

MR. FELIX CARBRAY'S SCHOLARLY LECTURE,

BEFORE THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS, AT QUEBEC.

The many efforts being made to revive the grand old language of Ireland, not only by Irishmen, but by scholars of other tongues, must naturally come grateful to those who believe that in the language of a country lies a great deal of its strength. There is much that is inspiring in tradition and folk lore, but much of its merit is lost in translation. It has been said that nobody could understand Cervantes unless he was read in the original, and the same holds true with even greater force as regards Keltic literature, the age and pre-eminence of which are pointed out in the very learned lecture delivered by Mr. Felix Carbray, M.L.A., in Quebec, on the 11th inst. Mr. Carbray has been a close student of the language and literature of Argyrian man, and he has compressed the result of a vast amount of research into the compass of a lecture, every line of which is pregnant with scholarly information. It was delivered in an eloquent way in Tara Hall, the entertainment being under the auspices of the A. O. H., the officers of which Society took every measure to ensure its success and are to be congratulated on the results of their labors. Dr. Brophy, Mayor of St. Foye, president of the A. O. H., introduced the lecturer in a stirring speech.

Mr. Carbray spoke as follows:—
"I think I cannot do better in beginning my lecture than to tell you what the Gaelic language is and where it came from, as far as is known. I will give you this in the words of the most zealous and learned workers in the cause of the old Gaelic tongue, Canon Ulick Rourke, M. R. I. A., late President of St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, in his truly learned and magnificent work, 'The Argyrian Origin of the Gaelic Race and Language,' tells us: 'The primeval language of man, called amongst the learned of the present day the Argyrian of which the Keltic is a dialect, brings us back to the period before the human family had emigrated from the first home wherein they had settled. For the sake of those who are not acquainted with the science of comparative philology, by the aid of which scholars can point out clearly and distinctly the connection as well as the difference between living languages, and, at the same time, trace all to one common origin, it is necessary to state, that by the aid of this science and by kindred aids, without direct reference to revelation, men of literary research have found proofs of the most convincing, to show that before the dispersion of the human family there existed a common language, 'admirable in its richness, in its vigor, its harmony, and the perfection of its forms.' The sciences in connection with the languages are, in this respect, quite in accord with the tradition of every nation on the globe, and with the teaching of history and the inspired writings of Moses and the Prophets. These linguistic sciences do not deal with any particular language; they take in all modern radical tongues, and like those who sail up separate small rivers, till they reach a common source, they trace the different streams of language up to a primeval fountain-head, from which all European dialects have taken their rise. Thus, it has been discovered that there had been, anterior to the dispersion, one common primeval speech. Learned men in England, France, Switzerland, and Germany, have by their labors within the past half century contributed to this important result. It is the same class of scholars in Germany and Switzerland, and not Irishmen, who have shown that Irish Gaelic is, in origin, one with Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin; and that it is amongst the oldest branches of the one primeval Argyrian tongue.

First.—The Irish speech is, therefore, for all lovers of languages, and for all who wish to become, like German scholars acquainted with the first tongue spoken by the human family, equal in value to Sanscrit, Latin, and Greek. This is not merely in the opinion of the writer, it is held by Prof. Blackie, of Edinburgh, by Mons. Pictet, of Geneva, by Bopp, by Geddes, Professor of Greek in the University of Aberdeen. Geddes says: (Lecture—The Philologic uses of the Keltic tongue, published by A. Browne & Co., Aberdeen, 1872);—"A great field of investigation, as yet comparatively unexplored, lies before you in your (the Gaels of the Highlands) own tongue, it is an El-Dorado for the winning."

Second.—Schleicher, a German scholar, shows in his compendium of comparative grammar the position which Irish holds as a language in the wide field of Argyrian speech. According to this distinguished linguistic scientist, a foreigner to Ireland in all save her ancient language, Irish holds on the tree of early human speech a position next after the eastern and classic offshoots of the great Argyrian tongue. Fuller investigation shows that Irish with its 16 to 17 primitive letters, had an earlier start westward than

either Greek or Latin, from the Argyrian region, namely, that high table land around Mount Ararat, whence the four rivers, the Euphrates, and the Tigris, the Araxas and the Oxus, flowing out from the Garden of Eden, took their rise. Professor Geddes does not fail to observe, viewing the linguistic tree fringed and developed by German hands, that Schleicher makes immediately after the separation of Sanscrit or Zend from the common stem, the Keltic keep company with the Greek and Latin in what he calls a common Greco-Italo-Keltic branch, and that there remained the Italo-Keltic which shot far more to the west, after the Greek had sprouted forth to the south, and had attained development. It there found, as history testifies, a congenial clime for further growth in the mountains and valleys of Thessaly, and stretching more southward still in the Peloponnesus and in the isles of Greece, and, above all, in Ionia where it blossomed and ripened into the highest and most matured perfection. Under the styms of the father of Grecian poetry, it had been made the medium of the undying Epics, that tell of the direful wrath of Achilles with the destruction of Troy, and the wanderings of Ithaca's king. In following the line of march of those amongst the very early emigrants to Europe from the table land in which the primitive Argyrian speech had once been spoken, the writer has necessarily accompanied on their way that colony which, at a subsequent period was known as Hellenic, and was styled at a still later period Greek, by Roman historians and by modern writers.

A thousand years anterior to the days of Homer, and before the Greek was matured in southern Europe and on the coast of Ionia, the second sprout of the Greco-Italo-Keltic branch was planted in the Italian peninsula, and there, like the grain of mustard seed, grew into a large tree, the branches of which ultimately filled the whole earth. The Keltic branch took root for a time in northern Italy. It bore fruit, and, like the oak, scattered its seed to the west in Iberia or Spain, to the northwest in Keltic Gaul, along the banks of the Garonne, the Loire and the Seine. The best part was wafted to our noble island, "Inis Alga," where it sprang up and formed the luxuriant tree of Irish Gaelic, which at this very day presents all the features that mark the primeval speech of the Argyrian race and country. The views just put before the reader are confirmed by the opinions and arguments of savants famed throughout Europe for their knowledge of philology and ethnology.

"It is certain that there was a primeval speech, called by scholars at present the Argyrian tongue; that it was once spoken by the people that lived in the high table lands of Armenia and Iran; that it was carried to Europe by the inhabitants who emigrated from the land now ruled by the Shah, that Greek, Latin, Keltic or Irish, Slavonic or Bulgarian, Lithuanian, Gothic or German, are dialects of that common pre-historic speech. Listen to the words of Adolphe Pictet, of Geneva, expressed in his famous work, 'Les Origines Indo-Européennes, ou les Aryas Primitifs, Paris, 1859':—

At a period anterior to every historic development, and one which is lost to view in the night of the remote past, a race destined by Providence to be, at a coming day, rulers over the entire globe, were gradually growing great in their ancient cradle, where during their infancy they gave indications of a brilliant future, in coming thus with a happy growth to matured fulness, not in prosperity alone, but in numbers, this vigorous race sought to secure for themselves as a potent agent for the process of development a language admirable for its richness, its vigor, its harmony, and the perfection of its forms; a language which was likely to foreshadow in its own features naturally and without effort, not alone all the impressions affecting it, its nice shades of form and of thought, its natural impressions of admiration, but also its tendency upwards to a sphere higher still; a language full of images and of ideas precise and perceived at a glance; a language bearing in its infant state all the future wealth which was to be developed by a magnificent practical expansion, in the region of poetry the most elevated, as well as of thought the most profound. This language, at first one and of the same stock, served as the common medium of inter-communication among the people of this primitive race, as long as they did not extend beyond the limits of their native country."

Monsieur Pictet for good reasons styles this primitive race Argyrian and calls the language they spoke the Argyrian tongue. He says that in the course of time they spread from Armenia eastward to India, and westward to the extreme limits of Europe, and that they formed one long chain of parent peoples, one in blood and in kin, yet no longer recognizing each other as brothers. The name Argyrian has now been accepted by modern philosophers in Europe, as well as in America and in the East. Keltic is Argyrian. "The Keltic," says Geddes, "is now duly installed in what may be called the Hierarchy of Argyrian tongues. Pritchard established the affinity; Pictet has done much in the same direction; but the work has been fully performed by four Germans (Bopp, Zeus, Ebel, and Schleicher)." The root of this remarkable term is "aria," which has been preserved in the two sister languages, the Sanscrit and the Zend—"ar" and "ere." "Ce que je veux remarquer encore," says the clever scholar, "c'est qu'il en sort un synonyme de Arya, le Sanscrit arta, en Zend, areta, venere, illustre, auquel Burnouf a rattache l'ancien nom de Perses 'Artaioi.' Les Ossetes du Caucase, il est vrai, s'appellent eux-mêmes Iron du nom de leurs pays Jr. Further the root "ar" and "er," and "her," has been found in many Keltic and German names throughout Europe.

Comparative philology plainly points to the truth told by the inspired author of the Pentateuch, that there was one parent race of all mankind, and that they made use of only one original tongue. In the work lately published "on the manners and customs of the ancient Irish," W. K. Sullivan writes in vol. I, p. iv., as follows:—"It is now a recognized fact in science, that from the Indus to the Atlantic ocean, and thence across the American Continent to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, the descendants of one primitive, blue eyed, fair haired race, divided into several branches, and speaking dialects of what was once a common language, held sway. To determine the common elements in the languages, mythologies, legends, laws and customs of the several branches of this great Argyrian race, and thence inductively rehabilitate the primitive parent race, whence they issued, is one of the most interesting and important problems of historical science. The Irish race, it is confessed, had been the earliest emigrants from the land of Iran, and had led the van in the great army which came westward to people Europe.

The Romans, Kelts and Germans have so long commingled on the Continent of Europe, and in Britain, that it is almost impossible to say what is peculiar to each, and what borrowed. The only branch of the Keltic race not directly in contact with this highly developed political organization was the Irish. Fortunately, we possess in the remains of the Irish language, poetry, laws, etc., such a mine, and in fulness, too, greater than is to be found in the other branches of the Argyrian race, except the Sanscrit, Greek and Latin. It is quite plain, therefore, from all that has been shown, that for all lovers of philological research, a knowledge of the Irish language is necessary as a knowledge of the Sanscrit.

This is the conclusion, which the Professor of Greek in the University of Aberdeen, W. D. Geddes, M.A., has come to. In his lecture, "The Philologic Uses of the Keltic Tongue," (published by A. & R. Milne, Aberdeen, 1872), he addresses the members of the Keltic debating society, and says: "A great field of investigation, as yet comparatively unexplored, lies before you in your own tongue; it is an El Dorado for the winning. From the systematic neglect of Keltic, it has resulted that our scholars, both Keltic and Saxon have gone far to find what they could have got nearer home. They have wandered to the extremities of Europe and of Asia in search of philologic facts, digging them out of the graves of dead Rabbis or Aristarcuses when they might have found them far more easily exemplified on the lips of a living Gaelic speaker; a living Highland shepherd by the side of a Highland burn. Until these days British philologists have been for the most part poverty-stricken creatures, clamoring for gold from what they thought classic sources, and stumbling blindly among the jewels that lay around them for the gathering, all upon their own shore and their native hills."

To sum up. From the light which Irish Gaelic throws on the sciences of linguistic palaeology, the language of Ireland, it must be admitted, is worthy

of the attention of students and savants. It opens up, as widely at least as Sanscrit, a field of philological enquiry. In that field its usefulness is admitted to be equal to that of Sanscrit; not only because it is more ready at hand than that ancient eastern tongue, but it once held dominion over the west of Europe, and left, consequently, in the early enclosures of Continental countries its mark on the face of the western world, which Sanscrit did not, and could not have done. Irish Gaelic is for European savants a very ready, practical, and truthful vehicle for linguistic research in archaic fields of human speech and of history.

The following passage from Max Muller makes the genealogical chart regarding all the European languages plain to every scholar. All mists are cleared away. The strange tracings from other lands, quite unscientific, are connected, and the entire question put before the view in its most simple and in its correct state. "When Sanscrit had once assumed its right position, when people had once become familiarized with the idea that there must have existed a language more primitive than Greek, Latin and Sanscrit, and forming the common background of these three, as well as of the Teutonic, Keltic, and Slavonic branches of speech, all languages seemed to fall by themselves into their right position. The key to the puzzle was found, and all the rest was merely a work of patience. The same arguments by which Sanscrit and Greek had been proved to hold coordinate rank were perceived to apply with equal strength to Latin and Greek; and after Latin had once been shown to be more primitive on many points than Greek, it was easy to see that the Teutonic, the Keltic and the Slavonic languages also contained each a number of formations, which it was impossible to derive from the Sanscrit, Greek or Latin. It was perceived that all had to be treated as co-ordinate members of one and the same class."

The early migration from the cradle land of the human race took its rise long before Thare, the father of Abraham, brought his son, and Lot his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram, his son, out of Ur of the Chaldees, to go to the land of Chanaan. They came only as far as Haran "in Armenia," and dwelt there. Westward was the cry before Abram was desired by God to go out of his country, and from his kindred, and from his father's house to a land which he would be shown, the land of promise for him and his seed; nay, before Misraim colonised Egypt, before the cities of Thebes and Memphis were founded. The inspired author of the Pentateuch hints at the time when the earth was one of tongue and of the same speech. And when they removed from the east they found a plane in the land of Sanaar. The tower had not been built. Even then the Keltic migration commenced. The question regarding the confusion of tongues is not one that comes within reach of the science of comparative philology. The field of investigation respecting it remained untouched, for there are other primitive tongues besides the Argyrian. A. W. Schlegel and Bopp point to languages of monosyllabic roots not capable of entering into composition, and others capable; then there is the Semitic speech with roots of two syllables. The path pursued in this work is that pointed out and illumined by the light that flows from the lamp which the science of comparative philology holds before the student's eyes. The Irish-Gaelic language, in connection with the primitive Argyrian speech, is the special subject which, in these pages, engages the writer's attention.

Professor Blackie says:—"What was the lineage and kinship of the Gaelic language? In 1830, it was regularly admitted to be a real orthodox, full-blooded member of the great Argyrian or Indo-European family of languages in which year Pritchard published his book on the subject. Originally the Argyrian tongue was the language of the leading classes on the high tableland of Persia, who at length divided one half (at different periods) going east into Hindostan, and the other west into Europe. Gaelic therefore, as the earliest in her migration westwards, was one of the oldest branches of this ancient family."

That Irish Gaelic, in its plastic power and phonetic fecundity, possesses not only the virtual but the formal germinal developments of dialectic variety, is a proposition that can, as the writer says be readily proved by means of a little knowledge of the science of comparative philology.

Proof:—The Argyrian tongue is de-

clared to have been a potent agent in the process of development; a language admirable for its richness, its vigor, its harmony, and the perfection of its forms. Again that it had been such as it had been here described, is proved by its effects. How are the perfections of a cause known? From the perfections of its effects. Witness the varied perfections of the Greek, Latin, Gaelic, British; of the Zend and the Sanscrit. It was from the Argyrian tongue, as from a fountain these perfections were derived. It was potent in its process of development. It produced the high Argyrian. It gave to the East the Sanscrit; to the West all the European tongues. Such was the Argyrian.

Among the large quantities of MSS. records which have come down to our times, will be found examples of the literature of very different periods of our history. Some possess a degree of antiquity very remarkable, indeed, when compared with similar records of other countries of modern Europe. Those manuscripts which we now possess, belonging to the earliest periods, are, themselves, we have just reason to believe, either in great part or in the whole but transcripts of still more ancient works. "At what period in Irish history written records began to be kept it is perhaps, impossible at present to determine with precision. However, the national traditions assign a very remote antiquity and a high degree of cultivation to the civilization of our Pagan ancestors.

Without granting to such traditions a greater degree of credibility than they are strictly entitled to, it must, I think, be admitted that the immense quantity of historical legendary and genealogical matter relating to the Pagan age of ancient Erin, and which we can trace to the very oldest written documents, of which we entertain any account, could only have been transmitted to our times by some form of written record. What was the probable state of learning in Erin about the period of the introduction of Christianity by St. Patrick?

There is abundant evidence in the manuscripts relating to this period (the authority and credibility of which are readily proved), to show that St. Patrick found on his coming to Erin a regularly defined system of law and policy, and a fixed classification of the people according to various grades and ranks, under the sway of a single monarch, presiding over certain subordinate provincial kings.

We find mention likewise of books in possession of the Druid before the arrival of St. Patrick, and it is repeatedly stated (in the Tripartite Life of the Saint), that he placed alphabets, primers or lessons, in the Latin language in the hands of those whom he wished to take into his ministry.

We have also remarkable examples of the literary eminence which was rapidly attained by many of his disciples, among whom may be particularly mentioned Benen, or Benignus; Mochoe, and Pice of Slebble, or Sletty. This last is the author of a biographical poem in the Gaelic language, a most ancient copy of which still exists, and which bears internal evidence of a high degree of perfection in the language of the time in which it was composed. And it is unquestionably in all respects a genuine and native production, quite untinged with the Latin, or any other foreign contemporary style or idiom.

It is, at all events, quite certain that the Irish Druids and Poets had written books before the coming of St. Patrick in 433, since we find the statement in the ancient Tripartite Life of the Saint, as well as in the annotations of Tireachan, preserved in the Book of Armagh, and which were taken by him from the lips and books of his tutor, St. Machta, who was the pupil and disciple of St. Patrick himself.

O'Curry enters fully into the well known subject of Ogham writing. In eight pages he makes the matter very plain, and certain from a historic point of view. Indeed there is no doubt at all that the pre-Christian Gaels of Ireland wrote in Ogham. Proofs of this effect are scattered broadcast in every page of our ancient MSS. The records of the Royal Irish Academy abound in well authenticated facts.

It is certain that the Golden age of Irish literature, ecclesiastical, civil and scientific, as far as science had been then known, medical, astronomical, legal, was within the period from 432 A.D. to 600. It is certain from the Tripartite life of St. Patrick that he gave the Roman alphabet, or primers in the Latin language, to all the ecclesiastics of Ireland.

It is certain that the Druids before St. Patrick's coming to Ireland wrote books and studied manuscripts. It is certain that in the pre-Christian period the Druids and the learned Gaels made use of a secret writing called "Ogham," of which there were many kinds, something like the modern shorthand, and that even in the Christian period this kind of writing was not and is not to this day wholly forgotten.

Guided by the rules of scientific research; treading on sure principles of knowledge the archaic paths which have, by time, been embedded into the national language and the genius of the Irish race; comparing on the way the signs of certainty which archaeology and palaeology furnish in manifold forms; at one time in cyclopean architecture, the Round Towers; at another in poetry, in painting, in law, and in the varied footprints of a by-gone civilization, the writer has furnished to every rational thinker, and to every scholar who wishes to steer the middle course between credulity, on the one side, and scepticism on the other, reasons abundant, and convincing that the Gaelic language and people have come from the cradle-land of the Japhetic race.

The phoenesis of Irish Gaelic at present and in Pagan times is a subject quite new to the public, but very important, for it comes in, to confirm the views already arrived at in England, regarding the correct sounds of the vowels and consonants. Irish-Gaelic pronunciation is the fountain from which the classical languages of Europe have drawn the flood of full and open sounds which constitute the beauty of Italian, and which gave to the national pronunciation its ore rotundo, fullness and power, amongst the Romans, *rerum dominos gentemque togatam*. Irish phonetic laws are in accord with Jacob Grimm's law of lingual interchange; and the bardic beauties of Irish song are the source from which the poetic children of modern literary Europe have drawn the grace which gives to versification its charm, Rhyme.

Few persons care to admit that Pagan Ireland was civilized; yet it is a fact, that the Gaelic-speaking tribes of Pagan times enjoyed in the western isle an advanced state of material civilization long before Rome or Carthage, or Corinth, or Priam's city had been built. The first people who came to the "Island of Destiny" were descended of an enlightened and a highly civilized parent stock. The knowledge of the natives in the art of writing, of dyeing, painting, illuminating, smelting metals, of coining money, and making ornaments in gold and brass; of cyclopean architecture, of which the Round Towers are a standing, and to this hour and abiding proof, point out clearly the archaic civilisation and primitive refinement of the Pagan Irish race.

(To be Continued.)



When death has laid its cold and relentless hand upon a kind and loving husband, the wife cannot be blamed for asking herself if all her years of devotion and work and helpfulness were worth the while, when it comes so soon to this tragic end. If men would only take the most common sense precautions against the encroachments of ill-health, there would be fewer houses of mourning, and fewer women left alone almost helpless before the battle of life is half over. A man's liver and stomach are twin machines that work together, either to make or unmake. If they work wrong they deplete and poison his blood. Impure and impoverished blood means sickness and death. If they work right, they purify and enrich the blood. A man whose blood is rich and pure, and whose liver is active cannot well be unhealthy. Headaches, biliousness, indigestion and costiveness, which men generally disregard, are Nature's warnings that the twin mechanism, stomach and liver, is working against, instead of for him. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery is the best medicine to use under these circumstances. It creates appetite, corrects all disorders of the digestion, invigorates the liver and fills the arteries with rich, red, healthy blood. As an invigorating, restorative tonic, it is far superior to all the multi-extended. It is the great blood-maker and flesh-builder. It does not build sickly, flabby fat as cod liver oil does, but the firm, muscular tissues of health.

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