonians and Mæats took up arms with one accord, upon receiving the news of the emperor's indiſpoſition.

After his death, Caracalla and Geta, his two ſons, agreed in giving them peace upon very honourable and advantageous terms. This peace was ignominious to the empire in every article, excepting that relating to the hoſtages. For the two brothers reſigned to the Barbarians all the advantages for which Severus and his predeceſſors had been ſo eagerly contending.

The affairs of North Britain were totally neglected for a long time after Antoninus and Geta had quitted this iſland. The empire was torn in pieces by tyrants; and thoſe who aſſumed the purple wanted leiſure, inclination, or ſpirit, to make any new attempts on Caledonia.

Caledonia. The ableſt men among them, Aurelian, Probus, and Diocletian, were too much employed elſewhere to execute ſuch a deſign.

It is true, Carauſius uſurped the ſovereignty of South Britain in that period: but it may be doubted whether he repaired the old Roman wall which ſtood between Clyde and the Forth; whether he fortified that wall with ſeven caſtles; whether he built that ancient edifice vulgarly called Arthur's oven, on the bank of the river Carron; or whether he erected a triumphal arch in the neighbourhood of that river, to perpetuate the memory of a ſignal victory which he had obtained over the Barbarians of North Britain. All theſe notable actions, together with the etymon given of Carron *, reſt entirely on the authority of the fabulous Nennius; or upon the credit of his equally fabulous interpolator.

After Carauſius and Allectus, his ſucceſſor in the uſurpation, were ſlain, Conſtantius Chlorus, on whom Britain, together with the other Weſtern provinces of the empire, had devolved, upon the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian, came into this iſland. This

* To ſuppoſe that Carron comes from Carauſius is a very puerile conceit, though probably the only foundation of the curious anecdotes related by Nennius. The name of that river is a Galic one; which ſignifies a *winding river*. Accordingly we find ſeveral Carrons in North Britain; and one of them in the Weſtern diſtrict of Roſsſhire, where Carauſius confeſſedly never was.

Emperor formed a reſolution of ſubduing the Caledonians, though he had other affairs of much greater importance to mind; but he died at York before he had time to carry his deſign into execution.

CONSTANTINE, who commonly goes under the name of Great, ſucceeded his father Conſtantius in the imperial dignity, and aſſumed the purple in Britain. But being, as it is natural to ſuppoſe, impatient to take poſſeſſion of the capital, it is certain that he loſt no time to acquire either new territories or laurels in Caledonia. The idle panegyrics of Eccleſiaſtics are the only authorities we have for ſuppoſing that he did either the one or the other in the beginning of his reign; nor did he ever, after putting a period to the civil war, return into Britain.

THE province of Britain fell, upon the death of Chlorus, to his ſon Conſtantine; and it is certain that the Caledonians were neither exhauſted nor even moleſted by Roman legions under his ſhort reign. His ambition inſpired him with very different views. He made war on his brother Conſtans, at no great diſtance from the ſeat of the Roman empire, and was ſlain by his generals in battle near Aquileia *. This event ſubjected Britain to Conſtans; and it is allowed that he, accompanied by his brother Conſtantius, came in perſon to viſit his new territories. But it does not appear that either of the brothers did penetrate as far as Caledonia. Two declamatory writers of that

* Eutrop. l. x.

age,

age, who ſpeak of this expedition in a very high tone *, ſeem to reſolve the glory of it into the victory obtained by Conſtans and Conſtantius over the Britiſh ocean, during the winter ſeaſon: a feat which, according to the opinion of one of theſe authors, was never performed before, nor ever to be performed afterwards.

Constans was murdered in Spain, after a reign of ſeventeen years, by the party of Magnentius, who aſſumed the purple in Gaul, and drew over Britain to his ſide. It is not probable that ever this uſurper had any diſputes with the Caledonians. Conſtantius made war upon him without any intermiſſion, during the whole courſe of his ſhort reign, and brought him at laſt, after the loſs of ſeveral battles, to the neceſſity of laying violent hands upon himſelf. Upon the death of Magnentius, Britain, together with all the other rebellious provinces of the empire, ſubmitted to Conſtantius.

From this review of the hiſtory of Rome, in ſo far as it is connected with that of North Britain, from the death of Severus to Conſtantius, ſeveral queſtions will naturally reſult. In what Emperor's reign were the Caledonians ſo exhauſted or degenerated to ſuch a degree as to yield up their country, their freedom, and their reputation, to a colony, or even an army of Scandinavian rovers? In what period

* Livan. in Bas. Julius Firm. de error. profan. &c.

of time happened thoſe devaſtations by which they were exhauſted? Were they either annihilated or reduced to a ſtate of incurable debility by Severus, or by his ſons Caracalla and Geta? Did Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander, or Maximinus, did any of the ſucceeding Emperors or thirty tyrants overcome them?

As therefore there is no ground for ſuppoſing that the Caledonians were annihilated or even much weakened by the legions, generals and Emperors of Rome, it is far from being credible that an army ſufficient to overcome or extirpate them, could be tranſported from the Cimbrica Cherſoneſus, in the third century. Every body knows what little progreſs navigation had made at that time in the North of Europe. A few long boats, which were the only craft the Scandinavians could be ſuppoſed to have, were very inadequate for the purpoſe of carrying armies acroſs the German ocean.

The improbability of a great migration of this kind, at that period, is ſtrengthened by the ſilence of antient writers of credit on that head. It is therefore too precipitate in any modern antiquary, to give his authority to a fiction, ſo contrary to all the ideas we can form of the ſtate of the North of Europe, in thoſe times. The opinion of Camden, the moſt learned as well as moſt candid of the antiquaries of England, is deciſive on this ſubject. After mature conſideration of this new ſyſtem of Humphrey Lhud, he was far from believing

believing that the Picts were an upſtart nation, or a colony of foreigners firſt ſettled in Britain in the courſe of the third century. Camden's opinion was, that the Caledonians, ſo far from being extirpated by the Romans, or any other enemy, had multiplied to ſuch a degree, that their own country became too narrow for them: and it is to this cauſe he attributes, chiefly, the frequent incurſions they made into the Roman province *.

* Camden's Brit.

DISSERTATION IV.

Of the Pictiſh Monarchy.

THE countries, of which the greateſt monarchies in Europe are now compoſed, were antiently divided into ſeveral ſmall dynaſties and petty republics. Men, whoſe ſuperior ſtrength of body or mind raiſed them, on ſignal occaſions, to the head of the community, were firſt dignified with the pompous title of royalty. Their authority and power were originally, however, confined within limits extremely circumſcribed. Abſolute government is never eſtabliſhed in the firſt ſtages of ſociety. It is after a ſeries of ages that the paſſions of the human mind are ſufficiently mellowed down to ſubmit calmly to the dictates of deſpotiſm, and to wait with patience the tedious operations of an extenſive government.

MANKIND, in their uncultivated ſtate, though averſe to that tyranny which ſometimes attends monarchy, were incapable of any other form of government. A republican ſyſtem is too philoſophical for the ſavage to comprehend it properly. I might have ſaid,

though the obſervation is far from being favourable to the dignity of human nature, that it is too noble for even civilized communities long to preſerve it among them. I ſhall not therefore heſitate to pronounce, that monarchy is the moſt natural government for mankind.—We accordingly learn, from the moſt antient accounts we have of every nation, in their earlieſt ſtate, that monarchy was univerſally eſtabliſhed among them.

We find, from Homer, that antient Greece was divided into an immenſe number of petty dynaſties. The ſame kind of government prevailed of old, in Gaul, Italy, Spain, and Germany. Britain, at the time of Cæſar's invaſion, was governed by a number of little independent Princes; and from the accounts given of Caledonia by Tacitus, Dio, and Ptolemy, we may conclude with certainty, that it was compoſed of many ſmall ſtates, unconnected with one another, and without any one bond of union, excepting that which aroſe from their common danger.

Galgacus and Argetecoxus are the only Caledonian Princes expreſly mentioned in hiſtory. The firſt was no more than the Generaliſſimo of a powerful confederacy, though ſuperior in birth and renown to the other Caledonian Princes who fought againſt Agricola. The ſecond was little more than a petty King or Chieftain *; for the ſpirited reply made by his

* Xiphil. in Severo.

wife

wife to the Empreſs Julia ſeems to be the only thing that has preſerved his memory from oblivion.

To aſcertain that all the inhabitants or territories of Caledonia were governed by one monarch, in any one period of time before the beginning of the ninth century, is extremely difficult, if not abſolutely impoſſible. And if it were true that the Picts were a great people before the Scots were ſettled in Britain, it is far from being certain that thoſe Picts were governed by general monarchs in any early period.

ADAMNAN, abbot of Iona, is the firſt that mentions any Pictiſh King, and the oldeſt author after him is Bede. We are told by theſe two writers, that St. Columba converted Brudius, King of the Picts, to the Chriſtian faith; and we learn further from Bede, that Brudius was a moſt powerful prince, and that Columba came into Britain in the year of the vulgar æra five hundred and ſixty-five. If there were any Pictiſh Kings before that period, Pictiſh Kings poſſeſſed of extenſive dominions, or monarchs of Caledonia, we have no genuine record to aſcertain their very names.

BUT the loſs ariſing from the ſilence of antient writers is perhaps more than fully compenſated by the accounts given of the Pictiſh Kings, and the antiquity of the Pictiſh monarchy, by the *Sennachies* or hiſtorians of Ireland. We are told by them, that the Pictiſh monarchy began at the ſame time with that

of their own country, that is to ſay, thirteen, or at leaſt eleven whole centuries before the birth of Chriſt *. They aſſure us further, that the Picts had a ſucceſſion of ſeventy Kings, from *Cathluam*, who was cotemporary with *Heremon* the firſt Iriſh monarch, to Conſtantine, who reigned about the end of the eighth century.

THOUGH the Scots hiſtorians took care not to do too much honour to the Pictiſh nation, yet it ſeems they found themſelves under a neceſſity of granting that the Picts were ſettled early in Britain; and that they had a ſucceſſion of fifty-eight, or at leaſt fifty-two Kings †.

THE Pictiſh nation was totally ſubdued by the Scots in the ninth century, and their name has been ſwallowed up by that of the conquerors with whom they were incorporated. Did any conſiderable body of that people exiſt now, it is more than probable that ſome of them would lay claim to the honour of remote antiquity, and boaſt of a very long ſeries of monarchs, like the Scots, Iriſh, and every other European nation. But though the Picts have been extinct for many ages back, they have found in Father Innes, the author of the Critical Eſſay, not only a moſt zealous friend, but as able an advocate to plead their cauſe, as perhaps any one their nation could have produced.

* Keat. Gen. Hiſt. of Ireland, p. 120, &c. Flaherty Ogyg. p. 190.
† See Innes's Crit. Eſſ. p. 108.

It is well known that Innes has been at great pains, though born a Scotſman, to annihilate no leſs than forty Scottiſh Kings. He was ſenſible that many of the abettors of the high antiquities of Scotland would be diſpleaſed with the wanton attempt he made to rob them of their antient monarchs, to whom they had, at leaſt, an old preſcriptive right. But he found out a method of making ample amends for this injury: inſtead of forty or thirty-nine ideal monarchs, and theſe no more than petty Kings, had they actually exiſted, he has given his country an indiſputable right to forty powerful ſovereigns of the truly antient Pictiſh line; and he has been at no little trouble to demonſtrate, that the Scots of modern times are as much intereſted in theſe Pictiſh monarchs, as they could be in the antient Kings of their own nation, who are placed between the firſt and ſecond Fergus.

Innes could not poſſibly believe that the antiquaries of Scotland were ſo blind as to be caught in a ſnare ſo very viſible, or idle enough to be put off with a compliment ſo vain and illuſory. That writer could not have imagined, without a manifeſt ſelf-contradiction, that the very names of ſo many crowned heads, from *Cathluan*, the founder of the Pictiſh monarchy, to *Dreſt*, in whoſe time the goſpel was preached by St. Ninian to the Picts, could have been preſerved without the knowlege of letters, preſerved in the rhimes of bards, and the traditionary ſtories of ſennachies.

He could not have ſeriouſly entertained ſuch an opinion, and at the ſame time ſee very good reaſons for deſtroying ſo many Scottiſh and Iriſh Kings promiſcuouſly, and without any mercy, whoſe exiſtence depended on a ſimilar authority.

But why were the Scottiſh Kings deſtroyed, and the Pictiſh monarchs ſpared? Why, becauſe the annaliſts, hiſtorians, ſennachies and antiquaries of Ireland are univerſally agreed that the Pictiſh monarchy is coeval with their own; and Iriſh writers cannot be ſuſpected of diſhoneſty or ignorance in a matter of this kind. "They had no private motives of their own, to invent this ſtory of the antiquity of the Pictiſh ſettlement and monarchy. They would not, without a neceſſity, put a foreign people upon a level with their own, in the two advantages upon which they chiefly valued themſelves: and hence it follows, that the Iriſh writers muſt have had good information in this affair *."

It is amazing how Innes could have prevailed with himſelf to follow Iriſh guides through the impenetrable darkneſs of the Pictiſh antiquities. He himſelf has been at extraordinary pains to prove that theſe guides are, of all others, the blindeſt and moſt faithleſs: if ſo, how can they who adopt their doctrine hinder themſelves from ſuſpecting both their honeſty and intelligence? There is no ſmall

* Inn. Crit. Eſſ. p. 104.

difficulty in explaining the motives by which the inventors of hiſtorical fable, in the ſeveral ages and countries of the world, are led to frame and publiſh their fictions.

But the writers of Ireland had it ſeems a private view, though a ſomewhat remarkable one, for carrying up the antiquity of the Pictiſh monarchy to ſo great a height. Keating affirms, that it was from Ireland the Picts got their wives when they went to ſettle in Britain *. Other Hibernian hiſtorians inform us, that *Cathluan* was married to one of thoſe wives; that the firſt monarch of the Pictiſh line, and all his Pictiſh ſubjects, ſwore, in the moſt ſolemn manner, to devolve the government of the country they were to ſubdue upon the iſſue of thoſe Hibernian women, and to continue it with them for ever. Why an oath became neceſſary in a caſe where the Picts muſt, in the nature of things, leave their territories to their progeny by the Iriſh ladies, as they had no other women, I ſhall leave to the Mileſian ſennachies to determine.

Innes endeavours to perſuade us, that tradition, without the help of letters, might have preſerved the names of the ſeventy Pictiſh Kings. Why then could not tradition preſerve at leaſt the names of the Kings who governed the weſtern parts of Caledonia before Fergus the ſecond? And what could hinder the Iriſh

* Gen. Hiſt. of Irel. p. 62.

from

from preſerving, by means of the ſame oral chronicle, the names of all the monarchs or provincial Kings who reigned in their iſland before the time of *Leogaire* and *St. Patric?* All theſe depend upon the ſame degree of authority, and muſt ſtand or fall together.

It is to be obſerved, that the account given by the Iriſh ſennachies and annaliſts of the Pictiſh nation and Pictiſh Kings, differs eſſentially from that taken by Innes from his Pictiſh Chronicle, and the Regiſter of the Priory of St. Andrews *. According to the *Pſalter Caſhel*, quoted by Keating †, and according to the books of *Lecan*, quoted by O Flaherty ‡, Cathluan the ſon of *Gud* muſt be placed at the head of the Pictiſh royal line. But according to the catalogue publiſhed by Innes, *Cruithne* the ſon of *Cinge* was the founder of the Pictiſh monarchy. The *Pſalter Caſhel* and the book of *Lecan* are the two moſt valuable monuments of literary antiquity of which the Iriſh nation can boaſt; and if any ſtreſs can be laid on the authority of theſe, Gud the father of Cathluan, and generaliſſimo of the Picts, after killing his maſter Policornus, came all the way from Thrace into Ireland, where he and his people were very kindly received by *Criomthan* King of Leinſter, and by *Heremon* monarch of the whole iſland. But Innes contends, that the Picts were of a Britiſh, and conſequently of a Gauliſh extraction: nor was he credulous enough

* Keat. Gen. Hiſt. of Irel. p. 60, 61, 62.

† Crit. Eſſay, p. 134, &c. 798.

‡ Flaherty Ogygia Dom. p. 190.

to admit on the authority of Iriſh records, that Gud or Cathluan, Cinge or Cruithne, had been regicides, or come from Thrace.

Of the Pictiſh monarchs, whoſe names are enumerated in the catalogues exhibited by Innes, we have no leſs than five, every one of whom wore the crown of Caledonia longer by twenty years than the famous Arganthonius reigned over Tarteſſus. Each of theſe Pictiſh monarchs held the ſcepter a whole century; and one of them had the honour of equalling a very celebrated Iriſh * King in proweſs. He fought one hundred battles, or rather put a happy period to a hundred wars. His name was *Druſt*. He reigned in the beginning of the fifth age, and in his time the goſpel was firſt preached to the Picts by St. Ninian. The Kings who filled the throne of Caledonia before this Druſt, had, for the moſt part, the good fortune to have reigned longer, by very great odds, than any other race of princes that ever exiſted ſince the days of the fabulous Egyptian monarchy.

The oldeſt domeſtic record that can pretend to throw any light on the hiſtory of Caledonia, is a ſmall treatiſe publiſhed by Innes, in the Appendix to his Critical Eſſay †. This treatiſe muſt have been written about two hundred years before

* The famous Con Ceud-chathach of the Iriſh ſenachies.

† The title of this little treatiſe is, De ſitu Albaniæ, &c. &c. See the Appendix to the Crit. Eſſay, Numb. I.

Fordun's

Fordun's Scotichronicon. The author had his materials from Andrew biſhop of Caithneſs, who was cotemporary with King David the ſaint, and was a prelate of a very great reputation for ſanctity, and hiſtorical knowlege. The treatiſe ſays, upon the biſhop's authority, that the Picts reigned over all Albany, throughout a ſeries of one thouſand three hundred and ſixty years, or at leaſt one thouſand and ſeventy. But the learned prelate told the author of this treatiſe, that Albany was of old divided into ſeven kingdoms, each of which had a ſovereign of its own; and that every one of theſe ſovereigns had a petty King under him. The moſt antient of thoſe ſovereigns was called *Ennegus*, if the biſhop deſerves any credit.

In ſhort, the hiſtory of thoſe Pictiſh monarchs who reigned over Caledonia before St. Ninian's time, is no leſs dubious than that of thoſe forty Scottiſh Kings whom Innes has been at ſo much pains to eraze from the liſt of Scots Kings. We may therefore venture to affirm, that it is impoſſible to prove, from any probable hiſtory, that the Picts were governed by any general Kings before the time of Fergus the ſon of Erc, ſuppoſing that time to be the true æra of the commencement of the Scottiſh monarchy. If the Scots of modern times will, at all events, have ſpurious or nominal Kings in the liſt of their monarchs, Fergus the ſon of Ferchard, and his thirty-nine immediate ſucceſſors, will anſwer their purpoſe much better than *Chruidne* and his ideal deſcendants.

THE generality of the Scots hiſtorians place the beginning of the Scottiſh monarchy in the age of Alexander the Great. Every impartial judge will allow, that Innes has totally deſtroyed that part of their ſyſtem *. But had Innes been conſiſtent with himſelf, or had he purſued thoſe principles from which he argued ſo ſucceſsfully againſt the antiquity of the Scottiſh monarchy, it ſeems plain, that he would have likewiſe demoliſhed that of the Pictiſh nation. The authority of the Pſalter Caſhel, the book of conqueſts, the book with the ſnowy cover, and other Iriſh chronicles, either imaginary or inviſible, would have gone for nothing with him: and had thoſe Pictiſh chronicles mentioned by Andrew biſhop of Caithneſs been extant in his time, we have great reaſon to believe that he would have found himſelf under the neceſſity of admitting that they contained little more than ill-digeſted legends.

BRUDIUS, a prince cotemporary with St. Columba, is the firſt Pictiſh King expreſsly mentioned by any writer of credit. It is impoſſible to aſcertain what figure his anceſtors made in Caledonia, and who were his predeceſſors in the throne of Pictavia. We know little concerning thoſe Pictiſh Kings who ſucceeded Brudius. Bede informs us, that during the reign of one of them, the Picts killed Egfred King of Northumberland in battle, and deſtroyed the greateſt part of his army. The venerable hiſtorian paſſes over in ſilence

* See the Crit. Eſſay, p. 102, 103, 104.

the

the name of the Pictiſh monarch in whoſe time this great event happened. The continuator of Nennius calls him Brudius, and adds further, that he commanded the Picts in that glorious and deciſive battle. Bede ſpeaks of another Pictiſh King, for whom he had a particular regard, though for a very indifferent reaſon. The name of that favorite monarch was *Naitan*. It was to him that Ceolfrid, abbot of Wiremouth, wrote his famous letter concerning Eaſter and the Tonſure; a letter in which Bede himſelf had very probably a principal hand. Roger Hoveden and Simeon of Durham mention two other Pictiſh Kings, under the disfigured names of *Onnuſt* and *Kinoth* *: and the ſum total of their hiſtory, as far as it has been recorded by theſe writers, is, that Onnuſt died in the year 761, and that Kinoth gave a kind reception to Alfred of Northumberland, who had been expelled his kingdom about the year 774. The accounts given by the Scots hiſtorians of ſeveral other Pictiſh Kings cannot much be depended on. Some of them were miſinformed or led aſtray by inveterate prejudices, or too ready to believe legendary tales; while others, poſſeſſed indeed of a great ſhare of learning, choſe to embelliſh their hiſtories with fictions of their own, or to make room for the fables which had been invented by their predeceſſors. The ſtories told by the Britiſh hiſtorians, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the author of the Eulogium,

* Their true names ſeem to be Hungus, Angus or Innis, and Cineach or Kenneth.

concerning Roderic a Pictiſh King, concerning Fulgenius, another prince of the ſame nation, and concerning the three Pictiſh colonies eſtabliſhed in North Britain, deſerve not the leaſt attention. The curious in ill-contrived legends of this kind may be amply ſatisfied on that head, in archbiſhop Uſher's antiquities *.

* Chap. xv. p. 300, &c.

DISSERTATION V.

Of the Pictiſh Language.

WE are told by Bede, that the inhabitants of Britain in his time, both ſtudied and preached the goſpel in the languages of five different nations, agreeably to the number of thoſe books in which the law of God was written. Theſe languages were the Saxon, Britiſh, Scottiſh, Pictiſh, and Roman *.

FROM this paſſage of that venerable author, ſome have concluded, and with ſome appearance of juſtice, that the languages of the Britons, Scots and Picts, were eſſentially different. Bede lived in the neighbourhood of the Pictiſh nation. The monaſtery of Girwy, to which he belonged †, ſtood near the mouth of the Tine. He could not have been a ſtranger to the Britiſh tongue, however much the Britons and Angles diſagreed. He was perſonally well acquainted with many of the Iriſh Scots, and had a friendly partiality for their country. Beſides, he has given us ſome ſpecimens of his ſkill in the Britiſh, Scottiſh, and Pictiſh

* Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 1. cap. 1.

† Now Jarrow.

languages; ſo that his authority ſhould, according to the judgment of ſome very learned writers, weigh down all the arguments that have been brought to prove that the Britiſh tongue was the ſame with the Pictiſh *, or that the Scotch and Pictiſh languages were eſſentially the ſame †.

Cambden ſeems to have had a profound veneration for Bede, and accordingly calls him "the ornament "of the old Engliſh nation." But he took the liberty to differ from him in the affair now under conſideration, and was at no ſmall trouble to prove, that the Britiſh and Pictiſh were the ſame identical language.

It appears from that paſſage in Bede, on which ſo much ſtreſs is laid, in the preſent queſtion, and likewiſe from another part of his hiſtory, that the good man had great ſatisfaction in finding that the number of languages ſpoken in this iſland correſponded exactly with the number of books in which the Moſaical law was written. Whether a pious inclination to juſtify this very edifying parallel may not have in ſome degree influenced him to believe too haſtily that the Britiſh, Pictiſh, and Scottiſh languages were ſpecifically different, we ſhall leave undetermined.

The ſpecimens which Bede has given of his ſkill in the Scottiſh or Galic tongue will do him very little

* Cambden. † Buchanan.

honour.

honour. His explanation of the local name *Alcluith* or Dumbarton, and his etymon of *Dalreudini*, argue too ſtrongly that his knowledge of that language was extremely circumſcribed *.

It is unneceſſary to diſpute with vehemence this pious writer's account of the languages which in his time prevailed in Britain. If an author of modern times ſhould aſſert, that the goſpel is now preached in Britain in five different languages, in the Welſh, in Galic, in French, in the Engliſh of Middleſex, and in the Scotch of Buchan, it may be preſumed that no reaſonable objections could be raiſed againſt the propriety of ſuch an aſſertion; however true it may be that the two languages laſt mentioned are in ſubſtance the ſame, and underſtood more than tolerably well by the Engliſh and Scots reciprocally.

It is univerſally known that the Iriſh language, and the Galic of Scotland were originally the ſame. But the pronunciation is ſo different, that a public declamation in the Iriſh of Connaught would be as little underſtood by a Highland audience, as a diſcourſe in the Doric of Syracuſe would be by the Ionians of the leſſer Aſia.

* *Alcluith*, according to him, ſignifies the rock above Clyde, and *Dalreudini* the portion of Reuda. But in the Galic neither Alcluith ſignifies a rock, nor Dalreudini a part or portion, though the learned author of the Archæologia Britannica ſays otherwiſe, upon the faith of Bede's authority.

If we allow that the language of the Picts and Scots, of antient times, were as different from one another as the Doric and Ionic dialects of the Greek, we will do all reasonable justice to Bede, and save the credit of his testimony. To grant more, would be too much indulgence, as shall appear in the course of this dissertation.

It is evident, that the names of most of the places in the Eastern division of Scotland, which was of old the country of the Picts, have manifestly a Galic origin. This is so well known that examples are altogether needless. Almost every village, river, hill and dale there, will furnish a decisive proof on this head *.

If any one should beg the question, he may contend, that all these Galic names were framed by the Scots, after the extinction of the Pictish monarchy. And indeed the authority of Boece and Buchanan favour this opinion. These historians maintain that Kenneth, the son of Alpin, who subverted the monarchy of Pictavia, divided that district, which went once under the name of Horestia, between two bro-

* We learn from a very old register of the priory of St. Andrews *, that Kilrymont, which was the ancient name of St. Andrews, was in the days of Hungus, the last Pictish King of that name, called *Mukross*, and the town now called Queensferry, *Ardchinnechain*. But these two Pictish words are undoubtedly Galic; the first of them signifying, in that tongue, the wood, heath, or promontory of Swine; and the second, the peninsula of little Kenneth.

* See Dalrymple's Collect. p. 122.

thers Æneas and Mernus. From the firſt, ſay they, the diſtrict which now is called Angus, derived its name; and the county of Mearns was ſo called from the latter.

But an author * much older than them, and even prior to Fordun himſelf, informs us, that Ennegus, the Æneia of Boece, and the Angus of our time, received its name from Ennegus, the firſt Pictiſh King: and were it true that the names of villages, rivers, and mountains, in the Eaſtern parts of Scotland were altered by Kenneth Macalpin, and his ſucceſſors, we beg leave to aſk, How it came to paſs that the names of many Pictiſh Kings were exactly the ſame with others that were common among the ancient Scots, and continue to be ſo among the Highlanders to this day? Were theſe names too created after the extinction of the Pictiſh monarchy? Or did the conquerors give unheard of appellations to the Kings of the conquered nation, as well as new denominations to the ſeveral parts of their land?

Any one who chuſes to inveſtigate this matter, may conſult the two catalogues of the Pictiſh Kings, publiſhed by Innes; and upon comparing their names with the true Galic names of the Scottiſh monarchs, as exhibited by the ſame author, he ſhall immediately diſcover a perfect identity in ſeveral inſtances †.

It

* Andrew, biſhop of Caithneſs.

† *Cineoch* or Kenneth, *Oengus* Ennegus, Angus or Hungus, *Elpin* or Alpin, *Urſen* Eogan, Ewen or Eugenius, *Urgbuis* or Fergus, Canaul

It is impoſſible to prove, from any faithful record, that Kenneth M'Alpin introduced a new language among his new ſubjects, after he had united the Pictiſh kingdom with that of the Scots. He was too wiſe a Prince to exterminate the brave and numerous people whom he had conquered, though ſome Scottiſh hiſtorians have been injudicious enough to believe ſo improbable a fiction. Kenneth was too ambitious to confine his views to North Britain. He endeavoured to extend his empire farther; and for that purpoſe invaded England ſix different times †. For a Prince of ſuch a diſpoſition, it would have been extremely impolitic to extirpate a nation he had ſubdued, or to extinguiſh their language, had it differed from that of his own nation.

Without endeavouring to produce examples from remote ages, we may conclude, from the preſent ſtate of the European tongues, that the inhabitants of mountainous countries are remarkably tenacious of the language of their anceſtors. The Spaniards near

naul or Conal, Caſtantine or Conſtantine, Domhnail or Dovenald. All theſe names were the proper appellations of Pictiſh Kings: and the very ſame names are found in the catalogues of the Scottiſh monarchs, every one of them excepting Hungus, which is unqueſtionably a Galic one, and very common among the Scots Highlanders, of theſe and former times. It is proper to obſerve, that all the Pictiſh names now mentioned belong wholly to thoſe Pictiſh Kings who reigned after Brudius, St. Columba's convert.

† See Innes, Crit. Eſſay, p 782.

the bay of Biſcay, the French of Bretagne, the old Britons of North Wales, the wild Iriſh of Connaught, and many Highlanders near the heart of Scotland, ſtill retain the languages of their remoteſt anceſtors. Neither ridicule, contempt, or the power of faſhion, which ſubdues every thing, have been able to extinguiſh thoſe languages. From this obſtinacy of all nations in retaining their reſpective tongues, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that if the Pictiſh language had differed much from the Galic, it would, like the Biſcayan, Armorican, and old Scottiſh, have ſtill preſerved its being in ſome corner or other of thoſe countries which belonged to the Pictiſh nation.

Henry, archdeacon of Huntingdon, expreſſes his aſtoniſhment to find that the Pictiſh tongue was in his time totally extinguiſhed, inſomuch that the accounts given of it by writers of former ages had the appearance of downright fiction. Henry wrote his hiſtory within leſs than four hundred years after the Pictiſh nation was incorporated with the Scots. It is therefore matter of great ſurprize, that no veſtige of the Pictiſh tongue remained in his time, if it differed at all from the Galic of the Scots. The arguments which may be drawn from the archdeacon's teſtimony is not more unfavourable to Buchanan's hypotheſis than it is to that of the learned Cambden.

John, prior of Hogulſted, another Engliſh hiſtorian, who had better opportunities of knowing the ſtate of

North Britain than the archdeacon of Huntingdon, relates * that the Picts made a very conſiderable figure in the army of David the Saint, during his diſputes with Stephen, King of England. The battle of Clitherbow, in which David obtained the victory, was fought, according to the prior †, by the Engliſh on one ſide, and by the Scots aſſiſted by the Picts on the other. Before the battle of the ſtandard was fought, the Picts inſiſted with great vehemence on their hereditary right of leading the van of the Scots army, and were gratified in their requeſt by the King ‡. It cannot be imagined that theſe Picts who held the poſt of honour in the Scottiſh armies had been perſecuted out of the uſe of their native language, nor can we ſuppoſe that they themſelves held it in ſuch contempt, as to abandon it voluntarily.

But ſhould it be granted, without any neceſſity, that the Southern Picts had entirely forgot or loſt the language of their anceſtors, through the intercourſe they had for ſome ages with the Walenſes of Cumberland, the Saxons of Bernicia, and the Scots of Jarghaël, it may be preſumed that the Picts of the North, the Picts of Murray particularly, would have preſerved their native language long after the time of Henry of Huntingdon. The Picts of Murray, the Moravienſes of our old hiſtorians, had frequent diſputes with the poſte-

* Hen. Hunt. Hiſt. lib. 1.

† Joan prior Hogulſ. ad annum, 1138.

‡ Rich. prior Hogulſtad: ad annum, 1136.

rity of Malcolm Canemore, in vindication of the rights and privileges enjoyed by their Pictiſh anceſtors; and it may be taken for granted, that they would have likewiſe fought with great ſpirit for their language, if invaded or perſecuted: nor was it an eaſy matter to root that language from among them, though totally reduced to obedience in the thirteenth century, as the interior part of their country was full of mountains and inacceſſible faſtneſſes.

It is certain that the Picts were in a reſpectable condition after the Duke of Normandy's acceſſion to the throne of England. The great charter granted by that conqueror to his Engliſh ſubjects affords an unqueſtionable proof of this fact. It is not therefore credible that either the Pictiſh nation or Pictiſh tongue could have been entirely extinguiſhed in the time of the archdeacon of Huntingdon.

Innes, as well as Cambden, is of opinion that the Picts ſpoke the Britiſh language. Theſe two eminent antiquaries agreed in believing that the Picts or Caledonians had originally migrated from South Britain, and that the Scots were of Iriſh extraction. To eſtabliſh thoſe ſyſtems, it became neceſſary for them to prove that the Britiſh was the language of Scotland, and eſſentially different from the Galic. But the arguments which they produce are far from being concluſive.

CAMBDEN obſerves, and after him Innes, that *Aber*, a word denoting the mouth of a river, or the confluence of two rivers, was frequently prefixed to local names, in thoſe parts of Britain which the Picts poſſeſſed, and that the ſame word is very common in Wales to this day. This cannot be denied. But the ſame word *Aber* is found in ſome parts of North Britain to which the Pictiſh empire did never extend. *Lochaber* is the name of a diſtrict in the Weſtern Highlands, which had always belonged to the Scots.

SHOULD we ſuppoſe with Cambden, that the Iriſh went originally from South Britain, and alſo agree with him and Innes, that the Scots of Britain are of Iriſh extraction, what could have hindered either of thoſe nations from uſing the word *Aber* like the Picts or Caledonians? The Iriſh might have very naturally borrowed that word and thouſands more from their Britiſh anceſtors, and the Scots from their Iriſh progenitors. But if the Iriſh, and of courſe the Scots, muſt be brought from Spain, a notion which Innes inclined to believe, the *Cantabri* and *Artabri* of Spain might have furniſhed the Iriſh, and conſequently the Scots, with the word *Aber*, a word in which the two former nations, and therefore the two latter, were peculiarly intereſted.

STRATH is another word which Cambden has gleaned up from among the remains of the Pictiſh tongue. It ſignifies, as he juſtly obſerves, a valley through which runs a river or brook. But among all the

the local names in thoſe Weſtern Highlands and iſles in which the Picts were never ſettled, there is hardly any one ſo common as thoſe which have the word *Strath* prefixed to them. Nor is there any difficulty in finding the ſame initial part of a local name in Ireland *.

The only ſpecious argument urged by the two antiquaries in defence of their opinion, is founded on a diſcovery which Bede has made for them. We are told by that writer, that *penuahel* ſignifies, in the Pictiſh language, the head of the wall, and very fortunately that word bears the ſame meaning in the Britiſh. But it is to be obſerved, that both Cambden and Innes were of opinion that Bede committed a miſtake, when he affirmed that the Britiſh and Pictiſh were different languages. The ſame miſtake, which we may infer from them, aroſe from Bede's want of critical knowledge in the Britiſh tongue, might have led him to think that *penuahel* was a Pictiſh word, when in reality it is Britiſh.

The author of the Eulogium Britanniæ informs us, that the ſame extremity of the Roman wall, which the Anglo-Saxon calls penuahel, went under the name of cenuahil in the Scottiſh tongue. Suppoſing then that Bede did not through miſtake give us the Britiſh name of the wall's end, inſtead of the Pictiſh, the argument drawn by Cambden from pennahael proves with its full ſtrength no more than this, that the Pict-

* Strathbane and Strabrane, and a hundred others.

iſh

iſh and Scottiſh tongues differed in the initial letters of one word. And ſhall we infer from that immaterial difference that they were two diſtinct languages? We might as well conclude that the Doric and Ionic dialects of the Greek had no great relation to one another. We muſt likewiſe maintain that the Latin authors who wrote Caius Cæſar, and Cneius Pompeius, uſed a language different from thoſe who wrote Gaius Cæſar and Gneius Pompeius.

THOUGH I contend for the identity of the Pictiſh and Scottiſh tongues, I would be underſtood to mean no more than that theſe languages were reciprocally intelligible to the reſpective nations by whom they were ſpoken. The Iriſh of Ulſter differs in a conſiderable number of words from that of Connaught, as does the Galic of the weſtern iſles from that of Sutherland or Aberdeen ſhire. But the immaterial variations in theſe ſeveral idioms will never hinder one from affirming that the people of Connaught and Ulſter ſpeak the ſame Iriſh, and all the Highlanders of Scotland the ſame Galic.

BY the Pictiſh tongue I mean, in the whole courſe of this diſſertation, the language of the old Caledonians. If in the ſequel it ſhall appear, that the Scots as well as Picts were the genuine deſcendants of the Caledonians, there will be no difficulty in ſuppoſing that they ſpoke the ſame language.

DISSERTATION VI.

Of the Scots.

THOUGH it is well known that the modern French and Germans are deſcended of the antient Franks and Allemans, it is impoſſible to aſſign the period of time in which they made the firſt great figure in their reſpective countries. Before the middle of the third century, their very names were unknown to the writers of Greece and Rome. It is therefore no matter of ſurprize, that the Picts and Scots, who poſſeſſed but a corner of a remote iſland, ſhould remain equally unknown to hiſtorians till that period.

EUMENIUS, the panegyriſt, is the oldeſt writer who ſpeaks of the Picts, and Porphyrius, the philoſopher, is the firſt who makes any mention of the Scots. It is well known that Porphyrius was an implacable enemy to the Moſaic and Chriſtian inſtitutions, and that he wrote with peculiar acrimony againſt both. In one of his objections againſt the former, he took occaſion to ſpeak of the Scottiſh nations. The words

of

of that objection have been preſerved by St. Jerome, who tranſlated them into Latin, from the original Greek, and they run in Engliſh thus: "Neither has Britain a province fertile of tyrants, nor have the Scottiſh tribes, nor has any one of the barbarous nations, all around to the very ocean, heard of Moſes or the Prophets *."

CAMDEN, Uſher, and ſeveral other eminent critics, have quoted this paſſage, as the language of the pagan philoſopher, without ever ſuſpecting its authenticity. But Innes is poſitive that it is Jerome's own invention. He ſays, "That this paſſage is not "Porphyrius's, but Jerome's own, this the epithet "he gives to Britannia, of *fertilis provincia tyrannorum*, "ſeems to demonſtrate. For when Porphyrius, about "A. D. 267. wrote the book againſt the Chriſtian reli-"gion to which St. Jerome alludes in that paſſage, "there had ſcarce till then appeared from Britain "any conſiderable tyrant, or uſurper againſt the em-"pire: whereas, betwixt that year 267 and the year "412, when St. Jerome wrote his letter to Cteſiphont, "there had riſen in Britain no leſs than ſeven tyrants "or uſurpers." After Innes had enumerated theſe tyrants, and obſerved that four of them were cotemporary with St. Jerome, he concludes, that Porphyrius had no real concern with the paſſage now under conſideration.

* Neque enim Britannia, fertilis provincia tyrannorum, et Scoticæ gentes, omneſque uſque ad oceanum per circuitum barbaræ nationes, Moyſen Prophetaſque cognoverant. Hieronym. Epiſt. ad Cteſiphont.

It will appear hereafter, that Innes had particular reaſons of his own for aſcribing this paſſage to Jerome. Had he acknowleged with other critics, that it belongs undoubtedly to Porphyrius, he would have pulled down his ſyſtem with his own hands. But whatever his motive may have been for giving the words in queſtion to the holy father, we ſhall in the mean time do full juſtice to his argument.

The ancient writer, whoever he was, calls Britain, a province fertile in tyrants. If Porphyrius was the real writer, it is certain that he wrote in Greek; and if he meant to ſay no more than that Britain was full of Kings, he ſurely wrote proper Greek in calling thoſe Kings Τυραννοι, or *tyrants*; nor would he have given us a falſe account, had he affirmed that Britain was divided between many Princes. This was certainly the caſe, before the Romans ſubdued the beſt part of this iſland; and the very character that an ancient author gives of Britain is, "It abounds in nations, and Kings of nations *."

But waving this conſideration, Innes had no authority for maintaining that our author ſpeaks of conſiderable tyrants or uſurpers in the empire. There is not a ſyllable in the paſſage before us concerning tyrants from Britain who uſurped the imperial dignity.

* Mela de Situ Orb. Lib. iii.

Some of the thirty tyrants who tore the Roman empire into pieces, after Gallienus had abandoned himself entirely to sloth and sensuality, had, it is true, been governors of Britain, and had assumed the purple there. Among these tyrants were Lollianus, Victorinus, Posthumus, Tetricus, and Maximus, whose coins were, in Camden's time, seen more frequently in England than any where else. From that circumstance, that excellent antiquary concluded, with great appearance of reason, that these usurpers had been proprætors of Britain. He adds another to the number of tyrants now mentioned, that is, Cornelius Lælianus, a pretended Emperor, whose coins are found in Britain only *.

It cannot be ascertained that Porphyrius wrote his book against the Christian religion in the year 267. His master and friend Longinus, the critic, was put to death by Aurelian the Emperor, who died about nine years after that period; and Porphyrius may have written the treatise, out of which Jerome quotes the passage in dispute, some little time before the death of Aurelian, or the year 275. But supposing the date of the philosopher's book to be precisely what Innes makes it, the learned infidel had a good deal of reason to say of Britain, that it had been fertile in Kings in former ages, or fertile in tyrants in his own time †.

* Camden's Brit. Rom.

† See Tribellius Pollio's little book on the thirty Tyrants.

HAVING thus eſtabliſhed the authority of that paſſage, in which the Scots are mentioned for the firſt time, we are to inquire next, where that nation, or the tribes who went under that name, were ſettled.

IT muſt be allowed that Porphyrius has not ſufficiently cleared up this point. But archbiſhop Uſher was ſurely too haſty in affirming that the philoſopher places the Scottiſh nation without Britain, that is to ſay, ſomewhere elſe rather than in that iſland *. The Scots were without Britain, in one ſenſe, and within it, in another, at the very time when Porphyrius wrote againſt Chriſtianity. The very learned primate could not have been ignorant that the generality of Greek and Latin authors have appropriated the name *Britannia* to that part of the iſland which had been ſubdued by the Romans. Tacitus obſerves, in the very beginning of his hiſtory, that Britain had been loſt to the empire, and was ſoon recovered. Claudian introduces Britannia to Stilicho, with a moſt humble and grateful addreſs in her mouth, for the eſſential ſervices done to her by that able general, who drove away the Picts and Scots from her territories: and Bede has frequently confined the name *Britanni* to the provincials, in contra-diſtinction to the Picts and their allies. All this is undeniably true; and therefore the Scottiſh nations mentioned by the philoſopher may have been within the iſland of Great Britain, though diſcriminated from the provincial Britons.

* Uſher. Antiquit. lib. xv. p. 380.

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS is the next author who mentions the Scots: his account of them is, that "In the tenth conſulſhip of Conſtantius, and in the third of Julian, the incurſions of the Scots and Picts, two wild nations who had broken the treaty of peace, laid waſte thoſe parts of Britain which lay near their confines: ſo that the provincials, oppreſſed with a ſeries of devaſtations, began to entertain the moſt frightful apprehenſions. Cæſar was paſſing the winter at Paris, when the Britons informed him of their diſtreſsful ſituation. He was quite at a loſs how to behave in a conjuncture every way dangerous. He could not prevail with himſelf to leave Gaul, as the Alemans at that very time breathed out cruelty and war againſt him; nor did he at all think it prudent to croſs the ſea, in order to relieve his Britiſh ſubjects, as the Emperor Conſtans † had done on a ſimilar occaſion. He therefore judged it moſt convenient to ſend Lupicinus, an able general, into Britain, to re-eſtabliſh the peace there, either by force or treaty *."

As

† The Britiſh expedition of Conſtans happened in the year 343.

* Lhoyd, biſhop of St. Aſaph, far from allowing that the Romans had entered into a treaty with the Scots and Picts, would have us believe that thoſe two barbarous nations had previouſly agreed among themſelves to invade the Roman frontiers, in ſome certain places which they had marked out, as moſt fit for their purpoſe; and theſe places, according to him, are the *condicta loca* of Ammianus; *condicta* being joined in the conſtruction to *loca*, and not to *rupta quiete*, according to our tranſlation. But how came the hiſtorian to learn that the Scots and Picts had made an agreement concerning theſe certain

As a learned Engliſh prelate has given his opinion, that all thoſe Scots who invaded the Roman Britain were Iriſhmen, he found himſelf under the neceſſity of conſtruing and expounding a part of this paſſage of Ammianus in a different ſenſe. To ſatisfy the curious on this head, I have thrown at the bottom of the page the biſhop of St. Aſaph's conſtruction of this paragraph.

WHATEVER ſucceſs Lupicinus had in his war or negotiations with the Picts and Scots, it is certain that they, as alſo the Saxons and Attacots, harraſſed the provincial Britons inceſſantly, during the ſhort reigns of Julian and Jovian *. In the reign of Valentinian, thoſe barbarous nations reduced the provincial Britons to extreme miſery, having killed *Tullofaudes* their general, and *Nectaridus* the warden of the maritime coaſt. In a word, they carried all before them,

certain places, and followed with great exactneſs that plan of operations which they had concerted before the commencement of that war? Suppoſing that Ammianus was privy to all their plans and compacts, what could he mean by informing us, that the Picts and Scots diſturbed the tranquillity of the province, when they laid it waſte? Devaſtations of that kind are never ſeen or felt, without a previous breach of the public tranquillity. *Gentium ferarum excurſus, rupta quiete, condicta loca limitibus vicina, vaſtabant.* So Lhoyd would have the words of the text pointed and conſtrued. But in this diſpoſition they look very much like a ſoleciſm in grammar and ſenſe; while in the other, for which we contend, they are perfectly conſiſtent with both. Livy has *condicere inducias:* and the ſame great hiſtorian oppoſes *quies* to *bellum.* Vid. Ammian. lib. xx.

* Ammian. lib. xxvi.

till,

till, in the year 368, Theodoſius, the greateſt general of that age, marched againſt them, at the head of a numerous army, defeated their plundering bands in every place, recovered all the Roman territories which they had ſeized, and erected thoſe territories into a new province, to which he gave the name of *Valentia*. Having performed theſe exploits, he returned in triumph to court, no leſs eminent for his military virtues, ſays the hiſtorian, than Furius Camillus and Papirius Curſor had been in diſtant ages *.

Theodosius, however victorious upon this occaſion, was either not able, or too much in haſte, to tame the wild nations of Britain, ſo far as to hinder them from renewing their incurſions and ravages. The mighty feats he performed in the Orkneys, Thule, and the Hyperborean ocean, are the poetical creation of Claudian, who flattered the grandſon of that general. The barbarous nations of the north were pouring in whole inundations of very formidable troops into the moſt fertile and important provinces of the empire; of conſequence, the preſence of Theodoſius near the throne and principal ſcenes of action, became indiſpenſibly neceſſary. We have therefore reaſon to believe, that he contented himſelf with regaining thoſe territories which the Scots, Picts and Attacots, had wreſted from the provincials; and it was undoubtedly in theſe territories that he erected the new province of Valentia; though Gildas, Bede,

* Ammian. lib. xxvii.

and

and after them a great number of modern writers, were of another opinion.

WHATEVER the extent or boundaries of Valentia may have been, it is certain that neither the Furius Camillus of the fourth century, nor Maximus the Spaniard, nor Stilcho's legions, nor walls either new or repaired, obſtructed or intimidated the barbarians of North Britain, or confined them within their native hills. Impatient of controul, greedy of plunder, and thirſting for fame, they reſumed their former ſpirit of conqueſt and devaſtation. They frequently invaded the ſouthern diviſion of the iſland, recovered the diſtrict of Valentia, and continued their hoſtilities, till Honorius reſigned all his pretenſions to Britain, and left the provincials to ſhift for themſelves. It was between the 420 and 435 of the Chriſtian æra that this inglorious, though involuntary, dereliction of Britain happened.

EVERY one muſt acknowlege, that the Scots and Picts were by much too powerful for the Britons, after they were abandoned by the Romans. The letter written by the degenerate provincials to Ætius the conſul, exhibits a moſt lively picture of their diſtreſſes. The following paſſage of it has been preſerved by Gildas: "The barbarians drive us back to the ſea: the ſea drives us back to the barbarians: inevitable deſtruction muſt be our fate, in either of theſe ways: we are either killed or drowned."

SOME

Some learned men, whoſe prejudices have led them far in extenuating the national antiquity of the Britiſh Scots, have found themſelves under a neceſſity of allowing that the people who went under that name had ſettlements of their own in this iſland, within leſs than a century after it was abandoned by the Romans. But no Greek or Roman writer has informed them that the Scots had no ſettlements in Britain before the end or middle of the fifth century. Ammianus Marcellinus has not even furniſhed them with a dark hint, that the Scots who invaded the Roman province in the reign of Conſtans, Conſtantius, Julian, Jovian, and Valentinian, were Iriſh. This is ſo far from being the caſe, that he ſays, in plain terms, "That he had, in that part of his hiſtory which related to the Emperor Conſtans, given the exacteſt account of Britain, whether we regard its ſituation or inhabitants;—that it was therefore unneceſſary to repeat that account in the hiſtory of Valentinian;—and that, of courſe, it was ſufficient for him to ſay, that, in the reign of that Emperor, the Picts, who were divided into two nations, the Deucaledonians and Vecturiones, likewiſe the Attacots, a warlike race of men, and the Scots, roamed about through different parts of the province, and committed many depredations *."

But, from the latter part of this very paſſage, ſome antiquaries of note have concluded, that the

* Ammian. lib. xxvii.

Scots

Scots of Valentinian's time were no more than vagabonds in this iſland, and conſequently unpoſſeſſed of any ſettlements. The hiſtorian, after mentioning the Scots, adds immediately, *per diverſa vagantes*, "a people without any fixed habitations."

BEFORE this criticiſm is admitted, we muſt take the liberty to aſk, whether the Picts and Attacots had any ſettlements in Britain at this time? They certainly had. Yet ſo it is that the expreſſion from which the concluſion is drawn, relates equally to them. The ſequel of the ſtory proves this, beyond any poſſibility of contradiction. "The Saxons and Franks ravaged "thoſe parts of Britain which lay neareſt to Gaul. The "Picts, Attacots and Scots overran, plundered and "laid waſte ſeveral other parts. Theodoſius the Roman "general formed a reſolution of applying the moſt "efficacious remedy to all theſe calamities. Accord-"ingly he divided his army, which was numerous, "and conſcious of its own ſtrength, into ſeveral "different bodies. This done, he took the field "againſt all the hoſtile nations at once, and attacked "their plundering bands with ſucceſs, in the ſeveral "places which they ravaged †." Here is a deciſive proof that the Scots were vagabonds only in the ſame ſenſe in which the other hoſtile nations were ſo. Not one of the five nations had a ſettlement in South Britain. But can it be reaſonably inferred from this, that neither the Scots, nor any of the reſt, poſſeſſed a

† Diviſis plurifariam globis adortus eſt hoſtium vaſtatorias manus. Ammian. lib. xxvii.

foot of ground in the northern diviſion of the iſland?

Ammianus has ſaid, that the Franks, and their neighbours the Saxons plundered the Gallican or Southern parts of the Britiſh province, ſometimes by ſea, and ſometimes by land. But he has not ſo much as inſinuated that the Scots were ſea rovers; neither has he favoured a certain tribe of antiquaries with a ſingle hint, from which they could venture to infer, that the Scots were either mercenary troops or auxiliaries, muſtered up by the Picts in Ireland. This was ſo far from his meaning, that he makes the Scots principals in the war againſt the Britons, under the reign of Conſtantius.

In ſhort, Ammianus, who holds a reſpectable place among the hiſtorians of Rome, found the Scots in Britain in the year 360, and left them there. He found them likewiſe in the ſame country about the year 343. They had concluded either a truce or peace with the Emperor Conſtans, in that year, and broke it in his brother's reign.—He found them a formidable people in Britain, and as well eſtabliſhed there as the Picts or Attacots, fifty years at leaſt before any other author of tolerable credit has found the Scottiſh name in Ireland.

But theſe Scots, according to ſome, might have been adventurers from Ireland. This has been confidently affirmed by many able writers; and it has been

been the general belief of many nations, that the Scots of Britain have derived their origin from the Iriſh. But as the bare authority of a thouſand learned men is not equal to the force of one ſolid argument, nor the belief of ſeveral great nations more, in many inſtances, than a popular error, it is far from being impoſſible that theſe writers and whole nations may have been miſtaken in the preſent caſe. That they were actually ſo, it is no crime to ſuſpect, nor an unpardonable preſumption to affirm, when it can be evinced that their belief is ill founded.

WERE it certain, or even highly probable, that the Britiſh Scots owe their name and exiſtence to the ancient Iriſh, it is difficult to ſay why they ſhould be aſhamed of their origin. The Germans, South Britons and Caledonians were, before the birth of Chriſt, nations of much the ſame character with the old Hibernians, equally illiterate, equally unpoliſhed, and equally barbarous in every reſpect. About the latter end of the firſt century, the difference between the Hibernians and the people of this iſland muſt have been inconſiderable. In the ſecond, third and fourth centuries, the Caledonians, Picts and Attacots, were undoubtedly wild nations, and no leſs ſo than the Iriſh. In the fifth, ſixth and ſeventh, religion and learning flouriſhed in Ireland to ſuch a degree, that it was commonly ſtiled the mother country of ſaints, and reputed the kingdom of arts and ſciences. The Saxons and Angles ſent thither many of their Princes and Princeſſes, to have the benefit of a pious and

liberal education. It ought likewiſe to be acknowleged, that ſome of the moſt eminent teachers of North Britain received their inſtruction at the Iriſh ſeminaries of literature and religion.

If the Iriſh of the middle ages became a degenerate race of men, we ought to conſider that all nations have their dark and ſhining periods.—The domeſtic confuſions of their government, and the cruel oppreſſions of the Danes, very much contributed to their national depravity. Even the Engliſh conqueſt, for ſome ages, rather ſuſpended than introduced government among them. Theſe misfortunes have, however, been for ſome time back removed, and we find that Ireland has gradually emerged from that cloud of national ignorance which involved it, and produced men who would do honor to any nation in Europe.

But notwithſtanding all the national honor that might accrue to the Scots, from an Iriſh deſcent, yet that partiality I may be ſuppoſed to have for my countrymen will never induce me either to believe or ſupport the venerable fiction of their Hibernian extraction. That my unbelief on this head is not ill founded, will beſt appear from a conciſe diſcuſſion of the antiquities of Ireland.

DISSERTATION VII.

The Iriſh Antiquities peculiarly dark and fabulous.

TO thoſe who conſider the ancient ſtate of Ireland, which, from its ſituation, was little known to foreign writers, and was itſelf totally deſtitute of the uſe of letters, till the introduction of chriſtianity by St. Patrick, it will be little the matter of ſurprize, that very few of the domeſtic tranſactions of that country have been handed down, with accuracy, to the preſent times. But Ireland has been peculiarly happy in its domeſtic means of preſerving its internal hiſtory. Every thing material in its hiſtory, from the very firſt day of its population till it was conquered in part by the Norwegians, and in whole by the Engliſh, has been preſerved in the moſt faithful records. Should any one aſk what theſe records were; the great hiſtoriographer of Ireland furniſhed a liſt of them taken from books of indiſputable authority which were to be ſeen in his own time *: nor has the ſame writer made any difficulty of affirming that the Iriſh annals are of a ſuperior fidelity to any other annals in the world.

* Keat. pref. to his Hiſt. of Ireland.

As

As the antiquities of Ireland have an inſeparable connection with thoſe of North Britain, it is hardly poſſible to do juſtice to the latter without examining the former. We are therefore under a neceſſity of reviewing the Iriſh antiquities with a particular attention: but the utmoſt care will be taken to give no more unfair repreſentation of them than what is to be found in the writings of thoſe who have pleaded the cauſe of the Iriſh nation with the greateſt zeal and learning.

IRELAND, ſays one of theſe zealous writers, lay uninhabited for the ſpace of three hundred years after the flood. At the end of that period Partholanus, the ſon of *Scara*, arrived there with a thouſand ſoldiers and ſome women. He had killed his father and mother in Greece, his native country, and that was the reaſon why he undertook this voyage into Ireland. If one is curious to know in what year of the world this adventurer took poſſeſſion of that iſland, in what part of it he landed, and as ſome people are minutely inquiſitive, about every thing in which great perſonages are intereſted, in what month, and in what day of the month, the annals of Ireland will give him entire ſatisfaction. Partholanus landed at *Tubberſceine* in Munſter, on the fourteenth day of May preciſely, and in the year of the world one thouſand nine hundred and ſeventy eight.

THE ſame annals furniſh us with a moſt circumſtantial account of the lakes which broke out in Ire-

land during the reign of Partholanus, of the rivers which he found there, of his favourite grey-hound, of his conſort's moſt ſcandalous behaviour, of his own death, and of that all conſuming plague which ſwept away, in one week's time, all his poſterity, and all their ſubjects; ſo that not a ſingle man or woman remained alive in the whole kingdom. This extraordinary event happened about three hundred years after Partholanus had poſſeſſed himſelf of Ireland; and this total exciſion of his poſterity and ſubjects, was a judgment inflicted upon that wicked man for the double parricide he had committed in Greece.

After the extinction of this firſt Hibernian colony, Nemedius, another Prince of Magog's race, and the eleventh in deſcent from Noah *, repeopled the iſland, which had been a perfect wilderneſs for thirty years. Nemedius began his voyage in the Euxine Sea, and after a long and very ſtrange navigation, arrived at length in Ireland. His fleet conſiſted of four and thirty tranſports, and every one of them was manned with thirty heroes.

The great improvements made by this new ſovereign in Ireland, the lakes which broke out there under his reign, the battles he fought againſt ſome African pirates, the grievous misfortune which broke his heart, the moſt cruel oppreſſions which his poſterity and people ſuffered after his death; theſe and many other curious occurrences are ſet down at large in thoſe annals to which we have already referred.

* Partholanus was the eighth.

The

THE Nemedians were ſo unmercifully uſed by the victorious Africans, that after ſeveral ineffectual efforts to recover their liberty, they found themſelves under a neceſſity of quitting Ireland. They equipped a fleet conſiſting of eleven hundred and thirty tranſports, and put to ſea under the command of three leaders. The firſt of theſe was the famous *Simon Breac*, who ſteered his courſe for Greece; the ſecond was *To Chath*, another grandſon of Nemedius, who ſailed with his ſquadron to the Northern parts of Europe; the third was *Briatan Maol*, who landed in the North of Scotland. From this illuſtrious leader Britain derives its name, and the Welch their origin.

ABOUT two hundred and ſixteen years after the death of Nemedius, the deſcendants of Simon Breac, and of his followers, returned from Greece into Ireland. They were conducted thither by five Princes or Chieftains of a very high reputation; and as a fifth part of the men who compoſed this new colony fell to the ſhare of each of the ſaid Princes, it was agreed that the iſland ſhould be divided into five almoſt equal parts, and that one of theſe diviſions ſhould be allotted to each of the five Princes. The Iriſh hiſtorians have taken care to preſerve the names of theſe old provincial Kings, and their ſubjects are the men whom they ſtile *Firbolgs*.

IF any one inclines to learn how theſe Firbolgs were driven out of Ireland, or totally enſlaved after the loſs of a hundred thouſand men in one battle, the

Iriſh

Iriſh hiſtorians will inform him very particularly. They will let him know likewiſe that the *Tuath de Dannans*, by whom theſe Firbolgs were deſtroyed, or brought under the yoke, were a generation of Necromancers who came from Attica, Bœotia, and Achaia into Denmark, from Denmark into Scotland, and from Scotland into Ireland.

THERE are two very remarkable circumſtances in the hiſtory of theſe *Tuath de Dannans*, which we cannot paſs over in ſilence: the firſt is, that they underſtood magic to ſuch a degree of perfection that they could reſtore life to thoſe who had been ſlain in battle, and bring them into the field the next day: but in ſpite of their enchantments, the Aſſyrians were too many for them, and accordingly drove them out of Greece. The ſecond circumſtance that deſerves our attention is this: from the four cities which the Tuath de Dannans poſſeſſed in Denmark, they carried away ſome noble reliques, a ſpear, a ſword, a cauldron, and a ſtone. The laſt of theſe curioſities was called *lia fail*, and was that fatal marble chair on which the monarchs of Ireland firſt, and afterwards the Kings of Scotland were crowned. *Lia fail* was poſſeſſed of a very extraordinary virtue till after the birth of Chriſt. Whenever an Iriſh monarch was crowned, it made a ſtrange noiſe, and appeared in a ſurprizing agitation.

BUT neither the wonder working ſorceries of the Tuath de Dannans, nor the amazing virtues of their

Daniſh reliques were able to deliver them out of the hands of the *Gadelians*, when they invaded Ireland. Theſe Gadelians were the deſcendants of the celebrated Gathelus, and from him they derived their name.

GATHELUS or Gathelglas was a great perſonage who lived in Egypt, and contracted a friendſhip with Moſes the legiſlator of the Jews. His mother was Scota, the daughter of Pharaoh Cingris, and his father was *Niul*, a Prince of extraordinary learning and rare accompliſhments. Niul was the ſon of the illuſtrious *Feniuſa Forſa*, a Scythian monarch, cotemporary with Nimrod, and the ſame monarch that, by the aſſiſtance of two excellent ſcholars, invented the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Iriſh alphabets.

THE preciſe time in which the poſterity of Gathelus came into Spain, after a long ſeries of ſtrange peregrinations by ſea and land, the manner in which they poſſeſſed themſelves afterwards of Ireland, and the means by which they at laſt conquered a great part of North Britain, are related fully and minutely by that Iriſh hiſtorian from whom I have borrowed every thing told in this ſection concerning the Partholanians, Nemedians, Firbolgs, and Tuath de Dannans *.

ACCORDING to the ſame writer, the Gadelians or Scots conquered Ireland about the year of the world two thouſand ſeven hundred and thirty ſix, or about

* Keating,

thirteen

thirteen hundred years before the birth of Chriſt. The chief leaders under whoſe conduct the Gadelians made that conqueſt, were Heber and Heremon, two ſons of Mileſius, King of Spain, who was married to a ſecond Scota, the daughter of another Pharaoh, quite different from him already mentioned. From either of theſe two Scota's, the Gadelians have been called Scots; and it is becauſe all the Kings of Ireland, from the Spaniſh to the Engliſh conqueſt of that iſland, were deſcended from Heber and Heremon, the ſons of Mileſius, that the Iriſh hiſtorians call them the Princes of the *Mileſian race.*

An ingenious author who lately publiſhed ſome diſſertations concerning the ancient hiſtory of Ireland, makes no difficulty of affirming that all the antiquaries of that country are unanimouſly agreed in fixing the epoch of the Mileſian colony's arrival in Ireland about a thouſand years before Chriſt*; but that gentleman

* Mr. O Connor's Diſſert. on the ancient Hiſt. of Ireland, p. 110.—This O Connor, ſince Dr. Macpherſon's death, has publiſhed another edition of his work, and has given an additional diſſertation to the world, with remarks upon Mr. Macpherſon, the tranſlator of Oſſian's poems. He ſeems to have been ſo galled with what that gentleman has ſaid concerning the antiquities of Ireland, in his prefatory diſſertations to, and notes upon, the works of Oſſian, that he has totally laid aſide good ſenſe and argument, for ſcurrility and perſonal abuſe. It is however to be hoped Mr. Macpherſon will not honour with a reply ſuch an illiberal attack, which is as impotent as it is low and ungentlemanny. When a man appears extreamly angry upon a ſubject, which can only be ſupported by cool and temperate diſquiſition, it is a concluſive argument that he is ſenſible of the weakneſs of his cauſe, or

gentleman could not have been ignorant that Keating, Kennedy and others had placed the ſettlement of that colony in Ireland much earlier.

DONALD O NEIL, King of Ulſter, informs Pope John XXII. that the three ſons of Mileſius had come into Hibernia from Cantabria, more than three thouſand and five hundred years before that in which he wrote his letter to his Holineſs, which was in the year 1317. This hiſtorical curioſity has been preſerved by John de Fordun, and it may be preſumed that the King of Ulſter, and thoſe other Princes who joined him in his epiſtolary correſpondence with the Pope, would have conſulted the ableſt ſennachies, and moſt authentic records of the country, before they could venture to write ſo confidently on a matter of ſuch importance to the common father of all Chriſtendom.

BUT were it undeniably true, that all the antiquaries, hiſtorians, and bards of Ireland, have fixed the epoch of the Mileſian colony's arrival there in the very time aſſigned by Mr. O Connor, the queſtion is, whether we can ſafely depend either on his, or upon their authority, in a matter of ſuch antiquity? How did it appear to him, or how can it be made clear to others, that a Spaniſh colony did actually ſettle in Ireland

extreamly diffident of his own abilities to defend it. But as the character of modeſty is not very conſpicuous in Mr. O Connor's works, it would ſeem to me that his intemperate rage had its riſe from a narrow and iraſcible ſpirit, thrown into confuſion by the diſcovery made, by Mr. Macpherſon, of the fabulouſneſs of the Mileſian ſyſtem, which he himſelf had been at much pains to adorn: *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!*

about a thouſand years before the birth of Chriſt? Is it probable in any degree that one of the remoteſt countries in Europe could have found out the art of preſerving the memory of ſuch diſtant events before letters were known to any of thoſe Celtic nations who inhabited the ſame diviſion of the world? And is there any one of thoſe Celtic nations that can, with reaſon, pretend to give a credible account of their anceſtors or their actions, at the diſtance of two thouſand and eight hundred years back?

It may be aſked alſo, whether we have any better evidence for believing the ſtory of the Mileſian colony than for believing that of the Partholanians, Nemedians, Firbolgs, and Tuath de Dannans. If the Iriſh will give us leave to reject the ſtory of theſe more ancient colonies, how can they ſave the credit of the famous *Pſalter Caſhel*, *Pſalter nan-traun*, the *Book of conqueſts*, the *Book of the ſnowy back*, and that of all their other immortal manuſcripts and traditions.

Another natural queſtion is, how it came to paſs that the Iriſh antiquaries and ſennachies found out the connexion of Partholanus, Nemedius, Gathelus and Mileſius, with Magog, Japhet, and Noah, when no Celtic nation in the world became acquainted with theſe patriarchal names before the promulgation of Chriſtianity? Did the Scots of Porphyrius's time know Moſes or the Prophets? And how came Moſes himſelf to forget his excellent friend *Gathelus* *, or *Cingris*

* See Keat. Gen. Hiſt. of Ireland, p. 35 & 36.

his

his implacable enemy? The plain truth is this: That exact conformity which we find in the genealogies given by Moſes and the Iriſh annalifts, from the beginning of the antediluvian world, down to the third generation after Noah, affords a clear demonſtration that the Iriſh annals and genealogies were framed ſome time after the books of Moſes were known in Ireland.

But we are told poſitively, "That the uſe of letters was known in Ireland from a very early period. The Mileſian colony imported the arts and ſciences into that country from Spain. The long intercourſe which the Spaniards had with the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Perſians, and Grecians, had humanized them and their poſterity to a very high degree. The Iberian or Spaniſh Scots who came into Ireland, under the conduct of Heber and Heremon, were, like their anceſtors, wiſe, brave, humane, and polite. Their genius was ſtrongly turned to literature as well as to arms. As they had ſeveral academies for martial exerciſes, ſo they had ſeminaries of learning eſtabliſhed among them, and theſe richly endowed. In theſe ſeminaries they employed able profeſſors of poetry, eloquence, philoſophy and hiſtory. The philological parts of learning were in great requeſt among them. Philoſophy was patronized by their Kings, recommended by *Fileas*, and became the ſtudy of their great men, as without it no dignities could be obtained in the ſtate. The Iriſh bards and ſennachies had hereditary fees ſettled upon their families; and as they were obliged,

obliged, by the ſtanding laws of the kingdom, to confine themſelves to the proper buſineſs of their profeſſion, it muſt be preſumed that they made an extraordinary proficiency.

"But the Iriſh hiſtoriographers appointed by authority muſt have been peculiarly induſtrious and faithful. Their ſalaries were great; and their compoſitions were to undergo a very ſtrict and impartial examination, in the public aſſemblies of the ſtates of the kingdom. The Iriſh held triennial parliaments at *Tara*. A committee of every parliament was appointed to reviſe the work of every hiſtoriographer, before it could be publiſhed: and as it was prudently conſidered that the ſpirit of party might prevail in one of theſe committees and parliaments, it was ordained, that the ſame work ſhould be re-examined by a new committee of a ſubſequent parliament."

All that has been advanced here concerning the uſe of letters in Ireland, from the arrival of the Mileſian colony, and concerning the flouriſhing ſtate of learning there, has been copied from Mr. O Connor's Diſſertations. O Flaherty had likewiſe been at great pains to juſtify the pretenſions of his countrymen to an early knowlege of the ſciences: But O Connor has equalled him in zeal, and exceeded him in dogmatical aſſertions.

It is needleſs to make any anſwer to the account of the learning of Ireland given by this writer, ſimply on his own authority. The ingenious father

Innes * has long ago convinced the candid and impartial, that the Iriſh were wholly unacquainted with letters, till St. Patric brought them into their country, about the year 432.

One of his arguments, and a very plauſible one, is, that the very words in the Iriſh tongue which expreſs what in Engliſh we call books, pens, paper, reading, writing, and letters, are manifeſtly Latin ones Hibernized.

Innes has totally deſtroyed all the proofs which O Flaherty had piled up in ſupport of this abſurd doctrine, and evinced, in the moſt ſatisfactory manner, that the *Bethluis nion* of the modern Iriſh is no more than the invention of a late age. All the Iriſh letters may be ſeen in Latin manuſcripts written in foreign countries, which had not the leaſt intercourſe with Ireland.

Those who deſire to be more fully ſatisfied in this matter, may conſult Mr. Innes †; and to his arguments I ſhall beg leave to add one or two more, with a particular view to the doctrine promulgated by O Connor.

Were it true that Ireland had been the ſeat of learning, and the mother of the ſciences, long before the commencement of the Chriſtian æra, it is abſo-

* Mr. Innes's 2d part of his Critical Eſſay.

† Mr. Innes's 2d part of his Critical Eſſay, chap. 1. art. 2, 3, 4.

lutely

lutely incredible that the old Hibernians ſhould have been ſo unfavourably characterized by Strabo, Mela, and Solinus. It is impoſſible to believe that no accounts of their extraordinary genius and paſſion for literature, their unexampled proficiency in philoſophical knowlege, their moſt laudable munificence to the profeſſors of eloquence, poetry, and theology, could have tranſpired, eſpecially as the ſea-ports of Ireland were better known than thoſe of Britain, and more frequented by foreigners.—By what ſtrange fatality has it happened, that the inhabitants of a country, ſo wonderfully well civilized, ſo early improved by their intercourſe with Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Perſians, and Egyptians, and ſo unconquerably tenacious of thoſe excellent inſtitutions which their anceſtors tranſmitted to them, could have been repreſented by Strabo as ſavages more wild and unpoliſhed than the Britons? Or could they have been deſcribed by Mela, as the moſt uncultivated of all nations?—The character which Solinus has drawn of them is equally unfavourable: he calls them a *nation void of humanity, unhoſpitable, and every way barbarous and atheiſtical.* Theſe characters were certainly too ſevere: the vices and ignorance of the old Iriſh muſt have been cruelly exaggerated, and the writers now mentioned muſt not have been properly informed. But had the people of Ireland been that humane, generous, polite and literary people whom O Connor has deſcribed them, it is impoſſible to imagine that the world could have been ſo unjuſt to them, or that the

writers now mentioned could have been ſo groſsly miſtaken.

Besides, if it be certain that Ireland was the grand Emporium of the North in the firſt century;—that the Kings and armies of that country fought in Caledonia, againſt Agricola, before the Scots were ſettled in North Britain; that the Picts maintained a conſtant intercourſe with the inhabitants of Hibernia, from the commencement of their reſpective monarchies; and that they frequently intermarried with their beſt families:—If all this be true, how was it poſſible that the old Caledonians and Picts could have been totally unacquainted with letters, and could have remained in their uncultivated ſtate till the third or fourth century?

If it is true, that Angleſey, on account of its vicinity to Ireland, then the country of literature and ſcience, was the great Britiſh univerſity for Druidical knowlege; if it is certain that there was the metropolitan's ſeat, and that the philoſophers of Gaul came thither to finiſh their education *; how could South Britain have been deſtitute of hiſtories, books and letters, till it was conquered and poliſhed by the Romans?

Sir James Ware, one of the moſt diligent, and undoubtedly one of the moſt learned antiquaries

* O Connor ſays, that the reaſon why learning flouriſhed ſo early in Angleſey, was on account of its vicinity to Ireland.

that

that Ireland ever produced, has, in ſeveral paſſages of his works, given the ſanction of his authority to the ſyſtem which we have been now defending. That learned gentleman, though very willing to do all poſſible honour to his country, confeſſes ingenuouſly, *that all the knowlege now remaining of what paſſed in Ireland before the light of the goſpel began to dawn there, is extremely little* †. And for that very good reaſon he has ſpoken of thoſe matters with diffidence and caution. He begins his account of the Iriſh Kings no higher than Leogaire, who was cotemporary with St. Patric, and makes no ſcruple to acknowlege, that almoſt all that is related concerning that King's predeceſſors, is either mere fiction, or totally diſguiſed with fable. He defends Bolandus in his opinion that the famous Apoſtle of the Iriſh was the perſon who introduced letters among them, and owns at the ſame time, that after the ſtricteſt enquiry, he was not able to diſcover any one tolerable writer of the hiſtory or antiquities of his own country more ancient than the *Pſalter Caſhel*, which was wrote in the tenth or eleventh age.

This ſyſtem of the aboriginal literature of the Iriſh nation being ſubverted and ruined, the pretended accounts of their ancient colonies muſt together with it fall to the ground. In the diſſertation which immediately follows this, I ſhall endeavour to inveſtigate the genuine origin of the firſt inhabitants of Ireland.

† Perexiguam ſupereſſe notitiam rerum in Hibernia geſtarum ante exortam ibi evangelii auroram liquido conſtat. Warius de Ant. Hib. in præfatione.

DISSERTATION VIII.

Of the original Inhabitants of Ireland.—That they went from Caledonia.—Why the Iriſh and Britiſh Scots were called Gaëls.

THE unprejudiced part of mankind will allow, with Sir James Ware, that the domeſtic hiſtory of Ireland, prior to the time of St. *Patric*, which is the earlieſt æra that can be affixed for the introduction of letters, is irretrievably loſt. Tradition might for a time have preſerved a confuſed ſhadow of great events. The compoſitions of bards and *fileas* may have tranſmitted through a few generations, ſome occaſional atchievements of their heroes; but nothing is more abſurd than to depend on either for the regular and continued hiſtory of any nation.

THE glow of poetry which animates ſome of the compoſitions of the bards, the harmony of numbers, and the elegance of thought and expreſſion, have, in ſome caſes, taken ſuch hold of the human mind, that they have undoubtedly been handed down through ſome generations without the aid of letters. The poems

poems of Oſſian lately given to the public, may convince the world of the truth of this obſervation, which, at firſt ſight, may appear paradoxical. But a number of circumſtances have concurred in the preſervation of thoſe monuments of genius. When the mind is impreſſed by the boldneſs of poetical figures and metaphors the memory ſeldom fails. Thoſe figures cannot be introduced into a hiſtorical narration. The mind flags at the dull jingle of hiſtory in rhime; and therefore no argument can be drawn to ſtrengthen the hiſtorical traditions of ſennachies and fileas from the preſervation of the poems of Oſſian.—The period, moreover, to which Oſſian is fixed, is not ſo much beyond the introduction of letters into the North, but their aſſiſtance might have very early been received to perpetuate his compoſitions. We have among us many ancient manuſcripts of detached pieces of his works, and theſe may have been copied from manuſcripts ſtill more ancient.

But the tranſmiſſion of merely hiſtorical events, by the rhimes of a ſucceſſion of bards, cannot deſerve the ſame degree of faith. We know, in the Highlands of Scotland, how little our bards can be depended on in matters of fact, ſince we had it in our power to examine them by the criterion of true hiſtory. I therefore have rejected their idle tales concerning the antiquity of our nation, preferring the ſmall, but more certain light we have from the writers of Greece and Rome, to all their incoherent and indigeſted fables. But as the Iriſh nation have not hitherto rejected the legends

legends of their bards and fileas, we are not to wonder at the ſtrange maſs of abſurdity which they poſſeſs for their early hiſtory.

As it cannot be ſaid that the Iriſh had the uſe of letters before the introduction of Chriſtianity, ſo it is impoſſible to prove that they had any other infallible method of perpetuating the memory of events. The art of drawing hieroglyphics on pillars or rocks, notwithſtanding their pretended intercourſe with Egypt, it is certain they had not. Their wildeſt antiquaries do not even pretend it; and Keating abſolutely diſclaims it in the name of his whole nation.

From the accounts which that writer, and others who have adopted the ſame ſyſtem, have given of the firſt inhabitants of Ireland, and its oldeſt colonies, it may be fairly concluded that the origin of that nation muſt be inveſtigated any where rather than in its own annals.

Cambden, whoſe conjectures are plauſible as his learning was immenſe, ſeems to have been perſuaded that the firſt inhabitants of Ireland muſt have gone from Britain. But afraid or averſe to provoke a whole nation, at that time deſperately in love with their traditionary genealogies, he ſpeaks too faintly and with too much brevity on that ſubject.

The arguments brought by that great antiquary to ſupport his hypotheſis, are in ſubſtance

theſe *: " The vaſt number of Britiſh words found in the Iriſh tongue; the ſimilarity of old proper names in the two iſlands; that conformity of nature and cuſtoms which point out the connection of the two nations with each other; the denomination of a Britiſh iſle given by ſome ancient writers to Hibernia, and of Britains to its inhabitants; and laſt of all, the ſhortneſs of the paſſage from Britain into Ireland."

Had Cambden told us in plain language, that by that part of Britain from which the firſt and earlieſt colonies went over to Ireland, he meant the Northern diviſion of it, his arguments with regard to the origin of the Iriſh nation, would have been more if not perfectly convincing. The vicinity of the countries is a proof which pleads much more ſtrongly for the Caledonians and *Mæatæ* of North Britain, than for the *Silures* or *Devices* or *Brigantes* of the South. The frequent viſits of the Hibernian Scots in the Northern part of the iſland, and their long alliance with the Picts, furniſh ſtrong enough preſumptions that theſe two nations were united by the ties of conſanguinity, or ſprung at firſt from the ſame ſtock. The two promontories now called the Mull of Galloway, and the Mull of Cantyre, lie more contiguous to Ireland than any part of England or Wales. The languages of the Caledonians and Scots were the ſame, and from the ſame principles it may be proven that the Pictiſh and Iriſh tongues were ſo likewiſe. All theſe conſidera-

* See Cambd. Hibernia, cap. 1.

tions

tions taken together will induce any one to believe that the oldeſt inhabitants of Ireland were colonies from the Weſtern parts of the modern Scotland.

TACITUS underſtood, by converſing with Agricola, that the Hibernians cotemporary with that great man differed not much in their genius, manners, and cuſtoms, from the Britains.

THE bulk of the Iriſh nation were a very different race of men from thoſe on the Weſtern coaſt of South Britain. Their languages, though plainly related to one another, are far from being reciprocally intelligible in both the countries: and till the Normans conquered ſome parts of Ireland, the people of that country had rather better opportunities than the Welſh to retain the language of their anceſtors in its purity. Therefore as the Iriſh differs ſo eſſentially from the antient and modern Welſh, and is ſo nearly allied to the Galic or antient Scotch, it ſeems deciſive that the Iriſh muſt have derived their language, and conſequently their original from North Britain.

I SHALL endeavour in the ſequel of theſe diſſertations to ſhew that the Scots of Britain are the genuine poſterity of the Caledonian Britains. If that attempt ſhall ſucceed, it will be readily granted that the Scots of Ireland went originally from Scotland. For it may be proved that a perfect ſimilarity of genius, language, arms, dreſs, manners and cuſtoms, has ſubſiſted

ſiſted between the two nations from the earlieſt accounts of time.

THERE is one argument more which may be conſidered of ſome force, though of the grammatical kind.

THE Welſh to this day call the Iriſh and Scots *Guidhill**. The Iriſh and Highlanders of this kingdom give themſelves this name reciprocally. We are told by a very able judge in ſuch matters, that the Picts were called *Guidhill* by his countrymen of old. On the other hand, the Engliſh, Welſh, and all who ſpeak Engliſh only, are diſtinguiſhed by the Highlanders and genuine Iriſh, with the appellation of *Gaul*.

NATIONAL prejudices and antipathies run much too high every where. From that ſource national reflections will flow very naturally: formerly an unfavourable idea was annexed to the name of Highlander, and the people of that country, in return, gave the name *Gaul* to every foreigner or enemy of their nation, and affixed to it the ideas communicated by the words, *ſtranger*, *ignoble*, *cowardly*, *penurious*, and *unhoſpitable*. But the true original meaning of the name is, a man from Gaul. The ancient inhabitants of Scotland thought themſelves of a different race from the people

* In the word *Guidhill*, the letters *dh* are quieſcent, ſo that it is pronounced almoſt in the ſame manner with *Gaël* or *Caël*, the name which the Iriſh and Highlanders of Scotland give themſelves to this day.

of South Britain, a people who came at a later period from Gaul, and were of courſe ſtrangers to them. It became therefore at laſt cuſtomary with them to call every foreigner *Gaul*, and every perſon who had his education in a remote country, or who affected to imitate the manners and faſhions of other nations, *Gauldi*.

From the appellation of Guidhil or Gaël given indiſcriminately to the Picts, Scots, and Iriſh, by the antient inhabitants of South Britain, we may reaſonably infer that the latter were perſuaded that theſe three nations had the ſame common original, and ſomewhat different from themſelves. The Welſh, who are reckoned the genuine remains of theſe ancient South Britains, call themſelves Kymrè in their own language; and had they been of opinion that the old Hibernians derived their blood from their own predeceſſors, is it probable that they would have confounded them with the Picts and Scots by giving the ſame national denomination to all?

To ſtrengthen the argument drawn from the appellation now before us, it may be obſerved, that the Saxons who came from Germany into England, gave the name *Gaul*, with a ſmall difference in the orthography, and leſs in the pronunciation, to thoſe Britains of the South to whom they bore the greateſt hatred. They called the Britains *Weales* in their own language, and *Gauli* in the Monkiſh Latin of the times. The reaſon why they affixed this mark of diſtinction to theſe Britains was, that they were in their opinion

deſcended from the Gauls on the continent: a nation againſt whom the old Germans, like their modern poſterity, had entertained ſtrong national prejudices *.

As it will be aſked why the genuine Scots call themſelves *Gaël* or *Caël*, their country *Caëldocht*, and every thing that looks like them and their country *Gaëltich*, I ſhall take the liberty to offer a conjecture which may tend to illuſtrate the ſubject under conſideration.

Men of letters will allow that the Germans, as well as the people of Gaul, were called *Celtes* by the Greeks †. It is likewiſe true, that the power of the letter *G* was in a vaſt number of words much the ſame with that of *K* among the Greeks, and *C* among the Latins ‡. Theſe two obſervations being admitted, one may venture to ſay that *Gaelti*, in the language of the ancient Scots and Iriſh, is the ſame with the *Celtæ* of the Latins.

If we examine the changes made by the Greeks and Romans in the perſonal and local names of the

* The initial W of the Teutonic is commonly equivalent to the *Gu* and ſimple G of the Britiſh, Iriſh, French, and Italian languages. Thus the Weales of the Anglo-Saxons is by the French pronounced and written *Galles*, as it is by the Iriſh and ancient Scots *Gaullive:* it is unneceſſary to produce more inſtances. See Lhyod's Com. Etymol. under the letter G.

† Suidas in his Dictionary.

‡ Thus the Romans wrote Carthaco and Carthago, pugna and pucna, vigeſimus and viceſimus, and the Greeks inſtead of the Latin Caius wrote Γαιος, &c.

Celtic language, the etymon now propoſed can hardly be thought overſtrained: at the worſt it cannot be ſo abſurd as that which deduces the name *Gaël* from the Gallæci of Spain, with whom the Scots have perhaps leſs connection than with the *Galatians* of Aſia and the *Galatæ* of Europe.

THE etymon of *Gaël* or *Caël* being thus eſtabliſhed, we have plainly the derivation of the *Caledonia* of the Romans. I have above obſerved that the Highlands of Scotland is known, to this day, by no other name among the natives, than by *Caël-dochd*, a word compounded of *Caël*, i. e. *Celts*, and *Do-ich country*. This obſervation was firſt ſuggeſted by the tranſlator of Oſſian's poems: and it is ſo obviouſly the original of *Caledonia*, that it is matter of ſome ſurprize it never was obſerved before. The inhabitants of the Highlands of Scotland call themſelves emphatically *Na Caël*, i. e. *the Celts*. To the Iriſh they give the name of *Caël Eirinach*, i. e. *the Iriſh Celts*. Whether an argument could be drawn from this circumſtance, that of old it was not the popular belief, that the Scots came originally from Ireland, I leave to others to determine.

IF any one ſhould incline to think that the ancient Iriſh and Scots had their denomination of *Gaël* from their imaginary founder, Gathelus, the ſon or huſband of Scota, he may, while he pleaſes, enjoy an opinion once popular and ſtill harmleſs. But it is ſcarcely leſs credible that Gathelus ever had any real exiſtence,

exiſtence, than that he was miraculouſly cured by Moſes near the Red Sea. That young Prince had it ſeems the misfortune to be bit in the neck by a ſerpent, and the whole maſs of his blood was immediately corrupted: but at the requeſt of his father, Moſes interpoſed very ſeaſonably, and upon laying his wonder-working rod on the wound reſtored the youth to a perfect ſtate of health, mean time there remained a green ſpot on that part of his body where the ſerpent had fixed her teeth. From this green ſpot he was ever after called *Gaidhil Glaſs*, that is the green or rather the grey: and Keating has inſerted in his hiſtory a dozen of verſes extracted from the faithful records of Tara, to prove that this illuſtrious Prince derived his right to the epithet *Glaſs* from the impreſſion made on his body by the teeth of this monſtrous ſnake.

Upon the whole, it appears evident, that Ireland was firſt peopled from Caledonia. The abettors of the high antiquities of Ireland have in ſome meaſure owned the exiſtence of a Britiſh colony; but they were too much wedded to the indigeſted fictions of a Spaniſh extraction, to be convinced that all their anceſtors went from this iſland. It would be no difficult matter to inveſtigate the origin of the legendary fictions of the Iriſh nation, and to ſhew that they had not their riſe in a very remote age. But a diſcuſſion of this ſort is too unimportant in an age in which all but bigots to an abſurd antiquity, ought, in the judgment of ſober reaſon, to reject the Mileſian fables; which bear about them the marks of their being invented

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ſome time after Chriſtianity was introduced into Ireland.

In the courſe of my reading on the ſubject of theſe diſſertations, I had an opportunity of examining all the Iriſh hiſtories that have any pretenſions to antiquity: I would have myſelf underſtood of thoſe that have been given to the public: for though Ireland, as its annaliſts affirm, is crouded with ancient records, yet as they have been inviſible to all but themſelves, we may conclude, if they really exiſt, they throw very little advantageous light on the hiſtory of that country. The remarks I made I intend on ſome future occaſion to throw together; though, as I above obſerved, the ſubject is unimportant, on account of the ſmall degree of faith now given to the ancient domeſtic accounts of the Iriſh nation. But as in every age and country there are ſome enthuſiaſts that fondly believe the moſt extravagant fictions concerning the antiquity of their reſpective nations, ſo there are people that are ready to ſupport that abſurd enthuſiaſm. I may therefore, by ſome drawcanſir of this ſort, be called forth to ſupport, with further arguments, the opinion I have advanced concerning the antiquities of Ireland; and it was from foreſeeing that a circumſtance of this kind might happen, that I made notes upon the ſubject *.

* Theſe notes are now in the poſſeſſion of Mr. Macpherſon, of Strathmaſhy, in the county of Inverneſs; a very ingenious and learned gentleman, who has made the antiquities of Ireland his particular ſtudy.

DISSERTATION IX.

Why the genuine Poſterity of the ancient Caledonians were called Picts and Scots.

FATHER Innes, ſo often mentioned, and ſome other antiquaries of note, ſay, that "the occaſion and riſe of the name of Scots afford a very "probable conjecture that the owners of it came, at "firſt, either from Scandia or Spain *." Theſe are Innes's own words. According to him, the Scythæ and Scoti are names of a ſimilar import and pronounciation; therefore it is natural to believe that the latter is derived from the former, and that the original Scots of North Britain were a Scythian colony.

SHOULD we reaſon from principles ſo vague, we might inſiſt on the cloſe connection between the name *Scotus* on the one hand, and *Scotuſa* of Theſſaly on the other. And would any one, poſſeſſed of common ſenſe, infer from this reſemblance or even identity of ſounds, that the pretended conquerors of Ireland

* Critical Eſſay, p. 536.

came

came from Theſſaly, and were perhaps the ſame with the myrmidons of Achilles?

INNES and other writers add further, that the argument is founded, not ſo much on the analogy of the names, as upon that conformity of manners and cuſtoms by which the Scots and Scythians were diſtinguiſhed from all other nations.—It is difficult to ſhew wherein the conformity conſiſted: if it lay in their barbarity and peculiar wildneſs of manners, the *Scotuſæ* of Thrace might have ſuited the compariſon as well as the moſt unpoliſhed parts of Scythia.

SHOULD a man of learning and abilities, even through humour, aſſert that the Scots came from Thrace, or the places adjacent, to the river Strymon, he might ſupport his abſurd hypotheſis with many plauſible obſervations. The Thracians have been very often called Scythians—Scotuſa is nearly related to *Scotus*—the *Geloni* are not unlike the *Gaël* in ſound; the Geloni painted themſelves—The Geloni and the Biſaltæ, near Scotuſa, drank the blood of horſes and milk curdled together: the Scots of Ireland have frequently eat of the ſame compoſition, if common fame has not belied them. A writer of great reputation ſhews that the Geloni and Biſaltæ, and conſequently the inhabitants of Scotuſa, gave into this practice *.

* Biſaltæ quo more ſolent acerque Gelonus,
Cum fugit in Rhodopen, atque in deſerta Getarum,
Et lac concretum cum ſanguine potat equino. VIRG. Geor. iii.

NOT

NOT to inſiſt on the conjectures of thoſe who give a Scythian origin to the name of Scots, it is evident that at beſt it is no more than an idle fancy to bring the Scots from either Scandinavia or Spain, till the learned are able to diſcover the Scots among the old inhabitants of thoſe diſtant countries. The geographers and hiſtorians of ancient times condemn thoſe two ſyſtems, by their total ſilence on that head; and a hypotheſis of this kind can never ſtand on ſo feeble a foundation as the diſtortion of the word *Scythæ* *.

AFTER all, it muſt be confeſſed, that it is extremely difficult to give any ſatisfactory etymology of the

* It was on the ſame falſe principles that the Iriſh ſhewed their connection with Spain; but the affinity between the names Hibernia and Iberia is no more than the ſhadow of a proof for ſupporting their ideal genealogy. The Greek and Latin names of the iſland are to be derived from its weſtern ſituation, from the wintry temperament of its air and climate.—It may be likewiſe obſerved, that the firſt ſyllable of the Latin word Hibernia is always long in the Latin proſody, and the firſt ſyllable of Iberia ſhort. From this circumſtance it may, with ſome ſhew of probability, be inferred, that the poets were ſtrangers to the relation between the Spaniards and the Iriſh. To ſuppoſe that the Greek name of Ireland, that is Ierne or Iouerna, comes from the Greek word which ſignifies *Holy*, is ſurely no more than a groundleſs fancy, though embraced by a learned gentleman. Had it come from that epithet, it muſt have been written with an aſpiration, like Hiera, one of the *Agates*, and Hiera, one of the Æolian iſlands. One of the rivers in Spain is called Ierna by Mela. Ireland, like that river, was called Ierna, from the Celtic word *Iar*, that is Weſt; and the name of *Erin*, by which it has been always known by the Iriſh and Highlanders of Scotland, is manifeſtly a compound of *Iair*, *Weſt*, and *In*, *Iſland*.

name of Scots. It has puzzled the moſt eminent antiquaries that Britain has produced; and therefore I think it no diſhonour to me to fail in a point where men of much greater abilities have not ſucceeded.

VARRO and Dionyſius Halicarnaſſenſis diſagree in their opinions concerning the etymon of Italia: nor are the derivations given of Gallia, Hiſpania, or Græcia, more certain. What ſhall we make of Europa, Aſia and Africa? Camden, with all his erudition and indefatigable induſtry, was greatly embarraſſed by the names Coritani, Silures, and many more nations, who made a very conſiderable figure in the country, which he illuſtrated with vaſt pains and equal ſucceſs. Scaliger and Voſſius, Grotius, Bochart, and Menage, have been very often unſucceſsful in their endeavours to ſolve difficulties of this kind.

THERE is no reaſon why the Scots ſhould be aſhamed to acknowlege that the origin of their name is involved in darkneſs; while that of Rome, the Queen of nations, remains utterly inexplicable. Plutarch found and left it ſo. Solinus gives no leſs than four different etymons, all equally unſatisfactory. Why the capitals of Britain, France and Portugal, have been of old called Londinum, Lutetia and Olyſippo, are queſtions which have not hitherto been ſufficiently cleared up, and probably never ſhall.

ALL we know with certainty concerning the appellation of *Scot* amounts to this, that it muſt have been

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at firſt a term of reproach, and conſequently framed by enemies, rather than aſſumed by the nation afterwards diſtinguiſhed by that name. The Highlanders, the genuine poſterity of the ancient Scots, are abſolute ſtrangers to the name, and have been ſo from the beginning of time. All thoſe who ſpeak the *Galic* language call themſelves *Albanich*, and their country *Alba*.

CONTUMELIOUS appellations have been given in all ages not only to individuals, but to whole bodies of people, through ſpite, or a ſatirical pleaſantry natural to the human race. The *Pæones* of Macedonia were a quarrelſome race of men, and therefore were called *Pæones*. The Proteſtants of France and the Low Countries were nick-named Hugenots and *Gueux*, becauſe their adverſaries ſtudied to make them ridiculous and contemptible. It is needleſs to multiply inſtances. The ſame ill-natured humour has been hitherto general, and will always continue ſo.

THE Picts, who poſſeſſed originally the northern and eaſtern, and in a later period, alſo the more ſouthern diviſions of North Britain, were at firſt more powerful than the Caledonians of the weſt. It is therefore eaſy to ſuppoſe that the Picts, from a principle of malevolence and pride, were ready enough to traduce and ridicule their weaker neighbours of Argyle. Theſe two nations ſpoke the ſame language. In the *Galic* tongue *Scode* ſignifies a corner, or ſmall diviſion of a country. A corner of North Britain is the very name which Gyraldus Cambrenſis

gave the little kingdom which the ſix ſons of Muredus King of Ulſter were ſaid to have erected in Scotland *.

SCOT, in Galic, is much the ſame with *little* or *contemptible* in Engliſh; and *Scottan*, literally ſpeaking, ſignifies a ſmall flock; metaphorically it ſtands for a ſmall body of men. For ſome one of the reaſons couched under theſe diſparaging epithets, their malicious or ſneering neighbours may have given the opprobrious appellation of *Scot* to the anceſtors of the Scots nation.

THE Allemans of Germany were at firſt an ignoble multitude, or a motley compoſition of many different tribes and nations. For that very reaſon, the reproachful name of *Allemans* † was framed by thoſe who hated and deſpiſed them. But the deformity of that deſignation was afterwards covered with laurels, like the blemiſh which gave Cæſar ſo much pain; and the whole Germanic body is now proud of a title, thought at firſt diſhonourable. In the ſame way it may be naturally ſuppoſed, that the people of *Albany* were, after a courſe of ages, reconciled to the once diſparaging name of *Scots*, upon finding that all other nations agreed in diſtinguiſhing them by it.

IT is generally believed that the Picts derived their appellation from their characteriſtical cuſtom of painting their bodies. This opinion ſeems to be

* The kingdom of Argyle, according to his information.

† Allemans, q. *All-mans*, a compoſition of nations.

ſupported by an expreſſion of Claudian *; who ſhews, in another place, that the Picts continued the old practice of drawing the figures of animals on their limbs, after it had been aboliſhed in South Britain †. But when the faſhion of painting in the ſame way was univerſal in Britain, it may be aſked, Why were not all the inhabitants called *Picts* by the Romans? Why were the Caledonians of the Eaſt diſtinguiſhed by a name to which thoſe of the Weſt had the ſame right; for it is certain they uſed the *Glaſtum* of Pliny, and the *Vitrum* of Mela, in common? *Picti* is no more than an epithet: and as Virgil would have been guilty of an impropriety, had he called either the Geloni or Agathyrſi, Picti, without ſpecifying the particular nation to which he applied that epithet, ſo the Romans in Britain would have been guilty of the ſame ſoleciſm, had they called the Eaſtern inhabitants of Caledonia *Picti*, without annexing a noun ſubſtantive to the adjective.

Upon weighing theſe difficulties, I am apt to believe that the name, out of which the Romans framed the deſignation of *Picti*, was originally a Britiſh one, and of a very different ſignification from the Latin word, which is equivalent to *Painted* in Engliſh. The name was very probably framed by the Scots to the Weſt, or the *Mæatæ* to the South: and as it may

* Ille leves Mauros, nec falſo nomine Pictos,
Edomit.

† ——————— Ferroque notatas
Perlegit exanimes Picto moriente figuras. Claudian.

have

have been impoſed after the expedition of Severus, it is no matter of wonder that it was unknown to all the Roman writers till the very end of the third century.

After the reign of Caracalla, the deſign of conquering North Britain ſeems to have been totally laid aſide by the Romans. The frequent competitions of rival Emperors, the public diſtractions unavoidably attending ſuch conteſts, and a long ſucceſſion of Princes, fooliſh, wicked and inactive, muſt have diverted their attention to other objects. The barbarians of Caledonia had ſenſe enough to avail themſelves of the advantages which an adminiſtration, ſo feeble and uncertain, muſt have afforded them. They made frequent incurſions into the Roman provinces, and met with little oppoſition. Not long after, Conſtantius Chlorus came from the Continent into Britain, with an intention to make war upon them; but he died at York, before this deſign could be executed. It was probably much about that time that the Romans diſcovered that the moſt conſiderable nation among the unconquered Britons was called *Pictich*, a word correſponding in ſound with the *Picti* in Latin: accordingly we find that Eumenius, the panegyriſt, is the firſt Roman author who mentioned that people under this new name.

In philological inveſtigations of this kind, it is much eaſier to diſapprove of the conjectures of others, than to offer a more rational one to the public. But

as new opinions, which turn only on verbal criticiſm, are very innocent, though perhaps they may be ill founded, I ſhall venture to give a new etymon of the name of *Picti.*

THE Highlanders, who ſpeak the ancient language of Caledonia, expreſs the name of that once famous nation, who were at laſt ſubdued by the Scots, by the word *Pictich.* They could not have borrowed this epithet from the Romans; for the illiterate part of the Highlanders have no idea that the Romans were in this iſland, or ever exiſted: yet the name now under conſideration is very familiar to their ears. One of the ideas affixed to the word *Pictdich*, or *Pictich*, is that odious one which the Engliſh expreſs by the word *Plunderer*, or rather Thief. Therefore it is not improbable that their neighbours may have given that title to a people fond of depredation: and Dion gives us to underſtand, that the barbarians of North Britain took a peculiar pleaſure in robberies; nor was this character, in theſe days of violence and ignorance, attended with much infamy: if the robber had the addreſs to form, and the ſpirit to execute his unjuſt ſchemes, he was rather proud than aſhamed of his conduct: all the honeſty required at his hands, was not to encroach on the property of a friend or ally *.

* Thoſe who may imagine that robbery was eſteemed more honourable among the ancient Picts than among the other rude nations of mankind, may conſult Thucydides, p. 3. b. i.

AMONG

Among the Princes and chieftains whom Virgil has brought to the aſſiſtance of Turnus, we find ſome who bear a perfect reſemblance to the plundering heroes of Pictavia. The picture which the poet has drawn of Ufens and his people may, without any impropriety, be applied to the ancient Caledonian tribe now under conſideration.

Et te montoſæ miſere in prælia Nerſæ,
Ufens, inſignem fama et felicibus armis:
Horrida præcipue cui gens, aſſuetaque multo
Venatu nemorum, duris Æquicula glebis
Armati terram exercent, ſemperque recentis
Convectare juvat prædas, et *vivere rapto.*

Virg. Æn. 7.

The Brigantes of South Britain, the Brigantes of Ireland, the Brigantii near the Alps, and the inhabitants of Brigantium in Spain, derived their names from *Brigand* ‡, a Celtic word, which ſignifies a robber. The French have retained the original word in their language; and the Engliſh have the word Brigantine, which properly ſignifies a veſſel uſed by pyrates.

Sextus Pompeius obſerves, that thieves were, in the language of Gaul, called *Cimbri*; and according to Plutarch, robbers went under the ſame name in Germany. The Cimbri had a ſtrong propenſity to robberies of a private nature, as well as to that ſpecies of depredation which goes under the name of war

‡ See Bullet. Dict. Celt. Fol. 2d, p. 211.

and

and public conqueſt. But if the Cimbri of Germany, and the Brigantes of South Britain, have borrowed their reſpective names from their deſire of booty, or their ſucceſs in plundering, it is far from being incredible that a Caledonian people might have been called *Pictdich* by their neighbours, for their uncommon dexterity in the ſame way.

Every one knows, that the Borderers of England and Scotland diſtinguiſhed themſelves for many ages, by pillaging, plundering, and laying whole countries waſte. In time of war theſe ravages may have been in ſome meaſure excuſable.—But even after truces and pacifications had been ſolemnly ratified, the ſame barbarous practices were too faſhionable on both ſides to be deſiſted from; eſpecially as they were attended with honour and encomium, rather than puniſhment or diſgrace. It is hardly neceſſary to add, that this practice, though manifeſtly incompatible with the laws of all civilized nations, was tolerated, and perhaps encouraged, till the acceſſion of James to the throne of England *.

The explications I have ventured to give of the names Picts and Scots may be defective; but they can hardly be more ſo than thoſe etymologies which have

* I am tempted to think that the ancient Selgovæ of Scotland, who lay North of the Engliſh Brigantes, were ſo called from the word *Sealg*, which, if literally taken, ſignifies *Hunting*, and metaphorically *Theft*. The Gadini, who were at no great diſtance from the Selgovæ, ſeem to be nothing elſe than *Gadichin* in Galic, that is to ſay, robbers or thieves.

been inſiſted on by men who may be juſtly called the oracles of erudition in matters of this kind. It may be likewiſe ſaid that I have dwelt much longer on this ſubject than its importance deſerves. In the mean time, I leave it to the judgment of common ſenſe to determine, whether it is not more probable that the Picts derive their name from a Britiſh word, than from a Latin epithet *.

* Strabo, though a very judicious critic, hiſtorian, and geographer, imagined, very inconſiderately, that the Germans received their name from their being as like their neighbours of Gaul as if they had been their Brothers-German. Bede, though a Saxon himſelf, and the moſt eminent ſcholar of his time, entertained a fancy that the name Anglus ſhould be traced up to the Latin word Angulus, or a Corner. This conceit was little better than the puns of Pope Gregory at Rome, upon the words Angli and Angeli, Deiri and De ïra, *Aella* and Alleluja †. And can it be matter of wonder that Claudian ſhould have found the etymon of the Pictiſh name in the Latin tongue, eſpecially as theſe Caledonians were painted, and as the analogy between the Britiſh word *Pictich* and the Roman *Picti* was ſo very cloſe?

† Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 2. cap. 1.

DISSERTATION X.

The Highlanders Strangers to the National Name of Scots.—Call themſelves *Albanich*, or ancient Britons—Gaël, or Celtæ.—Obſervations on the Iriſh, Galic and Welch Languages.

FROM what has been ſaid in the preceding diſſertation, it appears, that the names of *Picts* and *Scots* were impoſed on the two nations into which the Caledonians were divided, ſome time before the Romans deſerted Britain, by the malevolence of their neighbours to the South, or roſe from the animoſities which ſubſiſted between themſelves. The indigenal name of the Caledonians is the only one hitherto known among their genuine deſcendants, the Highlanders of Scotland.—They call themſelves *Albanich* to this day. All the illiterate Highlanders are as perfect ſtrangers to the national name of Scot, as they are to that of Parthian or Arabian. If a common Highlander is aſked, of what country he is, he immediately anſwers, that he is an *Albanich*, or *Gaël*.

It is unneceſſary to produce authorities to ſhew that the iſland, which now goes under the name of Britain, was in early ages called *Albion*. To ſearch for a Hebrew or Phænician etymon of *Albion* has been the folly of ſome learned writers. In vain have ſome attempted to derive it from the white cliffs near Dover, or from a Greek word which ſignifies a certain ſpecies of grain, or from a gigantic ſon of Neptune.

In the Celtic language, of which ſo many different dialects were diffuſed over all the European nations of the Weſt and North, and let me add, the Scythians of Aſia, the vocable *Alp*, or *Alba*, ſignifies *High*. Of the Alpes Grajæ, Alpes Pæninæ, or Penninæ, and the Alpes Baſtarnicæ, every man of letters has read.

In the ancient language of Scotland, *Alp* ſignifies, invariably, an eminence. The Albani near the Caſpian ſea, the Albani of Macedon, the Albani of Italy, and the *Albanich* of Britain, had all the ſame right to a name founded on the ſame characteriſtical reaſon, the heighth or roughneſs of their reſpective countries. The ſame thing may be ſaid of the Gauliſh Albici near Maſſilia.

The Celtic was undoubtedly the language of the Belgic Gaul. For this we have the authority of Strabo. That from the Belgic diviſion of Gaul the firſt colony muſt have tranſmigrated into South Britain, muſt be readily allowed. The vicinity of the two

two countries, and the ſhortneſs of the paſſage, is an argument in this caſe equal to a demonſtration. It was natural enough for men, who had been once ſettled in the low plains of Belgium, to give the name of *Alba*, or *Albin*, to Britain, on comparing the face or appearance of it to that of their former country. Men who had come from the Netherlands would moſt probably have called this new world *Albin* in an oblique caſe, and *Alba* in the nominative. And it is to be obſerved, that almoſt all the local names of the Celtic tongue are energetical, and deſcriptive of the peculiar properties or appearance of places.

THE Greeks became in ſome degree acquainted with Britain, and its original name, long before the Romans had any opportunity of knowing either. Agreeably to the genius of their language, the former naturally gave a new termination to *Albin*; and their Albion muſt have, in proceſs of time, paſſed to the Romans. But the true Celtic name of the iſland having travelled gradually into the remoter parts of it, was there retained, by a race of plain, uncivilized men, who having no intercourſe with the Greeks, and very little with the Romans, adhered invariably to their mother tongue, and particularly to the local names which had been tranſmitted to them by their anceſtors.

THAT all the territories once poſſeſſed by the old Caledonians were formerly called *Alba* in Galic, and Albania in the Latin of latter ages, is certain, beyond contra-

contradiction. In the little ancient Chronicles of Scotland, publiſhed by Innes at the end of his Critical Eſſay, they go frequently under that name *; and Kenneth, the ſon of Alpin, who was the firſt Monarch of Caledonia, is called the firſt King of Albany, in ſome old Latin rhimes often quoted †. But had the Scots of Britain come originally from Ireland, their Latin name would have been very probably Hiberni, and their Galic one undoubtedly remain *Erinich*.

After the Germans had conquered the ſouthern diviſion of Britain, to thoſe who remained of the old inhabitants they gave the name of Weales and Gauls, in their own tongue, and of Brittones, in the Latin of the times; while they themſelves thought it more honourable to retain their hereditary appellations of Saxons, Angles, and Jutes.

Among the moſt illuſtrious nations of antiquity, few have been equal, and ſcarce any ſuperior, to the Gauls, in military glory. Salluſt makes no difficulty of acknowleging, that in this reſpect they were before the Romans ‡. Be that as it will, it is certain they had great merit in that way. Yet the Franks had too high a regard for their own genuine fame, and too profound a veneration for their anceſtors, to

* Innes's Crit. Eſſay, in his Appendix, Num. 1, &c.

† Primus in Albania fertur regnaſſe Kenethus,
Filius Alpini, prœl a multa gerens.

‡ Salluſt. in Catilina, cap. liii.

aſſume

aſſume the name of the Gauls, after they had poſſeſſed themſelves of their country.

To ſtrengthen the obſervation I am to make, it is almoſt needleſs to mention the Ionians of Aſia, the Phocæans of Gaul, the Boii of Germany, the Longobardi of Italy, the Belgæ and Atrebates of South Britain. All theſe, and other innumerable colonies, who left their native countries, and planted themſelves in foreign regions, made a point of retaining the proper names of thoſe nations from which they were originally ſprung.

Had the Scots of Britain been a colony from Ireland, in ſpite of all the hard things ſaid by Strabo, Mela, Solinus and others, to the prejudice of the old Hibernians; nay, if the univerſal conſent of mankind, inſtead of three or four ancient writers, had agreed in calling the Iriſh ſavages, cannibals, atheiſts, and ſtrangers to every virtue under heaven, the Scots, notwithſtanding, would have admired their anceſtors ſuperſtitiouſly, and retained their name, rather than degrade themſelves into *Albanich*. But no Britiſh Scot has ever yet called himſelf an Hibernian in a learned language, nor *Erinich* in his own mother tongue. Every Scot who underſtands the Galic calls himſelf, as I obſerved before, either *Gaël*, that is, one of the Celtæ, or *Albanich*, in other words, a genuine Briton.

Not all the ſenſible and quaint obſervations of civilized times will eradicate from the minds of the bulk of a people the high opinion they entertain of themſelves, for their connexion with renowned national anceſtors; and in every country national anceſtors have a great deal of traditional fame. It is true, the merit of remote progenitors is ſometimes very ſmall, frequently dubious, and always exaggerated by the partial fictions of their poſterity.

The founders of Rome were a very flagitious race: the vagabonds that aſſociated with them an ignoble and abandoned rabble. Thieves, ruffians, deſperadoes, bankrupts, cow-keepers, ſhepherds, ſlaves, raviſhers of women, murderers of men, oppreſſors and uſurpers, were the anceſtors of the lords of the world *. Yet the Romans were extravagantly vain and proud of their origin. All other nations were in ſome degree influenced by the ſame puerile weakneſs.

But in the annals of mankind it is perhaps impoſſible to find a nation more vain in this reſpect than the old Iriſh. To ſay nothing of the antediluvian inhabitants of Ireland, and not to mention the Partholanians, Nemedians and others, the ideal connection they had with Scythian Kings, Egyptian Princeſſes, and Iberian heroes, inſpired them with a very high idea of their own dignity, and perhaps with a propor-

* Majorum primus quiſquis fuit ille tuorum,
Aut paſtor fuit, aut illud quod dicere nolo.
Juven. Satyr. viii. ad finem.

tionable

tionable contempt for almoſt every other people. Had the Scots of Britain been the real poſterity of a people ſo extravagantly fond of their ideal national anceſtors, is it reaſonable to believe that they would have rejected the name of Hibernians or *Erinich* with ſcorn, and preferred that of *Albanich*, a name which the Picts and old Caledonians muſt have carried in common with them?

From the appellation Kymri, Cumri or Cumeri, invariably retained by the Welſh, it has been concluded, and with reaſon, that, inſtead of being deſcended from the Romans, Saxons, Danes, Normans, or other interlopers into Britain, they are the genuine offspring of the ancient Gomerians or Cimbri. What therefore ſhould hinder antiquaries from concluding likewiſe, the argument being exactly the ſame, that the Scots of Britain, who without interruption retained through all ages the name of *Albanich*, are ſprung from the ancient inhabitants of *Albany*, and conſequently were genuine Caledonians? The Welſh have preſerved their original Celtic name. The Highlanders of North Britain retained the firſt appellation given to the inhabitants of the whole iſland. It will be aſked perhaps, why the Welſh have not retained the appellation of *Albanich*. I ſhall offer a few remarks to clear up that difficulty.

It is certain that the languages ſpoken by the people of North Wales, by the Highlanders of Scotland, and by thoſe commonly called the wild Iriſh,

are the moſt genuine remains of the ancient Celtic tongue now extant. The Corniſh, Armorican, and Biſcayan dialects, muſt yield the preference to the former three, however certain it is that in theſe dialects ſome true Celtic words have been preſerved hitherto, which the Welſh, Highlanders, and Iriſh, have totally loſt.

By the ſuffrage of reaſon, and from the experience of nations and ages, we find that the language of a people out of the way of foreign invaſions, and unacquainted with the arts of commerce and civil life, has the beſt chance of continuing the ſame, or at leaſt of undergoing the feweſt alterations. Remote iſles, ſecured by tempeſtuous ſeas, and mountainous tracts of land, environed with rocks, woods, and moraſſes, defended by a warlike race of men, and ſterile enough to diſcourage the avarice or ambition of ſtrangers, are the beſt means to fix and perpetuate a language.

It is true, no ſituation of country can ſecure a language altogether from the injuries of time, from the arbitrary power of faſhion, and from the common fate of every ſublunary thing. Some words muſt be imported by ſtrangers, ſome created by whim. Some will riſe out of new diſcoveries, and others muſt be framed to expreſs new ideas conveyed by new objects. Language, in ſhort, even independent of the mixture of nations, muſt be in a ſtate of fluctuation. But after all that can be ſaid to prove the natural and accidental

inſtability of language, rocks, ſeas and deſarts, ignorance, ſterility, and want of commerce, are its beſt preſervatives, next to valuable books, and permanent records.

WHETHER Wales, Ireland, or the mountainous parts of North Britain, have retained the Celtic the neareſt to its original ſimplicity, purity, or ſtrength, is a queſtion which, like all other matters of verbal criticiſm, is more amuſing than uſeful, and differently reſolved by the learned in that way. Of theſe ſome have declared for the country firſt named, others have determined the controverſy in favour of the ſecond, while the third, unfortunate in many reſpects, and particularly in its ſcarcity of domeſtic writers, has been entirely left out of the queſtion.

EVERY one knows that the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, had long and bloody conteſts with the ancient Kymri. In ſpite of all the brave ſtruggles they made for liberty, and the honour of their country, it is certain they were enſlaved by the firſt of the nations juſt mentioned, and brought under total ſubjection by the laſt. The intercourſe they had with the other two was too conſiderable not to affect their language in ſome degree.

THE Norwegians and Danes made ſtrong and ſucceſsful efforts in Ireland. By them were the principal towns or cities there built. Turgeſius and his army made conſiderable acquiſitions there, and was cruelly

oppreſſive. The Eaſterlings and Normans could never be totally exterminated out of that country. One of the braveſt of the monarchs of Ireland, Brian Boroimbe, loſt his life in the famous battle of Cluantarf, fighting againſt theſe foreigners. The Hibernian antiquaries are agreed in complaining bitterly that the barbarians of the North made a dreadful havock of their churches, monaſteries, ſeminaries of learning, and books. The wars, commerce, and intermarriages of the Iriſh with the Eaſterlings, muſt have had ſome conſiderable influence on the language of Ireland.

The Norwegians and Danes did likewiſe infeſt Scotland for a courſe of ages, made a conqueſt of the Weſtern Iſles, and erected a principality there, called the Kingdom of Man, as that iſland was the ſeat of their ſmall empire in North Britain. But ſome of the Highland diſtricts upon the Weſtern continent of Scotland were never ſubjected to any foreign yoke; nor has the language of theſe diſtricts been either exterminated, or till of late corrupted in any conſiderable degree, by an intermixture of that tongue which has been prevailing in the more civilized provinces of this kingdom for ſeven centuries back.

It will be readily granted, that the Iriſh and Welſh dialects of the Celtic tongue are more copious than the Galic of theſe diſtricts of North Britain which I have juſt mentioned. I ſhall allow likewiſe that the two former dialects were better poliſhed, and rendered perhaps more harmonious. The countries in which

which they were ſpoke produced many books, and encouraged men of letters. But from theſe very conſiderations, it may perhaps with reaſon be inferred, that they receded farther from the ſimplicity of the original language than thoſe who had neither opportunities nor inclination to refine or enrich it. Is it not certain that one of the academies of France, and the many books publiſhed by the members of it, have contributed much to deſtroy what they call the old Gauliſh tongue in that country? And is it not equally true, that the modern univerſities of England and Scotland have, together with other cauſes, almoſt totally altered the language brought by the Saxons from Germany, and once common to much the greateſt part of the firſt of theſe kingdoms, and to the moſt conſiderable diviſion of the laſt.

I SHALL not carry the parallel between the Welſh, Iriſh, and Galic, much farther. They only who underſtand the three languages perfectly have a right to decide in this diſpute. Let me only obſerve, that the learned author of the Archæologia Britannica, one of the ableſt judges the republic of letters has produced, made no ſcruple to ſay, though a Welſhman himſelf, that if the Iriſh, Scotch, and Welſh, are compared with the ancient language of Gaul, the latter will be found to agree leſs with it than the other two. Certain it is that the meaning of many Celtic words which have been preſerved by the Roman writers, and particularly names perſonal and local, the ſignification of which has confounded the

ſkill

ſkill of our beſt antiquaries, may be eaſily diſcovered by thoſe who are no more than indifferently converſant in the Galic.

To exemplify the general poſition laid down by the author of the Archæologia, the word *Iſca*, once ſo common in South Britain, *Iſca Silurum*, *Iſca Danmoniorum*, *Iſca Legionis Secundæ*, and ſo on, common, I mean, in time of the Romans, ſignifies plainly *Water* or a *River*, in the Galic and Iriſh. The Welſh have loſt the ſignification, and almoſt the uſe of that word, which is *Uiſce* in the languages juſt named, and *Wyſk* in that of the old Kymri. For that reaſon the learned Cambden was not able to find out the meaning of *Iſca*, in the names mentioned above. But in all the diviſions of Britain were many rivers which had no other names than the general appellatives of *Uiſk*, *Avon*, *Wy* and *Taw* *. In Scotland are many ſuch which are called *Eſk*,

* The largeſt river in Scotland is called *Taw* in the Galic, the moſt noted rivers in Wales are called *Taff*, and the Thames, the nobleſt river in Britain, was undoubtedly called *Tamh* in the old language of the country. *Tamh* ſignifies the ocean, or great ſea, in Galic, and *Mor Tauch* has the ſame meaning in the Welſh. I am perſuaded that theſe rivers obtained the names now mentioned, becauſe they are ocean like, or ſeas, if compared to ſmaller ſtreams; juſt as the Hebrews, and ſometimes the Romans, gave the name of a ſea to a large collection of freſh water. For the ſame reaſon was the *Tagus* of Luſitania ſo called; the Taio of the preſent times, a word which comes nearer to the old Celtic name of that river. Here likewiſe it may be obſerved that the *Duriæ* of the Alpine regions, the *Durius* of Spain, and the *Duranius*

Eſk, though corruptly, to this day. In England are ſeveral *Avons*, and many ſmaller waters which have *wy* for their final ſyllable, as there is a large navigable one diſtinguiſhed by the ſame appellative. In the compound names of South Britain, we often find *Ex*; for example, Exeter, which anſwers to *Eſk* of Scotland. In Yorkſhire is a rivulet called *Wyſke*, and in Monmouthſhire is a larger ſtream which goes under the name of *Wyſk*.

CAMBDEN has been at ſome pains to prove that the word *Braccæ*, which was undoubtedly a Celtic one, ſignifying a party-coloured garment, is preſerved to this day in ſome manner by the Welſh, *Brati* in their language being the ſame with foul tattered clothes. The learned antiquary made this remark, together with many more in the grammatical way, to prove that the language of South Britain was of old the ſame with that of Gaul. How far he has ſucceeded in the compariſon drawn between *Braccæ* and *Brati*, I ſhall not ſay. But in the Galic tongue, the word *Braccan* * is in common uſe to this day, and the idea affixed to

Duranius of Gaul, are all appellative nouns, derived from the Celtic word *Dur* or water; and I add farther, that almoſt all the large rivers in Europe have the vocables, *Avon*, *Iſc*, or *Dur*, either in the beginning or end of their names, though much diſguiſed by the inflections of Greek and Roman writers.

* Braccan is that kind of upper garment uſed by the Highlanders, which the Engliſh call *Plaid*: it is derived from the adjective *Breac*, ſignifying *party-coloured*.

it

it explains what the Gauls meant by their Braccæ much better than many learned critics had been able to do.

We are told by Feſtus Pompeius, that the father of Roman eloquence, and his anceſtors, had the name *Tullius* from a cataract near the ſeat of the family. In the Galic, a flood or torrent like that which tumbles down from a cataract, is expreſſed by the word *Tuille*. But I have not been able to diſcover that the Welſh have preſerved a word of the ſame ſound and import in their language. It is hardly neceſſary to obſerve further that the Gauls were once poſſeſſed of many places in Italy, and muſt have left many local names behind them, ſome of which are extant to this day.

To conclude this tedious philological diſcuſſion: it is certain that many words in uſe to this day in the Highlands of Scotland, were once uſed in common by the Britons of the South, and the ancient Celtæ, though now diſcontinued in the language of Wales. From the whole I draw this concluſion: that the Welſh may have loſt in their language the appellation of *Albanich*, though once common in their country, in the ſame manner that they loſt the remarkable vocable *Uiſc*, and many others that could be ſpecified.

DISSERTATION XI.

Of the Genius, Manners and Cuſtoms of the Caledonians, Picts and Scots.

THE Caledonians made war their great ſtudy, and the principal buſineſs of life. Agriculture was entirely neglected, or but faintly proſecuted, and the commercial arts were hardly known among them. The chace, an exerciſe manifeſtly ſubſervient to a military life, was their favorite amuſement. A peculiar attachment to the pleaſures and advantages ariſing from ſuch a courſe of life, gave them an uncommon degree of agility, vigour and patience to bear fatigue. Dio ſays, that they ran with extraordinary ſwiftneſs, and ſuſtained cold, hunger and toil, with an amazing conſtancy. Herodian calls the barbarians of North Britain, incomparably brave, and inſatiably fond of ſlaughter. Let hiſtory determine, whether they were ever conquered, or whether the Lords of mankind, the Romans, were ſo bravely

repulſed by any other nation, except the Parthians of the Eaſt, and the Germans of the Weſt *.

It muſt be allowed, that the particular ſituation of the Caledonian territories gave great diſadvantages to any enemy that invaded them; and it is alſo certain, that the very ſame circumſtance inured the inhabitants to all the hardſhips incident to a military life. The people of Numantia, whoſe dominions were confined within the narrow limits of a few mountains, gave much more trouble to the Roman arms than Antiochus the Great, and the prodigious hoſt which he collected on the fertile plains of Aſia. The genius of every ſoil naturally transfuſes itſelf into the ſouls and bodies of its inhabitants. Caledonia was peculiarly adapted to that kind of life which we call barbarous. Its foreſts and mountains produced game in abundance. The ſeverity of the climate, and the rugged face of the country, tended to ſtrengthen the body, and inure the mind to hardſhips. Theſe circumſtances, however diſagreeable they may appear in this age, were highly favourable to that martial ſpirit which ſubſiſted among our anceſtors; and what

* An author, who has done honour to the age in which he lived, as well as to the country which gave him birth, has touched this ſubject with the uſual felicity of his poetical genius.

Roma ſecuri geris prætendit mænia Scotis.
Hic ſpe progreſſus poſita Carrontis adundam
Terminus Auſonii ſignat divortia regni, &c.

Buchanan in Epithalamio Franc. Valeſ. & Mar. Scot. Reg.

would

would render Caledonia but a poor acquiſition to the Romans, was the only means of its defence againſt them.

It is impoſſible to ſay, with certainty, at what time the Caledonians began to cultivate the ground. Under the reign of Severus they were abſolute ſtrangers to agriculture. They thought, like their *Celto-Scythian* brethren of Germany, * "That he who acquires, with the continual ſweat of his brow, what might be purchaſed all at once with a little blood, is deſtitute of ſpirit, genius and feeling.—One could more eaſily perſuade them to brave all the perils of war, than to toil at the ſpade, or wait for the ſlow returns of Autumn."

Their food was the natural produce of an uncultivated country, the fleſh of tame animals, veniſon, fiſh, milk, and the ſpontaneous growth of their fields and woods. We cannot believe, on the authority of Strabo, though a very exact and judicious writer, that ſome Britons were barbarous enough not to have known the art of curdling milk: nor is it credible that they had an irreconcileable averſion to fiſh, though they had it in ſuch plenty in their ſeas and rivers. Solinus relates, that the inhabitants of the Ebudæ lived on milk and fiſh only.

It is hardly neceſſary to obſerve, that the refinements of luxury were utterly unknown to the ancient

* Tacitus de mor. Germ. c. xiv.

inhabitants of Caledonia. One of their methods of preparing the fleſh of animals killed in hunting, is very exactly deſcribed by Mr. Macpherſon, the tranſlator of Oſſian's Poems. The ſame method was practiſed in Ireland. Nor is that ſpecimen of our ancient cookery much unlike that which hitherto prevails among the modern Highlanders, on their hunting parties *.

* The Scots of the fourteenth century had not degenerated much from the ſimplicity of their forefathers in the article of living. In the reign of Robert Bruce, Randolph Earl of Murray, and Sir James Douglas, invaded the North of England, at the head of a ſelect body of men inured to battles and fatigues. After theſe adventurers had penetrated farther than Durham, and committed dreadful ravages in their progreſs, Edward the Third ſaw the neceſſity of appearing againſt them in perſon. The two armies came at laſt very cloſe to each other, being divided only by the river *Were*. They watched each other's motions for ſeveral days, without coming to a deciſive action. At length, after Douglas, with a few men of approved reſolution, had performed an extraordinary feat of proweſs, the Scots quitted their camp, and marched off toward their own country. Some of the Engliſh, either to gratify curioſity, or in expectation of booty, took a view of the Scottiſh camp, and found there three hundred bags made of raw deer-ſkins, with the hair on them, and all theſe full of water and fleſh, for the uſe of the men. The bags were contrived ſo as to anſwer the deſign of kettles. They found likewiſe a thouſand wooden ſpits, with meat on them, ready to be roaſted. Such was the luxury of the poſterity of the ancient Caledonians, at the diſtance of little more than four ages back, and ſo well was their taſte calculated for a military life. See Buchanan and Abercromby, under the reign of Robert Bruce.

We learn from Cæſar, that the Britons of the South uſed braſs plates and rings of iron by way of money: it is probable their neighbours of the North adopted the ſame cuſtom. Herodian writes, that they held the laſt of theſe metals in the ſame degree of eſtimation which other nations placed on gold. Virius Lupus, one of the lieutenants or pro-prætors employed by Severus in Britain, purchaſed a peace from them with money. Agricola and his troops had probably taught them the uſe of coin.

The Britons of the South began to underſtand the uſe of the mint ſoon after the Romans came firſt among them. There are extant to this day ſeveral coins belonging to their own native Kings, particularly Cunobiline and Caractacus. The firſt of theſe Princes was cotemporary with Auguſtus, and the latter with Claudius. If there were any pieces of money coined in North Britain within eight or nine centuries after that period, they are entirely loſt or deſtroyed.

The riches of the Caledonians conſiſted wholly in cattle. The caſe was much the ſame in ſeveral other countries, long after the world had been ſufficiently peopled. An ancient author obſerves, in his account of Geryon, King of Spain, whom Hercules plundered of his cattle, that in thoſe times herds were accounted the only wealth*. And Varro, the moſt

* Juſtin. Ep. lib. xliv. cap. 4.

learned

learned writer of his age, derives pecunia, the Roman word for money, from pecus, which ſignifies cattle.

It is after property is long eſtabliſhed, and ſome degree of commerce introduced, that money becomes the ſtandard of wealth among nations. In the beginning of ſociety, mankind do not think a piece of metal an equivalent for their flocks and herds. Should I be permitted to give my opinion concerning the origin of coin, I would trace it to that ſuperſtition which is inherent in human nature in rude times. The firſt coin was probably a portable image of a Divinity, which was worſhipped by a community. The beauty of the metal, and the ſacred awe ariſing from the figure of a God, firſt gave value to that kind of medals in the eyes of the ſavage; and as enthuſiaſm often gets the better of the love of property, he would not ſcruple to exchange his horſe, or his ox, for that *Icon* of the power he adored.

Ambition has been known, in every ſtage of ſociety, to take advantage of the follies and weakneſſes of mankind.— Kings, obſerving the reverence paid to thoſe medals, by degrees ſubſtituted their own image, inſtead of that of the God, and by their authority ſtampt a value upon what we now call coin. From that time forward money became, as it were, the repreſentative of property; and the great convenience it affords, from the eaſe with which it can be carried, made mankind almoſt univerſally adopt it as the ſtandard of wealth.

It is probable that the barbarous inhabitants of North Britain imported the arts of huſbandry from the neighbouring Roman province. The advantages ariſing from ſo great an improvement would have ſoon convinced them of their former ignorance: but among men inured to idleneſs, rapine and war, an art, cumberſome at firſt, and afterwards ſlow in rewarding the labourer's toil, would have made no very rapid progreſs.

Whatever may be ſaid with regard to the riſe and improvement of agriculture in North Britain, it is certain that the inhabitants were numerous, robuſt, high-ſpirited, and martial, and conſequently well fed. They muſt have had therefore ſome means of ſubſiſtence, with which we are not thoroughly acquainted*. It has been already obſerved, that no country could be better adapted for an uncultivated life than the hills, vallies, rivers, woods and lakes of Caledonia. The inhabitants had no appetites of their own creation to gratify: happy in their ignorance of refinements, and by nature philoſophers enough to reſt ſatisfied with a competency. If their fare was at ſome times ſcanty, that diſadvantage was rendered eaſy to them, by parſimony and patience, or was ſufficiently compenſated by the abſence of luxury in all ſeaſons. Want and toil could never enfeeble their bodies, or ſhorten their lives, ſo much as the exceſſes

* See Sir Robert Sibbald's Miſcellanea eruditæ antiquitatis—*De Radice Chora.*

ariſing from affluence have done elſewhere. All the accounts of antiquity allow, that they were among the ſtrongeſt, and healthieſt, and braveſt men in the world.

In whatever degree the ancient inhabitants of Scotland poſſeſſed the neceſſaries of life, it is certain that they were remarkably hoſpitable. Hoſpitality is one of thoſe virtues, which, if not peculiar to, is moſt commonly met with in a ſtate of barbarity. It is after property has taken abſolute poſſeſſion of the mind, that the door is ſhut againſt the ſtranger. The Highlanders of our own time are beyond compariſon more hoſpitable to ſtrangers, and more ready to receive them into their houſes, than their more civilized countrymen. Their manner of ſhewing this generous diſpoſition may carry along with it, in the eyes of the polite part of mankind, a degree of rudeneſs; but it is an honeſt rudeneſs, and expreſſive of that primeval ſimplicity and goodneſs of heart which they derive from their anceſtors the old Caledonians.

"No people in the world, ſays Tacitus, indulge themſelves more in the pleaſure of giving a kind reception to friends, neighbours and ſtrangers, than the old Germans. To drive away the ſtranger from one's door, is accounted a groſs impiety. Every one entertains according to his wealth; and after the hoſt has acted his part generouſly, he directs his gueſt to the neareſt good family, and attends him thither, without

without any previous invitation. This intruſion is ſo far from giving offence, that they are both received with the greateſt frankneſs and civility. There is no diſtinction made between the acquaintance and ſtranger, as far as the laws of hoſpitality are concerned *."

ANY one acquainted with the manners and cuſtoms of the inhabitants of the Highlands, would be tempted to think the celebrated writer drew this good-natured picture from them. It was once univerſally a cuſtom among them, nor is it yet totally diſcontinued, to accompany their gueſts to their next neighbour's houſe, and there, as it were, to reſign them to his care and protection.

So far were the old Highlanders from denying any man the benefit of their *roofs* and *fire-ſides*, as they expreſs themſelves, that many of them made a point of keeping their doors open by night as well as by day. They thought it inconſiſtent with the rules of honour and hoſpitality to aſk the ſtranger abruptly, from what quarter of the world he came, or what his buſineſs was. This queſtion could not be decently put till the year's end, if the family in which he ſojourned was opulent, and the gueſt choſe to ſtay ſo long.

IF it is an error to beſtow too much praiſe on the good qualities of our anceſtors, it is alſo unjuſt to

* Tacit. De mor. Germ. cap. xxi.

deny them every virtue, becauſe we have taken it in our head to call them barbarous. Some people connect the vices and virtues of mankind with the periods of ſociety in which they live, without conſidering that what we call the barbarous and poliſhed ſtages of ſociety, equally afford a field for the exertion of the good or bad principles of the human heart.—The only difference ſeems to be this: Among barbarians the faculties of the ſoul are more vigorous than in poliſhed times; and of conſequence, their virtues and vices are more ſtrongly marked, than thoſe of a civilized people.

THE old Caledonians were much addicted to robbery and plunder. Their poſterity inherited the ſame vice through a long ſeries of ages. Another high crime, of which the Caledonians and their poſterity of remote times ſtood impeached, was, that they had their women, and brought up their children, in common. The firſt of theſe vices was countenanced by neceſſity, the opinion of the times, and the ſituation of thoſe who were plundered. Property muſt be perfectly eſtabliſhed, before the loſs of it can be hurtful, or an incroachment on its laws is followed by diſgrace. Beſides, as depredations took place only between different tribes and nations, they may be conſidered as a ſpecies of war.

WITH regard to the other ſpecies of immorality, with which Dion and Jerom have impeached the old

* Dion and St. Jerom.

Caledonians, it is enough to ſay, that it is a vice to which the civilized are more addicted than barbarians. It is only when luxury prevails, that irregularities of this kind tranſcend the bounds preſcribed by nature. Chaſtity is one of the great virtues of rude life: when the ſoul is active, it ſeldom ſinks into ſhameful enormities. Horace has given a very lively picture of thoſe impurities which prevailed in his own time, and takes occaſion to remark, that ſuch criminal gallantries were very far from being faſhionable among thoſe Romans who defeated Pyrrhus, Hannibal, and Antiochus the Great.

The Caledonians and Scots, like the ancient Germans, were remarkable for the virtue of conjugal fidelity: "The men of that nation contented themſelves with one wife each, excepting ſome few of their great ones; * nor were the laws of wedlock obſerved with greater reverence and ſtrictneſs among any people. The nuptial bed was defended on the females ſide by an unconquerable modeſty, which neither public aſſemblies, nor private entertainments, nor love epiſtles, had any opportunities of corrupting. Among the men, no one made a jeſt of vice; nor were matrimonial infidelities called the way of the world †."

* Severa illic matrimonia: nec ullam morum partem magis laudaveris. Nam prope ſoli barbarorum ſingulis uxoribus contenti ſunt, exceptis admodum paucis. Tac. De mor. Germ.

† Nemo illic vitia reddet: nec corrumpere et corrumpi ſeculum vocatur. Idem ibidem, cap. 19.

THE prejudice of Dion and Jerom againſt the Caledonians or ancient Scots, concerning their having their wives in common, has ſome plauſible foundation. In thoſe times of remote antiquity, it is very natural to ſuppoſe that the Caledonians were not very well lodged. The whole people of the family, with their occaſional gueſts, lay on ruſhes, on the ſame floor, and in the ſame apartment. This cuſtom, till of late, prevailed amongſt the moſt uncivilized part of the Highlanders, and was once univerſal over Britain. If we may judge of the ancient inhabitants of North Britain, by the preſent rudeſt part of the Highlanders, this circumſtance of ſleeping in the ſame apartment was not productive of that conjugal infidelity mentioned by Dion and the holy father.

THE inhabitants of South Britain were, in Cæſar's time, equally unpoliſhed, their domeſtic œconomy much the ſame, and their habitations juſt as mean as thoſe of the rudeſt Highlanders. It was natural for a ſtranger, of any delicacy, who ſaw the whole family lying together promiſcuouſly, upon one continued bed of ruſhes, fern, or leaves, to imagine that the wives and children belonged to the males in common. Hence it was, that Cæſar entertained that falſe opinion of the South Britons: and hence Dion and Jerom's opinion with regard to thoſe of the North. But nothing could have been more raſh than the concluſions which they drew from theſe appearances. The people of Germany lay almoſt indiſcriminately

minately together in the very ſame manner *: and we have been already told, by a very intelligent writer, that there was not any country which produced fewer inſtances of incontinence.

It is difficult to ſay how far the Caledonians may have employed themſelves in cultivating the powers of the mind. The Druids †, thoſe great teachers of all the other Celtic nations, were ſettled among them; and it may be preſumed that they reaſoned like their brethren elſewhere, concerning the nature and extent of the univerſe, the magnitude of the celeſtial bodies, the power of the Gods, and the nature of the human ſoul.

It does not appear from hiſtory that the Caledonians had any public games, or ſchools of war; but it is certain that their deſcendants uſed exerciſes perfectly ſimilar to thoſe of the Greek *Pentathla*. Theſe were leaping, running, *throwing the ſtone*, as they expreſs it in the Galic, darting the launce, and wreſtling. All theſe diverſions were peculiarly ſubſervient to a martial life. And if to theſe exerciſes we add that of hunting, it is plain, that though they wanted acade-

* In omni domo nudi ac ſordidi in hos artus in hæc corpora quæ miramur excreſcunt. Inter eadem pecora, in eadem humo, degunt, &c. Tacit. de mor. Germ. cap. 20.

† The author wrote a diſſertation on the Druids, and the rites of their religion, which he gave to the late ingenious and learned Sir James M'Donald, Baronet, and was unfortunately loſt or miſlaid among Sir James's papers.

mies,

mies, their military talents were cultivated to very good purpoſe; and muſt have been conſiderably improved, before they had any opportunities of engaging an enemy.

In the Highlands and Iſlands, where the old cuſtoms of the Scots maintained their ground after they had been long aboliſhed in the reformed parts of the kingdom, the moſt of thoſe exerciſes were, till of late, held in high repute. They reckoned ſwiftneſs of foot one of the moſt conſiderable accompliſhments. Nor was that manner of thinking peculiar to them: Homer ſeldom forgets to mark out this characteriſtical quality of his hero: and another eminent poet, in his lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, gives a peculiar praiſe to thoſe Princes, on account of their ſwiftneſs. In Homer and Virgil, we ſee the champions of Greece, Phrygia and Italy, ſometimes deciding their ſingle combats, and the fate of battles, by throwing of rocky fragments.

The old Britons had recourſe to the ſame expedient on many occaſions. To fit them for this method of fighting, a large round ſtone was placed near the gate of every chieftain's houſe. The ſtranger who happened to lodge there, or, if a man of rank, the ſtrongeſt man of his retinue, were regularly invited by the hoſt to try the power of their ſkill and ſtrength on that ſort of quoit.

LEAPING was another exerciſe in great eſteem among the Scots of former days. Every chief, who had ſpirit enough to ſupport the dignity of his name and fortune, kept a band of young and active warriors continually about his perſon, one of whoſe qualifications it was neceſſary ſhould be agility in this kind of exerciſe. Theſe warriors, or *Cathern*, were conſtantly employed in manly exerciſes and recreations in time of peace, and ſerved the chief as a kind of body guards. Wreſtling was their great and favourite exerciſe. Boys were inured to it early, and ſtimulated to it by prizes ſuited to their taſte and paſſions. When one chieftain paid a viſit to another, after the firſt civilities were over, the wreſtlers retained by each came firſt to a trial of ſkill, and ſometimes even to blows, unleſs their maſters interpoſed.

THERE were declared combatants of this profeſſion, who went about in queſt of adventures, like Amycus, Caſtor and Pollux: they no ſooner arrived at a hamlet, than they challenged all the inhabitants, demanding a tribute to be immediately paid, or a fair battle, *without any favour*, as they always expreſſed themſelves. There are ſome men now living in the Highlands, who have ſeen theſe knights-errant; and we are told, that one of the moſt conſiderable chieftains in the Iſlands, at the diſtance of a few ages back, loſt his life in fighting a champion of this order. The wreſtler had affronted his whole clan: to vindicate the honour of his name, the chief encountered and overcame him; but by too violent an exertion of his

his ſtrength, he broke a blood veſſel, and inſtantly expired.

It is well known that the Caledonians, and their deſcendants, had a particular dexterity in managing darts of every kind. The Scottiſh ſpearmen were famous, like the archers of England. The battles fought by theſe two nations, while in a ſtate of mutual hoſtility, were often decided either by the ſuperior ſkill of a body of ſpearmen of the former, or that of the archers of the latter. Their dexterity in handling thoſe weapons muſt have deſcended to both nations from their remoteſt anceſtors.

We are told by Herodian and Dion, that the inhabitants of North Britain uſed the ſpear more than any other weapon. The latter adds a circumſtance, omitted by every other ancient author: he ſays, that there was a piece of braſs, in form of an apple, fixed to one end of their ſpears, which they ſhook, to terrify the enemy with its noiſe. I have converſed with old Highlanders, who have ſeen ſpears of that conſtruction. The name they gave them was *Trimiframma*. The critics are at a loſs to find out what the *Framea* of the Germans may have been *. Tacitus ſhews that it was a ſpear; and it is highly probable that it was contrived like thoſe uſed by the ancient Caledonians. The Galic name juſtifies this opinion. Dion's *Brazen Apple* was called *Cnap-Starra* in the

* Lipſius, in his notes on Tacitus de mor. Germ. cap. 6.

language

language of the ancient Scots, that is, a Boſs, like that on the middle of a ſhield, ſtudded with nails of braſs *.

From the obſervations made on the military cuſtoms and manly exerciſes of the Caledonians, and their poſterity, in the more early ages, it may be concluded, were hiſtory ſilent, that they muſt have been extremely well trained for war. They were certainly ſtrangers to all the poliſh of fine life: commerce, its fruits and advantages, were abſolutely unknown to them; nor was a knowlege of theſe arts

* Among the ancient Scots, the common ſoldiers were called *Catherni*, or fighting bands. The Kerns of the Engliſh, the Kaitrine of the Scots Lowlanders, and the Caterva of the Romans, are all derived from this Celtic word. The Gauls had a word of much the ſame ſound and meaning. We learn from tradition, that theſe Catherni were generally armed with darts and *ſkians*, or durks. Theſe were the weapons which the Caledonians uſed in Dion's time. The helmet and coat of mail were reckoned incumbrances by that people, according to Herodian; nor can I find out that they were in faſhion among their poſterity, till the Danes and Norvegians began to infeſt the coaſts of Britain and Ireland. It was by theſe Northern invaders that this heavy ſort of armour was introduced into Scotland, together with the weapons commonly called *Lochaber axes*. Theſe weapons were well ſteeled, and extremely ſharp, and deſtructive in the hands of ſtrong men. Thoſe who were armed with ſuch axes, and with helmets, coats of mail, and ſwords, went under the name of *Gallo-glaich*, (by the Engliſh called *Galloglaſſes.*) They were generally men of diſtinguiſhed ſtrength, and commonly drawn up againſt the enemies cavalry. The deſignation of theſe ſoldiers proves, that the Scots and Iriſh borrowed theſe weapons from foreigners.

at all ſo neceſſary for them, as the virtues which they poſſeſſed are for men in a civilized ſtate. When a ſtate is invaded, and is in danger of falling a prey to an enemy ;—when the freedom and very exiſtence of a people are at ſtake ; the warrior, and not the merchant, is the uſeful and valuable man. Great as the bleſſings of induſtry and commerce are, they become fatal, when they overwhelm the martial genius of a nation.

THE people of North Britain were in a ſtate of war and military exertion for a thouſand years after they became known in hiſtory. During all that time they had their freedom and ſettlements to defend from enemies, foreign or domeſtic. The ſpirit of the times, a principle of juſt revenge, or the laws of neceſſity, taught them to be warlike, and perhaps barbarous. Romans, provincial Britons, Saxons, Danes, Normans, and Engliſh foes, made frequent attempts on their liberty and country. When the Picts and Scots began to diſpute for the empire of Albany, there was little room for the arts of peace ; nor was it poſſible to cultivate them with any degree of ſucceſs. After the Picts had been ſubdued, the numerous pirates of Scandinavia, for a courſe of three hundred years, diſcouraged the Scots from minding the buſineſs of agriculture or civil life. Upon the death of Alexander the Third, under whoſe reign the Norvegians obliged themſelves, by a formal treaty, to abſtain from all future hoſtilities againſt

the

the dominions of Scotland, the kingdom became a ſcene of unparalleled miſeries. Two ſucceſſive competitions for its crown, and the cruel ambition of two Engliſh Monarchs, every way formidable, converted it into a field of blood and deſolation. The ſelfiſh views of two regents, during the long captivity of James the Firſt, the long minorities of his ſucceſſors, their conſtant diſputes with powerful Barons or Lords, too great to be loyal ſubjects; all theſe, and many more unfavourable circumſtances, co-operated ſtrongly in diſcouraging induſtry, and in encouraging violence and bloodſhed.

FROM theſe conſiderations it follows, that the principal virtues of the nation were of the military kind. High-ſpirited, enterprizing, and fearleſs of danger, they were almoſt continually in the field, carrying fire, ſword and deſolation into the territories of the enemy, defending their own againſt foreign invaders, or fighting the battles of their Kings, Lords and Chieftains, againſt rebels and competitors.

THOSE among the Scots of former generations who poſſeſſed the wealth of the times, maintained dignity of character, without pageantry. Their houſes were acceſſible to the ſtranger and the diſtreſſed. Though void of ſuperb decorations and a dazzling ſplendor, they were adorned with numerous bands of bold warriors, who paſſed their time in thoſe amuſements and exerciſes I have ſo particularly deſcribed.

The tables of the old Scottiſh Lords and Chieftains, however ill ſupplied with exotic delicacies, abounded with the true pleaſure of entertainment. The real generoſity and unaffected complaiſance of the open-hearted hoſt appeared conſpicuouſly in every circumſtance, and gave the higheſt ſeaſoning to the repaſt. Next to the glory ariſing from martial exploits, the reputation acquired by acts of hoſpitality was, in thoſe ages, eſteemed the higheſt honour. The bards diſplayed the whole power of their poetical abilities in celebrating the hero and beneficent man; and they, in meriting the praiſes beſtowed by thoſe heralds of fame. The great men emulouſly ſtrove to outvie one another in the manly virtues. A portion of the ſame noble ambition fell to the ſhare of every individual, according to his rank in life. That is poſſibly the happieſt period of a nation, when the practice of the generous and martial virtues become the amuſement and object of every member of a community, in proportion to their reſpective ſituations *.

It muſt however be confeſſed, that the national vices of thoſe times were far from being few; nor can it be denied, that the Scots of our preſent times have greatly the advantage of their anceſtors in many reſpects. Property is now under the protection of the law; and the civil magiſtrate poſſeſſes authority.

* In the old Galic there is but one word for a brave and good man, and but one for a land-holder and an hoſpitable man; which ſufficiently demonſtrates the ideas the ancient Caledonians entertained concerning bravery and hoſpitality.

Agri-

Agriculture, the moſt uſeful of all arts, is ſtudied, and has made great progreſs. Commerce is underſtood, and its advantages purſued. The mechanic and manufacturer furniſh their country with ſeveral commodities, either uſeful or ornamental. Arts and ſciences are patronized by ſome, eſteemed by all, and with ardor purſued by many. Murders, robberies, and all the outrages and barbarities, are unfrequent, and individuals enjoy that liberty which has diffuſed itſelf over the whole nation.

But notwithſtanding all theſe great and eſſential advantages, a doubt may be raiſed, Whether the virtues of our preſent times are more numerous, more ſublime, more generous and diſintereſted, than thoſe of our anceſtors, in the dark ages of barbariſm, poverty and confuſion? If that queſtion muſt be reſolved in the affirmative, another will immediately riſe out of the compariſon; and that is, Whether our vices are fewer, or leſs unnatural?

No reaſonable man will deny that commerce naturally produces an inſatiable love of gain, and together with that boundleſs paſſion, all the arts of circumvention, perjuries, unmanly deceits, and groſs frauds. Avarice and luxury are inſeparable companions of riches: nor is it an eaſy matter to keep haughtineſs, inſolence and impiety at a due diſtance from an affluent fortune. The ſame ingenious arts which improve the taſte, and poliſh the manners, have a tendency to effeminate the ſoul, ſo as to prepare

prepare it for ſlavery. The refinements of good-breeding and inſincerity go too frequently hand in hand. Falſe learning may be worſe than groſs ignorance. That philoſophy which tends neither to ſtrengthen the mind, or improve the happy feelings of the heart, is worſe than the inſtinctive feelings of the ſoul of the ſavage.

Upon the whole, it is difficult to prove, that opulent kingdoms poſſeſs a greater degree of virtue, and conſequently of happineſs, than the petty ſtates from which they roſe. The queſtion is of a complex nature, and would require a longer diſcuſſion than would ſuit with a work of this kind. The beſt writers of antiquity have declared in favor of what we, with great impropriety perhaps, call barbarous times. Xenophon, towards the end of his Cyropœdia, has diſcuſſed the point with great ability.

DISSERTATION XII.

A Tradition preſerved by Bede conſidered.—A Parallel between the Manners and Cuſtoms of the Caledonians and ancient Germans.—General Reflections on the Subject.

IT was an eſtabliſhed tradition a thouſand years ago, that the Picts were the original inhabitants of the Northern diviſion of Britain. Bede * ſays, in his eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, that they came to Caledonia from *Scythia*, the European part of which, according to Pliny †, comprehended Germany. The authority of the venerable writer was never queſtioned on this head; and a belief has ever ſince obtained that the Picts were a different race from the Gauls, who poſſeſſed the Southern parts of Britain. Though the hypotheſis of deducing the origin of the Caledonians from the

* Bede, Hiſt. Eccleſ. † Pliny, Nat. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 13.

old

old Germans is improbable, on account of the diſtance of the two countries from one another, and the ſmall progreſs that navigation muſt have made in ſo early a period, yet the opinion of Tacitus ‡ on that ſubject, weighed ſo much with me, that I examined this ſyſtem with a good deal of attention.

The reſult was, a parallel which I drew between the manners and cuſtoms of the old Caledonians, and thoſe of Germany, as deſcribed by Tacitus. I am very ſenſible, that all nations in their primæval ſtate are very ſimilar in their genius, cuſtoms, and manners. Similar ſituations will, no doubt, create an identity of ideas. Hunting and war ſeem to be the ſole buſineſs of nations in rude times, and it is no matter of ſurprize, that there ſhould ariſe, from theſe occupations, a great affinity not only of ſome characteriſtical cuſtoms but even of language. It is not therefore with a deſign of ſtrengthening the tradition preſerved by Bede, that I give this parallel to the public, being perſuaded that a ſimilarity of a few ſtriking cuſtoms is too feeble an argument for deducing the Caledonians from the old Germans, when common reaſon declares againſt a migration of this ſort in ſuch early times.

The military character of the Caledonians and Germans were very ſimilar. As they fought with the ſame ſpirit, ſo they uſed the ſame kind of weapons; the ſword, dart, and ſhield. The ſwords of

‡ Tacit. Vita Agric. c. 26.

Germany were long and unwieldy *. Thoſe of Caledonia were equally enormous. It was this very circumſtance that gave a fatal diſadvantage to her braveſt ſons in the battle they fought againſt Agricola near the Grampian mountains †.

We are told by Tacitus, that the German ſpear was immoderately long ‡; and every one converſant in the hiſtory of Scotland muſt know that the ſpear uſed of old in that country was remarkable in point of length.

Virgil ſpeaks of a weapon properly Teutonic, which he calls *Cateia* §. All the commentators, down from old Servius, and together with them all the compilers of dictionaries, have miſtaken the meaning of that word. *Cateia* is undoubtedly of a Celtic original, and in the Galic dialect of that tongue, ſignifies a *fiery dart* **. We learn from Cæſar that ſuch darts were uſed by the Perſians, a Belgic nation of German extract ††.

The compoſitions of their ancient bards were the only records known to the old Caledonians. In one of theſe compoſitions, Cuchullin, the ſame hero that is ſo much celebrated in Oſſian's poems, is ſaid to have

* Plut. in Mario. † Tacit. in Vita Agric. c. 26.
‡ Ann. l. ii. p. 49. Ed. Lips.
§ Teutonico ritu Soliti torquere Cateias. Æn. vii. v. 740.
** Bullet. Dictionnaire Celt. vol. ii. p. 608.
†† Tacit. de moribus Germ.

killed his friend Ferda in a miſtake, with a dart *kindled into a devouring flame by the ſtrength of wind* *.

The Caledonian ſhield was ſhort and narrow †. That of Germany was contrived in much the ſame manner ‡. The authority of that excellent writer §, who ſeems to have ſtudied the real character of the two nations better than any other, has decided this point.

The Germans painted their ſhields with beautiful colours ‖. The old Britons adopted that cuſtom. The rhimes of our ancient bards ſpeak frequently of *ſhields ſtained with red.*

Dio relates that the Caledonians upon whom Severus made war were armed with that ſort of dagger, which the Engliſh call *Durk*, and the Welſh, Iriſh, and Scots, *Bidog*. This appears likewiſe from an antique ſtone dug out of the remains of Antonine's wall, and preſerved among the curioſities belonging to the univerſity of Glaſgow. On that ſtone are exhibited two Caledonian captives, and each with a *Durk* hanging down before him.

* That is, by a blackſmith's bellows. The words in the Galic original, are *Gathbulig* and *Craoſach-dhearg*, words of the ſame import with Cæſar's *jaculum ferveſactum*, and Virgil's *Cateia* or *Ga-tie*, i. e. *Gath* or *Cath*, a dart, and *tei*, of fire. The only difference is, that the Galic words are more poetically turned.

† Herod. l. iii. 47. ‡ Tacit. An. lib. iii. p. 47. Vit. Ag. c. 36.

§ Tacitus. ‖ Seneca, in Apololocynthoiſi.

I CANNOT

I CANNOT ſay whether all the Germanic nations uſed this kind of dagger; but the Saxons certainly did, if we may credit Windichindus, an author born of Saxon parents *; and it deſerves notice, that the picture of a Saxon ſoldier, as it is drawn by that author, is in every one of its lines like that of a Highlander of the laſt age, or genuine Caledonian.

HERODIAN, in his deſcription of theſe barbarous nations of Britain, who fought againſt Severus, takes occaſion to obſerve, that they reckoned helmets and coats of mail abſolute incumbrances. The country they inhabited was full of lakes, moraſſes, and inacceſſible faſtneſſes, and that was the reaſon, according to him, why they uſed no ſuch inſtruments of defence †. But the true reaſon ſeems to have been either a brave contempt for ſuch unmanly impediments, or a natural attachment to the cuſtoms of their forefathers. The Germanic nations, in Trajan's time, had very few coats of mail, and ſcarce any helmets ‡. If we go back beyond that period, it may be preſumed they had none at all.

UPON a compariſon of the weapons uſed by the Gauls with thoſe of the Germans, it will be eaſily found that the difference was very conſiderable: and hence ſome might infer, that the Caledonians borrowed the faſhion of their arms from the latter rather than from the former.

* See Cambd. Brit. Art. Saxons. † Herod. lib. iii. v. 47.
‡ Tacit. de mor. Germ. p. 437. Ed. Lips.

THE ſhields of the Gauls were long, and their darts ſhort. To prove this aſſertion ſeveral paſſages might be quoted from ancient authors. But one authority is ſufficient; that paſſage in the Æneid, where, among a great variety of very beautiful figures, the picture of a Gauliſh ſoldier is ſo finely drawn by Virgil *.

THE armies of the old Germans were made up of ſeparate tribes. Their battalions conſiſted of men who had a natural connection with each other, men who had the ſame common intereſt in view, were engaged in the ſame purſuits of glory, and ſtrongly cemented by an inviolable attachment to the ſame Chieftain. Tacitus, who probably underſtood the art of war, as he undoubtedly did the art of thinking juſtly, ſeems to give his hearty approbation to this part of the German diſcipline †.

"IN a day of battle, ſays that author, the Chieftain thinks it highly diſhonourable to yield. His warriors follow his path in the field with the moſt undaunted emulation and vigour. To die for him is their utmoſt ambition. But to ſurvive his death, and to leave him dead in the field, are actions of everlaſting infamy and diſgrace. The Chieftain fights for victory, the warriors for the Chieftain ‡."

* Galli per dumos aderant
Duo quiſque alpina coruſcant
Gæſa manu, ſcutis protecti corpora longis. Æneid viii. v. 660, &c.

† Tacit. de mor. Germ. cap. 7. ‡ Tacit. ibid. cap. 14.

THE

THE Caledonians of Agricola's time were made up of ſeveral different tribes, and theſe headed by independent Chieftains or Kings. Galgacus was no more than one of theſe petty ſovereigns. An univerſal monarchy was unknown in North Britain till the ninth century; and after that form of government was eſtabliſhed there, every diſtinct tribe or ſmall nation fought, in a day of battle, under its own Chieftain or Lord. Theſe Lords and Chieftains were accounted the common fathers of the nations or communities at the head of which their birth and merit had placed them. They were the great protectors of all, the hope and dread of every individual, and the common center of union, being equally dear to their kinſmen, their vaſſals, and their clients. It is natural to believe, without having recourſe to hiſtory, that their friends and dependents would have riſqued their lives in the ſervice of their Chieftains with greater zeal and alacrity than any hireling ſoldier will be apt to do for a Prince who happens to wear an imperial Crown.

AMONG the Germans there was a powerful nation diſtinguiſhed by the name of Arians, of whom we have the following account. "The Arians are peculiarly fierce, and they ſtudy to heighten their natural ferocity by the help of art, and favourable opportunities. Their ſhields are black, their bodies are painted, and they make choice of the darkeſt nights for fighting their battles. The conſequence is, that by the horrible appearance they make, and by the dreary aſpect of their death-like armies, their enemies

muſt be greatly terrified: nor can any of theſe ſtand out againſt ſuch new, and one may ſay, infernal objects; for the eyes of men are firſt of all overcome in battles *."

It is needleſs to ſay that the Caledonians painted their bodies like the Arians, and with the ſame deſign: nor will it be denied that the Britons of the South were once addicted to the ſame cuſtom. Were we to admit the German extraction of the Picts, we might alſo ſuppoſe that this cuſtom travelled Southward from Caledonia.

It is an opinion generally received, that the firſt inhabitants of South Britain came thither from Gaul. The vicinity of the two countries, and that cloſe ſimilarity which the Romans found in the religion, language and character of the reſpective inhabitants of the two countries, are the arguments with which Tacitus endeavours to eſtabliſh this opinion; and theſe arguments are more than plauſible. But whether the ancient inhabitants of South Britain came in general from the Belgic, Celtic, or Aquitanic diviſion of Gaul, is a point which neither hiſtorians nor antiquaries have determined. That they came from the Belgic Gaul is undoubtedly the moſt probable hypotheſis. But ſhould it be ſuppoſed and allowed, that the three ſeveral diviſions of Gaul ſent their ſeveral colonies into this iſland, it will be difficult to prove that any of theſe colonies could have imported the faſhion of painting their bodies. Their mother country was an abſolute ſtranger to a

* Tacit. de mor. Germ. cap. 43.

cuſtom

cuſtom ſo barbarous when they became firſt known to the Romans. It is therefore not improbable that the cuſtom of painting faces and limbs, to ſtrike the enemy with terror, aroſe firſt from the ſuperior barbariſm of the Caledonians, and travelled Southward to the Britons, who had come in a later and more civilized period from Gaul.

The inhabitants of the Southern and Northern diviſions of Britain muſt have had ſome intercourſe, either in a hoſtile or a friendly way. And ſhould it be ſuppoſed that the Brigantes of South Britain were more than once intimidated by the horrible figures imprinted on the bodies of their Northern enemies, and of courſe vanquiſhed in ſeveral battles, it was natural enough for them to aſſume the ſame artificial ferocity which had given their enemies ſo manifeſt an advantage. The faſhion of painting, being thus introduced into South Britain, was probably diffuſed in a courſe of ages, over all that part of the iſland, and the ſooner ſo that it had been practiſed with ſucceſs by the Brigantes, a people remarkably brave, numerous and powerful.

Should the ſuppoſition now made be thought not abſurd, it will be aſked in the next place, how this barbarous cuſtom of painting was introduced into Caledonia. It is difficult to ſay, unleſs it aroſe, as I have ſaid, from the ſuperior barbarity of a people living in a mountainous country. The abettors of the Germanic extraction of the Caledonians might draw a plauſible argument from ſo characteriſtical a cuſtom. The Arians of Germany, and the Caledonians of

Britain, were men of much the ſame character. Each of theſe nations was wild and ferocious. Each of them took care to heighten their innate ferocity by the help of art. Both nations exerted their whole ſtrength of ingenuity, in giving themſelves the moſt dreadful aſpect poſſible; and to attack their enemy in the night time was one of thoſe military arts which they practiſed in common *. It would therefore be a more rational ſyſtem, to derive the original of the Caledonian Britons from the German Arians, than to draw their deſcent from the *Agathyrſi*, according to the opinion of Stillingfleet and Boece †.

Cæsar has drawn a parallel between the Gauls and Germans. Upon comparing the manners and cuſtoms of thoſe two great nations with thoſe of the Caledonians, one may eaſily perceive that the cuſtoms of the latter bear a much nearer reſemblance to the old Germans than to the Gauls.

* Tacit. ut ſupra, et in Vita Agric.

† The Agathyrſi were ſettled in a diviſion of Sarmatia, at no ſmall diſtance from the ſea ‡. The Geloni, another nation who uſed paint in Sarmatia, lay to the Eaſt of the Boryſthenes. It is not therefore eaſy to ſuppoſe that either the Agathyrſi or Geloni could tranſmit their cuſtom of painting, or tranſport themſelves into Britain. The ſeas that lay neareſt to them, were the Palus Mæotis, the Euxine, and the Baltic: neither can it be reaſonably ſuppoſed that they had any tolerable knowledge of navigation; and if the practice they made of painting was a good foundation for the ſtrange conjecture made by Boece, a ſimilar practice that prevailed among thoſe Ethiopians in the army of Xerxes ⸸ will furniſh any one elſe with another genealogical account of the Caledonians equally authentic.

‡ Vide Celt. Not. Orb. Ant. in Sarmatia. ⸸ Herodot. lib. vii. c. 69.

"THE Germans, ſays Cæſar, differ greatly in their manners from the Gauls. They neither have Druids to preſide in religious affairs, nor do they mind ſacrifices. Their whole lives are employed either in hunting or in cultivating the arts of a military life. They inure themſelves early to toil and hardſhips. They are clad with ſkins or ſhort mantles made of fur, ſo that a great part of their bodies is naked. To agriculture they give little or no attention. Their food conſiſts principally of milk, cheeſe, and fleſh. The only perſons among them who have a property in land, are their magiſtrates and Princes. Theſe give annually to the tribes and families who aſſociate together under their protection, as much ground as they think proper, and where they ſee moſt convenient. In the enſuing year theſe great men oblige their dependents to ſhift their ſettlements.

"WHEN a German nation is engaged in a war, either defenſive or offenſive, they inveſt the general to whom they commit the management of it, with a power of life and death. In time of peace they have no public magiſtrate: the Chiefs of the ſeveral diſtricts and Clans diſtribute juſtice and decide controverſies among thoſe under their juriſdiction. Robbery is attended with no degree of infamy, if committed without the territories of the nation to which the robber belongs: nor do theſe men ſcruple to affirm before the world, that in order to exerciſe the youth, and to put a ſtop to the growth of effeminacy, that practice muſt be not only indulged, but encouraged.

In their public aſſemblies when any of their Chieftains undertakes to go at the head of ſuch an expedition, thoſe who give their approbation to his deſign riſe up before the aſſembly, enliſt themſelves in the ſervice, and are applauded by the multitude. They who break their engagements are reckoned traitors * and deſerters: nor do they ever after recover their former honour †."

"The Britons of the North, ſays Dio, till no ground, but live upon prey, hunting, and the fruits of the wood. They dwell in tents, naked and without ſhoes. They take peculiar pleaſure in committing depredations. They endure hunger, cold, and every kind of hardſhip with wonderful patience ‡."

The principal lines of this picture are extremely like thoſe of the original we have been juſt now viewing; and the more we compare the accounts which ancient authors have given of the reſpective nations, the more we are ſtruck with their ſimilarity in genius and manners. Dio has indeed obſerved that the Caledonians went naked; but it may be preſumed, that he meant no more than that they were

* One would think that Cæſar, in this paſſage, copied the manners of an American tribe of Indians upon a like occaſion. This is the very method uſed by them in their aſſemblies, when they reſolve on a war. There is a wonderful ſimilarity between all nations in the firſt ſtage of ſociety.

† Cæſ. de Bel. Gal. lib. vi. cap. 21, 22, 23.

‡ Dio, lib. lxxii.

poorly clad. This is all that Eumenius, the panegyriſt, has ſaid concerning the habits of thoſe Picts who fought againſt the Britons of the South, before Cæſar invaded this iſland: and Cæſar himſelf has told us that thoſe who inhabited the inland parts of Britain in his time were cloathed with ſkins *. Whatever the opinion of Dio may have been on this ſubject, it is certain, that the Caledonians could hardly ſecure their lives againſt the natural ſeverity of their climate, without ſome ſort of cloathing, notwithſtanding all their conſtitutional vigour and acquired hardineſs.

It muſt be acknowledged that Herodian likewiſe ſeems to make the inhabitants of North Britain a naked people. His words are, "Theſe barbarians are ſtrangers to the uſe of cloaths, but they trim their bellies and necks with iron trappings, being poſſeſſed with a belief that iron is ornamental and a ſign of opulence, in the ſame manner that gold is eſteemed by other nations. They mark their bodies with a variety of figures reſembling many different animals. For this reaſon they take care not to cover their bodies, for fear of concealing theſe figures †.

But this author has told us in the paſſage immediately preceeding that now quoted, that theſe barbarians were far from being totally naked, the greateſt part only of their bodies being ſo; and that muſt in all probability have been true.

* Cæſar de Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 14. † Herod. lib. iii. cap. 47.

The Greeks and Romans knew very little concerning the habits of the Caledonians, excepting thoſe they wore in a day of battle. Upon ſuch occaſions they were indeed very ſlightly clad, if cloathed at all. Before the engagement began they threw away their upper garments, and marched up to the enemy having only a piece of thin ſtuff wrapped about their middle. The Highlanders of Scotland inherited the ſame cuſtom ſo late as the battle of Killicranky, in which they fought in their ſhirts, having laid by their plaids and ſhort coats before the action began. The old Germans behaved in the very ſame manner upon ſimilar occaſions.

Those who are very meanly or thinly clad are in common converſation called naked. Agreeable to this uſual form of ſpeech, Virgil adviſes the Italian farmer whether in ploughing or ſowing his ground to work *naked;* that is to ſay, without that part of his garb that was no more than a real incumbrance to him †.

Besides the ſkins of beaſts worn by the Caledonians, like the more barbarous inhabitants of Britain and Germany, there is reaſon to believe that they imitated the latter in another part of their habit. The Germans wore woollen mantles, and theſe ſometimes party-coloured, though generally otherwiſe. A mantle of the latter kind was by the Romans called *Sagum*, and a party-

† Nudus ara ſere nudus. Virg.

coloured

coloured one either *Sagum* or *Braccæ* promiſcuouſly. The only garment of an ordinary German was, according to Tacitus, a mantle tacked together with a *Fibula*, or if that ſhould be wanting they uſed a pin *. The *Fibula* was a buckle or ring made of a thin plate of ſilver, braſs, or iron, with a needle running through the middle and joined to the buckle at one end. But if the perſon who wore the mantle was too poor to afford the fibula, a ſkewer made either of wood or bone was formed to anſwer its uſe. The buckle or ſkewer kept the two upper corners of the mantle together.

It muſt be allowed that the writers of ancient hiſtory are ſilent as to the garb worn by the Caledonians, Picts, and Scots: but in a matter of this kind, we may ſafely depend on the faith of tradition, eſpecially when ſupported by immemorial cuſtom; and we are informed by both, that the moſt ancient inhabitants of North Britain were clad with a *Sagum* tacked together about the neck with either a pin or buckle. If the *Sagum* was of one colour, it was called, in the language of the country, *Plaide:* if party-coloured or ſtreaked with different dyes, it was called *Breaccan.*

Varro obſerved that the word *Sagum* is of Celtic extract. The word *Braccæ* is ſo likewiſe. In the Galic tongue, which is perhaps the moſt genuine branch of

* Tegumen omnibus ſagum, fibula aut ſi deſit ſpina conſertum. Cætera intecti, &c. Locupletiſſimi veſte diſtinguuntur. Stricta et ſingulos artus exprimente *.

* Tacit. de mor. Germ. p. 442.

the

the old Celtic, *Saic* ſignifies a ſkin or hide. The Germans, like many other uncivilized nations, covered themſelves with ſkins before they began to manufacture woollen ſtuffs; and as *Saic* was the name of their original garb, it is highly probable, that after the woollen mantle was introduced in its place, they gave it the well known name of their former covering. This conjecture is ſo much the more plauſible that the form of their mantle was in a great degree ſimilar to that of their old covering.

If we conſult either lexicographers, or the writers of notes critical and explanatory, we ſhall find ſome difficulty in ſettling the preciſe meaning of the word *Bracca*. But every Highlander in Britain knows that the *Bracca* was an upper garment of diverſe colours. The very word is to this day preſerved in the Galic language, with the addition of only a ſingle letter, and, in the ſame language, any thing that is party-coloured is conſtantly diſtinguiſhed by the epithet *Breac*.

Blue was the favourite colour among the Caledonians*, or at leaſt the moſt prevalent. That their women of quality uſed blue mantles may be concluded from a paſſage of Claudian †, as well as from tradition.

The

* Solin. cap. xxxv.

† Inde Caledonico velata Britannia monſtro
Ferro Picta genas, cujus veſtigia verrit
Cærulus, oceanique æſtum mentitur amictus.
Claud. Imprim. Con. Stil.

In

THE only or principal difference between the dreſs of the males and females was, that the mantle of the latter flowed down to their ankles, as it did among the women of Germany. The uſe of the *Fibula* was common both to the men and the women of Caledonia *.

IT would be no difficult matter to carry the parallel between the Germans and Caledonians much further. Thoſe who have enquired with care into the primæval ſtate of North Britain, will ſee the compariſon in a much ſtronger light, upon peruſing, with attention, that admirable treatiſe of Tacitus concerning Germany and its inhabitants. There is certainly a ſtrong unifor-

In this paſſage Britain is perſonified by the poet, and is painted in the cheeks, and clad with a blue mantle in the Pictiſh manner. It is hardly poſſible to make ſenſe of the words without taking them in this view.

* I have it from very good authority, that a large ſilver buckle, once worn by Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, was till of late in the poſſeſſion of Macdougal, of Dunolly, a gentleman in Argyleſhire. Bruce, after the fatal battle of Methven, found himſelf under the neceſſity of flying to the Highlands, attended by only a ſmall band of truſty friends. Macdougal, of Lorn, one of the anceſtors of the gentleman now mentioned, being in the Engliſh intereſt, attacked that illuſtrious Prince in his flight, and overpowered him with ſuperior numbers. Bruce performed prodigies of valour, in a narrow paſs where he poſted himſelf ſingly till all his friends were out of danger; but he was forced at length to give way, and in his retreat loſt his upper garment, or at leaſt the buckle with which it was faſtened. This ſcuffle in which Bruce was thus worſted, is ſung by Barbour, an old Scottiſh bard.

mity

mity between all nations in a barbarous ſtate. The ſimilarity muſt be much more apparent between nations originally ſprung from the ſame ſource. But it evidently appears to any one acquainted with the early hiſtory of the Germans and Caledonians, that the conformity between them, in point of cuſtoms and national manners, is much more ſtriking than between the Caledonians and Britons †. This ſeems greatly to favour the opinion of Tacitus, and the tradition preſerved by Bede. But it muſt be confeſſed, that nothing deciſive can be ſaid on this head, though I intend to do all juſtice to the ſyſtem of the ſuppoſed Germanic extraction of the Caledonians.

THE great objection againſt the ſyſtem is, that as in that early period wherein North Britain was peopled, the art of building and navigating veſſels muſt have been either totally unknown, or very imperfectly underſtood in Germany, it is much more probable that the firſt inhabitants of Caledonia came rather from the Southern diviſion of the iſland, than from any part of the Northern continent, at the diſtance of ſeveral days ſailing from any part of Britain *.

THIS indeed is a very plauſible argument, and difficult to be obviated; at the ſame time it is not eaſy to aſcertain the period of time in which the Germans could firſt venture to commit themſelves, with ſafety, to the ocean.

† Sir William Temple. * Innes, Crit. Eſſay, p. 71.

We know from good authority, that the *Suiones* of Germany had very conſiderable fleets, either in the Baltic or in the Northern ocean, in Trajan's time *; of conſequence it may be preſumed, that they knew the art of building and navigating ſhips much earlier. The Teutones, who fought againſt Caius Marius, muſt have had ſome tolerable veſſels to tranſport themſelves and their families to Germany from the Northern parts of Scandinavia, when they went upon their celebrated expedition towards the South of Europe. This being the caſe, there is but little abſurdity in ſuppoſing that the anceſtors of the ſame Teutones, or of the Suiones, or of ſome other maritime nation in the Weſtern part of Germany, might have ventured upon a voyage to North Britain, five or ſix hundred years, at leaſt, before the Suiones made ſuch a conſiderable figure at ſea in the reign of Trajan. It does not appear that the Gauls underſtood ſea affairs much ſooner than the Germans. If the Phenicians made early voyages to the coaſt of Gaul, the ſame love of gain that carried them thither would have led them likewiſe to the maritime parts of Germany; and nothing could hinder the Allemans, any more than the Gauls, from learning the more ſimple branches of ſhip building and navigation.

It may indeed be ſaid that the Gauls might have eaſily learned the art of building ſhips from the Phocœans of Maſilia, who were ſettled among them, and conſequently might have underſtood ſea affairs much

* Tacit. Lips. p. 450.

earlier than the Germans. But South Britain muſt have been peopled, if we can judge from appearances, before the Phocœans poſſeſſed themſelves of the Maſſilian diſtrict of Gaul, an event which happened about five hundred years before the birth of Chriſt *.

WITHOUT admitting an early knowlege of navigation, it is difficult to account how the Belgic Gauls tranſported themſelves into Britain. They certainly could not ſtow themſelves, their wives, children, and cattle, in *Currachs*. They muſt, in ſhort, have veſſels of a larger and better conſtruction. Should this be allowed, what could hinder the anceſtors of thoſe Saxons, Frieſians, Normans, and Oſtmans, who harraſſed the Southern parts of Europe in after ages, from having veſſels equally good with thoſe of Gaul, or from making voyages into a country at the diſtance of a few days ſailing? The Saxons infeſted the coaſt of Britain under the reign of Diocletian; and if we can give credit to Saxo Grammaticus, the Danes invaded Britain ſeveral ages before the Roman enſigns were diſplayed there. But be that as it will, it is certain that the maritime nations of Germany and Scandia were very bold adventurers at ſea, before the Roman empire began to decline; and they may have been ſo much ſooner, though the Greek and Roman hiſtories are ſilent upon that head.

IF it ſhould be ſaid, that the firſt Belgic colonies made their way into Britain in *Curachs* or boats made

* Juſt. lib. xliii. c. 3.

of wicker and ox hides, it may be anſwered, that theſe *Curachs* muſt then have been conſiderably larger than thoſe uſed for many ages by ſeveral barbarous nations upon rivers and narrow ſounds. The Belgic colonies who tranſmigrated into Britain, had originally cattle to carry along with them in their tranſports: and there is no reaſon to believe that the ancient inhabitants of Britanny, Normandy, or Picardy, had more ſkill to build veſſels fit for a national migration, or more courage to uſe them than the ancient inhabitants of Holland, Frieſland, Weſtphalia, Saxony, or Denmark. It is true, the latter lay at a greater diſtance from Britain: but if the Britons of Lucan's time ventured out into the ocean in *Curachs* *, the old Germans might have likewiſe done ſo. Should they even be too timid or unſkilful to make at once a croſs voyage to Caledonia, it was always in their power, after coaſting the Belgic Gaul and South Britain, to arrive at laſt in the Northern diviſion of this iſland.

FROM the parallel drawn between the Germans and Caledonians, and the obſervations I have made on the ſuppoſed ſtate of navigation in thoſe times, it muſt be owned that there is ſome additional ſtrength given to Bede's tradition, and the remark of Tacitus. But after all, the Gauliſh deſcent of the Caledonians is the moſt natural and the leaſt liable to objections. In the obſcurity which involves ſo early a period, probability muſt take place of all arguments drawn from the ſimilarity

* Lucani Pharſ. lib. iv. ver. 130, et ſeq.

of manners and cuſtoms which invariably ſubſiſts among all barbarous nations; at the ſame time, I am actually of opinion, that the Caledonians and Germans deſcended originally from the ſame Gauliſh ſtock.

The Gauls who firſt poſſeſſed themſelves of Britain, might eaſily, at the ſame time, ſend colonies beyond the Rhine. In a courſe of ages the inhabitants of Gaul, as they poſſeſſed a fine climate and ſoil, naturally formed themſelves into regular governments and communities, and made a more rapid progreſs towards civilization than the Celto-Germanic colonies they ſent beyond the Rhine, and which, from the nature of the country they poſſeſſed, muſt longer remain in a ſtate of barbarity. In proceſs of time the Gauls, no doubt, from an increaſe of numbers, ſent ſucceſſive colonies to Britain. The firſt coloniſts, from the preſſure of thoſe new comers, gradually migrated to the North, till at laſt they poſſeſſed themſelves of the inacceſſible mountains of Caledonia. There they not only found ſecurity to themſelves but to their original cuſtoms and language, which, from the ſimplicity of a life ſpent in hunting, ſuffered very few innovations. The Northern Germans, certainly, from ſimilar circumſtances, gradually had moved towards the Baltic, and had the ſame opportunities of preſerving the ancient cuſtoms and language once common to the great Celtic ſtock. Thus the reſemblance between the old Germans and Caledonians is better accounted for, than from a deduction of the latter from the former in an after age.

As the Gauls, as I have above ſaid, made a quicker progreſs towards civilization than their colonies in Britain, and beyond the Rhine, ſo their language and manners ſuffered a more rapid change. The arts of civil life introduce among mankind a new form of ideas, and of courſe new words and new manners. To this, and this alone, muſt be aſcribed the difference between the Caledonians, and the Gauls and Britons of the South, in point of the conſtruction of their language, and the diverſity of a few national cuſtoms.

DISSERTATION XIII.

Of the Degrees and Titles of Honour among the Scots of the Middle Ages. Of obſolete Law Terms in Regiam Majeſtatem. Of the Merchetæ Mulierum.

THE Galic dialect of the old Celtic was the common language of the greateſt part of Scotland, from time immemorial, down to the eleventh century. The Scots who lay to the South of Clyde and the Forth had, for ſeveral ages before the æra now aſſigned, a good deal of intercourſe with the Saxons of Bernicia and Deira. That diviſion of Scotland was, at intervals, ſubject to a Saxon government *. Some of the Scots Kings were Lords of Cumberland, before their acceſſion to the throne, and kept their little courts in that part of England. From theſe circumſtances we may conclude, that the Saxon tongue prevailed in the Southern diviſion of North Britain for a conſiderable time before it croſſed the Firth of Edinburgh, in its progreſs to the North.

* Bede.

TOGE-

TOGETHER with the language, cuſtoms and laws of the Saxons, Malcolm Canemore introduced Saxon or French titles of magiſtracy and honour, unknown till then in Scotland.

BEFORE that time North Britain, like other unpoliſhed countries, may be ſuppoſed to have been very defective in its laws. Hector Boece, and ſome other Scottiſh hiſtorians, have given the world an abſtract of ſome excellent laws made by Kenneth the Second and Macbeth: but their authority on this head is extremely queſtionable. There is another body of laws which are commonly attributed to Malcolm, the Second of that name, who in the year 1004 mounted the throne of Scotland: but our ableſt antiquaries have been much divided on this ſubject. The learned Sir John Skene, and Sir James Dalrymple, are poſitive that theſe laws ought to be aſcribed to Malcolm; but Dr. Nicolſon, Biſhop of Carliſle, Dr. Hickes, and before them, Sir Henry Spelman, contended for fixing them to a later period. I have thrown at the bottom of the page Spelman's own words *.

* "Skene begins the laws of Scotland with thoſe of Malcolm the Second. But it is far from being clear that the laws which go under that King's name are ſo ancient. They contain many words and terms which belong to a more modern age: beſides, they refer to cuſtoms, and names of offices, which belong to a later period. Skene likewiſe attributes to David the Firſt thoſe four books which are intitled, Regiam Majeſtatem Scotiæ. This Monarch, according to his calculation, began to reign in the year of Chriſt 1124, or about the twenty-fourth of Henry the Firſt. But Randolph de Glanville did not write his treatiſe concerning the laws and cuſtoms of England, till after

MALCOLM MACKENNETH, or the ſecond King of Scotland of that name, was cotemporary with Canute. He was long at war with the Danes and Engliſh; and it is not likely that he borrowed theſe titles of honour from either of thoſe nations. It is much more probable that his great grandſon Malcolm Canemore imported them from England. In the MacAlpine or MacKenneth laws mention is frequently made of

after the twenty-ſixth of Henry the Second's reign, that is, not till the year 1180; and they who compare this book of Glanville's, and the Regiam Majeſtatem of Scotland, will readily find ſuch an agreement and ſimilitude in them, that they muſt conclude one of the two was copied after the other. But I allow others to determine whether we have imported our ſyſtem of laws from Scotland."

"If it is impoſſible to prove that the feudal law was eſtabliſhed in England before the Norman conqueſt, it is therefore far from being probable that the ſame feudal law was known in Scotland about ſixty years before that epoch. However ancient the league between the French and the Scots may have been, it may be doubted whether Malcolm the Second had intercourſe enough with that, or any other Continental nation, to learn the conſtitution of their government, or to know even their titles of dignity and honour, ſo as to transfer them into his own kingdom. It is hardly credible that he could have been the author of thoſe laws which give exact deſcriptions of the offices of chancellor, juſticiary chamberlain, ſteward of the houſhold, conſtable, mariſchal, ſheriff, provoſt, baillies of burghs, together with the privileges and juriſdiction of barons. "The Britons, ſays Cambden, diſown the name of barons: nor is there any thing ſaid with regard to it in the Saxon laws. The firſt mention of this title that I have met with, is in a fragment of the laws made by Canute the Great †." See Spelman's Gloſſary, under the words Lex Scotorum.

† Britannia, under the article, Degrees of England.

earls,

earls *, among the barons. Sir James Dalrymple infers from this circumſtance, that we had that degree of honour in Scotland during Malcolm the ſecond's reign †. But the argument is not concluſive, till it is admitted that that Monarch was the author of the MacAlpine laws; and if the ancient copy to which the learned knight appeals, be a ſufficient authority to aſcribe theſe laws to Malcolm Mac-Kenneth, the old tradition which attributes them to MacAlpin, is an argument equally good for making them much more ancient.

EARL is originally a Daniſh word, which anſwers to Conſul, Comes and Dux, of the Latin uſed in the middle ages ‡. Dalrymple infers, from two or three concluſive authorities, that we had Comites and Vice-comites in Scotland before the reign of Malcolm the Second §. But he allows that this title of dignity was not hereditarily annexed to families, till the time of Malcolm Canemore. The Scots hiſtorians accordingly tell us, that MacDuff, Thane of Fife, was the firſt that obtained the hereditary title of Earl to his family.

BUCHANAN || ſays, that there was no title of honour in Scotland ſuperior to that of Knight, excepting thoſe of the Thanes and Juſticiaries, before the reign of Malcolm the Second. But it is not even certain that there were gentlemen of the *equeſtrian order* in

* Collections, p. 146.

† Comites.

‡ Spelm. Gloſſ. under the word Eorla.

§ Collect. p. 146.

|| Rer. Scot. lib. 6. cap. 52.

Scotland ſo early *. Cambden and Spelman ſuppoſe, that the origin of this dignity muſt be inveſtigated among the ancient Germans. They quote the following paſſage from Tacitus: "Among the Germans, it is never cuſtomary for any man to carry arms till the community have firſt given their approbation. That done, one of the principal nobility, or the young man's father or relation, adorns him with a ſhield or javelin, before a public aſſembly. This ceremony confers the ſame dignity among them that the gown does among the Romans. Before their youth receive this honour, they are reckoned only a part of a private family; but from that day forth they are conſidered as members of the commonwealth †."

BEFORE the titles of Barons, Earls, Dukes, Marquiſſes and Viſcounts were imported from foreign countries, all the degrees of honour known in Scotland were, as far as I can learn, the King, the Lord, the Taniſt, and the Toſhich; together with thoſe belonging to offices, civil and eccleſiaſtical. Barons came in with the feudal law. The word Earl is of a Daniſh extract; and the language of the Danes was unknown here till after the middle of the ninth century. Robert the Third created our firſt Dukes, and James the Sixth our Marquiſes, Viſcounts and Baronets.

* We find no great mention of this order till Malcolm the Third's time. Henry Fitz-Empreſs was ſent from England to receive the honour of knighthood from David, the ſon of that Prince.

† Tacitus de mor. Germ. cap. 13.

THE

THE ancient Scots or Highlanders call the ſovereign *Ri*; the old Britons or Welſh *Rhuy*; the modern French *Roy*; the Italians *Re*; and the Spaniards *Rey*. From this ſimilarity of ſounds, and identity of ſenſe, we may reaſonably infer, that the *Rex* of the Latin is derived from the Celtic, and had originally the ſame idea affixed to it which is conveyed by the correſpondent names in the ſeveral dialects of that language.

THE meaning of *Ri* is a ruler; and among the ancients the idea of deſpotiſm was not annexed to regal government. This opinion only obtained in the Eaſt. The Celtic nations limited the regal authority to very narrow bounds. The old Monarchs of North Britain and Ireland were too weak, either to controul the pride and inſolence of the great, or to reſtrain the licentiouſneſs of the populace. Many of thoſe Princes, if we credit hiſtory, were dethroned, and ſome of them even put to death by their ſubjects; which is a demonſtration that their power was extremely circumſcribed. They were not in poſſeſſion of treaſures, to keep ſtanding armies, or to corrupt thoſe whoſe avarice might induce them to be inſtruments of tyranny.

NEXT to the King were thoſe great landholders who are called *Lords* in Engliſh, *Lairds* in Scotch, and *Tierna* in the ancient Galic. It is very probable that the Galic *Tierna*, or the Welch *Teyrn*, was

the firſt title of ſupreme dignity among the Celtic nations *.

THE Highlanders and Iriſh frequently addreſs the Supreme being under this name; and hence it may be concluded, that their anceſtors had no conception of power ſuperior to that of the *Tierna*. From the ſame conſideration we may likewiſe infer, that originally every one called Tierna was an independent Prince. It was only after many ſuch Lords had become the vaſſals of mightier Princes, that this name was given to perſons in a ſtate of ſubordination. As the Romans formed their *Rex* out of the Celtic word *Ri*, ſo the Greeks derived their Τυραννος from Tierna. The word Tyrant was originally no more odious, in the language of that nation, than King is in that of England. It were an eaſy matter to ſhow that ſome excellent Princes were ſtiled Tyrants in Greece, and agreeable to that mode of expreſſion in ancient times, Æneas gives the very ſame title to the good old Latinus.

THE third name of dignity among the Scots of ancient times was *Taniſt*, or *Taniſtear*. This word has been confounded with *Thane*, which occurs frequently in the hiſtory of Scotland. Buchanan ſays, that before the reign of Malcolm the Second, *Thane* was the

* Tierna is derived very probably from *Ti*, *The one*, by way of eminence, and *Ferran*, *Land*. *Ferran*, in the oblique caſe, produces *Eran*. So that *Tierna* is the ſame with *Tiëran*, *A man of land*, or *a great proprietor of land*.

higheſt title immediately after that of King. His explication of the word is, the Governor of a country, or the King's Lieutenant in a certain diviſion of his dominions *. Every one converſant in the hiſtory of Scotland has read of Banquho, Thane of Lochaber, MacDuff, Thane of Fife, and Somerled, Thane of Argyle.

The appellation of Thane was known in England, and common there for ſeveral ages: nor was it diſcontinued till after the Norman conqueſt. In the Saxon tongue, *Thane*, *Theger*, and *Tain*, ſignified a Servant or Miniſter †.

The Iriſh had their *Taniſt*; and in their language the meaning of that word is, the ſecond perſon, or ſecond thing ‡. It is not probable that they borrowed the title from the Engliſh, as, notwithſtanding of Bede's allegation concerning the friendly diſpoſition of the Iriſh towards the Saxons of the ſixth and ſeventh centuries, they had a mortal averſion to the Engliſh; and before the conqueſt of Ireland by Henry the Second, the title of Taniſt became obſolete: it may therefore be preſumed that Taniſt is an ancient Galic word.

In the ſettlement of ſucceſſion, the law of Taniſtry prevailed in Ireland from the earlieſt accounts of

* Præter Thanos hoc eſt præfectos Regionum. Buchan. in Milcolm.

† Spelman's Gloſſary, under theſe words.

‡ See Lhoyd's Iriſh Dictionary.

time.

time. "According to that law, ſays Sir James Ware §, the hereditary right of ſucceſſion was not maintained among the Princes or the Rulers of countries; but the ſtrongeſt, or he who had moſt followers, very often the eldeſt and moſt worthy of the deceaſed King's blood and name, ſucceeded him. This perſon, by the common ſuffrage of the people, and in the lifetime of his predeceſſor, was appointed to ſucceed, and was called *Taniſt*, that is to ſay, the ſecond in dignity. Whoever received this dignity, maintained himſelf and followers, partly out of certain lands ſet apart for that purpoſe, but chiefly out of tributary impoſitions, which he exacted in an arbitrary manner; impoſitions, from which the lands of the church only, and thoſe of perſons veſted with particular immunities, were exempted."

THE ſame cuſtom was a fundamental law in Scotland for many ages. Upon the death of a King, the throne was not generally filled by his ſon, or daughter failing of male iſſue, but by his brother, uncle, couſin-german, or near relation of the ſame blood. The perſonal merit of the ſucceſſor, the regard paid to the memory of his immediate anceſtors, or his addreſs in gaining a majority of the leading men, frequently advanced him to the crown, notwithſtanding the precautions taken by his predeceſſor.

THE hiſtory of the Saxon heptarchy, or that of the Engliſh monarchy, down to the time of the conqueſt,

§ Antiq. and Hiſt. of Ireland, chap. 8.

ſhews,

ſhews, that the law of Taniſtry was very often the rule obſerved in the ſucceſſion of Sovereigns. No great regard was paid to hereditary right: the King's brother was frequently preferred to his ſon; a baſtard Prince ſometimes took place of a legitimate one; and the will of the laſt reigning Sovereign had more than once excluded the lineal heir.

It is plain that the law of Taniſtry had a natural tendency to embroil families, countries and kingdoms. In all the places where it prevailed, domeſtic feuds, provincial inſurrections, and national wars, muſt have been unavoidably frequent. But as the Scots and Iriſh, and almoſt every other Celtic nation, made arms the great occupation of life, they thought it highly inexpedient to intruſt the direction of the ſtate to infants, minors, or unexperienced youths. With them it was the moſt eſſential conſideration to have a brave and diſintereſted Prince, who had been inured to war, and who could lead them into the field, inſpire them with ſpirit, and ſupport them with conduct. They conſidered the King at once as the ſubject and leader of the community.

In Ireland the law of Taniſtry not only determined the regal ſucceſſion, but likewiſe extended to every great eſtate poſſeſſed by a ſubject. The Lord of every country, and the Chief of every *Sept* was ſucceeded, not by his ſon or next heir, but by the Taniſt, who was elective, and who frequently procured his

election by force of arms *. In Scotland the case was much the same, till the establishment of the feudal law, and in some places long after that period.

In the Highlands and Western Isles the Tierna's next brother claimed a third † part of the estate during life, by virtue of a right founded on an immemorial custom. It is not above two hundred years back since the Tanistry regulation, and the disputes consequent upon it, prevailed in the Highlands. There have been some instances of it much later.

Toshich was another title of honour which obtained among the Scots of the middle ages. Spelman imagined that this dignity was the same with that of the Thane ‡. But the Highlanders, among whose predecessors the word was once common, distinguish carefully in their language the *Toshich* from the *Tanistair*, or the *Tierna*. When they enumerate the different classes of their great men, agreeable to the language of former times, they make use of these three titles, in the same sentence, with a disjunctive adverb between them.

In Galic, *Tus*, *Tos*, and *Toshich*, signify the *beginning*, or *the first part* of any thing, and sometimes the front of an army or battle §. Hence the name

* Sir John Davis's Histor. Relations of Ireland.
† Trian Tiernis.
‡ Spelm. Gloss. under the word Thane.
§ See Lhoyd's Irish Dictionary.

Toshich;

Toſhich *; that is to ſay, the General, or Leader of the van. The interpretation now given of the word

* The Moguls or Calmachs give the name of *Taiſha* to their heads of tribes, and that of *Contaiſha* to their Great Chan.—— *Can* itſelf is the ſame with the *Cean* of the Galic, ſignifying *Head*, and metaphorically the head of a family; ſo that *Cantaiſha*, or grand Chan, would be expreſſed by a Highlander *Cantoiſhich*. Here it is worthy to remark the connection between the old Mogul or Tartar language and the Celtic. This connection offers ſome kind of preſumption that they ſprung from the ſame original ſtock. The great river Oxus, called by the Tartars *Amu*, which, riſing in mount Imaus, once diſcharged itſelf in the Caſpian ſea, but now, having changed its courſe, falls into the lake of *Aral*, naturally divides Aſia into almoſt two equal parts. The Tartars, and ſome other Eaſtern nations, called that diviſion which lies to the South-weſt *Iran*, that to the North-eaſt *Turan*, which are plainly Celtic words. *Iran* is compounded of *Iar*, South-weſt, and *ran*, diviſion; and *Turan*, in the ſame manner, is compoſed of the two words *Tua* and *ran*, which ſignify the Northern country or diviſion. See *Abul Ghazi*'s Hiſt. of Tartary, vol. ii. p. 541.

It were eaſy to purſue the ſimilarity between the Tartar and Celtic languages much farther. I ſhall give one other inſtance. The great Zingis Chan, firſt Emperor of the Moguls, being one day hunting, and perceiving a ſolitary tree, exceeding tall and beautiful, he ordered his ſons to inter him under it, after his death; which they accordingly executed with all the requiſite ceremony. There grew, in time, ſuch beautiful trees about the tomb, and in ſuch numbers, that an arrow, ſhot from a bow, could hardly find a paſſage through them. From that circumſtance, they have given to that place the name of *Barchan Caldin*; and all the Princes of the poſterity of Zingis Chan who ſince then died in thoſe provinces, have been interred in the ſame place. *Barchen Caltin* is perfectly underſtood by every Scots Highlander: it ſignifies a beautiful thicket of birch and hazel trees.——Hiſt. of Tartary, vol. ii. p. 145.

Toſhich is confirmed by the name of a conſiderable family in the Highlands of Scotland—the clan of M'Intoſh, who ſay, that they derive their pedigree from the illuſtrious MacDuff, once Thane, and afterwards Earl of Fife. MacDuff, in conſideration of his ſervices to Malcolm Canemore, obtained a grant, which gave him and his heirs a right of leading the van of the royal army on every important occaſion. The Chieftain of the clan that is deſcended from this great Earl is ſtiled *Mac in Toſhich* in Galic, that is to ſay, the Son of the General.

Ochiern, or Ogetharius, is another title of honour mentioned in the ancient laws of Scotland. Spelman, copying after Skene, ſays, that the *Oſchiern* is a perſon of the ſame dignity with a Thane's ſon; becauſe, in the laws of Regiam Majeſtatem, the *marcheta* of a Thane's daughter is equal to the marcheta of an *Ochiern*'s daughter *, as the *Cro* of a Thane was the ſame with that of an *Ochiern*. The word is undoubtedly a Galic one, contracted from *Oge-Thierna*, that is, the young Lord, or heir apparent of a landed gentleman. It is likewiſe not improbable that the Thane of our Regiam Majeſtatem is the Taniſt, or the perſon who poſſeſſed the third part of a great Lord's eſtate †.

The *Brehon*, or *Brithibh*, may be ranked, without any impropriety, among the old Scottiſh titles of

* Two kids, or twelve pennies.

† Ogetharius is derived from Oig-thear, that is, a young gentleman.

honour.

honour. The Brehons were, in North Britain and Ireland, the Judges appointed by authority to determine, on ſtated times, all the controverſies which happened within their reſpective diſtricts. Their courts were uſually held on the ſide of a hill, where they were ſeated on green banks of earth. Theſe hills were called mute hills. It may be preſumed that the Brehons were far from being deeply ſkilled in the intricate ſcience of the law, which they profeſſed. By converſing with the eccleſiaſtics in their neighbourhood, they learned ſome ſcraps of the canon law, but knew little or nothing of the civil. The cuſtoms which prevailed in the land wherein they lived, and the opinion of the times, were generally their rules of deciſion. The office belonged to certain families, and was tranſmitted, like every other inheritance, from father to ſon. Their ſtated ſalaries were farms of conſiderable value.

By the *Brehon* law even the moſt atrocious offenders were not puniſhed with death, impriſonment, or exile, but were obliged to pay a fine, called *Eric*. The eleventh or twelfth part of this fine fell to the Judge's ſhare: the remainder belonged partly to the King, or Superior of the land, and partly to the perſon injured; or if killed, to his relations.

We learn from Tacitus, that the ſame cuſtom prevailed among the ancient Germans. After he had obſerved that they hanged traitors and deſerters on trees, and that perſons, either cowardly, or infamous

for impurity, were drowned in miry lakes, he adds, "Men guilty of crimes leſs ſcandalous, were, upon conviction, fined in a number of cattle. A part of this fine was paid to the King or commonwealth, and another portion of it was given to the perſon injured, or to his neareſt friends."

In Scotland the ſame cuſtom prevailed, till within three or four hundred years ago, and in ſome diviſions of it much later. In our laws of Regiam Majeſtatem, we find it enacted, That one who, riding through a town, rides over and kills any of the inhabitants, is to pay a proper ranſom, no leſs than if he had wilfully deſtroyed him*. The name given to the ranſom in the law is *Cro* and *Galmes*. The *Cro* of every man is aſcertained, in the ſame inſtitutes, according to his quality or birth. The *Cro* of an Earl is one hundred and forty cows. The *Cro* of an Earl's ſon, or Thane, is an hundred cows. The Cro of a plebeian, or *villain*, is ſixteen. The *Cro*, *Galmes* and *Enach* of all other ranks and orders of men are particularly defined in thoſe laws.

Spelman has judiciouſly remarked, that theſe three barbarous words are of Iriſh extraction. But he did not recollect that the Galic of Scotland was much the ſame with the language of Ireland, and that the words were originally Britiſh. They certainly had once a place in the law of Scotland, though their true meaning has not been yet ſettled. The wealth of the ancient Scots, eſpecially towards the North,

* Regiam Majeſt. lib. 4. cap. 24.

conſiſted ſolely in cattle. In the language ſpoken there, *Cro* ſignifies Cows, and *Croo* a ſheepfold or Cow-pen. Agreeable to this explication of theſe two terms, a murderer is ordered by our old laws to pay the *Cro* of the perſon whom he had killed, that is, to pay the ſtated equivalent for his life, in cattle taken out of the ſlayer's pen or fold.

GALMES is a Galic word, and means a Pledge, or Compenſation for any thing that is carried away or deſtroyed *. In the ſame language, *Enach* ſtands ſometimes for the Engliſh word Bounty, and ſometimes for an Eſtimate or Ranſom.

CRO, *Galmes* and *Enach* are perhaps ſynonimous terms, according to the common language of the Scottiſh law, which is full of ſuch tautological expreſſions. If there is any real difference between theſe words in the caſe before us, they ſignify three diſtinct fines; one payable to the King, or Superior of the perſon ſlain; another to his children; and a third to his *Cinea*, or the tribe to which he belonged. Agreeable to this diſtinction of fines, the old Saxons of England obliged murderers to pay three different ranſoms, the *Fredum* to the King, the *Wergelt* to his family, and the *Linebote* to his kinſmen †.

KELCHYN is another term in the old Scottiſh law, to expreſs a mulct due by one guilty of manſlaughter.

* Gial, in the Galic, is a Pledge, and Meas an Eſtimate.

† See Spelman, under theſe words.

In

In our Regiam Majeſtatem *, the *Kelchyn* of an Earl is ſixty-ſix cows and two thirds; the Kelchyn of an Earl's ſon, or of a Thane, is forty-four cows, twenty-one pence, and two thirds of an obulus or bodle; the Kelchyn of a Thane's ſon is by a fourth part leſs than that of his father; and the law adds, that a ſwain, or perſon of low degree, is to have no ſhare of the Kelchyn.

The learned Sir John Skene obſerves, that in the ancient language of Scotland, *Gailchen* ſignifies a pecuniary mulct, to which one is made liable, for a fault or crime. Spelman differs from him only ſo far as to think the word an Iriſh one. Skene's conjecture is partly juſt, and partly otherwiſe. The Kelchyn was a mulct, but not always a pecuniary one, nor payable for every fault or crime. We ſee the Kelchyn of an Earl is ſixty-ſix cows, and two thirds of a cow. This fine belonged to the kinſmen of the perſon killed †, but to thoſe only of principal note among them.

In the old Scottiſh law, with regard to the fine paid by the murderer of an Earl, this Croo is declared to be one hundred and forty cows, and every cow priced at three Oræ. In a law of Canute the Great, quoted by Spelman ‡, fifteen Oræ, or Horæ, are made equal to a pound: and ſuppoſing the Engliſh pound of thoſe

* Reg. Majeſt. lib. 4. cap. 38.

† Kelchyn ſignifies, paid to one's kinſmen, and is derived from Gial and Cinnea.

‡ In voc. Ora.

days

days to have been twelve times as much as the Scottiſh one, and the Oræ of both nations the ſame, the pecuniary value of one cow would have been about five ſhillings ſterling. But ſhould one ſuppoſe that the Ora of North Britain was to that of the Southern diviſion, what the pounds, ſhillings and pence of the former are to thoſe of the latter, the price of a cow in Scotland was, at the time of compiling the Regiam Majeſtatem, proportionably low.

It is certain that money was extremely ſcarce in Scotland during the reign of King David the Firſt. But as we cannot well imagine that a full grown cow was ſold for the ſmall trifle of five-pence in that period, and as it is not in any degree probable that the price of it could have riſen to five ſhillings ſterling, we have here one proof, together with many more, from which it may be evinced, that the laws of Regiam Majeſtatem were framed in the time of David the Second, and not in the days of the firſt Scottiſh King of that name.

In that part of Regiam Majeſtatem which aſcertains the different Merchetæ Mulierum, the Vacca, or large Cow, is valued at ſix ſolidi, or ſhillings. The real amount of that ſolidus cannot well be determined. If an Engliſh one, the price of a cow is conſiderably greater than the eſtimate already given: if a Scottiſh, it ſinks down to a ſmall matter.

As I have entered upon the explication of law terms, it is proper to give ſome ſolution of one of them, which,

which, as it is now underſtood, leaves a reproach upon our anceſtors. The meaning of *Merchetæ Mulierum* is, according to ſome, founded upon a cuſtom which did great diſhonour to the ancient civil government of Scotland.

Some of our beſt hiſtorians give the following account of the introduction of the *Merchetæ Mulierum* among the ancient Scots. Evenus the Third, a King of Scotland, cotemporary with Auguſtus, made a law, by which he and his ſucceſſors in the throne were authorized to lie with every bride, if a woman of quality, before her huſband could approach her: and in conſequence of this law, the great men of the nation had a power of the ſame kind over the brides of their vaſſals and ſervants. We are told further by the ſame grave and learned hiſtorians, that this law was ſtrictly obſerved throughout the kingdom; nor was it diſcontinued or repealed, till after a revolution of more than ten whole centuries. It was near the end of the eleventh age, that the importunities of St. Margaret prevailed with her huſband, Malcolm Canemore, to aboliſh this unjuſtifiable cuſtom. From that time forward, inſtead of the ſcandalous liberty given to every Superior by virtue of Evenus's law, the vaſſal or ſervant was impowered to redeem the firſt night of his bride by paying a tax in money *. This tax was called Merchetæ Mulierum.

I know not whether any one has been hitherto ſceptical enough to call the truth of this tale in

* Boece ſays a merk of ſilver, Buchanan half a merk.

queſtion,

queſtion, though it wears the face of abſurdity and fable. Twenty moral demonſtrations conſpire in rendering it abſolutely incredible.

Evenus, the ſuppoſed author of the law, is no more than an imaginary being. Boece and Buchanan, with all their hiſtorical knowlege and induſtry, knew juſt as little concerning the Princes of Caledonia, coeval with Auguſtus, and of the laws eſtabliſhed by them, as the other learned men of Europe knew with regard to the Emperors of Mexico before the time of Fernando Cortez.

It is impoſſible to prove that any conſiderable diviſion of Caledonia was governed by a ſingle Monarch in the Auguſtan age. But were it true that the caſe was otherwiſe, and alſo certain that Evenus reigned in the Weſtern parts of North Britain in that very epoch, it is not credible that the Scots of that age would have granted ſo very extravagant a prerogative to their King, or ſo very uncommon a privilege to their nobility. In thoſe early times men were too fierce and intractable to crouch under a burden ſo inſupportable. To a people of ſpirit, a total extinction of freedom and property, in every other inſtance, would have been a much eaſier yoke than the ſlavery, oppreſſion and diſgrace attending ſo very ſhocking a proſtitution of their wives, daughters and kinſwomen. But had even the lower people of Scotland been the moſt abject of all ſlaves, and uncommon patterns of paſſive obedience, it cannot be ſuppoſed that all

the nobility, from age to age, would have practiſed the doctrine of non-reſiſtance, in ſuch an amazing degree of perfection, as to permit their Sovereign to violate their honour in ſo heinous a manner. We know that many Princes, beſides Tarquin, were dethroned, baniſhed, and cut to pieces, for attempting the chaſtity of women. And we may ſafely affirm, that the moſt deſpotic King or Sultan in the Eaſt would fall a ſacrifice, ſhould he endeavour to eſtabliſh the law of Evenus in that country, which has always been the ſcene of the ſevereſt exertion of arbitrary power.

Some may ſay, that the manners and opinions of men are greatly changed. But human nature was always, and will ever continue the ſame, in the matter now under conſideration. In vain will it be ſaid, that the Scots, through a long habit, became reconciled to this ignominious cuſtom. The Scots certainly were not more paſſive than the other brave nations of the world: and the hiſtory of mankind does not exhibit a ſingle inſtance of ſuch brutal inſenſibility in any nation.

The ſatyrical Gildas, who had entertained the moſt violent prejudices againſt the Scots, would not have omitted ſuch an opportunity of declaiming againſt them, with his uſual acrimony. Bede himſelf, though a writer of much greater humanity and moderation, would not have overlooked ſo remarkable a part of their character, eſpecially as he impeaches them,

more than once, of other immoralities. It would have been more to his honour to have animadverted ſeverely on ſo flagitious a practice, than to arraign them ſo frequently of heterodoxy, for a pretended error in the trivial affair of Eaſter.

If we conſider the jealouſy natural to women, it is highly improbable that the Queen of Malcolm Canemore was the firſt royal conſort in Scotland that would have ſollicited her huſband for a repeal of this infamous law. In the courſe of more than a thouſand years, which intervened between the pretended Evenus and Malcolm, there were no doubt many Queens whoſe influence with their huſbands might have abrogated this laſcivious inſtitution.—The ſtory altogether wears ſuch a face of improbability, that it is aſtoniſhing how it ever became the ſubject of tradition itſelf, and much more that it has received the ſanction of hiſtorians.

It is however certain that the Merchetæ Mulierum were once paid in Scotland, and authorized by law. But this impoſition was not peculiar to that kingdom. The Merchetæ Mulierum were, properly ſpeaking, pecuniary fines, paid by the vaſſal and ſervant to his lord and maſter, upon the marriage of his daughter, or paid by a widow upon a reiteration of nuptials: and this cuſtom obtained in every part of Britain, though with ſome variation.

I cannot determine whether the brides of England or Wales were liable to this tax before the conqueſt;

but in the reign of William the Norman they certainly were. "A woman, ſaith Domeſday book, in whatever way ſhe came by a huſband, gave twenty ſhillings to the King, if a widow; but if a maid, ten only *." That the grievance ariſing from this hard law was univerſal, or at leaſt very general, may be juſtly concluded from different articles of the charter granted by Henry the Firſt, and from the famous Magna Charta of King John.

In the fourth article of Henry's charter are the following words: "If any one of the Barons, or of the other vaſſals that hold immediately of me, ſhall incline to give his daughter, ſiſter, niece or kinſwoman in marriage, let him ſpeak to me on that ſubject: but neither ſhall I take or receive any thing from him for a marriage licence, nor ſhall I hinder him from diſpoſing of the woman as he pleaſes, unleſs he beſtow her on my enemy †."

From the immunity given in theſe words, and from the preamble of the charter, one may naturally infer, that the law of the Merchetæ had formerly prevailed in every part of England, excepting the ſingle county of Kent. After King John had given the great charter of liberties to the Barons, and after that ineſtimable right had been confirmed by his ſon, grandſon, and great grandſon, we find, that not only villains, or the loweſt claſs of people in England, were obliged to pay this fine, but thoſe too who held

* Spelman in voc. Maritag. † Matth. Paris, p. 55.

their lands in free ſoccage *. The fine was called Merchetum or Maritagium there, as it went under the name of Mercheta in Scotland.

It can ſcarcely be doubted that the feudal inſtitutions of Scotland came originally from England. The general ſpirit of the feudal laws, and the manner in which they are expreſſed, afford almoſt a demonſtration on that head. Malcolm Canemore had lived long in England, and owed very great obligations to that country. His Queen was a Saxon Princeſs, and Engliſh exiles were the great favourites of both. Malcolm's children had an Engliſh education; and after that period of time, the Engliſh language, the Engliſh ſyſtem of religion, the Engliſh dreſs, and the Engliſh law, became faſhionable in Scotland. Hence it may be inferred, that the old Scots ſtood obliged to their neighbours for the Merchetæ Mulierum, and not to Evenus, their ideal King.

We have no cauſe to believe, whatever our hiſtorians affirm on that head, that Queen Margaret eaſed the Scots from this oppreſſive tax. In Regiam Majeſtatem, the Merchetæ payable by an Earl's daughter is no leſs than twelve cows, and was a perquiſite which belonged to the Queen. The Merchetæ due by a Thane's daughter fell to the Superior, and was no more than a ſingle cow, and twelve pence, which fell to the collector's ſhare. The Merchetæ of every woman, whether virgin or widow, is determined by our oldeſt inſtitutes, and the fine payable to the Queen was by far the moſt conſiderable.

* Spelman in voc. Soke manerio.

In

It is very evident that Boece and Buchanan miſtook the origin and true meaning of the Merchetæ. According to the former, a Mark of ſilver was the compenſation demanded by Malcolm Canemore for the firſt night of the bride; a privilege to which he and his nobles had an equal right. But according to Buchanan, the very half of that pecuniary tax was all that could be required, or was given. It is ſtrange enough that theſe two authors could have differed ſo widely in this matter; and it is equally ſo, that they imagined the ſame ſum preciſely was exacted from every woman, whether of high or low rank, and whether a maid or a widow. From this circumſtance it may be juſtly concluded, that neither of theſe hiſtorians examined the old laws of their country *.

* With regard to the etymon of the word Mercheta, or Merchetum, none could be more improper than that offered by our learned countryman Skene. It carries indeed too much immodeſty in it to be laid before any delicate reader. It is very probable that the tax under conſideration was paid in England before it was impoſed in Scotland. We ſhould therefore look out for the true etymon of the Mercheta in England. The Merchetum was ſurely a pecuniary fine, and amounted at firſt to a Mark. Thoſe who have ſtudied the hiſtory of ancient coins know very well that Marks of ſilver and gold bore very different values in different countries, ages and nations †. The Engliſh Mark conſiſted of thirteen ſhillings and four-pence ſterling. The Mark of Scotland was no more than a twelfth part of that ſum. The Burgundian ounce was the eighth part of a Mark; and a Scottiſh Mark was juſt an ounce. The Daniſh Mark ſeems to have been equivalent to two denarii, or two-pence; and in ſome countries the Mark was equal to eight ounces. In ſhort, whatever the original amount of the Merchetum may have been, in all probability its etymon muſt be *Marca*, *Marcha*, or *Marchata*, three words of the very ſame meaning.

† See Spelman, under the word Marca.

DISSERTATION XIV.

Of the Bards.

A MODERN writer of ſome eminence has attempted to prove that religion was the true ſource of poetry. According to him, it was very natural for a perſon who poſſeſſed a warm imagination and a good heart, after contemplating the marvellous works of that Great Being who is the Creator and Sovereign Lord of the univerſe, to feel the ſtrongeſt emotions of admiration, gratitude and love. Filled with the idea of this grand object, he would ſoon endeavour to expreſs the awful impreſſion he felt in language. Words falling ſhort of his conceptions, he would ſtrive to ſupply that want with the tuneful ſounds of ſome muſical inſtrument. Delighted with the harmony of agreeable ſounds, he would exert his whole ſtrength in adding to his vocal praiſes the ſame numbers, meaſure, and cadence, which had been expreſſed by the action of his hands, in playing on the inſtrument *.

We are told by the moſt ancient of all hiſtorians, that the harp and organ were known in a very early

* Rollin, Bell. Let. Vol. I. book ii. art. 1.

period,

period, and it is natural to think that there had been ſome poetical compoſitions before Tubal invented thoſe inſtruments. Vocal muſic was certainly prior to the invention of inſtruments of muſic. There is no reaſon therefore to ſuppoſe but the numbers, meaſures, and cadence of verſe, were known before words were adapted to the tone of an inſtrument.

The moſt ancient ſpecimens of poetry now remaining were dedicated to the honour of the divinity. The two ſongs of Moſes, and that of Deborah, are entirely in that ſtrain. The praiſes beſtowed on men and women in the latter are introduced epiſodically, and have a manifeſt reference to the main ſubject. The lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan is in a different ſtile. Religion has little or no concern in it. The heroic exploits and untimely fate of theſe two great Princes make the whole burden of that ſong.

We may take it for granted, that the art of verſification was known and much practiſed before Moſes wrote his triumphal ode. But whether the firſt poetical eſſay was employed in the ſervice of God, or in honour of ſome great man or wonderful natural object, it is impoſſible to ſay. Poetry is the triumphant voice of joy or the broken ſighs of ſorrow and melancholy. The extreams of thoſe paſſions are moſt violent in the earlieſt ſtage of ſociety. Before the faculties of the human mind are regulated by advanced civilization, the feelings of the heart are ſtrong: and ſtrong feelings always produce that ſublimity of expreſſion which

we

we call poetry. The variety of the life of the ſavage affords him opportunities of viewing natural objects in their moſt awful and ſtriking form; therefore even his common converſations are expreſſive of the deep impreſſions of his mind, and his language is metaphorical and ſtrong. In advanced ſociety, the cultivated ſtate of the mind gives riſe to abſtracted ideas, which are too jejune and ill underſtood to conſtitute that ſublimity of expreſſion which is ſo remarkable in the poetical compoſitions of early ages.

THE poets of the Celtic nations were univerſally called bards by antient writers. The bards celebrated in verſe the great actions of heroes, and men of high dignity and renown. Without encroaching on the province of another order of men, they could not employ their genius on religious ſubjects.

A PASSAGE of Ammianus Marcellinus deſerves our attention. "After the inhabitants of Gaul, ſays he, "had been gradually poliſhed out of their original "barbarity, the ſtudy of ſome valuable branches of "learning made a conſiderable progreſs among them. "The Bards, Eubates, and Druids, gave birth to that "ſtudy.

"IT was the buſineſs of the bards to ſing the brave "actions of illuſtrious men in heroic ſong, and their "poems on theſe ſubjects were accompanied by the "ſweet modulations of the lyre. The Eubates made "deep reſearches into the nobleſt and moſt ſublime

" properties of nature: and they endeavoured to
" expreſs their ſpeculations on that ſubject in verſe.
" But the Druids, men of a more elevated genius, and
" formed into ſocieties agreeable to the rules laid down
" by Pythagoras, acquire the higheſt pitch of honour
" by their enquiries into things ſublime and unknown,
" and, deſpiſing all that belongs to the human race
" in this lower world, they made no difficulty of
" affirming that ſouls are immortal *."

Many learned writers among the moderns have been of opinion that the Druids, Eubates and Bards, were three different orders of prieſts. But it requires a clearer proof than ancient hiſtory can furniſh, to ſhew that the Bards took any greater concern in ſpiritual affairs than the laity of their country.

* Per hæc loca hominibus paulatim excultis, viguere ſtudia laudabilium doctrinarum, inchoata per Bardos et Euhages et Druidas: et Bardi quidem fortia virorum illuſtrium facta, heroicis compoſita verſibus, cum dulcibus lyræ modulis cantitarunt: Euhages vero ſcrutantes ſumma et ſublimia naturæ pandere conabantur. Inter hos Druidæ ingeniis celſiores, ut auctoritas Pythagoræ decrevit, ſodalitiis aſtricti conſortiis quæſtionibus occultarum rerum altarumque erecti ſunt; et deſpectantes humana pronuntiarunt, animas immortales. Ammian. lib. xv. circa finem.

I have taken the liberty of tranſlating our author's *pandere*, to expreſs in verſe. *Pandere* is a poetical word, and though ſometimes found in proſe writers, is never uſed in a proſaic ſtile. In the ſenſe of that word now under conſideration it almoſt always conveys the idea of a pomp of diction, and a harmony of numbers.

It is plain from Strabo's teſtimony *, that the Eubates were prieſts and much employed in phiſiological diſquiſitions. But unleſs we ſuppoſe that they publiſhed poetical compoſitions on religious ſubjects, it is difficult to know how to diſtinguiſh them from the Druids in the preceding paſſage of Ammianus. The Druids compoſed in verſe, but never publiſhed any of their compoſitions.

Οὐάτεις, *Vates*, *Eubates*, *Euhages*, and *Eubages*, are words of exactly the ſame meaning, and diverſified only in the orthography by the vicious pronounciation of original authors, or the blunders of tranſcribers. Thoſe to whom the name belonged were a Celtic order of prieſts, philoſophers, and poets, thought to have been prophetically inſpired. Though the office is no more, the title has been hitherto preſerved in the name of an Iriſh tribe, and in that of a Scottiſh clan, once conſiderable, and not yet extinct †.

LUCAN

* Lib. iv. p. 302.

† Among the old Iriſh families of note in the county of Mayo, Cambden reckons that of MacVadus *, and in the Weſtern Iſles of Scotland are ſome called MacFaid. In the Galic and Iriſh languages, *Faid* ſignified a Prophet †.

As the Hibernian and Hebridian Scots had clans among them who drew their origin and appellation from ſome eminent *Faids* or prophetical poets, ſo they had others who derived their pedigree from Bards famous in their day. Every one belonging to the clans deſcended from theſe, was, after his poetical anceſtor, denominated *Mac-i-Bhaird*,

* Hib. Com. Maio. † Lhoyd's Iriſh and Engliſh Dictionary.

LUCAN has identified the Vates and the Bard *: but he is the only claſſical writer who has confounded theſe two names together. Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, and others, ſpeak of the Vates with great reſpect, and have given that title to themſelves, as well as to the moſt eminent poets of Greece; but not one of them has thought of doing the ſame honour to the more ignoble race of Bards.

THE poet and prophet are congenial ſouls. Their profeſſions are nearly allied. The claim to ſupernatural inſpiration is common to both: and certainly without a large portion of enthuſiaſm, taking that word in its original ſenſe, neither of them could ſucceed ſo well as they have done. The conceptions of both riſe to the grand, marvellous, and pathetic; their language is ſtrong, animated, magnificent, full of tropes, and every way removed from proſaic diction. As it is the prophet's buſineſs to utter predictions, ſo the poet aſſumes the ſame character occaſionally, and aſſerts that he ſpeaks the language of the Gods.

IT was for this reaſon that the Romans gave the name of Vates indiſcriminately to prophets and poets. This emphatical word, like many more, they bor-

that is to ſay, the ſon of the Bard; and according to the genius of the Saxon language, which generally ſubſtitutes the German W in place of the Celtic Bh, the Mac-i-Bhairds go under the name of Ward, in the South of Scotland, and ſome parts of England, the Mac being rejected.

* Lib. i. ver. 247, &c.

rowed

rowed from the old Celtic. The Vates of Gaul certainly exerciſed the ſacerdotal function. Strabo ſays ſo expreſly in the place to which I have already referred. Ammianus informs us, that the Vates was a poet of ſuperior dignity to the Bard. This opinion of Ammianus is ſtrengthened by the authority of Virgil.

QUINTILIAN remarks, that Virgil was peculiarly fond of old words, when proper and expreſſive. This admirable poet was born and educated in the Ciſalpine Gaul. He therefore muſt have been much better acquainted with the Celtic language than any writer of his time. But be that as it will, it is plain that he makes a diſtinction between the Bard and the Vates. In his ninth eclogue, Lycidas confeſſes, or rather boaſts a little, that he himſelf was a poet, and a poet not of his own making, but one formed by the muſes, at the ſame time he had too much modeſty to imagine that he had a right to the name of Vates, though the ſhepherds were pleaſed to honour him with that title.

" Incipe ſi quid habes: et me fecere *poetam*
" Pierides, ſunt et mihi carmina: me quoque dicunt
" Vatem paſtores, ſed non ego credulus illis:
" Nam neque adhuc Varo videor nec dicere Cinna
" Digna, ſed argutos interſtrepere anſer olores *."

SERVIUS, and ſome other commentators of great reputation, have done a manifeſt injury to this paſſage. Dr. Martin, after having given a long and learned note on it, concludes that the proper ſignification of

* Virg. Eclog. ix. ver. 32, &c.

Vates is, a poet of the firſt rank, a maſter of the art, and one that is really inſpired. He had ſaid before that *Vates* ſeems to be an appellation of greater dignity than *Poeta*, and to anſwer to the Bard of the Engliſh. In this laſt opinion he has been followed by another learned tranſlator.

If I underſtand the Engliſh language, Bard is not a title of greater dignity than poet; notwithſtanding two eminent Engliſh writers are of that opinion. The title of Bard, no doubt, is ſometimes given to men deſervedly celebrated for their poetical genius; but the preſent mode of expreſſion ſeems to have affixed an idea of contempt to that name. But in whatever degree of eſteem the name of Bard is or may have been held, it is certain that Vates never loſt its original dignity.

Some Celtic Bards treated, it is true, of theological ſubjects in their compoſitions. We are told by Tacitus *, that "the Germans celebrated Tuiſto, an earth-born God, and his ſon Mannus, in poems of great antiquity." He adds, a little after, that the ſame nation had poems of a very different ſtrain; poems calculated ſolely for inſpiring their warriors with courage in action. Thoſe martial ſongs were of the compoſition of the Bards, as appears from the name of Barditus, which was given to that ſpecies of poetry. This name was borrowed from the Germans themſelves. Tacitus does not ſay that the religious poems of the Germans

* Tacit. de mor. Germ. cap. 2.

were the productions of the Bards. The contrary is rather insinuated. These theological pieces were the work of a more venerable race of men, of the Eubates of Marcellinus, who investigated the most mysterious arcana of nature.

The Eubates or the Vates of Strabo were the disciples of the Druids; and it is not improbable that the Vates composed the numerous poems which those great teachers of all the Celtic nations communicated to their followers *.

The translator of the poems of Ossian has in a great measure explained the reason that there are no traces of religion to be found in the works of that illustrious Bard. To the arguments produced by that ingenious gentleman I beg leave to add one more, which rises naturally from the observations I have just made on the subject. Though all the Celtic nations were in a manner full of Gods and superstition, their Bards could not employ their genius in the service of any divinity without going out of their own proper sphere. Heavenly themes belonged to the Vates, another order of men, of a more dignified and sacred character.

Though religion is an universal concern, yet in every age and country there were persons set apart whose more peculiar business it was to praise and address the divinity. According to the Christian system, every one is under an obligation to celebrate their creator, though there is an order of men whose more

* Cæsar de Bell. Gall. lib. vi. cap. 14.

immediate

immediate employ it is to deal in matters of religion. The old Celtic nations did not ſo much take the buſineſs off the hands of the prieſt as we do: the *Faids* or Vates had no competitors in the province of theology. The Bard ſung merely mortal ſubjects: hymns and anthems belonged ſolely to the more dignified race of *Faids*. Oſſian, therefore, though one of the firſt men of the ſtate, could not, ſuch were the prejudices of thoſe times, interfere with religious ſubjects, without a manifeſt breach on the peculiar privileges of that branch of the Druids called the Vates. It is to this cauſe, and not to the extinction of the Druids, I attribute the total ſilence concerning religion in the poems of Oſſian. Religious enthuſiaſm, of whatever kind it is, takes too much hold of the human mind ever to be eradicated; and it may be ſafely affirmed, that it is a prejudice impoſſible to be removed, even by the ſevereſt exertions of power *.

It

* The learned diſſertator might have added, that nothing is capable of removing one religious enthuſiaſm, but the ſuperior abſurdity of another ſyſtem of the ſame kind, or an immediate revelation from heaven. The feeble ray of reaſon can never diſpel that hazineſs which ſuperſtition has naturally thrown over the human mind. Accuſtomed to look through this groſs atmoſphere, our ideas of ſupernatural things are ſtrangely magnified and confuſed, and our diſtempered dreams, on that ſubject, make deeper and more permanent impreſſions than any material objects can do. If in an age when we can bring the wiſdom of former times to the aid of reaſon and philoſophy, we are almoſt incapable of diveſting true religion of the trappings of ſuperſtition, it is much more improbable, that, in a barbarous period, the human mind could extricate itſelf from the chains of ſuperſtitious fanaticiſm. Dr. Macpherſon, therefore, has accounted better for the ſilence concerning religion

It is idle to attempt to inveſtigate the etymon of Bard. Nothing can be more trivial than the opinion of thoſe who derive it from Bardus, an imaginary King, who, according to Beroſus, reigned over the Gauls and Britains, and was the inventor of poetry. Bard is undoubtedly Celtic; and being a monoſyllable it is vain to hope to trace it to any root.

A certain modern hiſtorian is of opinion, that it was from the ignorance of the old Celtic nations, and their contempt of letters, originally roſe the Bardiſh compoſitions of Europe. It is certain that poetry had a great reputation among the Celtic nations, long before they

religion in the poems of Oſſian, than the tranſlator has done, by the ſuppoſed extinction of the Druids.

It is certain, that ſeveral tribes of American Indians have apparently no ſigns of religious ſuperſtition among them. This neither proceeds from groſs ignorance nor from the refinements of philoſophy; for the firſt has been always known to create more ſyſtems of enthuſiaſm than the ſcepticiſm of the latter has been ever able to deſtroy. It muſt be aſcribed to the ſerenity and unchangeableneſs of the climate of the more inland and Southern parts of North America, which preſerves an equal diſpoſition of mind among the natives, not ſubject to the ſudden reverſes of joy and melancholy, ſo common under a more variable ſky. Superſtition delights to dwell in the fogs of iſlands, the miſt of mountains, and the groſs vapors of a fenny country. Theſe circumſtances throw a melancholy over the mind that is very productive of vain and ſupernatural fears and pannics. It was from this cauſe, perhaps, that Britain was anciently the principal ſeat of Druidical ſuperſtitions; and on the ſame account, though from other circumſtances, it now poſſeſſes true religion in its purity, it will, in a courſe of ages, revert to that gloomy enthuſiaſm ſo ſuitable to its moiſt air and variable climate.

knew the uſe of letters. It is even probable that poetry was known to the Celtes before their tranſmigration from Aſia into Europe. We are to look for the origin of poeſy much farther back than that ignorance and contempt of letters which prevailed among the European Celtes, after they became great nations, and objects of attention to Greece and Rome.

In Gaul the Bards were held in great eſteem. They had contributed greatly to poliſh that nation out of its primæval barbarity. The Spaniards alſo, and more eſpecially the Celtiberians, had the ſame high reſpect for that order of men: nor is it improbable that thoſe old poetical compoſitions, of which the *Turdetans* boaſted ſo much, were the works of their Bards *. Ancient Germany had the greateſt veneration for her Bards. Poetical records were the only annals known in that extenſive country, and in them only the actions of great men were tranſmitted from generation to generation. Thoſe oral chronicles prevailed over all that country through many ages. Charles the Great found barbarous poems of very high antiquity among his German ſubjects, and ordered copies of them to be made †. The German Saxons of a later age could not be perfectly reconciled to Chriſtianity till the Holy Scriptures were rendered into verſe, ſuch

* Strabo, lib. iii. p. 204. Edit. Amſlet.

† Barbara et antiquiſſima carmina, quibus veterum regum actus et bella canebantur ſcripſit, memoriæque mandavit. He calls them *Barbara*, becauſe they were written in a language which he did not underſtand. Eginhard, in Vita Car. Mag. c. 29.

a permanent hold had their prejudice in favour of the Bards taken of their minds.

The Northern Europe had the ſame profound reſpect for its Scalds, ſo poets were called in Scandinavia. The Scalds were the ſole recorders of great events. The Danes and Norwegians have no records older than the twelfth century, and the Swedes fall even ſhort of the Danes in the antiquity of their writers of hiſtory *. Saxo Grammaticus, who flouriſhed in that age, has frequent recourſe to the authority of the Scalds who preceeded that æra; and Joannes Magnus, archbiſhop of Upſal, appeals to them continually in his hiſtory of the Goths.

Torfæus relates that the Scalds were accounted perſons of very conſiderable importance in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. They were retained by monarchs, were inveſted with extraordinary privileges, and highly careſſed. In the court of that great Norwegian monarch, Harald Harfager, they had the honour of ſitting next to the King himſelf, every one of the order according to his dignity. If we can depend on the authority of Saxo, Harnius gained the crown of Denmark by the ſtrength of his poetical abilities: an illuſtrious perſon of this profeſſion was in the ſame country exalted to a matrimonial alliance with one of its Princes †.

The *Kymri* of Britain were remarkably fond of Bards. Every one of their Princes had his laureate; nor

* Torfæus, in Orcad. præfat. † Idem, ibidem.

could any man of quality ſupport the dignity of his rank, without having one of that faculty near his perſon. From the vaſt number of poetical manuſcripts written in their native tongue, which the Welſh have hitherto preſerved, it may be concluded that poetry was in very high eſtimation among their anceſtors *.

Among the ancient Cambro-Britannic Bards, Talieſin and Lhyvarch held the firſt place for the felicity of their poetical genius. They flouriſhed in the ſixth century, and a conſiderable part of their productions is to this day extant. Talieſin was cotemporary with the great Maglocunnus, and was highly favoured by that Prince. He was dignified by his countrymen with the title of *Ben-Bairdhe*, or the chief of the Bards.

It is needleſs to prove that the Iriſh had the greateſt value for poetry. Never did any nation encourage or indulge the profeſſion of Bards with a more friendly partiality. Their nobility and gentry, their Kings, both provincial and ſupreme, patronized, careſſed, and revered them. The Bards of a diſtinguiſhed character had eſtates in land ſettled on themſelves and their poſterity. Even amidſt all the ravages and exceſſes of war, theſe lands were not to be touched, the poet's own perſon was ſacred, and his houſe was eſteemed a ſanctuary.

Every principal Bard was in the Iriſh tongue called *Filea* or *Allamh Redan*, that is to ſay, a *Doctor in Poetry*.

* Tit. vii. p. 239.

Each

Each of the great Fileas or Graduates had thirty Bards of inferior note conſtantly about his perſon, and every Bard of the ſecond claſs was attended by a retinue of fifteen poetical diſciples.

If any faith can be given to Keating, many other extraordinary advantages and immunities were annexed to the office of Bard, beſides thoſe which aroſe from the extravagant munificence of private perſons. It was ordained by law that all Bards ſhould live at the public expence for ſix months in the year. By the authority of this law they quartered themſelves upon the people throughout the iſland from Allhallow tide till May *. This heavy annual tribute was of a very old ſtanding, and for that reaſon the Bards who were authorized to exact it, were in the language of the country called *Clear-hen-chaine*, that is, the ſongſters of the ancient tax.

The very ample privileges conferred on the Bards, and the blind reſpect paid to their perſons, made them at laſt intolerably inſolent. Their avarice alſo kept pace with their pride. Their haughty behaviour and endleſs exactions became an inſupportable grievance to the nation. The numbers of thoſe ſtrollers increaſed daily. Such as inclined to ſpend their time in idleneſs and luxury joined themſelves to the fraternity, and paſſed under the character of Bards. In the reign of *Hugh ain Mearach*, ſays Keating, that is, in the latter end of the ſixth age, a third part of the people of Ire-

* Keat. Gen. Hiſt. of Ireland, Part ii. pages 25, 26.

land

land went under that title, and claimed the privileges annexed to the order.

It is a juſt obſervation of Claudian, that every one who performs actions worthy of being celebrated by the muſe, is always ſmitten with the love of ſong. The fame of the hero will ſoon die, unleſs preſerved by the hiſtorian, or immortalized by the productions of the poet. Barbarous times have produced very few tolerable hiſtorians; but all ages indiſcriminately, and all countries where military merit ſubſiſted with a conſpicuous luſtre, have produced Bards famous in their generation.

The ancient inhabitants of Caledonia were very warlike, and of courſe fond of fame. Such as had remarkably ſignalized themſelves in the defence of their country, were, no doubt, proud of patronizing the beſt Bards of the times in which they lived. Cambden's immenſe erudition has diſcovered that Galgacus was celebrated by the poets of South Britain *; and therefore it is likely he was highly extolled by the Bards of his own country. We are told by Tacitus that Arminius, the great deliverer of Germany, was in his own time ſung by the Bards †. Every Celtic nation took care to perpetuate the memory of all their patriot heroes in their poetical annals. The laureates, if I may call them ſo, of every community were obliged by their office to pay a juſt tribute of fame to

* See his Britannia, under the article Caledonia.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. cap. ult.

the

the benefactors of the public; even crowned heads and warlike Chieftains thought it no diſparagement to their high rank to exerciſe their talents in the poetical-eulogiums ſo common in thoſe times.

The Princes of Scandinavia valued themſelves much on their poetical genius. Four Norwegian monarchs, and a Daniſh King, diſtinguiſhed themſelves remarkably in that way. Theſe were Harald Harfager, Olaus Trygvinus, Olaus the ſaint, Harald the imperious, and Ragnar Lodbrach *. The great men who held of thoſe monarchs, emulated their maſters in diſplaying the fire and vigour of their genius in a ſtudy ſo faſhionable in thoſe romantic ages.

The Caledonian Princes of ancient times were animated by the ſame ſpirit. We know that James the Firſt was an admirable poet for the age in which he lived. Some Galic rhimes compoſed by his couſin german, Alexander, the famous Earl of Mar, have been hitherto preſerved. The Highland Chieftains contended frequently in alternate verſe: nor have all thoſe poetical dialogues periſhed. The apoſtle of the Pictiſh nation, and the old Scottiſh miſſionaries were remarkably fond of the muſes, and frequently couched their ſacred leſſons in ſong.

The public has lately received the works of Oſſian, the ſon of Fingal. The impartial and men of taſte have read them with admiration, and ſenſibly felt the

* Torfæus, in Orcad. præfat. ad Lect.

true

true language of natural and ſublime genius. Thoſe who affected to deſpiſe the compoſitions of ancient times have been confounded and mortified by the impartial voice of Europe in the praiſe of thoſe poems. The candid part of the nation, though ſome of them perhaps were at firſt prejudiced againſt the genuineneſs of the work, have been agreeably ſurprized to find that their ſuſpicions were abſolutely groundleſs.

It has been a queſtion with ſome whether Oſſian was a Caledonian or Iriſh Bard. Aſia and Europe, in a remote age, contended for the honour of having given birth to Homer. It is therefore no matter of wonder that North Britain and Ireland ſhould emulouſly claim a particular right to the great poetical ſun of their dark ages. They have formerly contended for much ſmaller prizes. The queſtions whether Sidulius, the poet, whether Cataldus, the biſhop of Tarentum, whether St. Aidan, St. Finan, St. Adamnan, and many more wrongheaded monks, belonged more properly to the ſacred iſland than to the wilds of Caledonia, have been agitated with all the keenneſs and zeal incident to national diſputes of that kind.

The editor of Oſſian's works is very able to defend his own ſyſtem. When objections worthy his notice are raiſed, he will certainly pay them all due regard. If he will ſit down gravely to confute the groundleſs and ill connected objections which have been raiſed by ſome people in the cauſe of Ireland *, it is deſcend-

* See Mr. O Connor and Dr. Warner on this ſubject.

ing

ing too far from that dignity of character which he has already acquired. For the poetical errors of his author, if he has committed any flagrant ones, the tranſlator is no ways accountable. But if Oſſian's compoſitions do honour to that dialect of the Celtic language, in which they have been wrote, to that Celtic nation which produced the Bard, and to human genius itſelf; the editor has an indiſputable title to great praiſe, for bringing to light ſuch a monument of the poetical merit of the ancient Bards.

Among the ſeveral arguments from which it may be concluded that the author of Fingal was a Caledonian, the language he uſes is a deciſive one. The genuine Iriſh poems which are to be found in books, and the little Iriſh ſongs which are brought into the Highlands by ſtrolling harpers from Ireland, are in every other ſtanza unintelligible to a Highlander.—But the language of Oſſian's compoſitions is eaſily underſtood by every one who has a competent knowlege of the Galic tongue.—If ſome few of the words are uncommon, or become obſolete, it is no more than what muſt have been naturally expected in a work ſo ancient. It is aſtoniſhing what a purity and ſimplicity of language prevails over all the works of this poetical hero, while the Galic compoſitions of the laſt century are dark, affected and confuſed *.

Whether Oſſian flouriſhed in the third, in the fourth, or in the fifth age, is a point difficult to

* See Lhoyd's Iriſh preface to his Iriſh Dictionary.

diſcuſs. His poems are undoubtedly more ancient than any extant in the Celtic tongue, and the genius of the diction, of the arrangement and ſentiment, gives a ſtrong internal proof of their genuineneſs and high antiquity *.

BESIDE the Bards appointed by authority in Caledonia, the Princes, great Lords, and petty Chieftains, aſpired much after the reputation ariſing from a poetical genius. It was impoſſible that all the numerous eſſays produced, could be deſtitute of merit. Every clime, however diſtant from the ſun, is capable of producing men of true genius. The thick fogs of Bœotia, and the cold mountains of Thrace, have given birth to illuſtrious poets, while the ſcorching ſands of Africa have remained languid and ſilent.

THERE is great reaſon to doubt the doctrine advanced by Martial, that there will be no want of poets equal to Maro, if there ſhould be patrons as munificent as Mecænas: at the ſame time it is certain, that when the love of poetry in a nation confers upon thoſe who have a genius that way, rewards of honour, profit, and reputation, their compoſitions will be numerous, and ſome of them worthy of public attention. The old Caledonians were as bountiful to their poets as their poſterity the Iriſh were. Lands were appropriated to the eminent Bards, and became hereditary in their

* Dr. Blair's Critical Diſſertation on the Poems of Oſſian.

family. Many diſtricts in the Highlands ſtill retain the name of the Bard's territory *.

About a century back one of the Highland Chieftains retained two principal Bards, each of whom had ſeveral diſciples who were his inſeparable attendants. The Chieftains of former times, if led by choice, or forced by neceſſity, to appear at court, or to join thoſe of their own rank, on any public occaſion, were attended by a numerous retinue of vaſſals, and by their moſt eminent poets and ableſt muſicians. Hence it was that in the ſpacious hall of an old Celtic King, a hundred Bards ſometimes joined in concert. Keating informs us that there was no leſs than a thouſand principal poets in Ireland during the reign of one monarch.

We of modern times may perhaps condemn this ſtrange taſte of our barbarous anceſtors. We may blame them for retaining and loading with wealth and honours ſuch numerous bands of rhimers, a race of uſeleſs, inſolent, and flattering men. A ſlur of this kind is unjuſtly thrown on our progenitors, till we remove a prevalent folly of the ſame kind from among ourſelves. Our great men, to their honour be it ſaid, give but little encouragement to poets, or that flattery which is natural to the muſe. But our courts are full of worthleſs ſycophants, the halls of

* The ſecond title of the noble family of Athol is taken from lands appropriated to a Bard. *Tullybardin* is compounded of *Tulloch*, a hillock, and *bardin*, bards.

our Lords with pimps and paraſites. Flattery feeds on the folly of the great without the merit of being cloathed in the ſtrength of ſentiment, or in the harmony of numbers.

But to return back to the regions of antiquity: the martial exploits of great men were ſung by the Bards in epic poems, and tranſmitted from one generation to another. They exerted the whole force of their genius in perpetuating the memory of departed heroes, in exciting the nobles to walk in the ſame paths of activity and glory, and in rouſing up their nation to ſupport its dignity and to cultivate the generous and manly virtues. Praiſe throws around virtue attractive charms. Nothing tends more to raiſe ſentiments of magnanimity in the heart than the nervous and glowing exhortation of the poet. It follows, therefore, that the Bard was the great and ſucceſsful inſtructor of the barbarian, and had in ſome meaſure a right to be held ſacred.

History informs us, that men of that character have done the moſt important ſervices to ſtates overpowered by a victorious enemy, or enſlaved by tyrants. Tyrtæus, though a very deſpicable perſon in his appearance, ſaved Lacedæmon from utter ruin, and by the ſtrength of his poetical abilities *; and Alcæus, by employing the ſame talent, reſcued his country from the hands of cruel uſurpers †.

* Juſtin. lib. iii, cap. 5. † Horat. Carmin. lib. ii. od. 13.

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We are told by Quintilian *, that Alcæus was rewarded with a golden plectrum for his great ſervices. Horace, for the ſame reaſon, aſſigns him a place of diſtinguiſhed honour in the Elyſian fields: and to give us a juſt idea of this patriot poet's merit, he throws around him a numerous crowd of ghoſts, attentively hearing thoſe ſpirited war ſongs which contributed ſo much to expel the enemies of liberty out of Leſbos.

Plato, who was a declared enemy to the order in general, gives the title of a moſt divine poet to Tyrtæus, and pronounces him at the ſame time a wiſe and good man, becauſe he had in a very excellent manner celebrated the praiſes of thoſe who excelled in war †. There is ſomething in the character of Tyrtæus which ſeems to reſemble that of a Celtic Bard. He was a poet and muſician at once. The inſtruments on which he played were the harp and that kind of martial pipe which the Lacedemonians uſed inſtead of the trumpet of other nations.

The chief Bards of North Britain, like thoſe of other Celtic nations, followed their patrons into the field, and were frequently of ſignal ſervice. It was their buſineſs and cuſtom, upon the eve of a battle, to harangue the army in a war ſong compoſed in the field. This ſpecies of ſong was called *Broſnuha Cath*, that is to ſay, an *inſpiration to war*. The poet addreſſed a part of this perſuaſive to every diſtinct tribe, ſhewing them the rewards of a glorious death, and remind-

* Inſtitut. lib. x. cap. 1. † De Repub. lib. 1.

ing

ing them of the great actions performed by their anceſtors. He began with a warm exhortation to the whole army, and ended with the ſame words. The exhortation turned principally on the love of fame, liberty, and their Prince. "The Germans, ſays Tacitus, have poems which are rehearſed in the field, and kindle the ſoul into a flame. The ſpirit with which theſe ſongs are ſung predicts the fortune of the approaching fight; nor is their manner of ſinging on theſe occaſions ſo much a concert of voices as of courage. In the compoſition they ſtudy a roughneſs of ſound and a certain broken murmur. They lift their ſhields to their mouths that the voice, being rendered full and deep, may ſwell by repercuſſion *."

The fate of battles depended not a little on the encomiums and invectives of the Bards. To be declared incapable of ſerving the ſovereign in any military ſtation is now deemed an indelible reproach. To incur the ſatire of the Bard, by a cowardly behaviour, was reckoned in former times the laſt degree of infamy and misfortune.

We are told by a Norwegian hiſtorian †, that in time of ſea engagements, if near the coaſt, the Scalds of Norway were ſometimes landed in a ſecure and convenient place, and ordered to mark every event diſtinctly, ſo as to be afterwards able to relate them in verſe. The ſame author informs us, that Olaus, the

* Tacit. de mor. Germ. cap. 3.

† Torfæus, in Hiſt. Rerum. Orcad. vid. præfat.

Saint,

Saint, had in a day of action appointed ſtrong guards for his three principal poets, after giving them inſtructions of the ſame kind.

WHEN a great and deciſive battle was fought, the Bards were employed in doing honour to the memory of thoſe gallant men who had ſacrificed their lives in defence of their country, and in extolling the heroes who had ſurvived the ſlaughter of the day *.

A JUDICIOUS Roman poet obſerves that many brave men who lived before Agamemnon were buried in oblivion, unlamented and unknown, becauſe they had the misfortune of wanting a poet to celebrate their memory †. This obſervation is in ſome mea-

* In the year 1314, Edward the Second, of England, invaded Scotland at the head of a very great army, having, according to all human appearance, reaſon to expect an abſolute conqueſt of that kingdom. Full of this imagination, he ordered the prior of Scarſborough, a celebrated Latin rhimer, according to the taſte of thoſe times, to follow his troops all the way to Bannockburn. He intended to employ this eminent poet in immortalizing his victory; but fortune declared for the enemy, and the prior was found among that immenſe number of priſoners which the Scots had made: the ranſom demanded for his life was, a poem on the great ſubject he had before him. He gave a ſpecimen of his ſkill, but it was invitâ Minervâ, though he ſucceeded wonderfully well in the judgment of times not remarkable for delicacy of taſte. Another learned monk was appointed by the Scots to eternize their victory in verſe; and though Apollo was as niggardly in his aid to him as he had been to the Engliſh Carmelite, we have reaſon to believe that his compoſition was much admired.

† Horat. Carmin. lib. 4. od. 9.

ſure-

ſure juſt. But it may be doubted whether heroiſm is more ancient than poetry, and whether any illuſtrious perſonage of the remoteſt ages of the world wanted his Bard. It is certain that the works of many eminent poets have periſhed altogether, and with them the renown and even the names of thoſe mighty chiefs whom they endeavoured to eternize. At the ſame time it is evident, that of all the monuments which ambition is able to raiſe, or the gratitude of mankind willing to beſtow, that reared by the muſe of a genuine poet is the moſt expreſſive, the moſt durable, and conſequently the moſt to be deſired. The works of Phidias and Praxiteles, once thought everlaſting, are now no more. The fainteſt traces of the magnificent Babylon cannot now be inveſtigated. The famous Egyptian pyramids, though ſtill extant, have not been able to preſerve the name of the vain monarchs by whom they were conſtructed. But the ſtructures which Homer has built, and the monuments which Virgil has raiſed to the memory of illuſtrious men, to Gallus, to Mecænas, and Auguſtus, will periſh only together with the world.

Though the beſt of Roman poets had a contempt for Ennius, yet the elder Scipio, with all his learning and taſte, had a greater reſpect for him than Auguſtus had for Virgil himſelf. The old Calabrian Bard was conſtantly near that *thunderbolt of war*, and we are told by Cicero, that a marble ſtatue was erected for him in the burial place of the Scipios *. It therefore is no

* Oratio pro Archia Poeta.

matter

matter of wonder that Celtic Kings and Celtic Lords ſhould have patronized the poets of their own times; a race of men whoſe compoſitions, however rough or unpoliſhed, kindled the ſoul of the warrior to attempt great actions, and promiſed the hero a perpetuity of fame.

THE more ancient Bards were greatly ſuperior to thoſe of later ages, yet mere antiquity was not the real cauſe of that ſuperiority. In times more remote, true merit was the Bard's only title to favour. In after days the office became hereditary, and an indefeaſible right was the circumſtance which rendered his perſon and character ſacred. It was only after the feudal law took place, that the proper reward of genius and great actions became the birthright of unworthy perſons.

No people, however barbarous, could have imagined that the lineal heir of an eminent poet ſhould inherit the natural enthuſiaſm or acquired talents of his predeceſſor. But the general cuſtom of entailing almoſt every office in certain families, and perhaps an extraordinary regard paid to the memory of ſome excellent poet, ſecured the poſſeſſion of the grant of land to the poſterity of thoſe bards whoſe merit had acquired them that lucrative diſtinction from their ſuperiors.

DISSERTATION XV.

Of the Weſtern Iſlands of Scotland.—Accounts given of them by the Writers of Rome.—Of their ancient Names, Ebudes, Hebrides, and Inchegaul. Subject to, and poſſeſſed very early by the Scots of Jar-ghaël.

THE diſquiſitions of antiquaries are incapable of thoſe ornaments which, in the opinion of the world, conſtitute fine writing. To trace the origin of a nation through that darkneſs which involves the firſt ages of ſociety, is a laborious taſk, and the reputation attending the ſucceſs of a very inferior degree. The antiquary is no more than a kind of pioneer, who goes before, to clear the ground, for the conſtruction of the beautiful fabric of the hiſtorian. In this diſſertation I enter into the diſſection of words, the inveſtigation of etymons, and into an inquiry into the ancient ſtate of iſlands now very unimportant in the Britiſh empire. Should this trivial ſubject diſcourage any reader, let him turn to another ſection.

THE geography, as well as internal hiſtory of the Northern Europe, was little known to the writers of Greece and Rome. The uncultivated and barbarous ſtate of the Celtic nations diſcouraged travellers from going among them. The Romans met often, on their frontiers, hoſtile nations, to whoſe very name, as well as country, they were abſolute ſtrangers.—Involved in a cloud of barbariſm at home, the inhabitants of the North were only ſeen when they carried war and deſolation into the provinces of the empire; and conſequently the accounts given of them by the hiſtorians of Rome are vague and uncertain.

THIS ignorance of the true ſtate of the Northern diviſion of Europe afforded an ample field for fiction, and encouraged pretended travellers who had a talent for fable, to impoſe upon the world the moſt abſurd tales, with regard to the ſituation, hiſtory and inhabitants of the barbarous regions beyond the pale of the Roman empire. Strabo complains frequently that Pythias the Maſſilian, and other travellers, could not be credited, in the account they gave of their voyages, which looked more like a poetical fiction, than a faithful narration of facts. Pythias, though a man in the moſt indigent circumſtances, had the vanity to ſay, that he had travelled over all the Northern diviſion of Europe, to the very extremities of the world: "A ſtory, not to be credited," ſaith Strabo*, "though Mercury himſelf had told it." He pretended to have viſited Britain in the courſe

* Lib. ii. p. 163.

of his peregrinations, and with great gravity gives a very circumſtantial deſcription of that iſland. He alſo ſays, that he made a voyage to Thule, the remoteſt iſland belonging to Britain, at the diſtance of ſix days ſailing from it, in the ſkirts of the frozen ocean. He is candid enough to own that he was obliged to others for the hiſtory which he gives of that place; but he does not heſitate to affirm that he himſelf had ſeen it. It was a place, according to him, which was neither earth, ſea nor air, but ſomething like a *compoſition of all of them*, ſomething reſembling, to uſe his own expreſſion, the *lungs of the ſea*, ſomething, in ſhort, totally inacceſſible to the human ſpecies. Such is the ridiculous account which the Maſſilian traveller gives of Thule, and from which the idle tales of ſucceeding authors concerning that iſland ſeem to have been taken.

SOLINUS deſcribes Thule as an extenſive tract of land, inhabited by a race of men, who, in the beginning of the vernal ſeaſon, fed, like their cattle, upon graſs or ſtraw, lived upon milk in ſummer, and laid up the fruits of their trees in ſtore for their winter proviſion *. But his authority will not be greatly reſpected by thoſe who know what he has ſaid of men and women, whoſe feet were contrived like thoſe of horſes, and whoſe ears were long enough to cover their whole bodies.

STRABO owns that thoſe who had ſeen the Britiſh Ierna had nothing to ſay concerning Thule, though

* Solin. Polyhiſ. cap. 35.

they

they gave ſome account of other ſmall iſlands on the coaſts of the Northern Britain. We learn from Tacitus, that Domitian's fleet, after the reduction of the Orkney iſles, deſcried Thule; a place which till then, ſaith he, lay concealed under ſnow and an everlaſting winter *. The truth of this fact reſts upon the veracity of the perſon from whom Tacitus received his information.

PTOLEMY is ſo particular in his account of Thule, as to inform us, that it lies in ſixty-three degrees N. Lat. and that the longeſt day there conſiſts of twenty-four hours †. There is no place near the Britiſh iſles to which this, or any other deſcription given of it, can agree better than to Shetland. But after all that has been ſaid upon the ſubject, with a conſiderable expence of erudition, by Sir Robert Sibbald and others, there is reaſon to conclude, with Strabo, the moſt judicious of all ancient geographers, and one of the beſt hiſtorians and critics of remote times, that the hiſtory of Thule is *dark*, *dubious* and *unauthentic* ‡, and that every thing told by Pythias concerning it is a fiction.

THE iſles of North Britain have been divided by ſome ancient geographers into two claſſes, and by others into three. The firſt of theſe claſſes conſiſts of the *Ebudes* and Orcades. The ſecond comprehends the *Hemodes*, *OEmodes*, or *AEmodes*, together with the

* Diſpecta eſt et Thule, quam hactenus nix et hyems abdebat. Vita Agric. c. 10. † Lib. viii. c. 2. ‡ Strabo, lib. iv. p. 308.

two

two juſt mentioned. An exact deſcription of places then ſo little known, cannot be expected from theſe writers; but their voluntary errors admit of no excuſe.

PLUTARCH relates, upon the authority of one *Demetrius*, who ſeems to have been employed by the Emperor Adrian to make geographical obſervations and diſcoveries, that ſome of the Britiſh iſles were conſecrated to Demi-gods:—That *Saturn*, bound with *chains of ſleep*, is confined in one of them, under the cuſtody of *Briareus*, and that ſeveral inferior divinities are his conſtant attendants.

SOLINUS writes with great gravity and ſeeming preciſion concerning the inhabitants of the Ebudes, their manner of living, and their form of government. "They know not," ſays he *, "what corn "is: they live on fiſh and milk only. The iſles "of the Hebudes are ſeparated from one another by "narrow ſounds, and by reaſon of their contiguity "are governed by one King. This Monarch has no "property.—He is ſupported at the expence of the "public.—He is bound by eſtabliſhed laws to rule "according to the principles of equity. Leſt he "ſhould be tempted by avarice to commit any acts of "oppreſſion, poverty confines him within the rules "of juſtice.—He has no perſonal intereſt to promote. "—He has no wife, that can with any propriety be "called his own: any woman for whom he conceives

* Solin. Polyhiſtor. cap. 35.

"a paſ-

" a paſſion muſt be at his ſervice.—Hence it is, that he " has neither hopes nor deſires with regard to chil- " dren, to whom he cannot claim a peculiar right."

MANY ancient writers of hiſtory and geography have taken a boundleſs liberty of inventing marvellous ſtories, in their deſcriptions of the manners and cuſtoms of diſtant nations; and Solinus ſeems, in his deſcription of Thule and the other Britiſh iſles, to have indulged his fancy in that reſpect with much freedom. Some eminent critics have obſerved, that this author copies, in a ſervile manner, after Pliny the elder; but he has rejected his authority with regard to the number of the Ebudes and of the Orkney iſles. According to Pliny *, the Orcades amount to forty, and the Hebrides to thirty; but Solinus reduced the number of the Hebrides to five, and of the Orcades to three wretched iſles, overgrown with ruſhes, or made up of horrible rocks or naked ſands, and totally deſtitute of inhabitants.

IF Solinus flouriſhed, as is commonly ſuppoſed, after Tacitus had publiſhed the life of Agricola, or the hiſtory of his own times, it is ſurprizing that he could have been a ſtranger to the works of that excellent writer, and totally unacquainted with the ſtory of the voyage performed by Domitian's fleet round Britain, and the conqueſt made of the Orcades during that voyage. Solinus is one of thoſe ancient geogra-

* Nat. Hiſt. lib. iv. cap. 16.

phers

phers who divided the iſles of North Britain into two claſſes only—the Hebudæ and the Orcades.—Ptolemy follows very nearly the ſame diviſion. But Pomponius Mela, after informing us that there are thirty Orcades, placed at ſmall diſtances from one another, obſerves that there are ſeven OEmodæ lying over againſt Germany *, which are probably the iſles of Shetland.

Salmasius and other critics believe that the Ebudæ of Ptolemy and Solinus are the OEmodæ of Mela. The great ſimilarity of the names, and the ſilence of the laſt of theſe writers with reſpect to the Ebudæ, and of the other two with regard to the OEmodæ, ſeem to juſtify this opinion. But Pliny's authority is againſt it. That author diſtinguiſhes the OEmodæ from the Hebudes, with the greateſt clearneſs and preciſion †; and he could not have been miſled by either of the other two geographers. He wrote before Ptolemy, and after Mela.

It is matter of ſome wonder that the ancient writers of geography, who flouriſhed before the reign of Domitian, could have known more concerning the Orcades, than Solinus, who flouriſhed after Tacitus wrote his hiſtory. Pomponius Mela was cotemporary either with Julius Cæſar, or rather with Claudius. This we have reaſon to conclude from a paſſage in that part of his work where he attempts to give an

* Mela de ſitu Orb. lib. iii. cap. 6.

† Nat. Hiſt. lib. iv. cap. 16.

account

account of Britain *. But ſuppoſing Mela to have been cotemporary with the laſt of theſe Emperors, rather than with the firſt, one will be ſtill at a loſs to find out how he could have learned that there were iſlands to the North of Britain, which were called Orcades, and which were ſeparated from one another by narrow friths, and were thirty in number. We learn from Tacitus, that before Agricola's time it was a problematical queſtion, whether Britain was an iſland or part of a Continent; and it is not probable that any foreign ſhips had ſailed to the Northern extremity of it before the period he mentions. The Carthaginians are the only people who can be ſuppoſed to have made ſuch a voyage; and it was not conſiſtent with their maxims of policy and commerce to have made public their diſcoveries. It is plain, however, that Mela and Pliny had received diſtinct information concerning the name and number of theſe iſles. Theſe authors differ indeed as to the preciſe number of the Orcades: one of them makes them thirty, and the other forty. But this difference is not material, if we conſider that there are no leſs than forty Orcades, including the *Holmes*, and not more than thirty, if we enumerate thoſe only which are or may be conveniently inhabited.

BUCHANAN was totally at a loſs with regard to the origin and meaning of the word Orcades. Camden

* Britannia qualis ſit, qualeſque progeneret mox certiora et magis explorata dicentur: quippe tam diu clauſam aperit ecce principum maximus, &c. Mela de ſitu Orb. lib. iii. cap. 7.

attempted to explain it very ingeniouſly: he quotes an old manuſcript, which was afterwards publiſhed by Father Innes, where it is derived from *Argat*; that is to ſay, according to the author of that little tract, above the Getes: but he rejects this etymon, with good reaſon, and conjectures that the name in queſtion is derived from "*Arcat*, or above *Cath*, a country of Scotland, which, from a noted promontory there, is called *Cathneſs*."

The juſtneſs of this etymon is founded on a ſuppoſition that the modern *Caithneſs* was called *Cath*, before *Mela*'s time at leaſt. But were that ſuppoſition well grounded, and were it certain that inſtead of *Carini* in Ptolemy, we ſhould read *Catini*, which Camden ſuppoſes, in order to help out his conjecture, I am ſtill apt to think that the Word *Orcades* ſhould be derived from another ſource. The old Scottiſh bards call Orkney *Inche-Torc*, that is to ſay, the *Iſlands of whales*. One of two things muſt have been the foundation of the name: either whales of an enormous ſize were frequently ſeen around the Orkneys, which indeed is ſtill the caſe; or thoſe old Caledonians who ſaw theſe iſles at a diſtance, compared them to theſe monſtrous ſea-animals. Agreeable to the laſt of theſe ſuppoſitions, the Highlanders of Scotland call the Orkneys *Arc-have*, that is to ſay, the *Swine* or Whales of the ocean *.

I SHALL

* In the Galic language *Orc*, *Arc*, and *Urc*, ſignify a Sow. *Torc* likewiſe ſignifies a Sow. The old Scots called the whale commonly Muc-Mhara, i. e. the ſow of the ocean.

For

I SHALL now endeavour to throw ſome light on that part of the ancient hiſtory of Britain wherein the Hebrides are more particularly concerned; a ſubject hitherto almoſt entirely neglected, though not abſolutely unworthy the attention of the curious.

PTOLEMY and Solinus comprehend five iſles under the general name of Ebudæ or Hebrides. They are enumerated by the former; and the names he gives them are *Ricina*, *Maleos*, *Epidium*, the Weſtern and the Eaſtern Ebudæ. In Camden's opinion *Ricina* is *Richrine*, an iſle which lies much nearer the coaſt of Ireland than that of North Britain, and belongs to the county of Antrim. But as Richrine was too inconſiderable an iſle to have deſerved Ptolemy's particular notice, amidſt ſuch a vaſt number of other iſlands omitted by him, and as Camden's opinion is founded ſolely on a remote affinity of names, there is, I think, more reaſon to believe, that the *Ricina* of the Egyptian geographer, and the *Riduna* of Antonine's itinerary, is rather the *Arrin* of Scotland: ſo they who ſpeak the Galic call an extenſive iſland near the mouth of the Clyde, which is the property of the family of Hamilton.

CAMDEN thinks that the ancient *Epidium* is the ſame with Ila; *Maleos*, Mull; the *Weſtern Ebuda*, Lewis; and the *Eaſtern Ebuda*, Sky. But if Ricina is the ſame with

For a full and diſtinct account of the Orkney iſles the reader may conſult the works of Torfæus, a Norvegian hiſtorian, and of Mr. Wallace, a learned Miniſter of Kirkwall.

Arran, it is far from being improbable that *Epidium* is the iſland of *Bute*, which lies near it; *Ey Bhoid*, that is, the Iſle of Bute, in the Galic language, being much more nearly related to *Epidium* in its ſound than Ila. I have no objection to Camden's opinion with regard to *Maleos* and the larger *Ebudæ*.

PLINY is the oldeſt author who has made very particular mention of the *Ebudes*; and if we conſider their number only, he ſpeaks of them with much greater accuracy than any of the ancients. According to him, there are no leſs than thirty iſles of that denomination. If all the iſlands in the Deucaledonian ocean, and all the *holms* adjoining to them, ſhould be comprehended under the general name of Ebudæ, there are certainly more than three hundred of that claſs: but a vaſt number of the *holms* are too inconſiderable to deſerve a writer's notice; and ſixty at leaſt of the iſles which are of ſome conſequence, may be juſtly reckoned appendages to the principal ones.—We cannot therefore blame Pliny for want of exactneſs in that part of his Britiſh topography which relates to the *Ebudes*. Some writers of the middle ages, who had occaſion to underſtand the ſubject perfectly, inform us, that theſe iſles were thirty-two in number, and the old natives call them twenty-four to this day.

WE can hardly gueſs what commodities could have been exported from Ireland in an early period, excepting live-cattle, hides, and ſlaves. However, Tacitus informs

informs us, that merchants frequently viſited that iſland, which, for that reaſon, was better known to the Romans of his time than Britain. There muſt have been a conſiderable intercourſe between the Iriſh and the inhabitants of the Ebudæ in thoſe times. They were undoubtedly at that time the ſame nation, in point of language, manners and cuſtoms. Pliny learned from ſome merchant of his own country, very particularly, the length and breadth of Ireland. The ſame perſon, or any other employed in the trade to Ireland, might have had a pretty exact account of the Ebudæ from the Iriſh, or even ſome of the natives of thoſe iſlands, as no doubt they ventured often to Ireland in their *Curachs*. Agricola had not diſplayed the Roman Eagles in the Northern diviſion of Britain when Pliny loſt his life; and we are told by himſelf, in the very chapter where he ſpeaks of the Ebudes, that the arms of the empire had not penetrated further than the Caledonian foreſt. It may therefore be concluded, that he received the account he gives of theſe iſles as I have above ſuppoſed.

It is difficult to inveſtigate the meaning or etymon of the name Ebudes, as the preſent inhabitants have no ſuch term of diſtinction in their language. Camden's ſuppoſition was, that it ought to be derived from the ſterility of the ſoil, or the total want of corn in thoſe iſlands; *Eb-eid*, in the old Britiſh language, ſignifying a place deſtitute of corn. To ſupport this conjecture, he quotes Solinus, who informs us, in a paſſage already mentioned, that the inhabitants of the Ebudes knew not the uſe of corn.

This

This etymon, however plauſible, is far from being ſatisfactory. The Caledonians of the third century were, according to Dion, abſolute ſtrangers to tillage, as much as the inhabitants of the Ebudes, cotemporary with Solinus, could have been. Even the inland Britons of the South knew not agriculture in Cæſar's time. It may be therefore aſked, with great propriety, why the iſles on the weſtern coaſt of Caledonia, and no other part of Britain, ſhould be characterized by a want that was common to Britain in general?

Some of the Ebudes, it is true, are very barren; but many of the Weſtern iſlands were formerly among the moſt fertile and plentiful tracts of land in North Britain. It would therefore be equally proper, with Camden's etymon, to call them *Ey-budh* in the Britiſh, or *Ey-bhiod* in the Galic, that is, the *Iſlands of corn*, or metaphorically the *Iſles of food*. The truth is, neither Camden or I can give any ſatisfactory etymon of the *Ebudes*.

The old appellation of *Ebudes* has, by writers of later ages, been changed into *Hebrides*; a name utterly unknown to the more ancient writers of monkiſh ages, as well as to the old Greeks and Romans. The following conjecture may account in ſome meaſure for this change *.

Of all St. Patric's diſciples, excepting perhaps Columba, *Bridget* had the good fortune of acquiring

* The name of Hebrides may probably have originally proceeded from an error in ſome tranſcriber, who miſtook the *u* in Hebudes for *ri*.

the higheſt reputation. Her miracles and peregrinations, her immaculate chaſtity, conſtant devotion, and high quality in point of birth, made her very famous in Britain and Ireland. The ſeveral diviſions of Britain concurred very zealouſly with Ireland, the country that gave her birth, in treating her character with a moſt ſuperſtitious reſpect. Through a courſe of ages ſhe was thought a perſon of too much influence in heaven, and conſequently of too much importance upon earth, to be tamely relinquiſhed to the inhabitants of Kildare, who piqued themſelves upon the peculiar honor of having her body interred in their ground. The Iriſh of Ulſter challenged that honor to themſelves. But the people of Britain would never cede a property ſo invaluable: the Picts were poſitive that her remains lay buried at *Abernethy*, the capital of their dominions; which *Nectan* the Great, one of the moſt illuſtrious of their Kings, had conſecrated and made over to her by a royal and irrevocable donation *.

The Scots, after having annexed the Pictiſh territories to their own, paid a moſt extravagant homage to the relics of Bridget in Abernethy †. But the inhabitants of the Weſtern iſles exceeded all the admirers of this female ſaint, excepting perhaps the nuns of *Kildare*, in expreſſing their veneration for her. To Bridget the greateſt number of their churches were dedicated: from Bridget they had oracular reſponſes: by the divinity of Bridget they

* See Innes in his Crit. Eſſay, Append. Num. 11.

† Boeth. Scot. Hiſt. lib. 9. Leſl. in Rege 47.

ſwore

ſwore one of their moſt ſolemn oaths: to Bridget they devoted the firſt day of February; and in the evening of this feſtival, performed many ſtrange ceremonies of a Druidical and moſt ſuperſtitious kind.

FROM theſe conſiderations we have reaſon to ſuſpect, that the Weſtern iſles of Scotland were, in ſome one period or other during the reign of popery, put under the particular protection of St. Bridget, and perhaps in a great meaſure appropriated to her; as a very conſiderable part of England was to St. Cuthbert. The name of this virgin-ſaint is, in Galic, *Bride*; and *Hebrides*, or *Ey-brides*, is, literally tranſlated, the Iſlands of Bridget.

THE reaſon why the Ebudes of ancient times were in latter ages called *Inchegaul*, is more obvious. We have had occaſion to obſerve that the old Scots of Britain and Ireland gave the name of Gauls to all foreigners indiſcriminately. They affixed to that name the ſame idea which *hoſtis* expreſſed in the language of the more ancient Romans. *Hoſtis* at firſt ſignified a *ſtranger*, afterwards an enemy, either public or private, and conſequently a perſon to be deteſted and abhorred.

DERMIT, the provincial King of Leinſter, betrayed Ireland, his native country, into the hands of the Engliſh; and therefore the old Iriſh, in order to brand his name with an everlaſting mark of infamy, called him *Dermit na ngaul*, that is, *Dermit of the ſtrangers*, or the friend of a foreign nation, and conſequently his country's

country's enemy. The ancient Scots of Britain uſed the word *Gaul* in the ſame acceptation, and their poſterity continue it to this day.

THE Engliſh were not the only foreigners of whom the Iriſh and Scots of former times had reaſon to complain. The *Normans* and *Eaſterlings* often moleſted them: they came from a remote country in a hoſtile manner, and therefore had the opprobrious appellation of Gauls affixed to them. The wars of the Iriſh againſt the Scandinavians are, by an Hibernian hiſtorian, who wrote on that ſubject, called the wars of the Gadelians againſt the *Gauls* *.

THE Weſtern iſles of Scotland were long ſubject to the Norwegians. The Scots of the Continent, who had a mortal averſion to thoſe foreign interlopers, gave the name of *Inche Gaul*, or the Iſlands of ſtrangers, to the Ebudes.

WE have already examined Solinus's account of the Ebudes, and his romantic deſcription of their inhabitants. All the other old geographers who have made particular mention of theſe iſles, have ſaid nothing concerning the inhabitants: nor am I able to recollect that any Greek or Roman hiſtorian, who has written concerning the affairs of Britain, hath touched that ſubject. What the Scottiſh hiſtorians have told us concerning the firſt colonies ſettled in theſe iſles, concerning the country from which they

* Keat. Gen. Hiſt. Part II. pag. 50.

emigrated, the manners and cuſtoms of the inhabitants, and that ſtate of anarchy in which they lived, till bleſſed with a monarch of the Mileſian race; all this, I ſay, reſts entirely on the veracity of Iriſh ſennachies, or the ill-founded ſuppoſitions of hiſtorians.

We have reaſon to believe that the Ebudes, as they were diſtant from one another, and ſeparated by dangerous ſounds, were for a long time poſſeſſed by different tribes, and governed by different chiefs. It does not appear from authentic hiſtory, that theſe chiefs depended on the Kings of Albany, whether Pictiſh or Scottiſh, if any ſuch Kings exiſted, till after the Romans left this iſland.

But whether we date the origin of the Scottiſh monarchy from Bede's *Reuda*, or from *Fergus* the ſon of *Ferchard*, or from *Fergus* the ſon of *Eirc*, which is indeed the moſt probable hypotheſis, it may very reaſonably be preſumed, that ſoon after the eſtabliſhment of that monarchy, the Ebudes were annexed to the Continental territories of the Scots. A cluſter of iſlands, thinly inhabited, deſtitute of ſtrong-holds, altogether unprovided for defence, and incapable of aſſiſting one another, muſt have fallen an eaſy prey to any powerful invader. The Ebudes, however inconſiderable they may be thought now-a-days, would be a very conſiderable addition to the petty monarchy of the Scots of Albany, and could not fail to be an object worthy their acquiring.

At

At whatever period the iſles may have been annexed to the Scottiſh kingdom, the inhabitants perhaps would be inclined to embrace a proper opportunity to ſhake off their yoke, and to diſturb the government of their new Lords. The hiſtory of theſe iſlanders in later ages, and the vindictive ſpirit of every conquered people, render this opinion probable. But there cannot be any foundation for the circumſtantial account which Boece and Buchanan have been pleaſed to give us of grand rebellions in the Ebudes, during the reigns of Caractacus, Corbredus, Ethodius, and other ideal Scottiſh Kings. It is certain, notwithſtanding all the pains taken by Abercromby to prove the contrary, that *Caractacus* never reigned in North Britain, and that *Corbredus*, *Ethodius*, and other royal perſons of the ſame imaginary exiſtence, have fought their battles againſt the chiefs of the Ebudes only in the fabulous annals of our hiſtorians. The accounts they give of a *Donald of the iſles*, ſo old as the times of the Romans, bear about them the apparent mark of a modern invention.

DONALD was a name very common among the Iſlanders; and two of that name, who were both of the great family whoſe power was once more than equal to that of the King, over all the Ebudes, were extremely famous. Theſe were, Donald Earl of Roſs, who fought a battle, fatal to Scotland, againſt an army raiſed by Robert Duke of Albany, during the captivity of James the Firſt in England; and *Donald Balach*, who obtained a ſignal victory over the Earls

of Mar and Caithneſs, wounded the firſt of theſe noblemen, killed the other, and made a great ſlaughter of the King's army under their command. The public calamities produced by theſe battles, and the devaſtations committed by the two Donalds, ſeem to have led our hiſtorians, who were very ill informed concerning the affairs of the Ebudes, into a notion that all the Lords of the Iſles went, from the earlieſt ages, under the ſame deteſtable name.

When the Kings of Scotland poſſeſſed no other territories than thoſe upon the Weſtern coaſt of Albany, we may take it for granted that they frequently viſited their dominions in the Ebudes. Being involved in perpetual wars, either with the Britons, Saxons, or Picts, it was neceſſary for them to ſecure the leading men of the Iſles to their intereſt. Without a ſuppoſition of this kind, it is difficult to comprehend how the Scots could have ſubdued the Picts, or defended themſelves againſt the Saxons. When Aëdan, King of Scots, invaded Northumberland, at the head of a numerous and gallant army, he received no aſſiſtance from the Picts, and had no Iriſh auxiliaries to ſupport him in that expedition. We muſt therefore conclude that the Iſlanders, among whom Adamnan informs us Aëdan had been inaugurated, made a conſiderable part of that numerous army which he led into England.

All the Scots hiſtorians affirm, that the Weſtern Iſles made a part of the Scottiſh dominions, from the

earlieſt accounts of time, to the death of Malcolm Canemore in the year 1093. On the demiſe of that prince, ſay theſe hiſtorians, his brother *Donald Bane* formed a deſign of mounting the throne; and to ſupport, by foreign aid, his title, which was far from being juſt, as the old law of *Taniſtry* had been aboliſhed, he implored for this purpoſe the aſſiſtance of *Magnus* the *Barefooted*, King of Norway, and obtained it, upon ceding all the Northern and Weſtern Iſles of Scotland to that Monarch. Magnus took immediate poſſeſſion of thoſe iſles, and the ſucceſſors of *Donald Bane* in the throne of Scotland did not for a long time recover them. Orkney and Shetland remained in the poſſeſſion of the Norvegians to the year 1468, when James the Third of Scotland married the daughter of Chriſtian the Firſt of Denmark, and got poſſeſſion of thoſe iſlands, until the portion of the Queen ſhould be paid. Even the Ebudes likewiſe were ſubject to the Norvegians, till Alexander the Third, King of Scotland, after having given a ſignal defeat to the Norvegian army at *Air*, in the year 1263, reannexed them to his dominions.

In this manner, and in theſe different periods, if the unanimous conſent of Scottiſh writers could be depended on, did the crown of Norway acquire and loſe the Weſtern iſles. But the Norvegian hiſtorians give a very different account of the matter in almoſt every material circumſtance. Shetland, Orkney, and the Hebrides, were, according to them, ſubdued by their nation in a more early period than that aſſigned; and

and the Scots owed the reſtitution of thoſe iſlands more to the negotiations of a treaty, and a ſum of money, than to the force of their arms.—A diſcuſſion of this point will naturally comprehend the hiſtory of that Norvegian dynaſty which went under the name of the kingdom of Man; which I ſhall briefly give, in the ſucceeding diſſertation.

DISSERTATION XVI.

The Hiſtory of the Norwegian Principality of the Iſles, commonly called the Kingdom of Man.

IN the cloſe of the preceding diſſertation, I promiſed to give a brief hiſtory of the Hebridian principality of the Norwegians, commonly known by the name of the kingdom of Man. In the account I am to give, I ſhall follow more the digreſſive manner of the antiquary, than the regular narration of the hiſtorian. If I ſhall be able to throw a new and ſtronger light upon the ſubject, I ſhall attain my purpoſe, and leave the palm of fine writing to men of greater abilities.

ABOUT the year 875, according to the annals of Norway, written by hiſtorians appointed by authority *, Harold *Harfager*, or the *Fairhaired*, one of the greateſt heroes of Scandinavia, obtained a deciſive victory over many independent Princes who diſputed his title to the throne, and was declared King of Norway. Some of theſe Princes, who had been deſpoiled

* Torfæus in Orcadibus, p. 10 & 11.

of

of their dominions, took refuge in the Scottiſh iſles, and uniting their forces there, made ſeveral deſcents upon the dominions of Harfager. Harold, exaſperated by theſe frequent incurſions, reſolved to carry his arms to the retreats of the invaders. His progreſs through the iſles was irreſiſtible; and while he purſued his enemies from place to place, he made a total conqueſt of Man, the Ebudes, Shetland and Orkney. From that time forward, all the Iſlands became ſubject to the crown of Norway, and continued ſo, with little interruption, for many ages. The writer from whom I have taken this account, informs us further, that Harold often invaded the Continent of Scotland, and fought ſeveral battles there with great ſucceſs: and to corroborate the teſtimony of the old *Iſlandic* hiſtorian from whom he had this relation, he appeals to the rhimes of two ancient poets of Scandinavia, who celebrated that monarch's actions in Scotland in heroic ſongs.

It is certain that a powerful army of Scandinavian pirates infeſted the Eaſtern coaſt of Scotland about the time now aſſigned, and committed the moſt cruel devaſtations, under the conduct of two famous brothers, *Hinguar* and *Hubba*. Conſtantine the Second, King of Scots, marched againſt them in perſon, and twice gave them battle. In the firſt action he obtained the victory, but in the ſecond he was defeated, taken priſoner, and beheaded. This event happened, according to the Scottiſh hiſtorians *, in the 879; and

* Fordun, Boece, and Buchan. in vita Conſtant. II.

as

as Harold Harfager reigned at that time, the authority of the bards, to whom Torfæus appeals, ſeems to deſerve credit. It is true, the enemies by whom Conſtantine was killed are by our hiſtorians called Danes: but that is an objection of no force: the pirates who infeſted the different kingdoms of Europe in the ninth century are, by different writers, ſtiled Norvegians, Danes, Getes, Goths, Jutes, Dacians, Swedes, Vandals, Livonians, and Frieſlanders; their armies being compoſed of all thoſe nations. As the countries from which theſe inundations of plunderers came, lay either to the Eaſt or North of the European kingdoms which they infeſted and harraſſed, they went under the more general denominations of Eaſterlings, Oſtmans, or Normans.

It appears evidently from the annals quoted by Sir James Ware *, that in the year 735, the Normans laid waſte a great part of Ireland, and the iſland of *Richrine*, which is reckoned by ſome one of the Ebudes. Three years after this devaſtation they infeſted Ulſter and the Hebrides; and it is not probable that Orkney, which lay in their way, could have reſiſted their fury. In the year 807, continues Ware, the Danes and Norwegians, landing in the province of Connaught, deſtroyed Roſcommon with fire and ſword. At the ſame time *Cellach*, abbot of I-collumcille, fled into Ireland for ſafety, after the enemy had murdered a conſiderable number of his

* Antiquit. of Ireland, pag. 57.

people. He did not return to Scotland for ſeven years: and from that circumſtance we may take it for granted that theſe ſavages made themſelves maſters of *Iona*, at leaſt, and probably of all the other Weſtern iſles.

About the year 818, *Turgeſius*, by ſome called a Dane, and by others a Norwegian, invaded Ireland. This famous adventurer, after a long ſeries of piratical deſcents and flying battles, uſurped at laſt the ſovereignty of the whole iſland, ruled the miſerable inhabitants with a rod of iron, made dreadful maſſacres of all the eccleſiaſtics he could ſeize, and committed their books to the flames.

The Iriſh were revenged of this cruel tyrant, but had not ſtrength enough to ſhake off the yoke of ſlavery under which they groaned. New ſupplies of hoſtile troops came yearly from Scandinavia, which, with the adherents of Turgeſius, maintained the war with ſucceſs againſt the divided natives. About the year 850, they poſſeſſed themſelves of Dublin, and the parts of Leinſter adjacent to that capital *, from whence the Iriſh were never able to drive them.

The greateſt Monarch that ever held the ſcepter in Ireland, prevailed, in the year 1014, with the greateſt part of the provincial Kings to join their forces to his own, and to attempt a total expulſion of the common enemy. Sitricus, who was at that time King

* Ware's Antiq. of Irel. p. 58.

of the Dublinian Eaſterlings and Normans, uſed every poſſible precaution to make head againſt this powerful confederacy. He entered into a league with the King of Leinſter, procured a body of auxiliaries from him, and received a great acceſſion of ſtrength from the Danes of Man and Inchegaul. After vaſt preparations had been made on both ſides, the contending nations met at laſt near Dublin, and fought the obſtinate and bloody battle of *Chuain-tarf*. In that fatal conflict the Iriſh loſt the illuſtrious *Brian Boré*, their ſovereign, together with his ſon and grandſon, beſides ſome provincial Kings, a vaſt number of the nobility, and many thouſands of the common people *.

Sitricus retired, and maintained his poſt in Dublin, with the ſhattered remains of his army. The preparations made by that prince before the battle, and the ſupplies he received from Man and Inchegaul, afford a clear demonſtration that the Scandinavians were poſſeſſed of theſe iſles before the æra aſſigned by the Scottiſh hiſtorians; and the Iriſh annals, from which Ware has taken the account he gives us of theſe things, are more to be depended upon, with regard to the time at leaſt in which the Ebudes became ſubject to the crown of Norway, than the accounts followed by Buchanan, Boece and Fordun.

We know that the Normans made conſiderable acquiſitions in France, and the Danes in England,

* Ware's Ant. &c. p. 63. Keating's Gen. Hiſt. of Irel. Part 2. page 64.

about the ſame time that Turgeſius became ſo formidable in Ireland. We learn from Fordun, that the Danes infeſted the Eaſtern coaſt of Scotland before the end of the ninth century. It is not probable, therefore, that the Hebrides, which lay in their way, could have been entirely overlooked by theſe freebooters, in the courſe of their ravages. Theſe iſles, diſcontiguous, and thinly inhabited, incapable of aſſiſting each other with powerful ſuccours, and lying at a great diſtance from the ſeat of the Scottiſh kingdom, could make little reſiſtance to a torrent which at that time carried almoſt all Europe before it. The Monarchs of Scotland could not have relieved their Hebridian ſubjects, nor repoſſeſs themſelves of their conquered iſlands: they had ſufficient employment elſewhere; the Eaſtern provinces of their kingdom muſt be defended from the frequent invaſions of the ſame barbarous enemy, or from the inſurrections of the lately conquered Picts.

THE moſt authentic hiſtory of the revolutions which happened in the Weſtern iſles, is contained in the *Chronicle of Man*, as far as it goes. This ſmall piece has been preſerved by Cambden, in his Britannia. It was written by the monks of Ruſſin, an abbey in Man, and is probably older, by a whole century, than Fordun's Scotichronicon. Thoſe who examine the tranſactions of thoſe times with attention, will diſcover ſome chronological errors in the Chronicle of Man; but theſe errors are owing to the negligence of tranſcribers, as they are manifeſtly incon-

inconſiſtent with the truth of facts related, and with the æras aſſigned in other parts of the Chronicle.

THIS ancient record begins thus: "In the year 1065, died Edward, King of England, of bleſſed memory. He was ſucceeded in the throne by Harold, the ſon of Godwin; to whom Harold Harfager, King of Norway, gave battle at Stainford-bridge. The victory fell to the Engliſh, and the Norwegians fled. Among the fugitives was Godred, ſirnamed *Chrovan*, the ſon of Harold the Black from Iceland. This Godred coming to the court of Godred, the ſon of Syrric, who reigned in Man at that time, was entertained by him in an honourable way. The ſame year William the Baſtard conquered England; and Godred, the ſon of Syrric, dying, was ſucceeded by his ſon Fingal."

THE King of England who died in the year with which the Chronicle begins, was *Edward* the *Confeſſor*, a prince highly extolled by monks, who derived extraordinary advantages from his pious liberality. It is well known that Edward aſſiſted *Malcolm Canemore* in recovering the throne of his anceſtors, which had been uſurped by Macbeth, and that Malcolm, for years, carried on a war againſt the Norman conqueror and William Rufus, his immediate ſucceſſor. Malcolm died in the year 1093, about thirty years before Godred, the ſon of Syrric, left the kingdom of the iſles to his ſon Fingal, and conſequently thirty years before Donald Bane made the pretended donation of the

the Ebudes to Magnus of Norway. This donation never exiſted; for it manifeſtly appears from the Chronicle of Man *, and other concurring records, that the Norwegians had occupied the Weſtern iſles long before Donald Bane mounted the throne of Scotland, and before *Godred Chrovan* took poſſeſſion of the dynaſty of the iſles.

GODRED was a powerful prince. He ſubdued a great part of Leinſter, annexed Dublin to his empire, and reduced the Scots, according to the Chronicle, to ſuch a ſtate of dependency, that he would not permit them to drive more than three nails into any boat or veſſel they built. Ware quotes a letter of Lanfranc, archbiſhop of Canterbury, wherein that prelate called Godred King of Ireland †. He died, after a reign of ſixteen years, at *Yle*, or Iſla, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Lagman.

TORFÆUS, following the annaliſts of his country, labours hard to prove that *Magnus* the *Barefooted* dethroned *Godred*, bound his ſon Lagman with iron fetters, made an abſolute conqueſt of the Weſtern iſles,

* The authors of this Chronicle, and after them other writers, were miſtaken in calling the Norwegian King, ſlain in the battle of Stainford-bridge, Harold Harfager. We learn from Torfæus and others, that the true name of that prince was Harold the Imperious. Harfager lived in a much earlier period. The ſame Chronicle writers, or their copyiſt, muſt have committed a blunder likewiſe in making the year 1066 the year of Godred Chrovan's acceſſion to the throne of Man.

† Antiq. of Irel. p. 65.

and

and beſtowed them on his ſon, *Sigurd*, with the title of King *. But the Chronicle of Man places the expedition of Magnus into the Weſtern parts of Scotland, and into England and Wales, in the year 1098, twenty years after the death of Godred, and eleven after the death of his ſon and ſucceſſor, *Lagman*. *Simon Dunelmenſis* agrees with the chronicle in the æra here aſſigned; and if any regard is to be paid to the Scottiſh hiſtorians, the acquiſition made of the Weſtern Iſles by King Magnus, muſt have happened ſoon after the death of *Malcolm Canemore*.

Torfæus, after a long diſcuſſion of the chronological difficulties ariſing out of theſe contradictory accounts, rejects the authority of the chronicle, confutes Buchanan, finds fault with ſome of the writers of his own country, and prefers at laſt the teſtimony of Ordericus Vitalis to all others. But if we follow that author's ſyſtem, the firſt expedition of Magnus into the Weſtern ſeas of Britain took place in the fifth year of William Rufus, that is, in the year 1092. According to this calculation, the Norwegian monarch muſt have ſeized on the Ebudes before the death of *Malcolm Canemore*, and conſequently *Donald Bane* could not have been guilty of the infamous ceſſion which has hitherto done ſo much injury to his memory.

Magnus the Barefooted, might have ſufficient provocation to invade the Ebudes in a hoſtile manner, though ſubject to the crown of Norway before his

* Orcades, p. 71, 72.

time.

time. Many of the piratical Eaſterlings and Normans, who infeſted the Britiſh iſles, after the time of Harold Harfager, were originally independent of the Norwegian crown, or rendered themſelves ſo. Turgeſius, and his ſucceſſors in Ireland, were ſovereign Princes. The Earls of Orkney, though much nearer the ſeat of that empire to which they were vaſſals, made reiterated attempts to ſhake off all marks of ſubjection: and that the Kings of Man endeavoured frequently to render themſelves independent, will appear in the ſequel.

We learn from the chronicle *, that one *Ingemunde* was ſent by Magnus to take poſſeſſion of the Hebudes, in quality of King. But the chiefs of the iſles, finding that this man abandoned himſelf wholly to the moſt ſcandalous exceſſes, to luſt, avarice, and cruelty, conſpired againſt him, and, without regarding either his perſonal dignity or the authority of his conſtituents, ſet fire to the houſe where he was lodged, and deſtroyed him, together with his whole retinue. It was probably with a deſign of revenging this inſult, that Magnus undertook the expedition already related. But whatever may be in this conjecture, it is plain, from the commiſſion with which *Ingemunde* was inveſted, that the Kings of Man had aſſerted their independence, or had refuſed to pay the ancient tribute.

After the death of *Lagman*, the ſon of Godred, who had taken the croſs and died in the holy land, *Mur-*

* Chronicon. Manniæ, ad an. 1097.

card

card O Brien, King of Ireland, ſent, at the deſire of the nobility of Man, one of his friends who was a perſon of royal extraction, to act as Regent in that iſland, during the minority of Olave, the brother of their late ſovereign*. Here we have another clear proof that the Princes and great men of the Weſtern Iſles had withdrawn their allegiance from their old maſters, the Kings of Norway.

MAGNUS the Barefooted, only recovered the territories which one of his remote forefathers had acquired, and which one of his more immediate anceſtors had loſt. He ſubdued all the Scottiſh iſles from Shetland to Man, and according to ſome hiſtorians, added the fruitful peninſula of Kintire to theſe conqueſts: he carried his victorious arms into South Britain, and made himſelf maſter of Angleſey, in ſpite of the united efforts of the two brave Earls who led a numerous army againſt him. He was unqueſtionably one of the moſt powerful Princes of his time, and preſcribed what laws he pleaſed to all thoſe whoſe ſituation made them obnoxious to his intemperate rage, or to the luſt of his boundleſs ambition. The Welſh felt the dreadful effects of his barbarous power, and therefore courted his friendſhip with a multitude of preſents. He obliged the Scots of Galloway to furniſh him with timber, at their own expence, for the uſe of his bulwarks. He ſent his ſhoes to *Murcard*, King of Ireland, and commanded him in the moſt peremptory manner, under the pain of his diſpleaſure, to

* Chron. of Man.

carry them on his ſhoulders, in the preſence of his ambaſſadors, on the anniverſary of Chriſt's nativity. The Iriſh nobility received this inſolent meſſage with becoming ſentiments of diſdain and indignation: but *Murcard* was too wiſe to provoke the reſentment of a conqueror whoſe power was equal to his pride, and told his friends that he would eat the ſhoes of the Norwegian monarch, rather than ſee any one province in Ireland deſtroyed. Accordingly he paid homage in the diſhonourable way preſcribed by the haughty Magnus, entertained his ambaſſadors with a royal magnificence, and diſmiſſed them with the higheſt expreſſions of reſpect for their maſter.

It does not appear from any authentic record, that Magnus came near the Eaſtern coaſt of Britain in either of its diviſions. His troops could not therefore have been of great uſe to *Donald Bane*, had any one of his nephews diſputed the crown of Scotland with him: and indeed it appears to me more probable that Donald, upon the demiſe of his brother, poſſeſſed himſelf of the throne by virtue of the old *Taniſtry* right, or that, according to ſome Engliſh hiſtorians, he was elected king, than that he owed his crown to the aid of a foreign ally.

Donald's immediate predeceſſor in the throne, though a great Prince, had diſobliged the nation by many unpopular actions. He had introduced the Engliſh language, dreſs, manners, and religion, in a country at that time full of the moſt violent prejudices

againſt every thing which came from a quarter ſo hoſtile. His obſtinate attachment to the intereſt of his brother in law, Edgar Atheling, involved the nation in a ſeries of wars more expenſive and calamitous than profitable or glorious. The large eſtates which he had ſettled on ſome noble exiles who followed the fortune of that weak Prince, muſt have greatly exaſperated the Scottiſh nobility, and alienated their affections from his family. He had been overmatched by the conqueror of England, and groſly inſulted by his ſucceſſor, William Rufus. His heir apparent, Prince Edward, had periſhed unfortunately with Malcolm at Alnwick. The reſt of his children by Queen Margaret were under age, and that Princeſs, already worn out by the auſterities of a ſuperſtitious life, overwhelmed with grief, ſurvived her huſband and ſon but a few days.

All theſe circumſtances conſpiring together muſt have made it eaſy for Donald Bane to poſſeſs himſelf of the throne vacant by the death of his brother, without purchaſing the aid of a Scandinavian potentate, ſo much at the expence of his country and his own reputation. His pretenſions to the crown were oppoſed only by a law neither ancient nor ever much regarded; and the diſtractions at court in conſequence of ſo many unhappy events, afforded him the moſt favourable opportunity of aſſerting his claim. The concluſion I would draw from what has been ſaid on this ſubject, appears to me to be perfectly juſt: that our hiſtorians were ill informed with regard to the

manner how, and the time when the Weſtern Iſles fell under the dominion of Norway.

After Magnus the Barefooted had, through his temerity, loſt his life in Ireland, Olave, the ſon of Godred, recovered his paternal dominions, and reigned over the iſles forty years. Olave was a Prince of a peaceable diſpoſition, diſtinguiſhed greatly by the religious virtues of the times, and extremely liberal to eccleſiaſtics. He was educated in the court of Henry I. and was on good terms with the monarchs of England throughout his life. He lived in amity with Ireland; and it does not appear that thoſe Kings of Scotland, who were his cotemporaries, diſputed his title either to Man or the Iſles.

Selden complained that *Olaus* and *Aulave*, *Amlaff* and *Anlaphus*, are names which breed great confuſion in the Engliſh hiſtory; but theſe names ſeemingly different appear to me to be the ſame. The ſennachies of the iſles call the Olave, of whom we are now ſpeaking, *Aula* or *Amhla*, in Latin, *Amlavus*, *Anlaphus*, or *Olaus*; and they diſtinguiſh him from other Princes of the ſame name by the title of *Amhla Dearg mac Rì Lochlin*, that is to ſay, *Red Olave, the King of Lochlin's Son.* Godred, the father of Olave, was from Scandinavia, which is called Lochlin by the inhabitants of the Highlands and Iſles.

It is the opinion of ſome that *Lochlin* and *Denmark* are words of the ſame import: but it appears to me

rather that *Lochlin* and *Scandinavia* are ſynonimous terms. *Harold Harfager*, and Magnus, the Barefooted, were Norwegian Princes, and the iſlanders give no other appellation to thoſe great conquerors, nor to other *Normans*, who held their anceſtors under ſubjection for many ages, than that of *Lochlinich*.

In the Galic language, *Loch* ſignifies a great collection of water, whether ſalt or freſh, and *lan* full. *Lun* is the name of a certain bird remarkably voracious. The Baltic might have been very properly called *Lochlan*, if it neither ebbs nor flows; and many different countries, particularly Scotland and Ireland, experienced that from this ſea ſwarmed an immenſe number of pirates, who by an eaſy and juſt metaphor might have been compared to birds of prey and of paſſage. But whatever the etymon of the word *Lochlin* may be, it is certain that all the adventurers who came from the Baltic, or from the Northern ſeas, and the countries bordering upon them, whether Norwegians, Swedes, Finlanders, Ruſſians, Livonians, Poles, Pomeranians, Danes, Frieſlanders, or Icelanders, were by the Iriſh and Hebridian Scots called *Lochlinich*.

It has been thought a matter of wonder that Scandinavia, ſo barren in every other reſpect, ſhould have been ſo very fertile of men, as to pour forth whole inundations of rovers almoſt every year from the latter end of the ſeventh century, at leaſt, till the thirteenth.

Some

Some ingenious writers have endeavoured to account for this extraordinary phænomenon by reſolving it into the effects of polygamy. A plurality of women were, by the laws or cuſtoms of Scandinavia, confined to the bed of one man, if we believe theſe writers; and hence it was that the inhabitants multiplied almoſt beyond belief. A country in this ſituation, which did not abound with the neceſſaries of life, could not but ſend numerous colonies abroad in queſt of either plunder or ſettlements: and ſuch colonies, conſiſting of adventurers hardy, enterpriſing, lawleſs, poor, and determined to make their fortune or periſh in the attempt, muſt have carried deſolation far and wide.

But it is by no means certain that polygamy was eſtabliſhed either by law or cuſtom among the ancient Scandinavians. The Germania Magna of the old geographers comprehended at leaſt the Southern coaſt of the Baltic, together with its iſles. Mela and Tacitus ſeem to extend it much farther*; and Cluverius is poſitive that Norway, Sweden, and every region lying to the North of the Baltic, made a part of that immenſe tract of land. The *Suiones* of Tacitus are undoubtedly either the Norwegians or the Swedes, or perhaps both: and the Æſtii of the ſame author are by Archbiſhop Uſher†, and other eminent critics, called the progenitors of thoſe pirates, afterwards ſtiled Eaſterlings and Oſtmans.

* Mela, lib. iii. cap. 3. Tacit. de mor. Germ. cap. 45.

† See Ware's Antiquities of Ireland, chap. 24.

Tacitus,

TACITUS, who ſeems to have made the manners and cuſtoms of the Germans his particular ſtudy, informs us, that every one of that nation, excepting only a ſmall number of the chiefs or leading men, contented himſelf with one wife, and that of all the barbarians in the world, they were the ſtricteſt obſervers of the matrimonial laws ‡. We have therefore reaſon to believe, that the *Suiones*, *Æſtii*, *Cimbri*, *Teutones*, and other nations, of whom the Normans and Eaſterlings of after-ages muſt have been deſcended, had not a plurality of wives in his time; and it does not appear from good authority that polygamy became faſhionable among the poſterity of theſe nations, in the period intervening between the time of Tacitus and the introduction of chriſtianity.

BUT even allowing, without any neceſſity, that polygamy was common in Scandinavia, ſtill it is doubtful, from the hiſtory of nations who give into that cuſtom, whether a plurality of wives increaſe population or not. As the males of Scandinavia were always engaged in war at ſea, there is indeed reaſon to believe that the accidents from enemies, and thoſe ariſing from a rude navigation, carried off a greater proportion of them than of the males of any other nation; and therefore it may be ſuppoſed that a greater number of women fell to the ſurvivors. But, when we conſider that the women of the North always attended

‡ Severa illic matrimonia, nec ullam morum partem magis laudaveris: nam prope ſoli barbarorum ſingulis uxoribus contenti ſunt, exceptis admodum paucis. Tacit. de mor. Germ.

their

their huſbands and friends in their expeditions, we muſt allow that they were ſubject to the ſame accidents with the males. In this way therefore it is impoſſible to account how the Northern Europe could cover the Southern diviſions of it with ſuch deluges of barbarous adventurers.

The old Norwegians and Swedes, before their converſion to Chriſtianity, were addicted to piracy, and eſteemed it a glorious occupation. The wild tribes who lived near the gulphs of Bothnia, Finland, and Livonia, followed the ſame practice. The maritime nations inhabiting the Southern coaſt of the Baltic were led by the example and ſucceſs of thoſe rovers to try their fortune in the more wealthy diviſions of the South of Europe. If to theſe numerous nations of plunderers we add thoſe of Denmark, Holſtein, Saxony, and Frieſland, all the way to the mouth of the Rhine, we do not make the country of thoſe Northern rovers, who have done ſo much miſchief in former ages, more extenſive than hiſtory affirms. It is alſo extreamly probable that thoſe who dwelt in the more inland diſtricts of the kingdoms of the North joined the freebooting inhabitants of the ſea coaſts in their expeditions. In a diviſion of Europe ſo extenſive, it could have been no difficult matter to muſter up ſwarms of adventurers, ſome thirſting after glory, others rendered deſperate by poverty, and all of them animated by the ſucceſs of their neighbours or predeceſſors in emigrations of the ſame kind.

It may alſo be ſuſpected that the piratical Eaſterlings and Normans, who committed ſuch devaſtations in the lower Germany, France, Britain, Ireland, and other places, were not ſo very numerous as they have been repreſented. Inſtead of making war in a regular manner, they generally invaded one particular diviſion of a country near the coaſt, in flying parties, gathered all the ſpoils they could carry away, and deſtroyed every thing elſe. They were compoſed of ſeveral bodies independent of one another, and no ſooner was one band gone than another came. By this means the countries expoſed to their ravages had ſcarce any reſpite from their incurſions: this circumſtance muſt have greatly ſwelled the idea of their numbers in the minds of thoſe who were ſo cruelly haraſſed by them; and as they made a conqueſt of ſome countries, the writers in the intereſt of the old natives, to ſave their credit in ſome meaſure, would perhaps have aſcribed thoſe conqueſts to the numbers of the enemy, rather than to their ſuperior bravery.

To leave this digreſſion, for the hiſtory of the dynaſty of Man. *Olave*, King of the iſles, after a long and peaceable reign, was treacherouſly ſlain by his own nephews: he was ſucceeded by his ſon, *Godred*, whom he had by the daughter of *Fergus*, Earl of Galloway, the moſt powerful ſubject in Scotland at that time.

Godred had ſailed to Norway before his father's death, and did homage to King *Hinge*. In his abſence the three ſons of his uncle *Harold* ſeized on his dominions and divided them among themſelves. But the uſurp-

ing aſſaſſins ſoon met with the fate their crimes deſerved. *Godred* returning from Norway, aſſerted his title to the kingdom of Man, cauſed one of the ſons of Harold to be executed, and agreeably to the inhuman cuſtom of thoſe barbarous times, put out the eyes of the other two *.

Soon after *Godred* had recovered the inheritance of his anceſtors, the Eaſterlings of Dublin invited him over into Ireland, and made him their King. Elated beyond meaſure by this great acceſſion of power, he began to rule tyrannically in his own dominions, and regardleſs of juſtice and the laws, deprived the nobles of their eſtates. The moſt powerful among them, *Thorfin*, the ſon of *Oler*, to gratify his revenge, entered into a league with *Somerled*, the famous thane of Argyle, and after wreſting many of the iſles out of *Godred*'s hands, by the aſſiſtance of that powerful chief, erected them into a ſeparate kingdom for *Dugal*, the ſon of his new patron.

The Chronicle of Man calls *Somerled* Prince of *Heregaidel*, and informs us further, that he had married a natural daughter of King *Olave*, and conſequently *Godred*'s ſiſter. By that lady he had four ſons: *Dugal*, of whom came the *MacDougals* of Lorn; *Reginald*, the progenitor of all the *MacDonalds* of Scotland and Ireland; *Angus*, an ambitious lord, whoſe great power and numerous offspring became extinct in a ſhort time; and *Olave*, of whoſe actions or iſſue neither hiſtory nor tradition have recorded any thing memorable.

* Chron. Man. ad ann. 1143.

The

THE King of Man, upon receiving intelligence that Thorfin and Somerled had ſeized on a part of his dominions, equipped a conſiderable fleet, and putting to ſea went in queſt of his enemies *. Somerled met him with a fleet conſiſting of eighty ſail: after an obſtinate fight, attended with great ſlaughter on both ſides, they patched up a peace, having agreed to divide the kingdom of the iſles among them. From that day, ſaith the chronicle, may be dated the downfall and ruin of the kingdom of Man.

EITHER Somerled's ambition was very high, or Godred's perfidy provoked him ſoon to recommence hoſtilities; for he invaded Man with a new fleet about two years after the partition treaty had been concluded. Godred, unable to maintain his ground, abandoned the iſland, fled to Norway, and laid his grievances before the ſovereign of whom he held his dominions by a feudal right. He remained in Norway for ſix years before his repreſentations had any effect. At length he obtained a conſiderable ſupply of forces, and returning to Man, defeated his brother Reginald, who had taken poſſeſſion of the iſland in his abſence, and re-eſtabliſhed himſelf in his kingdom †.

SOMERLED was killed before this revolution happened. Intoxicated by repeated victories, and his vaſt acquiſitions, he had formed a deſign, if we believe the Chronicle of Man, to conquer all Scotland. Having,

* Ad ann. 1156. † Chron. Man. ad ann. 1164.

in conſequence of that extravagant project, equipped a fleet of one hundred and ſixty ſail, he landed a numerous army near Renfrew in Clydeſdale. Here, ſaith the chronicle, he was, through the juſt vengeance of God, vanquiſhed by a ſmall number, and he himſelf, together with his ſon and a vaſt multitude of his people, ſlain *.

The Highland ſennachies give a very different account of Somerled's death and character. According to them, this powerful thane had received many inſufferable provocations from the miniſters of King *Malcolm* IV. a Prince weak, unexperienced, and entirely under the direction of his ſervants. The vaſt extent of Somerled's eſtate on the continent, to ſay nothing of the acquiſition he had made in the iſles, filled theſe miniſters with a political jealouſy, and tempted their avarice at the ſame time. Reſolved to humble ſo formidable a ſubject, and to divide his lands among themſelves, they compelled him, by a long ſeries of attrocious injuries, to take arms in his own defence. The King's counſellors attainted him, and *Gilchriſt*, Earl of Angus, the ableſt general of that age in Scotland, was ſent with a great military force to render that unjuſt ſentence effectual; but Somerled fought the Earl, though with an inferior army, and the victory remained dubious. This happened during the minority of Malcolm.

After that Prince had taken the reins of government into his own hands, his miniſters, enraged by a diſ-

* Chron. Man. ubi ſup.

a diſappointed ambition, made it their chief buſineſs to convince him that it was neceſſary to annihilate the overgrown power of Somerled, or at leaſt to reduce him to a ſtate of mediocrity. The force of an argument ſo ſpecious, concurring with the facility of his own temper, prevailed eaſily with the King to favour their deſign. But to have ſomething of a plauſible pretence for commencing hoſtilities, it was agreed in council, that a perſon inveſted with a public character ſhould be ſent immediately to propoſe to the Thane, that in order to procure a remiſſion of his crimes from the King, he ſhould renounce his right to the lands held of him on the continent, and ſatisfy himſelf with his poſſeſſions in the iſles.

SOMERLED was too conſcious of his own ſtrength, and too tender of his undoubted right, to acquieſce in a propoſal no leſs injurious to his character than prejudicial to his intereſt. Incapable of diſguiſing his ſentiments, and fired with a juſt indignation, he drew his ſword, and told the meſſenger that "He would ſooner terminate the diſpute with that weapon, than tamely ſurrender any part of his property." After returning ſuch an anſwer to a meſſage ſent by his ſovereign, he had reaſon to believe that a violent ſtorm would immediately gather, and burſt upon him: he therefore armed his numerous vaſſals in Argyleſhire and the iſles, procured a conſiderable body of auxiliaries from Ireland, and determined to carry the war into the country of his unprovoked enemies. He landed with an army of fifteen thouſand men in the

Bay of St. Laurence, now Greenock, and marched directly to Paiſley, where the King's troops were encamped. But before he could bring them to an action, he was moſt baſely aſſaſſinated by *Maurice MacNiel*, one of his nephews, whom the King's generals found means to bribe. This is in ſubſtance the account given by the Highland ſennachies of Somerled's diſpute with his ſovereign, and of the unhappy end of his life, which was the conſequence of it. His followers, ſay the ſennachies, betook themſelves to their gallies, upon receiving the news of their leader's fate, and returned home without ſuffering any conſiderable loſs.

The account given by the Scottiſh hiſtorians of this matter, agrees neither with the Chronicle of Man, nor with the relation now given. According to them, Somerled's ambition knew no bounds, and his luſt of power was inſatiable. Led by the dictates of thoſe paſſions, he formed an audacious deſign of extending the limits of the principality he had by very indifferent means acquired, at the expence of his ſovereign. Malcolm IV. a minor, had mounted the throne of Scotland upon the death of his grandfather, David the Saint; and Somerled taking advantage of the minority, rebelled in the very beginning of this reign. He put himſelf at the head of a numerous army, conſiſting partly of his own vaſſals, and partly of lawleſs perſons, whom the love of plunder or a conſciouſneſs of guilt had driven from all quarters to his ſtandard, and laid waſte thoſe diviſions of the kingdom which

lay next his own principalities. But the celebrated *Gilchriſt**, Earl of Angus, being ſent with an army to oppoſe him, gave him a total defeat, and obliged him to fly for refuge into Ireland.

MALCOLM's reign was full of troubles. Henry II. of England, taking advantage of his pacific diſpoſition and mean genius, forced him to ſurrender the towns and countries which his anceſtors had poſſeſſed in South Britain. A ceſſion ſo inglorious provoked the reſentment of the Scottiſh nation, and became the foundation of a dangerous inſurrection. To pacify the malecontents, Malcolm was under the diſagreeable neceſſity of declaring war againſt England. But he carried on and concluded that war in a way which gave little ſatisfaction to his people. The alienation he made of Northumberland, and a ſcandalous puſillanimity which appeared in every part of his conduct, rendered his perſon and authority contemptible.

THE inhabitants of Galloway, deſpiſing this feeble adminiſtration, revolted openly, and thoſe of Murray followed their example. In the midſt of ſo many commotions and civil wars, which had deſtroyed the braveſt ſoldiers in the nation, Somerled's genius was too enterprizing to remain unactive. He had returned from Ireland, whither the unſucceſsful battle already mentioned had driven him, and haraſſed for ſome time the coaſts of Scotland with piratical depredations.

* There was no Earl of Angus called Gilchriſt in that age. See Dalrymple's Collect. p. 392.

In

In a conjuncture ſo full of tumult and public confuſion, he ſoon collected a large body of men, with whom he made a deſcent upon the left ſide of the river Clyde, and penetrated as far as Renfrew: but being too intent upon plunder, and too little ſolicitous about his own ſafety, he was ſurprized and his followers cut to pieces. Some writers relate that he himſelf was taken priſoner, brought before the King, and executed like a common malefactor; others will have it that he and his ſon fell in battle. Buchanan places theſe events about the year 1163.

I THINK there is reaſon to believe that both the Scottiſh hiſtorians and Highland ſennachies have committed a number of errors in their contradictory account of this powerful chief. Had his birth been obſcure, and his original fortune low, as theſe hiſtorians pretend, it is difficult to comprehend how he could have raiſed himſelf to the thanedom of Argyle, or why the public ſhould have recogniſed his title. The Chronicle of Man calls him *Prince of Heregaidhel* *, at the time of his marriage with the daughter of King Olave. It does not appear that this marriage gave him a right to any part of the iſles, though Abercromby † concurs with the Highland genealogiſts in an opinion of this kind. *Olave* was ſucceeded by his ſon Godred, and the poſterity of Godred inherited the greateſt part of Olave's dominions, for a whole century after Somerled had been killed near Renfrew.

* A corruption of Jar-ghaël, that is to ſay, the country of the Weſtern Caledonians.

† Mart. Atch. of the Scots nation, vol. ii. p. 440.

It is hard to determine whether Somerled gave the firſt provocation to his ſovereign, or received it from the miniſters of that prince. It is not improbable, that after he had acquired ſo vaſt an addition of power in the iſles, he aſpired to be independent towards the latter part of his life. If his whole army, as is alledged, a very ſmall number excepted, was cut off near the river Clyde by an inconſiderable body of royaliſts, it is ſurprizing that his family ſhould have ſubſiſted, after his death, without any diminution of its vaſt power. No advantage appears to have been obtained by a battle ſo deciſive. The eſtates of the rebel were neither annexed to the demeſnes of the crown, nor parcelled out among court favourites. His ſon *Dugal* was left in the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of Argyle and Lorn: *Reginald*, another of his ſons, was Lord of the Iſles and Kintyre: *Angus*, their brother, was powerful enough to fight battles by ſea and land againſt Reginald: and *Somerled* the Second, the fourth ſon of Somerled the Firſt, and an hereditary traitor, ſay our Scottiſh hiſtorians, was able to raiſe a new rebellion in the reign of Alexander the Second.

I suspect indeed that this Somerled the Second never exiſted, notwithſtanding what hath been ſaid about him by ſennachies and hiſtorians. The Chronicle of Man makes no mention of him; and the time at which we are told he revolted, looks like a demonſtration that the whole ſtory is a mere fiction. Somerled the Firſt was killed in the year 1164. The

younger Somerled rebelled againſt Alexander the Second in the year 1248 *. He muſt of courſe have been eighty-four years of age, when he engaged in a war againſt his ſovereign, ſuppoſing he had been born on the very day in which his father was ſlain.

ANOTHER argument from which it may be concluded, with great probability, that the real Somerled's party ſuſtained no conſiderable loſs at Renfrew, is, that the diviſion of the iſles which had fallen to the ſhare of that mighty Thane, after his firſt ſea-fight with the King of Man, remained after his death in the poſſeſſion of his ſon Reginald, and of his poſterity for three centuries. If Somerled's army had been totally deſtroyed at Renfrew, it may be very reaſonably preſumed that *Godred*, King of Man, who had been violently diſpoſſeſſed of theſe iſles about eight years before that event, would have laid hold of ſo favourable an opportunity to re-annex them to his dominions, before the ſons of Somerled could have recovered themſelves from the loſs they ſuſtained in the battle which was fatal to their father.

IT is true indeed the Chronicle of Melroſs, another old hiſtorical regiſter, agrees exactly with the account which we have in the Chronicle of Man, of the total overthrow given to Somerled's army. From it we learn, that "Sumerled, the petty King of *Eragaithel*, had carried on an impious rebellion againſt his natural lord, Malcolm King of Scot-

* See Buchan. & Abercrom. in Alexander II.

land, during the ſpace of twelve years: that this rebel, after having collected a numerous army in Ireland and other places, was, through the vengeance of God, killed at *Renfrew*, together with his ſon, and a multitude of his vaſſals: and that a handful of men belonging to the ſame province, the inhabitants of Clydeſdale probably, had the ſole merit of delivering the nation from this rebel *."

Sir James Dalrymple quotes a charter belonging to the family of Innes, from which it appears that Malcolm and Somerled once concluded a peace, and of courſe that Somerled's rebellion could not have been of ſuch a long duration as the Chronicle pretends. King Malcolm reigned twelve years only, and the Thane of Argyle died before him †.

It is more than probable that the true hiſtory of Somerled's birth and character—of his diſputes with the Kings of Scotland and Man—of his laſt great armament and death, was this:—His anceſtors were perſons of conſiderable influence, though greatly inferior to him. He ſoon began to extend his power

* Sumerledus, Regulus Eregeithel, jam per annos duodecim contra Regem Scotiæ Malcolmum, dominum ſuum naturalem, impie rebellans, tam copioſum de Hibernia et diverſis locis exercitum contrahens apud Renfrim applicuiſſet, tandem ultione divina cum filio & innumerabili populo, a paucis cumprovincialibus ibidem occiſus eſt. Chron. Melros. ad ann. 1164.

† The charter was dated, *apud Pert. natali domini proximo poſt concordiam Regis & Sumerled.* Dalrymple's Collections, p. 425.

—he wreſted half of the iſles out of the hands of Godred, King of Man—he made war on Malcolm, King of Scotland—a battle was fought, but the controverſy was not decided.—Malcolm, directed by his natural clemency, or more probably by reaſons of ſtate, adjuſted all his differences with Somerled in an amicable way. After this agreement, the ambitious Thane taking advantage of his brother-in-law's unpopular adminiſtration, and the inteſtine commotions conſequent upon it, ſeized on many of thoſe iſles which made a part of the Norwegian dynaſty of the iſles. Two ſucceſsful ſea-fights eſtabliſhed the right which the ſtrength of his arms and political intrigues had given him to that acquiſition. An increaſe of power ſo great muſt have made him the object of public jealouſy more than ever. A wiſe miniſtry ſaw the neceſſity of humbling a perſon already too powerful to be a good ſubject; and no doubt ſome of the nobles of Scotland were willing to ſacrifice him to their avarice. Somerled ſaw the danger with which he was threatened, and took every precaution to defeat the machinations of his enemies. He formed the bold deſign of rendering himſelf totally independent of the crown. He had no reaſon to dread much from the magnanimity or addreſs of Malcolm; and accordingly having collected a great body of men, not only in Argyle and the Iſles, but likewiſe in Ireland, where he had connections, he made a deſcent on Clydeſdale. The King's generals took the ſhorteſt and moſt effectual, though an ignominious way of ending the diſpute. They bribed a perſon from

whom

whom Somerled could have no fears, and by his means got him aſſaſſinated. The rebels diſperſed immediately; but the loyaliſts were too weak to purſue their ſucceſs. They permitted the Highlanders to retire unmoleſted, and the ſons of Somerled to divide his overgrown eſtate among themſelves.

GODRED, King of the iſles, was obliged to yield a conſiderable diviſion of his hereditary territories, as related above, and was likewiſe ſtript in a ſhort time of the dominions he had acquired in Ireland. We learn from the annals of that kingdom, that *Dermit nan gaul* and his ſon-in-law, the famous Earl of *Pembroke*, took Dublin, the capital of the dominions of the Eaſterlings, in the year 1170 *, and that the troops ſent from Man to recover it, next year, were totally defeated, and their leaders ſlain.

GODRED died in the year 1187, during the winter ſeaſon, and his body was in the following ſummer conveyed to *I-colm-cille* †. It has been obſerved already, that this King muſt very probably be one of thoſe Norwegian Kings, who, according to the Scottiſh hiſtorians, lie buried in Iona.

OLAVE, ſurnamed the Black, the only legitimate ſon left by Godred, had been declared heir by his father, and by the pope's legate: but as he was too young to aſſume the reins of government, the people

* Ware's Ant. of Irel. chap. 24.
† Chron. Man. ad ann. 1187.

of

of Man made his natural brother *Reginald* King in his ſtead. We are told by the hiſtorians of Norway, that *Reginald* was the moſt famous warrior in the Weſtern parts of Europe, during his time ‡. It had been the practice of ſome famous pirates among the old Normans to live for three years without entering under the roof of a houſe which emitted *any ſmoke*. Reginald had conformed himſelf to that cuſtom, and became of courſe capable of ſuſtaining hardſhips of every kind. He prudently lived upon good terms with the Kings of England, and ſtudied to oblige thoſe of Scotland. At the requeſt of *William* the *Lion* he undertook to recover Caithneſs out of the hands of Harold, Earl of Orkney, and effected it §. After apprehending his brother *Olave*, and committing him to priſon, for preſuming to aſk a more comfortable maintenance than the mountainous and ſterile iſland of Lewis could afford him, he delivered him into the hands of *William*, to prevent a civil war; and the innocent prince was kept in priſon during the life of that Monarch *.

Reginald ſaw very good reaſons for courting the honour of being a vaſſal to the ſee of Rome. The Popes of the twelfth and thirteenth ages preſcribed laws to ſome of the greateſt ſovereigns of Europe, and ſecured the intereſt of thoſe who committed their perſons and eſtates to their protection. Reginald thought the tribute payable by his kingdom to the

‡ Torfæi Orcades, p. 146.
§ Ibid. p. 164.
* Chron. Manniæ.

crown

crown of Norway too high, and the Lord of his allegiance was at too great a diſtance to defend him, if oppreſſed by one of his more powerful neighbours. He therefore, like two Engliſh Monarchs, his cotemporaries, ſubjected his kingdom to the Pope, who demanded only an annual tribute of twelve merks †.

REGINALD, though illegitimate, ſtiled himſelf King of Man, *by hereditary ſucceſſion.* In thoſe days illegitimacy did not incapacitate any perſon in the Northern parts of Europe from ſucceeding his father in the poſſeſſion of an eſtate or kingdom; and the caſe was much the ſame towards the South.

AFTER *Reginald* had reigned near thirty years, his brother Olave found means to re-eſtabliſh his own authority in the Northern Ebudes; and having equipped a conſiderable fleet there by the aſſiſtance of his friends, invaded Man, and ſurprized Reginald: but he entered into a treaty with him, and left him in poſſeſſion of Man, with the regal title.

IN a little time after the concluſion of this treaty, Reginald entered into a confederacy with Allan, Earl of Galloway, the moſt powerful ſubject of Scotland; and accompanied by that Lord, made an expedition into the Northern Ebudes, with a deſign of re-taking thoſe territories which he had reſigned to Olave by treaty. But the confederates found themſelves under the neceſſity of returning home without effecting any

† Fœdera Angliæ, tom. 1. p. 234.

thing;

thing; the people of Man having too great a partiality for Olave, and too much regard for the Islanders in his interest, to fight them ‡. Soon after this unsuccessful expedition, *Reginald* pretended a journey to the court of England; and to defray the expence of it, obtained from the people of Man a pecuniary aid, which was thought very considerable at that time; but he went only to Galloway, in order to facilitate the execution of his former design, and to marry his daughter to the son of his ally. His subjects, disobliged by this gross misapplication of the aid they had granted, sent for Olave, and made him King §. Reginald made two unsuccessful attempts to dispossess his brother, and lost his life in the last of them.

The competition being ended by the death of *Reginald*, and a perfect tranquillity ensuing, *Olave* went to Norway, with a design of paying homage to his sovereign, and getting his right confirmed; but before his arrival, *Haco*, the Norwegian Monarch, had made a certain nobleman called *Husbec* King of the *Sodorian* isles *. This nobleman, who, according to

‡ Chron. Man. ad ann. 1225. § Ibid. ad ann. 1226.

* The meaning of the word *Sodor*, which has been very much misunderstood by many learned men, may contribute to throw light on some parts of the *Hebridian history*, hitherto involved in darkness, and apparent contradictions.——We are told by Buchanan, lib. 1. cap. 34. that the age before that in which he lived, gave the name of *Sodor* to a town in the Isle of Man. Bishop Brown, the author of a new description of that island, which Dr. Gibson has annexed

to the Chronicle of Man, was the ſon of *Owmund*, but according to Torfæus, the ſon of *Dugal*, and grand-

annexed to the old one given by Cambden in his Britannia, ſuppoſes that the *Inſulæ Sodorenſes*, thirty-two in number, were ſo called from the biſhopric of *Sodor*, erected in the iſle of Iona, which was one of them. Theſe *Inſulæ Sodorenſes* were united to *Man*, if we believe him, about the beginning of the eleventh century, and the biſhops of theſe united ſees were ſtiled biſhops of *Sodor and Man*. But after the Iſle of Man, continues Dr. Brown, had been annexed to the crown of England, the two ſees were disjoined, and Man had biſhops of its own, who ſtiled themſelves variouſly, ſometimes biſhops of *Man* only, ſometimes *Sodor et Man*, and ſometimes *Sodor de Man*; giving the name of *Sodor* to a little iſland, called by the Norwegians *Holm*, and by the natives *Peel*, in which the cathedral ſtood.—(See Cambd. Brit. Gibſon's edit. page 1449.) To juſtify this explication of the word, Dr. Brown appeals to a charter granted by Thomas, Earl of Derby, to one of the biſhops of Man, in the year 1505.

I ſhall not inſiſt on the difficulty of proving that a biſhopric was erected in the Weſtern iſles of Scotland before the twelfth century, or perhaps before the thirteenth, nor on ſome other remarks which might be made on the hiſtorical relation now given; but it is certain, that after Man had fallen into the hands of the Engliſh, the biſhopric of the Iſles was tranſlated by the Scots into Iona, and that the biſhops who filled that ſee from that period, till the final abolition of epiſcopacy after the revolution, went under the title of *Epiſcopi Sodorenſes*: whether they or thoſe of Man had the beſt right to it we ſhall not now inquire.

If *Sodor* was a town in *Man*, in the beginning of the ſixteenth century, or in the fifteenth, which was Buchanan's opinion; or if, from that town or *Holm*, the biſhops of Man and the Iſles derived their reſpective titles, agreeably to Dr. Brown's opinion; it is difficult to

grandſon of Somerled, was killed, in the firſt year of his reign, at the ſiege of a caſtle in Bute, and his body

comprehend, why, in charters, regiſters, hiſtories, and common converſation, *Sodor* ſhould be preferred to *Man*, of which it was no more than a ſmall part. When we take the word *Sodor* in ſo confined a ſignification, there ſeems to be the ſame impropriety in ſtiling a perſon *Biſhop* of *Sodor and Man*, as in ſtiling another of the ſame order Biſhop of *Derry and Ireland*, Biſhop of *Bangor and Wales*, or Biſhop of *Dumblain and Scotland*.

The paſſage quoted from the Earl of Derby's grant ſeems to me to be miſrepreſented, and by no means to imply that *Pele*, *Holm*, or that ſmall iſland to the Weſt of *Man*, was the true *Sodor* of ancient times.

When the Norwegians conquered the Weſtern iſles, they ſometimes changed the old Galic names of places, and gave them new ones, abundantly deſcriptive. Thus to the Eaſtern Œbudæ of the ancients they gave the name of *Ealand Skianach*, or the Cloudy Iſland; Sky in the Norſe language ſignifying a Cloud; and to the Weſtern Œbuda, that of *Logus*, or *Lodhus*, i. e. a Marſhy Country, more fit for paſturage than tillage: and when they divided theſe iſles into two parts, agreeably to their ſituation, and appointed a diſtinct governor to each, they gave the name of *Sudereys* to that diviſion of the iſles which lay to the South, and of *Nordureys* to that in the oppoſite quarter; Ey or Ay, in the Norwegian language, ſignifying an Iſland, and *Suder* and *Norder* ſignifying Southern and Northern, when they poſſeſſed the ancient *Cathaneſia*, they gave the new name of *Suderland* to a county in the Northern diviſion of Scotland, now well known by the ſame appellation.

It appears from the hiſtory of the Orkneys, compiled by an old Iſlandic writer, and tranſlated, with large additions, by Torfæus, that the explication now given of the two vocables *Nordureys* and *Sudereys*, is perfectly juſt.

body tranſlated into Iona. Immediately after his death, *Olave* reaſſumed the government of his paternal

The promontory in Argyleſhire, which is called the *Point of Ardnamurchan*, was the boundary which ſeparated the *Sudereys* and *Nordureys* of former times from each other. To the South of that promontory lies Man, Arran, Bute, Cumra, Avon, Gid, Ila, Colenſa, Jura, Scarba, Mull, Iona, Tiree, Coll, Ulva, and many other iſles of inferior note. To the North of Ardnamurchan are Muck, Egg, Rum, Canna, Sky, Raſay, Barra, South Uiſt, Benbicula, North Uiſt, and the Lewis, including Harris, together with a vaſt number of ſmall iſles. All theſe when joined together, and ſubject to the ſame Prince, made up the whole kingdom of Man and the Iſles.

The Southern diviſion of the Ebudes was reckoned more conſiderable than the Northern. The ſeat of empire was fixed in the former: the Kings kept their courts in the Iſle of Man, and ſent deputies into the *Nordureys*, who reſided either in Sky or in the Lewis. When the kingdom of Man and the Iſles was divided between Godred, the ſon of Olave, and Somerled, Thane of Argyle, Ila, one of the beſt iſles in the Southern diviſion of the Ebudes, fell to the ſhare of Somerled, and became in ſome meaſure the capital of a ſecond Hebridian kingdom: for theſe reaſons the *Inſulæ Sodorenſes*, or Southern Iſles, became much more famous than the *Nordureys*, and are therefore more frequently mentioned in hiſtory. When the Norwegian writers make no diſtinction between the *Sudereys* and *Nordureys*, the latter are always comprehended under the name of the former; and hence it was that the biſhops of the iſles were ſtiled biſhops of *Sodor*, though their dioceſe included all the iſles to the North of Ardnamurchan, as well as thoſe to the South. But when the *Nordureys* are particularly mentioned by theſe writers, the Southern Ebudes are totally excluded: thus we are told by Torfæus, that *Magnus, the Barefooted*, ſome time

paternal dominions, and his title to the kingdom was in a little time recognized by *Haco*. He died in the Iſle of Man, after a reign of eleven years, and was buried at *Ruſſin*; the monks of that abby having found means to recommend themſelves to his favour more powerfully than thoſe of Iona.

Olave *the Black*, was ſucceeded by his ſon *Harold*: this young Prince confiding in the alliance he had contracted with the King of England, refuſed to pay homage to *Haco*, King of Norway. But that monarch, to puniſh the diſloyalty of his vaſſal, ſent *Goſpatric*, one of his favourites, in quality of viceroy, into the iſles, at the head of a great fleet. *Goſpatric* drove Harold out of all his dominions; but dying ſoon thereafter, *Haco* was reconciled to Harold, and reſtored him to his paternal dominions, confirming to him and his heirs, under the royal ſeal, a right to all the iſles enjoyed by his predeceſſors.

It appears evident, from this part of the hiſtory of Harold, and of his father Olave, that the Kings of Man held their dominions of the crown of Norway; and we learn from Matthew Paris *, that a tribute of

before he had made a deſcent on the Southern Iſles pertaining to the King of Man, made a priſoner of *Lagman*, the ſon of *Godred Chrovan*, whom his father had made governor of the *Nordureys*. Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 71.

* Hiſt. Norm. p. 1000.

ten merks of gold * was paid by theſe vaſſal Princes to their ſovereigns, at the time of their inveſtiture; and that this tribute became due whenever a new monarch happened to obtain the ſcepter of Norway. It is likewiſe clear that the more ancient biſhops of *Sodor* were under the metropolitical juriſdiction of the archbiſhops of Drontheim; for though in the treaty concluded between Alexander III. of Scotland, and Magnus IV. of Norway, the patronage of the Sodorian biſhopric was veſted in the Scottiſh monarchs, yet the former juriſdiction of Drontheim over it, was by a ſpecial article reſerved to the archbiſhops of that ſee. Accordingly we find that King Alexander ſent *Marcus*, the Gallovidian, who had been elected biſhop of Man, in the year 1275, to be conſecrated or confirmed in his right by his metropolitan in Norway †.

* Spelman, in Voce Marca, quotes an author who makes a merk of gold equivalent to fifty of ſilver. According to other writers to whom the ſame learned antiquary refers, the merk of gold was ſometimes of no greater value than ten merks of ſilver, and ſometimes equal to nine only. But if the tribute due by the Kings of Man to their ſuperior Lords of Norway, was no more than *ten times ten merks* of ſilver, and that tribute payable only four or five times in a century, King Magnus IV. of Norway, certainly made a profitable bargain when he ceded the Weſtern Iſles to Alexander III. of Scotland, for a conſiderable ſum of money paid in four years, together with a yearly tribute or rent, commonly called the Annual of Norway.

† After the Iſle of Man had been ſubdued by the Engliſh, the biſhopric of Sodor was divided into two. That which was erected in the principal iſland, and confined to it, fell under the juriſdiction of the archbiſhop of York. The other, which comprehended all the Ebudes of Scotland, and was eſtabliſhed at Iona, became ſubject to the archbiſhop of Glaſgow.

HAROLD

HAROLD was a Prince of diſtinguiſhed abilities and many ſhining virtues. He was highly careſſed by the Kings of England, and lived in a good underſtanding with his neighbours of Scotland. Haco courted his friendſhip much, and after beſtowing his daughter on him in the Orkneys, celebrated his nuptials with a royal magnificence at Bergen in Norway †. But while Harold was returning into his own dominions with the Princeſs his ſpouſe, accompanied by many perſons of eminent rank and fortune, he was overtaken by a violent hurricane near Shetland, and periſhed, together with his whole retinue. This unfortunate event happened in the year 1248, according to Torfæus; but in the year following, if we believe the Chronicle of Man.

SOME time before the death of Harold ‡, Alexander II. King of Scotland, a Prince of great abilities, who deſired above all things to extend the limits of his empire, ſent two biſhops to the court of Norway to reclaim the *Sodureys*, and the iſles to the Weſt of Scotland. This is the language of the Iſlandic annals, of which Torfæus has given a Latin verſion. From that paſſage, as well as from many more in the ſame annals, we learn diſtinctly that the *Sodureys* were no more than a part of the iſles called Ebudes by the ancients. The Scottiſh ambaſſadors executed their commiſſion with great fidelity and zeal, but were diſmiſſed with a categorical refuſal. Haco, the ſon of

† Torfæus Hiſt. Orcad. p. 164.

‡ Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 163.

the

the Haco formerly mentioned, told them that all his anceſtors, down from Harold Harfager, had an hereditary right to the Weſtern Iſles of Scotland, and that he was unalterably determined to maintain it. The two biſhops, upon receiving this anſwer, had recourſe to another expedient. After repreſenting the danger attending a rupture with their maſter, they took it upon them to ſuggeſt to the Norwegian monarch, that Alexander, though a Prince of great magnanimity and power, was of too pacific a diſpoſition not to redeem the Ebudes with a ſum of money. But Haco replied immediately that he was in no dread from any foreign quarter; that he was at preſent ſufficiently provided with money; in fine, that no offer or temptation of any kind could prevail with him to diſmember a province from his empire.

It does not appear that any Scottiſh King, prior to Alexander II. demanded a reſtitution of the Weſtern Iſles. During the piratical incurſions of the Norwegians through the Deucaledonian and Iriſh Seas, it would have been no eaſy matter to recover thoſe iſles, or to keep them if recovered. The revenues ariſing from them in that early period could not have been conſiderable, and the attention of the Kings of Scotland was almoſt conſtantly employed by inteſtine commotions, or by uninterrupted wars with foreign enemies. But Alexander, an opulent, wiſe, and magnanimous Prince, being married to a daughter of England, and in the beſt underſtanding with its monarch, formed a reſolution of recovering theſe iſles.

After

After negociations and pacific overtures had failed, he equipped a fleet with an intention of conquering the territories in dispute. But a violent distemper seizing him while engaged in the expedition, he died without having made any progress in the execution of his design. The untimely death of this excellent King happened in the year 1249 *. It is surprising that the Scottish historians should have been strangers to a circumstance so remarkable as the vast preparations made by King Alexander II. to wrest the Ebudes out of the hands of foreign usurpers. They have related at great length the disputes of that Prince with John, King of England; the services done by him to the Barons who fought against that unhappy monarch; the subsequent differences he had with the court of Rome, and with Henry III. together with the manner in which he quelled two or three dangerous rebellions at home: but one of the noblest projects he had ever formed, a project which undoubtedly he would have executed, had heaven prolonged his days for any time, has by these writers been buried in oblivion.

"ALEXANDER, King of Scots, saith the Chronicle of Man, prepared a mighty fleet about this time †, with a view of conquering the isles; but a fever seized him in the isle of Kerwaray ‡, of which he died."

* Chron. Man. Torfæ. Hist. Orcad. p. 64.

† That is in the year 1249.

‡ On the coast of Lorn.

THE

The old Iſlandic hiſtorian, tranſlated by Torfæus, gives a more particular account of this grand deſign. "Alexander, of Scotland, ſaith that writer, actuated by a ſtrong paſſion of extending his dominions, raiſed forces throughout all his territories, and boaſted that he would not lay down his arms till he had reannexed the Ebudes to the kingdom already in his poſſeſſion. He alſo held forth that he would ſubdue Orkney and Shetland. To ſucceed the better in this undertaking, he began to tamper with one of the Hebridian Kings, *Jon* or *John*, the ſon of Dugal of Lorn, and grandſon of Somerled, Thane of Argyle. Haco had committed the impregnable fort of Kiarnaburgh *, and two or three other caſtles of great importance, to this John. Alexander offered him much larger poſſeſſions than thoſe he had obtained from the King of Norway, provided he would deliver up the fort and caſtles. But the Hebridian chief, in ſpite of the importunities of his friends, and all the ample promiſes made to him, continued faithful to his maſter. Alexander, not diſcouraged by this repulſe, proſecuted his deſign, and invaded the iſles. But while he lay in the bay of *Rialarſund* †, ſaith Torfæus, after his author, he had a very extraordinary viſion and ſoon after died ‡.

* The true name of the fort is Kiamaburgh; it lay in a ſmall rocky iſle near the coaſt of Mull.

† The *Rialarſund* of the Iſlandic hiſtorian, is the iſland Kiararey near the Sound of Mull, where Alexander died, as we learn from the epitaph inſcribed on his tomb, in the abby church of Melroſs. See Abercromby's Life of Alexander II.

‡ Three men approached Alexander when aſleep in his bed. Theſe phantoms were St. Olaus, King of Norway, St. Magnus, Earl of

About the time of Alexander's death, *Harold*, the ſon of *Godred the Brown*, and grandſon of that Reginald who had formerly reigned in Man, aſſumed the title of King of the Iſles. But his reign was tyrannical and ſhort. Summoned by his paramount Lord to appear before him, he found himſelf under the neceſſity of repairing to Norway, and was impriſoned there for his uſurpation and cruelties *.

Haco, upon receiving intelligence that his daughter and ſon-in-law, *Harold*, the ſon of *Olave the Black*, had unfortunately periſhed, committed the adminiſtration of all public affairs in the Ebudes to *John*, the ſon of *Dugal*, and grandſon of Somerled, till ſome one of the blood royal could be conveniently ſent into that province †. But John arriving in Man, aſſumed the regal title, without regarding either his maſter's

Orkney, and St. Columba, abbot of Iona. The firſt of theſe being a perſon of great ſtature, with a red coloured face, and clad with a royal apparel, looked him full with a ſtern and terrible look. The ſecond was in his appearance younger, wonderfully handſome and very richly dreſſed. The third, who was taller than the reſt, and very violent in his manner, aſked the King, in a moſt wrathful tone, whether he really intended to invade the Ebudes? Alexander anſwering in the affirmative, the phantom adviſed him, at his peril, to drop that deſign and return home. After the King had related this awful dream to thoſe about him, the wiſeſt of his council diſſuaded him very earneſtly from the proſecution of his deſign: but perſiſting in his former reſolution, he was attacked by a violent diſtemper which ſoon made an end of his life and raſh project together. Vide Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 163, 164.

* Chron. Man. ad ann. 1249. † Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 164.

inſtructions

inſtructions or the inclinations of the people. But the people highly provoked by this indignity, and firmly attached, at the ſame time, to their lawful Prince, drove the uſurper out of the iſland, and having ſoon after concerted matters with their neighbours, declared Magnus, the ſon of Olave, their King *; and Haco recognized his title. John, diſappointed in his ambitious views by the exaltation of a rival, began to hearken to the advantageous offer of the Scottiſh monarch. Alexander II. had in vain employed the ſtrongeſt ſolicitations and ampleſt promiſes to corrupt him †; but the conjuncture was now more favourable; and Alexander III. had all the ſucceſs he could deſire in ſeducing John from his allegiance to his ſovereign.

The Scottiſh and Norwegian hiſtorians give contradictory accounts of the manner in which the Weſtern Iſles were reunited to the dominions belonging to the crown, in the reign of Alexander III. Buchanan's account is as follows:

"In the year 1263, *Acho*, King of Norway, having approached the coaſt of Kyle with a fleet of one hundred and ſixty ſhips, landed twenty thouſand men near a town of that diſtrict called *Air*. His pretext for making war upon the Scots was, that ſome of the iſles which had been promiſed to his anceſtors by *Donald Bane*, had not been given up. Theſe were Bute, Arran,

* Chron. Man. ad ann. 1250. † Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 164.

and the two Cumras, places which had never been reckoned in the number of the Ebudes. But to one who wanted only ſome colour of reaſon for making war; it was enough that theſe places were iſlands. Acho reduced the two largeſt of them before any oppoſition could have been made to the purpoſe. Elated by this ſucceſs, he made a deſcent upon *Cunningham*, and engaging in battle with the Scots, in a place called *Larges*, was overpowered by their ſuperior numbers, and reduced to the ſhameful neceſſity of flying with the greateſt precipitation to his ſhips. But the loſs of that battle was not his only misfortune. A violent tempeſt deſtroyed the greateſt part of his fleet, immediately after the action was over; and it was with no ſmall difficulty that he made his eſcape into the Orkneys with a few ſhips that remained after that calamity. The Norwegians left ſixteen thouſand men in the field of battle, and the Scots five.

" Acho, overwhelmed with grief upon the loſs of his army, and the death of a favourite youth, diſtinguiſhed by his valour, died ſoon after. His ſon, Magnus, who had lately come over from Norway, ſeeing things in a much more deſperate ſituation than he expected, and as he could not get any new ſupplies from home before the ſpring ſeaſon, was willing to terminate the quarrel by a definitive treaty of peace. There were ſeveral reaſons which confirmed him in this diſpoſition. The Iſlanders were diſaffected, and thoſe on the continent of Scotland, on whoſe aſſiſtance his father had laid no ſmall ſtreſs, had entirely aban-

doned his intereſt. *Man* had been already reduced by the enemy, and it was very probable that the other iſles were ſoon to follow the ſame fate.

"MAGNUS was eaſily determined by ſo many weighty conſiderations to offer a peace: but Alexander would not hearken to any propoſitions made by the Norwegian ambaſſadors, till it ſhould be previouſly agreed that the Ebudes ſhould be ceded to him, and annexed to his crown for ever. This preliminary article having been at laſt admitted, a final pacification was concluded on the following terms: That the King of Scots ſhould immediately pay four thouſand merks of ſilver to his brother of Norway, as an equivalent for the Ebudes, of which the latter made a total renunciation, and together with that ſum, an annual tax of an hundred merks of ſilver, was to be paid by Alexander, and his ſucceſſors, to Magnus, and his. It was further ſtipulated, that Margaret, the daughter of the former, ſhould marry Hungonan, the ſon of the latter, as ſoon as their ages ſhould permit *."

IN this manner were the Weſtern Iſles recovered by Alexander III. of Scotland, and upon theſe terms ceded by Magnus of Norway, if we are to give faith implicitly to the Scottiſh hiſtorians.

BUT the account given by Torfæus of the matter, after the authors of his country, and the public records kept there, is in ſubſtance this.

* Buchan. Rer. Scot. Hiſt. lib. vii. cap. 62, 63.

"IN

" In the year 1263, the petty Kings of the Sodorian iſles acquainted their ſovereign Haco of Norway, that *Kiarnach*, Earl of Roſs, had committed the moſt cruel devaſtations in their territories, that he had deſtroyed many of their towns, villages, monaſteries and churches, and that he had in the moſt barbarous manner killed all the people that fell in his way, without any diſtinction of age or ſex. They notified further, that the King of Scots had declared he would never deſiſt till all the Ebudes poſſeſſed by the Norwegians ſhould be reunited to his dominions *.

" Haco, a Prince of uncommon abilities, and of a military genius, heard all this with a becoming indignation; and having without loſs of time fitted out a vaſt fleet, ſet ſail for Scotland, on the 11th of July 1263. He arrived in Shetland on the 13th, and ſtaid there for two weeks; and after having ſettled his affairs in Orkneys and Caithneſs, ſteered his courſe firſt for the Lewis, and afterwards for Sky. Here he was joined by Magnus, King of Man, and by Dugal, one of thoſe great Lords in the iſles, who had aſſumed the regal title. Haco was piloted by this vaſſal King to the Sound of Mull, and from *Mull* to *Kiarary*. He had ordered all his ſhips of war to rendezvous in this iſle, and here he received a conſiderable acceſſion of ſtrength by the junction of a fleet which the Iſlanders had brought to his aid.

* Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 165.

" While

"WHILE Haco was ſettling his plan of operations at *Kiarary*, he detached a ſquadron of fifty ſhips to the iſthmus of Kintyre, and another conſiſting of fifteen to the iſle of Bute. The firſt was commanded by Magnus, King of Man, and Dugal, the Sodorian Prince already mentioned. Three or four Norwegian Captains, and one of the Ebudenſian Chieftains commanded the other. Theſe two ſquadrons had all the ſucceſs that could be deſired. The conqueſt of Kintire was finiſhed in a ſhort time. Two Lords who bore the greateſt ſway in that province delivered it up to the Norwegians, ſwore fealty to Haco, and brought in a thouſand bullocks for the uſe of his army. The caſtle of Bute ſurrendered, and the whole iſland was ſubdued, and a conſiderable body of troops ſent from it did no ſmall damage on the continent of Scotland.

"WHILE Haco lay before the iſle of Arran, after having reduced all the other Ebudes *, the King of Scots ſent ambaſſadors to him with propoſitions of peace. The Norwegian monarch, after receiving ſeveral different meſſages in the ſame ſtile, began to liſten to the overtures made, and ſent two biſhops and three laics of diſtinguiſhed talents, inveſted with a public character to ſettle all differences. Alexander was in appearance fond of an accommodation, but inſiſted peremptorily that Arran, Bute, and Camray, ſhould be reſtored to the crown of Scotland. Haco, unwilling to grant ſuch advantageous terms, and perceiving that he had been too long

* Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 166.

amuſed with the inſidious promiſes of an enemy, who had been ſpinning out the time with affected delays, till he could draw a more numerous army together, broke off the treaty, and recommenced hoſtilities. He had in vain made a new propoſal, that he and the King of Scotland ſhould meet in a certain place, at the head of their reſpective forces, and either ſettle a laſting peace, or terminate their differences in a pitched battle.

"HACO finding that his enemy had only made an equivocal declaration, in anſwer to this generous propoſal, ſent Magnus and Dugal of the Iſles, together with ſome more of his general officers, at the head of a fleet, conſiſting of ſixty ſail, and a numerous body of land forces, into the bay of *Skipafiord* *. Theſe generals having landed their troops, penetrated into the country—deſtroyed all the villages around *Loknlovie*—laid waſte a country from which one of the Scottiſh earls derived his title, and carried back all the plunder they could find to their ſhips."

* Skipafiord is a Norwegian word, which ſignifies, according to Torfæus, the *Bay of ſhips*. In the confines of the ſhires of Argyle and Dumbarton there is a bay which is now called *Loch loung*, a Galic word, of the ſame import with the *Skipafiord* of the Norſe. Unleſs this *Loch-loung* be the bay meant by Torfæus, and the writer whom he tranſlates, it muſt be the bay of *Greenock*. Each of theſe bays lies at a ſmall diſtance only from *Lokn-love*, i. e. *Loch-lomond*, a large freſh-water lake, that abounds with iſlands, agreeably to the account given of it by the Norwegian writers. The tract of land which, according to the ſame writers, gave his title to a Scottiſh earl, muſt be the county of Lennox, or ſome part of it: it cannot be either Lorn or Lochaber, as Torfæus imagined.

WHILE

WHILE the ſquadron commanded by Magnus lay in the bay of *Skipafiord*, a terrible tempeſt deſtroyed a great part of it—the grand fleet lying at the ſame time before an iſland, in the mouth of the Clyde it may be preſumed, five tranſports were driven from their anchors, and wrecked on the coaſt of Scotland. It was with extreme difficulty " that Haco's own galley was ſaved. The Scots ſeeing ſo many of the Norwegian veſſels ſtranded, came down to the ſhore in great numbers, and attacked them; but the Norwegians, ſupported by a reinforcement ſent from the fleet, defended themſelves with extraordinary valour, and maintained a deſperate fight throughout all the night, till the Scots found it convenient to retire."

ON the following day, Haco, notwithſtanding the manifeſt diſadvantages of every kind to which his people were expoſed, formed a reſolution of landing, either to ſhare the ſame fate with his diſtreſſed forces on ſhore, or to relieve them out of ſuch imminent danger. But the chief man of his council and army perſuaded him to keep the ſea, and ſend new ſupplies of men to the party aſhore. As the ſtorm continued to rage without any intermiſſion, it was not in his power to land more than eight hundred men, who had ten times their number to encounter. They fought, however, with undaunted reſolution and vigour for a whole day. The enemy gave way in the evening, and withdrew to a place of ſafety. The Norwegians purſued them, and after having diſlodged them, retired to their ſhips, and joined their companions.

"THE day after this engagement, Haco took up the bodies of the Norwegians who had been ſlain, and buried them in holy ground.—The winter now approaching, he left the iſle before which his fleet lay, and ſteered his courſe for the North. In the courſe of his voyage through the Ebudes, he diſmiſſed Magnus, Dugal, and ſeveral other Sodorian lords, and appointed governors over the iſles and forts, of which he had made himſelf maſter. He arrived ſafe in the Orkneys, and died ſoon after at Kirkwall *."

A NORWEGIAN hiſtorian animadverts with ſome degree of ſeverity on the Chronicle of Man, as well as upon the Scottiſh writers, for aſſerting that Haco effected nothing in this expedition; and I incline to think he had great reaſon. It is hardly poſſible to believe that the battle of *Larges*, if ever ſuch a battle was fought, was ſo very fatal to the Norwegians as is repreſented by the Scottiſh hiſtorians. Their loſs amounted to ſixteen thouſand men, according to Buchanan, but twenty-five thouſand, according to Boece; and neither of theſe writers could determine whether the Scottiſh army was commanded on that occaſion by *Alexander the Third* in perſon, or by Alexander Stewart, the great grandfather of *King Robert the Second*. From that and other circumſtances it may be fairly concluded, that the records, or rather perhaps traditionary reports, from which they drew their account of Haco's misfortunes, muſt have been very imperfect.

* Torfæ. Hiſt. Orcad. p. 166, 167, &c.

If the Norwegian fleet had been almoſt totally deſtroyed by a tempeſt; if the greateſt part of Haco's land forces had been cut off in the battle of *Larges*; if the Iſle of Man had been reduced by King Alexander the Third of Scotland; and if a ſpirit of diſſatisfaction generally prevailed in the other Ebudes; all which is alledged by our Scottiſh hiſtorians; it is ſtrange that Magnus, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Haco, with theſe and ſeveral other manifeſt diſadvantages on his ſide, could have been able to procure a peace, in every reſpect more honourable to him than to the other contracting power. In vain has it been objected by Abercromby *, that Magnus would never have given up the acquiſitions ſuppoſed to have been made of Bute, Arran and the Comras, together with Man and the other Iſles, if his father had effected any thing conſiderable.—Magnus was young, a ſtranger to the art of war, and of a pacific diſpoſition. The Ebudes lay at a great diſtance from the ſeat of his empire. The revenue ſent from theſe iſles into his exchequer amounted only to ten merks of gold, and that was paid only at the acceſſion of a new monarch. The expence to which his crown had been put in the late King's time, for ſecuring theſe remote and unprofitable territories, would have probably overbalanced all the duties collected there ſince the days of Harold Harfager. Beſides all this, we learn from a Norwegian Chronicle, cited by Torfæus, that in the year immediately after Haco's death, the King of Scotland ſent ſome friars to treat with

* Mart. Atch. vol. i. p. 323.

Magnus concerning the Iſles; a circumſtance hardly credible, had his father's army and fleet received ſo heavy a blow.

A PEACE at length was concluded at *Perth*, in the year 1266; Alexander the Third of Scotland being preſent, together with his clergy and nobles, while the chancellor of Norway and one of his barons repreſented King Magnus. The principal articles of the treaty were, That the Kings of Norway ſhould lay no further claim to *Man*, or to the *Sodorian Iſles*:—That theſe ſhould for ever belong to the Kings of Scotland, with all the ſuperiorities, homages, rents, ſervices, and other rights pertaining to them, together with the patronage of the biſhopric of Man; ſaving at the ſame time to the church of Drontheim her metropolitical juriſdiction over that ſee:—That the inhabitants of the iſles ceded to the crown of Scotland ſhould enjoy all the heritages and privileges formerly granted to them by the Kings of Norway, without being brought to account for any thing they had done before that time in favour of their old maſters:—And that the ſaid inhabitants ſhould be governed for the future by the Kings of Scotland, and ſubject to its laws, unleſs any of them ſhould incline to reſide elſewhere; in which caſe, they were to have full liberty to remove unmoleſted with their effects.

ON the other hand, King Alexander obliged himſelf and his ſucceſſors to pay, as an equivalent for

the renunciation made by his brother Magnus, four thouſand merks ſterling, within four years, from the date of the treaty—together with an annual penſion of one hundred merks ſterling, to be paid in the church of St. Magnus in the Orkneys, by Alexander and his ſucceſſors, to the King of Norway and his ſucceſſors for ever.

We are told by the Scottiſh hiſtorians, that to eſtabliſh this peace upon the moſt ſolid foundation, another article was inſerted in the treaty, by which the contracting parties obliged themſelves reciprocally to marry *Hungonan*, the ſon of Magnus, to *Margaret*, the eldeſt daughter of Alexander. But the ſon of Magnus who married the Lady Margaret of Scotland, was not called *Hungonan*, but Eric; and he was not born till the year 1270, that is, four years after the peace had been concluded at Perth *. So very ill informed were the Scottiſh writers with regard to almoſt all the diſputes and tranſactions between Alexander, Haco, and Magnus †.

They

* See the contract of marriage between Eric and Margaret, inter Fœdera Angliæ, tom. xi. p. 1079.

† It is not improper to obſerve that Abercromby, the firſt of our hiſtorians who gave, and perhaps could have given, the Norwegian account of theſe diſtricts and tranſactions, is far from being exact in the relation of them, which he drew out of Torfæus. He was either in too great hurry, or too much under the influence of national prejudice, while tranſlating that author. His complaint, that the names of the iſles through which he made his progreſs, are very different, in the Norwegian Journal, from thoſe now given them by the Scots, is not altogether juſt;

THEY give us a long account of the mighty feats performed in Man by Alexander, lord high ſteward of Scotland, and John Cummin, earl of Badenoch, who had been ſent thither by Alexander the Third; and of the vigorous reſiſtance made by Magnus, then King of Man and the Iſles, in defence of his people and crown. But the author of the Chronicle of Man, who lived in that very period, makes no mention of theſe things. After relating that Magnus, the ſon of Olave, King of Man and the Iſles, died at his caſtle of Ruſſin in the year 1265, he adds, in the very next ſentence, that the kingdom of the Iſles was tranſlated in the following year to Alexander, King of Scots.—Whence we may conclude, that the Scottiſh hiſtorians muſt have been miſled in their relation of theſe matters, as well as in the account they give us at the ſame time of the conqueſt of all the Weſtern

juſt; and were it more ſo, the objection would ſignify little. To thoſe who know the ſituation of the iſles through which Haco paſſed, and have at the ſame time any notion of the Galic and Norſe, the Journal is abundantly intelligible, and worthy of credit. The author of it ſeems to have aſſiſted in the expedition, and to have been a ſpectator of every place and action. He may indeed have extenuated the loſſes ſuſtained by his countrymen upon that occaſion: but ſurely an objection of greater force may be made upon the ſame head, againſt the veracity of thoſe writers who have appeared on the other ſide of the queſtion.

I add further from Torfæus, that *Sturles*, an eminent poet, cotemporary with Haco, gave a full deſcription of the expedition in heroic verſe, and that the greateſt part of his compoſition was extant in that author's time: if ſo, the Norwegian annals ſeem in this matter to be preferable to thoſe of Scotland.

Iſles

Iſles by the lord high ſteward of Scotland, the earls of Athol, March and Carnock, together with the thanes of Argyle and Lennox. If this conqueſt had been made before the treaty of Perth, it is matter of no ſmall wonder that the King of Scots ſhould have granted ſuch extraordinary conditions on that occaſion to his adverſary of Norway. If after it, one can hardly believe that the petty Kings, lords and chieftains of the Iſles, men whoſe territories lay at conſiderable diſtances from one another, men diſtracted in their councils, all too feeble to contend with a powerful Monarch in their neighbourhood, if cloſely united, and all perfectly ſenſible that Magnus had abandoned them for ever, could have thought of making any reſiſtance againſt their new maſter, eſpecially as their late ſovereign had ſecured their eſtates, privileges and rights of every kind, in the ſtrongeſt manner. This and Buchanan's ſilence conſidered, I am apt to ſuſpect, that this conqueſt received all the exiſtence it ever had from the invention of Boece, who has, in too many inſtances, forgotten or neglected the firſt rule which an hiſtorian ſhould have in view.

We learn indeed from the little Chronicle ſo often quoted, that the people of Man, four years after all the Ebudes had been ceded by Magnus of Norway, to Alexander, King of Scots, fought with great ſpirit, though unſucceſsfully, againſt an army ſent by that Monarch to reduce them *. From that time, till the

* Chron. Mann. ad ann. 1270.

crown

crown of Scotland, with all the dominions pertaining to it, was extorted from the unhappy John Baliol, by Edward the Firſt of England, the Iſle of Man continued in the poſſeſſion of the Scots. But about the latter end of King Edward's reign, one of the family of Montacute, who was of the blood royal of Man, ſaith Cambden †, having raiſed a body of Engliſh adventurers, aſſerted his right to the iſland by force of arms, and drove the Scots out of it: but having plunged himſelf into a vaſt debt by the expence attending this conqueſt, he mortgaged the iſland to the famous *Anthony Bee*, biſhop of Durham, and patriarch of Jeruſalem. Some time after the death of this biſhop, Edward the Second made over the kingdom of Man to his favourite Peter de Gaveſton; and when that minion could no longer enjoy the grant, gave it to Henry de Beaumont, *with all the demeſnes and royal juriſdiction thereunto belonging* ‡.

In the year 1313, Robert Bruce, King of Scots, after having beſieged the caſtle of Ruſſin, which was bravely defended by the Engliſh, took it at laſt, reduced the whole iſland of Man, and made his nephew, Randolph earl of Murray, lord of it.—Randolph, upon receiving this title, aſſumed the arms of the later Kings of that iſland. The arms of the older Kings of Man, I mean thoſe of the Norwegian race, were, a ſhip with its ſails furled, and the title in their ſeals was, *Rex Manniæ & Inſularum* §. The arms of the later Kings were three human legs linked together.

† Cambden, in his Continuation of the hiſtory of Man.

‡ Cambden, ibidem.

§ Cambden, ibidem.

In

In the unfortunate reign of David Bruce, *William Montacute*, earl of Saliſbury, recovered Man out of the hands of the *Randolph* family, and in a little time ſold it, together *with the crown thereof*, to *William Scrope*. Upon the confiſcation of Scrope's eſtate, Henry the IV. of England beſtowed the iſland and lordſhip of Man upon Henry Piercy, earl of Northumberland. But Piercy having been attainted, in about four years after this grant, the Iſle devolved, by the King's favour, upon the *Stanley* family. It is almoſt needleſs to add, that the earls of Derby, of that family, enjoyed the title of *Kings* and *Lords of Man*, for many ages, till the ſovereignty of it fell, by female ſucceſſion, to the family of Athol.

The vaſt Continental eſtate of Sumerled, thane of Argyle, and the large acquiſitions he had made in the Iſles, at the expence of his brother-in-law, devolved wholly, ſome time after his death, on his two ſons, Dugal and Reginald. The lordſhip of Argyle fell to the ſhare of the former, together with the extenſive iſland of Mull, and ſome others of inferior note. The latter had Kintyre, Ila, and ſeveral more of the ſmaller Ebudes. The ſucceſſors of theſe two brothers, while the kingdom of Man and the Iſles remained in the hands of Norwegian Princes, like theſe their allies, neighbours, and ſometimes maſters, aſſumed the higheſt titles, and made an extraordinary figure for many ages. We have already ſeen that John, the ſon of Dugal, the ſame who had revolted over to Alexander the Third, was dignified with the name of *King*. The poſterity of Reginald had pre-

tenſions equally good to that appellation, and were more than equally able to ſupport them. They accordingly bore the regal title for a long time. While the more immediate deſcendants of Sumerled poſſeſſed the *Sodorian Iſles*, with a kind of royal juriſdiction, the *Nordureys*, or the iſles to the North of Ardnamurchan, were governed by the viceroys ſent thither by the Kings of Man. Theſe viceroys or governors were generally the ſons, or brothers, or kinſmen of the reigning Princes. Of one of thoſe lieutenants are deſcended the *MacLeods*; a family once very powerful in the Northern diviſion of the Ebudes. Their deſcent from the Kings of Man appears not only from tradition, and the genealogical tables of the ſennachies, but likewiſe from the arms of the family; one branch of the two into which it has been divided, about five centuries back, retaining the *three united legs*, and the other *a ſhip with its ſails furled*.

BESIDES the petty Kings and powerful chieftains ſprung from Sumerled and the Nordureian governors, there were, in the two ſeveral diviſions of the Weſtern Iſles, many conſiderable families; ſome of a Scottiſh extraction, and others originally Norwegians. At the head of each of theſe families was a perſon of high dignity and importance among his own people. His ordinary title was *Tïerna*, or *Armin*, two words of much the ſame ſignification; the firſt of them belonging to the Galic tongue, the ſecond to the Teutonic. We learn from Torfæus and the Highland ſenna-

ſennachies, as well as from many paſſages in the Chronicle of Man, that theſe *Tïerns* or *Armins*, called frequently the great men of the Iſles in that Chronicle, were much employed in the adminiſtration of public affairs, and of the utmoſt conſequence at the time of electing Kings and governors.

It appears from an expreſs article of the pacification of Perth, above inſerted, that Magnus took care to ſecure the eſtates, privileges and rights of all the great men in the Iſles, whether petty Kings, Chieftains, or Armins. It was provided in the ſame article, that theſe great men, and all the other inhabitants of the iſles, ſhould be ſubject to the Kings of Scotland, and governed by the laws and cuſtoms of that realm for ever. But to me there ſeems to be no great temerity in affirming, that the Iſles were almoſt entirely independent of the Scottiſh empire, and totally unreſtrained by its laws for about two centuries after that tranſaction. The lords and great chieftains were abſolute monarchs within their little principalities: all the laws known among their people were, the arbitrary will and pleaſure of their maſters, the deciſions of ignorant brehons, the canons made by their prieſts, abbots and biſhops, ſome ſtrange cuſtoms deſcended to them from their anceſtors the Caledonians, and ſome feudal inſtitutions left among them by the Norwegians.

It does not appear that the great men of the Iſles paid any pecuniary taxes to the government of Scot-

land during the period I have mentioned, or joined their arms with their ſovereign againſt his enemies, till after the middle of the fifteenth century. The deſtructive wars, foreign and domeſtic, in which the whole nation was miſerably involved during that time, put a ſtop to almoſt all legal proceedings in the heart of the kingdom, and much more in remote corners. Amidſt theſe diſtractions, and the diſreſpect to laws neceſſarily attending them, it could not have been expected that Iſlanders, who enjoyed a ſort of regal authority at home, and had nothing to fear from abroad, would have ſpontaneouſly burdened themſelves, or their people, with any public duties. Upon the whole, it is hard to ſay how far King Alexander III. eſtabliſhed his authority in the Iſles; and after the death of that excellent Prince, and while the fatal diſputes conſequent upon it did remain, the Sodorian and Nordurcian lords had the beſt opportunities they could deſire of enlarging their power, and rendering themſelves independent.

Angus, Lord of the Iſles, was led by political reaſons, as well as by motives of a more laudable kind, to engage in the cauſe of Robert Bruce. When that illuſtrious Prince, after the unhappy battle of *Methven*, had fled into the Weſtern Highlands, purſued by the force of an Engliſh Monarch, extremely formidable, and unable to ſecure a ſafe retreat in any other part of his own dominions, Angus received him into his caſtle of Saddle, protected him there for ſome time, and furniſhed him

with boats, to tranſport himſelf, and his ſmall party of truſty friends, into an obſcure iſle on the coaſt of Ireland.

When fortune began to ſmile a little on the royal adventurer, Angus aſſiſted him with the utmoſt alacrity in recovering his paternal eſtate of Carrick; and when every thing was at ſtake for the laſt time, the honour and life of his ſovereign, the freedom and independency of his country, the exiſtence of his friends and fellow patriots, all in the moſt imminent danger of being ſwallowed up by a prodigious army of foreigners, he joined him at Bannockburn with five thouſand men, ſay the Highland ſennachies, and did him a moſt ſubſtantial ſervice upon that occaſion.

After Robert had fully eſtabliſhed his authority in every part of his dominions, he gave to Angus ſeveral marks of an extraordinary regard. However ſenſible the King might have been that it was highly impolitic to increaſe the power of a lord of the Iſles, he beſtowed on his old friend, perhaps from a principle of gratitude, a conſiderable part of the eſtates formerly belonging to the Cummins of Lochaber and MacDougals of Lorn, two families that had deſerved very ill of him, and had for that reaſon been forfeited.

The grandſon of this Angus, John, lord of the Iſles, adopting a very different ſyſtem, abandoned the

the intereſt of David Bruce, and eſpouſed the cauſe of Edward Baliol. Having obtained from that Prince, while acting the part of a Scottiſh King, a right to all or moſt of the Ebudes, after vindicating that right by the ſuperiority of his ſtrength, he began to aſpire after a regal authority at home, and in purſuance of that deſign, entered into a formal alliance with that powerful Prince, Edward the Third of England. But returning afterwards to his allegiance to his natural ſovereign, Robert the Second of Scotland confirmed all the rights of his family, whether old or recent, and gave him his daughter in marriage.—— Donald his ſon of that marriage was the famous Lord of the Iſles, who added the earldom of Roſs to the vaſt poſſeſſions left by his anceſtors, fought the battle of Harlaw, to defend that acquiſition, againſt the duke of Albany's army, and maintained his title, in ſpite of all the efforts made by thoſe in the adminiſtration of that time.

The two immediate ſucceſſors of Donald were either too powerful to be loyal ſubjects, or too much the objects of public jealouſy and private reſentment to be left in the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of their overgrown eſtates. John, the laſt of theſe great lords, provoked by injuries received from the court of Scotland, either really or in imagination, deluded at the ſame time out of his duty by the Douglaſſes, and bribed withal by Edward the Fourth of England, who took care to feed his immoderate ambition with the ampleſt promiſes, exerted his whole ſtrength in ſub-

ſubverting the eſtabliſhed government of his country, and in the end proved the ruin of his own family's greatneſs. He loſt the earldom of Roſs, together with many other conſiderable tracts of land which he had poſſeſſed in different parts of the Continent, and was of courſe reduced to a mediocrity of fortune, which diſabled him effectually from being any longer formidable. The other chieftains and great men of the Iſles, who had been long the obſequious vaſſals, or at beſt the impotent neighbours of Sumerled's poſterity, embraced ſo favourable an opportunity of aſſerting their liberties, procured new rights to their eſtates from the crown, and became from that time forth uſeful ſubjects.

THIS vaſt diminution of that almoſt unbounded power, of which the lords of the Iſles had been poſſeſſed for ſome ages, happened in the reign of James the Third, and after the middle of the fifteenth century.

DISSERTATION XVII.

Of ſome Monuments of Antiquity in the Weſtern Iſlands of Scotland. Occaſional Obſervations upon the Genius, Manners, and Cuſtoms, of the Hebridian Scots of the Middle Ages.

THE counties of Dumbarton and Argyle, were the theatre of the firſt campaign of Julius Agricola in Caledonia. It is therefore probable, that conſiderable detachments of the Roman army paſſed over from the continent into ſome of the Southern Ebudes. It may likewiſe be taken for granted, that Agricola's fleet, in its return to South Britain, through the Deucaledonian Sea, was more than once under a neceſſity of refitting in ſome of the many excellent harbours of the Northern Ebudes. But whether the Romans took any long ſtay in thoſe places or not, it is certain that they have not left any monuments of antiquity there. The Norwegians and Druids are the only people who have left the leaſt veſtige of themſelves behind them in thoſe iſlands.

THE circles of ſtones ſo often mentioned by Oſſian, and ſo frequent in the Northern Ebudes, were the works

works of the Pictiſh Druids, and though ſimple in their conſtruction, are not unworthy of the attention of the curious. They were the temples in which the old heatheniſh prieſts, employed by our anceſtors in the ſervice of their idols, performed the moſt ſolemn offices of their ſuperſtition. There are many of theſe temples to be met with in the Eaſtern Ebuda of Ptolomy, now called the Iſle of Sky. In the language of the country they are generally called Druidical houſes; and though the inhabitants have but a very confuſed idea of Druidiſm, ſtill they agree in calling the circles holy places, and ſometimes give them the name of temples *.

That the Caledonians, as well as other Celtic nations, worſhipped the ſun under the name of Grannius, admits of no doubt. An inſcription, not many years ſince dug out of the ruins of the Roman prætenture between the friths of Forth and Clyde, is a demonſtration that the ſun was one of the deities of Cale-

* About half a century back, a farmer in the iſle of Sky imagined he had very good reaſons for removing his houſes from that part of his farm where they formerly ſtood, to another part which he found had been once occupied by the Druids, and was conſequently more auſpicious. The farmer was remarkably induſtrious, and had of courſe more than ordinary ſucceſs in his buſineſs. The conſequence of his ſucceſs was, that almoſt all his neighbours removed their houſes to the conſecrated hillocks and circles which tradition had named after the Druids, nor would they permit the leaſt ſtone in theſe temples to be touched for fear of diſobliging the genius of the place; ſo unconquerable are the remains of a once prevalent ſuperſtition.

donia. Grannius is manifeſtly derived from *Grian* *, the Galic word for the ſun. That thoſe circles of ſtone I have mentioned were conſtructed for the worſhip of the ſun ſeems to me evident, from a circumſtance communicated to me by a learned friend in the county of Inverneſs.

In the confines between two diſtricts of that county, called Badenoch and Strathſpey, is a very extenſive and barren heath, through which the river Spey runs. On this heath are ſtill to be ſeen entire, many of thoſe Druidical circles of ſtone. The name of the heath is Slia-ghrannas, which, literally tranſlated, is the *heath of Grannius*. No perſon in that country underſtood the etymon of *Slia-ghrannas*, till my friend paſſed that way. The country round about this place was called of old, and by ſome of the vulgar to this day, *Ghriantochd*, or the country of *Grannius*. Some people imagined that *Ghriantochd* had its name from a Highland clan called *Grants*, who poſſeſs that country. To me it appears much more probable that the Grants, in Galic called *Griantich*, had their name from the country, and not from a pretended *Legrand*, as the genealogiſts of that tribe affirm.

In ſome parts of the continent of Scotland, the Druidical holy places conſiſt of two or three circles

* Grian ſeems to me to be derived from *Gré* or *Gné*, ſignifying the *nature*, and *thein*, the oblique caſe of *tein*, fire. In the Galic language, a conſonant before an *h* or aſpiration is always quieſcent, ſo that *Gre thein* muſt be pronounced *Grè-ein*, i. e. *The eſſence* or *natural ſource of fire*. Should this etymon appear unjuſt, the editor, and not the author of the Diſſertations, is to be blamed for it.

which

which have the ſame common center, and greatly reſemble, though in miniature, the famous Stonehenge in Saliſbury plains. I have not ſeen any ſuch double or triple circumvallations in the iſlands, but have more than once obſerved one ſtone broader than any one of thoſe which form the circle, ſtand detached from it at a certain diſtance. This broad ſtone is placed towards the Eaſt, with a cavity in the top, and a fiſſure either natural or artificial in one of its ſides: theſe hollows were perhaps intended for receiving the libations offered to their Gods. The largeſt ſtones in the circumference of the Druidical circles which I had occaſion to ſee in the Weſtern iſlands are about three feet and a half above the ground, and near three feet broad. The diameter of the greateſt area is about thirty feet. There is ſomething agreeably romantic in the ſituations choſen for theſe temples. The ſcene is frequently melancholy and wild, the proſpect is extenſive but not diverſified. A fountain and the noiſe of a diſtant river were always eſteemed as requiſite neighbours for thoſe ſeats of dark and enthuſiaſtic religion.

THOSE large heaps of ſtones which are called *Cairns* in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, are very numerous in the Ebudes. There are no leſs than ſeven ſuch piles within the confines of a little village in the iſle of Sky. All cairns are not of a ſimilar conſtruction. Thoſe which depart moſt from the common form are called *Barpinin*, in the language of the country; theſe reſemble the Barrows of England. The word *Barp* or *Barrow* is originally Norwegian. *Cairn* is a Britiſh

word, which ſignifies a heap of ſtones, either lying together in the greateſt confuſion, or piled up in ſome ſort of order. I have ſeen ſome of theſe heaps that are three hundred feet in circumference at the baſe, and about twenty feet perpendicular in heighth. They are formed conically, and conſiſt of ſtones of almoſt all ſizes, as chance or the materials of the place directed. They lie generally near ſmall arms of the ſea which run into the land and receive rivers. They are always placed near the common road, and upon riſing grounds. The motives which induced the builders to rear up theſe piles in ſuch places, were the advantage of the ſtones, and a deſire of exciting the traveller's admiration and devotion. Various have been the opinions of the learned concerning the intention of thoſe *Cairns*, and concerning the people by whom they were collected. Some will have them to have been made by way of trophies, or with a view of perpetuating the memory of heroes ſlain in battle. Some conjecture that they were monuments erected by wayfaring men in honour of Mercury, the protector of travellers. Others fancy that they were ſeats of judicature for the old Brehons: and others are of opinion that they were the eminences on which our old Kings ſtood after their election; ſo as to exhibit themſelves to the multitude. One or two critics have imagined that they were no more than boundaries which divided the eſtate of one great Lord from that of another: and many have thought that they were intended only for burial places.

The laſt of theſe opinions is undoubtedly the juſteſt. The ſepulchral urns always found in every Cairn that

has been hitherto examined, are ſufficient to demonſtrate the truth of it. Theſe urns are depoſited in large ſtone coffins, which lie in the center of the barrow. The coffin conſiſts of ſix rude flat ſtones; one in the bottom, two in the ſides, two more in the ends, and another larger one above. There is ſometimes a kind of obeliſk which overtops the barrow, and ſtands at the head of the coffin. The coffins are generally more than ſix feet long, and the urns which they contain are half full of aſhes and bones. The workmanſhip of theſe veſſels is rather coarſe than otherwiſe *.

It is a queſtion whether the Cairns were reared by the Norwegians or old Britains of Caledonia: there are Cairns in the different parts of the continent of Scotland, particularly in the Highland diſtricts of the coun-

* It is not above fifty years ſince the Iſlanders underſtood that the barrows were the repoſitories of the dead. Much about that time a gentleman in one of the iſles having occaſion for ſtones to build a houſe, broke down one of theſe old fabrics, and coming to the bottom of it, near the center, lighted on the large flat ſtone which formed the cover of the coffin. Upon comparing a current tradition with the contrivance of the ſtones, and the ſound emitted from them, he immediately concluded that here was a ſtone cheſt which contained a quantity of hidden treaſure: full of this agreeable fancy, and dreading much at the ſame time that a perſon of much greater authority in the country would infallibly deprive him of the treaſure, if the ſecret ſhould once tranſpire, he obliged the workmen, by the interpoſition of a moſt ſolemn oath, to conceal the happy diſcovery. After this point was ſettled, and a reaſonable dividend promiſed to every one of the workmen, the coffin was opened with due care: but the treaſure found in it gave very little ſatisfaction, being no more than a ſmall quantity of aſhes contained in a yellow-coloured earthen veſſel.

ties

ties of Aberdeen and Inverneſs, into which neither the Norwegians nor Danes ever penetrated. Beſides, the mountains of Carnarvonſhire have many monuments of the ſame kind. It is therefore evident, that the old Britains erected ſome of theſe fabrics; nor can it be affirmed that the Norwegians were ſtrangers to the ſame art. We are told by Pomponius Mela, that the Druids burned and interred the bodies of their departed friends *. And Sir James Ware quotes a paſſage from an ancient book of canons, from which it appears that the old Iriſh buried their dead in the ſame manner.

We learn from the epitaph of the robber, Baliſta, and from ſeveral paſſages in other ancient authors, that malefactors were ſometimes buried under heaps of ſtones. It is certain that the barrows in the iſles were intended for illuſtrious perſons, or thoſe of the higheſt dignity among the people. The expence of time and labour, to which theſe huge piles muſt have ſubjected the builders, together with the coffins and urns found within them, leave no room for a doubt in this matter. In one of theſe barrows which I ſaw broke open, there were found four different coffins placed at ſome diſtance from a larger one in the centre. Each of theſe contained an urn with aſhes and ſome half burnt bones. The coffin or cheſt in the middle was certainly the repoſitory of a great Chieftain or King, and thoſe around belonged to perſons who were either his near relations, or heroes of a leſs exalted character.

* De Situ Orb. lib. iii. cap. 2.

THERE is a proverbial expreſſion common in the Highlands and iſlands to this day, from which we may form a conjecture of the manner of erecting theſe piles, and the uſe for which they were intended. The expreſſion is, *I ſhall add a ſtone to your Cairn* *; that is to ſay, I ſhall do your memory all the honour in my power, when you are no more. I ſhall contribute to raiſe your monument. This is the language of petitioners, when ſenſible the favours they aſk cannot in all probability be ſufficiently acknowledged till after the benefactor's death. The religious belief of theſe times obliged every pious traveller to add a ſtone to the pile of the dead. The larger the ſtone the more to the honour of the departed ſpirit which was thought to hover around his heap, and to rejoice over the piety of the traveller. If the Cairn belonged to a man of diſtinguiſhed merit, who died in the cauſe of his tribe, or was reared in memory of a famous bard, the whole community came on appointed days to increaſe the pile, and ſend it down with luſtre to poſterity. Hence we may account for the bulk of thoſe little hills, though reared in times when carriages and mechanical engines of all kinds were little known.

AMONG all the monuments of antiquity found in the Weſtern Iſlands, the ruinous forts, ſo frequent there, deſerve the firſt notice. The irregular and uncommon conſtruction, the ſimilarity of their magnificent ſituations, and the almoſt unintelligible pecu-

* Curri mi cloch er do charne.

liarities of their workmanſhip, ſeem to render them very curious objects for antiquaries.

These forts are, in the language of the iſles, called *Duns*, in that of the Norwegians, *Burghs*, and in the Iriſh, *Raths*. The firſt of theſe names is a Celtic word, which ſignifies a hill or eminence in almoſt all languages *. It was cuſtomary among the ancient nations to build their caſtles or places of defence upon high grounds, in order to diſcover the enemy before he approached, and to repel his aſſaults with greater facility. When the inconveniences of ſuch ſituations appeared, the places of defence were built in low grounds; but they ſtill retained the old names of *Duns*, *Raths*, *Burgs* or *Bergs* †.

It will be no eaſy matter to prove that the Caledonians, Picts, or ancient Scots of Britain, had ſtone edifices of any kind. The caſe was the ſame with the Iriſh, till after the Normans were ſettled among them: and before Alfred's time there was ſcarce a royal palace, or a houſe for divine worſhip in England, built of any other materials than timber ‡.

Some perhaps will be ſurprized to hear that the piratical nations of Scandinavia ſhould have underſtood

* See Bull. Dict. Celt. vol. i. p. 2.

† Caſaubon, in his notes upon Strabo, obſerves that the Πύργος of the Greeks, the *Burg* of the Germans, and the *Brica* of the Spaniards, all ſignify a *Hill*, in their original ſignifications; ſo *Arx*, in Latin, ſignifies the top of a hill, as well as a caſtle.

‡ Aſſerius.

any

any one of the arts of poliſhed life better than our anceſtors. It is unqueſtionably certain, that the oldeſt forts on the Weſtern and Northern coaſts of Scotland were erected by the barbarians of the Northern Europe. Tradition has hitherto preſerved the names of ſeveral Norwegian chiefs, who built the moſt conſiderable forts in the Ebudes *.

ALL the Norwegian towers in the Ebudes were of a circular form. The old ſquare caſtles there are of a much later date. Thoſe Norwegians who built theſe towers muſt have underſtood the art of quarrying, forming, and laying ſtones, in great perfection, and have uſed mechanical powers of which the iſlanders of late ages have no conception. The expence of working and carrying the ſtones to the very ſummit of a high hill, or to the edge of a dreadful precipice, through almoſt impaſſable paths, muſt have been very conſiderable, and indeed ſuperior to what can well be imagined. One of the forts which I had occaſion to view, ſtands on the edge of a rock which hangs over the ocean, and is of an amazing height. The other ſide of the rock againſt which you approach the fort, is a ſteep aſcent of more than half a mile, and all the ſtones which compoſed the fort muſt have been carried up that hill. This fort is in the Southern extremity of the iſland of Barra.

MANY of theſe ſtructures are ſtill pretty intire, and almoſt every one of them is ſituated upon a hill, com-

* *Kynninburg, Kernburg, Boſewick.*

manding a very extenſive proſpect, or upon a ſmall iſland of difficult acceſs, or upon a precipice every way hideous. As they were deſtined for watch towers, as well as for places of ſtrength, they are built and connected through irregular diſtances, every one of them is in ſight of another, and they follow the windings of the ſea coaſt and valleys. The Norwegians being foreigners, and conſequently under continual apprehenſions either from the natives, or from the Scots of the continent, took care to contrive theſe fortreſſes, ſo as that the alarm in caſe of an invaſion might run immediately from one diviſion of the country to another. On ſuch occaſions they raiſed great pillars of ſmoke, in the day time, by ſetting fire to a great quantity of combuſtible matter, and at night made ſignals of diſtreſs by burning whole barrels of pitch.

THE moſt curious fabric of the Norwegian kind that is to be ſeen in any part of the Highlands or iſlands is in Glenelg, within two miles of the firth which divides that part of the continent from the iſle of Sky. This fabric is of a circular form, about thirty four feet high, and includes an area thirty feet in diameter. The wall is double: the inner one ſtands perpendicular, and that without falls in gently till it unites with the other near the top of what may be called the firſt ſtory. The opening between the two walls is four feet broad at the bottom, and each of the walls is four feet in thickneſs; ſo that both, including the aperture between them, are twelve feet thick at the foundation. The ſtones are large and better choſen and

more judiciouſly laid than can be well conceived. There is neither lime nor any other kind of cement in the walls, and the ſtones are indeed placed with ſo much art, and ſo beautifully inſerted into one another, that none was neceſſary.

BETWEEN the two walls there are laid in a poſition nearly horizontal, different rows of large thick flat ſtones which were at firſt near as cloſe to one another as the deal-boards of a floor. Theſe united ſtones go all the way round the edifice, and form ſo many different ſtories of unequal heights, from ſix to four feet; the one ſtory riſing above the other to the part where the two walls meet. A gentleman * of that country, to whoſe knowledge and induſtry I am indebted on this ſubject, informed me that ſome of the old men in the country who ſaw this Dun intire, were of opinion that the rows of flat ſtones aſcended in a ſpiral line round the building, and ſupplied a communication within the walls from the foundation to the top.

WHERE the two walls join, there is a regular row of large flat ſtones four inches thick, which project horizontally towards the area, from the face of the inner wall. There was another row of ſimilar ſtones which projected in the ſame manner, about eight feet above the lower tire. But the barbarity of a military man employed by the government in that country, has deſtroyed this curious monument of antiquity. In this whole building nothing is more

* The reverend Mr. Donald MacLeod.

curious than the rows of windows, or window-like apertures in the inner wall. They riſe in a direct line above each other, from the bottom to the ſummit of the ſtructure: two of them are detached from the reſt, and begin at the diſtance of about thirteen feet from the foundation. It appears that there have been ſix rows of the windows firſt mentioned, all of the ſame breadth, that is a foot and a half, but unequal in the heights, ſome of them being but two, and others three feet high. There is no appearance of a window in the outer wall, nor of any other opening excepting the door, which communicates with a little circular ſtone fabric called the Houſe of the Druids.

It muſt be confeſſed that there are ſome things in the conſtruction of this and the other old towers in the iſlands which cannot eaſily be underſtood. It is likely that the ſeveral wide ſpaces which lay between the two walls were deſigned for ſtorehouſes, beds, and places of arms; but it is difficult to ſay what might have been the intention of the windows or openings in the inner ſide of the walls, and of the circle of flat ſtones which projects from the top towards the area.

We cannot learn by tradition, or otherwiſe, that theſe buildings were ever covered above. The men had ſmall huts within the areas, and the governor had a kind of hall for his particular uſe. The walls had battlements of one kind or other, to which there was an aſcent either by ladders or through the paſſages in the middle. In times of war a centinel ſtood conſtantly

ſtantly on the battlements in a kind of centry box; his buſineſs was to cry aloud at certain intervals, ſo as to convince the enemy without, that the fort was not to be taken by ſurprize. The Norwegians called this centinel *Gok-man*. He was obliged, by the rules of his office, to deliver all he had to communicate in extemporary rhymes. A large horn full of ſpirituous liquor ſtood always beſide him to ſtrengthen his voice and keep up his ſpirits. It is little more than half a century ſince this Norwegian cuſtom was laſt obſerved in an old tower belonging to a Chieftain whoſe eſtate lay in one of the remoteſt of the Weſtern Iſlands. Torfæus ſays *, that the great men of Norway employed ſuch Gok-men, not only for giving the alarm in caſe of danger, but likewiſe to inform the generous lord of the caſtle if they ſpied a veſſel in diſtreſs at ſea.

THE boats which were uſed by the ancient inhabitants of the Ebudæ, ought not to be forgot in deſcribing their ancient curioſities. We are told by Solinus, that the Britons and Iriſh committed themſelves to the mercy of a tempeſtuous ſea in wicker hulls covered with cow hydes †. It is not above thirty years ſince one of thoſe South Britiſh boats or curachs was uſed in the iſle of Sky: and though the Norwegians had taught the Iſlanders the uſe of building boats with wood in a very early period, yet theſe curachs were the only kind which they employed on ordinary occaſions, till within a century back.

* Rer. Orcad. Hiſtor. p. 8.

† *Viminèis Alveis.*

SOME

Some of the ancient curachs muſt have been much larger than thoſe ſeen in late ages. Marianus Scotus ſpeaks of three devout Iriſhmen, who, upon having formed a reſolution of leading a life of pilgrimage, left their country with great ſecreſy, and taking with them proviſions for a week, came in a boat made of ſkins, without ſails or oars, after a navigation of ſeven days, into Cornwall. We are informed by Adamnan, that St. Cormack, another wrong-headed monk, who went from Iona to the Orkneys in queſt of a proper hermitage, was with all his enthuſiaſm wiſe enough to keep oars in his curach; by this precaution he got ſafely through the ocean. Theſe curachs muſt have been of a tolerable ſize, otherwiſe the romantic paſſengers could never have made out their voyages.

The curach in which St. Columba came from Ireland into Iona, muſt have been little leſs than forty feet long, if the tradition hitherto preſerved in that iſland deſerves credit. And we are told by Sidonius Appolinaris *, that it was no more than matter of amuſement with the Saxon pirates of his time, to croſs the Britiſh ſea in ſuch leathern veſſels. Boats made of the ſame materials, were very commonly uſed by other ancient nations, particularly by the Spaniards † and the Veneti near the Po ‡. It was in ſuch tranſports that Cæſar wafted his men over the river Sicoris, before he attacked Pompey's lieutenants near Ilerda §.

* Carm. vii. † Strabo. ‡ Georg. lib. iii.
§ Lucan Phar. l. iv.

Besides

Besides theſe wicker pinnaces, the ancient inhabibitants of Caledonia had a kind of canoe in which they fiſhed on rivers and freſh water lakes. This kind of canoe was hollowed out of a large tree, either with fire or tools of iron. In the Galic of Scotland, a boat of that make was called *Ammir* or trough, and *Cotti* in the language of Ireland. A few of theſe canoes are ſtill to be ſeen in the Weſtern Highlands: and Virgil was not perhaps far miſtaken, when he imagined that the firſt experiments in navigation were made in ſuch bottoms *. It cannot be aſſerted that the Iſlanders had galleys, or what they called long ſhips, till the Norwegians were ſettled among them. After that period they ſurely had ſuch veſſels, and in imitation of their maſters, rowed about in them in queſt of plunder from ſea to ſea through almoſt all the ſeaſons of the year †.

The hiſtories of Scotland are full of the depredations committed by the Iſlanders of the middle and lower ages. The annals of Ireland complain loudly and frequently of the Hebridian *Red Shanks*. The petty Kings of Ireland were continually at war with enemies, either foreign or domeſtic, and had conſtant recourſe to the aſſiſtance of the Hebridian Scots. Mercenary ſoldiers have been always remarkably rapacious, and by all accounts theſe Scots were not inferior

* Alnos primum fluvii ſenſere cavatas. Georg. 1.

† The ſame practice took place among the ancient inhabitants of the Grecian iſlands, ſoon after they knew how to conſtruct galleys. Thucid. lib. i.

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in cruelty and barbarity to any foreign allies. Whenever they met with a repulſe in Ireland, they fled home in their ſhips, and plundered the South Weſt coaſts of Caledonia in their way: ſuch was the conduct and art which they imbibed from their Norwegian conquerors.

When the Hebridian chiefs and captains returned home after a ſucceſsful expedition, they ſummoned their friends and clients to a grand entertainment. Bards and ſennachies flocked in from every quarter; pipers and harpers had an undiſputed right to appear on ſuch public occaſions. Theſe entertainments were wild and chearful, nor were they unattended with the pleaſures of the ſentiments and unrefined taſte of the times. The bards ſung, and the young women danced. The old warrior related the gallant actions of his youth, and ſtruck the young men with ambition and fire. The whole tribe filled the Chieftain's hall. The trunks of trees covered with moſs were laid in the order of a table from one end of the hall to the other. Whole deer and beeves were roaſted and laid before them on rough boards or hurdles of rods wove together. Their pipers played while they ſat at table, and ſilence was obſerved by all. After the feaſt was over, they had ludicrous entertainments, of which ſome are ſtill acted in the Highlands. Then the females retired, and the old and young warriors ſat down in order from the Chieftain, according to their proximity in blood to him. The harp was then touched, the ſong was raiſed, and the *Sliga-Créchin*, or the drinking ſhell, went round.

It is a great queſtion with the preſent Highlanders, what liquors were drunk at the feaſts of their predeceſſors. They find them frequently mentioned in their old ſongs under various names; but it is univerſally allowed that they were of an intoxicating kind. We are told by Dioſcorides, that the ancient Britons drank a ſtrong liquor made of barley, which they called *Curmi*. This ſurely was the drink uſed by the Albanian Britons, and old Hebridian Scots; for in their language, to this day, every great feaſt is called *Curme*, as in their apprehenſion drink is the very life of ſuch entertainment. Some have imagined that the *Uſkebai*, the favourite liquor of the modern Highlanders, is the ſame with the *Curmi* of their forefathers; and there can be no ſtrong objection to this opinion. The Gauls uſed their *Cerviſia* *; the Germans their *Humor ex Hurdeo*; and all theſe liquors are evidently of the ſame origin, and made of perhaps the ſame materials. But however that may have been, it is certain that the Iſlanders were furniſhed with ſtrong drink in a very early period; nor were they ſparing of it at their public entertainments, whether of a feſtal or funereal kind. Whenever the gueſt was placed in his ſeat, he was obliged, by the faſhion of the land, to drink off a draught of their *Water of Life*, out of a large family cup or ſhell. This draught was in their language called a *Drink of Uſkebai:* and the gueſt had no ſooner finiſhed that potion than he was preſented with a crooked horn, containing about an Engliſh quart, of ale. If he was able to drink all that off at a

* Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. xxii. cap. 35.

time, he was rather highly extolled, than condemned in the leaſt for intemperance.

The births of their great men were attended with no rejoicings or feaſting by the old Hebridians. But their funerals were celebrated with great pomp, and followed with magnificent entertainments: all the Chieftains of the neighbouring tribes attended on ſuch occaſions, and came accompanied with a numerous retinue of their firſt men, and all well armed. After inviting people of ſuch rank from their reſpective habitations to perhaps a diſtant iſland, it was incumbent on thoſe principally intereſted in the ſolemnity, to diſplay the utmoſt magnificence of expence.

At the funeral proceſſion, the men belonging to the different Chieftains were regularly drawn up, taking their places according to the dignity of their leaders. They marched forward with a ſlow pace, and obſerved great decorum. A band of pipers followed the corps, and in their turns played tunes, either made for that occaſion or ſuitable to it. Great multitudes of female mourners kept as near the coffin as poſſible, and made the moſt lamentable howlings, tearing their hair and beating their breaſts. Some of theſe, after the paroxyſms of their zeal or affected grief, had in ſome meaſure ſubſided, ſung the praiſes of the deceaſed in extemporary rhimes. The male relations and dependents thought it unmanly

manly to ſhed tears, or at leaſt indecent to betray their want of fortitude in public *.

If there were any characteriſtical diverſities in genius, manners, and cuſtoms, of the Iſlanders, when compared to their neighbours on the continent, they muſt have borrowed them from the Norwegians, who had been long their ſuperiors, and who of conſequence muſt have introduced their own taſte, faſhions, and laws, among them. Hence we may account for that diſpoſition and attachment which the inhabitants of the Ebudes diſcovered to piracy and poetry, in a ſuperior degree to any other tribe of the Albanian Scots.

* Fæminis lugere honeſtum eſt, viris meminiſſe. Tacitus de mor. Germ.

DISSERTATION XVIII.

Of the Scottiſh and Pictiſh Dominions, before they were united under one Sovereign.

HAVING ſhewn, in the courſe of the preceding diſſertations, that the Picts and Scots were the genuine poſterity of the Caledonians, though divided into ſeparate kingdoms, it is neceſſary I ſhould throw ſome light on the extent of their reſpective dominions.—That want of records which has involved their ancient hiſtory in obſcurity, has alſo left us in the dark with regard to the real boundaries of their territories.

ACCORDING to two antient fragments of Scots hiſtory, publiſhed in the Appendix to Innes's Critical Eſſay, Fergus, the ſon of Erc, reigned over Albany, from *Drumalbin* to the ſea of Ireland and Inchegall *. The ſea of Ireland is a boundary well underſtood. The Weſtern iſlands of Scotland, formerly the Ebudes of the Romans, are called *Inche Galle* to this day. In the eighth century thoſe iſlands fell into the hands

* De ſitu Albaniæ, quæ in ſe figuram hominis habet.

of the Norwegians, who, like all other foreigners, were called *Gauls* by the Highlanders of the Continent. *Inche* is an abbreviation of *Innis*, which in the Galic ſignifies an Iſland; ſo that *Inchegalle*, literally tranſlated, is the *Iſles of ſtrangers*. How far *Drumalbin*, the other boundary mentioned in the fragment, extends, is not yet determined by antiquarians.

The word *Drumalbin*, literally tranſlated, ſignifies the *Ridge of Albany*. Agreeable to this interpretation, it is called by Adamnan, the writer of Columba's life, *Dorſum Britaniæ*, or a Chain of hills, according to the genius of the Latin tongue. Theſe hills have been confined to a principal branch of the Grampian mountains, which extends from the Eaſtern to the Weſtern ſea. But the true meaning of the name implies that this *Ridge of hills* muſt have run from South to North, rather than from Eaſt to Weſt.

The anonymous author of another ſmall piece concerning the antient hiſtory of Scotland, was, according to his own teſtimony, informed by Andrew, biſhop of Caithneſs, who flouriſhed in the twelfth century, that Albany was of old divided into ſeven kingdoms. All theſe petty kingdoms are deſcribed, and their boundaries ſettled pretty exactly. The two laſt of thoſe dynaſties mentioned in that fragment are the kingdom of Murray, including Roſs, and the kingdom of *Arragatheil* *. According to

* Sextum regnum fuit Murray et Roſs. Septimum regnum fuit Arregaithel.

Cambden

Cambden and Uſher, the territories of the more ancient Scots were confined within Cantyre, Knapdale, Argyle, Braidalbain, and ſome of the Weſtern Iſlands. Cambden believed too precipitately, that Iona was made over to Columba by Brudius, King of the Picts.

ADAMNAN, who wrote the hiſtory of the life of Columba, and was himſelf abbot of Iona, relates, that the ſaint was courteouſly received by Conal, King of the Scots. As Adamnan has been very minute in his hiſtory, it is far from being probable that he would forget Brudius, had he given ſuch a benefaction to Columba.

THE author of the Critical Eſſay is more liberal to the Scots than Cambden and Uſher, and extends their antient territories to a branch of the Grampian mountain which runs all the way from Athol to the ſea coaſt of Knodort *. But as he had very juſtly expoſed the miſtake of Bede with regard to Iona, and as it does not appear from any other author, that either Brudius or any other Pictiſh King poſſeſſed a foot of ground from the Glotta to the Tarviſium of the antients, he might have given all the North-weſt coaſt, from Clyde to Dunſbyhead, as alſo the Cathaneſia of his anonymous author, to the kingdom of *Arreghael*.

* Near the Iſle of Sky in Inverneſs-ſhire.

THE

THE Galic name *Arreghael*, or rather *Jar-ghaël* †, was, in the Latin of later ages, changed into Ergadia: and it appears from a charter granted by the Earl of Roſs, and confirmed by Robert the Second of Scotland, that *Garloch*, a diſtrict which lies at a conſiderable diſtance from Knodort, to the North, was a part of Ergadia *. It is likewiſe apparent, from the charters given by King Robert Bruce, to Thomas Randulph, Earl of Murray, that all the Weſtern Continent, from Lochaber to *Eaſt Roſs*, was comprehended within the Ergadia of the antients.

WE learn from Bede ‡, that in the year 603, Ædan, King of the Britiſh Scots, came againſt Ordilfred, King of the Northumbrians, at the head of a very numerous and gallant army §. In the genealogical ſeries of the Scottiſh Kings given by Innes, from his authentic Chronicles, Ædan, or Aidan, is the great grandſon of Fergus MacEirc. It is difficult to underſtand how this King of Scots could have muſtered up ſuch a vaſt army againſt the Saul of the Engliſh nation ‖, if his territories were pent up within the ſmall principality of Camden's *Arreghael*, or even the Ergadia of Innes. So far were the Picts from lending

† See a note on the word Jar-ghael. page 16.

* Confirmatio donationis Comitis Roſſiæ Paullo Mactyre de terra de Gerloch, anno ſecundo Roberti II.

‡ Hiſt. Eccleſ. cap. 34.

§ Cum immenſo et forti exercitu.

‖ Adamn. Vita Columbæ, lib. 2.

any

any aſſiſtance to the Scots, that they were engaged in a cloſe confederacy with the Saxons of that time.

The Britons, it is true, were allies to Aidan, but they deſerted him in the very criſis of this war. He certainly could not have any auxiliaries from Ireland, as Bede poſitively ſays that the Iriſh never committed any acts of hoſtility againſt the Engliſh; on the contrary, that they always cultivated an inviolable friendſhip with them. We therefore have reaſon to believe that Aidan's numerous army muſt have entirely conſiſted of his own ſubjects; and conſequently that his dominions comprehended at leaſt all the Weſtern coaſt of Scotland, together with the biſhop's *Carthaneſia*.

Brudius, the Pictiſh King, who was converted to the Chriſtian faith by Columba, had a kind of royal ſeat at Inverneſs. This appears from the accounts given by Adamnan, in the life of that ſaint. From the ſituation of this royal reſidence we may conclude, that Murray, and very probably Roſs, which was of old annexed to that diviſion of Albany, made a part of the Pictiſh kingdom.

Columba, in his journey to the palace of King Brudius, travelled over Drumalbin, or Adamnan's Dorſum Britaniæ. It is impoſſible to tell whether the ſaint went directly from Iona, or from a more Northerly part of thoſe Weſtern diſtricts which were under

under his juriſdiction. But as there is a ridge of high hills all the way from Glengary, where Loch Neſs terminates *, to the Frith of Taine, it is far from being improbable that Drumalbin extended that far, and that the kingdoms of the Scots and Picts were ſeparated by the frith and hills juſt mentioned.

All our hiſtorians have agreed that the inhabitants of Murray were a ſeditious and diſloyal race of men, for ſeveral ages after the Scots had reduced Pictavia. They rebelled frequently againſt the poſterity of Malcolm Canemore. One of thoſe Princes found himſelf under the neceſſity of tranſplanting that turbulent people into different parts of his kingdom. But it may be inferred, from the impatience with which they lived under the yoke of a new government, that they were of the Pictiſh nation, and conſequently that the dominions of that people extended much farther towards the North than ſome of the Scottiſh hiſtorians are willing to allow.

The Picts and Saxons were alternately maſters of *Laudonia*, or thoſe more Eaſterly countries which lie between the frith of Edinburgh and the river Tweed. We learn from Bede, that Oſwin, brother to St. Oſwald, and the ſeventh King of the Northumbrians, ſubdued the Pictiſh nation in a great meaſure, and made them tributary †. This Prince began his reign in the year 642. His ſon Egfrid having formed a

* Brudius had his ſeat at the end of this lake.

† Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 2. cap. 5.

reſolution to carry his conqueſts beyond the Forth, invaded the Pictiſh territories, and was cut off, with the greateſt part of his army, in the year 685. A victory ſo deciſive produced great conſequences. The Picts of that age recovered what their predeceſſors had loſt. The Eaſtern counties, or *Laudonia*, fell immediately into their hands.

It appears from Bede, that the Saxons continued maſters of Galloway, when he finiſhed his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. He gives an account of *Candida Caſa*, or Whitehorn, where a biſhop of the Saxon nation was inſtalled in his time. After Bede's death, the Picts recovered Galloway likewiſe, or made a conqueſt of it; ſo that before the extinction of their monarchy, all the territories, bounded on the one ſide by the Forth and Clyde, and on the other by the Tweed and Solway, fell into their hands.

Upon the whole, it ſeems evident, that the antient Scots, ſome time before the conqueſt of Pictavia, poſſeſſed all that ſide of Caledonia which lies along the North and Weſtern ocean, from the frith of Clyde to the Orkneys. Towards the Eaſt, their dominions were divided, in all appearance, from the Pictiſh dominions, by thoſe high mountains which run all the way from Lochlomond, near Dumbarton, to the frith of Taine, which ſeparates the county of Sutherland from a part of Roſs; and thoſe high hills which paſs through the middle of Roſs, are very probably a part of the antient Drumalbin.

DISSERTATION XIX.

Of the Religion of the antient Caledonians.

SOME ingenious writers have been of opinion that Druidiſm was never eſtabliſhed in Caledonia. It is difficult to ſay, why aſſertions ſo ill-founded were obtruded upon the world, if it was not to deduce the honor of the preſent prevalent ſyſtem of free-thinking from our remoteſt anceſtors. Irreligion is never one of the virtues of ſavage life: we muſt deſcend to poliſhed times for that ſcepticiſm which ariſes from the pride and vanity natural to the cultivated ſtate of the human mind. It is not now my buſineſs to enter into a controverſy with thoſe who affirm that religion is no more than an engine of policy, and that the gods of all nations ſprung from the timidity of the multitude in the firſt ſtages of ſociety.

HAD the inhabitants of Britain roſe originally like vegetables out of the earth, according to the opinion of Cæſar and Tacitus, there might have been ſome foundation for ſuppoſing that the Druidical ſyſtem of religion was never known in Caledonia. But as it is generally allowed that the inhabitants of both the diviſions of Britain deduced their origin from nations on the Continent, it is reaſonable to

think that they carried along with them the gods of their anceſtors, in their tranſmigration to this iſland.

THAT the Caledonians, in the time of Julius Agricola, were not totally deſtitute of religion, appears from a paſſage in the ſpeech which Tacitus puts into the mouth of Galgacus; in which that chieftain mentions both gods and a providence. The celebrated writer alſo obſerves, that after the Caledonians were worſted in the firſt action with the Romans, far from being intimidated, or cured of their own ſelf-ſufficiency, they formed a reſolution to renew the war with greater vigour. For this purpoſe, ſays Tacitus, they armed their young men, placed their wives and children in places of ſafety, ſummoned their ſeveral communities together, held public aſſemblies, entered into confederacies, and confirmed their engagements with ſacrifices and the blood of victims *.

DRUIDISM was certainly the original religion of all the branches of the Celtic nation: yet Cæſar obſerves, that the Germans, who undoubtedly were principally deſcended from the great Celtic ſtock, had no Druids among them. We have reaſon to differ in opinion from that great man. Cæſar was too much ingroſſed with his own vaſt projects, to enter minutely into the theological inſtitutions of the Germans. Tacitus, who made the cuſtoms and manners of Germany his particular ſtudy, informs us that prieſts poſſeſſed great influence in that country.

* Cætibus et ſacrificiis conſpirationem civitatum ſancire.

DRUID,

DRUID, or rather *Druthin*, is originally a Teutonic word. Its meaning is, the ſervant of God, or the ſervant of *Truth*: *Dru* or *Tru* ſignify *God* or *Truth* indiſcriminately. It is certain that every German prieſt was called *Dry*, and the Saxons of England brought that word from Germany into Britain.—The Engliſh Saxons, before their converſion to Chriſtianity, worſhipped, it is apparent, the ancient Gods of Gaul, and nearly under the ſame names. The *Tuiſco*, or *Tuiſto* of Germany, to whom the Saxons dedicated *Tueſday*, was the ſame with the *Teutates* of Gaul; and the Thor of the Saxons was the *Taranis* of the ancient Gauls.

THE meaning of Teutates is GOD THE FATHER OF ALL BEINGS: *Dyu*, in the ancient Britiſh, which was undoubtedly the ſame with the language of Gaul, ſignifies *God*; and *Tad*, or *Tat*, in the Armorican dialect, is, to this day, the word for Father. The *Thor* of the Celto-Scythians of Germany was, as I obſerved before, the *Taranis* of their neighbours to the South. In the ancient language of the Scots, both the names of this divinity are retained to this day, with a ſmall variation of the final ſyllables. *Torran*, among the Highlanders, is the lower muttering of thunder, and *Tarninach** ſignifies the loudeſt peals of that awful noiſe.

* Tarninach is probably a corruption of *Nd'air-neamhnach*, or *Tarnearnach*, as it is pronounced, literally ſignifying *Heavenly Father*; thunder being thought the voice of the ſupreme Divinity. Or perhaps it may be derived from *Torneonach*, literally an *uncommon and wonderful noiſe*: or from *Nd'air-neonach*, the *Wrathful Father*.

THIS

This identity of religion which prevailed among the ancient Germans and Gauls, is a proof that tribes of the latter were the prevalent colonies of Germany. The Tectoſages, a people of Gallia Norbonenſis, poſſeſſed themſelves, according to Cæſar, of the moſt fertile regions of Germany. The Boii and Helvetii, nations ſprung from the Gauliſh ſtock, made very conſiderable acquiſitions near the Hercynian foreſt. The Suevi were the moſt powerful nation in Germany. Of the ſeveral tribes into which the Suevi were divided, the Senones pretended to be the moſt noble and the moſt ancient. Their pretenſions to antiquity Tacitus ſupports with an argument ariſing from the genius of their religion.

"At a ſtated time," ſaith the excellent hiſtorian, "all thoſe who have derived their blood from the "Senones meet, in the perſons of their repreſenta-"tives or ambaſſadors. This aſſembly is held in a "wood, conſecrated by the auguries of their prede-"ceſſors, and the ſuperſtitious fears of former ages. "In this wood, after having publicly ſacrificed ſome "unhappy man, they commemorate the horrible "beginnings of their barbarous idolatry." In this paſſage every one may ſee the ſtrongeſt features of Druidiſm, painted in the moſt lively colours, and placed in the cleareſt point of light. It is unneceſſary to obſerve, that the Senones, who ſent colonies into Italy and Germany, were originally a people of Gaul, and ſettled near the Seine.

During the reign of Tarquinius Priſcus, that is, five hundred years before Cæſar was born, Ambigatus, King of the Celtic Gaul, finding that his territories were greatly overſtocked with inhabitants, ſent his two nephews, Bellovesus and Sigovesus, at the head of two powerful armies, in queſt of ſettlements in foreign countries. The province allotted by the Augurs to Bellovesus was Italy, and that to Segovesus was the Hercynian foreſt.—Livy has preſerved this piece of hiſtory; and according to Cæſar himſelf, the great univerſity and metropolitical ſeat of Druidiſm lay in the country of the Carnates; the ſame Carnates whom Livy places among the ſubjects of Ambigatus.

We have no reaſon to believe, notwithſtanding Cæſar's authority to the contrary, that there was any eſſential difference between the religion of Gaul and that of Germany. The victorious Boii, the Helvetii, the Tectoſages and Senones, the Celtic nations of Sigovesus, and more eſpecially his Carnates, could not have either forgot or deſpiſed their own religion, upon ſettling themſelves in a foreign country. They certainly would not have diſmiſſed the Gods under whoſe auſpices they had been ſo ſucceſsful. The conquerors muſt rather be naturally ſuppoſed to have eſtabliſhed their own ſpiritual inſtitutions upon the ruins of thoſe which had done ſo little ſervice to the conquered.

It is univerſally agreed that Druidiſm was eſtabliſhed in South Britain. The ſuperintendant of the whole

whole order, it has been ſaid, reſided there: and we learn from Cæſar, that thoſe who ſtudied to underſtand the deepeſt myſteries of that ſuperſtition, travelled into Britain. Whether the moſt learned profeſſors of Druidiſm taught in Angleſey, or elſewhere, it is impoſſible to determine. From the exciſion of the groves of Mona, by Suetonius Paullinus, nothing can be concluded in favour of that little iſland. To make the Weſtern Ebudæ the ſeat of theſe colleges, is as perfect a chimera as that Druidiſm was not at all known in Caledonia.

The eccleſiaſtical polity of North Britain was certainly the ſame with that which took place among all the Celtic nations. We have the cleareſt veſtiges of the Druidical ſuperſtition in many parts of Scotland to this day. The appellation of its prieſts, *Dru* and *Druthinich*, is ſtill preſerved. Their holy places are pointed out, and are called the Houſes of the Druids by the vulgar. In the Iſles, and throughout the Continent of Scotland, are many of thoſe circular fabrics of large rude ſtones, within which they performed the myſterious rites of their religion.

Thoſe circular piles of ſtone are by ſome called the Houſes of the Picts. This miſtake aroſe very probably from the ſimilarity of ſound between the two Galic words which expreſs the Picts and Druids. The Picts are ſometimes called *Cruithnich*, in the language of the Highlands, and Druids always *Druithnich* or *Drui*.—The injudicious vulgar think that Fingal and his

his heroes, who are thought to have been giants, placed enormous kettles upon thoſe circles of ſtone, in order to boil their veniſon. Both theſe circumſtances ſtand as proofs of the uncertainty of oral tradition in every country.

THE Romans, though ſeldom governed by the ſpirit of perſecution, were very zealous in deſtroying the Druidiſm of South Britain. Claudius Cæſar endeavoured to aboliſh it. The groves conſecrated to that cruel ſuperſtition in Mona were cut down by Suetonius Paulinus in the reign of Nero. It is reaſonable to believe that other governors and emperors, directed by the ſame principle of humanity, declared war againſt the abominable rites of a ſect who offered human victims to their idols. After Chriſtianity became the eſtabliſhed religion of South Britain, in the reign of Conſtantine, the empire of Taranis and Teutates muſt have been totally ruined, or confined within very narrow limits.—But the Pagan Saxons, who, in appearance, had good reaſon to boaſt of the ſtrength of their Gods, undoubtedly re-eſtabliſhed the worſhip of thoſe divinities.

I HAVE already obſerved, that thoſe victorious infidels brought the word *Dry* from Germany. Together with the name they certainly introduced the office, being ſuperſtitiouſly devoted to *Tuiſto*, *Woden*, and *Thor*. The hiſtory of King Edwin's converſion, in Bede, and the great revolution brought about in the kingdom of Northumberland at that time, in ſpiritual matters, is a ſufficient demonſtration of this poſition.

One circumſtance is ſufficient for my purpoſe to mention concerning the converſion of Edwin. After Paulinus had exhorted Edwin to embrace the Chriſtian faith, agreeably to the inſtructions he had formerly received from a perſon ſent from the inviſible world, the King ſummoned his friends and great council to have their advice and approbation. One of the counſellors or Princes was the Pagan High-prieſt, or Primus Pontificum. The name, or rather title of this High-prieſt or Pontifex Maximus was Coifi, or Coefi.—I know not whether any one has attempted to explain the meaning of this word. It was, in my opinion, the common title of every Druidical ſuperintendant of ſpiritual affairs. The Highland tale-makers talk frequently concerning *Caiffie*, or *Coiffie Dry*; —and by theſe two words they mean a perſon of extraordinary ſenſe, ſkill and cunning. *Dry* undoubtedly ſignifies a *Druid*, a wiſe man, a prophet, a philoſopher, and ſometimes a magician, in the Galic:— *Coiffie Dry*, Bede's Coiffi or Primus Pontificum, ſtands for the principal Druid, or what ſuch a perſon ought to be, a man ſupremely wiſe and learned.

It is needleſs to enlarge any farther on the Druidiſm of Caledonia. That point has been handled at great length in another Eſſay *. Germany and Gaul, South Britain and Ireland, were full of that idolatrous ſuperſtition: and how could the inhabitants of Caledonia be ignorant of the religion of their anceſtors and brethren deſcended from the ſame great Celtic ſource?

* The author alludes to the Diſſertation on the Druids, loſt among Sir James MacDonald's papers.

It is, in ſhort, very unreaſonable to think that a nation, in any of its ſtages, ſhould be totally deſtitute of religion: it is both unnatural and contrary to experience to ſuppoſe it. Religion, whether it ariſes from the original preſſure of the divinity on the human mind, or ſprings from a timidity inherent in man, is certainly more prevalent than atheiſm: and indeed it is doubtful with me whether atheiſm ever exiſted in a mind that is not perfectly inſane. It is a boaſt of the ſceptic, which cannot be believed: and it is equally incredible that the ſavage, however much his mind is obſcured, could entertain ſuch an irrational idea.

That the Caledonians had ſome ideas of religion and a providence, is certain: that they were more pure in their ſpiritual inſtitutions than other Celtic nations, their barbariſm in other reſpects ſufficiently contradicts.—With the Teutates and Taranis of their Gauliſh anceſtors, they probably worſhipped ſome local divinities of their own creation. That univerſal God of the heathen world, the ſun, was certainly worſhipped with great devotion in Caledonia. The inſtance I have given, towards the beginning of the preceding diſſertation, is demonſtrable of the honour paid to that great luminary, under the name of Grannius. The fires lighted on eminences by the common Highlanders, on the firſt day of May, till of late years, is one of the remains of that ſuperſtition.

DISSERTATION XX.

Of the Time in which Chriſtianity was introduced into North Britain. That the firſt Churches of Britain were planted by Oriental Miſſionaries.

AFTER ſpending ſo much time in the inveſtigation of the ſecular antiquities of the Scots nation, it may be naturally expected that I have made ſome inquiry into their ancient eccleſiaſtical hiſtory. My obſervations on that ſubject are comprehended in this and the ſubſequent diſſertation.

THE Chriſtian religion became known in the principal diviſions of Britain before the middle of the third century; yet it is impoſſible to determine the particular time in which the firſt dawn of the goſpel roſe on Caledonia. Tertullian, a writer cotemporary with the Emperor Severus, and confeſſedly a very learned man, affirms poſitively, that the Chriſtian religion had, in his own time, penetrated further into Britain than the Roman arms had done. Let us examine, therefore, the teſtimony of Tertullian, and inveſtigate what parts of Britain he had in his eye.

IT

It is certain, from the ſeveral different paſſages which Tertullian has quoted from Tacitus, that he had read the writings of that great hiſtorian; and from them he certainly muſt have underſtood that South Britain had been entirely reduced into the form of a Roman province, before the end of the firſt century.

To ſay nothing of the ſucceſsful campaign Claudius Cæſar had made there in perſon, the Prætor Aulus Plantius had vanquiſhed ſome Britiſh Kings, taken many garriſons, and conquered ſeveral whole nations. Oſtorius Scapula, who ſucceeded Plantius, fought and defeated the Iceni, Cangi, Silures, and Brigantes. Suetonius Paulinus, Petilius Cerealis, and Julius Frontinus, three great generals, carried their victorious arms much farther than Oſtorius had done; and the famous Agricola had finiſhed the conqueſt of the country now called England, before he invaded Caledonia, near twenty years before the end of the firſt century.

It is paſt all doubt that Agricola performed great things in North Britain. He ravaged or ſubdued thoſe diſtricts of that country which front Ireland. He defeated the Caledonian army on the Eaſtern coaſt. His fleet reduced the Orkney iſles. His land and ſea forces had ſpread either deſolation or terror over all the maritime places of Caledonia, but ſtill there were many corners of the country, and even whole diſtricts, which the difficulties ariſing from their ſituation, and his

want

want of time, hindered that illuſtrious general from pervading. Theſe diſtricts may be reaſonably thought to have been the places meant by Tertullian *.

If any one, to invalidate the force of this teſtimony, ſhould object, that Tertullian was haſty and dogmatical, frequently led aſtray by an intemperate zeal, and too apt, like many of his profeſſion, to obtrude pious frauds on the world, his objection would have been too vague and unjuſt to deſerve a confutation that would unavoidably lead us into a long diſcuſſion of particulars.

But were it certain that this ancient writer's character is enough to deſtroy the credibility of every fact that reſts upon his bare teſtimony, ſtill we have cauſe to believe that ſome of the remote parts of North Britain were converted to the Chriſtian faith, in the reign of Severus. It is impoſſible to prove from hiſtory, that no ſuch converſion happened in that period; and if it be true that the goſpel had made its way into the Southern diviſion of this iſland long before that time, it is probable that the ſame change took place in ſome parts of Caledonia, before the middle of the third century.

Christianity had made a progreſs amazingly rapid over all the provinces of the Roman empire before the end of the firſt age, nor were the doctrines taught

* Et Britannorum inacceſſa Romanis loca, Chriſto vero ſubdita. Tertul. lib. contra Judæos cap. 7.

by

by that new religion confined within the pale of the empire. It was one of the firſt principles of the primitive Chriſtians to communicate their doctrine to all nations. Animated by the warmeſt zeal, they were active in propagating their tenets; and their ſucceſs was proportionable to their pious induſtry on that head. We are told by Tacitus that there was a vaſt multitude of Chriſtians at Rome*, when Nero, or ſome fatal accident, laid that imperial city in aſhes. Pliny the younger, informs the Emperor Trajan †, that great numbers of all ages, of all degrees, and of both ſexes, had embraced the religion of thoſe men: nor was this ſuperſtitious contagion, to ſpeak with that author, confined to the cities only, it had ſpread itſelf likewiſe through the villages and country. He adds farther, that the temples of the province committed to his care, had been almoſt deſerted, that the ſacred rites of the eſtabliſhed worſhip had been a long time neglected, and that the victims had very few purchaſers till he had applied the cure of ſome wholeſome ſeverities for remedying ſo great an evil."

TRAJAN inveſted Pliny with a conſular power over Bithynia, Pontus, and the republic of Byzantium, about the beginning of the ſecond century; and the reign of Severus comes down farther than the commencement of the third. After what has been extracted from one of his epiſtles, it is needleſs to aſk, whether Pliny was prepoſſeſſed in favour of Chriſ-

* Igitur primo correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens, &c. Tacit. Annal. lib. 15.

† Epiſt. xcvii. lib. 10.

tianity,

tianity, or in the humour of framing holy fictions to ſupport its credit? So far indeed was he from having taken ſuch a biaſs, that, though otherwiſe a reaſonable and good natured man, he gives the hardeſt of all names to the profeſſors of Chriſtianity. He calls the Chriſtian religion a ſort of madneſs, and a ſilly and extravagant ſuperſtition. It is idle to ſearch into the political motives which led Pliny to ſpeak with ſuch ſeverity againſt Chriſtianity. His words ſhew plainly that the Chriſtians were greatly multiplied in ſome provinces of the Roman empire, about a whole century before the latter end of Severus's reign. Here then is a fact which reſts upon the teſtimony of unexceptionable evidence, and what can hinder us from believing, upon the faith of the primitive divine, that the goſpel began to flouriſh in Britain about the beginning of the third century?

All the Scottiſh hiſtorians are agreed that Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed in their country about the beginning of the third century, in the reign of King Donald. The objections raiſed by ſome eminent antiquaries againſt the truth of this doctrine, are of little importance. The ſtory of King Donald is at leaſt as well founded as thoſe of King Lucius, and King Arviragus, which ſome antiquaries endeavoured to ſupport at a vaſt but uſeleſs expence of learning *.

The Scots of former ages have, like their neighbours, carried their pretenſions to ſpiritual antiquity extra-

* It is more than probable that what is told concerning the three Monarchs is an abſolute fiction.

vagantly high. Any one who peruſes the famous letter of the Scottiſh nobility and barons to John, biſhop of Rome, in the reign of Robert Bruce, will ſee a clear demonſtration of this vanity. In that letter, after the greateſt men of the Scots nation had confidently aſſerted that "the King of Kings had favoured their anceſtors, though planted in the uttermoſt parts of the earth, with perhaps the earlieſt call to his holy faith," they aſſure his Holineſs, that Chriſt had given another extraordinary teſtimony of his particular regard to their people. The words, rendered into Engliſh, are, "Neither would our Lord have the Scots of old confirmed in the ſaid faith by any other perſon than the apoſtle firſt called by himſelf, the moſt worthy brother-german of the bleſſed St. Peter, that is St. Andrew, who was ſet apart to be their everlaſting patron. Such was the will of Chriſt *."

As the Scots were in a perilous ſituation when this letter was written to the Pope, it was undoubtedly convenient for them to draw ſome political advantages from the fraternal relation of St. Peter and St. Andrew, and conſequently from their ſpiritual conſanguinity with Rome. They took care, therefore, to remind the ſovereign pontiff "that thoſe moſt holy fathers who were his predeceſſors, had with many favours and privileges ſtrengthened their kingdom and people, as theſe had been the peculiar care and portion of St. Peter's brother." Nor did they forget to draw from ſuch ſtrong premiſes a very important

* See Dr. Mackenzie in the Life of John Barbour.

concluſion. They moſt earneſtly entreated the Pope to remember thoſe ſtrong bonds of friendſhip. They conjured him to interpoſe his good offices, ſo as to mediate a peace between them and the Engliſh; and they gave him to underſtand at the ſame time, with great ſpirit and freedom, "that if he ſhould perſiſt in his partiality, and continue to give faith to the miſrepreſentation of their foes, the Moſt High would lay to his charge all the effuſion of Chriſtian blood, and all the loſs of immortal ſouls that ſhould enſue upon the diſputes between them and their unreaſonable adverſaries."

We may take it for granted, that the Scottiſh nobility and leſſer barons had the ſtory of their relation to St. Andrew, and conſequently to his moſt worthy brother-german, from the learned eccleſiaſtics of thoſe and former times. But churches, like nations, have frequently valued themſelves upon an imaginary connexion with ſome illuſtrious founder. That of Rome, every one knows, began early enough to claim a peculiar right to the Prince of the apoſtolic college. Antioch had pretenſions of the ſame kind, and perhaps a better title to the prerogative founded on it. Alexandria, though the ſeat of a great patriarch, was modeſt enough to content herſelf with an inferior dignity. She had only the honour of having St. Mark for her ſpiritual patron, a perſon who had no higher commiſſion than that of an evangeliſt. The firſt biſhop of Jeruſalem could not with any decency be any thing leſs than the brother of Chriſt.

SOME time ago, it would have been deemed a heretical and a moſt dangerous doctrine in Spain to deny that the churches there were founded by James the Greater. Two centuries back, it was an article of every Frenchman's creed, that St. Dennis, to ſay nothing of Lazarus and Mary Magdalene, preached with great ſucceſs in his country. Dennis was a member of the Areopagus of Athens; and Joſeph of Arimathea was one of the great Jewiſh Sanhedrim. Rather than yield the poſt of honour to a rival nation, England thought proper in former days to aſcribe the merit of her converſion to the honourable counſellor juſt mentioned, the ſame excellent perſon who had buried our Saviour in his own tomb *.

THE churches of the two firſt ages, conſtantly diſtracted by the fears of perſecution, or always employed in affairs of much greater importance, never thought of drawing out eccleſiaſtical annals or regiſters, containing the hiſtory or order of their paſtors. Euſebius acknowledges that it was extreamly difficult,

* Though the editor has all due reſpect for the judgment of the Engliſh, in points of national honour, he is far from thinking a member of the Sanhedrim equal in dignity to one of the Athenian Areopagus. The Jews, though a choſen people, were by no means to be compared to the illuſtrious inhabitants of Attica; it were therefore to be wiſhed our anceſtors had taken a man of ſome higher rank than Joſeph for their ſpiritual patron; ſo our rivals, the French, would have been deprived of that pre-eminence which Dennis has given them, in this very material controverſy.

for this reaſon, to inveſtigate the names of thoſe who governed the churches founded by the apoſtles *.

The ableſt eccleſiaſtical critics have exhauſted the whole ſtrength of their erudition and fancy in ſettling the order in which Peter was ſucceeded. Clemens is one time the firſt, at another the ſecond, but generally the third in the papal liſt. Cletus and Anacletus are in the chronological ſyſtems of ſome learned annaliſts, one time identified, and at another divided into two pontiffs. Linus is by many called the ſecond Pope of Rome, and by not a few the fourth. Nothing, in ſhort, can be more full of uncertainty or more favourable to hiſtorical ſcepticiſm, than what ancient and modern writers have ſaid on this ſubject †.

Hegessippus was the firſt who, about the year one hundred and ſixty of the vulgar æra, began to draw up catalogues of the biſhops of Rome, Corinth, and other principal ſees ‡. He was another Papias, equally wrongheaded, credulous, and viſionary.

It is undoubtedly a taſk that exceeds the power of any one who extends his reſearches to Chriſtian antiquities, to give authentic liſts of the old biſhops of Rome, Jeruſalem, and Antioch, to aſcertain the time at which the once famous churches of Carthage, and other African dioceſes, were founded, and to diſcover

* Eccleſ. Hiſt. lib. iii. cap. 4.

† See Baſnage, Hiſt. de L'Egliſe, liv. vii. cap. 4.

‡ Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. iv. cap. 27.

their

their holy patrons. If this is the caſe, why ſhould we make any difficulty of acknowledging that the origin of our Britiſh churches, and the ſucceſſion of our oldeſt paſtors, are totally loſt in oblivion, or greatly embarraſſed with inextricable abſurdities.

In ſpite of that fond partiality which men will naturally entertain for thoſe who ſeem to have done honour to their country, it is hardly in our power to believe, upon the authority of ſome ancient writers, that the Britiſh iſles were viſited by the apoſtles, by either one or more of that ſacred body. To prove this ſuppoſed fact, Uſher and Stillingfleet have quoted the plaineſt teſtimonies from Euſebius, Theodoret, Jerome, and Chryſoſtom. It will be readily objected, that theſe authors, though very learned, were bad authorities. They lived at too great a diſtance from the time at which the event could have happened. To obviate this difficulty, Stillingfleet urges the teſtimony of Clemens Romanus, a father of the higheſt antiquity, one who was cotemporary with the apoſtles themſelves, and one whoſe name was written *in the Book of Life* *. In one of his letters to the Corinthians, Clemens ſays expreſly, that St. Paul preached righteouſneſs throughout the whole earth, and in ſo doing went to the very extremity of the Weſt. But theſe words are too hyperbolical to be literally true, and too undeterminate to be deciſive in the preſent queſtion. We know that Catullus, in his lampoon on

* Stilling. Orig. Brit. p. 38.

Mamurra

Mamurra and Cæſar, calls Britain the remoteſt iſland of the Weſt. Horace too calls the inhabitants of our iſland the moſt diſtant men on the face of the earth *. But Virgil gave the ſame epithet to the Morini of Gaul, though he knew that the Britons were beyond them, and, to ſpeak in his own language, divided entirely from the whole world. And Horace, in another paſſage, calls Spain the laſt of the Weſtern countries †. A noted cape there goes ſtill under the name of Finiſterre, or the extremity of the earth.

All this conſidered, it is probable that Clemens meant no more than ſome diſtant land, by the extremity of the Weſt. It is certain that Paul intended to make a journey into Spain: ſo we are told by himſelf, in his letter to the Romans. Theodoret affirms that he went thither after his liberation at Rome. The expreſſion in the epiſtle of Clemens may be applied with the ſtricteſt propriety to that country. If we extend its meaning as far as the power of words can go, we have a kind of demonſtration that the apoſtle preached in Ireland, and preached alſo in Thule. So a Chriſtian poet, Venantius Fortunatus, has affirmed, without any ſcruple, though with no more juſtice than Virgil had on his ſide, when he promiſed the conqueſt of the ultima Thule to Auguſtus Cæſar. Poets and orators have a right to ſpeak at large. The Chriſtian panegyriſts, who have celebrated the praiſes of

* Carm. Lib. 1. Ode 35.
Serves iturum Cæſarem in ultimos orbis Britannos.
† Carm. Lib. 1. Ode 36. Heſperia ſoſpes ab ultima.

apoſtles

apoſtles and ſaints, have aſſumed the ſame liberty; nor do they deſerve any ſevere cenſure for ſpeaking agreeable to the rules of their art: the whole blame ought to fall on thoſe reaſoners who draw ſerious concluſions from principles which are no more than the high flights and hyperbolical bombaſt of rhetoric.

But were it certain, that the teſtimonies of holy fathers, ancient Chriſtian orators, and eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians, are arguments ſolid enough to convince the moſt unprejudiced that the apoſtles viſited the Britiſh iſles, it is no eaſy matter to comprehend why their miniſterial labours ſhould be confined to the countries now called England and Ireland. Archbiſhop Uſher had a ſtrong inclination to convince the learned world that Ireland had her ſhare of that mighty advantage *. He has quoted, in the chapter of his Antiquities which relates immediately to his own country, a very clear teſtimony of Euſebius, from which it appears, as far as the authority of that writer can go, that the apoſtles preached in the Britiſh Iſles: and who could deny that Ireland was of old reckoned one of that number?

Stillingfleet had no great partiality for the *kingdom of ſaints*, and none at all for Scotland. He therefore exerted his whole ſtrength in proving, that the Southern and better part of Britain was the happy land where one of the apoſtles had exerciſed his function. To eſtabliſh that favourite point, he

* Brit. Eccleſ. Ant. cap. xvi. p. 386.

availed himſelf of the teſtimonies which the learned primate had collected to his hand; taking particular care at the ſame time not to drop a kind hint that North Britain and Ireland enjoyed the ſame advantage.

THE moſt ancient churches of Britain were founded, in all probability, by Aſiatic miſſionaries. The conformity of their belief and practice in the affair of Eaſter, to that which prevailed among the Chriſtians of the Eaſt, ſtrengthens this opinion.

IT is well known that the celebration of Eaſter was one of the earlieſt cuſtoms which prevailed among the primitive Chriſtians. The preciſe time at which that feſtival ought to be kept, was almoſt univerſally reckoned an affair of the laſt importance; and the queſtion, what that time was, however frivolous in itſelf, produced high diſputes, ſchiſmatical diviſions, and the moſt diſagreeable effects.

THE churches of the Leſſer Aſia ſolemnized their Eaſter, agreeably to the Moſaical inſtitution with regard to the Jewiſh paſſover, on the fourteenth day of the moon, in the firſt month. The churches of the Weſt, and of many other countries, took care to celebrate that feaſt on the Lord's day thereafter. This diverſity of opinion created an infinite deal of animoſity among the Chriſtians of thoſe times. Polycarp, biſhop of Smyrna, came to Rome, all the way from Aſia, to confer with the then poſſeſſor of St. Peter's chair, about

about eſtabliſhing the peace of the church. Polycarp himſelf was one of theſe who were branded with the frightful names of *Teſſares kai decatitæ* and *Quarto decimans*. The two pacific biſhops communicated with each other: but Polycarp, after returning home, was ſo far from giving up the point, in complaiſance to the Pope, that he confirmed the churches of Aſia in the belief of their old tradition. The quarrel was renewed under the pontificate of Victor, and became very violent, through the fooliſh management of that haughty prelate.

We have no great concern in the ſequel of this diſpute. The controverſy, though it aroſe from a trifle, was kept alive for a long time. In ſpite of papal deciſions, and many ſynodical decrees, the Aſiatic churches maintained their old tradition and cuſtom, till the firſt general council of Niece, or rather the authority of Conſtantine the Great, ſilenced them. But the canons made by that and other councils, though ſupported by imperial edicts, had no manner of weight in Britain. The churches there followed the ritual of the Eaſtern Chriſtians, ſome of them till after the beginning of the eighth century, and ſome longer. It was in the year 710, that the Pictiſh Chriſtians renounced their error with regard to the canonical time of ſolemnizing the paſchal feſtival. So Bede has told us; and it coſt him and the abbot Ceolfrid the trouble of a very long and elaborately learned epiſtle, addreſſed to King Naitan,

to reform them and their ſovereign out of that capital error *.

NOTHING is more improbable than that the light of the goſpel ſhined long in the Southern diviſion of this iſland, before the firſt faint rays of it had penetrated into the Northern. The vicinity of the former to the Continent, and its conſtant intercourſe with the world, would have ſoon made it acquainted with the new religion. In Nero's time there was a vaſt number of Chriſtians at Rome; and it is well known that after the burning of that great city, they were moſt barbarouſly perſecuted, as the perpetrators of the horrible crime, which many laid to the Emperor's own charge. We may take it for granted, that the news of that extraordinary event, and of the unparalleled ſeverities conſequent upon it, would take no long time in travelling to South Britain. The Romans had colonies and ſubjects there. Human nature will always ſympathize with the diſtreſſed. Every good heart will feel deeply for the innocent, when doomed, like the unhappy victims at Rome †, to the horrors and torments of the moſt ignominious and painful deaths. On theſe accounts, the hiſtory of the dreadful perſecution which Nero raiſed againſt the Chriſtians muſt have come ſoon into Britain, and brought

* Bed. Eccleſ. Hiſt. lib. v. cap. 21.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contectis laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammandi, atque ubi defeciſſet dies, in uſum nocturni luminis urerentur.

along

along with it ſome accounts of the religion that had afforded a pretext for committing ſuch barbarities. As that religion promiſed to make its votaries wiſer and happier men than thoſe unacquainted with it, that conſideration likewiſe would have ſoon waked the curioſity of many. Some of the Chriſtians who ſurvived that cruel maſſacre at Rome, and many of thoſe elſewhere who had cauſe to dread the repetition of the ſame exceſſes, would have undoubtedly taken refuge in places of greateſt ſecurity, and of conſequence have fled into Britain. The blood of martyrs has been in one ſenſe juſtly called the ſeed of the church; and the firſt general perſecution is very probably the æra from which we ought to date the firſt eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian faith in the country now called England.

It is far from being evident that the new religion made any conſiderable progreſs in Britain before the reign of Domitian. In that reign Agricola introduced the liberal arts and ſciences among the Britons of the South. This circumſtance, however prejudicial it may have been to the liberties of that people, was a very favourable one to Chriſtianity.

In all the countries where the ſciences are cultivated, a ſpirit of inquiry will naturally prevail. The belief of former ages will no longer be the rule of faith, in matters of any importance. Eſtabliſhed ſyſtems, whether of philoſophy or religion, will be canvaſſed with an ingenious freedom. Men, who are

made for ſpeculation and the ſervice of virtue, will indulge themſelves in the moſt rational and exalted of all pleaſures, that of diſcovering thoſe truths which are of the utmoſt conſequence to mankind. They will moſt chearfully communicate their diſcoveries to the world, unleſs cruelly reſtrained by penal laws, or courts of inquiſition; and even the fury and vengeance of theſe will hardly be able totally to ſilence them. In the height of perſecution they will mutter out their ſenſe of things in a corner, or open their ſentiments freely among their friends. The hiſtory of ages and nations, eſpecially in matters of religion, juſtifies theſe obſervations. It is therefore evident, that the introduction of the ſciences and fine arts would contribute much to the advancement of Chriſtianity in South Britain.

AMONG the liberal ſciences which Agricola introduced into South Britain, the art of ſpeaking elegantly held one of the firſt places. The humour of cultivating that branch of learning prevailed to ſuch a degree, that the inhabitants of Thule began to talk of hiring rhetoricians, if we can believe a cotemporary writer *. All indeed that we can infer from the Satires is, that a taſte for eloquence was greatly diffuſed over Britain: and where the art of ſpeaking was ſo much ſtudied, it is more than probable that the art of thinking was not neglected. In ſhort,

* Gallia cauſidicos docuit facunda Britannos,
De conducendo loquitur jam rhetore Thule.
Juvenal, Sat. xv. ver. 111, 112.

from the ſucceſsful attempt made by Agricola, to humanize the people of his province, we may juſtly conclude, that knowlege, philoſophy, and conſequently a ſpirit of inquiry, began to prevail in the Roman part of Britain in a very early period.

We learn from Euſebius and others, that Polycarp, the famous biſhop of Smyrna, mentioned above, had been St. John's diſciple. He had adopted the ſyſtem of the Quartodecimans; nor could the authority of a Pope alienate him from that party. No man, after the expiration of the apoſtolic age, was more zealous than this excellent prelate in propagating the Chriſtian faith. He ſealed this belief with his blood; and the only crime of which perſecutors impeached him, was his ſteady attachment to the intereſt of Chriſtianity, and the important ſervices he had done it. It was for that reaſon his murderers called him the Father of Atheiſm, the Father of Chriſtians, and the Teacher of Aſia. But his paſtoral care was not confined to that diviſion of the world. His zeal carried him much farther. He ſent miſſionaries into the very heart of Gaul, and founded the church of Lyons. Nicetius and Bothinus, the firſt teachers there, had been his diſciples *. And what ſhall hinder us from thinking that this truly apoſtolical man, and great lover of mankind, may have contributed every thing in his power to make Britain a province of the Chriſtian empire?

* See Baſnage—Hiſt. de l'Egliſe, liv. v. chap. 3.

This, I confeſs, is no more than ſuppoſition and conjecture; but the darkneſs of the ſubject admits of no certainty: and when it is conſidered that the moſt ancient Britiſh Chriſtians of whom we have any tolerably juſt accounts, adopted Polycarp's ſyſtem with regard to Eaſter, that like him they refuſed to conform to the cuſtom of the Weſtern church, and that, in their diſputes with Italian miſſionaries, they always appealed to the authority of St. John, and the other Eaſtern divines, the conjecture is, at leaſt, ſpecious. Polycarp, who to all appearance has the beſt right to be called the founder of the Britiſh churches, ſuffered death in the 170th year of the vulgar æra. It is not probable that the goſpel had taken any deep root in Britain before that time; and if the teſtimony of Tertullian can at all be depended upon, it begun to flouriſh greatly in this iſland ſoon after that period.

DISSERTATION XXI.

Of the Converſion of the Southern Picts by St. Ninian. Of the Miſſion of Palladius to the Scots. Of St. Columba.

THE only guides we have to lead us through thoſe dark regions of eccleſiaſtical antiquity, which are now to fall in our way, are, Adamnan, abbot of Iona, and Bede, the preſbyter of Girwy. Any impartial perſon who peruſes the life of Columba written by Adamnan, and the hiſtory of the Saxon churches compiled by the Anglo-Saxon, muſt be of opinion that theſe two writers poſſeſſed a much greater degree of zeal, piety, and learning, than of ſound judgment. I do not wiſh to be underſtood, from this obſervation, that I put Adamnan on any footing of equality with Bede.

AFTER Bede had told that Columba came from Ireland in the year of Chriſt 565, with a reſolution of preaching the word of God to the Northern Picts *, he obſerves that thoſe in the South had long before that time

* Bede lib. iii. cap. 4.

abandoned

abandoned the errors of idolatry. The happy inſtrument by which theſe Southern Picts had been converted to the faith was Ninian, a ſaint and biſhop, who, to uſe Bede's language, had been regularly formed at Rome. It is ſaid further, that this worthy prelate built a church, which he took care to dedicate to St. Martin. That church ſtood in a place which was called *Candida Caſa*, and the reaſon why the place obtained that name, was, that it was built of ſtone, a ſpecies of architecture which the Britons had never known till introduced by Ninian.

Bede has not mentioned the pontificate during which Ninian had been inſtructed at Rome, nor has he aſcertained the time of his preaching among the Picts. Modern writers have ſupplied that defect. Smith, the lateſt editor of that author's eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, relates *, that the founder of Candida Caſa viſited that ſee in the time of Pope Damaſus, about the year 370, that he was ordained a biſhop for the propagation of Chriſtianity among his countrymen, by Siricius, in the year 394; and that in his way to Britain he took the opportunity of waiting on the celebrated St. Martin, in Gaul.

Innes with great acuteneſs has found out the Pictiſh King in whoſe reign Ninian acted the part of an evangeliſt among the heathens of Pictavia †: the name of that monarch was Druſt, the ſon of *Irb*, whoſe reign commenced in the year 406.

* Smith, in a note on the chapter of Bede now referred to.

† Innes, Crit. Eſſay, p. 136.

On

On proper examination it will appear, that the ſtory of Ninian's ſpiritual legation to the Southern Picts, and of his having dedicated a magnificent church to St. Martin, is attended with too many improbabilities not to ſeem at leaſt dubious. His having been regularly inſtructed in the faith of Rome, though a Britiſh Chriſtian, is a circumſtance that renders it ſtill more ſuſpicious. If Ninian preached the doctrine he had learned at Rome, with regard to Eaſter, he made few proſelytes, and left no orthodox diſciples among his countrymen; for when Auguſtine, the monk, was ſent into Britain by Pope Gregory, all the Chriſtians there were quartodeciman ſchiſmatics or heretics. All that we know further, with regard to the hiſtory of this religious man, is, that he died much about the time in which Palladius was ſent by Celeſtine, biſhop of Rome, to exerciſe the epiſcopal office among the Scots.

Palladius is ſaid to have been the firſt biſhop who was ſent among the believing Scots; and the æra of his miſſion is aſſigned to the year 430 ‡. The Iriſh claim the honour of being thoſe Scots to whom this great reformer was ſent; but there was no conſiderable number of Chriſtians in Ireland before St. Patrick appeared in quality of apoſtle there: ſo that their title to the character of believing Scots cannot be well founded.

‡ Anno CCCCXXX, Palladius ad Scotos in Chriſtum credentes a Celeſtino papa primus mittitur epiſcopus.

The Britiſh Scots, from the earlieſt accounts of time, have been poſſeſſed with a belief that Palladius was employed in their country; and it is univerſally agreed, that he died in North Britain. It appears likewiſe that Pope Celeſtine departed this life in the year 432 *; ſo that if Palladius had been but one year employed among the Iriſh Scots, as they themſelves relate, it is abſolutely improbable that the Pope could have received the news of his great want of ſucceſs before the time of his own death, in order to ordain St. Patrick to ſucceed him in his office.

Of all the Scottiſh ſaints who have been celebrated by panegyriſts, canonized by prieſtcraft, and adored by ſuperſtition, Columba was undoubtedly the moſt illuſtrious. It is generally agreed that Columba was an Iriſhman, and deſcended of anceſtors who had made a conſiderable figure in that iſland. Adamnan has told us, that his father, Fedlimid, and his mother, Orthnea, were ranked among the nobility †. Keating quotes the rhimes of an old Hibernian bard, from which we learn that Fergus, his grandfather, was a Prince renowned in war ‡. Some have confounded that Prince with Fergus MacErc, the ſuppoſed founder of the Scottiſh monarchy: but the Iriſh manuſcripts to which Uſher § appeals, inform us, that the Fergus from whom Columba derived his deſcent, was the ſon of

* Uſher's Ant. p. 424.

† Sanctus Columba ex nobilibus fuit oriundus genitalibus patrem habuit Feidlimyd, filium Fergus, matrem Orthneam nomine.

‡ Gen. Hiſt. of Ireland, part ii. p. 32. § Ant. p. 360.

that

that celebrated hero, *Conal Gulbin*, and the grandſon of that famous Hibernian monarch, Neil of the nine hoſtages.

Mr. O Connor aſſerts, that Columba rejected the imperial crown of Ireland. We know, indeed, that ſome Princes have preferred the monkiſh cowl to the regal diadem. We read of ſeveral Kings who abdicated their thrones and received the tonſure. England has furniſhed us with two of that character, and Scotland with a third: but we cannot readily believe that Columba either had a crown in his offer, or had the ſame extreme contempt for the higheſt pitch of human grandeur.

MANY different Iriſh writers relate that Columba was dedicated very early to the ſtudy and ſervice of Divinity: and nothing is more probable than that he mortified his appetites by a ſevere courſe of abſtinence. Auſterities of every kind, and macerations particularly were the cardinal virtues of thoſe ſuperſtitious ages. Our ſaint is ſaid to have overacted the part of a religious ſelf-tormentor to ſuch a degree that his body was emaciated away into a hideous ſkeleton. This ſtory however cannot be reconciled to probability. Columba underwent many fatigues, and ſome give accounts of his extraordinary vigour and healthineſs of conſtitution. An old Bard quoted by Keating, aſſures us * that while Columba was celebrating the myſteries, or ſinging pſalms, his voice might be heard

* Keating, book ii. p. 35.

at the diſtance of a mile and a half, which is a kind of proof that he was not ſo ill fed as is generally ſuppoſed.

It is univerſally agreed that this ſaint employed the greateſt part of his life in cultivating the devout faculties of the ſoul. He certainly was poſſeſſed with the moſt ardent and unconfined zeal for religion. His unwearied and ſucceſsful labours in propagating the goſpel among the Iriſh, Scots, Picts, and Britons, afford a convincing proof of the enthuſiaſm, if not of the ſincerity of his mind.

They who commonly paſs under the amiable name of good natured men, are ſeldom found qualified for the execution of arduous undertakings. That pertinacity which is neceſſary to compleat difficult deſigns, is often the fruit of an iraſcible and choleric diſpoſition of the mind. Hence it may be inferred that Columba's paſſions were keen and violent, though perhaps not ſo peculiarly vindictive and hot, as bards and annaliſts have repreſented.

Keating relates, on the faith of Iriſh manuſcripts, that Columba, to gratify his private revenge, frequently embroiled the whole kingdom of Ireland. His rage produced three long civil wars, ſo often and ſo ſucceſsfully did the iraſcible ſaint blow the trumpet of ſedition. If it be true that the firſt of theſe wars was occaſioned by the reſentment of Columba, for loſing a copy of the New Teſtament, which he claimed, and which the Iriſh monarch adjudged to another ſaint,

the old tutelar demi-god of our country was certainly a moſt unreaſonable man.

The ſecond war was founded on ſome kind of affront which Columba had received from a provincial King; and the third was carried on at his inſtigation, without any tolerable pretext at all. If theſe ſtories are authentic, the heathen may indeed aſk, *can ſuch violent tranſports of paſſion dwell in celeſtial minds* *? But it cannot well be ſuppoſed that any conſiderable number of the Iriſh, however monk ridden, would have fought battles in compliance with the humour of a man ſo impotently wrathful: much leſs can we believe that heaven interpoſed, on all theſe different occaſions, in his favour. Yet thoſe very authors on whoſe teſtimony the truth of the whole ſtory reſts, will have it that compleat victories were granted by the *God of Battles* to Columba, in conſequence of his prayers. Columba is ſaid to have been at laſt made ſenſible of his guilt by a holy perſon called *Molaiſe*. This man of God obliged the ſinner to abandon his native country, by way of pennance. He enjoined him likewiſe, under the higheſt penalties, never more to caſt his eyes on Iriſh ground. The ſelf-condemned criminal obeyed the ſpiritual father with a filial ſubmiſſion; and ſo religiouſly obſequious was he to the diſciplinarian's commands, that he covered his eyes with a veil while he ſtayed in the iſland. Keating ſupports this tale with the authority of a canonized bard.

* Tantæne animis celeſtibus iræ. Virg. Æn. i. v. 11.

Bede

BEDE gives the following relation of the ſaint's arrival in Britain, and of his miniſtry among the Picts. "In the year of Chriſt five hundred and ſixty five, while Juſtin the Leſſer held the reins of the Roman empire, Columba, a preſbyter and abbot, whom his manners have rendered deſervedly famous, came from Ireland into Britain. His deſign in coming thither, was to preach the word of God in the provinces of the Northern Picts, the Southern people of that denomination having been converted to the faith by Ninian, a long time before that period. He arrived in Britain while Bridius, a very powerful Prince, reigned over the Picts; and the power of the holy man's doctrine, and the influence of his example, converted that nation to the faith *.

ADAMNAN calls this Pictiſh King Bradeus, and informs us, that he ordered the gates of his palace to be ſhut againſt the apoſtle. But Columba, if we take Adamnan's word for it, removed this obſtruction without any difficulty. The ſign of the croſs, and ſome other efficacious ceremonies, made the paſſage ſoon open to the ſaint. The King, upon ſeeing this miracle, received him courteouſly, and heard his advices with a reſpectful attention. It is true, ſome of his favourites conſpired with the miniſters of the old ſuperſtition in oppoſing the new teachers; but the man of God, ſays the writer of his life, overcame all oppoſition: and by the help of ſome ſignal miracles,

* Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. iii. cap. 4.

which

which gave an irreſiſtible ſanction to his doctrine, finiſhed at laſt the great work he had undertaken.

Soon after Columba's arrival in Britain, he ſettled at Iona, and founded the celebrated abbey of that place.

Before Columba had fixed the ſeat of his little ſpiritual empire at Iona, his character had riſen to a great height. The ſanctity of his manners, the mighty power of his eloquence, the ſpirit of that doctrine which he preached, the warmth and activity of his zeal, together with the benevolence of his intentions, had recommended him ſtrongly to the higheſt attention and reſpect.

Should one collect all the miracles and ſtrange tales that legends have vouched and tradition tranſmitted from age to age, with regard to this remarkable perſon, he might very eaſily compile a huge volume. But a judicious reader would think himſelf little indebted to the compiler's induſtry.

One of theſe traditional fictions, though ſomewhat impious, is ludicrous. Oran, from whom the Cæmitery in the iſland of Iona was called *Rælic-Oran*, was a fellow ſoldier of Columba in the warfare of the goſpel. Columba, underſtanding in a ſupernatural way, that the ſacred buildings he was about to erect in Iona, could never anſwer his purpoſe, unleſs ſome perſon of conſequence undertook voluntarily to be buried alive in

the ground which was marked out for thoſe ſtructures: Oran with great ſpirit undertook this dreadful taſk. He was interred accordingly. At the end of three days the grave was opened before a number of ſpectators. No ſooner was the brave martyr's face uncovered, than he opened his mouth and cried aloud in the Galic language, *Death is no great affair, hell is a mere joke.* Columba, who aſſiſted at the ceremony, was greatly ſhocked at the dangerous heterodoxy of this doctrine, and with great preſence of mind cried out, *Earth on the head of Oran, and prevent his prattling.* Thus poor Oran was actually buried, for pretending to diſcloſe the ſecrets of the other world.

Our hiſtorians are generally agreed that whole kingdoms paid Columba the utmoſt deference, and were determined by his advice in matters of high conſequence. He became a counſellor of ſtate to many different ſovereigns, and frequently decided the controverſies of contending powers. Aidan, King of Scots, upon receiving ſome provocation from Brudius, the Pictiſh King, declared war againſt him. The armies of the two monarchs met near Dunkeld, and fought a battle which produced a great effuſion of Chriſtian blood. After the action was over, Columba came to the field and interpoſed his good offices, but all in vain. Aidan remained inflexible. The ſaint, fired with a pious indignation, reproved the Scottiſh King very ſharply, and turned his back on him with great wrath. Aidan, ſenſible of his error, caught the garment of the retiring ſaint, and acknowledging his

raſhneſs,

raſhneſs, begged to know of him how the injury done could be expiated. Columba replied haſtily, that the loſs ſuſtained was irreparable. This drew tears from the penitent monarch. Columba was ſoftned, wept bitterly, and after he had been ſilent for ſome time, adviſed Aidan to a peace. The King complied, Brudius acquieſced in the propoſals made, and a pacification immediately enſued.

In Columba's time, the hereditary, indefeaſible right of Kings was a doctrine hardly known in any part of Britain or Ireland. In Scotland, the ſucceſſion of the lineal heir ſeldom took place, till Kenneth the Third found means to eſtabliſh it by law. Columba was a perſon of the greateſt influence in thoſe diſputes which generally enſued on the throne's becoming vacant. This will appear from the following ſtory.

Gabhran, King of Scots, had left two ſons, Aidan and Iogenanus. Columba had conceived a peculiar affection for the latter, and though the younger brother, inclined ſtrongly to procure the crown for him. But a very ſtrange adventure diſconcerted his intention. Adamnan relates it thus. "While the holy man was in the iſland Kimbria *, he fell on a certain night into a ſupernatural dream, and ſaw an angel of the Lord holding in his hand a tranſparent book which contained directions for the ordination of Kings †. The angel preſented the book to him; upon peruſing

* Cimbrei. † Vitreus ordinationis regum liber.

it, he found himſelf commanded to ordain Aidan King. But his attachment to the younger brother made him decline the office. Upon this the angel ſtretched forth his hand and gave him a ſtroke on the cheek, which made an impreſſion that remained perfectly viſible during his life. Columba was then ordered in a very threatning manner, and under the penalty of a much heavier puniſhment, to comply immediately with the pleaſure of Almighty God. He had the ſame viſion, ſaw the ſame book, and received the ſame orders, three nights ſucceſſively. At laſt the obſtinate ſaint obeyed, and went to the iſland of Iona, where he found Aidan, and laying his hand on his head, he ordained him King *." It may be inferred from this marvellous ſtory, that Columba was a perſon of great ſway in ſtate as well as religious affairs; and that he was artful enough to make the proper uſe of the influence his ſanctity gave him among a ſuperſtitious people.

He was frequently conſulted in the perplexities of government not only at home but abroad. His authority had particular weight in his native country. *Aodh* or Hugh, one of the Iriſh monarchs, ſummoned his Princes, nobility, and dignified eccleſiaſtics, to meet in parliament at *Dromceat*. The principal reaſon which induced him to call this great council proceeded from a very curious cauſe.

* Adamn. Vita Colum. lib. iii. cap. 5.

The

The Iriſh nation had been for ſome time moſt grievouſly oppreſſed by a numerous rabble of Bards, a race of men, idle, avaricious, and inſupportably petulant. One of the many ample privileges which theſe formidable ſatyriſts had acquired, was, an indiſputable right to any boon they were pleaſed to aſk. This high prerogative joined to the advantage of a ſacred character, made the Bards ſo intolerably audacious, that in King *Aodh*'s time, they had the inſolence to demand the moſt valuable jewel belonging to the crown. The jewel theſe miſcreants ſought, was the golden bodkin which faſtened their ſovereign's royal robes under his neck. An outrage ſo provoking incenſed Hugh or Aodh to ſuch a degree, that he formed a deſign of expelling the whole order out of the iſland: but as the authority of Iriſh Kings was circumſcribed within narrow bounds, he was under the neceſſity of calling the repreſentatives of the nation together, and of having Columba's aſſent before his will could have the force of a law.

Columba, at the earneſt requeſt of the King and the Iriſh nation, repaired to Dromceat. His retinue conſiſted of twenty biſhops, forty prieſts, fifty deacons, thirty ſtudents in divinity, and if we believe Keating, he was accompanied by Aidan, King of Scotland. The ſaint was received by the aſſembly with ſingular reſpect: but ſome of the Scottiſh clergy, by whom he was accompanied, were treated with contempt and inſolence. Columba had ample revenge of thoſe who inſulted his clergy, and we are firmly aſſured that the

hand of God was visible in the punishment inflicted on the offenders. Struck by a judgment so signal, the King accommodated the affair of the Bards according to Columba's pleasure.

There is no necessity for entering into any detail of the particulars of this saint's life, as they are related at large, though incorrectly, by his biographer. Upon the whole, we may allow that Columba, notwithstanding of his faults, was a man of respectable talents, and could use well the ascendancy which his religious reputation gave him over a superstitious age.

The boundless influence he had over two successive Princes who filled the throne of Scotland; the friendship he had contracted with King Rodoric of Cumberland; the ascendant he had over the great Pictish Monarch and his whole subjects, together with the share he took occasionally in the administration of public affairs in Ireland, seem to furnish convincing proofs of his genius, spirit and address. He was born a man of high quality, and closely allied to Princes, but preferred the apparent humility of a religious life to the highest secular honours. Whether this austerity was the effect of a desire of power, under a sanctity of character, or from real enthusiasm, is now difficult to say, though very possibly it arose from both.

Many learned authors have told us positively, that Columba wore the epifcopal mitre; but he was no

more than a Preſbyter. Had he been fond of a ſuperior rank in the hierarchy, he might have very eaſily gratified his ambition: but though he was confined within the more narrow limits of the prieſtly office, his authority extended much farther than that of the moſt exalted dignitaries of his time.

Columba is ſaid to have been a poet and hiſtorian. That he poſſeſſed a talent for rhime, and exerciſed it frequently, is very agreeable to the reported ſtrength and vivacity of his imagination, the prevailing humour of the time, and that friendly partiality which the Scottiſh and Iriſh bards have entertained for his memory.

We are informed by Mr. Lhoyd *, that there is ſtill in the Bodleian library at Oxford an Iriſh manuſcript, intituled, The works of Columbcille, in verſe, containing ſome account of the author's life, together with his prophecies and exhortations to Princes.

The ſame induſtrious writer obſerves, that there is in the library of Trinity College at Dublin ſome other moſt curious and wonderfully ancient manuſcript, containing the four goſpels, and a variety of other matters. The manuſcript is called, The Book of Columb-cille, and thought to have been written by Columba's own hand.—*Flann*, King of Ireland, ordered a very coſtly cover to be given this book. On a ſilver croſs, which makes a part of that cover, is

* Catalog. of Iriſh Manuſcripts.

ſtill

ſtill to be ſeen an Iriſh inſcription, of which the literal meaning is, The prayer and bleſſing of Columb-cille to *Flann*, the ſon of *Mailſheachnail*, King of Ireland, who made this cover: and ſhould the manuſcript be of no greater antiquity than the reign of that Prince, it muſt be about nine hundred years old †. This ſtory, however, carries with it a great degree of improbability—and it is more than probable that *this book of Columb-cille* aroſe from the pious fraud of a much later age.

† Lhoyd's Archæol. p. 432.

THE END.

ERRATA.

In the firſt diſſertation, inſtead of *Turdetonians*, read *Turdetanians* throughout. Page 34. l. 16. Inſtead of *upon the death of Chlorus*, read *upon the death of Conſtantine the Great.* Page 64. l. 4. Inſtead of *fertile of tyrants*, read *in.* Page 330. l. 20. for *corps*, read *body.*

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