

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
ACCOUNTS GIVEN OF THE LIFE AND ACTS
OF
SAINT PATRICK.

By Mr John Dillon.

THE scantiness of materials for a history of this country has always been a subject of complaint. The grievance has been aggravated by a deluge of unmeaning fables and contemptible falsehoods, which were imposed upon our ancestors to supply the want of true history. The magnificent pretensions of these silly stories, have only exposed us to the ridicule of those who were qualified to judge of them.

Attempts have been made to remedy this evil; and, had they been made earlier, perhaps something material might have been saved from the wreck which the authentic documents of our history have suffered. But we have to regret that these attempts came too late; and we are reduced to the necessity of picking up what we can out of the monuments and chronicles of other nations.

Mr Pinkerton has made a very laudable attempt to remove the obscurity of our ancient history, and point out the materials which should supply the facts. He has bestowed immense labour, and examined a prodigious quantity of materials, which might be useful in illustrating the ancient part of our history. Among other particulars, not much, if at all, attended to, by those who had pretended to write histories of Scotland, he consulted a class of writers who have fallen into disgrace and contempt; I mean the writers of the lives of the saints who employed themselves in propagating the Christian religion in these islands. As there cannot be any doubt, that letters and the use of writing only came into Scotland with the Christian religion, no domestic monuments of greater antiquity can be expected, than those furnished by the biographers of our early saints.

The imperfection, however, of those writers, is very great. Though they are numerous, and their works are voluminous, a very small proportion of them can be turned to any useful purpose in writing history. They seem to have studied to discard from their narratives every circumstance connected with the affairs of the world. They have paid no attention whatever either to chronology or geography, nor made the smallest attempt to declare or illustrate the political state of the countries, where the labours of the saints took place, or to mark the times of the transactions they record.

But still it was impossible to make any narrative of facts quite free of allusions to circumstances of time, place, and persons, distinct from the saints and their miracles. Nations, kings, and great men, must necessarily come into view, when their conversion or their opposition to the faith are mentioned; and thus, when the necessary time and labour is bestowed, to sift the few insulated facts connected with history and geography from these immense collections of miracles, we here and there can perceive a gleam of light.

When these apply to a known person or place, or a remarkable occurrence, they afford that pleasure which the mind feels on the discovery of truth, and serve to support or adjust history and chronology.

The learned Archbishop Usher made a very large collection of ancient facts respecting the origin and propagation of the Christian religion in the British islands. This collection he published under the title of *Primordia Ecclesiarum Britannicarum*; and it is most useful, as affording materials not only for ecclesiastical history, but for profane history also, in the earlier ages. In compiling it, he, of course, applied to many histories of the kind we have mentioned; and, with immense labour, he has collected a vast body of facts and chronology, as little encumbered as possible with miracles.

Among others, he has paid particular attention to the history and transactions of Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, whose labours were successful in making the profession of the Christian religion general in that country. In reading over the learned Archbishop's account of the transactions of Saint Patrick, collected from all the books and manuscripts within his reach, I was struck with a variety of circumstances, which tended to convince me of the general authenticity of the narrative. Names both of persons and places occurred, that were quite familiar, though given by persons utter strangers to the country, and who, of course, must have drawn them from more ancient and authentic sources. This induced me to think that the stories told of Saint Patrick, if divested of the marvellous and extravagant form in which they appeared, might be held true in general, though the zeal of each writer and transcriber, had successively turned them into extravagant fables.

The task of stripping these stories of their fabulous garb is not easy. The pretension to miracles is very ancient. We even find

Bede retailing them; and not marking them in the manner that a man of learning and probity ought to have done. But then, perhaps, in some degree, as in our own time, a true story, that was probable, and which there was no cause to doubt, was little regarded, compared with one that was utterly false, but marvellous. The latter is always preferred by the majority of mankind. In this way, the writers of saints lives have probably gone on, adding miracle to miracle, and each improving on his predecessor in the marvellous; while the honest recluse, the subject of their ill-judged panegyric, would, if in his power, have disclaimed the nonsensical stories they injudiciously attributed to him.

Saint Patrick was a native of this country, and of a part of it with which some of us are well acquainted. When I found that the narrative, given by absolute strangers to this country, applied directly to places and names that were quite familiar to me, I could not help feeling an interest in examining these accounts. To give a careful perusal to the stories recorded of him, promised also to afford an opportunity of acquiring some clear apprehension of the history of those times that are involved in great obscurity.

In the course of this reading, several observations occurred, as to times and places, which I have put together, as a feeble attempt to draw out some truth from the mass of fable and contradiction, which involves the biography of Saint Patrick.

Place of Saint
Patrick's birth.

It is agreed, by all the writers of the life of this saint, as well as by authors who have mentioned him incidentally, that he was born near the present town of Dunbarton, on the north side of Clyde. Patrick's Epistles and Confession, which are extant, though of doubtful authenticity, state that he was *ingenuus, patre decurione natus*; that his father's name was *Calpurnius*, whose father again was called *Potitus*, who is said to have been a *Presbyter*.

But as some transcriber, full of ecclesiastical ideas, has written, on one occasion, *diacono* instead of *decurione*, I am inclined to suspect that *presbyter* has found its way into the text by some similar blunder.

Patrick was, therefore, born in a respectable station of life, his father being a municipal magistrate in the town where he lived, which was in the north-west part of the Roman province.

The next point to be discovered is, What was the town where his father dwelt, and where situated? With regard to this, I may mention that, in fixing the date of Patrick's birth, I have been led to prefer the year of the Christian era 372, as most free from difficulties, although many other dates are assigned by different authors. We know, from authentic history, that about four years before that date, Theodosius was sent to restore order in Britain, where the northern barbarians had broken through the wall between Forth and Clyde, and invaded and occupied the northern or extreme part of the Roman territory. He had repelled the barbarians, who are said to have been Scots and Picts; and re-established the wall, which was guarded by a Roman legion. A. D. 368.

This wall terminated on the west at the river Clyde, not far from the present village of Kilpatrick; and at Duntocher, situated on a hill just above that town, there are remains of Roman buildings, and a bridge over a rivulet, shewing that here was a station where a garrison was posted, and where, or near it, there fell to be a town or village. Patrick's father may have been settled here before the renovation of the wall, or he may have come with the Roman troops which recovered the province. The latter supposition seems most probable, if we believe what is reported by his biographers, that his mother called *Conevessa*, was a sister or niece of St Martin Bishop of Tours. Upon this supposition, we are to

presume that Patrick's father and his family were Christians, and came to Britain in a civil capacity, with the Roman troops which Theodosius commanded. But Patrick is generally held to be a Briton, on account of his birth, though perhaps his parents were not. His historians give him a number of brothers and sisters, all of whom have barbarous names,—that is, not Latin. But to what language they ought to be referred, I cannot pretend to say. His father's and grandfather's names, that are handed down to us, are pure Latin. This is one of the difficulties apt to occur in such a course of reading, and tends to destroy the credit of the biographers. I cannot pretend to reconcile the inconsistency it betrays. The most natural inference is, that the writers of Patrick's life have exercised their invention as to those brothers and sisters of his; or we may perhaps presume that the Roman provincials assumed Latin names.

Calpurnius, however, whether a Roman, or a Gallic or British provincial, appears to have lived at this time at this town or burgh, situated at or near the western termination of the wall of Antoninus, when it was repaired and re-occupied, about the year 368, by Theodosius; and in it he held the office of a *decurio* or senator, or, in more modern language, perhaps a *town counsellor*.

This place was near the river Clyde, because it was near the termination of the wall which joined the Clyde. The working of the river in the low ground has obliterated the marks of the wall just on its bank; but on the rising ground above the village of Kilpatrick, there are the ruins of a Roman station, and a village called *Duntocher*. Kilpatrick is situated on the low ground nearer the river, and shews no signs of antiquity. The Roman station, therefore, and village commonly adjacent to such a station, may have been together on this hill of Duntocher, the most eligible

situation for security, on a frontier, in troublesome times, like those of which we are now treating. Kilpatrick, as it now stands, may have arisen in latter times, when security did not fall to be so much considered in chusing the site of a village.

These places are hardly a mile distant from each other; which, in such an inquiry, is not worth mentioning; and we may prefer either Duntocher or Kilpatrick. Dunbarton Castle is about five miles distant down Clyde, towards the west. Some of Patrick's biographers have fixed on it for the place of his birth; but others are so distinct in pointing out the Roman station, and the remains of the works, that I prefer the testimony of the latter. The error of the former has arisen from their supposing that the Roman wall terminated at Dunbarton, which is certainly not the case. Glasgow is to the east of Kilpatrick, at the distance of ten miles. Between these two places, Glasgow and Dunbarton, Patrick was born; and I cannot think of any place better entitled to claim the honour of his birth, than Kilpatrick, or rather the smaller village of Duntocher.

Consideration of names does not tend to throw much farther light on this point. Names are generally corrupted in transcription by persons unacquainted with the places; so that we are by no means sure if we now have them as they were originally written. Patrick, in his Confession, calls the place *Vicus Bonavem Taberniæ*. Probus, who has written an account of his life (which Usher considers incorrect), calls it *Bannava Tyburniæ regionis, haud procul a mare occidentali*. Jocelin again, who wrote in the twelfth century, says, "*In pago Taburniæ, hoc est, Tabernaculorum campo; eo quod Romanus exercitus tabernacula ibidem fixerit, secus oppidum Emphor degens, Mari Hibernico collimitans.*" The description of the situation may be held true, though not precise;

because the place where the Roman wall ended was not on the sea, though it may be said to be near it. The name *Taburnia*, or *Tabernia*, is totally lost in that country. But there is, in the parish of Kilpatrick, and at no great distance from the place we are talking of, a place bearing the name of *Balvey*, or *Balnavay*, which may have some connexion with *Bannava*. *Empthor* is also called *Nempthur* in some of the books quoted by Usher, of which name also I am at a loss to give any account. To attempt an etymology of names, probably much distorted by corruption, seems idle. However, if *Bal* may be allowed a place in *Bannava*, the *l* being commonly elided in pronunciation, we have the Irish or British word, which enters into so many names of places in this country. Again, as to *Empthor* or *Nempthor*, we have *Tor*, signifying an insulated hill, which occurs both in Saxon and Welsh, and in multitudes of names in this country. The last part of *Duntocher*, and of *Empthor*, are plainly made up of this word, both in sound and meaning; and if we suppose a mistake of the writer in the beginning of the latter word, which displaced the *D*, we have almost the exact modern name of this place. Allow this hypothesis, and we have found out the *oppidum Nempthor*; a *campus tabernaculorum*, or station for troops, on a hill called *Duntocher*,* and this at the termination of the Roman wall on Clyde.

Thus, every circumstance seems to turn the balance of probability in favour of Kilpatrick, or Duntocher just by it. And although neither *Bannava* nor *Nempthur* are proved to have been the original names of those places, they must have been names of a place or places not far distant, and where there was a Roman camp or station near.

* *Ch* is guttural here, as in most Scotch names where it occurs.

Jocelin considers *Nempthur* as signifying the same place as *Alclutha*, that is, Dunbarton. But his own description of *Nempthur* shews that he was in a mistake, as it applies better to Duntocher or Kilpatrick. "Erat in quodam promontorio supereminenti præfato oppido *Empthur*, munitio quædam exstructa, *cujus adhuc murorum apparent ruinosa vestigia*." Now, with regard to Kilpatrick, Duntocher *supereminet oppido*. The same thing cannot be said so truly of the relative situation of the town of Dunbarton, and the rock on which the castle of that name stands, for there is more than a mile of low land between them. Again, as to the *ruinosa vestigia murorum*, the description applies strictly to the appearance of the remains of the Roman works on the hill of Duntocher, which must have been much more conspicuous in the twelfth century than they are now. But at Dunbarton there is no appearance of ruins of that kind. And that any ruins at all were apparent there in Jocelin's time is highly improbable, when we consider that, in those times, Dunbarton was esteemed a frontier garrison and bulwark to the low country along Clyde, not only against the Irish and Highlanders, who even then made plundering expeditions up Clyde, but also against the Norwegians, who at that time were masters of the Western Islands, and of those within the Firth of Clyde, to which last Háco maintained his claim so late as 1263. These considerations must lead us to presume, that the castle of Dunbarton could not at the time be a place exhibiting *ruinosa vestigia murorum*; and so not the place alluded to by Jocelin.

We have thus settled the place of Patrick's nativity as near as we can; which might have been done better, if any of Patrick's countrymen had thought fit to write his life: but, among all his numerous biographers and historians, we have no one who knew any thing of the country where he was born. And this accounts

for the confusion regarding it, and the imperfect descriptions of it which they have given.

Time of Patrick's Birth.

We shall now consider the accounts we have of the *time* of Patrick's birth, where we cannot attain to the same certainty, for want of fixed points of chronology, to compare with the remarkable transactions of his life.

The dates of his birth assigned by different authors vary much; owing perhaps as much to the corruption to which numbers in manuscripts are particularly liable, as to the bad information of the authors.

Florence of Worcester fixes his birth in 372 of the Christian era, which we have already observed was four years after Theodosius had repelled the barbarians beyond the rampart of Antoninus, and re-established the province of Valentia, which included that part of modern Scotland south of Forth and Clyde. An anonymous author, often referred to by Usher, who wrote a life of Patrick in three books, gives the same date. Jocelin gives nearly the same account, in as far as he places Patrick's death in the year 493, and says he died at the age of one hundred and twenty-three years; which brings his birth to 370; a difference of very little moment in a reckoning of this kind. Agreeing almost literally with this, the annals of Ulster mention his death in 492, which is there said to be the sixtieth year after his mission to Ireland, making the commencement of it to be in 432; and if, as some of his biographers say, he was then sixty years of age, it brings his birth to the year 372, and makes his age at his death one hundred and twenty.

There is, however, a great probability that his age is much exaggerated, perhaps by assuming the lives and transactions of other

persons of the name of Patrick as his: And the great confusion and obscurity, and diversity of accounts as to the place of his death and burial, give reason to presume that such a mistake has been made. More shall be said on this subject hereafter.

Probus, the author mentioned by Usher, and the writer of the antiquities of Glastonbury, borrowing from each other, fix the time of his birth in the year 361; but they cannot be depended upon, by reason of their evident incorrectness in many other particulars. Again, the Annals of Connaught carry it back to 336; betraying however their incorrectness, by referring to the Emperor Constantine as then reigning, whose father Constantine died in the following year. These accounts we therefore reject; and, in the meantime, assume the year 372 as the date of Patrick's birth.

As to the corresponding public transactions in this period, connected with Patrick's birth and childhood, we find from the Roman historians and poets, frequently quoted by all authors on British antiquities, that in the year 360, the northern part of the Roman province of Britain, lying to the south of Forth and Clyde, was invaded on the west by the Scots from Ireland, who settled there and in Argyle, and who are the Highlanders of the present time. The eastern boundary of the province on the Firth of Forth, was at the same time disturbed and invaded by the Picts, situated to the north of that firth in the east part of Scotland.

The Scots, who harrassed the Roman province on the west, in all probability came originally from Ireland; but it is also very probable that before the time mentioned, viz. the year 360, they had found their way and made settlements in Galloway, Kintyre, Argyle, the Western Islands, and other places nearest to Ireland. All these coasts lie so convenient for easy access to and from each other, that we may, without violating probability, suppose that

the incursions were made by people from Argyle, Kintyre, and the Isles, as well as from Ireland; and access in their boats or currourhs to the Roman province near Clyde, as well as their retreat when that was found necessary, was exceedingly easy. We are not to suppose a regular simultaneous invasion by these barbarians, with a direct view to conquest and settlement; but a succession of incursions, whose principal object was plunder.

In the year 364, it is expressly stated that the Picts and Saxons (on the east coast), the Scots and Attacotti (on the west), harrassed the Britons. They had indeed driven the Romans out of the province immediately south of the wall, and were only forced back by Theodosius in 368, as already noticed.

After this the province probably enjoyed some peace; and it is in this period of peace we are to suppose Patrick was born, and got his early education, till he was sixteen years old. So far, therefore, the history of the times does not contradict the date we have assumed for Patrick's birth.

Captivity of
Patrick in Ire-
land.

Patrick's age of sixteen agrees with the year 388, according to the date we have assumed for his birth. In that year, all his historians mention a remarkable occurrence of his life, viz. his being taken captive by pirates or barbarians, carried away from his own country to the north of Ireland, and reduced to a state of slavery, wherein he remained six years. The nature of this transaction appears with sufficient clearness: *1st*, The barbarians who carried him off, and two of his sisters, as the authors say, were from Ireland; because they carried their booty thither, and there Patrick was kept in slavery, in the service of Milcho, a petty king in the north of Ireland. The place of Milcho's residence is stated to be Skirry, in the county of Antrim. *2dly*, This must necessarily

have happened in one of those incursions by the Irish upon the province, which had so much disturbed it before, and which afterwards were so formidable to the Britons, and at last produced the abandonment of the new province of Valentia by the Romans, not many years after its establishment by Theodosius. We see, then, how consistent the story of Patrick's captivity is, with the actual state of affairs at this time in his native country.

We cannot be positive as to the precise year when such an obscure event as we are considering may have happened, unless we could fix with certainty the exact year of Patrick's birth, which it is impossible now to do. But the Roman histories mention the wars in Britain about 379, when Gratian and Valentinian are said to have brought a body of Picts into Britain from the continent, in their service. This was about nine years before the time of Patrick's captivity, which, if he was born in 372, must have taken place in 388. Again, we are told of the Scots and Picts wasting Britain in 393, a few years after that date. Farther, we read of Stilicho repairing the Roman wall in 396, which had been destroyed by the *Scots from Ireland*, those at least who came by sea, which is equally applicable to Argyle and the Isles as to Ireland. This fact is therefore consistent and probable, though the year cannot be accurately fixed; yet it must have happened within a few years of the time we have mentioned.

Patrick's captivity in Ireland is said to have endured six or Escape. seven years, which brings the time of his escape to 394 or 395. We say *escape*, because the *Confession* attributed to him says, "*Conversus sum in fugam, et intermisi hominem cum quo fueram sex annis.*" He mentions his having a warning from heaven that a ship was ready for him, though it was then two hundred miles distant, at a

place where he never had been, and where he knew no person whatever. As he was in the north of Ireland, the only direction in which he could travel two hundred miles was to the south, to find a ship to carry him off, where there must have been a port frequented by foreign merchants.

The reader of Patrick's adventures will naturally wish to know where Patrick went after his escape, and what became of him. But here we are met by the usual obscurity and confusion of monkish historians, who have done so much injustice to the species of history they undertook to write.

Probus, an author alluded to by Usher on many occasions, mentions a three days navigation, and twenty-eight days journey in the desert; but condescends to say nothing of the country to which he went, or where he travelled. If, as we have guessed, he went to the south of Ireland, the three days navigation most probably brought him to the west of France. No other country occurs where he could have gone on such a voyage; for, as none of the authors mention Britain on this occasion, I hold it to be out of the question. That being a well known country, it would have been named had he landed there.

We therefore presume the ship in which he escaped carried him to France. We are not to inquire in what direction he took his journey of twenty-eight days through the desert. There are no means of satisfying this inquiry left us but one, viz. his biographers say that after his escape, he went to Martin Bishop of Tours, his mother's uncle, for the sake of divine instruction, with whom he remained about four years, and who is said to have made him a monk; though Usher's opinion is rather that he made him a canon regular of his church.

There are here some materials for fixing an epoch of Patrick's

life. The death of St Martin, Bishop of Tours, is by some accounts made to fall in 397, and by others in 401. The termination of his four years with Martin may be therefore in 398 or 399, if he immediately found his way to Tours; and we must, however reluctantly, hold that the twenty-eight days journey through the desert was through the heart of France. Indeed, if we are right in landing him in the west of France from Ireland, which geography makes most probable, his journey afterwards by land could be nowhere else but in France; and the circumstance of his being, after his escape, with Martin Bishop of Tours, can lead to no more probable conclusion, than that Patrick, with all diligence, went to seek out his mother's relation, of whom he must have heard before.

About this time, but whether before or after his visit to Tours Return to Britain. I cannot say, we ought to place Patrick's coming to his parents in Britain, mentioned in his Confession. It must have been while he was young; of course, soon after his escape from slavery: and this cannot be confounded with an after visit to Britain, which perhaps took place when he was about ninety years of age; for, on the present occasion, he says his parents entreated him not to leave them. The reason of not complying with their request is given by himself, that, in a vision of the night, he saw a man called *Victoricus* come to him with many letters, whereof he gave him one, which began with the words *Vox Hiberionacum*; and while he was reading it, he thought he heard the voice of the people near the Forest of Focluth, which is near the Western Sea, calling out to him, "*Rogamus te, Sancte puer, ut venias, et adhuc ambules inter nos.*" The incident is alluded to as happening when he was young, consequently immediately after his escape, when

his age was about twenty-two. It thus appears that, soon after his escape, he was with his parents in Britain; and I am much disposed to place this visit before his going to St Martin at Tours, whom he probably visited in the view of preparing himself for his mission to Ireland, to which he believed he had a divine call, as the narrative of his vision imports.

Here we may stop, just to notice the gross perversion which ignorance, and a stupid attachment to the marvellous, have produced upon this occasion. Patrick relates the story of his call as a dream, wherein a *man*, named *Victoricus* (a person he probably knew during his servitude in Ireland), invited him to come and live among them. This *man*, the monkish historians have turned into an *angel*, named *Victor*, and the dream into reality; and they will have it, that this angel accompanied and advised him on other occasions. That Patrick may have had such a dream is probable enough; but this probability is turned into an absurd miracle, by the perversion of ignorance. It shews, however, that Patrick, bred as a Christian previous to his captivity, had during the term of it, conceived the design of preaching to and converting the Irish. His mind appears to have been warm and enthusiastic on this point, which might naturally give rise to the dream; and such a dream he would naturally take as a divine and supernatural call to this good work.

From these stories, told in a confused way, and obscured by the desire to make them marvellous, I am inclined to conclude the simple truth was nearly thus:—That Patrick found an opportunity of running away from his barbarous master; found a vessel which carried him from Ireland, to what country is not said; but that he made his way home to his own country, where his parents still lived. He had previously conceived the plan of converting the

Irish; and, with more judgment than some modern missionaries, thinking ample preparation necessary, repaired to his mother's uncle, St Martin of Tours, for instruction, and remained with him no less than four years. However, he did not think even that sufficient. He spent a number of years more (most of his biographers say thirty), in travelling and obtaining instruction, before he at last, in the sixtieth year of his age, ventured upon the execution of his mission, which appeared in his eyes too important to be rashly gone about.

We must, however, notice his connexion with another bishop of Gaul, viz. Saint Germanus, who became a bishop either in 418 or 421. Patrick is said to have studied under this bishop for some time, which must have been after one or other of these years, and before 432; and this leaves a considerable space, from about 401 to 418 or 421, unaccounted for, except by Patrick's supposed travels in France, Italy, and the islands of the Tyrrhene Sea, of which no particulars are afforded.

It is not however necessary to hold that he was long under this bishop's tuition, who, in the year 431 or 432, dispatched him to Rome, with proper recommendations to Pope Celestine, that he might be sent on the duty of converting the Irish; an object which, we have some reason to presume, was in Patrick's mind from the time he had been in that country in a state of slavery. Mission to Ireland, A. D. 437.

He is said to have obtained ordination as a bishop, in the course of this latter journey to Rome, from a certain aged bishop, whose name and place are nowhere mentioned. But others attribute this ordination to Pope Celestine.

However that may have been, he got his instructions and authorities, and set out on his mission to Ireland in 432, just about the

time that Palladius, who had been sent on the same mission the year before, had given up the attempt, and retired to Albania, or modern Scotland, where he died in December 431.

He set out with a train of associates of twenty persons or more. Among them was one *Germanus*, who, however, must not be confounded with the bishop before named, and of whom there are traces in the names of different places in the parish of Kilpatrick, indicating that Patrick's labours were not restricted to Ireland only.

He appears to have sailed from Britain (that is probably Wales) to Ireland; and we can trace his progress from the coast of the county of Wicklow, where he is said first to have attempted a landing, but was opposed, till he came north into Ulster, in the county of Downe, where he found the inhabitants more favourable. There he got a gift of some land, and founded a church at the city of Downe, or Downpatrick; and here he also founded a monastery. From this situation, which may be considered as the head quarters of Saint Patrick, he successively extended his ministry to the other parts of Ireland; and very probably also to the west of Scotland and Galloway.

We shall not spend time in discussing the other transactions of Patrick in Ireland, farther than to notice, that Jocelin, his most regular historian, says that he spent seven years in Munster, as many in Connaught, and was longer in Ulster; which indeed appears to have been the country he chiefly frequented. Thus, his mission occupied *more than* twenty-one years, and brings us beyond
 A. D. 453. the year 453. After this, he is said to have resigned his bishopric of Armagh; to have again travelled to Rome; and to have visited Britain (*propria patria*), which must mean that part of Britain where he was born.

We shall not stop to examine the probability of the journey to Rome, by a man who resigned his bishopric on account of old age and infirmity, being above eighty, and, according to some of his biographers, above ninety, at the time; nor the foolish story of the Pope's having invested him with the *pallium*, and made him his legate in Ireland; the futility of which Usher exposes.

But Jocelin, in bringing him back from Rome, makes him call at his own country, and stay there some time ("aliquantisper in *Britannia propria patria moratus*"), where he is said to have founded monasteries, repaired others that had been destroyed by the pagans, filled them with monks, who conformed to the rules he prescribed, and where he prophesied many future events, including the holiness of St David, then unborn.

Since the *Britannia* which Patrick is said to have visited at this time was his *propria patria*, it could only be that part of Roman Britain which lay on the river Clyde, not Wales, as Jocelin perhaps imagined, when he so prematurely introduced the young St David. Notwithstanding, however, the story is garnished with such idle miracles, we are inclined, from other circumstances, to believe that Patrick did visit his native country during his mission in Ireland; for, in the course of it, he must frequently have been in sight of Scotland, the passage to which is short and easy from the north of Ireland, and has been made a thousand times in open boats.

But we have not Jocelin's testimony alone that Patrick was in Britain after his mission to Ireland commenced. Others of his biographers give the same account, though none of them afford us the time with any pretension to accuracy. We are not obliged to confine the journey to Britain to the time when Patrick resigned his bishopric in 455 or 462, and was an old man. Another voy-

age of his to Britain is mentioned by Jocelin, and attributed by Usher to the year 447, fifteen years before. If we take away the expedition to Rome, and the *pallium*, the two journies are perhaps one and the same, for they differ little in other circumstances. According to the accounts of both, Patrick brought a number of learned men with him from Britain to Ireland, whereof he made *thirty* bishops. He visited the isles of the sea; by which is certainly meant the Western Isles; placed *Germanus* as bishop in Man, and others in the other islands. These things are told both of 447 and 462; and lead us to conclude that both accounts relate to one journey, which was more probably made at the earlier period, for which there was a rational object. But the *pallium*, and office of legate, are obvious inventions of a later period. By this conclusion also we do more credit to Patrick.

Resignation. We shall now attend to another remarkable period of Patrick's life, *viz.* his resignation of the bishopric of Armagh, upon which occasion he is said to have retired to the monastery he had founded near Downe, and to have spent the remainder of his life (which is represented as not less than thirty years), as a recluse, except occasionally holding councils of the clergy.

This matter is accompanied with as much difficulty as any of the rest. By Jocelin it is said to have happened in 462; but others make it to have happened in 455. In either case, it is agreed Benignus succeeded to the bishopric of Armagh. It is after this resignation that Jocelin places the journey to Rome and to Britain, of which we have been just treating. But so little is said of Patrick after this resignation, that we are not called upon to believe that he lived so long, especially as there is authority to the contrary from other documents.

From the Annals of Ulster, the following series of the bishops of Armagh is extracted by Usher.

Patrick began in 445; he sat ten years, and resigned in	455
Benignus ——— 555; he sat ten years, and resigned in	465
Jarlaith ——— 465; he sat eighteen years, and died in	483
Cormac ——— 483; he sat fifteen years, and died in	498

Other Irish accounts, however, begin with Patrick, whose commencement is not mentioned; But

Sæchnall, or Secundinus, succeeded to him in	439
He sat six years, when he died, - - -	445
Senpatrick sat ten years, - - -	455
Benignus succeeded to Senpatrick, and sat ten years, -	465
Jarlaith sat eighteen years, - - -	483
Cormac, fifteen years, - - -	498

There is no difference between these two lists but at the beginning, where, in the latter, Patrick and Sæchnall are introduced before *Senpatrick*, or Patrick who resigned to Benignus. But if we can make out that our Saint Patrick and Senpatrick are in fact the same person, then we get over the difficulty arising from the apparent difference, and the two lists agree.

In order to illustrate this, the two lists are combined in the following one.

1. Saint Patrick's mission began in 432, or rather say - 433

Some years may reasonably be supposed to have passed before an episcopal see could be established; and let us, in

order to adjust the time to the dates of the preceding lists, suppose this state continued about six years, till - 439

Patrick could not well be stationary, considering the nature of his mission ; and there is nothing improbable in supposing that

2. Sæchnall, his nephew, supplied his place in his absence, whether at Downe, Armagh, or elsewhere, is quite indifferent (and indeed it may have been at both these places), for six years, - - - - - 445
3. Then follows the person called *Senpatrick* in the Irish accounts, and in the annals of Ulster simply *Patricius*, who sat ten years, - - - - - 455
4. Benignus succeeded on the resignation of Patrick, ten years, 465
5. Jarlaith, on the resignation of Benignus, eighteen years, 483
6. Cormac, in whose time Saint Patrick is said to have died, fifteen, - - - - - 498

Now, an important remark occurs as to *Senpatrick*. Usher considers him as a different person from *Saint Patrick* ; but I am to submit some reasons for thinking these names signify the same person, who is our apostle of Ireland. If so, the lists agree in the fact, that Saint Patrick resigned the bishopric of Armagh in 455, to Benignus his disciple.

We have only to make the supposition with which we began, and which has every appearance of probability, that Patrick, while absent from Downe, and pursuing the object of his mission in other quarters, substituted Sæchnall to attend to the necessary duty at Downe and its neighbourhood ; and, when he returned, resumed it himself, either at Downe or Armagh. Thus, our Patrick and *Senpatrick* may, without any violence to either of the annals, be con-

sidered as the same person ; and the list of bishops must begin with him.

Besides the appearance of the lists, I am led to this way of thinking by another consideration, which weighs not a little with me. Usher and the Irish annalists of Patrick say, that *Senpatrick* signifies the *Elder Patrick* (*Senex Patricius*), as distinguishing him from a younger person of the same name. Now, there was no bishop in Ireland who could be called *senior* in respect of Saint Patrick himself. He was also at this time a very old man according to the common course of human life, being above eighty, and by some accounts more than ninety years of age ; so that the chance of there being a person among the new Irish Christians, capable of being a bishop, and older than Patrick himself, was very small indeed, and far from probable, while none of them could be an *older bishop*. Every one of these Christians were his own disciples, and under his instruction and controul,—so he could not well be distinguished as Patrick *the younger* among them.

In the *next* place (if I may be permitted to make the remark), it is possible that *Senpatrick*, instead of signifying *Old Patrick*, as Usher supposes, may be merely the popular pronunciation of *Saint Patrick* ; for it is as nearly related to *Sanctus* as to *Senex*. The epithet *Sanctus*, bestowed only on holy persons, inscribed in the kalendar for annual commemoration, was not generally applied to others not so distinguished.

Moreover, it is agreed among the writers of Patrick's life, that his name was not originally Patrick. Some say that he first bore the name of *Succat*, or *Soccoch* ; others, that he was called *Malgo*, *Mago*, or *Maun* ; and that the name *Patricius* was given him either by Martin or by Germanus, just before he went on his mission to Ireland. Hence, if at his resignation, there were any of his clergy

who bore the name of Patrick, it must have been in imitation of him, or as signifying him to be their spiritual father and instructor: consequently, in this view also, none of them could, in respect of him, be called *Patrick the Elder*.

From these obvious considerations it may be concluded, that no Patrick the Elder succeeded to our Patrick, to whom Benignus succeeded upon his resignation; and that no person of the name of Patrick could have possessed the bishopric of Armagh before him; and we may at the same time understand, that dioceses were not then the fixed and determinate territories which they afterwards were. It is from crude and incorrect ideas of the state of things in ancient times, that authors of the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, supposed a bishop and bishopric were the same in all respects in the fourth and fifth centuries, as they were in their own time.

The time assigned by the chronology we have been considering, for the resignation of Patrick, is the year 455, twenty-three years after the commencement of his mission to Ireland. It is preferable to the other term, which puts it off till 462, because it agrees both with the annals and with calculations.

Age. We shall now consider what is said of Patrick's age by his biographers. This point is attended with as much uncertainty and obscurity as any other circumstance concerning him. The variety is prodigious, from about *eighty to one hundred and sixty* years; and this variety arises from the total inattention to chronology in all the writers of his life, and from their imperfect materials, or the imperfect use made of these materials. According to the principle laid down in the beginning, of endeavouring to strip the history of Saint Patrick of miracles and wonders, I would willingly assign him

a probable and moderate term of life; and this I would wish to do, by supposing his death to have happened soon after his resignation in 455, when he was eighty-three; and, if he lived three years after, he would be eighty-six at his death. It is true the greatest number of authorities are against this supposition; but they do not agree with each other, and depend on no certain chronology. Besides, the total want of facts and particulars during this last period of Patrick's life, (which most of his biographers extend to thirty years), and uncertainty as to time and place, lead us to believe it was not near so long as pretended.

The annals of Ulster, at the years 491 and 492, mention his death thus,—Antiq. Celto-Scan.

“ 491. The Scotch say Saint Patrick died.

“ 492. Saint Patrick bishop of the Scots, died in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age, and the sixtieth after his arrival “ in Ireland to convert the Scots.”

These two accounts do not differ much; and they seem to be given by the compiler as the *opinion or belief* of the Scots,—that is, of the Scots of Ireland. But the compiler of these annals himself (though perhaps a Scot of Ireland), appears not to have held the matter as so settled. For at the year 457, in the same annals, which Usher says answer to 458 of our reckoning, there is noted, “ *Quies Senis Patricii, ut ALII libri dicunt.*”

Now, reasons have already been assigned for holding, that this *Senex Patricius*, or *Sen Patraic*, as he is denominated in Irish, and our Saint Patrick, are the same person. And it is evident, from the strain of the quotation (which is made by Usher), that the compiler himself thought so. And, notwithstanding that Usher thinks the compiler of the annals wrong, yet the antiquity of them

seems to give the latter better means of judging, than moderns at the distance of centuries.

Again, in the annals of Connaught, often referred to by Usher, there is this entry as to *Sen Patraic*,—"Anno 454, Dormitatio Sancti Senis Patricii Episcopi Glosoniensis Ecclesiæ." This *Senex Patricius*, and the other mentioned in the annals of Ulster, as dying in 457, I look upon as one person. The difference of two years, in assigning the time of his death, I consider as of no consequence in matters so ancient. Two compilers, at different times, and in different places, and having but scanty and imperfect materials, are lucky when they come so near. Holding this *Senex Patricius* to be the Irish Apostle, I consider the passage quoted as another testimony in favour of probability and reason, that Patrick died at least within a few years of the time indicated; and that the other notices of Saint Patrick's death must either be errors of chronology, to which monkish writers were particularly prone, or apply to other persons of the name of Patrick, of whom several appear, but one only was dignified by canonization.

Usher, supposing *Senpatraic* not to be Saint Patrick, gives him up to the Glastonbury monks, probably on the faith of the words, *Episcopi Glosoniensis*, and *Ecclesia Glastonensis*, referring however to the various reading *Glascensis*. What place is meant by *Glosoniensis*, I do not pretend to guess. The year 454, is so long previous to the time when Patrick died, by the Glastonbury accounts, that the Patrick here mentioned cannot be he who resided with them thirty-nine years, after he had exercised his mission forty-seven years in Ireland. Neither can the place alluded to be *Glastonbury*.

The vast variety, in regard to the longevity assigned to Patrick by his biographers, affords nothing upon which any person can

place dependence, so as to adopt their chronology. They all differ from each other; and must have formed their calculations from false chronology.

Our hypothesis is most probable, in fixing Patrick's death, upon respectable testimony, at the age of eighty-six, after he had resigned his bishopric, (we may presume), upon account of old age and infirmity; and we reject the fable of his going to Rome afterwards to get promotion, as nonsensical and absurd. Why should Patrick resign his bishopric at the age of eighty-four, and then seek to be made an archbishop and legate by the Pope?

Usher, however, draws an argument for Patrick's long life, by comparing his age with that of Saint Bridget, who, he says, survived him thirty years; though, by our hypothesis, the term she must have survived him was sixty years. But the whole effect of the argument depends on assuming the fact, that Saint Bridget did survive Patrick thirty years only, instead of sixty. For each of these periods, however, there are authorities; and since it is admitted that Bridget died in 518, if we deduct sixty years from thence, it will bring out the year 458 as that of Patrick's decease; which is a most satisfactory coincidence with the annals, and in favour of the period we have been led to assign for Patrick's death.

As to the mention which is made of Patrick, in times after that which we have fixed on for his death, we must either attribute it to errors in chronology, and erroneous calculations, or, as it is evident there were other persons of the same name at this time, we may with great probability say, that what belongs to them, is inadvertently imputed to the subject of our present consideration.

Another point for consideration is, how Patrick spent the remainder of his life, and where he died and was buried. If we are right in assigning the year 457 or 458 for his death, within three

Place where he died...

A. D. 432
47
39
518

years after his resignation, much cannot be expected on the subject of his transactions in that short period. Accordingly, very little is said about them. His supposed journey to Rome we have considered and rejected, on account of its palpable inconsistency and improbability. His journey to *his own country* is not so improbable, and carries in it no inconsistency; but it is possible that the biographers, confounding times as usual, attribute to the period after the resignation, a journey that took place in 447, eight years before it. He may, however, have revisited his own country after the resignation, as it appears that he had connexions and acquaintances there; and on such a journey he may have been overtaken by death. We will shew presently that this is probable; though the Irish accounts concur pretty much, in assigning as the principal place of his residence, the monastery near Downe, which he is said to have established, and to have passed there the remainder of his days in a contemplative life.

A claim, however, is made by the monks of Glastonbury, to the honour of having the residence of Patrick among them, during the last period of his life, and of having his bones buried there. But the claim is accompanied with many circumstances of improbability. It is said that Patrick retired from Ireland to this place, in the forty-seventh year of his ministry, which, if he began it in his sixtieth year, would bring his age, at his retirement, to one hundred and seven; and nearly the same age would fall to be adopted for his resignation. And as it seems pretty well ascertained that he began the work of his mission in 432, his retirement to Glastonbury would fall in 479. Then it is said he followed the monastic life at Glastonbury for thirty-nine years more, when he died; making his extreme age one hundred and forty-six, and the year of his decease 518, the same year that St. Bridget died, instead of sixty years before her.

This seems sufficient to enable us to judge of the Glastonbury pretensions. These monks, however, give other calculations, that would make Patrick's age one hundred and twelve at his death, shewing that the inventor of this fable was totally unacquainted with the subject. Usher supposes that their tradition about Saint Patrick refers to another Patrick, the nephew, or rather son of Lumanus a nephew of Saint Patrick, who he seems willing to concede passed the last part of his life at Glastonbury.

It seems worth while to inquire into the testimonies which led Usher to this conclusion; and it appears, with great submission, that he has been misled, and has not perceived the very frail grounds on which the blundering pretensions of the monks of Glastonbury are supported.

Jocelin, the most copious biographer of Patrick, lived in the twelfth century. He was a monk of Furnes; and obtained the *prioratus* (which I suppose means that he was first canon or prebendary) of the church of Saint Patrick, from Malachias Bishop of Downe, at whose desire, as well as that of Thomas Archbishop of Armagh, and John De Courci Governor of Ulster, he wrote the life of Saint Patrick, about the year 1183. He gives the following account of the materials he used, and the authors of them, which is entitled to attention.

After mentioning that no less than sixty-six books had been written of the acts of Saint Patrick, and that the greatest part had been destroyed by fire, he adds,—“*Quatuor tamen codices de virtutibus et miraculis ejus, partim Latine et partim Hibernice conscripti, reperiuntur; quos, diversis temporibus, quatuor discipuli ejus, viz. Beatus Benignus successor illius, et Sanctus Mel Episcopus, et Sanctus Lumanus Pontifex nepos ejus, et Sanctus Patricius filiulus ejus, qui post decessum patris sui Britanniam*

“*remeans, in fata concessit, in Glascouensi Ecclesia sepultus honorifice, conscripsisse referuntur.*” This Patrick, who was buried in *Glascouensi Ecclesia*, must have given rise to the Glastonbury tradition of Saint Patrick having died and been buried at Glastonbury. But the error is evident:—1. It is not Saint Patrick, but his grand-nephew, the son of Lumanus, who is here spoken of. 2. They have, either in Jocelin’s book, or in some other, erroneously read *Glastonensi*, where it was written *Glascouensi*; a very natural mistake, the writing of these two words being extremely similar in ancient manuscripts.

Jocelin’s work was first printed at Antwerp in the year 1514, *Opera Cornelii Hugonis Franciscanorum Hiberniæ Provincialis Vicarii*. In this first edition the material word *Glascouensi* occurs: But Usher mentions that a manuscript used by him, has *Glastonense*; notwithstanding which, I am disposed to think the reading in the printed book right, and that it has been correctly taken from a good manuscript. This first edition was probably published by an Irishman, who has read in the manuscript from which he printed *Glascouensi*, and not *Glastonensi*; and the presumption is that he read right. That other editions, or even manuscripts, read *Glastonensi*, is no way strange, since to every reader of manuscripts it is known, that the distinction between *c* and *t*, *n* and *u*, is so minute, as frequently to be imperceptible; and any person to whom *Glastonbury* was familiar, but *Glasgow* unknown, would very readily suppose that the former place was intended, and not *Glasgow* on the Banks of the Clyde, five hundred miles distant, near which Patrick was born and bred up in his youth; where the descendants of his family are found in after periods, and where his and their names still remain, affixed both to places and families.

That Saint Patrick had many relations in this country is suffi-

ciently proved by Jocelin himself; for he mentions the children of Tigridia, sister of Saint Patrick, seventeen sons, and five daughters. All the sons, he says, were bishops, priests, and monks:—“*Episcoporum nomina Brochadius, Brochanus, Mogenochus et LUMANUS, fuerunt, qui cum Sancto Patricio avunculo suo, de Britanniis in Hiberniam venientes, et in agro dominico strenue laborantes, messem multam ad horrea cœlestia transmittendam collegerunt.*” This shews that Patrick visited his own country during his mission, and even brought bishops and priests his own relations, from thence to assist him. It could not well be otherwise, considering how near he was, and the intimate intercourse that must have taken place, when a great part of the west of Scotland, and particularly in the neighbourhood of the Clyde, was in the power of the Irish.

Jocelin, indeed, does not say that Saint Patrick removed to Glasgow, or to Glastonbury; but another Patrick, son of Lumanus, the nephew of Saint Patrick. The Glastonbury monks, however, taking no pains to discriminate, have applied that to Saint Patrick, which, by their authorities, belonged only to his grand-nephew, and probably happened long after the former’s decease. The simple fact appears to be, that Lumanus a nephew of Patrick, whom he brought from his own country (where Glasgow is situated) to Ireland, had a son called Patrick, who, after his uncle’s death, returned to his own country (*remeavit*), and died at *Glasgow*; which, by wrong reading or careless writing, has been converted into *Glastonbury*; and, by more inexcusable carelessness, Patrick the grand-nephew, has been turned into Saint Patrick the Apostle of Ireland. But had either of these Patricks gone to Glastonbury, whence they did not come, the word *remeans* would never have been used to signify their going there. But they came from Glas-

gow, or the country near it; and, therefore, when the younger Patrick went back, he is properly said *remeare*.

This is by far the most probable story; and the other is every way improbable and inconsistent. 1. Glasgow is situated *in the native country* of Saint Patrick, where during his lifetime, we find his family, and also their descendants, after his death. 2. The Irish Scots were probably then masters of it; but having become Christians under Saint Patrick's instruction, they did not drive out or destroy the British Christians, as the pagan Saxons did. Patrick's access to it was easy; and it was natural that he should visit it. He accordingly did so, and brought back with him his relations, who were priests and monks, to assist him in Ireland. 3. The southwest of England, where Glastonbury is situated, is represented as in the most wretched state about this time. The British Kings were always at war, or in feuds with each other; and the pagan Saxons were making great progress in establishing their power. Glastonbury, therefore, was neither a quiet nor a safe place to retire to. But Glasgow, and the country near it, was probably then possessed by the Irish Scots among whom Patrick's mission was exercised, and of course Christians; and to him and them, both countries were common. It is probable the Irish remained masters of at least part of this country, till the Saxons of Northumberland encroached upon them, drove them out of Lanark, Ayrshire, and part of Galloway, and confined them to Argyle, and the mountainous parts of Dunbartonshire, about one hundred years after. 4. But if it shall be said, that the Saxons then had not obtained possession of Somersetshire, and that it was still British, it is answered, the name of Glastonbury is pure Saxon, and not British; and the place could not have got that name before the Saxons conquered it. It would therefore have been referred to by its British name,

Avallon, had it been the place of Patrick's retirement in the time of the British.

Another circumstance favourable to our opinion is, that the names of Patrick, his relations, and followers, remain in this country.

Not to dwell on *Port-Patrick*, which must have derived its name from him, and is the nearest point, and most frequented passage between Scotland and Ireland, nor on *Kilpatrick*, with good reason believed the place of his birth, we shall instance one or two more, that lead us to suppose, that he and his followers and relations frequented and resided in this country.

Patrick's biographers say that his name was originally *Succat*, or *Succach*. Now, there is in the parish of Kilpatrick, not far from the village of that name, a place called *Succoch*, the property of Sir Ilay Campbell. That the name belonged to Patrick, has been handed down to us by persons who knew nothing of these lands or their name, and whose books are so ancient, and so little known in this country, that they could never have given rise to the name of the lands. It is said that the name *Patricius* was not given to or assumed by Patrick, before his being invested with the clerical character, either by Martin or Germanus. Thus, strangers have unwittingly preserved a circumstance, tending strongly to shew the general authenticity of the mission and labours of Patrick, as well as to prove the place of his birth.

Again, we are told by these biographers of Patrick, that he had a brother called *Sadin*, or *Sannan*, or *Senanus*, who is described as a *deacon*. This name appears attached to several places near Glasgow, and is also a common surname in that part of the country.

As to places, we have *Sadinston*, near Glasgow, on the east, and

in the original parish of Glasgow, in which the cathedral church is situated, and where we may reasonably presume, there has existed a church from the days of Saint Patrick, where one Patrick a nephew or grand-nephew of his, died and was buried, as we have already seen. This place, *Sadinston*, is now corruptly called *Shettleston*; but it is repeatedly mentioned in deeds recorded in the cartulary of Glasgow, and designated *villa filii Sadin*. It was part of the original patrimony of the church of Glasgow; and a charter of Alexander II. prohibits the magistrates of Rutherglen from collecting custom in the town of Glasgow; but orders that they shall collect it *apud crucem de Sadinston* (that is, at the boundary of the territory of Glasgow), from persons passing into the town.

There is also on the west side of Glasgow, betwixt Renfrew and Paisley, a village called Inchinan (*Insula Senani*), compounded of the very same name, and indicating the importance of the person who bore it, since his possession of land must have been pretty extensive.

As to persons, *Shadden* and *Shannan* (for they appear to be the same), are at this day current surnames in the west of Scotland. When these facts are considered, we are not to wonder when we find a son or a nephew of *Sadin*, or other relation of Patrick, living and dying in Glasgow, and being buried in the church there.

Next, as to Saint Patrick's followers and associates, we find one who accompanied him from the continent called *Germanus*. His name remains in the quarter of the country we have been speaking of. There is a lake called *St German's Loch*, in the parish of Kilpatrick; and we have *Killermont* (*Cella Germani*, the *g* being aspirated by the Celtic inflection), the seat of the Lord Register, in the same parish.

The place of Patrick's death and burial require a few more observations. Notwithstanding the greatest number of accounts place it at Downe, yet there are circumstances which render that doubtful. We have accounts of a Patrick dying and being buried in *Ecclesia Glascoensi*, according to our reading, who, however, is supposed not to be our Saint Patrick, but his grand-nephew. But we have besides *Senex Patricius*, and *Patricius Episcopus Glosoniensis*, dying in 454 and 458, who, there is reason to suppose, are one person, and our Patrick. There is no mention of the place; but Usher is willing to interpret the word *Glosoniensis* into *Glastonbury*, whereof we have already shewn the improbability. In a matter so obscure, some conjecture may be admitted; and the more so, that several authors represent the place as unknown.

It cannot be doubted that erroneous readings have taken place in the books and chronicles (and *Glosoniensis* must be one); therefore, it is competent to offer conjectures upon such readings.

We shall suppose that the original of the evidently corrupted reading *Glosoniensis*, (which applies to no place we know of), has arisen from a marking in some old chronicle, that a *Patricius Episcopus* died or was buried *Glascuæ* or *Glastoniæ*. An ignorant or careless transcriber might naturally enough convert this into *Patricius Episcopus Glosoniensis*; or it may have come to this by various blundering transcriptions. Now, having put Glastonbury out of the question, we can only adopt *Glascou*, as being the name nearest to that in our corrupted text: To this place we have shewn it to be probable Patrick used to repair, and he may have done so in the latter part of his life.

One thing, however, admits of tolerable evidence, which is, that Patrick did not die, and was not buried, at Downe, as most of his biographers have taken for granted, on the ground no doubt that

his relics were deposited there ; a fact which the testimony we are to adduce tends to prove, happened a good many years after his death.

There is in the Annals of Ulster, at the year 550, the following passage :—“ The relics of Saint Patrick brought to a shrine sixty years after his death by Saint Columba.” This account is defective, since it does not inform us whence or whither they were brought. But Columba was abbot of Iona, and probably came from some part of the neighbouring coast of Scotland, where his mission lay. And as we presume the Annals of Ulster were written in *Ireland*, so we are led to conclude the relics were brought *thither*. Next, we naturally suppose the relics were found at, and brought from the place where Patrick died, and where of course they were originally buried. But bringing them *to Ireland*, necessarily implies they were not placed *there* originally. Patrick, therefore, was not buried at Downe, and did not die there.

The question recurs, where then did he die, or where was he buried ? We shall answer with the testimony in favour of his having died in *Britannia*, though we shall not say it is clear or conclusive. Usher quotes Ninius, Matthæus Florilegus, and Tirechanus, stating that the place where Patrick was buried was *unknown*. In the last mentioned author, there is a mutilated sentence, which, if entire, would perhaps have afforded some light. It is to this purpose :—“ Columcille, Spiritu Sancto instigante, ostendit sepulcrum Patricii in Ecclesia juxta mare.” So far is intelligible, and shews that the place where Patrick was buried was so obscure, that a particular revelation to Columba was supposed necessary to discover it. But what follows cannot well be construed :—“ Ubi est conductio martyrum, id est, ossium Collumcille *de Britannia*, et conductio omnium Sanctorum in die Judicii.” Without pretend-

Antiq. Celto-
Scand.

ing to decypher these words, which are plainly a fragment of a sentence or sentences, we need only observe their relation to the passage in the annals of Ulster above quoted, which mentions that Columba brought Saint Patrick's relics to a shrine six years after his death ; to which translation the mutilated passage must refer, though now rendered unintelligible by itself, by reason of material words having been dropt out. The words *de Britannia* seem to imply, that it was from thence the bones of Saint Patrick were brought, from a place *juxta mare*. Accordingly, we are elsewhere informed, that Patrick's bones were, on occasion of this translation, deposited at Downe, beside those of Saint Bridget. She died in 518 ; and it is curious enough, that it is just sixty years after 458, the year we have assumed as the true date of Saint Patrick's death, notwithstanding the chronicle, counting the sixty years from 492, has placed the translation in the year 550.

It would seem, that the occurrence of Saint Bridget's death may have suggested to Columba to bring Saint Patrick's bones to Downe, on purpose to bury them together with her's. Columba himself was afterwards buried in the same place. In conformity with this story, we are told that, in the time of Henry II, they were dug for ; and that the bones of these three were found buried together, and again honourably replaced in the church of Downe.

Our conclusion therefore is, that since Patrick's bones or relics were brought *to Downe*, they had not been originally deposited there ; and, accordingly, that Patrick had not died there, nor near that place. His connexion with Britain, his journies thither, and the reports that he did go thither after his resignation, make it probable that he died in Britain, whence his relics were brought in a posterior age.

Dundaleathglass, or *Dunleathglass*, is mentioned as the place of his death and burial, and supposed to be Downe in Ireland. But we find, on the shore of Clyde, and in the parish of Kilpatrick, a hill called *Dunglas*, near the place where it is certain Patrick was born. The connexion of the names is evident, and suggests the possibility (I shall call it no more), that this is the place called *Dunleathglass* by the Irish authors, which they have, by misapprehension, applied to Downe; and if so, here is the place of Patrick's death, and from which, or from some place near it, his bones were afterwards carried by Columba to Downe.

Several considerations arise from what has been said.

1. The very long and great variety of periods of life attributed to Patrick, produce doubt and distrust as to their truth. There are other and more probable accounts; and, therefore, there ought to be no hesitation in preferring the more moderate age of eighty-four or eighty-six years, to the extravagant terms of one hundred and twenty, one hundred and thirty, one hundred and forty-six, or one hundred and sixty. The former agree with the two different chronicles which report his death in 454 and 458. The Patricks mentioned afterwards, must be different persons from our Patrick, mistaken by the authors, for want of a clear enough chronology, and sufficient knowledge of the persons.

2. It seems pretty evident that Patrick visited Britain after his resignation, which it is plain he had visited previously during his mission; and as the part of Britain he visited was *his own country*, we make no improbable supposition when we say he died there.

3. To all this may be added as a confirmation, that a considerable time after his death, his relics were brought to Downe by

Columba; which never could have happened, and never would have been said, had he died and been buried at Downe, or within two miles of it: for then there would have been no translation of his bones by a person coming from Britain.

One thing in the church government established by Patrick may be noticed as curious. Usher refers to and quotes a *Catalogus Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, which states, that the first order of Catholic saints in Ireland was in the time of Patrick, when there were three hundred and fifty bishops, *ecclesiarum fundatores*. Nennius makes the number of bishops ordained by Patrick three hundred and sixty-five, and the churches just as many. Now, as the existence of three hundred and sixty-five bishops in Ireland, according to latter ideas, is quite out of the question; and since each bishop had one church, and the number mentioned is so considerable; it leads us to conclude, that the jurisdiction of bishops, as then constituted, was something very different from what it afterwards became; and that Patrick's church government was nearer the presbyterian standard than any other.

In submitting these observations, I have confined myself chiefly to such passages of Patrick's life as are connected with his native country, the locality of which is tolerably ascertained to be on the Clyde; because the only object worthy of attention, that can be attained by studying a subject so obscure, is the history, civil or ecclesiastical, of our own country. The discussion of Patrick's origin and mission, opens a partial light to that history, from the period when the country was a Roman province, wherein Christianity was professed. We find that the Christian religion

was obscured or extinguished by the inroads of various barbarous nations of the north and west, who distressed the Britons of the Roman province. Should this inquiry be farther pursued, we might perhaps trace the Christian establishments of these Britons at Whithorn and at Glasgow, and mark their subsequent destruction or depression by Scots, Picts, Saxons, or Normans, till the union of the ancient kingdom of Strathclyde to Scotland; after which the British bishoprics of Glasgow and Whithorn were restored under Malcolm III.

Read to the Society, 25th November 1816.