

601/c/153/5
ORLI



And Protestant Vindicator.

"I have set Watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night."

VOL. I.

BYTOWN, (C.W.) MAY 15, 1850.

NO. 22

THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT IRISH NOT ROMAN CATHOLIC.

The ludicrous fictions of Roman Catholics respecting St. Patrick have induced many sober Christians to doubt whether there ever existed such a person.

But if ancient and unquestionable documents may be credited, there was, beyond question, such a man. We can no more question the existence of St. Patrick than of King Alfred. I shall content myself with referring to Archbishop Usher's book, *On the Religion professed by the ancient Irish*, p. 15, &c., and the authority quoted by him; also to the historian Mosheim, under his details of the fifth century, part i.; and the authors there quoted and referred to by him.

It is proper here to remark, in reference to his title of "Saint," that among primitive Christians, in the early ages, the word *Saint* seems to have been used, perhaps invariably, as our modern word *Venerend*. It expressed, at first, veneration for the real virtues of godly pastors; by degrees it became a general title of men in the sacred office. Hence *Saint Ibar*, the predecessor in Ireland of *Saint Patrick*; hence *St. Cormic* and *St. Columbkille*. This title, in those apostolic times, was as different, in its use and design, from that of modern popery, as the title of *St. Paul* is from the title of *Judas*.

The *Saint Patrick* of the primitive and ancient Irish church is a totally different character from the Roman catholic Irish saint—*St. Padraig*. This is the true and correct name, as any one may see by looking into *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, vol. i. p. 317, Dublin edition. Hence the quotations of *Butler*—"Dornach-Padraig;" and "*Subhal Padraig*." By this name I shall carefully distinguish the *Irish Roman catholic saint* from the immortal Christian, *St. Patrick*.

I am inclined to think that we must admit that *St. Padraig* was either an impostor, or a merely fictitious character. If this man really converted the ancient Irish to christianity, meaning the Roman catholic religion, then he must have lived in the first or second century, when christianity was first propagated in Britain and Ireland.

But this cannot be; for first, popery, as we shall presently see, was not cradled, nor even born, in Ireland in those days. And, second, the authors of *St. Padraig's* stories do not pretend that he lived before the beginning of the fifth century. See *Butler's "Lives,"* i. 313. Those, therefore, who represent him as the first preacher of the gospel in Ireland, and the person who converted the Irish, do hold him up as an impostor, in the face of all historical facts.

I am inclined to view him as a mere fictitious character, modeled on that of *St. Patrick*. And he bears the same relation to the latter, which the characters in *Sir Walter Scott's* historical romances, clothed by that inimitable writer's fancy, in all their glory and pathos, bear to those of sober and real history. When popery triumphed over Ireland, some seven centuries after *St. Patrick* was in his grave, the foreign emissaries of Rome never could root out the native Irish's profound veneration and love of *St. Patrick*. He lived in their songs, in their mountain tales, in their wild and sweet music, in their unsubduable affection for his pure and simple christianity. The foreign priests and partizans of Rome, therefore, retained something like his name, if not the very name; they placed him a few centuries before his real time, or, rather, they placed the date of Irish catholic christianity before the days of its real christianity: then, in addition to this, they clothed him with miraculous powers; they held him up as a genuine hermit, and a true Romish fanatical ascetic. They make him perform eight hundred pious genuflections of a day; one third of the night he chants half of the psalms; one third, he lies on a cold stone pavement, with a block of granite for the pillow of his white hair; and one third, he stands up to the breast in cold water! On one occasion, he sails from Scotland, and again to England, upon a millstone; he feeds a company of friars, one day, on his only cow; next day she is alive, and grazing, as usual, in his meadow! A child half devoured by hogs, he raises from the dead, and makes entire! Even the more cautious *Butler* says, "he converted all Ireland by his preaching and miracles." And in his eulogy on him, he adds, that "he restored sight to the blind, healed the sick, and raised nine dead persons to life;" and "expelled, by his benediction, venomous creatures from Ireland!" Vol. i. p. 317.

Hence, *St. Padraig* is a pure fiction of the foreign Roman emissaries, palmed on the successors of the ancient Irish christians, whom, as usual, by frauds and imposture, they contrived to sink, by degrees, into the characteristic ignorance of Romanism; and thus they prepared them to receive any fictions at their hands, even the most incredible and absurd. And thus the deluded and brutalized children of the famous primitive Irish christians are sunk so low as to believe the popery of Rome and the romances of *St. Padraig* to be the gospel of Christ, and the preaching of the venerable and apostolic *St. Patrick*! Such was the origin of *St. Padraig*; and such has been the fearful result of this fiction, wielded by the Romish invaders of Ireland!

St. Patrick was a native of Scotland; born, it

is probable, at a place near Glasgow, which yet bears his name, namely, *Kilpatrick*. His original name was, as *Mosheim* observes, *Succathus*. He was a Roman citizen from his father's enjoying that rank under imperial Rome; and of good, if not of noble birth. Hence, as *Gibbon* observes, he probably, from this circumstance, took the name of *Patricius*, a *Patrician*, or nobleman. Hence the name *Patrick*.

One of the most satisfactory proofs of *St. Padraig's* being, as we have seen, a mere creature of a papist's fancy, is the constant and deliberate assertions of Roman catholics, that *St. Padraig* first preached the gospel in Ireland, and converted the Irish from paganism. This is enough to expose all the wild romance of their fictitious saint. One need ask no more than this, to upset the whole system, resting on this Atlas of *St. Padraig's* shoulders!

He must be deplorably ignorant of the first elements of history, who does not know that *Saint Patrick* arrived in Ireland in A. D. 432. I refer to *Mosheim* and his authorities.

But, he is equally ignorant of history who does not know that primitive and apostolical christianity was planted, and was flourishing in Ireland for centuries before his arrival. This is a period of Irish history which has been studiously concealed, and unblushingly perverted by modern papists. I know not a period of history, ancient or modern, in the old or new world, which has been more shamefully concealed, altered, and perverted. It has, in fact, been turned by popish priests, into the most fictitious of bold, ghostly romances!

Whosoever may have been the honored instrument in carrying the blessed gospel of Christ into Britain and Ireland, this is most certain—it came not from the Latins, or the Romish church; and the missionary was not a Latin, or a Roman.

The primitive teachers were from the Asiatic, or the African church, which in *St. Augustine's* days, proclaimed themselves independent of Rome and its bishop. See the decree of the *Milevitan council*, in *Mansi Collee. Concil. tom. iv. p. 507*.

Archbishop Usher has established this point in his book of *The Religion of the ancient Irish*. In all the quarrels between the Greek and the Latin churches, about the time of keeping Easter, the British and the Irish churches invariably retained their earliest and primitive practice, that of the Greek church. See *Usher*, chap. 10.

Mr. Grose, the eminent antiquarian, in his *Monastic Antiquities*, has observed that, "*Polycarp* sent missionaries to spread the gospel in the west and the northern parts of Europe. They gave a pure and uncorrupted ritual to their con-