

<sup>13:</sup>  
Sent with a letter  
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# LECTURE

BY

J. F. Campbell

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Author of "Vindication of the Celtic Character," &c., &c., &c.

DELIVERED ON THE EVENING OF

TUESDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 1860,

IN THE

PROTESTANT LAYMEN'S HALL, 53 CANDLERIGGS,

At the request of the United Highlanders of Glasgow.

MR CHARLES M'EWEN IN THE CHAIR.

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## LECTURE.

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MR CHAIRMAN, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,

Permit me, at the outset, to solicit your attention to the current libel so often repeated, and which seems to be on the increase annually, viz., that the Island of Britain was unknown to the rest of the world till the time of Julius Cæsar, the Roman General—about half a century before the Christian era,—and that hence it is inferred that our progenitors were in a state of savageism.

Now, it is readily granted that if isolated Britain, surrounded by the sea, was unknown to the rest of mankind, it would be difficult indeed to resist the conclusion that the natives really were in a state of barbarism. I think, therefore, that you will admit of the necessity of showing the falsity of that report, in order to lay a solid foundation for the subject to be treated of in the following remarks; for certain it is, unless that this point is properly handled, that not only Ossian, but also Scotland, with all her enviable pristine distinctions, must be delivered to her calumniators to dispose of her as they please; and I need not repeat to you how far their good, or rather their ill will, would go, for you are all aware that the current tales of old British barbarism is solely directed at us Scotsmen because our brave progenitors least deserved it.

If we were extinguished, the rest would be tolerated to live as trophies of conquest, and for other purposes too numerous to be exhibited in a sketch like this.

Gentlemen, it was not by compromise that our ancestors maintained their honour; for had that been the case, there would be fewer enemies now to assail their memory enshrined in their literary and martial achievements; and which we are bound to protect while there is bone or sinew of us left among the inhabitants of the earth.

Be pleased, therefore, to call to your recollection, that there is nothing in the legends of romance more ridiculous, more groundless, than that Britain was unknown to the rest of mankind, and its inhabitants in a barbarous state, till the Roman invasion; and that to hold this position in its integrity must inevitably bring out the Caledonian bard, not as a semi-barbarian but as an illustrious native of the kingdom of Scotland.

The worthies of old left us enough to guide us in this matter, so far as human authority can do it; so much so, that in fact a volume of references could be compiled from classic authors to prove that the Celtic race everywhere were noted for their bravery, chastity, and every other virtue, compared with the rest of mankind;\* and that the Britons in both ends of this Island were not the least of them in these respects.

Herodotus, who was born 484 years before the Christian era, and who in the thirty-ninth year of his age read his history before the Athenian Council, speaks of the British Isles in that history, and adds, "I cannot describe very exactly the seas by which they are surrounded, although we import tin from them."

This shows that the Britons had commerce with the Greeks, and the most polished of them, too—even the famous Athenians,—and that upwards of four centuries before the Christian era, and upwards of three hundred years before Julius Cæsar.

Strabo, in the Second Book of his Geography, plainly gives the reason that even learned men in those early times were kept in the dark in the particulars complained of by Herodotus. "The Phœnicians," says Strabo, "being masters of navigation in those times, made great profit of the tin imported from those Isles, took every precaution to conceal the places where they got that metal."

Here you see, gentlemen, that both the Phœnicians and the Greeks had commercial intercourse with the British Isles; and yet, according to our modern friends, neither the learning nor the commerce of those polished nations had any effect, for Britain must be unknown, and its inhabitants savages, till they are pleased to send a Roman to do them good. But we must employ other men who have a better right.

\* *Vide* Pelloutier's History of the Celts. Paris Edition, 1770.

Pliny ascribes the discovery of Britain to MELCARTES, the Tyrian, 1,000 years before the Christian era ; and Sir Isaac Newton, summing up all the evidence bearing on that point, in the most decided manner confirms that Pliny is right. (See for yourselves, Newton's Chronology, p. 112.) And although the latter great and good man cannot be exculpated from mistakes, yet who dare venture to say that he would take for granted what he did not find established by sufficient vouchers.

Again, according to Martian, Eusebius, and Salmasius in his notes to Ammianus Marcellinus, the Greeks settled a colony at Marseilles in the second year of the Forty-fifth Olympiad, which is precisely 599 years B.C. ; and Strabo says, as decisive as language can do it, that one PYTHEUS, of that colony, three centuries B.C., made a voyage round the British Isles, and was driven north as far as Iceland.

Gentlemen, you will notice here how convenient it is to give the honour of this enterprise to Julius Agricola, the Roman General, ~~six~~ <sup>four</sup> centuries after the Greek navigator from Marseilles performed his voyage ; and you also know the reason for attempting to establish that whim, viz., first—that, by putting Agricola in the place of Pytheus, it must follow that Britain was not known to be an island till that pretended discovery ; and secondly—that, if that fable be tolerated, all the rest of the charges must remain on the discredit side of our character. This is indeed the main object aimed at, but it will not do.

Wherefore, in addition to the foregoing proofs, it is certain that Theophrastus, the Greek philosopher, who died 288 years before the Christian era, speaks of both Britain and Ireland. "There is in that part of the world," says he, "two islands, the largest of which is Albion and Ierna."

Again, Erastosthenes, a learned man, a native of Cyrene, and an elaborate geographer, as his work will show, for he measured the earth scientifically 250 years B.C., and was so well acquainted with the situation of Britain, that he clearly states the distance between this Island and Gaul.

Polybius, a noble writer, who died at the age of 82, 124 years B.C.—in the third book of his history, says that Britain was the largest island then known. Now, observe

that this worthy man died sixty-nine years before the invasion of Julius Cæsar, and 209 before the pretended discovery of Agricola.

Dionysius, who lived in the century before the incarnation, mentions distinctly both Britain and Ireland.

Again, Catullus, who died as some say forty years B.C., calls Britain the most remote island.

We have, again, Sextus Rufus, a Roman writer of the fourth century, in a poem entitled "The Coasts of the Seas," the material of which, he says, he had from authentic records. In the said poem, Sextus describes a voyage by one Hamilco (or as some versions call Himilco), a Carthaginian, who was for four months exploring the north seas,—which must have happened before the final ruin of Carthage, upwards of a century before the Christian era.

Let us now come to Cæsar's Commentaries, and try what we can find there. I quote from the Edinburgh edition, 1808.

Cæsar says, in the Fourth Book and the 20th Section, that, at the end of that summer, he resolved on an expedition into Britain; because in all the wars of Gaul he found that the British assisted "our enemies."

This proves that the British were allies of the Gauls during the Roman invasion of that country; and that they were far removed from being unknown, or in a barbarous state. In a few sentences after this, Cæsar says that it would be of great advantage to him in his future plans of prosecuting the war, if he could but visit the Island to learn the nature of the people. Here you see that Cæsar knew Britain to be an island before he landed; and how can it be supposed that a man of his sense, and who undoubtedly had the works of his predecessors to peruse, would be ignorant of what learned persons, both in Europe and in many parts of Asia, knew ages before he was created.

Again, in the Fifth Book of his Commentaries, he says, "The interior is inhabited by such as they themselves record to be Aborigines of the Island." Here you see he calls it again an island, and that the natives had records to show that they were the first inhabitants of it.

But this is not all: he next proceeds to describe the extent of the country, which he says he learned from the

natives; and concludes that the circumference of the Island was about 2,000 miles. Here, again, you see that Cæsar not only knew that Britain was an island 140 years before the pretended discovery of Agricola, but that he also had the circumference of it so exact, that it is still a question if the best among us at the present day can correct it. And I think that this deserve particular notice, because the natives are the leading party in what their selfish invader relates.

Could they be in a savage state and at the same time so proficient in the science of numbers that they could measure their coast with such accuracy? Secondly—what do you think of the men who are propagating in Chronological Tables, Biographical Dictionaries, and school books of almost all kinds, that Julius Agricola, in the year 85 of the Christian era, first discovered Britain to be an island?

One would suppose after Cæsar's work being so common, that no impostor could possess the effrontery to attempt such undisguised falsehoods.

Gentlemen, you are their jury, and you know your duty; only that you will please to notice, before you return the verdict, that the foregoing extracts, from authors far less selfish than Cæsar, are not applied to the South Britons only, but to the whole country; and that, in spite of all that vituperative malice can muster, with the press at its disposal to propagate the aspersions every day cast in our faces, we can prove that they are utterly unfounded.

These calumniators say the Britons were in a savage state till the Roman invasion. Truth, in the mouth of a great Christian, says No. Origen, of Alexandria, who suffered martyrdom in the 69th year of his age, A.D. ~~124~~, 254. in his "Homily on Ezekiel," mentions that the Britons, before the Christian era, had the knowledge of, and believed in the one true God.\* Moreover, it is not to be forgotten, that this passage put Prelate Usher to his shifts: for, finding that Cæsar, Tacitus, and all the ancient authors, call the inhabitants of this country, as a whole, Britons, and not "*Barbaros*," as their corruptors now do, the Prelate is at a loss how to convict them of

\* Let it be remembered, that there are upwards of fifty spurious versions of this passage, made and quoted by enemies to construe it to their purposes.

both savageism and idolatry—which is more than he is able,—because it is not in his power to prove that Origen had no vouchers for what he says ; neither will it do to tell the world that he was a fabulist who had no more regard for conscience and the heavenly religion for which he died, than to propagate lies to make the ancient inhabitants of this country better than they really were.

Likely they will tell us, we appeal to Cæsar ; well, to Cæsar they will go.

Those calumniators will say, the Britons were in a savage state when Cæsar came. Truth, in the mouth of that invader, says No ; nor are there any suppositions or probabilities in his talk.

We still quote from the Fifth Book of his Commentaries :—“ The country is more temperate and not so cold as Gallia. That angle where Cantium is situated is towards the east, where almost all ships arrive from Gaul.” This proves that the inhabitants had commerce with the Continent before he came. Again, “ The country is infinitely populous.” Can we find among the inhabitants of the earth examples of great populations where savageism prevail ? There is no such thing yet discovered. But he adds, “ They have numerous flocks of cattle.” This proves that they were a rural population—the most exalted state that human nature can attain to in this sphere of existence

But the Roman does not stop here ; for he informs us immediately that, after the peace was concluded with the Britons, their Chiefs began to withdraw from the Roman camp, and delayed to deliver the promised hostages ; that they privately instigated the people to a general muster ; and that the latter left their farms and joined in the movement—the design being to cut off the Romans at once.

Nor is this all. Cæsar adds, that, when he understood their design, he prepared against future danger by daily carrying corn from the fields of the Britons into his camp. And I had almost forgotten that he says, a little before this, that when the peace was concluded the Chiefs came from all quarters to stipulate with him, but that the people returned to their farms. Here you see that the savage Britons had corn fields and flocks ; and that, in confirmation thereof, Pliny informs

us, that the Britons exported wheat to the Continent, in great quantities, and that it was superior to the grain produced there.

Once more, Cæsar informs us clearly that the country was well stored with houses much like those of Gaul. But it is all of no avail, if the tale-makers of our day are left undisturbed.

I would now ask again, what do you think of the men who can deliberately forge and publish the charges of barbarism in all its appalling aspects against the ancient inhabitants of this Island, and that to gratify the groveling propensity of groundless defamation?

Let us now turn our attention to this end of the Island, and see what the braid Matron can say for herself: for we do not envy either Britons, Romans, or Gauls, because we have plenty of our own to put us in that honourable position where providence placed the ancient kingdom long, long ago; and which she held with noble energy through a long series of ages, and, God willing, shall still do so. And I hope you will see the necessity of remarking in this place, that I will not quote our own historians, but very sparingly, in order to show that there is enough said by our oldest opponents, proving not only that the antiquity of the Scottish nation is genuine, as our annalists represent it, but that, on the admission of the Roman invaders, our progenitors were far advanced long before the era of Ossian. And I know that you will unanimously reply, that the Caledonian Bard is a worthy client. Yes; or otherwise he would not be so often assailed by designing knaves who hate him, and us for his sake.

We have already stated, that it is more honourable to be exculpated by enemies than by our own writers, although the latter have the best right to be judges of the affairs for which we are so much envied.

Modern Impostors say we were not a nation before the Christian era, neither had we monarchs as we allege. Truth, in the mouth of eminent Christians and others, says we had. Now, to make this proposition as clear as possible, we must apply the pruning-knife with considerable severity; because some of the most eminent men since the Apostolic age are on our side. Therefore, I hope that you will see the necessity



of this, or continue to be the footpath of not only designing deceivers, but, moreover, of creatures of the lowest intellect; for both can tread upon us with impunity, if not effectually quelled by what our ancestors and others left to rectify this important point.

We were settled in Caledonia before the Christian era. St. Ninian, a man famous over all the Christian world, and born in Galloway early in the fifth century, and frequently quoted by Usher, says that "the Scots came here from Dalrieta when Brutus, the son of Junius, was Roman Consul—more than five centuries before the Nativity." And let it be particularly noticed, that this very passage is quoted by Prelate Usher in his *History of the Ancient British Churches*, printed in Dublin 1630—221 years ago. And this being the first edition, corrected by the Prelate himself, it confirms to a certainty that the quotation was genuine. I merely mention this to shew that no impostor dare corrupt it to answer him now.

And, in case that the above date should be mistaken for the beginning of our Monarchy, the Prelate says that all the Scottish historians give for that period 330 B.C., and then he quotes very many of them to prove it; and that the first King of the Scots was Fergus, the son of Ferchard, a Milesian, who began his reign at the date just now mentioned. Neither should it be forgotten, that the venerable Bede speaks about Reuther, our sixth monarch, who reigned 213 years B.C.

It is alleged that we were not called Scots till the third and fourth centuries. It is utterly false: we were called Scots, and that very early. Seneca, who was born six years B.C., between A.D. 41 and 54, calls our ancestors, not only Scots, but also Blue Scots. And the great Scaglier confirms it by reasons not yet answered—no, nor never will.

Florus, the Roman historian and poet, who flourished in the first century, and in the beginning of the second, says sarcastically of Adrian, that he would not be that Emperor to go into Britain to suffer the Scots' hoar frost. This shows that we were called Scots by the Romans in the first century.

But to confirm this by the mouths of three witnesses. Mamertinus says that the Scots and Picts had wars with the Britons before the invasion of Julius Cæsar.

Nor is there any way of getting over this barrier, without branding these three Romans as fools ; or convicting them as knaves for writing what you have heard, before their evidence can be nullified. We would like to see who dare try it.

Modern calumny says we were barbarians at the very period we have mentioned. Truth, in the mouth of old Rome, says the very contrary.

Caractacus, our nineteenth monarch, was taken prisoner to that city about the middle of the first century of the Christian era, which Tacitus, out of respect for him, calls "a regretful capture," &c. And here we may remark, that our virulent enemy, Hollinshed, by the force of truth, is for once compelled into the path of rectitude ; for he relates what others have done long before he was created. Here are Hollinshed's words :—

"That Ostorius, the Roman General, used Caractacus very honourably, according to the degree of a king ; finally he sent him to Rome, together with his wife, his daughter, and brethren. His fame was such through all places, that, where he passed, the people came flocking to see him of whom they heard so much report, for his stout resistance made so long a time against the Roman puissance.

"At his coming to Rome, he was shewed to all the people, they being called to the sight ; for the victory and apprehension of him was judged equal with any other achievement against whatsoever the most puissant enemies of former times. The Emperor Claudius, upon respect, as was thought, of his princely behaviour and notified valliance, restored him to liberty," &c.

Gentlemen, what do you think of the nation that could teach a man so refined in his manners, and of such noble deportment, that Claudius the Roman Emperor respected him so much, not only for his bravery in a war of nine years, but also for his courtly qualities, that he set him at liberty ? And as this happened 200 years before Ossian, you will be the less surprised to find our princely Bard and his contemporaries equally accomplished.

Hold out a little—we will soon be at Selma, where you will salute the son of Fingal, when the way is cleared. And may you, in the true spirit of your fathers, leave to your descendants his memory untarnished, as we have it from our predecessors.

Designed modern imposition says we were barbarians when Agricola invaded us, 31 years after Caractacus. Truth, in the words and deeds of old Rome, loudly says there is nothing more unfounded.

In looking over the Iter of the Roman army, we find no fewer than forty-seven military forts, the most of which are along the Caledonian frontier. And it is very observable that the closer they come to that forbidden soil, evidently designed by Providence to be hitherto free, that these monuments of Roman ambition, and of Roman despair, become more and more extensive, more and more strong with ditches and ramparts—while we find them situated to every possible advantage that nature can afford, both in strength and prospect,—indicating the continual dread of the Legions for their brave enemies.

How is this illustrated by that great fort at Maryculter, shire of Kincardine. The rampart and ditch on the one side of it are very near a mile long, and the whole camp covers no less than eighty acres. There is another one in the parish of Bellie, and county of Banff, of no less than 890 feet in length by 343 in breadth.

Think you, was it against barbarous tribes that the Mistress of the world was obliged to take such precautions to defend herself and to secure their conquest? Truth, reason, and these monuments say No. Think you, was it with barbarous tribes that Agricola had to contend after landing in Caledonia? No, but altogether the contrary. Tacitus says that “in the sixth campaign, Agricola reached the Forth.” And what was the result—does he speak of the natives as naked savages, barbarous tribes, &c.? No; but he says that “when the Roman fleet appeared on the coast, the *amplex civitates trans Bodotriam sitas*\* were universally moved at seeing themselves attacked by sea and land, and mustered a strong army.” Here the Roman historian does not give an opinion of their number (which is more than he could do), nor is it necessary to insist upon it; but he does better, for he informs us that “the *amplex civitates* [i.e. the surrounding cities] moved with fear, combined to resist the invasion.” Nor is it in the power of falsehood to construe the historian’s meaning so as to make it appear

\* The cities situated beyond the Forth.

that our brave ancestors were not in a highly civilized state, numerous, and living under regular laws, &c.

Repeated lies are busy, we know; and ignorant beings who are duped by their missionaries, even when convicted, will rather adhere to them than forsake their nineteenth century romances. It is of little consequence. To remove every doubt as to the meaning of Tacitus in the foregoing sentence, Ainsworth, with a reference to Cicero, defines *civitates*, first—by “a corporation or assembly of people living under the same laws;” second—“the privileges or rights of citizens.” And the learned Theodore Beza, in his translation of the New Testament, frequently applies the word *civitates* as expressive of towns or cities.\*

Think you, was it against naked savages that the Imperial army for upwards of six years contended; and at last left them where they found them, after fighting at the conclusion of seven campaigns one of the most tremendous actions on record, according to the numbers engaged? This battle especially gives a decisive acquittal to the Scottish nation from the present aspersions—with even a Roman as their judge.

The description of Tacitus, of the state of the Caledonians, can admit of no palliation. He says that “their standing force in that battle amounted to *super triginta milia*, [*i.e.* upwards of thirty thousand] besides volunteers, or raw recruits,” as he emphatically calls them. And he adds, “There came also *senectus claro bello*,” [*i.e.* old men famous in war.] And what more—“*ac sua quisque decora gestantes*,” [*i.e.* each of whom carried their ornaments about them.] There are naked savages for you!

Again, taking the Gaelic army at thirty thousand, and the Romans at very near twenty-seven thousand, the disparity of numbers was far from being high in favour of the Scots, considering the strong body of cavalry in the Imperial ranks.† With all their discipline, and with so near equality in numbers, the Roman legions, with

\* Acts xxvi. 11. *Extra usque civitates*—*i.e.* unto strange cities. *Et civitates Sodomorum ac Gomorrhæ*—*i.e.* the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhæ.—2 Peter xi. 6. *His finitimæ civitates*—*i.e.* the adjacent cities.—Jude 7. *Et civitates gentium ceciderunt*—*i.e.* and the cities of the nations fell.—Rev. xvi. 9.

† See Small's Roman Antiquities in Fife. p. 78.

the best general of the Empire at their head, durst not face the Gaeil fairly. Tacitus relates that "the Caledonians formed partly on the adjacent acivity and partly on the plain" confronting the Romans, where the latter had every advantage which they could desire.

Stand you there, Agricola, till you receive your sentence. There you are on a heathery plain five miles in length, where your brave opponents had not the size of a blue bonnet to cover their heads;\* and yet your boasted legions dare not meet the sons of Scoria honourably steel to steel; for your own son left to all posterity that you arranged your legions, with the camp of Ardoch in your rear, and that you "cut a deep ditch of considerable length on the moor before your front ranks,"† to impede the impending torrent of the bravest blood under heaven,—which is an eternal monument of your fear of them, and likewise an unanswerable refutation of the aspersion, that the Gaeil could not defend their country, were it not for their fastnesses. You got enough of them; for the next sight that we have of you is, with a turned back, in the country of the Horestii, upon the Tweed, *Thus' a gharraich*, daring to attempt the conquest of Scotland.

Moreover, this historian leaves no doubt as to the social state of our progenitors at that time; for he informs us, in the clearest terms, that the night after the battle the Roman soldiers greatly rejoiced at the rich spoil of the enemies gathered on the field of battle. Think you, were they naked savages on whose person such articles were found.

But this is not all. He relates, that "when the Roman scouts went the next day to ascertain whether the enemies were still in that neighbourhood, nothing was to be seen in all directions but burned houses, and other marks of the flight of the inhabitants." Surely this is a proof that the country was regularly inhabited; otherwise, dwellings are of no use to show it anywhere else.

But why talk at this rate. When was this kingdom without, not only common dwellings but also buildings of which no man can tell when or by whom they were

\* Moor of Ardoch, parish of Muthill, and county of Perth.

† Even Brownie, of Edinburgh, a malicious accuser, admits this verbatim. *Vide History of the Highlands.* p. 21.

reared. Cast your eye along the chain of the Caucasus, and there you will find edifices beyond all research. Cast your eye over the surface of the ancient kingdom, and you will find no fewer than fifty-seven edifices of the same construction and material. I have published these already, with the shires, parishes, and localities where they are, between the Solway Frith and the island of Barra.

Again, it is alleged that there were no towns in Scotland contemporary with the Fingalians. Truth, in the mouths of witnesses whose reputation is imperishable, says the very reverse,—that there were towns over the whole kingdom—and that too when Tacitus wrote; so that he is not mistaken in what he relates of the burned dwellings.

Claudius Ptolemy, the geographer, a native of Alexandria, born in the first century, and died A.D. 140, says that he received his information from Tyrian and Phœnician merchants; as also, from the celebrated Marinus, the Tyrian geographer, who also wrote in the first century; and from Philemon, the Greek, who visited the British Isles in person. Now, what is the amount of the evidence of these witnesses? It is just this,—that on the map of Ptolemy we find his contemporary Scottish Clans, with their territories, cognomens, and capital towns, ports, &c., exactly delineated,—a decisive proof that will remain till the end of time. That each of the twenty-one tribes who then inhabited the ancient kingdom had their chief burghs in every division, like our present arrangement.

But the question recurs with double force, when or at what time was the Scottish nation in a state of barbarism?

Gentlemen, call to your recollection other evidences more worthy, more lasting, than Roman and Greek writers, who knew not the progress of the “glorious man from the east, whose outgoings are from eternity.” Just look at that PHAROS, reared by an inscrutable Providence in this kingdom 1657 years bygone. There is not an intelligent man in this room, nor alive in our native land, but can testify that no historical truth is better substantiated than that Christianity was nationally received here A.D. 203;\* and consequently spread its intrinsic blessings

\* It is confirmed by these authors :—Possevinus, Paulus, Jovius,

over the country sixty or seventy years before the time of Ossian. Hence, it is impossible to stigmatise the Scottish nation with barbarity at that period; or that they degenerated into that state in the course of two or three generations after the departure of Agricola, even if they were Pagans, but especially when we consider that the great majority were not.

The next query is, what time did Ossian live? That question is far from difficult to determine. In looking over the catalogue of our monarchs—that envied and hated charter of our nationality—we find two kings of the name of Fionn, either of whom speculation might take as the celebrated father of Ossian, were it not for the following facts, substantiated by our national history and the work of Ossian himself. First—Findochus, who began his reign A.D. 253, and died A.D. 264, is too early. Second—Fincormacus, who began his reign A.D. 301, and after a long reign of forty-seven years, died A.D. 348, is too late. Neither is there anything in the events of these reigns, on the subject in question, that will agree with the description of Ossian of the crushing of the Druids in his time, nor any mention of it at all.

But if we take the intervening reign of *Carthillin*, who mounted the Scottish throne A.D. 277, and died A.D. 301, we find both Ossian in his description of the Druidical war and our history in perfect accordance. That is, by the evidence of Ossian, circumstantially and descriptive; and by our history, descriptive and chronologically, the fact is established that Ossian lived in the third century, and that he was in the prime of life between A.D. 277 and A.D. 301.

Again, the concurrent testimony of Eutropius, and all chronologers of credit since, is that Carausius seized the British throne A.D. 286. And here we must notice, that many English writers also concur with our historians that the Scots and Picts, in alliance, assisted the Britons against the Romans that year, and put Carausius in possession of the kingdom.

Even our enemy, Hollinshed (and after him, any-  
Baronius, Polidore, Froissart, Arnoldus, Bellarmine, and Harrison—foreigners. By Fordun, Boethius, Spottiswood, Demspter, George and David Buchanan, Major Leslie, M'Kenzie, Dalrymple, Irvine, Guthrie Cruickshanks, and Burn—Scotsmen.

body), admits that *Carthilin*, on his return from South Britain after the said expedition, resolved "to utterly abolish the Druids, with their whole order and brotherhood."

Now, observe that this took place after A.D. 286, and that there is not a single mention of a war against the Druids by any other of our kings but by *Carthilin*, nor by him before A.D. 286. So that the mutual evidence of our history, and the poem of Dargo, the son of the Druid of BEL, composed by Ossian, will prove that the battles against the Druids described in that document must have taken place after the above date, and before the first year of the third century, when *Carthilin*, the 34th king of Scots died—that is between A.D. 286, and the close of the third century. Nor is there any way of getting over this, without annihilating the history of Rome, of Scotland, the old English writers, Ossian, and all. And I think that you will concur that, if repeated lies could do it, that there would be an end of them more than a hundred years ago; and that solely because they did, and do record, what we have just stated.

Moreover, there is a remarkable passage in the poem of "Dargo" (for so we must call it in English) illustrative of the above facts. When his staff gathered round Fingal to receive his orders for the engagement, the great Caledonian Bard, who was one of them, describes their aspect:—

"Amhùil soluis fo neula dorelia,  
'Trath bhios coill air chrith  
'San speur ri borbhan."

That is literally—

"Like lights beneath dark clouds,  
When the forest is shaking with tempest,  
And the thunder roaring in the skies."

Fingal, with the glance of an experienced leader, saw "cath duldai an suil gach laoich"—that is, "the dark frown of battle in the eye of each hero"—replied,

"Fhuair an Fheinne chean' an cliu  
Chluinntè 'n duthcha cein an òrain."

That is literally—

"The Fingalians have already received their praise;  
It was heard in the songs of far-off lands."



Here is a direct allusion to the expedition into South Britain: for he could not call any part of Scotland "duthaich chein," a term which is defined by our Gaelic lexicons—(1) distant, (2) remote, (3) foreign.

Having thus proved that the war of the Druids took place between A.D. 286 and the end of the third century; and that Ossian fought—first, against Dargo; and second, against Conn, his son, both of which were destructive battles, wherein the Fingalians were put to the severest test of valour, seeing they were not foreigners, but the native Gaeil, they had to contend with.

It were, perhaps, out of place to discard this point without mentioning that the Irish chronicles supply another proof to the same purpose; and although it is defective in many respects, it is also very useful. In the "Annals of Donegal," printed at Dublin six or seven years ago, and edited by Dr O'Donovan of that city, there is in that work an entry under A.D. 283, wherein it is stated that Fingal was killed crossing the ford of Brea, upon the Boyne, that year; and that Caoilte slew on the spot the three men who committed the deed. Again, A.D. 284, Oscar was killed in a battle between the Ulster forces and Cormac Cas, King of Munster.

That these random statements are untrue to some extent, is certain, when we consider that in the two poems commemorating that event—one of which was composed by Ossian, and the other by Fergus the bard, his contemporary—Oscar was killed before Fingal, and not after him; and likewise, that even the corrupted Irish version of it agrees with the genuine original here in that particular; and, moreover, that Oscar did not fight against the Munster forces with the army of Ulster; but that, on the contrary, the Fingalians went in a body direct from Scotland to fight against Cairbre, the Provincial King of Ulster.

In confirmation of this, Ossian at the beginning of his poem on the death of Oscar, asks, as if impatient to proceed, "An euala sibh m'a thurus Fhininn a nuair a ghluais e do Eirin." That is, "Have you heard of Fingal's expedition when he departed to Erin?" Again, "Leagadh leinn ar feachd 's ar sluagh air an taobh ma' thuath do Eirin." That is, "We landed our forces in the north of Ireland." And again, in the altercation be-

tween Cairbre and Oscar, Cairbre begins with, "Tomlad sleagh b'aill leam bhuait Oscair dhuinn a Albin." That is, "Change of spears I would have from thee, brown-haired Oscar, from Albin." Here we have full certainty—first, that it was against the northern Irish, and not for them, that the Fingalians fought; and, second, that the Fingalians were Scotsmen, and not Irishmen, because it was an expedition from this to that; and, Thirdly, that Oscar was killed in that battle, and that he was lamented by Fingal, as the poem relates;—proving in the clearest manner, that the foregoing notices in the Irish chronicles are so far wrong; but still they prove that Fingal and Ossian lived in the third century.

Let us now examine some of the allegations set afloat by the opponents of the poems of Ossian, since they became of European notoriety, exactly a century ago; for it was in 1760 or 1761 that Mr M'Pherson commenced his work which made them so very public, although it should not be forgotten, that Mr Jerome Stone, of Dunkeld, published some of them in the "Scots Magazine" some years before M'Pherson.

Enemies make curious objections to the authenticity of these poems; but we are at liberty, and justice demands it, that we should examine their qualifications before they be allowed to move a tongue in the matter.

First—Samuel Johnson, an Englishman, and a hater of Scotland and Scotsmen, on his own admission could not read a line of the Gaelic language, and therefore was not in the least qualified to be a judge of these poems, no more than an individual who never read a word of Greek could be a critic of Homer. So that we can take a very short method with such:—You can neither read nor understand the work of Ossian, therefore you and all others like you are but malicious barkers; speak of something else for which you are qualified.

Secondly—It was said at that time that there were no MSS. of these poems, and therefore that they were forged by M'Pherson. But see what truth brought to light: for Dr Donald M'Nicol, minister of Lismor, made Johnson not only a vender of willful calumny against the Scottish nation, but he referred him to resources in London where he would see the very documents which he did not like to find—and where Johnson knew very well

they were before he published his libel. But still the clamour about the nonentity of Gaelic MSS. went ahead, and one adventurer after another appearing on the stage to repeat what their predecessors invented, till provocation brought Highlanders out more and more in their own defence. Among these, the Rev. Dr Patrick Graham, of Aberfoyle, ably refuted many of those aspersions. But perhaps the best of it is, that he nailed on the foreheads of the calumniators a Gaelic MS., judged even by Mr Astle, an Englishman, to have been composed between the fifth and eighth, and written in the ninth or tenth age. It was greatly owing to the exertions of Dr Graham that the MSS. collected by Mr M'Pherson were restored from London into the possession of the Highland Society of Scotland, and that from their contents were published the poems of Ossian as they are now in your hands.

It would be insulting to continue much longer on this point, only it is necessary to remark, that the vicissitudes of time are strange. Who would have thought that when Johnson and Laing wrote a volume each, condemning these venerable monuments of long bygone ages, that a few years would explode their inventions so completely that there is not a vestige of their falsehoods unexposed to the view of the public at large? Who would have thought that when Johnson said, there were not five hundred words written in the Gaelic in which there is an evidence to prove them an hundred years old, that these very documents which he hated so much (because he knew that they were extant) would in the course of a few years be published; and that there is still a great mass of their contents very little known to the nation, although the catalogue of those valuable relics of antiquity is published again and again? Fullarton & Co. have done good service to the public so far, when they, in 1849, laid before the world a catalogue of no fewer than forty of these documents, so that the poor spite of traducers is of no more use to conceal them. I intend shortly to publish lithographic specimens of them, in a small volume now ready for the press. And as the public are strangers to neither their dates nor their contents, it is high time that all willing should be able to read them.

For many more particulars relative to this subject, I think I may be permitted to refer you to my Essay

appended to the small volume of my Gaelic Poems, published in 1858, and dedicated to the Celtic Society of Glasgow, where you will find more than 60 localities, in all parts of the country, named after Fingal and the Fingalians,—proving that the memories of those heroes are rivetted with the soil so tenaciously that they cannot be eradicated while the Scottish nation exists; and that all of them, with one exception, can be mistaken by none. I have also proved by the internal evidence of these poems that Fingal and the Fingalians were Scotsmen; and by the same evidence, the impossibility of their being Irish, as knavish design would suggest.

I do not exactly know who were the first inventors of calling that parish in Argyleshire extending twenty miles in length along the Sound of Mull, the kingdom of Fingal. If the abbettors of this whim could even show that that place was, or is called, in the Gaelic language *Morbheinn*, as Ossian designates the chief residence of the Fingalians, there would be some foundation to allege that the great Bard meant the said parish. But the misfortune is, that neither the natives of that place, nor those of any other part of the Highlands, ever called it *Morbheinn*, but *Móraitne* or *Marairne*, a term, it is granted, that is peculiar enough. But where is the man in his senses that would think of making *Morbheinn* of *Móraitne*, or *Marairne*, as the natives thereabout continually pronounce it? Or who would have thought of metamorphosing *airne* into *beinn*, while they could use their ears to correct themselves? Neither is there one elevation in that parish worthy of being called a mountain, and therefore have no right whatever to the said title, which is nothing else than a puerile absurdity. But if we turn to the north, we there find a reality every way consistent with the Ossianic title of Fingal's residence. I quote from the "Gazetter of Scotland," by J. Stark, dedicated to the Earl of Moira, and printed at Edinburgh 1805. "Morven, a high hill in Aberdeenshire, on the borders of the parish of Logie Coldstone, supposed to be 3,100 feet above the level of the sea." Again, "Morven, a hill in the parish of Lathern, in Caithness, elevated about a mile above the level of the sea."

Once for all, it is to be observed that the term *airne* is frequently postfixed to the names of several

places through the country. There is in Strathtyre, county of Perth, a place called *Cùlairne*. There is, also, in the parish of Callender, on the skirt of Ben Ledie, a place called *Lagairne*. There is, in the parish of Comrie, above the Baronial Mansion of Aberuchill, a place called *Leathadairne*. There is, a little above the village of Row, Dumbartonshire, another *Lagairne*. But in none of these places, were there hitherto any who attempted to make *beinn* of *airne*; but they unanimously say that the postfix *airne* means an activity between two waters, flanked by hills: a natural enough conclusion, for such is indeed the situation of the localities just mentioned. It is certain, however, that there is in the parish of *Mar-airne* or *Móirairne* both *Fionnairidh* and *Dun Fionnairidh*; but as neither of these can be transformed into *beinn* no more than *airne* can be made so, the *Mór* there must want the *beinn*, and just be doing with its old appendage sometime yet before Highlanders will believe *Móirairne* is *Morbheinn*.

It is alleged, lastly, that the word Fingal is not original, but that it was forged by M'Pherson to answer his notions some way or other. And hence it is inferred, that the translators of the poems of Ossian, convicted for that word, it must follow that the whole of these poems, or nearly so, were spurious. That is, on the proof of one word supposed to be forged, all the poems of Ossian must be condemned as the mere inventions of willful fraud and imposition. But as this, in common with every other attempt to tarnish the productions of the Caledonian Bard, is false, the proofs are far from difficult to obtain.

In the poem of "Dargo," already referred to in Dr Smith's collection, we find—

"Sheas gach fear 's a shleagh'na dhörn  
'S a shuil fo'ghòrsaid air Fionnghael."

That is—

"Every man stood with his spear in his hand,  
Looking below his shield at Fingal."

Here we find the word Fionnghael, Anglicised Fingal, in a poem not in M'Pherson's collection at all. But no doubt malice might go the length of alleging that Dr Smith borrowed the term from M'Pherson, and so might be partner in the supposed imposition; therefore, it is

necessary to mention, that John Barbour, 385 years before M'Pherson, made use of the term Fingal in the Memoirs of the Bruce. We would like to know who taught him.

Again, Black John M'Gregor, the author of the *Reel of Tulloch*, contemporary with Black Duncan, of Braed-albin, and reign of Charles I., in the peculiar rapid measure of the variations of the said *Reel of Tulloch*, depicting his own rapid race when he was pursued by the M'Kays, vows, "Rìgh Fionnghal na Feinne ged eireadh cha cha chuidichin." That is literally—"Although King Fingal of the Fingalians would rise from the dead, I would not stop to help him."\* The words of the *Reel of Tulloch* with the variations amounts to at least fifty lines. They were never printed. Moreover, M'Mathan, the Seaforth bard, who flourished about the middle of the 17th century, and at least 80 years before M'Pherson, makes use of the term Fionnghael in one of his poems, in everybody's hands. Again, John M'Donald, the Lochaber poet, does the same upwards of 60 years before M'Pherson appeared; so that that despicable cavil must go with the rest already disposed of.

\* Honest nature requires no comment.

PARUIG M'K——N.

BY A GUIDWIFE IN GLASGOW.

MAY, 1860.

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AIR:—"Mary of Glensmole."

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Mak' haste, man, to the winnock,  
 I hear the Kimmers say,  
 Yonder Paruig's comin'  
 Doon the whinny brae.  
 We see the buckles glancin'  
 On his *Fracchan* shoon.  
 He'll mak' the Lawlands Hielan,  
 Ere he'll lea the toun.

Richt weel I ken 'tis true,  
 Nane waur't his croun'd forebears,  
 Frae Gregor Mor M'Alpine,  
 Ruth o' fey and fear;  
 To reivers frae the south,  
 Wha fled and yowl'd when claw'd  
 By Donald's fleg, the *bodaich*,  
 Catch'd this side the bawk.

'Tis Albin's stobbie THRISLE,  
 Rank on *heugh* and fell;  
 How many faes it jagg'd  
 Nae clerk nor tongue can tell.  
 Ae thing am sure eneugh,  
 To *pu* it nane will dare;  
 The nieve aye cursed the greed  
 That made it grip't ava.

Forbye, I mind my gudsher  
 Tellin' mony times  
 The awfu' fecht at Bannock,  
 Tint to skaithfu' guile;  
 Whar PARUIG's doughty sires,  
 By ROBIN put in raw,  
 Gae his faes the thuds,  
 Whilk saved his croun and ha'.