The Antiquities of Ireland.

The Second Edition,

Additions And Corrections.

To Which Is Added

A Collection of Miscellaneous Antiquities.

EDWARD LEDWICH, L. L. D.

MEMBER OF MANY LEARNED SOCIETIES.

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1804.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN

EARL OF UPPER OSSORY,

BARON GOWRAN OF GOWRAN,

IN IRELAND:

AND IN ENGLAND

BARON UPPER OSSORY OF AMPTHILL,

AND

Lord Lieutenant of the County of Bedford,

A JUDGE AND A PATRON OF LEARNING AND THE POLITE ARTS,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The public sentiment in favour of the first Edition of these Essays, expressed in the respectable literary Journals at the time of their publication, encouraged the Author to prepare a second with considerable additions and corrections. Most of the additions have already appeared in the works of the different learned Societies, of which he has the honour to be a member.

That on the origin of Saxon and Gothic architecture, requires perhaps some apology for its introduction here; though the subject seems to be not unconnected with the beautiful specimens of these styles, still remaining in this kingdom.

The history of Kilkenny, is an attempt to trace the beginning and progress of an Irish city of some celebrity; and contains, probably, some memorials that may interest curiosity. Was this plan generally adopted, materials would be collected, valuable to future historians and antiquaries.
The few topographical antiquities at the end, were printed and published before the Author undertook to complete Grose’s Antiquities of Ireland, of which that amiable and excellent antiquary lived to write but seven pages.

The view of society and manners in ancient Ireland is, with little variation, the same as that of the most polished nations of modern Europe in remote periods. England, the bulwark of the civilized world, can behold without emotion, or mauvaise honte, her mental and political degradation at the arrival of the Romans, and smile with contempt at the flattering fables of Geoffry of Monmouth. Scotland, celebrated for talents and accomplishments, and rivalling her illustrious sister in her glorious career, assumes no pride from bardic tales, or the pages of Hector Boethius. No longer is the wild romance of Geoffry Keating, the heraldic registry of the Irish nation: its learning, its valour, and fame, are recorded in the more durable monuments of true history. When Hibernians compare their present with their former condition; their just and equal laws with those that were uncertain and capricious; the happy security of peace with the miseries of barbarous manners, their hearts must overflow with gratitude to the Author of such blessings: nor will they deny their obligations to the fostering care of Britain, the happy instrument for conferring them.

In a work, embracing such a variety of topics, errors will be found; the learned and candid can best estimate the difficulty of avoiding them, and the degree of indulgence they are entitled to. The Author declines hacknied apologies; in their place he begs leave to conclude with a line of an eminent poet:

“En adsum! et veniam, confessus crimina, posco.”

THE Character of the first and second Edition of this Work is extracted from the following very respectable authorities.

“We have thus taken a survey of Mr. Ledwich’s Essays on the Antiquities of Ireland. Instead of relying on etymology, like many of his predecessors, he has had recourse, when possible, to written authorities; which he first examines separately, and then compares with each other. His present work exhibits abundant marks of learning and industry.”

Analytical Review for May, 1792.

“The Antiquities of Ireland have been long neglected, or treated with strong prejudices for fable and visionary etymologies. It is with peculiar pleasure that we at length see a rational and learned work on this subject. Upon the whole, we have not perused any antiquarian work with more pleasure and instruction.”

Critical Review for August, 1792, and Appendix.

“When we meet with a professed Antiquary, who is at the same time a man of general learning, cultivated taste, liberality of sentiment, and a correct and elegant writer, (instances of which in such happy union are not very common) we accompany him in his literary and scientific excursions with care and peculiar satisfaction. Such a man, such a writer is Mr. Ledwich; whose entertaining and instructive performance we now, without farther preamble or ceremony, but with sincere pleasure, introduce to the acquaintance of our readers.

Thus have we endeavoured to give our readers a view of a performance in which we find much to commend and little to disapprove. If in an instance or two we might hesitate, or be inclined to object, our intention is overcome by the good sense, the learning, the judgment,
the diligence, the accuracy and the liberality which pervade the whole. We consider the public as indebted to this Author for so instructive and useful a production; which we trust will have its effect, in concurrence with other aids, towards the destruction of bigotry, superstition, and, false science, with all their idle fancies and childish chimaeras; and thus contribute to the advancement of solid learning, rational religion and virtue. The value of the Volume is still greatly enhanced by the Engravings, exact and beautiful, with which it is attended.”

*Monthly Review for May and June, 1793.*

“Seldom do we find such profound antiquarian investigations so free from hypothesis and conjecture, or so firmly established on well-selected authorities. Dr. Ledwich keeping the plan of that excellent Antiquary, Sir James Ware, in view, has omitted the fictions which strong national prejudices obliged the Knight to recite: with equal talents, superior information, and profound erudition, the Doctor has constructed his present work. The character here given of it coincides with the public opinion expressed of it on its first appearance. It was eagerly sought after, as alone exhibiting a genuine picture of the ancient state of Ireland.”

*British Critic, for September and October, 1804.*

“The account we have given of this very able work renders it unnecessary to speak further in commendation of it. We will only add, that it has the rare merit of being a cheap book, as well as a good one.”


“Ledwich’s book on the Antiquities of Ireland is a most valuable performance.”

*Gordon’s History of Ireland, Vol. 1. pag. 39.*

“In the preceding description, I follow Doctor Ledwich’s work, who illuminates and illustrates Irish Antiquities with classic taste and scientific wisdom.”

*Duhigg’s King’s Inns Remembrances, page 85.*

“Doctor Ledwich has published a second edition of his Antiquities of Ireland. Many years have elapsed since this work first excited and gratified the attention of the curious and learned world. Dr. Ledwich has now revised his Essays, and to the original number added nine others. They have always borne a high reputation, and confirmed upon their Author the deserved reputation of a good scholar, and an accurate and discriminative Antiquary.”

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THE
ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND.

ON THE ROMANTIC HISTORY OF IRELAND

When we review the remote histories of England, Scotland and Ireland, and find names and facts delivered with unhesitating confidence and chronological accuracy, it seems, at first sight, an unreasonable degree of scepticism to withhold our assent from them, or question their authenticity: but minuter enquiry satisfactorily evinces them to be but spacious delusions, and some of the numberless vagaries of the human mind.

The want of literary memorials created an impenetrable obscurity, which every attempt to deduce the origin of nations, or detail early events, was unable to penetrate or dispel. How then were national honour and high-born ancestry, the love of which is most conspicuous and prominent in rude people, to be supported? The answer is by poetic tales and bardic inventions; and hence we find the wild and naked German (1) sang the praises of his great progenitor, Tuisco; the Highlander of Scotland the exploits of Cuchullin, and the Hibernian the wonderful peregrinations of Milesius. Bardic fictions and unfounded traditions are the oral records of every barbarous nation.

As soon as society, by the aid of regular government and the use of letters, emerged from rudeness to an imperfect civilization, a new species of historic composition appeared, made (2) up of popular tales and genuine fads, so ingeniously interwoven as not only to referable but to pass for true history. This was the origin of romantic history, and of the Iliad, the Thebaid, the Argonautics and similar productions. These works flattered general prejudices by embodying and identifying truth and fiction, so that it (3) became a difficult task for subsequent writers to separate the one from the other. It was not without some struggle that people relinquished popular fables, the delight of their youth, and the constant themes of garrulous old age, however they vanished in the superior illumination of learning and criticism: wherever they are still retained, that people may be pronounced credulous and ignorant. What has been advanced will receive confirmation from examining the origin of romantic history in Ireland.

Ireland in the sixth and succeeding centuries possessed a literary reputation, which is proved by indisputable evidence. But her political constitution, municipal laws, and the prevailing studies of the times were but ill calculated to advance letters or improve civility. It cannot therefore be doubted, but that romantic history was a favourite subject, and much cultivated by a people thus circumstanced. But of this no monument exists antecedent to the (4) age of Nennius, A. D. 830. That it was much earlier must appear from his having consulted the most skilful Irish Antiquaries; who told him the fable of Pharaoh’s son-in-law, his expulsion from Egypt, his travels through Africa and Spain, and from thence to Ireland. Nennius’s judgment of this fiction is decisive, when he (5) declares, that there was no sure history of the origin of the Irish. A learned and very (6) ingenious writer has carefully examined and fully confuted the notion of the Hispanic extraction of the Irish; had he turned his thoughts to the origin of the fable, nothing more could have been said, at once to subvert it, and let the foolish fiction for ever at rest. The following hints are offered, in some sort, to supply their omission.

Spain, the (7) centre of oriental fabling, always enjoyed a celebrity above that of any European country; the Irish therefore esteemed it a matter of the greatest importance to exhibit a clear deduction of their ancestors from thence, and which their native writers, in every age,
have zealously inculcated. When the Arabians entered Spain in the beginning of the eighth century, (observe Nennius lived in the ninth) with the revival of Greek literature they introduced a knowledge of the sciences and arts before but little studied, and in many parts of western Europe not known. From the earliest period they cultivated magic ; they extolled their intimate acquaintance with the occult qualities of bodies ; their skill in metallurgy, in optics, in vitrification, and in precious stones and medicine supported their high pretensions, and astonished and confounded the incredulous. Nor were they less distinguished for a vein of romantic fiction : here they displayed an exuberance of fancy in the creation of imaginary beings, in the wildness and variety of their adventures, and in the extravagance of their fables, all springing from their modes of thinking and their peculiar philosophy. A brilliancy of thought and pomp of expression at once captivated and delighted the reader.

The pleasing contagion quickly diffused itself through every people : the genial warmth of oriental fiction enlivened their songs : the monotonous and dismal tales of blood and slaughter were succeeded by more amusing and sprightly relations, by the heroic achievements of gallantry, or the bland occupations of love ; all these worked up with Arabian inventions and Arabian philosophy are visible, as we shall see, not only in our civil history but in our hagiography.

The (8) Armoric and Welsh bards very early attained eminence in romantic fabling ; the Irish, who symbolized with them in every article of religion, soon adopted the same taste, as did the Cornish poets. The connexion between the Armoric Britons, the Cornish, the Welsh and Irish was for many ages intimate, so that a fondness for romantic history was soon propagated here : even the numerous resort of foreigners to our celebrated schools facilitated the introduction of this species of writing. A few proofs are necessary to establish what is now delivered.

Our mythologies (9) inform us that three Spanish fishermen arrived here before the flood, and soon after that awful event, the Fomoraigh or Africans (10) subdued the Isle, or others from the continent of Africa frequently visited it, and that it was finally colonized by (11) Milelius, a Spaniard. Nennius relates that these Spaniards in their voyage saw a tower of glass, which endeavouring to take, they were drowned in the attempt. This tower is a sure mark of an oriental fancy, and similar to the tower of glass, said to be built (12) by Ptolemy, and Boyardo’s wall of glass made by an African Magician, and the pillars of Hercules made erected on magical looking glasses.

The Milesians, when they landed in Ireland, had various (13) battles with the Tuatha de Danans, a nation of enchanters and magicians, whom they at length subdued by superior skill and bravery.

In our Legends the same spirit of romantic fiction abounds. No one (14) but a virgin could use the magic girdle of St. Colman. St. Cuthbert’s zone cures many diseases. An Irish priest complains to St. Gerald, that a huge rock impeded the navigation of a river, immediately the Saint throws a (15) wonderful stone on it, and it splits into pieces. At another time he puts the same stone into the mouth of a dead man and he revives. St. Kiaran, St. Fechin and St. Ænd are as safely conveyed over rivers, lakes, and the ocean on stones as in ships. The mystical power of stones declares the oriental complexion of our spiritual romances.

Some of our fictions are of a later date. Thus St. Patrick, a personage who (16) never existed but in legendary story, is born in Taburnia in Cornwall ; his mother (17) is (18) Conchessa, a Frenchwoman of Tours : others make him a native of Airmuirc or Armorica. From this region
he and his sister Lupita are carried away by Irish pirates. He goes to Rome, and on his return preaches in Cornwall: Fingar also and other Irish Saints travel to Armorica, "The people of Cornwall, says Camden, have always borne such veneration to Irish Saints, who retired there, that almost all their towns have been consecrated to their memory."

In a (19) council held by St. Patrick, all the unconverted Irish are baptized, and so violent a religious paroxysm seizes them, that thirty thousand, divided into three bodies, begin a pilgrimage with the Saint's benediction to Rome and Jerusalem, and other parts of Europe, Asia and Africa. Here is a fiction calculated to countenance the Crusades, and not earlier than the eleventh century, or it may refer to the seventy thousand persons who took a voyage to Palestine, A.D. 1062, and who were either killed or made prisoners. It is remarkable that the learned Jesuit, Bollandus, from a (20) critical and judicious examination (well worth perusal) dates the fabrication of our Legends about the eleventh century.

Many of the bardic figments are still more recent. The (21) Milesians in a starry night of winter discovered Ireland from the tower of Brigantia in Galicia by the help of a telescope. Roger Bacon (22) affirms, that Julius Caesar before he invaded Britain, viewed with a telescope her shores and harbours. He died in the thirteenth century.

In (23) Ossian's combat of Osgar and Illan, a beautiful damsel complains, that Illan, eldest son of the king of Spain, pursued her, and threatened wounds and destruction to the Fians: "wherever he goes, adds she, to the east or west, or to the four quarters of the world, his sharp-edged weapon makes every foe yield the victory." The words — four quarters of the world — evince this poem to have been written in the fifteenth century. Numberless other figments are of the same date. The fifteenth century is noted for literary impostures and supposititious authors. The Berosus, Manetho, Megasthenes and Cato of Annius of Viterbo, the Tuscan inscriptions of Inghiramius, and Boethius's Scottish history are the productions of this period, and their fabulous character well known. At this time, says (24) a learned writer, men began to be inquisitive into matters of antiquity, and therefore some who had more learning and better inventions than others, set themselves to work to gratify this curiosity. The success of their impostures was so great, that it became no easy matter to undeceive the public, and convince them they were but forgeries. Trithemius, an ecclesiastic of learning in this age, gave a plausible list of ideal French princes from their departure from Troy, which he declared was taken from an ancient author, named Hunibald. Frederic, Elector of Saxony, writ to Trithemius, requesting Hunibald might be sent to him. Trithemius had no way to screen his forgery, or evade compliance but by saying, the MS. was not in his possession, having changed his residence from Hitchau to Wurtzburgh, so that it was fairly (25) concluded — que cet auteur pretendu est de la propre fabrique de Tritheme.

Emancipated at length from the bondage of ignorance, credulity and superstition by the cultivation of learning, the human mind acquired a firm tone and power of discrimination to which it had been long a stranger. The evanescent meteors of romantic history lost all their charms; truth and authentic records were the guiding stars of every enlightened historian and antiquary; nor is it undeserving notice, that the northern writers, whose annals are clouded with fables, were among the foremost in this laudable career. Bartholine (26) desires his reader to use much caution in perusing the Icelandic chronicles, and in separating the true from the false; and not to be imposed on by the words — fornum bokum or old books — or fornum sogum or poetic fictions —

Loccenius, a celebrated lawyer and antiquary of Upsal in Sweden, (27) declares the ancient Swedish history to be so uncertain, that, not to mislead the reader, he would place no dates in
his margin antecedent to the age of St. Eric, A. D. 1150, nor was any historical relation to be depended on before the introduction of Christianity in the reign of Bero or Biorn, A. D. 816. These acknowledgments while they upbraided our pertinacity in defending palpable fictions, produced some good effects. Some it emboldened totally to reject our fables; others with a timorous and trembling hesitancy relinquished some of them, and weakly endeavoured to defend others.

Great care and critical sagacity, according to (28) O’Flaherty, are to be exercised in the choice of Irish MSS. Some are plainly apocryphal, or inventions for amusement; some to flatter the pride and ambition of Patrons are filled with hyperbolical and incredible narrations: however, adds he, undoubted truths may be drawn from them, as tradition and the consent of antiquaries allow. — This writer in another (29) work tells us, that as to Scotia, the daughter of Pharaoh, who gave the name of Scotia to Ireland, the Irish when they embraced Christianity and became conversant with sacred writ, thought it glorious to their country to have their ancestors derived by a mother from the Egyptian Pharaoh, and to have had familiar conversation with Moses and the Israelites. — Here O’Flaherty sees the childish absurdity of Irish fables, but fears to offend popular prejudices.

Very different is the language of two eminent Prelates. Doctor Talbot, titular Archbishop of Dublin in 1674, a man of talents, family, and by no means a bigot, observes, that (30) among our Annalists and writers who merit little regard are those vernacular authors whom Colgan calls the Four Masters: for they were illiterate and so devoted to party that but little of truth can be collected or inferred from their performances. Nor is there any relying on Keating who follows them, for he expressly treats of the genealogies of the Irish, deducing them in distinct generations from Adam. Many things he introduces from Bardic poems, filled with stories of giants. What valuable information can be had from such writers, I profess myself ignorant.

Doctor O’Brien, titular Bishop of Cloyne, author of an Irish dictionary and a man of letters, delivers (31) his sentiments with equal boldness and candour. “Parsons in his remains of Japhet seems but too well inclined to favour the antiquities of Ireland, without considering, that nothing could be of greater prejudice or discredit to them than asserting those fabulous genealogies, and the stories of the travels of the supposed leaders and chiefs of their ancient colonies, such as have been rejected with just contempt by all learned nations: first invented in Ireland by Bards and Romancers after they came to some knowledge of both sacred and profane history. The real and true antiquities of Ireland are not to be derived from any other sources than our authentic annals; such as those of Tigernach, of Innisfallen, the Chronicon Scotorum and a few others, wherein are no fabulous stories, such as those in the book called leaver Gabbhala, and others of that kind published in the translation of Keating’s history of Ireland, which he never intended for the public, but for the (32) amusement of private families.”

But there are two works, much relied on by native writers; these are the (33) Psalter of Cashel and Cormac’s glossary. Lhuyd and Nicolson say, a part of the first is in the Bodleian Library, but I do not recollect any one, who professes to have seen it. Walsh gives this extract from it, which must destroy its credit as an historical record: “That the Picts served in Thrace under one Polycornus, that they fled that country, and roamed up and down at sea till they came to Gaul, and there founded the City of Pictavia: that they were forced to leave Gaul and retire to Ireland: that Trosdan, a magician, advised the Irish army to bathe in the milk of one hundred and fifty white crumple-horned cows, as a sure antidote against the envenomed arrows of the Britons.”
This is the wonderful Psalter composed by Cormac, Prince of Munster and Bishop of Cashel. Such daring sceptics as Stillingfleet, Innes and Pinkerton condemn it as romantic; but what true Milesian will believe them?

As to Cormac’s glossary Lynch (34) says it was the work of Cairbre Liffechair, A. D. 279. Colgan, as good authority, ascribes it to Cormac Ulfhada. A. D, 257. O’Conor, who published O’Flaherty’s Ogygia vindicated in 1775, and was well acquainted with Irish literature, had never seen this glossary, and (35) fears it was lost to the public. However it is said to have been printed in the last century by O’Clery, one of the four Masters, whose characters are impartially exhibited by Archbishop Talbot before. Lynch and Colgan are better informed than later antiquaries, and neither give the composition to Cormac of Cashel, but to others, who lived above six hundred years before Cormac. But even Lynch and Colgan are romancing, when they suppose letters known or common in the third century. Grant that Cormac Mac Cuilenan was author of a glossary in the tenth century, was not this to serve as an interpreter to the precedent Irish language, grown obsolete in his time? This is the common idea of the use of a glossary, and it evinces the fluctuation and corruption of the language. It is now nine hundred years since Cormac writ this pretended glossary; has the Irish tongue suffered no alteration in such a lapse of ages? It must have astonishingly changed, when we are assured by the author of an Irish grammar, that the Irish language of (36) four hundred years back is totally different from the present, in sense and orthography. Let the reader mark the words, sense and orthography, and draw his conclusion as to the authenticity of this impudent and blundering forgery. I should not have detained the reader so long, were not Cormac’s glossary and psalter constantly appealed to as authentic literary monuments. The book of Lecan is another Irish record of equal veracity. From these a new species of romantic fabling has been introduced by the noted author of the Colleclanea de rebus Hibernicis, grounded on etymology, similitude of names and religious practices. In certain stages of society there is an almost identity of names and usages in the adoration of the Supreme Being, and as far as clouded reason permitted, an imperfect acknowledgment of his attributes. Are the Irish to be derived from the natives of Easter island in the Pacific ocean, because both erected ponderous structures of stone as temples for their deities? Are the Irish the same people as the Peruvians, because both adored the sun? But is it not making a mockery of the sacred oracles to introduce a Druid prophesying of the advent of our Redeemer on the authority of (37) Cormac’s glossary. Of the same stamp is a coincidence deduced from the similarity of names. Ith, the son of Breogan, and grandson of Milesius, all romantic personages, is made (38) Ithobaal, and supposed to be alluded to by the prophets. A work containing such positions would have been more properly addressed to a heathen than to a christian and very religious prince.

As to etymology, the other column of the new romantic history of Ireland, take this specimen from the same author. “Milesius was not a proper name but an epithet, being Mileless and Milespain, i. e. the hero of the ship. Mil is a champion from the Chaldee Malca, rex. Ess and Spain signify a ship, from the Hebrew ess, lignum, and Speia nauta. Malach in Hebrew and Melach and Melachoir in Irish, signify nauta, in Arabic mullah is a sailor and susina a ship.” Are you not astonished and illuminated, gentle reader, at this wonderful display of oriental literature? From these brilliant etymological evidences can any fact be clearer than that this patriarch being a great naval commander, and of course a great voyager and traveller, preferred the cool and humid charms of Ireland to the heat and aridity of eastern climates. May we not apply what Warburton said of Gale’s Court of the Gentiles, — that it would scarcely be believed the man was serious, had he not given us, in his numerous tomes, such lamentable proofs of his being in earnest?
It must occur to every reflecting mind, that pretensions to very high antiquity could only be supported by authentic records, the value of which could never be appreciated while they lay buried in public libraries or private collections, or were only exhibited in detached scraps. “Therefore,” says Stillingfleet in 1685, “it would tend very much to the clearing of antiquities, if some of these ancient annals and leiger books were printed. For it hath rendered their credit the more suspicious, because they have been so long kept up, when all the old English annals have been carefully published.” Innes, in 1729, after describing the manner in which Irish fictions were by the moderns brought into some confidence and shape, observes that the originals are kept out of sight to conceal their deformity and their contradictions to all true history. And he spiritedly adds, — we are now no more in ages of ignorance and credulity. Men have begun long since to measure their belief of remote antiquities by their vouchers.— In 1783, Mr. Edm. Burke declared his opinion, that extracts from Irish MSS. only increased curiosity, and the just demand of the public for some entire pieces, and that until this is done, the ancient period of Irish history, which precedes official records, cannot be said to stand on proper authority. In 1786, Mr. Burke says in a letter, “will you have the goodness to pardon me for reminding you of what I once before took the liberty to mention; my earnest wish that some of the ancient Irish historical monuments should be published as they stand, with a translation in Latin or English. Until something of this kind is done criticism can have no secure anchorage.” The earnest wish of these excellent scholars would have long since have been complied with, could these Irish MSS. have borne the light: part of their contents have already been given, and it is certainly for the honour of the country to suffer them to remain for ever in obscurity.

In 1440, when it was the boast of Britons to be descended from Brutus and his Trojans, and every writer flattered this popular prejudice, John du Wheathamstead, Abbot of St. Alban’s, an ecclesiastic of high dignity and superior accomplishments, delivers the following manly and judicious sentiments, which I wish the Irish nation and Irish historians may hereafter adopt. “Some, says he, look upon the story of Brutus as no other than, a ridiculous piece of soppery and vanity, to lay claim to nobility of descent, when we cannot ground our pretence on any probable foundation. It is virtue alone that gives nobility to any nation, and it is a greatness of mind with an exactness of reason that makes the true gentleman. Let this therefore be allowed the British nation, as a sufficient evidence of their honourable original, that they are courageous and resolute in war, have been superior to all their enemies round, and that they have a natural aversion to servitude.”

Had the learned Abbot recollected, he would have added these lines of the Roman Satyrist:

\[ \text{Malo pater sit Thersites, dummodo tu sis} \\
\text{Æacidae similis, Vulcanaq ; arma capessas,} \\
\text{Quam te Thersiti similis producat Achilles.} \]

To conclude. From this view of the ancient as well as the modern romantic history of Ireland, and the reprobation of both by the most enlightened antiquaries, it may reasonably be asked what objects deserve the attention of the learned and inquisitive? To this I answer with confidence, that there are as many curious and interesting subjects for antiquarian investigation, and supported by authentic records and existing monuments, as are to be found in any country, not the seat of an empire. The colonization of the Isle, the formation of the Irish alphabet, the state of literature from the sixth to the ninth century, our ancient music, round towers, stone-roofed crypts, our coins, laws, with our pagan religion and primitive Christianity, all admit proofs and solicit illustration, which they have never received. These and other topics would abundantly exercise the ingenuity and erudition of the philologer, the grammarian, architect, theologian and antiquary. These Essays pretend to no more than to
exhibit some new views and new illustrations of the foregoing subjects; supported by plain
sense and solid authorities.

Quicquid id est, sylvestre licet videatur acutis
Auribus, et nostro tantum memorabile pago;
Dum mea resticitas, si non valet arte polita
Carminis, at certe valeat veritate probari.

(1) Celebrant carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriae annalium est, &c. Tacit.
Germ.
(2) Milesius cyclicus, sic dictus, quoniam cyclum partim mythicum, partim historicum scrip-
serat, ita ut veresimilitudinem & ad probilitatis historiæ legem exigeret ea, quæ a poetis,
See also Salmas. Plin. Exorcit. in Solin. p. 846. where much curious learning may be
found on the original poetic and historic compositions of the Greeks.
(3) Quo quidem confilio nihil polerat esse ineptius, nihil ad ipsas historias pernociosius.
Heyne, sup.
(4) I am obliged to speak of this author's work as authentic, because others have done so,
though I think it the patched production of various writers, or one of the supposititious
performances of the middle ages.
(7) Warton's Hist. of English Poetry, V. i. Diff. i.
(8) Warton, Supra.
(9) Keating, p18. — 46.
(10) Keating p.11
(11) Pinkerton has the following curious note. " Nennius knew nothing of Melisius, but only
mentions Miles quidam Hispanus, a certain Spanish soldier. Of this Miles the Irish made
(12) Warton, sup. sect. 15
(13) Keating, p. 55.
(16) Sec this proved hereafter.
(18) Usser. sup.
(19) Usser. sup. p. 952.
(20) Vix uillas enim sanctorum Hibernicorum vitas habemus in manibus, quas possumus
died in 1665.
(21) Keating, p. 44.
(22) Warton, sup.
(23) Trans. of the Royal Irish Acad. V. 1. p. 74.
(24) Stillingfleets Brit. churches, pres.
(26) Plurima itaque cautela in libris veteribus Islandicens utendum est, & veræ historiæ a falsis
(27) Valde lubrica & incerta, & proinde ne lectori imponderem, placuit nullam potius quam
incertam ad oram annalium attexere, Locc. Antiq. Suco-Goth. p. 421. Sternhook, de jure
Sucon. p. 4.
(28) De Codicum Hibernicorum dilectu nunc maxima est habenda cura & acre judicium
O’Flah. Ogyg. prælog. p. 34 — 35. And Stanihurst, Hæc quidem fomnia fabularum
aniculæ fortassis admirationem, Abderæ alicui applausum, intelligentibus vero risum
(29) Ogyg. vind. p. 55.
(30) Inter annales vel auctores fide dignos locum non merentur nonnulli nostri vernaculi
Scriptores (quorum aliquos Colganus quatuor Magistros appellat) erant enim homines
(32) It is singular, that the celebrated northern Eddas were compiled with the same intent.
“Nec quidem ipsius auctori, sive Sturlonides ille fuerit sive alius, aliud propositum fuit,
ipsomet profitente, quam hasce poetarum antiquorum fictiones, apto ordine connectere &
(33) Walsh’s prospect, p. 490.
(36) Collect. de reb. Hib. No. 7. p. 331, and before p. 325. And No. 13. p. 115, no words can
be stronger.
(37) Vindic. of the ancient history of Ireland, by the author of the Collect. p. 199.
(38) Vindic. sup. p. 302. & seq.
(39) Vindic. sup. p. 294.
(40) Antiq. of Brit. chur. p. 248—249.
(42) Collection. No. n. 13. 133.
(43) Campbell’s Strict. p. 294
(44) Apud Camden, inhabitants, &c.

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