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## THE IRISH MONKS AND THE NORSEMEN.

BY HENRY H. HOWORTH, Esq., F.S.A.

IN a previous paper I have endeavoured to give a picture of Scotland in the dark period of its history preceding the 9th century, and to describe the constitution of the early Columban clergy who did so much to Christianize and civilize it. I also gave such an account as our frail materials would enable me of the destruction and ravaging of the settlements of the monks by the Norsemen. I now propose to give a parallel picture of the early monks in Ireland and to describe how they also were the victims of the same famous rovers, and I venture to hope that a subject so little explored may not be unwelcome to the Historical Society.

Ireland may fairly be called the foster-mother of western Monachism. It was crowded with monasteries, which were swept away terribly by the pirates. They were generally situated on the main land, but most of the little islands on the coast were also dotted with them. The Arran islands off the coast of Galway were among the first so occupied. We are told that Enda, one of the introducers of monkery into Ireland—

“Having received a grant of the Island of Arran from King Angus of Munster, collected a company of disciples and divided the island into ten parts, in which he constructed ten monasteries . . . and he founded his own monastery at the east end of the island, which is still called the cell of Saint Enda. This island is now known as Ara na Navach, or Arran of the Saints. Tory Island, off the north-west coast, Rechru, off the north east, Rechru or Lambay,

in the Irish Channel, and other small islands became likewise the seats of similar foundations. Of the twelve Apostles of Ireland we find that three, Molaisse of Devenish, Senel of Cluaininnis, and Nenith of Inismacsaint, founded their chief monasteries on three small islands in Loch Erne; and on two other islands in the same lake there were also monasteries. In Lough Ree, a lake formed by the Shannon, there were five, and in Lough Corrib and Lough Derg, both also formed by the Shannon, there were in the former, three, and in the latter two monasteries. Wherever the river Shannon in its course formed a small island there was also a monastery; and the number of these island monasteries, throughout Ireland generally was very great."—Skene, *op. cit.* 2, 62 and 63.

In trying to realize the condition and aspect of the early ecclesiastical foundations in Ireland we must remember that the history of the Church there was marked by singular conservatism. The earlier foundations were models rigidly followed, and fortunately the available material for illustrating the subject is abundant. At the time of St. Patrick's mission we find Ireland parcelled out among a number of clans, subject to particular chieftains owning a more or less definite allegiance to the general over-kings who belonged to the great race of the O'Neill's. These chieftains lived in fortresses, the remains of some of which subsist in the Arran islands and elsewhere and have been generously illustrated by Lord Dunraven. When one of the missionaries converted the clan in a district, he was often granted one of the fortresses within which to plant his settlement. Thus the church of Donaghpatrick at Tailteann, was built in the fortress which had formerly belonged to Conall, the king's brother, which was made over to St. Patrick for the purpose. So we are told, in the life of Saint Benin or Benignus, that his church was erected within the arx or fortress of Dun Lughaidh belonging to a lord of the country, who, having been baptized with his father and four brothers, gave up their dun or fortress for the purpose (Petrie, *op. cit.* 442). We are similarly told in the life of St. Caillin, that Aodh Finn the son of Feargna, chief of the country of Breifny, on his

conversion by that saint gave up to him his *Cathair* or stone fortress in which to erect his monastic buildings (*id.*). The fortress of Muirbheach Mil, in the Great Isle of Arran, which dates from the heroic period of Irish history, contains two churches within its enclosure (*id.* 444). When there was no such fortress to start with, one was invariably built, and this was the great and marked feature of the old Irish monastery, to be found not only in Ireland but wherever Irish monks planted their colonies, at Iona and Lindisfarne as much as at Armagh. The enclosing rampart when made of stone or of earth faced with stone, was called a *Cathair*, *i. e.*, stone enclosure, or *Cashel*, which is a mere corruption of castellum, a fortress. When made of earth only, the enclosure was called a *Lis* or *Rath* (*id.* 440). Few remains of the latter kind are now found, but several of the former remain, and we have no difficulty in understanding their structure. I shall avail myself of Dr. Petrie's and Lord Dunraven's admirable works in describing them.

In the famous tripartite life of Saint Patrick, the diameter of the enclosing rampart at the Ferta, near Armagh, was fixed at 140 feet, and this became the standard measurement for ecclesiastical cashels, which were more or less circular in shape.

Otherwise these structures were just like the military enclosures. The masonry of the earliest of these buildings is of a very rude primitive type, without cement and for the most part built of untooled stones. These cashels are built, says Miss Stokes, of stones varying in size according to the districts where they are found, often from 5 to 9 feet long, and 3 feet deep. Each wall consists of a central core of rough rubble, faced on both sides by stones carefully chosen and laid so as to produce an even surface. These facing stones are set in endwise with their small ends outside. The walls are about 13 feet in height. Unlike the rude camps of Britain where the entrances are mere gaps in the bank, the Irish cashels, both military and ecclesiastical, have formed-doorways with inclined sides and horizontal lintels varying in depth according to the

thickness of the walls, and roofed by a series of stone slabs like the earlier mortuary galleries in Brittany. In some cases a reveal in the centre of the passage shows that it was occasionally furnished with double doors, which were also fastened with bolts or rather bars of wood, the holes for the reception of which may still be seen. The door is sometimes approached by a passage between two walls formed of long stones set upright, a feature which is seen in the entrance of St. Brendan's Oratory. Platforms, offsets, or banquettes ran along the inner sides of the walls, to which four, sometimes even ten, independent flights of steps gave access (Dunraven and Stokes, *op. cit.* 2, 136). Similar cashels occur across the Irish Channel. Bede tells us St. Fusey's Monastery in Suffolk was built in a castrum, and he describes the cashel built by St. Cuthbert on the island of Lindisfarne as made of sods and stones so large that five men could hardly lift them, and as being nearly round, 4 or 5 perches in diameter, with a wall inside higher than the outside (Bede "Eccl. Hist.," chap. 19, & "Vita Sti. Cuthberti," chap. 19, sec. 30). Such was then the rampart of these western monasteries which gave them an idiosyncrasy of their own, and whose peculiarities were not imported but strictly of home growth. Let us now turn to the contents of the enclosures—the monastic buildings which they girdled. In order to understand these we must rid ourselves altogether of the notion that a monastery must necessarily be after the type which is so well known in England and elsewhere where monachism looked up to St. Benedict and his rule as its source. The monks of Ireland traced their pedigree directly to the hermits of the Egyptian desert and their colonies at Lerins and Marmoutier, and their societies were consequently modelled on an entirely different plan. In the former the monks all lived together under one roof and led a common life. In the latter the abbot, monks and priests each lived in separate cells where they provided for themselves, while the other buildings such as the churches, oratories, kitchens, refectories, etc., were all separate buildings. The Irish monastery was an aggregation of hermits

in fact, and was of the class called a Laura, a name derived from the street Laura or Lubra, at Alexandria, where there was a monastery (Petrie, 416 and 417).

A very typical specimen of the ancient Irish monastery survives in the almost inaccessible island of Ard Oilean or High Island, off the coast of Connemara, which is thus described by Dr. Petrie :—

“Ard Oilean or High Island is situated about six miles from the coast of Connemara and contains about eighty acres. From its height and the overhanging character of its cliffs, it is only accessible in the calmest weather, and even then the landing, which can only be made by springing on a shelving portion of the cliff from the boat, is not wholly free from danger.”

The church there is of the very rudest and most primitive type, and only twelve feet long by ten wide, and ten feet high ; the doorway is two feet wide, and four feet six inches high, with a cross on its horizontal lintel. The east window, the only one in the building, is but a foot high and six inches wide, and semicircular headed.

“The altar still remains and is covered with offerings such as nails, buttons, and shells, but chiefly fishing-hooks, the most characteristic tributes of the calling of the votaries.”

On the east side of the chapel is an ancient stone sepulchre, like a pagan kistvaen, composed of large mica slates, with a cover of limestone. The stones at the end are rudely sculptured with ornamental crosses and a human figure, and the covering slab was also carved and probably was inscribed with the name of the saint for whom the tomb was designed, who was probably the founder. The chapel is surrounded by a wall allowing a passage of four feet between them, and from this a covered passage, about fifteen feet long by three feet wide, leads to a cell, which was probably the abbot's habitation and which is nearly circular and dome-roofed and measures internally seven feet by six, and eight feet high. On the east side is a larger cell, externally round but internally a square of nine feet, and seven feet six inches in height. This

was probably the kitchen. On the other side of the chapel are a number of smaller cells which are only large enough to contain a single person. They are but six feet long, three feet wide, and four feet high. There is also a covered gallery or passage twenty-four feet long, four feet wide, and four feet six inches high, with an entrance but two feet three inches square, which Dr. Petrie suggests was a storehouse for provisions.

"The whole of these buildings," he says, "were surrounded by a cashel 108 feet in diameter, outside of which on each side of the entrance were circular buildings, probably intended for the use of pilgrims; within the enclosure are several rude stone crosses probably sepulchral, and flags sculptured with rude crosses but without inscriptions. There is also a granite globe measuring about twenty inches in diameter. In the surrounding ground there are several rude stone altars, or penitential stations, on which are small stone crosses; and on the south side of the enclosure there is a small lake, apparently artificial, from which an artificial outlet is formed, which turned a small mill; and along the west side of this lake there is an artificial stone path or causeway, 220 yards in length, which leads to another stone cell or house of an oval form, at the south side of the valley in which the monastery is situated. This house is eighteen feet long and nine wide (it was probably a granary or barn), and has a small walled enclosure joined to it which was probably a garden. There is also adjoining to it a stone altar surmounted by a cross, and a small lake, which like that already noticed seems to have been formed by art" (*id.* 420, 421).

This gives a good general view of an Irish Laura. It is clear that each member of the community lived apart from his neighbour, and that the whole institution was modelled on the plan of the Egyptian hermitages. Before we consider the several buildings in detail there is a preliminary question which must be decided. One of the most inveterate traditions among the students of Irish antiquities down to recent times was, that the Irish had in early days no stone buildings, and that all their early churches were made of wood. This seemed to be supported by some well-known passages in Bede and the

Irish writings. Bede, in describing St. Aidan's Church at Lindisfarne, says—

"fecit Ecclesiam Episcopali sedi congruam, quam tamen *more Scottorum, non de lapide, sed de robore secto* totam composuit atque harundine textit" (Bede, "Hist. Eccl." iii., 25).

In the life of St. Monenna, written by Conchubran in the twelfth century, and quoted by Archbishop Usher, we have the phrase—

"S. Monennæ monasterio Ecclesiam constructam fuisse notat Conchubranus *tabulis de dolatis, juxta morem Scotticarum gentium; eo quod macerias Scoti non solent facere, nec factas habere Primordia*, 737." (Petrie, *op. cit.*, 123.)

Again, when St. Malachy proposed to build a stone oratory at Bangor, his design was resisted as a novelty; "Scoti sumus non Galli," said his opponent (Todd's "Life of St. Patrick," 394, note). In the face of these statements it is strange that the evidence should be so overwhelming that the Irish from the earliest Christian times used stone for many of their ecclesiastical buildings, a position which, since the great work of Dr. Petrie, does not admit of controversy. The evidence he has collected is unanswerable. The explanation may perhaps be sought in two directions. It seems probable if we examine the pagan remains of Ireland that certain districts were characterized by the presence of stone structures, while in others they were absent and were apparently replaced by wood, and wattles, and earth.

The former prevailed in the north and west, and the latter in the south and east, and may be rudely tracked out by the presence of the various topographical names compounded with "rath" and "lis." It may be that this distribution coincided with the presence or absence of suitable stone, or the abundance or scarcity of wood as seems to have been the case on this side of the Irish Channel, where we have large districts characterized by houses made of timber, and so-called daub and whattle, and not houses only but churches also, three of which survive within easy distance of where I am writing this paper. Or it may be

as Dr. Petrie argues, that the tribes or races of the Firbolgs and the Tuath de Danan were accustomed to build not only their fortresses but even their dome-roofed houses and sepulchres of stone without cement, and in the style now usually called Cyclopean and Pelasgic (*op. cit.*, 124). Elsewhere in Ireland, no doubt the dwellings were made of wood, mud, or sods, and thatched, as is still the fashion in many districts there and in the Hebrides.

It would seem that when the early missionaries planted their religious colonies in Ireland, they adopted very largely the antecedent modes of building in use in the districts where they settled, and it is thus curious to read that St. Patrick himself built a church at Foirrgea of moist earth, because wood was not to be found there, "*fecit ibi ecclesiam terrenam de humo quadratam quia non prope erat silva*" (*id.* 123). The names of his three stonemasons, namely, Cæmar, Cruithnech, and Luchraid, who are said to have been the first to build damliags or stone churches in Ireland are recorded; we know further that St. Ninian's church at Whithern, as well as the numerous Treen chapels in the Isle of Man and the solitary chapel dedicated to St. Patrick, in Lancashire, were made of stone. Fashion, too, probably interfered. St. Columba and his scholars, who traced their origin perhaps more directly to Tours and Lerins and Marmoutier, preferred the ephemeral buildings which were patronized by the hermits of the desert, and which had been typified by the dwellings of leaves and boughs in which the Israelites lived in the wilderness, and as they became the chief missionaries of Scotland and North Britain they introduced this ascetic fashion with them which thus became associated with Scotie Christianity. These dwellings of wood occupied us in our previous paper, and we may now consider those of stone. There were, as I have said, imitations of the pagan structures already existing. "The churches, &c., were built of uncemented stones admirably fitted to each other, and their lateral walls converging from the base to their apex in curved lines, with their end walls converging also, though in a less degree, and having no resemblance to continental buildings,

nor showing any acquaintance with the arch. The only innovation introduced in the Christian buildings was that the churches were made of a quadrangular shape, and many buildings round outside were square inside, while the previous structures had been round or oval, both internally and externally" (*id.* 126). This change, as Dr. Petrie says, is referred to in the very early life of St. Patrick, by St. Evin, perhaps dating from the sixth century where the pagan Magus, Con, is made to predict among other innovations that their buildings would be quadrangular: "ædes ejus erunt angustæ et *angulatæ* et fana multa" (*op. cit.* 129). Let us now examine the construction of these buildings in greater detail.

The most important part of the establishment was of course the church, which among these intensely conservative communities followed not only the shape but also the dimensions prescribed by St. Patrick for his original foundation. These churches were always small. The exception quoted by Dr. Petrie of the great church of the primatial see of Armagh, which according to one translation was 140 feet long, clearly depends on a faulty rendering of the original, where the 140 feet refers no doubt to the diameter of the cashel. The fact is that the cathedral and abbey churches of Ireland before the 12th century rarely or never exceeded the length of sixty feet, which was the length prescribed by St. Patrick for his church at Donaghpatrick, near Tailteann, which was also the length, according to a very old tradition, of the oldest church at Glastonbury, one of the earliest British churches (Skene, *op. cit.* 192-3). Dr. Petrie concludes that the majority if not all of the large cathedral or abbatial churches in Ireland were damliags, *i. e.*, made of stone (*id.* 156). The oldest churches were simple oblong quadrangles, with square east ends. The semicircular apse so characteristic of the Continental basilicas and early churches was entirely unknown; "they had rarely more than a single entrance, placed in the centre of the west end." The windows was frequently triangular headed, but more usually arched semicircularly; while the doorway, on

the contrary, was covered by a horizontal lintel, consisting "of a single stone. In all cases the sides of the doorways and windows inclined, like the doorways in the oldest remains of Cyclopean buildings" (Petrie, *op. cit.* 159). The walls were formed like those of the cashels, of very large polygonal stones carefully adjusted to each other, both on the inner and outer faces, while the interior was filled up with rubble and grouting (*id.* 159). The east walls were pierced with an extremely rude east window, either square or round headed; if the latter, the arch was merely scooped out of a single stone.

"There is always a broad internal splay, and the aperture is generally on the face of the outside wall, but in some instances the window is set in the thickness of the walls, and expands both outside and inside. The apertures in these windows rarely exceed nine inches. The roof of the smaller churches, as in the case of the Numidian buildings described by Sallust, is in the form of an upturned boat, and made by the gradual projection of one stone beyond the other, till the walls meet in one flag at the apex" (Dunraven and Stokes, *op. cit.* 136—138).

In many cases the walls sloped inwards from their very foundations in a curve until they met in the ridge, and as in the case of the oratory at Gallarus, &c., so in all roofs, may be said to be in fact a vaulting, not placed on walls but standing directly on the ground, and having a most Cyclopean and solid appearance. In other cases the slope of the vault commenced at some height from the ground, and was a proper roof. These stone vaults were only used in the lesser churches; the larger ones were always of wood covered with shingles, straw, reeds, and perhaps sometimes with lead (Petrie, 160).

In these earliest buildings the only thing in the shape of an ornament was a cross made of five or seven quartz stones, whose whiteness stood out in strong contrast against the dark slate of which the walls were often built, and which were set over the doorway.

These oblong buildings, with high pitched roofs and finials on the gables, followed the traditional form of the ark,

that building in which the church was rescued from the flood.

Numerous examples of the type may be seen in the richer foreign sacristies, such as that at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the silver and the jewelled shrines containing the bones of famous saints.

The buildings we have described were essentially the building of the fifth and sixth centuries. In the seventh and eighth a marked progress seems to have been made in architectural knowledge. This was shown by the introduction of cement or mortar in more or less abundance in the buildings.

"The cement of the earliest builders," says Miss Stokes, "on the sea-coast often largely contained shells and sea sand, while inland a compound of mud and gravel was used. In many cases the walls seem to have been first built, and then this composition was poured on in a liquid state, to filtrate through from the top; later on the wall was well built with two faces, and a rubble core grouted in a similar manner, while in the time of Cormac O'Killen we have the stones well bedded in mortar. The archaistic and so-called Cyclopean character of this masonry, especially in the limestone districts, is very striking, even though cement be used. The great stones, varying from ten and even seventeen feet to eight and six feet in length, are often dovetailed, and fitted into one another, as the great stones above the lions gate at Mycenæ, and polygonal masonry often appears in company with ashlar, while ashlar is seen occasionally superimposed by rubble and wide-jointed irregular courses of stone" (*op. cit.* 144).

This reminds one of the incongruous masonry of the existing walls of Rome, where the beautiful work of the republic and the early empire is covered with the rude masonry of the later empire and the barbarians. Conjointly with the improvement in the masonry, there was a marked advance in the architectural features of the buildings; architraves, sometimes double and sometimes single, were added to the door. In many instances a reveal on the inside may be seen with stone sockets above or in the lintel, which were appliances for the shutter that took the place of a door; a plinth was added to the walls, con-

sisting of a square plain projecting face at the bottom of the walls close to the ground, while pilasters or square buttresses were added to the corners of the building. These only occur at the angles, "and are mere prolongations of the side walls in the primitive churches, and are sometimes continued all along, the gable, as in Inis Mac Dara, or along a portion of it, as at Kilmalkedar" (*id.* 145). In the corners also, but close to the roof, are projecting brackets, which no doubt, as Miss Stokes suggests, were originally meant as pegs, by means of which a covering of sods or thatch was tied down on the roof, and were probably afterwards retained as ornamental features, like gargoyles at the corners of the buildings (*id.* 138 and 146).

A very important innovation was the introduction of the chancel, which, when it occurs in the older churches, we find is not bonded into the nave, showing it was an after addition. There was no rule as to its relative size, and sometimes it was almost as large as the nave, and it is impossible now to decide whether there was any difference between them in the roof. With the chancel was apparently introduced the use of the arch. There is but one example, says Miss Stokes, of a chancel arch built in the primitive style—one stone overlapping another till the sides meet at the apex,—and this is at St. Kevins, Glendalough (*op. cit.* I., xix.).

The earliest arches were semicircular and sprang from jambs, which inclined like the sides of the doorways. The earliest of them were without imposts, consisting of a single sweep or soffit only, no sub-arch, and no moulding, or even chamfer, but with the voussoirs dressed and fitted with skill. These elements were gradually added. The size of the arches varies from nine to ten feet in width, and twelve to thirteen feet high. In some cases the arch is set back from the jambs from which it springs. At first there is no impost, then a rude impost formed of an unsquared block of stone, as at Kilmacduach in Arran, and then appears the chamfered impost as at Oughtmama. With the introduction of the chancel arose the necessity of lighting the nave, and windows

were introduced into the side walls, often square or triangular, always inferior in construction to the east window ; a little window was sometimes introduced in the east end of the south wall, the purpose of which appears to have been to cast additional light on the altar (*id.* 147). The windows in the nave were usually in the south wall. In some of these churches the stone altar is still standing beneath the little east windows, and is now fully garlanded with woodbine, ivy, and the thorny bramble (*id.* 145), while in one of them two stones believed to have been used as candlesticks, ten inches high, of an upright form, and so hollowed that they could support a candle, which passed through and rested on the altar, were still intact in 1845 (*id.* 1, 62).

The point of greatest interest, however, as Miss Stokes says, in the development of architecture at this stage, is the gradual growth of the use of ornament, not only on the principal features, but on the walls of the buildings also. At first such ornaments seem often introduced without reference to the general effect or beauty of the building, however they may add to its significance ; the cross is often found on the soffit, not on the face of the doorway, and the other fragmentary decorations are scattered about the walls of the buildings without any principle of arrangement that we can discover, and yet evidently are not insertions of a later period. The churches thus decorated preserve all the archaic character of the earliest Christian remains, with rude and massive masonry, and little if any cement ; the primitive east window is seen adorned, perhaps only on one side, with the fillet moulding, the corner-stones are carved with scrolls, the eaves rest on dragons' heads, and from the walls strange human heads project (xix.). The gradual enrichment was in many cases, however, strictly progressive.

"In the Irish doorway the idea of a group of columns is conveyed by rounding off the angles and channelling the jambs into bowtels or little clustered shafts, and instead of capitals, which each crown a separate column, one long and level entablature unites the whole at the top. At each end of this a woman's head is often carved,

whose streaming hair, entwined in long locks, seems to bind the group of columns into one, and forms an interlaced ornament on the face of the entablature" (*id.* xxiii.).

Attached to the large churches were certain appendages called *erdamhs* in the old annals. An *erdamh*, Dr. Petrie argues, answered to the porticus in the Anglo-Saxon churches, which probably meant a sacristy or other lateral apartment entered from the interior of the church (*op. cit.* 438), after the fashion of many mediæval chantries.

Dr. Petrie argues that while it is probable the churches were generally built of stone the oratories and the domestic buildings of the monks were usually made of more perishable materials (*op. cit.* 138). These oratories are known in the old Irish annals as *duirtheacs* or *derthechs*. The most reasonable etymology of the word is *dair thech*, *i. e.*, house of oak, which thus distinguished them from the more important *daimliags*, or houses of stone (*id.* 340). Dr. Petrie has collected much evidence to show that the *duirtheacs* or oratories were generally made of wood (*id.* 342—344). They seem to have been also whitewashed (*id.* 344).

Although most usually of wood, they were not universally so, and stone ones were not infrequent, not only in districts where stone abounded and wood was scarce, as in the Arran islands, but also where wood was abundant. An "*oratorium lapideum*" at Armagh is specially named in the Annals of Ulster under the year 788. A similar reference to one at Bangor is contained in Bernard's Life of St. Malachy (*id.* 141). The use of the qualifying adjective *lapeidum*, in these cases, proves that they were usually made not of stone, but of other materials. Several of these stone oratories survive. They do not vary very much in size, but average about fifteen feet by ten, inside measurement (*id.* 346). Their plan is also very uniform, with a single doorway in the west wall and a single window in the east one, and a stone altar placed near the window. These oratories were usually consecrated by the bishop, and seem to have been very favourite buildings with the Irish, and were founded by them in their scattered settlements

in Lombardy, Switzerland, &c. These oratories were used apparently originally for the private devotions of their founders, whose cells and tombs are found close by, and "they passed into them to spend the evenings of their lives in prayer and penance, and to be buried there, and they afterwards came to be used by devotees as penitentiaries, and to be regarded exclusively as such" (*id.* 352).

In accordance with this view we sometimes find combined under the same roof an oratory and a dwelling, the latter consisting of a room between the stone roof and the covered ceiling of the oratory (*id.* 351 and 352). Against the walls of some of these oratories there sometimes still remain stone cists which doubtless held the shrines of the founders.

Among the most prized and most sacred of the buildings within the ancient cashels were the Ferta or graves of the saintly founders and their descendants. These were of various forms; sometimes, as in Arran, rude sarcophagi, somewhat like Pagan kistvaens, at other times small cairns enclosed by circular or quadrangular walls. Sometimes they were marked by simple unsquared flagstones, with a cross on them, but in the case of more distinguished persons, small, conical-roofed buildings shaped like the oratories were placed over the grave, as in the tombs of St. Cadan, and of St. Muireadoch O'Heney, in the county of Londonderry (*id.* 448 and 449). The latter of these is faced with ashlar masonry, is ten feet long, four feet nine inches wide, four feet high to the eaves, and eight feet to the gable.

These pyramidal tombs no doubt represent the type mentioned by the old writers as prevailing at Iona, where the more celebrated monuments of the kings were built in the shape of little chapels. The sacred wells which form such a marked feature in the early legends of Ireland were sometimes enclosed with masonry, and sometimes when small were similarly covered with stone-roofed buildings, shaped like the oratories (*id.* 447 and 448).

The cashels are also marked by the presence of numerous stone crosses of various sizes, which when dating from the

period which we are describing were apparently plain and unornamented. About the church and oratory clustered the dwellings of the abbot and the brethren. These were usually built no doubt of perishable materials, and for the most part have disappeared. The abbot's house was generally larger and more imposing, and probably, as at St. Kevin's house at Glendalough, and St. Columba's house at Kells, combined both oratory and dwelling. The abbot's house was probably generally quadrangular, while those of the brothers were round and beehive-shaped. In the western parts of Ireland these latter were frequently made of stone, and their remains enable us to reconstruct and describe them. We are told they consisted of small beehive-shaped cells, called *clochaun*, ranging from seven to eighteen feet in diameter, some circular and others square and oblong in shape, with walls of enormous thickness, those on Scelig Michael being over six feet thick. This was necessary to support their stone roof. On the outside of some of these roofs are circles of projecting stones, probably meant, as in the churches, to fasten the sods and thatch by, for it is probable that the stone vault was also thus covered to exclude the wet, as it is in several examples still extant. The doorways are small, about four feet high and a little over two wide; as with the churches, these were surmounted by crosses of white quartz stones. The windows were also small and square-headed, little more than one foot high (Dunraven and Stokes, *op. cit.* 31). In the inside the walls are nearly vertical for several feet. The window is much broader than it is long. Four feet within the room there is a semicircular step, and then a second to the wall. At the top of the building is a circular aperture. This was probably the chimney. The angles of the wall inside are rounded off, and there are small recesses or cupboards in the walls, and projecting stones or brackets. Sometimes there is a low projection on one side of the cell near the ground meant for a seat. In those cells which are round outside, the inside is generally quadrangular. On the floor of one at least of them a kind of kitchen midden

of shells and bones of animals has been found, and on that of another a number of brass pins probably used to fasten the capes of the monks.

Besides the abbot's house and the houses of the brothers, there seems to have been generally a common refectory called a *proinntech*. Such was probably the *ædificium* or *aula* major mentioned among the buildings erected by St. Patrick at Armagh, and which we are told was thirty feet long (*id.* 379 and 423). These were no doubt made generally of wood. So doubtless were the kitchens called *cuicins* or *coitcenns*, otherwise called *cuili*, from the Latin *cullina*. In the Life of St. Patrick by St. Evin, just cited, we are told the kitchen he built was seventeen feet long, and we are told in the ancient fragment of the tripartite life that this was the normal size of such buildings (*id.* 439). We read of St. Columba's kitchen in the life of that saint, of St. Bridget's in her life contained in the *Leabhar Breac*, and of the kitchens of many other saints in various establishments (*id.* 439). Another important building commonly found in the Irish monasteries, as in the foundation of St. Columba at Iona, was the mill for grinding grain, while stone causeways and stepping-stones are named in a very ancient document, detailing the cost of various buildings (*id.* 342).

Having described the old Irish monasteries, we may now turn to the second part of our paper, and follow the story of their devastation and destruction at the hands of the pirates. In my previous paper I described the descent of the Norsemen on the island of Rechru, during the famous raid in which they plundered Lindisfarne, Iona, and the Isle of Man, at the close of the eighth century. It is not improbable that the rovers who came on that occasion were exiles from the North, victims of the strife between Godfred and Halfdene, to which I referred in my second paper on the Early Intercourse of the Franks and Danes.

The attack on Ireland in 795 was, however, a very transient matter, and only affected one of the small islands on the coast. They did not appear there again for some years.

Their next attack was in 807, when we read in the *Chronicon Scotorum*, "Burning of Inis-Muiredhaigh by the Gentiles, and devastation of Roscam. The moon was turned into blood" (*i. e.*, was eclipsed). This is the first record we have of any attack made by the Northmen on the mainland of Ireland. Its date is fixed by the eclipse just mentioned. In the *Art de Verifier les Dates*, i. 67, it is given under the year 807. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle also names it, dating it, however, on the 1st of September, 806 ("Chron. Scot.," 126, note 1). Inis-Muiredhaigh, or Inis Murray, as it is more generally known, was a famous monastic site. The island is situated in the Bay of Donegal, about five miles from the coast of Sligo.

"It forms," says Miss Stokes, "the barony of Carbury in the county of Sligo, and belongs to the parish of Ahamlish, a bare and desolate skerry, forming a table-land, with rocky precipitous sides rising gradually to face the Atlantic, but low in the eastern end where the monastery is situated."

The island was known by its present name as early as 747, and it probably took its name from Muiredach, a follower of St. Patrick, put by him over the church of Killala, and who also probably founded the monastery. A century later St. Molain, a contemporary of Saint Columba, was abbot of the place and founder of the old church bearing his name there, which therefore dates from the sixth century.

"The group of ruins at Inis Murray is," says Miss Stokes, "the most characteristic example now extant of the earliest monastic establishments in Ireland. The cashel or enclosing wall of the old monastery is built of large blocks of round stone, from two to four feet in length. It is from eleven to thirteen feet in thickness on the north side, and from seven to eight feet thick on the south. The greatest diameter of the enclosure, from north-east to south-west, is 175 feet, while from south-east to north-west it is only 135 feet. There are two doorways through the wall."

"This cashel," says the same gifted authoress, "is covered with grey lichen, which, combined with the rude character of its masonry

and the size of its stones, contributes to give it even a finer and more venerable character than that of the forts, either in Kerry or the island of Arran (Lord Dunraven's "Irish Architecture," i. 45, 46). Within the enclosure is a curious medley of churches, cells, raised structures, with chambers and underground passages running through them; leachta, tombs, stations, and pillar stones, with inscribed crosses, some still standing and others fallen on the ground" (*id.* 46).

There are three ruined churches—that of St. Molain, and those called respectively the church of the men and of the women; the first being the oldest, and being constructed of rude masonry cemented with a primitive grouting of shells and clay, with a deeply splayed east window, having a circular bend cut out of a single stone, the whole of a very rude and primitive type. A similar building is the little oratory dedicated to the same saint, whose roof, however, is intact. It is of stone, and has straight sloping sides, the covering stones being laid one on the edge of the next, in the usual style of Irish walling. Inside are still remains of the plaster and wattle lining. The east end contains a rude altar made of small stones (*id.* 47). This clochan or cell, and two others, are singularly well preserved. The largest of them is thirteen feet by twelve feet in size, and thirteen feet high. Miss Stokes has described the buildings in great detail in Lord Dunraven's magnificent work, where the remains are figured. As usual, among the peasantry, traditions and legends float about the old stones in very weird fashion (51). Inis Murray was clearly a very important monastic foundation. It was also easily accessible from the Hebrides, where the rovers probably now had settled quarters. Having burnt the monastery on the island, they went over to the mainland, and penetrated into the very heart of Connaught, where they devastated Roscommon.

It is curious that, as I mentioned in my previous paper this very year, Halfdene with a large armament submitted to the Frank emperor, probably, as I have argued, after a defeat by his rival Godfred. It is not improbable that the invaders of Ireland in 807 may have been some dispossessed fugitives

whose fortunes went down with his. We do not again read of the invaders till 811, when they made a descent upon Ulster, where, we are told, a slaughter was made of them. ("Chron. Scot." 127). The next year we find them in Connaught. They were there beaten by the men of Umhall or Owle, a district comprising the modern baronies of Murreesk and Burrishoole, in the county of Mayo. By this defeat we are probably to understand that, as usual with them, having made a descent and being resisted they retreated and went on, for we are told that they, the same year, slaughtered the men of Conmaicne, *i. e.*, of Connemara, in Western Galway. They advanced yet further and made an attack on Munster. According to the Tract on the Wars of the Danes in Ireland, this fleet numbered 120 ships, a most important armament and doubtless a royal fleet. Perhaps it was the fleet of Halfdene which, under his sons, fought such a fierce battle for the throne of Denmark against the successor of Hemming, as I mentioned in a former paper. This fleet, according to the Tract just cited, went to Camas ó Fothaidh Tire (*i. e.*, the fair island of Forthaidh), or, says Dr. Todd, perhaps of Ui Rathaigh (probably the island of Ui Rathaigh in Kerry being meant), and they plundered and devastated it and Inis Labhrain (probably some island on the river Cashen in Kerry), and also Dair Inis (*i. e.*, the oak island). Thence the invaders seem to have advanced inland, where they were beaten by Cobthach, son of Mach Cobha, chief of the Eoghanacht of Loch Lein, a tribe which lived east of Killarney, in the barony of Magunihy and the county of Kerry. On this occasion 416 of them were killed ("Wars of the Danes in Ireland," 5 and 222; "Chron. Scot.," 127; and "Annals of the Four Masters," 419). This means that the invaders were very severely beaten indeed, for 416 must have made a great gap in their not very large armament. We are not surprised therefore to find the defeat a subject of European notoriety Eginhardt in his Annals tells us that in 812 a fleet of Northmen having attacked Ireland was defeated by the Scots. Many of the invaders were killed, and the

rest returned home ignominiously (Pertz, I., 199, 200; Kruse, 66). The same event is mentioned in the annals of Fulda, where the invaders are called Danes, and in the *Annales Ottenburani*. It was doubtless on their return journey that, in the following year, *i. e.*, in 813, the men of Umhall or Owle were slaughtered by them, and that Cosgrach, son of Flannabhrat and Dunchadh, king of Umhall, perished ("Chron. Scot.," 129). The invaders seem altogether to have learnt a severe lesson on this visit, for we do not again hear of them for nine years.

When their attacks began again it was, as I believe, from an entirely different quarter; and I will now try and trace them out. We read in the Frankish annals, that in the year 820 a fleet of thirteen ships from Normania appeared on the coasts of Flanders, but were driven off by the coast-guards there, after burning some small houses and carrying off some cattle. They then entered the estuary of the Seine, where they were also routed by the guards and lost five of their number. Then going on towards Aquitaine they destroyed a town there called Bundium by Eginhardt, and Buin in the *Vita Ludovici*, and whose site seems not to be known. Hence they carried off a vast booty and returned homewards ("Eginhardt Pertz," i. 207; "*Vita Lud.*," *id.* ii. 625; Kruse, 79, 80). Kruse has argued with some plausibility that this fleet was commanded by two chieftains, brothers of Eric, the Danish king, who had been expelled from their country the year before (*op. cit.* 80). The question is whither did they go after leaving Aquitaine. It is curious that in the year 821 we again read of the Norsemen in Ireland, not in the north, where they would naturally have appeared if they had come from the Hebrides or Scotland, but on the south-east coast, facing the coast of Gaul. This makes it not improbable that the invaders were the same or a part of the same fleet which had been busy in Aquitaine. This view is rendered more probable when we remember that there was a regular intercourse between Aquitaine and Ireland from early times. Dr. Reeves says:—

"When Saint Columbanus was at Nantes, and the authorities there wished to send him back to Ireland, a ship was found in the harbour ready for the purpose, *quæ Scotorum commercia vexerat*" (Jonas, Vit. St. Columbani, ch. xxii.).

Even at the inland Clonmacnois we read :—

"In illis diebus quibus fratres Sti. Kearani segetes suas metebant, mercatores Gallorum venerunt ad S. Kearanum et repleverunt ingens vas de vino illo quod S. Kearanus fratribus suis dedit" (Vit. S. Kearani, c. xxxi.).

We also read in Adamnan's life of St. Columba :—

"Et antequam præsens funatur annus, Gallici Nantæ, de Galliarum provinciis adventantes, hoc eadem tibi enarrabant" (Reeves' "St. Columba," 57 and note *d*).

As I have said, we read of a Danish invasion of the east coast of Ireland in the year 821 or 822. The "Annals of the Four Masters" tell us they attacked Edar, (which was the ancient name of the peninsula of Howth, near Dublin,) and carried off a great prey of women. They also plundered Beg Eire, *i. e.*, Little Ireland, now Begery, a small island close to the land in Wexford harbour, on which was a church built by Saint Ibhar, who died in the year 500 ("Annals of the Four Masters," 431, notes *y* and *z*). They also plundered Dairinis Caemhain, *i. e.*, St. Camhain's oak island in Wexford harbour (*id.* and note *a*). St. Camhain was brother of St. Kevin of Glendalough, and was apparently also the founder of a church in one of the Arran islands (Lord Dunraven's "Irish Architecture," i. 86).

The next year we find them creeping along the coast further west, and attacking Cork and Inis Doimhli, probably not far from Cork ("Chron. Scot.," 131; "Annals of Four Masters," 433). According to the Tract on the Wars of the Danes, they also ravaged Cloyne and Rosniallain, or Roskellan; perhaps, says Dr. Todd, Rostellan, a parish in the barony of Imokilly, in the county of Cork. These places they plundered. We also read that they made a descent on the barren rock of Scelig Michæl, or St. Michael's rock, which was inhabited

by an anchorite named Etgall, whom they carried off. He died shortly after, and his death is dated in the Ulster Annals in the year 823, answering to A.D. 824. The same account says he died of hunger and thirst ("Annals of the Four Masters," 435, note *z*). This rock is one of the most romantic sites in the British Isles, and I am tempted to extract some notes about it by Miss Stokes. It is situated about twelve miles from the westernmost point of the coast of Kerry and in the Atlantic, and "the church of St. Michael with its group of monastic cells is built on its northern summit, where the rounded form of the hill is tinged with delicate green and roseate colour from the sea plants that grow on its bosom, while to the south, the bare pointed rock which forms its highest peak shoots upwards towards the sky." The sides of the rock are precipitous, and there is but one landing-place, "a narrow cove where the surrounding cliffs rise vertically to the full height of the island, and at the end of the gully a cave." The ancient approach to the monastery from the landing-place was on the northern side, as figured in the photograph in Lord Dunraven's book. There are 620 steps, from a point of the cliff which is about 120 feet above the level of the sea, up to the monastery. The rest of this flight of stairs is broken away. "The old stairs run in a varying line, the steps grow broader towards the upper part of the ascent, and are lined with tufts and long cushions of the sea-pink, and at each turn the ocean is seen breaking in silver foam hundreds of feet below." Up this staircase the rovers no doubt went on their wild errand, and along it have gone many pilgrims since, for the place has been a favourite shrine to our own day. The platform on the crest of the great splintered buttress of rock is occupied by the church of St. Michael, and the beehive huts of the anchorites around. The remains consist of those of the church, two small oratories, six beehive huts, two wells, five leachta or places of entombment, and several rude crosses, and are enclosed on one side by the rock and elsewhere by the cashel, or wall.

"The masonry," says Lord Dunraven, "is beautiful, and worthy of the builders of Staigue Fort, whose work it strongly resembles. There is the same curve or batter in the outline of the wall, the stones are laid as headers and fixed in horizontal layers although they follow the batter. It is astonishing to conceive the courage and skill of the builders of this fine wall, placed as it is on the very edge of the precipice, at a vast height above the sea, with no possible standing ground outside the wall from which the builders could have worked; yet the face is as perfect as that of Staigue Fort, the interstices of the greater stones filled in with smaller ones, all fitted as compactly and with as marvellous firmness and skill" (*op. cit.*, 30 and 31).

The rude buildings inside the enclosure are described in great detail by Miss Stokes, and consist of the usual array of ruined structures without ornament or carved detail, proving their early date, and doubtless also the poverty of the early occupiers. The island has a history going back to fabulous times; a cromlech which once stood near its summit is supposed to mark the grave of Ir, the son of Milesius, whose body was washed ashore on the island after the dispersal of his fleet and the destruction of his ship on the coast of Desmond (*id.* 34). It is curious that *scelig*, which enters into the composition of the name, is not an Irish word, but a corruption of the Norse *skerri* (Todd's "Wars of the Danes," xxxviii., note 1). Let us now on with our story.

Hitherto the attacks of the Norsemen had fallen in Ireland chiefly upon monasteries of a secondary importance. Their next victim was to be a much more stately foundation, namely the monastery of Bangor, Bennchair Mor, or Great Bangor, as the "Chronicon Scotorum" calls it, which was founded in 558 by Saint Comgall, a companion of Saint Columba. It was situated on the south side of Belfast Loch, in the county Down. Three thousand monks at one time obeyed its rule, and it became the foster-mother of many missionaries (Skene, "Celtic Scotland," i. 55—57). It was now to go under. We are told the Gentiles plundered the monastery, killed its bishop, its doctors and clergy, and broke

the shrine of Saint Comgall. The Ulster Annals state that the relics of Saint Comgall were shaken out of the shrine by the falling of the building ("Wars of the Danes," &c., xxxviii. and 7; "Chron. Scot.," 133; "Annals of the Four Masters," 434, note *p*. This was in 824. The next year, *i.e.*, in 825, the invaders, who had apparently wintered in Strangford or Belfast Lochs, which in later times became very favourite trysting places of theirs, made a descent on Magh bile, *i.e.* Movilla in the county of Down, several of whose bishops are mentioned in the Annals, and we are told they burnt it with its erdamhs, *i.e.*, plundered the church with its attached chapels ("Chron. Scot.," 133; "Wars of the Danes," &c., xxxviii. and 223). They also attacked Dunleth glaise ("Chron. Scot.," 133), *i.e.*, Downpatrick, at the southern end of Strangford Loch, the burial place of Saint Patrick (Todd's "Life of St. Patrick," 493), and which was in those days the royal residence of the chieftains of Eastern Ulster ("Wars of the Danes," cxlviii. note 2). The invaders, however, had not it all their own way, for we are told that they were defeated by the Ulster men at Magh Inis (*i.e.*, the island plain, so called from its being nearly surrounded by the sea. It is the modern barony of Lecale, in the county Down.) In this fight very many people fell ("Chron. Scot.," 133; Todd's "Patrick," 408, note 3). The same year we find the invaders in the south of the island. They had perhaps coasted round its eastern shores after their exploits in Ulster, for we meet with them in Munster and Ossory. The Chronicon Scotorum merely says they defeated the people of Ossory, and again plundered Inis Doimhle. In the Tract on the Wars of the Danes we are told they came to the Ceinnselaigh (*i.e.*, the district coinciding nearly with the present dioceses of Leighlin and Ferns in the counties of Wexford and Carlow *id.* xxxix. and 7), and plundered Tech Munnu (St. Munna's house) now Taghmòn, in the county of Wexford; Tech Moling, St. Moling's house, a monastery founded in 632; the place is still called Saint Mullins, and is on the river Barrow, in the county of Carlow) and Inis Teoc, now Inistioge, a small

town on the river Nore, in the county of Kilkenny. They then entered the district of Ossory, where they had a warm reception from the inhabitants, and 170 of them were killed ("Wars of the Danes," &c., xxxix.)

In the same year we are told in the Ulster Annals that the Gentiles spoilt Lusca, in the modern county of Dublin, and wasted Cianachta (*i. e.*, a territory situated in the baronies of Upper and Lower Duleek in the county of Meath) as far as Ochtar Ungen (? Ocha in the county of Meath, near Tara), and afterwards they spoiled the Galls of the north-east, *i. e.*, of Scotland ("Annals of the Four Masters," 1,440, note *i*). This is doubtless the same event mentioned in the Chron. Scot., where we read that Blathmac, son of Flann, was martyred by the Gentiles at Iona ("Chron. Scot.," 133). According to the metrical life of this saint, by his contemporary, Walafrid Strabo, which is still extant, he was of royal descent and heir to a throne in Ireland, but devoted himself to a religious life, and became the head of a monastery. Coveting the crown of martyrdom we are told he sought the dangerous neighbourhood of Iona, then presided over by Diarmaid, who in 818 had taken the shrine of Saint Columba there from Ireland ("Chron. Scot.," 131). This seems to show that the Scottish isles were, at that time, unmolested by the pirates. When he learnt of the approach of the invaders he addressed the brethren, and bidding those who could not face the danger depart, he and others determined to stay and oppose the intruders. The chief objects of Danish cupidity on these occasions were the gold and bejewelled shrines enclosing the precious bones of the saints. The shrine of Saint Columba was now taken from its place, buried and covered with sods. We are told that St. Blathmac was celebrating Mass when the invaders fell upon the island. They put many of the monks to the sword, and then turned upon the Saint and demanded the precious reliquary, all showing that the monastery had been in a measure rebuilt since its former destruction. He had purposely remained ignorant of its hiding place, and, we are told, spoke to the enemy in the barbarous tongue, *i. e.*, in

Norse, which was assuredly a most curious accomplishment for an Irish ecclesiastic at this time. He said, "I know not truly what gold ye seek, where it may be placed in the ground, and in what recesses it may be hid; but if it were permitted me to know, Christ permitting, never would these lips tell this to your ears. Savagely bring your swords, seize their hilts and kill. O God I commend my humble self to thy protection." Thereupon they cut him in pieces (Skene, 2, 302 and 303). Diarmaid, the abbot of Iona, apparently escaped, and four years later, *i. e.*, in 829, we find him going to Scotland with the Meonna of St. Columba, which is explained by Dr. Reeves as the articles of veneration of the saint, such as his crozier and his books or vestments, as distinguished from his ashes, and which he had doubtless saved in his flight (*id.* 303). It was at this time, according to the learned author whom I have so often quoted, Mr. Skene, that a small oratory was built over the shrine. He says a small quadrangular cell attached to the west end of the ruins of the Abbey church still goes by the name of Saint Columba's tomb. Its walls are about three and a half feet high, but have been partly excavated. At its west end is a regularly-formed entrance, and within at the east end are two stone rests placed along the north and south walls a few feet apart, which space at the east end was probably once filled by an altar. Mr. Skene argues that the cist on the right or south side contained the shrine of St. Columba, while that on the north side "probably the remains of Saint Blathmac, who died a martyr in protecting it from the Danes" (*id.*). Let us now revert once more to Ireland. Still referring to the year 825, the annals report the destruction Dun Laighen at Druim, by the pagans, in which Conaing, son of Cuchongelt, lord of the Fortuatha was slain with many others ("Annals of the Four Masters," 441). Fortuatha Laighen was the district in which Saint Patrick first landed, and was situated in the county of Wicklow (Todd's "St. Patrick," 286 and notes).

In 826, according to the Four Masters, a year answering to 828 of the Chron. Scotorum, which was probably the true

date, Temhnen the anchorite (not otherwise known to me) was martyred by the foreigners (*op. cit.* 441), and Leathlobhar mac Loingseach, king of Ulidia (*i. e.*, the modern county Down) defeated them (*id.* 443). The Ulster Annals also mention a great slaughter of hogs by the Galls, *i. e.*, the strangers in Ard Ceanachta, the modern barony of Ferrard, county of Louth ("Chron. Scot.," *index*); and we are told Cinaedh mac Cumascai, king of Cianacht (*i. e.* of Upper and Lower Duleek in county Meath), was wounded by the same foreigners, who also burnt Lain Lere (*i. e.*, Dunleer, county Louth) and Cluonmor (? Cloyne in county Cork or Clonmore in county Carlow) ("Annals of the Four Masters," 442 note, *p*). The same year, according to several authorities, a battle was fought against the invaders by Cairpre, son of Cathal king of the Ui Cennsealaigh, *i. e.*, of Wexford, and by the family of Teach Munna, who had already suffered from their attacks (*vide supra*), so that the monks were becoming martial men, and were now allied with the royal clan (from whom doubtless their comarbs were chosen) in repelling the intruders.

During the next two years we do not read of any attacks made upon Ireland by the pirates, and strangely enough it is during this interval we find them on the coasts of Gaul again. The coincidence is certainly strange, and one fact, probably, explains the other. We will now turn thither for a short time.

At the great council held at Ingelheim, in 826, when Harald was baptised and did homage for Denmark, the Breton grandees also attended, and in their presence Nominoé was appointed viceroy of Brittany. It was a great year for Louis le Debonnaire, but he was approaching the term of his grandeur. His sons were growing weary of their father's fickle arrangements for their future. Four different partitions of the empire had been made at various times, chiefly to find an acceptable portion for the child of the second wife, Judith, namely, Charles the Bald, and a civil war was smouldering on his own hearth. It was in the midst

of this ill-will that Louis undertook a campaign against the Bretons, who bore his yoke uneasily and were supposed to be on the eve of rebellion. Louis le Debonnaire set his army in motion during Lent, that holy time when, according to the precepts of the Church, the truce of God ought to have been most strictly observed, so urgent was the supposed exigency the alleged revolt of the Celtic king, an unfounded allegation according to the Breton historian, who maintains that Nominoé remained faithful to Louis, but that Bernard and Count Lambert, the traitor, suggested the inroad to forward some scheme of their own. The expedition was most unfortunate. The larger number of the nobles and troops who ought to have obeyed the summons refused. Some, as we infer from subsequent proceedings, scrupled about the Lenten season (Palgrave, 1, 278). They did not scruple, however, to raise the standard of revolt. Paris, the mother of revolutions, still but a provincial city, was the focus of rebellion, and Louis was subjected to indignities, and put under restraint by his sons. This was in 830, and this pass in Carlovingian history was fitly inaugurated by the first determined attack upon the fair shores of the Empire by the pirates. I have small doubt that they were invited by the Bretons, and they probably came from Ireland, thus accounting for their absence from there at this period. We can only grope in the dark, as I have said ; but judging from what we know of their after history they seem to have easily cozened towards the Celtic inhabitants ; at least the hinds and labourers afterwards became their faithful retainers, and among the Celts of Wales and Brittany they are early found in close alliance and friendship.

On this occasion they landed on the Isle of Herio, now called Noir Moutier in the Bay of Bourgnent, just south of the present mouth of the Loire. It is now joined to the mainland by a league's length of strand ; its ten leagues of circuit enclose some of the richest land of France, both pasture and arable. In the tenth century it was probably entirely surrounded by water, even at low tide. It then formed one of

those natural fortresses the sea rovers loved so well, with rich grass to feed their captured bees upon, a channel of their surest ally, the sea, between them and the main, and a fine river close by, a highway by which to creep into the very heart of richly-dowered France.

In 674 St. Philibert had founded a monastery there, known as Noir Moutier from the black dress of its Benedictine tenants, who in the twelfth century were replaced by the reformed white-robed Order of St. Bernard, the Cistercians. This monastery was plundered and burnt in the month of June, 1830. The next year, *i. e.*, in 831, we again read of them in Ireland, and not improbably it was the same body who the year before had been at Noir Moutier and had afterwards returned to their favourite trysting place. On this occasion they attacked Conaille, or Louth, and captured its kings Maelbrighde and Cananan his brother, whom they carried off to their ships ("Chron. Scot.," 139; Annals of Ulster, quoted in the "Annals of the Four Masters," 444, note *z*).

The next year, *i. e.*, in 832, we have a famous entry in the English Chronicle, where it is stated that the heathen men ravaged Sheppy ("Mon. Hist. Britt." 344). The recent researches of Theopald have shown, however, that the dates of the chronicle at this point are four years wrong, and this one ought to be 835 or 6, so that we must postpone the consideration of this and other attacks on England.

It was in 832, however, that they made a much more important attack upon Ireland. The times were favourable to them. There was at this period a persistent feud among the Irish princes, which had lasted for more than a century, owing to the pretensions of the chief of Cashel in Munster to be acknowledged as overking of all Ireland. This claim was at this time hard pressed by Feidhlimidh son of Crimhthan the chieftain of Munster.

"Although," says Dr. Todd, "he was himself an ecclesiastic, abbot, and bishop, as well as king of Cashel, he did not hesitate in the prosecution of his political designs to plunder the most sacred places in the northern half of Ireland, and to put to the sword their

monks and clergy. In 826, and again in 833, he had spoiled the Termon lands, or sanctuary of Clonmacnois, on which last occasion he slew many of the religious and burned the Termon up to the very doors of the principal church. He had treated in the same way the celebrated Columban monastery of Durrow. In 836 he took the oratory of Kildare by force of arms from Forannan of Armagh, who seems to have found refuge there with his clergy, and exacted from him a forced submission; and about the same time he obtained a temporary submission from Nial Caille, the head of the O'Neills who had been overkings of Ireland for so long, and was acknowledged as king of all Ireland" (Todd, *op. cit.*, xliv. and xlv.)

There was a similar feud in ecclesiastical quarters, and the famous see of Armagh, St. Patrick's metropolitan throne, was the subject of a fierce strife, one candidate being the nominee of the O'Neills, and another of their rival the chief of Munster just named. It is not improbable that the Norsemen were the allies of the latter, and that they were actually called in to his aid. Whether this be so or not, we read that in 832 Ardmacha was plundered three times in one month by the Gentiles, this being the first time it had been attacked by them ("Chron. Scot.," 139). Ard Macha, or the height of Macha, was indeed a famous site. When it was granted to St. Patrick by the chieftain Daire the red, it was already the site of a rath or fort, and contained two graves within it, hence its earlier name of Da Ferta. There he proceeded to put up certain conventual buildings already described.

Mr. Petrie has argued very forcibly that the principal buildings founded by St. Patrick at Armagh still survived in the middle of the ninth century, and consequently at the period we are writing about. These consisted of the Damhliag Mor, or great stone church, which substantially remains in the present Cathedral of Armagh, which, says Mr. Petrie, "after all the calamities to which it has been subjected, still retains nearly the same longitudinal measurement as in the time of its original foundation" (*op. cit.*, 154).

There was also the Damhliag ant Sabhaill or barn Church, the Damhliag na Togha, probably the original parish church

of Armagh, and dating from St. Patrick's time or shortly after. Some remains of it existed down to the recent restoration of the cathedral, and the rectors of Armagh were generally inducted there (*id.* 156).

No remains of the buildings at the Fertae Martyrum are now to be found. In the fifteenth century the place had become a nunnery and so continued to the period of the Reformation, when it was suppressed under the name of Temple-fertagh. Dr. Reeves has recently determined its exact spot in the present Scotch Street, at a spot from which a fine view of the hill upon which the cathedral now stands can be obtained. The way in which the capture of this northern ecclesiastical capital of Ireland is mentioned, when we are told that it was taken three times in one month, shows that there must have been some very hard fighting there. The Chron. Scot., after mentioning the plundering of Armagh, speaks of the devastation of Lugh-mhagh, that is of Louth, where there was a famous monastery founded by Saint Mochta, a disciple of St. Patrick, which was so rich that he was able to support there without requiring them to work for their livelihood, and while engaged altogether in the pursuit of learning, three hundred priests and one hundred bishops, with sixty or, according to another reading, eighty singers; and these numbers constituted the ordinary monastic family or household of the monastery (Todd, *op. cit.*, 29).

Besides Louth, other neighbours of Armagh suffered on this occasion, as Mucsnamha, now Muchnoe, in the county of Monaghan, the district of the Ui Meith Macha in the same county, and Druim Mic Ua Blae, or Druim Hubhla, situate in the baronies of Upper and Lower Slane, in northern Meath, where a church dedicated to Saint Sedna was renovated in the ninth century, but which no longer exists ("Annals of the Four Masters," 445; "Chron. Scot.," 139). The same year they laid waste Daimhliag Cianain (the stone church of Saint Cianain), founded by a disciple of St. Patrick's named Cianan, and now called Duleek, in the county of Meath. They also carried off Ochill the son of Colgan.

The Chron. Scot., besides the capture of Duleek itself, also mentions that the territory of Ciannachta (*i. e.*, a tribe settled in the present baronies of Upper and Lower Duleek in the county of Meath), with its churches, was also spoiled. Túathal, son of Feradach (about whom I can find nothing) was carried off by them, and the shrine of Saint Adamnan was taken away from Domhnach Maghen (*i. e.*, Donaghmoyne, in the barony of Farney and the county of Monaghan Reeves, "Adamnan," 389).

It was the same invaders, doubtless, who ravaged Cill Uaisaille (the church of St. Auxilius), now Killashee, near Naas, in the county of Kildare, which adjoins Meath.

The Chron. Scot. also mentions a plundering of Lismore in southern Ireland in the same year (*op. cit.*, 139; "Wars of the Danes," xl.).

The church at Lismore was founded by the famous St. Carthach or Mochuda, who was its first bishop, and who having died in 637 was buried there (Petrie, *op. cit.*, 240). Lis meant the wall of earth or stones which enclosed the cashel, and Lismore therefore meant merely the great wall or great rampart (*id.* 441).

This year is the probable date of the raid in the same district mentioned in the Tract already cited as grouping the invasions, and where we are told they demolished Dundermuighe, *i. e.*, the fort of the oak plain, now Dunderrow, near Kinsale; Inis Eoghanain, now Inis Shannon, on the river Bandon; Disert Tipraite, a place not now known; Lismore itself, and Cil Molaisi, now Kilmolash, five miles south-east of Lismore ("Wars of the Danes," &c., xxxix. and 7), all, so far as we can discover, close around the harbour of Kinsale in the county of Cork. The same work next mentions Cluain-ard Mobeoc (*i. e.*, the high lawn of St. Mobeoc) as being attacked by the invaders. Dr. Todd identifies this place with Kilpeacon in the county of Limerick (*id.* xl., note 1). If so, this must have been a solitary and sporadic descent, and it is possible that some now unknown site near Kinsale was really meant.

The very ancient fragment of the work on the "Wars of the Danes," contained in the book of Leinster, says that after

plundering the various places about Kinsale already named, the invaders went north to Snamh Aigneach, *i. e.*, Carlingford Loch, where they spoiled Lann Lere, *i. e.*, Dunleer in the county Louth ("Wars of the Danes," &c., xl. and 224), and Cill Shleibhe, now Killeevy, near Newry, at the head of Carlingford Loch. The ruins of this church still remain, and are figured in Lord Dunraven's work. It was called Kil Shleibhe, *i. e.*, the church of the mountain, because it was situated at the base of Sleive Gullion, in the parish of Killeevy, near Newry, in the county of Armagh. It consists, we are told, of two churches joined together, the western one forty-five feet long and twenty-two feet four inches wide; the eastern one sixty-one feet long, and twenty-two feet wide. The masonry is very rude, with square-headed doorways and huge lintels and posts; the east window of the western church consists of a simple round arch. The whole is of very primitive work. The church is mentioned as early as 517 (Lord Dunraven's "Irish Architecture," 109 and 110).

In 833, according to the Chron. Scot., Nial, that is Nial Caille, the over-king of Ireland and Murchadh, defeated the foreigners in Daire Chalgaigh, *i. e.*, Derry, or Londonderry ("Chron. Scot.," 139 and 376). The Ulster Annals tell us, however, that the invaders succeeded in plundering Rath Luraigh, *i. e.*, Lurach's fort, the ancient name of Maghera, in the county of Londonderry ("Annals of the Four Masters," 445).

"Maghera," says Lord Dunraven, "is a parish in the barony of Loughnisholm and the county of Londonderry. It is contracted from Machaire, either the 'rath' or 'fort' of the plain. The church there was founded by Saint Lurach, who probably lived at the beginning of the sixth century, and who gave the place its older name.

"The primitive monastery of Saint Lurach was probably enclosed by a circumvallation of earth, which was called his 'rath,' a fact indicative of very early foundation. The church, which still remains, is 71 feet 10 inches long and 20 feet 5 inches wide, is a simple

oblong, and does not seem to have been divided into nave and chancel. The east wall is almost gone, the other walls are chiefly built of some brass or basalt, rubble and good-sized stones, cemented with yellowish mortar. The height is 18 feet, and they are 2 feet 8 inches thick. There is a well close by, which still bears the founder's name, and his grave is said to be marked by a low headstone, with a wheel cross incised on it" (Dunraven's "Irish Architecture," i., 115—120).

Besides ravaging this old foundation, we are told the pirates also plundered Connor, or Condere, in the county of Wicklow ("Annals of the Four Masters," 445). The Chron. Scot. also tells us that this year Clondolcan, near Dublin, was ravaged by them (*op. cit.*, 139). This church was founded by Saint Mochua, who was its first abbot, and who flourished early in the seventh century. It subsequently rose to the rank of a bishop's see, and became a place of great celebrity. Of its original ecclesiastical edifices the tower alone remains (Petrie, *op. cit.*, 393). This is, no doubt, of later date than the ninth century. A large granite cross, without ornament, which stands in the churchyard, was, however, probably there when the Norsemen made their attack. They also plundered Loch Bricren, *i. e.*, the lake of Bricrum, so called from a chief of Ulster in heroic times. It is a small town, near a lake of the same name in the barony of Upper Inagh, in county Down. There Conghalach, son of Eachaidh, was taken prisoner and carried off by the foreigners to their ships, where he was killed ("Annals of the Four Masters," 447, 449, and note 2).

The next year, *i. e.*, 834, we are told Dunachadh, son of Scanlan, king of the Ui Fidgheinte (who inhabited a district in Limerick round the town of Croom), defeated the invaders and killed many of them ("Chron. Scot.," 141; "Annals of the Four Masters," 449).

The invasion of the great inlet of Limerick—the outfall of the Shannon, which, dotted with its many islets, was a very paradise as a trysting-place for the fleets of the pirates, is told in greater detail in the Tract on the Danes in Ireland, where

we read that they came into the harbour of Limerick, and that Corco Baiscinn (a district comprising the baronies of Moyarta, Clonderalaw, and Ibrickan, in the county of Clare), Tradraighe (a district in the same county, east of the river Fergus, whose name survives in the parish and rural deanery of Tradry), and the country of the Conaill Gabhra, or of the descendants of Conall Gabhra, who gave its name to the barony of Conelloe ("Wars of the Danes," xl., 9 and 31, note 7), which tribe, under their chief Donnchadh, or Donadhach, son of Scannlan (who was also head of the Ui Fidgheinte) together with Niall, the son of Cennfaeladh, the chieftain of Ui Cairbre, defeated them at a place called Senati, probably now represented by Shanagolden, in the barony of Lower Connello, in the county Limerick, where many of them were slain ("Chron. Scot.," 141; "Wars of the Danes," xli., 9 and 224).

This battle is dated in the year 834 in the "Annals of Ulster," the "Chron. Scot.," and the "Four Masters." "The Chronicon Scotorum" tells us further that the same year Glen da Locha, or Glendalough, was plundered by the pirates. Here they were again on a famous site, one of the most beautiful spots in Ireland, and the goal of many pilgrims in our own day. The abbey there was founded by Saint Kevin, and the church built by him is identified by Dr. Petrie with that still called the Lady's Church, in which his tomb remained during the last century (*op. cit.*, 170). Dr. Petrie also assigns to this early date the name of the famous building at Glendalough, known as Saint Kevin's house; and there are probably also remains of other very early buildings in the neighbourhood, but the greater part of what remains is of a much later and more ornate kind. Having pillaged Glendalough, the Norsemen also ravaged Slane, in the county of Meath, where there was formerly a round tower; and Finnabhair, abha, *i. e.*, Fennor, in the barony of Duleek, in Meath, the burial-place of St. Nechtan ("Annals of the Four Masters," 449; "Chron. Scot.," 384; Petrie, 164).

The next year, *i. e.*, in 835, we find them busy at their usual

occupation of piracy at Fernamor (*i. e.*, Ferns, in the county of Wexford), which was a foundation of St. Aidan, whose shrine was in the possession of Dr. Petrie (*vide* his volume, 201), Cluain mor Maedhoig (*i. e.*, Clonmore, in the county of Carlow,) and other churches of Ir Mumban, *i. e.*, Ormond (Chron. Scot., 141). The "Annals of the Four Masters" add the Church of Druimh' Ing, a monastery of St. Fuintain, among the Ui Seaghain, a tribe and territory situated near Rath Ciule, in the barony of Ratoath and the county of Meath (*op. cit.*, 451, and note *d*). The same year they made a descent upon Mungairid, now called Mungret, in far distant Limerick ("Chron. Scot.," 141; "Annals of the Four Masters," 451). A very ancient church, said to have been founded by St. Nesson, in St. Patrick's time, still survives there (Petrie, *op. cit.*, 180). "The wide range of these ravages," as Dr. Todd says, "proves they were committed by more than one body of invaders." The account for the most part is a mere dry list of names, as monotonous as the doings of the veritable Philistines which they record. In the Tract on the Wars of the Danes in Ireland, the attacks, as I have said, are not dated, but arranged in groups more or less geographical, but apparently very arbitrarily. Such a group includes the ravages just described, and adds some other names. Thus, after mentioning the expedition to Dunleer and Killesy (*vide ante*) we read that they returned again and plundered Swords of Columkille (*i. e.*, Sord, near Dublin). It was a foundation of St. Columba's, and founded before the year 563 (Petrie, *op. cit.*, 398). A famous round tower still remains there. This work also mentions Damliag of Cianan (*vide ante*), and Slane (*id.*), and Killossy or Kiluasile (*id.*), and Glendalough (*id.*), and Cluain Uamha (*i. e.*, Cloyne, in the county of Cork, but probably a mistake for the Clurain Mor already mentioned), and Mungairt, and the greater part of the churches of Erin. In this list of names we have, in fact, a repetition in one group of those already cited chronologically from the Annals.

We now again meet with an invasion of the Frank Empire, and it is in September of this year, 835, that we read of

Reginald Count of Herbage attacking them in the island of Herio, where he fought for seven hours from morning till night, and where he was wounded with many of his followers, and forced to seek refuge on the mainland. The Annals, as usual, offer their readers consolation by discounting the practical victory of the pirates with a considerable slaughter of their number. We are told that 480 of them perished in this attack—a very improbable story (Chronicon Engolism, ad ann. 835; Depping, 180). We must now turn again to Ireland.

In 836 the Gentiles from Inbher Dea, *i. e.*, the mouth of the river Vartry, in the county of Wicklow, where St. Patrick landed (Todd, "Life of St. Patrick," 338), and where the pirates doubtless had a trysting-place, attached Cildara, *i. e.*, Kildare, and burnt half the church. From the following sentence in the Annals it is not improbable that the Norsemen were in alliance with Feidhlimdh, the King of Munster already named, for it is said he captured the oratory at Kildare against Foran, the abbot of Armagh, with the congregation of Patrick, and took them prisoners "with their submission?" Kildare, "the church of the oak," was so called from a famous oak which was much cherished by St. Brigid (Todd, *op. cit.*, 21). St. Brigid was the founder of the monastery there, which became one of the most fertile mothers of monachism in Western Europe. Her establishment comprised both sexes. They were separated from each other in the cathedral by a partition, which explains the statement of the Annals that the Norsemen burnt half the church. While she and her successors presided over the abbey, a regularly constituted bishop had joint authority with her, and looked after matters episcopal. He had his episcopal throne, "*cathedra episcopalis*," she her virginal chair ("*cathedra puellaris*"). While the Bishop of Kildare was the senior bishop of Ireland, she was the senior abbess among the Scots. St. Brigid and the bishop she appointed were buried on the right and left of the high altar respectively; and their shrines, highly decorated with pendent crowns of gold, silver, and gems, were preserved there. He had been a patron of

the arts; had imported vestments of variegated texture from the Continent, which were then deemed peculiarly magnificent, and we are told he was St. Brigid's chief artist; Dr. Todd adds that the ancient Irish ecclesiastics did not consider it beneath their dignity to work as artificers in the manufacture of shrines, reliquaries, bells, pastoral staves, crosiers, covers for sacred books, and other ornaments of the church and its ministers. "The ecclesiastics of that period seem to have been in fact the only artists, and several beautiful specimens of their work are still preserved, chiefly belonging to the century or two centuries before the English invasion of Ireland; for almost all the older monuments of this kind, especially if formed of the precious metals, appear to have been destroyed or melted by the Danes" (Todd, *op. cit.*, 11—26). From this account it will be seen that the Norsemen doubtless found a rich booty when they plundered Kildare in 836. They followed up their attack there by a second raid on Cluain mor Maedhoig, or Clonmore, in the county of Carlow, which they assailed on Christmas Eve, and whence they carried off a great number of prisoners, and then cruelly ravaged all Connaught ("Chron. Scot.," 141). The oratory of Glen da Locha was also burnt by them.

The otherwise monotonous Annals have a curious notice this year, showing that nature was bountiful enough at these critical times; we read that there was abundance of nuts and acorns this year, and they were so plentiful that in some places where shallow brooks flowed under trees men might go dryshod, the waters were so full of them!!!

The sentence following is in grim contrast to this. "The Gentiles this year harried and spoiled all the province of Connaught" ("Annals of the Four Masters," 453; "Chron. Scot.," 141.) In the same year the Four Masters have an entry which would be very curious and interesting if well authenticated; we are there told that "Goffraith, son of Fergus, chief of Oirghialla, *i. e.*, Oriel or Uriel, in Ulster, went to Alba, *i. e.*, Scotland, to strengthen the Dal Riada, at the request of Cinaeth son of Ailpin," *i. e.*, Kenneth McAlpin (*op. cit.*, 453).

This early use of the Norse name Goffraith in Ireland is very interesting, but Mr. Skene, than whom it would not be easy to quote a better authority, considers it as of slight value, and that it has been taken from the unreliable genealogy of the McDonalds, Lords of the Isles, contained in the "Book of Ballymote," (letter to the author). I am not so sure, however, that he has not here been too sceptical, and the entry is deserving of more critical sifting. A second entry occurs in the "Annals of the Four Masters," which tells us Goffraith died in 851. He is then styled Chief of the Inis Gall, *i. e.*, Lord of the Isles, and if genuine, is the first recorded of that long and picturesque line of chieftains.

The year 837 was also a terribly scarlet year in the Irish annals; we read how a formidable fleet of sixty ships appeared in the river Boyne, and a second fleet of sixty ships in the Liffey, and that these two fleets ravaged the districts of Magh Life (*i. e.*, the plain of the Liffey in Kildare) and Magh Breghe (the plain of Bregia, between the Liffey and the Boyne, and extending from the sea into the county of Meath). The men of Breghe won a victory over them and killed six score of them ("Chron. Scot.," 141).

This victory, if victory it was, was compensated by a terrible reverse elsewhere, for we are immediately afterwards told that a battle was gained by the foreigners at Inbhear-na-Barc, *i. e.*, the river or estuary of the barks or ships, which the learned editor of the "Annals of the Four Masters" identifies with the mouth of the river of Rath Inbhir, near Bray (*op. cit.*, 455, note *b*), over all the O'Neills (*i. e.*, all the southern O'Neills who lived in the ancient Meath), from the Shannon to the sea, in which such slaughter was effected as had never before been seen, but the chief kings escaped ("Chron. Scot.," 141; "Annals of the Four Masters," 455, 456). This was evidently a crushing disaster for the Irish, and it was followed by blow on blow of the heaviest kind, which are described in grim, short phrases by the chroniclers. By these blows the most famous religious establishments in Ireland were devastated, and all, too, apparently in one year. The

list begins with Cluain-mac-Nois, assuredly a most famous monastic foundation, the most famous seat of religion and school of art in Ireland. It is situated on the eastern bank of the Shannon, in the barony of Garrycastle, in King's County. I shall avail myself of Dr. Petrie's description of its present aspect.

"The scenery of Clonmacnois," he says, "is of a character altogether lovely, sublime, and poetic. We stood on a gentle eminence above the margin of a noble and majestic river, on which, amidst a multitude of ancient gravestones, are placed two lofty round towers, and seven or eight churches, presenting almost every variety of ancient Irish Christian architecture. A few lofty ash trees, that seem of equal antiquity and sanctity with these ruins, wave their nearly leafless branches above the dead. To the right an elevated causeway carries the eye along the river to the ruins of an ancient nunnery, and on the left still remain the walls of an old castle, once the palace of the bishops, not standing, but rather tumbled about in huge masses on the summit of a lofty mound or rath, surrounded by a ditch or fosse, now no longer necessary, which once received the waters from the mighty stream. The background is everywhere in perfect harmony with the nearer objects of this picture; the chains of bare hills on either side, now sere and wild, but once rich with woodland beauty, shut out the inhabited country we so lately left, and the eye and mind are free to wander with the majestic river in all its graceful windings through an uninhabited and uninhabitable desert, till it is lost in the obscurity of the distance. Loneliness and silence, save the sounds of the elements, have here an almost undisturbed reign. Sometimes, indeed, the attention is drawn by the scream of the wild fowl which inhabit this solitary region, or the shot of the lonely sportsman; at other times we could hear the measured time of the oar, or rather paddle, of a solitary boat long before the little speck on the water became visible.

"There is not perhaps in Europe a spot where the spirit would find more matter for melancholy reflection than among the ancient churches of Clonmacnois. Its round buildings call forth national associations and ideas. They remind us of the arts and literature, the piety and humanity, which distinguished their time, and are the work of a people who, in a dark age, marched among the

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foremost on the road to life and civilization, but who were unfortunately checked and barbarized by those who were journeying on the same course, and ought to have cheered them on." (Petrie, MS. Hist. of Clonmacnois, quoted in Lord Dunraven's work, ii., 95, 96.)

The name Cluain-mac-Nois means the meadow of the son of Nois. The monastery there was founded by Saint Ciaran in 544. We are told that the king, Diarmaid Mac Cerbhall, assisted Ciaran with his own hands to raise the humble edifice and the still humbler cell which adjoined it, the monarch being at the time himself an outcast, on whose life a price was fixed, and who was seeking shelter from his persecutors in the wilderness to which the saint had come for solitude and repose. The monastery afterwards became the cemetery of King Diarmaid and his successors, and was richly endowed by them. It gradually became the chief school in Ireland. In the eighth century Colcu, one of its lectors, was known abroad as the chief scribe and master of the Scoti. He was a correspondent of Alcuin, who sent him a present of some holy oil for consecration, shekels as a present from his master Charlemagne, and similar gifts from himself for the brotherhood at Clonmacnois, and other presents to be distributed elsewhere. Colcu was the author of a famous work called "Scaip Chrabhaidh," *i. e.*, the "Besom of Devotion." He died in the year 789 (Dunraven, *op. cit.*, 96, 97). We shall revert to Clon-mac-Nois again, for it long survived this first attack of the Danes, and increased in wealth and splendour; but there is small doubt that even now the pirates found a rich booty there.

Besides Clon-mac-Nois, we are told they in this year burnt the churches of Loch Erne, near Enniskillen, in the county of Fermanagh, such as Daimhinis, (*i. e.*, ox island, now Devenish Island) in that lake. The monastery there was founded by Saint Molaise, otherwise called Laisren, who died there. A beautiful and perfect round tower still remains to mark the spot of the monastery, and the oratory of St. Molaise survived until a few years ago ("Annals of the Four Masters," 203,

note *t*; Petrie, *op. cit.*, 355, 432). They also plundered the church of Cluain Eos, or Clones, in the county of Monaghan, where there was another famous monastery, and burnt the churches of Laictene, Inis Cealtra, and Cill Finchi. Laictene was so called after Saint Lactin, who died in 622, and who had churches dedicated to him at Freshford, in the county of Kilkenny; Muscraighe, in the county of Cork; and Ballylongford, in the north of the county of Kerry ("Annals of the Four Masters," 244, note *g*; and 456, note *e*). Inis Cealtra was an island in Loch Dergdheirc ("Chron. Scot.," 389); there was an ancient church there built, by Saint Caimin in the seventh century, and rebuilt in the tenth by the famous Brian Borumha, the object of so much affection on the part of Irish patriots (Petrie, *op. cit.*, 272, &c.); while Cill Finnchi was a church described in a gloss to the Feilire Aenguis as near a great hill called Dom Buidhe, in Magh Raighne in Ossory. This has not been identified, however ("Annals of the Four Masters," 456, note *f*). We next have a very remarkable reference, since it preserves for us the first name of a leader of the pirates recorded in the Irish Annals. The phrase in the "Chronicon Scoticon" is "the killing of Saxolbh, lord of the foreigners, by the Cian-nachta," *i. e.*, the men of Duleek in eastern Meath ("Chron. Scot.," 143). The name Saxolbh is a curious one. It is clearly the Anglo-Saxon name Saxulf, and is not a Norse name at all. This proves that the Norse folk at this time were accompanied by some English chiefs, a fact which will be shown to have more than a passing interest presently. We then read of a slaughter of Gentiles at Carn Feradhaigh, which is a mountain in the territory of Clin-Mail in the south of the county of Limerick ("Annals of the Four Masters," 457, 245, note *h*; "Chron. Scot.," *loc. cit.*). They, however, gained a victory at Ferta, *i. e.*, the graves, probably Fearta fear Feig, on the Boyne near Slane, in Meath ("Annals of the Four Masters," 457, and note *h*; "Chron. Scot.," *loc. cit.*). This was balanced by a defeat at Eas-ruaidh, now Assaræ, at Ballyshannon, in the county of Donegal ("Annals of the Four Masters,"

456, 457, note *i*; "Chron. Scot." *loc. cit.*). Lastly, we have the short and pregnant phrase, "The first taking of Athcliath by the foreigners." Athcliath is short for Dubhlinn of Athcliath, *i. e.*, "the black pool of the ford of hurdles," and was the ancient name of Dublin ("Wars of the Danes," &c., xlix., note 5; "Annals of the Four Masters," and "Chron. Scot.," *loc. cit.*).

Such is the calendar of destruction and ravage committed in the fatal year 837. The size of the fleet which then arrived, 120 ships, is enormous for a Norse armament, as all will confess who have studied the doings of the corsairs, and the record of its handiwork shows that it was a very powerful body of invaders, and no doubt therefore led by a famous chieftain. On turning to the Tract on the Wars of the Danes we recover his name, which was Turges, or Turgesius, which it has been suggested is a form of the Norse name Thorgils. As usual, in this account the story is confusedly told, and, as Dr. Todd has suggested, we seem to have the same story repeated in it in a different way. Confused as it is, we will now abstract the notice, which is no doubt very valuable.

After mentioning the descent on Limerick (*ante*) this account goes on to say, "There came after that a great royal fleet into the north of Erin with Turges. This Turges assumed the sovereignty of the foreigners of Erin. The north of Erin was plundered by them, and they took possession of Leth Cuin (*i. e.*, the northern half of the island, called Leth Cuin or Cons half; *op. cit.*, 8, note 7).

"A fleet of them took possession of Loch Eathach, *i. e.*, Loch Neagh; another fleet took possession of Louth, another of Loch Ree" (*op. cit.*, 9, 224, and xlii., note 1). Here it will be seen three fleets are mentioned, and not two, as in the Annals. Then we have some paragraphs which are apparently inserted out of their order, and to which we shall revert presently, after which follows an account of the ravages as follows. "There came after that threescore and five ships (sixty is the number named in the Annals as forming each of the two fleets), to Dublin of Ath Cliath, and Laigin (*i. e.*,

Leinster) was plundered by them to the sea, and Magh Bregh" (*i. e.*, Bregia, already mentioned) (*op. cit.*, 13, 226). This story is clearly a condensed account of what we have already recited from the Annals; but at this point we get a very interesting additional phrase, for we are told that this fleet, after the plundering of Laigin and Bregia, went northwards with its left hand towards Erin, and the Dalriadans gave them battle. They were led by their king Eoghanan, the son of Angus (who according to O'Flaherty was the 31st of the Dalriadan kings of Scotland), who was killed, ("Wars of the Danes," 13, 226). The Ulster Annals tell us expressly the battle was fought in Fortrenn or Pictland, and besides Eoghan he tells us that Bran the son of Angus and Aid the son of Boareta, and an almost innumerable body of people, perished there ("Skene's Celtic Scotland," 307-8, note 7). These Annals date the fatal battle in 838, which answers to 839 of our era (Todd, *loc. cit.*).

The fight here described was one of the most important battles in history. In Mr. Skene's words,—

"The Picts received so crushing a blow from the Danish pirates, that it seems to have almost exterminated the family connected with Fortrenn, and paved the way for the successful attempt of the son of Alpin the Scot to place himself on the throne of the Picts" (*id.*, 307).

It was doubtless a consequence of this victory that, as we read in the "Chronicle of the Picts and Scots," the Danes devastated Pictland as far as Cluny and Dunkeld (*id.*, 310, note 66).

It seems clear, from the petty doings of the Norsemen in Ireland in 838, that a large part of the royal fleet, after gorging itself with booty from Ireland, had gone to Scotland, as I have mentioned. In 838 we have but one entry about "the Gentiles," where we are told they defeated the people of Connaught, and that Maelduin, son of Murighes, son of Tomaltash, and others were killed ("Chron. Scot.," 143; "Annals of the Four Masters," 459).

In 839 we read that a marine fleet of the foreigners arrived in Loch Eathach (*i. e.*, Loch Neagh), and the territories and churches of the north of Ireland were spoiled by them. The Annals of Clonmacnois say they built a fortress there. This was no doubt the fleet of Turges which had returned from the Scotch expedition, and explains the mention of the third fleet on Loch Neagh in the confused narrative of the "Tract on the Danes in Ireland."

The same year Ferns, in Wexford, and Cork were again ravaged ("Chron Scot.," 143; "Annals of the Four Masters," 459). This was probably by another section of the invaders.

In 840 the party who had settled on Loch Neagh attacked Louth, and made prisoners of many bishops and other wise and learned men, and carried them to their fortress, after having slain many others ("Annals of Ulster," quoted in "Annals of the Four Masters," 460, 461, and note *d*). This event is confused, by the "Tract on the Wars of the Danes in Ireland," with the previous capture of Armagh, when it was taken three times in one month, and no doubt by quite a different section of the pirates. The mistake has led to a misplacement of the paragraphs in that narrative, and to a confusion of the chronology of Turges' expedition in Dr. Todd's narrative. The notice to which I refer runs as follows:—

"Moreover Armagh was plundered by them three times in the same month, and Turges himself took the abbacy of Armagh, and Forannan, abbot of Armagh, was driven away and went to Munster, and the shrine of Patrick with him, and he was four years in Munster, while Turges was at Armagh, and the power of the north of Erin was with him" (*op. cit.*, 9, 224).

This proves that a confusion in the dates has arisen, for as Forannan returned in 845 and was absent four years, it seems to show that the capture of Armagh referred to was the later one, and not the earlier, which has been mixed up with it.

The capture of the famous old foundation of St. Patrick, and the eviction of his successor, are said to have been foretold

by several of the old saints, and the Annals quotes from three of them prophecies which are very clearly *ex post facto*.

First that of St. Bercan :—

“ Gentiles shall come over the noble sea,  
 They shall spread over the land of Erin ;  
 Of them shall be an abbot over every church,  
 Of them shall be power over Erin.  
 Seven years shall they be, not weak their power,  
 In the sovereignty of Erin,  
 In the abbacy of every church,  
 The Gentiles of the port of Dublin.  
 There shall be an abbot of them over this my church ;  
 He shall not attend to matins ;  
 Without pater, without creeds,  
 Without Latin, and only knowing a foreign language.”

Then that of St. Columba :—

“ This fleet of Loch Ri  
 Has well exalted the foreign Gentiles.  
 Of them shall be an abbot of Ardmacha ;  
 It shall be the rule of a usurper.”

That of Bec ma De, a saint who is said to have lived in the sixth century :—

“ When the bell was rung in warm Tailtin,  
 The aged, wealthy Ciaran of Saighu  
 Promised to Erin three times,  
 Parties of Danes of the black ships.”

This is explained in the context, as meaning that the Danish invasions were in punishment, first, of the banishment of St. Columba to Scotland ; secondly, the sacrilegious insult offered to Ciaran, of Clonmacnois, by King Diarmaid, in Tailtin, or Teltown, doubtless referring to the false oath sworn on the relics of his hand by Ambacuc in the year 544 (“ Chron. Scot.,” 49) ; and lastly, for the fasting of the saints of Erin against Diarmaid MacCerbhaill. This refers to the fact that Diarmaid was largely infected with Druidic

notions, and was a patron of the Druids, and in consequence incurred the displeasure of St. Columba, who denounced him (see Todd's "Patrick," 118, &c.).

Let us now return once more to the Annals. Under the year 840 we are told that the foreigners who still remained at Loch Neagh built themselves a fortress at Linn Duachail, probably situated at the tidal opening of the Glyde and the Dee, in the county of Louth, where the village of Annagassan stands ("Wars of the Danes," Todd's note, lxii., note 1). Thence they plundered the churches and territories of Teabhtha, or Teffia, a territory comprising portions of the present counties of Longford and Westmeath. They also built a fortress at Dublin (doubtless where the castle still stands), whence they harried Leinster and the land of the southern O'Neills as far as Sliabh Bladhma (*i. e.*, the Slieve Bloom Mountains in King's County, to which the land of the southern O'Neills extended) ("Annals of the Four Masters," 461, note *g*). They also plundered Cluain Edhnech, *i. e.*, Clonenagh, the famous monastery of St. Fintan, in Queen's County ("Wars of the Danes," lxi., note), and demolished Cluain Iraird, *i. e.*, Clonard, in the county of Meath, the foundation of St. Finnian, called the foster-father of the saints of Ireland. His celebrated school at Clonard is said to have produced 3,000 disciples, and as Dr. Todd says, it became the *alma mater* of many eminent ecclesiastics. The famous saints known as the twelve apostles of Ireland were his disciples (Todd's "Life of St. Patrick," 98). St. Finnian died in 551.

Besides this seat of learning the invaders also laid low Cil Achaidh, or Cil Achaidh-Droma-forta (*i. e.*, the church of the field of the long ridge), now Killeigh, in King's County, founded by Saint Sinchell, who died of the plague in 549. The next year was again a red year in the Annals. We are told the Gentiles were still at Dublin. Those at Linn Duachail again plundered Clonmacnois and also Cennetigh, now called Kinithy, in King's County, where there was a monastery ("Chron. Scot.," 145; "Annals of the Four Masters,"

463, note *s*). Another fleet of them was stationed at Linn Ross, on the river Boyne. Linn Ross, or the pool of Ross, was that part of the river Boyne which was opposite Rosnarea, in the barony of Lower Duleek, in the county of Meath ("Annals of the Four Masters," 462, note *q*). Another fleet was at Linn Suileach, doubtless an ancient name of Loch Suilach, or Loch Swilly, in Donegal ("Annals of the Four Masters," 463, note 2). It was apparently from Dublin ("Annals of Ulster," quoted in "Annals of the Four Masters," 463, note *s*) that issued those who plundered Birra, a foundation of St. Brendan, who died in 565 or 571, now called Parsonstown and Saigher, *i. e.*, Seir Keiran in Ballybritt, King's County, where was the principal church of St. Kieran.

"Saigher," says Dr. Todd, "is said to have been the name of a well-venerated queen in pagan times, and a prophecy attributed to St. Patrick is cited as having directed Saint Kieran to the place. He founded a church there, and began, we are told, by occupying a cell, where he lived as a hermit in the midst of a dense wood, and tamed some of the wild animals of the forest for his amusement; but his fame drew disciples, a monastery followed, and then a city, to which the name of Saigher, pronounced Seir, was given, from the name of the ancient well, and it was afterwards named Seir Keiran from the name of the saint." (Todd's St. Patrick, 201.)

Disert Diarmata (*i. e.*, Saint Diarmaid's desert hermitage or wilderness) was also devastated, the body who plundered it coming from Kaeluisge (*i. e.*, the narrow water, now Narrow-water), situated between Warren's Point and Newry in the barony of Upper Iseagh, in the county Down ("Annals of the Four Masters," 462, note *p*). "Disert Diarmata was the ancient Irish name of Castle Dermot, in the baronies of Kilkea and Moone, near the southern extremity of the county of Kildare, where Diarmaid, son of Aedh Roin, erected a monastery about A.D. 500. In the churchyard there are to be seen an ancient round tower and several curious crosses, which attest the antiquity and former importance of the place" (*id.*, note *o*).

Three important victims of the pirates are mentioned by name this year; these were Caemhan, abbot of Linnduachaille,

who we are told was mortally wounded and burnt by the Gentiles,—the “Annals of Ulster” say by the Irish and Gentiles (“Annals of the Four Masters,” 463, note *s*; “Chron. Scot.,” 145). They also killed Moran mac Inreaghty, Bishop of Clogher (*id.*), and they captured Maldinn MacConal, king of Calatrom (*i. e.*, Galtrim in Meath), who was killed three or four years later by the people of Leinster.

During the next two years the entries in the Annals about the Norsemen are very scanty, proving doubtless that a large part of their fleets were busy buccaneering elsewhere.

This is a good halting-place. The pirates now began a series of much more important raids upon the fair lands of France, while their course in Ireland also took a new departure. Much of this paper consists of arid detail, because the ground is largely new and untrodden, and we have to carve our way through a thicket which is dense and confused; but the very dryness of the details and their iteration proves the terrible way in which the culture and civilization of early Ireland was laid low at this time by the pirates.