

ART. XXVIII.—*Lost Churches in the Carlisle Diocese.* By  
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#### I. MÆDIÆVAL LOST CHURCHES.

IT is strange that in a Christian country so many places dedicated to divine worship should have been desecrated and wasted, or even totally forgotten. We can understand it in the case of monastic foundations which were laid low in the Reformation period, and we need not refer to the abbeys, nunneries, and priories which come readily to mind. But without pretending to exhaust the subject we have put together two lists, one of lost churches not entirely out of knowledge, but mentioned by various writers as anciently existing; and another list of place-names which seem to us to indicate still earlier churches, yet more completely vanished. In the first list we have Kirk Andrews on Eden, demolished before Bishop Nicolson's visit in 1703; and an earlier church known to have stood at Kirksteads, about a mile from Kirkandrews. Carlatton Church was ruined as early as the 14th century, and Kirk Camboc was destroyed in the time of Edward II. There was a chapel of St. John the Baptist at Skelsmergh; an old chantry of the 15th century at Keld, near Shap, recently made into a mission room by the Rev. J. Whiteside; a chapel of the Virgin at Chapelgarth, between Morland and Kings Meaburn; and at a spot marked on the ordnance map as Chapel-tree-wood, between Burneside and Staveley, was the Chapel-le-Wood mentioned by Nicolson and Burn as a cell of Cockersand Abbey. The hermitage of St. Hilda in Westward, of the time of King John, became a country chapel, which seems to be the place named in Queen Elizabeth's time as St. Ellen  
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the Old, now surviving in the place-name of Ile Kirk, for Hilde Kirk. The name of St. Helen's Chapel attaches to a 14th century building near Dalton-in-Furness, though the remains at Bolton-in-Furness are fragments of an old manor house, not a lost church. The survey of Henry VIII. mentions a chantry of St. Mary Magdalene formerly standing near Keswick; and Canon Thornley in the last volume of these Transactions infers, from field names, the existence of an ancient church at Addingham, a chapel at Ainstable, and a church at Haresceugh. Mr. H. S. Cowper, F.S.A., in the "Hawkshead Register," mentions a lost chapel at Graythwaite; and Archdeacon Prescott, in his notes to the "Chartulary of Wetherhal," shows that there were dedications in that neighbourhood to St. Constantine, the disciple of St. Kentigern, and to St. Servanus, Kentigern's reputed master. We are informed by the Rev. W. S. Calverley, F.S.A., that the sites are known of two more lost churches, one to St. Lawrence, near Camerton, and one to St. Roche, near Holme St. Cuthbert's in the old parish of Holme Cultram. This long list, which does not include abbeys, etc., nor private chapels, shows how frequent has been the destruction of churches, and yet how tenacious the memory of them, expressed in the surviving names. A place-name is tradition reduced to its lowest terms, written as it were in short-hand. Sometimes it is like a hieroglyph, and may be misinterpreted; sometimes it puts us on the track of discovery, like Peel Island in Coniston water, where the name suggested search for remains which were found.

## II. EARLY CELTIC CHRISTIANITY IN OUR DISTRICT.

Now there is a series of names beginning with Gil, which on the analogy of Gilcrux, in Cumberland, and Gilfillan, etc., in Scotland, seem to be church names,  
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or rather names of kills or cells founded by priests of that form of Christianity, which was the accepted religion here in the days of the Anglo-Saxons and Northmen and Danes; that is to say the old Celtic Christianity, which in so many ways left its mark on the country when heathen Vikings had done their worst, and when Normans had substituted Latin forms for the despised traditions of their Welsh, Irish, and Saxon predecessors.

In pre-Norman ages our district was within the sphere of four successive Celtic missions: The Romano-British of Ninian (4th century)—the Irish, of Patrick (5th century)—the Kymric, of Kentigern (6th century)—and the Anglo-Scottish, of Colman and Cuthbert (7th century). We know how Kentigern and Cuthbert visited Cumbria, and the many dedications to them and their associates prove that their work was not forgotten. Some of these dedications may even date back to the age when the patrons lived in the body and came here in person. On the other hand several to St. Cuthbert have been shown to mark the places where his votaries halted in their seven years' flight with his corpse and relics (soon after 876). Of the two earlier churches, Ninian's must have been in some connection with contemporary Romano-British Christianity. We have St. Ninian's Well at Brisco, Ninewells at Brampton, and Ninekirks at Brougham; though we do not think that the presence of his name implies his presence in person, any more than St. Helen's Chapel, near Dalton-in-Furness, and her well near Asby Church, (named by Bishop Nicolson) imply that the finder of the Cross, though traditionally a Briton, visited those places. The naming of Patrick at Patterdale, Aspatria, and Patrick Keld at Calder (mentioned in the 13th century), of Columba at Warcop, and Bridget at Bridekirk and Kirkbride, etc., similarly cannot prove that these saints visited our district, though it is very possible that St. Patrick passed through it. It proves, however, that the

the spiritual descendants of these great Irish saints dwell here—Irish missionaries, speaking Irish, and introducing Irish words and worship which took sufficient root to survive the turmoil of many unquiet generations.

That this was the case is indicated by the 12th century form of Kirkbride, which was Kirk Brydoch; that is to say little St. Bridget, Brid-og in Gaelic (og=young). The Irish Christians used to call their saints by the diminutive, as a term of endearment; and the persistence of Bryd-og shows that the worship and the name were brought in by Irishmen, not by Saxons or later English at second-hand. Again, the old form of St. Bees was Kirkby Begog, the diminutive of Bega; and this confirms the tradition that the place was founded by immigrants from Ireland, who alone would use that form of name. The old name of St. Bees head is Irish also: Baruth, Bar-ruadh, "the red headland." The traditional date of the foundation of St. Bees, about 650, is just the date of strong Irish influence in Anglian Northumbria. The Patrician Church and its daughter, the Columban, were then looked to as our forefathers' guides and teachers in religious matters. There was constant intercourse between the Anglian Kingdom and Ireland. Some Irish saints are recorded as visiting us, besides St. Bega. There was St. Molaga (died 664), who came over from Ulster to North Britain (*i.e.* Cumbria), and went to Wales, and thence back to the neighbourhood of Dublin. St. Becan Ruminni, is recorded as dying in "Britain" or "Wales" *i.e.*, the Kymric west of Saxondom, on the 17th of March, 675 (thus in the Annals of the IV. Masters; other annals make it a year later, or two earlier). This was after the general exodus of Irish Christians and their Anglian sympathisers in 664 A.D., consequent upon the Easter Controversy, when as Bede says (Eccl. History III. 27), the Scottish (*i.e.*, Irish), Bishops Finan and Colman retired to Ireland with "many of the nobility and of the  
lower

lower ranks of the English nation," who settled in Ireland to study, being supplied with books and the necessaries of life by the charity of the Irish. Earlier than this, however, the English went to study in Ireland, for the old university town of Armagh was divided into three "trian" (thirds)—Irish, Saxon, and foreign, showing the intercourse of the nations at this early period. Aldfred, the heir to Northumbria, studied there, and wrote a laudatory poem in Gaelic on the Irish and their hospitality. Afterwards, in 683 or 684 Ecgfrith invaded Ireland and carried away many captives; and to ransom them St. Adamnan (of Iona) came through Cumbria into Northumberland during the following winter,—the winter of the great frost.

These details show that during the 7th century Anglian Cumbria was closely connected with Ireland, and Irish Christianity was introduced by direct missionary agency. Some of the churches then founded have lasted to this day; many more must have existed which perished; a few we may trace in place-names. But before attempting to do so, we must ask—what chance had such early Celtic foundations to survive the Danish and Norse invasions? Would they not be swept away by the fury of the Northmen—Ira Normannorum, against which daily litanies were offered up to Heaven? How is it that "kirk" Brydoch, "Kirkby" Begog, are distinctively Irish names, but as distinctively Scandinavian: that Nine Kirks, Patterdale, Patrick Keld, and so on, show the Celtic foundation re-named by the Northmen; not wiped out, but handed on?

### III. IRISH CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE VIKINGS.

We hear much of the Danish atrocities in the 9th century when monks and nuns were massacred by heathen, newly come from Scandinavia; but at the same time there was another stream of Viking immigrants coming

coming in from the west, who did not burn the churches nor murder the priests—who were to some extent Christians themselves; the Norsemen who had been long settled in Ireland, had intermarried with the Irish, and often become converted. Many of the Vikings who went to Iceland from the shores of the Irish Sea, took their Christianity with them. Queen Aud, of Dublin, set up her cross on the Kross-hólar at Hvamm about 892; Krists-nes was the name of the settlement of her brother-in-law, Helgi, son of Raförta (Rath-bhearta=of the good deeds), the daughter of the Irish King Kjarval (Cearbhall="Carroll"), who succeeded Aud's husband, Olaf, on the throne of Dublin from 872 to 885. Another settler Orlyg was foster-son of a bishop in the Hebrides named Patrick, who (whether supernaturally or from information given by Norse adventurers, or Irish "Papar" who had been, as we know, in Iceland), directed Orlyg to his destined home, and bade him build there a church to St. Columba; which he did, and called the place Patrek's-fjord, as it is called to this day. At the end of Landnáma-bók is given a list of settlers about 900 A.D., who though Norse Vikings were also Irish Christians. The Irish annals do not state that the Vikings became generally christianized at so early a date, but Sir James Ware, who collected "*Antiquitates Hibernicæ*" from good native sources like the historian Duaid MacFirbis in the later part of the 17th century, states under Anno 948 "*Circa hæc tempora Ostmanni Hibernici ad religionem Christianam conversi sunt:*" which may perhaps antedate a general conversion. The Four Masters name Ivor, "Danish" King of Leinster in 972, and King Olaf Sigtrygs-son of Dublin in 980 as Christians. A curious proof that these Irish Vikings did not destroy all the churches is given by Sir Andrew Agnew in "*Hereditary Sheriffs of Galloway*" (I., page 25), where he shows that the visit of the Lindisfarne monks with St. Cuthbert's relics to Whithern Abbey

Abbey, about 880, must have been long subsequent to the general settlement of Galloway by the Gall-Gael, or Irish Vikings.

More light could be thrown on the subject by analysis of the art of the pre-Norman monuments. If such tombs as those recently discovered at Gosforth are later than the Anglian age, they can only be of the Viking period; and being distinctively Christian, from the symbols upon them, and belonging to a school of art distinctively under Irish influence, they show the presence of Irish Christianity in our district. Just in the same way the Founder's Stone of the church of Llanrhidian in Gower (S. Wales) which Mr. Romilly Allen (*Arch. Cambrensis*, April, 1886) assigns to the Irish School of the 9th or 10th century, is an archæological proof of the theory, based on place-names, that Cambria, like Cumbria, was colonized by Irish Vikings with Christians among them.

This is further proved by the personal names in land-owning families. At a little later date, when the real men and women of Furness, Westmorland, and Cumberland begin to emerge out of the dark 10th century, we find Scandinavian and Irish names intermingled. In Furness, Domesday Book gives two Norse names, Ornof and Thorolf, and two Irish, Gilemichel and Duvan (Dubhan "the little black man") as the land-holders of Edward the Confessor's time. Gilemichel is the servant or votary of St. Michael, a name which could only have been used in a Christian family from Ireland. The name must have been characteristic of the family, for we find Gilmyghel Croft at Pennington, in the time of Edward III., and the inference can hardly be avoided that a Viking family, already christianized in Ireland, settled upon that estate. "Gilmartyne ridding prope Crofton" (temp. John) suggests a Galloway origin, for Martin was the master of Ninian, and patron saint of Candida Casa or Whithern. Gylechrist of Farlam, Gylanders and his son Gilamor of Triermain

Triermain (temp. Hy. I. and Hy. II.) are of the same class; for we think Gilamor is Giolla Muire, "servant of Mary." Gilmore Flatt at Melmerby, mentioned by Bishop Nicolson (1704), may be from this name, while Melmerby itself is said by Denton to be called from Melmor son of Halfdan, a Dane. Now Melmor is distinctively Irish, with the same meaning as Gilamor, "servant of Mary," Mael Muire, Latin Marianus. The most interesting survival of these Irish christian names is Machel, formerly Malchael, latinized Malus Catulus; which can be nothing else but a corruption of Mael Cathail, "servant of Cathal," the famous Irish saint, so widely known as to be patron of Tarentum in Italy where his relics lie, under the name of San Cataldo. In Ireland the name that survives here as Machel is found as Mulhall.

Two points should be noted about these series of names: their close connection with Scandinavian families, and their persistence as Irish Gaelic among alien surroundings. For example of the first we take the family of Bewcastle, in which the name Bueth is clearly the Gaelic Buidh (yellow-haired), and the famous Gille is surely, like the Icelandic Gellir (in which the terminal "r" is merely a grammatical inflexion), a shortened form of the Gille or "servant" (*i.e.* votary) of the saint whose name is dropped. The connection of this family with Norse names is shown in Archdeacon Prescott's "Wetherhal" (p. 196 n). As instance of the second point we may cite an entry in the Pipe Rolls for Cumberland (p. 2) giving under the date 1156 Gospatric fil. Mapbennoc as holding Carlatun. Here is a man bearing the Cumbrian British form of the Irish Gillpatrick, and son of one whose name is a British form of patronymic from an Irish name. Mapbennoc is given elsewhere as "Macbenok, an Irishman" (Denton, who explains "Mac-ben-og, *i.e.*, filius junioris uxoris"). Now remembering that the Irish Vikings frequently travelled the Stainmore road between  
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Danish Dublin and Danish York, it is curious to observe on one of the branch lines or short cuts of that road a place named Setmabanning, spelt Setmabanwick in the time of Henry III., and near the Scandinavian Threlkeld and Keswick. The Gaelic Suid, "seat" is found in Ireland, in Sifinn, Seapatricks, etc., as a prefix, giving the meaning of Patrick's Seat, Fionn's Seat, etc. When "seat" is Norse it always follows the personal name in the genitive. We have a series of Gaelic "seats" in Cumberland: Seat Allen, Seat-Oller, which has been thought Norse, though the grammar is against it, and there is no Norse Oller or Toller, while Suid-iolar (pronounced Seatholler) would be Gaelic for "Seat of the Eagle"; Setmurthy, (temp. Q. Mary Satmurtho, temp. Henry VIII. Setmorthow) would be the "Seat of Murdach" or Murtach. A Murdac was Dean of Appleby in 1175. Thus Setmabanwick is Gaelic Suid mac Benoc, the Irish name of an Irishman's house. Further, Mac Benoc is short, probably, for Mac-Giolla-Beanog, "the son of the servant of little St. Benignus," a favourite patron of the Patrician group; and otherwise known as Benin and Beanan, using the other form of diminutive: so that Setmabanning is to Setmabanwick as Suidh mac-Beanan is to Suidh mac-Beanog. And if the first of the name was a near ancestor of the Gospatrick of Carlisle (not necessarily his father) and the place named from him, it shows the connection of Ireland and Cumbria, the Vikings and the Welsh, in a curious light: with which we may compare Mr. Gollancz's remark, in his recently published "Hamlet in Iceland," that "Havelock the Dane" is a Strathclyde rendering of the name and story of Anlaf Cuaran—Olaf of the brogues.

We could strengthen the argument by showing how many Christian Norse settled in Man and Galloway and elsewhere, and left names and remains like those of our district. For instance, Closeburn in Dumfriesshire was, as we are told by Dr. Jón Stefánsson, Cel-Osborn, which

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we take to be the Kill of St. Osbran, a saint of the 8th century, or perhaps the private chapel of a Norse chief Asbjörn or Osborn. In South Wales, among many Norse place-names, there are Kilvrough and Kilfelgy, which we take for cells, not Welsh but Irish in origin, of St. Mary, like Keeil-Voirrey in the Isle of Man, and of Failge or Failbhe, a dignitary of Iona who travelled in Wales.

Llanrhidian has been mentioned above, and Mr. A. G. Moffat (*Saga-book of the Viking Club*, Vol. II., p. 109) gives Lonnon (for Kil-Lonan,) Kilvey, and Killay as possible Irish churches among the Viking settlements of Gower.

#### IV. THE KILS.

These religious men and women of Ireland, settling as hermits or missionaries over the seaboard of the Irish Sea, and far beyond, built themselves tiny houses, often of stone "dry walling," in which they both lived and worshipped. These cells, written as cill in Irish, and called Kil in Ireland and Scotland, Keeil in the Isle of Man, are sometimes met with in their original condition, though of course ruined; but more often they have been replaced by greater churches dedicated to the same saint whom the original devotee worshipped in his rude and solitary hut. The name remains, meaning usually the Kil of such and such a saint; a glance at the map of Ireland or Scotland will show how many such names there are to this day. In our district (1) Gilcruix (Gillecruich and Gillecruz, temp. Henry I. and II.), and (2) Gilgarron have been generally accepted as meaning the churches or cells of the Holy Cross, and of a Welsh Saint Gerain. As these cells or kils are peculiarly Irish or Scottish, we should expect the patron to be of the same race. There was an Irish Saint Carthan (pronounced Carron), and several were named Ciaran; there is also Kilgarvan, St. Garbhan's Church. Mr. J. Sullivan, in "Cumberland and Westmorland

morland Ancient and Modern," gives (3) Kilridding as "the church at the ford." Kilriddain, is however, an Irish parish, and its church was the cell of St. Rodan, the patron of many foundations. This seems to explain Llanrhidian also, for which no Welsh explanation is found; but its Irish stone indicates an Irish origin.

Close by the "chapel in the wood," on the old Roman road between Kendal and Ambleside, there is a place (4) Gilthroton or Gillthrouten, spelt Gillthroton in 1690 (Hist. MSS. Com. Rep. X. 4, p. 355), which seems to us to be a Kil name of this form, and indeed of this same saint: for besides the diminutive ending to the saint's name his votary's affections used to be shown by prefixing "my" or "thy." St. Rodan would thus be called "do Rodan" (the "d" pronounced as "th") and Kil-th'-Rodan, cell of St. Rodan, would become Gilthroton. (5) Gilcambon or Gilcolman in Caldbeck also suggests the Kil of Caman, or Colman the bishop, like Kilcolman in Ireland. It might also be a name of the old owner of the valley, Gillacomán or Gillicolman; in any case of Irish Christian origin. It is perhaps necessary to remark that the Norse gil, "ravine" cannot explain this name; in Norse compounds the personal genitive or adjective must come first. We can have indeed Gillhead, Gillbank, comparatively modern forms; and we can have Gillercombe, Combe of the gills, gilja hvammr, but the gill of Orm is Ormsgill, and Bekansgill near it (Furness Abbey) seems to mean the of gill of Began, an Irish Viking. If the word had been "Gilbegan" we should have reason to think it a corruption of the Kil of St. Began, another popular patron; but the grammar shows that the phrase is Norse, and the grammar is more important than the etymologists of place-names have generally conceived. Once, the name was a living phrase, formed and used according to the laws of the language of which it was a part: and we have not explained a name until we have reproduced it in its original form.

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Now in (6) Gilshaughlin (Gilshaffin, Bishop Nicolson, 1703), we cannot accept Nicolson and Burn's derivation, "from rubbish shoveling down." Nor can it be Gil-skógs-linn, the "gill-shaw-linn": for both these are grammatical impossibilities. In Ireland there is Dunshaughlin, shortened from Domnach-Seachlan, the church of that saint, so named by Jocelin of Furness, the biographer of St. Patrick. Seachlan or Seachnal was the original Irish name of Secundinus, a companion of St. Patrick, author of a hymn still extant, and patron of the name Mael-seachlan, corrupted in "Malechy," who "wore the collar of gold." An Irish missionary settling here on the great north-western road might dedicate his cell to so famous a patron, and call it Kilseachlan,—Gilshaughlin. (7) Killerwick, Kil-verdiswic (temp. Rich. I) and Chiluestreuc (Domesday) now Mousell-in-Furness, near the road leading westward from the Roman Station of Dalton, must be a similar cell. The doubt about the latter half of the word makes analysis impossible; but the ch of Chil is by analogy to be pronounced hard, and can only imply a lost church. We cannot conclude with certainty that there were churches at these sites, but we can point out the possibility, first, of a reasonable explanation of names, otherwise most perplexing, and secondly, of an explanation of remains which might some day turn up in connection with them.

#### V. OTHER LOST DEDICATIONS.

Besides Kil, the Irish used Tigh (tee) "house" and Lann, also meaning "house," to signify church. (8) Tebay, on a Roman road, near early settlements, was a very ancient site. It was Tybai, Tibbay, Tibai, as far back as King Stephen. The bai cannot be Danish "by" or Norse bæ. Ty-bach, Welsh for "little house" has been proposed, but the exact equivalent is found in Tigh-Begha

Begha, the church of St. Bega. (9) The name written Tympaurin in the 11th century and Tymparun in the 12th, looks like another of this kind; the Tigh of St. Barran, perhaps, Tee-m'-Barran. (10) Lamplough, in the 12th century Lamplogh, is explained by Denton as "originally named Glan-Llough or Glan-fillough of the Irish inhabitants before the Conquest, which signifies the wet dale." It is an early site, Celtic in an Anglian neighbourhood. We have mentioned St. Molaga, or mo-Lōch as travelling into North Britain (Strathclyde and Cumbria) from Ulster, shortly before the Anglian Church threw off allegiance to Ireland. In his old age he was noted for keeping bees, so that his cell near Dublin was called Lan-beachaire, "church of the Bee-master." A dedication to him, Lan-m' Lōch, would soon become Lamp-logh. (11) Lanercost is one of the difficulties of place-name lore. As there seems to have been a Roman fort on the site we hazard the guess that the name means church of the camp. It was not uncommon for monasteries to be founded on sites already consecrated by some more ancient hermitage, and this place, like most of our cells, is an old inhabited neighbourhood on the Roman road.

Parallel to Kirkbride, etc., and identical with Kirksanton in the Isle of Man, is (12) Kirksanton in South Cumberland, Santacherche in Domesday; with which may be placed (13) Santon (possibly the Sunton of Domesday) already in the 11th century beginning to be lost churches, and on the way to the popular myth of explanation which interprets Kirksanton as a Kirk sunken in the sea, and confuses the name with Sunkenkirk, the Swinside Circle, and Chapel-sucken, megaliths in Corney. But there can be but little doubt that both are early dedications to St. Sanctan. (14) Kirk Cambak, so spelt temp. Ed. I. and Cambock Hy. II., cannot be from "Camp-beck" because Roman forts were not called camps

camps in the 12th century, nor is the termination "beck" but boc or bak. Denton's derivation is based on mere guess that Cambock is "Camboglana." Cambec, Cam-og (Gaelic) and Cambach (Cymric) would be the alternatives in use (like Mac and Mapbenoc) for the familiar and frequent name of the great St. Finian, of the 6th century, whose bee-hive shaped Kil is yet to be seen in Ireland (Joyce, p. 148). He was known as "cam" the "crooked," and Kirk-camboc is "the church of the dear crooked one."

Kirk was used at least as early as the beginning of the 10th century by Scandinavian heathens to give name to a steeple-like mountain, Kirkjufell, and the loch near it Kirkjufjord, in Iceland. A pagan temple was called Hof, and an altar in the open-air Hörgr. We used to see the last in such names as Arkholme (Ergune, Domesday), Grims-argh, Mosser or Mos-ergh (altar on the moss). But as Dr. Colley March shows (*Trans. Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 1890) *Erg* is a Gaelic-Norse equivalent for *Sæter* or *Sel*, a dairy farm or rather "châlet." If Ninewells and Ninekirk involve St. Ninian, then (15) Ninesergh must be Ninian's *erg*; and having a Norse name, may be a place founded by a Galloway Viking settled in Kentdale. We know that a Viking family held Kentdale, and early in the 12th century Orm Ketils-son, its representative, was connected by marriage with Earl Gospatrick's family and with Galloway. One of his connections was a lady Sigrid (Sigrith), which was a common name then, as it still is in Iceland. Now Sizergh, not far from Ninesergh, was anciently Sigarith's-erge, the place of Sigrid or Sigurd (Sigurth). Whether this be a lady's or a chief's dairy farm, or a pagan altar, the *erg* of Ninian seems more likely to mean a Christian Kil, the chapel or hermitage of some religious man from Galloway.

We have now shown why we think these fifteen places may have been the sites of Irish missionary agencies from

from the 7th to the 10th or 11th centuries, of the pioneers in art and literature, morality and religion among the rough barbarians who were our ancestors. We must leave it to further research to confirm our studies, or to correct them; but in these days when any living dog is better than the dead lions of old, and when we forget so many great duties to quarrel over little doubts, it is not wasted labour to recall our debt to ancient Ireland, who first showed a light in the darkness.