

# HENRY BROOKE

AN ESSAY ON THE  
ANTIENIT AND MODERN  
STATE OF IRELAND

Henry Brooke

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Modern State of Ireland**

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**Brooke H.**

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# An Essay on the Antient and Modern State of Ireland

## Dedication

TO

Matthew M<sup>c</sup>. Namara,  
Of *LIMERICK*, Esq;  
Counsellor at LAW.

Justly sensible, Sir, how sincerely You have the Character and Esteem of our Native Country at Heart, I take Leave to offer to Your Perusal, and commend to Your favourable Acceptance, the following Sheets.

What gave them Rise, was my happening, some Time since, to have fallen into Company with two or three sprightly young Gentlemen, then just returned from their Continental Rambles, – who – altho' little burthened with the Religion, Laws, Learning, Policy, Customs, Habits, Manners, or Languages of any, or the several Countries they had scampered thro', affected, nevertheless, an high Contempt for this, – their Native.

I listened with silent Indignation, and determined to contribute my Mite towards giving such unattentive, uninformed Youths, a more adequate Idea of this Kingdom, under its ancient and under its present happy Establishment.

The common Accidents of Time must lead them by better Authority to clearer Knowledge: In the mean while, I profess my Obligations to them, as they have given me this Opportunity of declaring my Regard to my Country in general, and the particular Attachments that ever bind me, in the strictest Sense of Fidelity and Esteem, to a Friend so worthy as You have been to,

Sir,

Your very obliged, and  
Most obedient Servant.

## Essay

In a Nation, where almost every Gentleman is better acquainted, and more conversant, with the Nature and Circumstances of other Countries than those of his own, the Publication of such Hints as may somewhat contribute to remove so odd an Inattention, and induce those far better qualified to render a Subject so interesting some Justice, will not, I hope, be deemed an Impertinence; in one especially who, by this Essay, however feeble, hath nothing beside the Honour and Advantage of *Ireland* in View, a Kingdom whereof he is, without Vanity, proud of being a Native.

As the Story of Savages and Barbarians can contain nothing instructive, or entertaining, the *Antemilesian* Inhabitants of this Land having been mostly such, and all surviving Accounts of them almost totally overcast with Fable, we are therefore, in treating of the antient *Scotia*, or modern *Ireland*, to refer principally to three distinguished æras, whereof the *first* is, its being peopled by an *Iberian* or *Spanish* Colony: The *second*, truly glorious, the Arrival of *St. Patrick*, in his most salutary Mission: The *third* and last, its Cession to *Henry* the Second, King of *England*, (the first of the Royal Race of *Plantagenet*) partly from a pretended Title of *Adrian* the Fourth, Pope of *Rome*; partly from the restless and insatiable Desires of *Henry*; *more* from the manifold Infirmities of the then reigning *Irish* Chiefs – but above all, from the peculiarly adverse Fate of *Roderick*, the last of our Kings.

The assiduous, exact, and candid Author of the *Dissertations*,<sup>1</sup> lately published, on the Origin, Government, Letters, Sciences, Religion, Manners and Customs of the antient Inhabitants of this Country, hath put all those Matters in so clear and happy, and, at the same Time, in so strong a Light, by the Powers of various foreign Testimonies, of undeniable Authenticity, coincident with our own, that scarce any Thing new can be offered on the same Subject.

It may, however, in general be observed, that *Milesius*, a *Spanish* Prince, so far back as the Reign of *Solomon* (instigated by Necessity, or induced by Ambition) with a considerable Number of Associates and Followers, landed from the Western Parts of *Spain*, on the Southern Coasts of this Island, where it is probable they met little, or but faint Opposition, from wild and undisciplined Inhabitants.

Those People, from their early Knowledge of the *Phœnician* Arts and Letters, imported such Rudiments of Government and Learning, as those primitive Times admitted; a Truth visible from the Similarity or rather Identity of the *Phœnician* and *Scotic* Alphabet.

This antient Colony quietly settled here, remote from the Storms and Revolutions of the greater World, and secured by Situation from its hostile Incursions, there is no Doubt but the Cultivation of Religion, Philosophy, Politicks, Poetry, and Musick, became the chief Objects of popular Study and Application: The Spirit of Ambition in succeeding Ages, with its unhappy concomitant Train of Sedition, Faction, and Violence, the foreign Invasions, and often the intestine Oppressions and Calamities, to which our neighbouring Nations were subject, calling forth the protective or conciliating Aids of those ancient Heroes, made them great Masters also in the Art military.

The Pentarchy originally formed by those *Iberian* or *Celtic Spaniards*, with a popular Right of Election, was certainly a Kind of Government extremely consistent with the Essence and Genius of true Liberty, and a System derived from the Patriarchs themselves. For when the various Necessities of Society required a Subordination, together with some stated Maxims to go by, to avoid the confused and promiscuous Intercourse in a State of Nature; then did the People elect the most Virtuous and Wise, to lead and conduct them in Times of War and Trouble; to govern, inform, and protect them, in milder and more auspicious Seasons. Then was the Motto of the Crown, or of the chief Ensign of Pre-eminence, *Digniori detur*, and so continued till the Degeneracy of Time, and the baneful Growth of Avarice and Pride, with the feverish Lust of Power, perverted it to —*Rapiat Fortior!*

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<sup>1</sup> *Dublin*, 1753, *M. Reilly*, Editor.

Such, thro' a long Succession of Ages, was the Condition, and such at length the Fate of this Kingdom, destroyed after a longer Continuance than any other can boast, by the Abuse of its own Powers; a sure Argument that all created Beings, all sublunary Institutions, however wisely composed, in the very Essence of their Creation, and in the very Rudiments of their Formation, comprehend, at the same Time, the Seeds of Dissolution: Yet it is not more remarkable than true, that in the most boisterous Periods of this Kingdom's antient Establishment, the Arts and Sciences, with the fundamental Principles of Constitution, were preserved and cherished with inviolable Assiduity. The Priests, Philosophers, Advocates, Annalists, Poets and Musicians, were obliged to preserve Religion, political Wisdom, Law, History, &c. hereditarily in their respective Tribes, and to educate in these different Branches the Chiefs and Nobles of the Land, for which they were graciously maintained in secure and splendid Tranquillity: Those Sages attended the National Conventions, where all publick Acts were religiously recorded, and all Abuses of Power and Government retrenched or reformed; nor were they permitted, except in Case of extraordinary Necessity, or uncommon Merit, to deviate from their proper and primitive Spheres of Action: Since, where an harmonious Subordination of Rank and Order hath not been duly preserved, even in free Estates, Liberty itself (wisely attempered, the greatest of all social Blessings) hath often, from Abuse and Neglect, sickened into Licentiousness, the immediate lewd Mother of Anarchy! In the visible Creation, the direct Result of infinite Wisdom, the lesser Planets do not interfere with, much less shock or oppose the Motions and Revolutions of the greater; they constantly keep the Distances first prescribed them, and all move regularly to their respective Ends. The most verdant and fragrant Meadows may, from the too frequent Irruption of muddy Waters, degenerate into noxious Marshes, if some Care was not taken to divert those impure Gushings into their proper Channels. Hence it may be inferred, that laying open the most honorary, as well as important and useful Professions of Society, to the Intrusion, or rather pyratyical Invasions, of the Scum and Dregs of the People, cannot, however varnished over with the fictitious Colourings of pretended Liberty, consist with true Political Wisdom.

Those ancient *Sophi* and *Literati* enjoyed their Places with the greater Security, that they were uninvadable by the inferior Classes of Mankind; with the greater Content and Chearfulness, that much Esteem and Emolument were connected with them: The Priest and Advocate informed and directed the Conscience and Conduct; the Historian and Annalist recorded the Institutions; the Poet and Musician celebrated and sung the Exploits of their Kings and Leaders: No Wonder then this Kingdom should have been revered at Home, and admired Abroad; when Religion formed, Erudition nurtured, Philosophy strengthened, History preserved, Rhetorick adorned, Musick softened, and Poesy refined, the National Wisdom and Accomplishments; to all which was added, a thorough Knowledge of Tactics, and great Skill and Agility in all the athletick Arts, and bodily Exercises.

In the Versions of some original Codes exported by our Countryman, the learned and pious St. *Fiechry*, still extant in the *Navarre* Library at *Paris*, the Constitutional Wisdom of *Ireland* appears in a clear and happy Light: Persons, Things, Actions, and Expressions, were cautiously attended to, by the Laws; *Persons*, in their Minority, Youth, and Manhood, according to their different Ranks in the State, so as by Care, Education, and Discipline, to render them, some subservient, others useful, some beneficial, and others ornamental thereunto. *Things*, so carefully, as to prevent, by prohibitory Laws, Wastes of whatsoever Kind, and to ascertain to each Individual, as well as Society, their proper and distinct Rights. *Actions*, by directing those in general, and particular, to the Honour of the Deity and Welfare of the Community: *Expression*, by the penal Interdiction of prophane Cursing and Swearing, Obscenity, Scurrility, Calumny, and Detraction, yet with a full Indulgence of proper Satire against such as merited popular Reprehension, or Contempt; the Satirist's Pen in those Days being as much dreaded, or rather more so, than the Magistrate's Rod, and consequently as diligently avoided by a Demeanour absolutely irreproachable.

It appeareth that, under the antient Government of *Ireland*, the Education of the landed Gentry, when Luxury, with its wasteful Catalogue of Vices, had not rendered Property so mutable and

wavering as in modern Ages, was provided for; whether by the immediate Care of Parents, or essential Attention of Guardians, by the Laws of the Land; in order that Gentlemen should, to the Antiquity of Birth and Possession, add the important Dignity of Learning, and social Refinement of Arts: Since a Man at the Head of an original Estate, who should want the necessary Cultivation of Letters, was considered only as a Peasant in Disguise, and not more respected than a Hewer of Wood, or Drawer of Water.

In these Writings of St. *Fiechry*, the legislative Wisdom of *Olam-Fodla*; the philosophically-religious Capacity of *Cormac-O Quin*, who, from the pure Light of Nature, in a great Measure defeated the absurd *Polytheism* of the *Druids*; the consummate Integrity and Impartiality of *Federach* the Just, and *Moran* his Chief Justice; the Magnanimity of *Con-Ked-Cathagh*; the Conquests of *Kineth Mac Alpin*; the long, glorious, and peaceful Reign of *Conary* the Great, *coeval* with the Birth of our Blessed Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, (undoubtedly the happiest, brightest, and most blissful Period the World ever saw;) are all displayed in a copious masterly Style, yet with strict chronological Exactness.

This learned St. *Fiechry* was Founder of the University in *Paris*, in the Beginning of the 8th Century. The better to enable him to carry on that noble Work, he obtained of *Charles* the Great a Tax on all Wheel-Carriages, within the Barriers of that City: Whence, a Hackney-Coach is at this Day technically term'd *Fiacre*.

*Charles* the Great, in order to repair the cruel and truly lamentable literary Dilapidations of the ferocious North-men, invited Numbers of the learned and pious *Irish* to the Continent, where he established and entertained them with Dignity, Tenderness, and Respect. In a curious Manuscript of *Nicholaus Gurtlerus*, (now in the *French King's Parisian Library*) Author of the *Origines Mundi*, where he alludes to these Times, you find the following favourable, but true Account of *Ireland*. —*Temporibus illis, barbaris Normannorum Cohortibus undequaque irrumpentibus, Religio, Fides, Philosophia, Virtus, Hospitalitas, Fortitudo, Castitas, necnon et Amœniores omnium generum Artes, Hibernia solummodò natali, veluti Solo, viguerunt*; little Wonder that *Ireland* should have been esteemed the *Ierne*, or sacred Isle of the *Greeks*, the *Insula Sanctorum*, or Island of Saints of the *Romans*. – Would to Heaven our Countrymen had, upon all considerable Occasions, recollected those deserved Encomiums, thereby to approve them worthy their applauded Origin, and native Soil!

We now proceed to consider *Ireland* in her happiest and brightest View, after the Admission and Propagation of Christianity. It is certain there were many Christians in *Ireland*, before the Arrival of *Palladius* in 431, or of St. *Patrick* the Year following: St. *Kieran*, St. *Ailbe*, St. *Declan*, and St. *Ibar*, whom *Ussher* calls the Precursors, or Forerunners of St. *Patrick*, are pregnant Proofs of this; they were of the Birth of *Ireland*, from whence they travelled to *Rome*, in Search of Education and Learning, where they lived some Years, were ordained, and returned Home about the Year 402.

It seems that those early Preachers confined their Labours to particular Places, in which they had considerable Success, but fell very short of converting the Body of the Nation: However, they sowed the Seed which St. *Patrick* came after to water: And it is certain that St. *Patrick* was so well satisfied with the Progress they made, in their particular Districts in *Munster*, that this was the last Province in *Ireland* he thought proper to visit. That there were many Christians in *Ireland*, at this Period, seems to be confirmed by *Prosper*, who, in giving an Account of the Mission of *Palladius*, says, that he was ordained by Pope *Celestin*, and sent the first Bishop to the *Scots* believing in Christ. This Passage can mean nothing else, but that *Palladius*, born in Britain, was sent to the *Scots* [i.e. the *Irish*] who had already formed Churches under *Kieran*, *Ailbe*, *Declan* and *Ibar*; and so the Bishop of St. *Asaph* expounds it. This then was the next Attempt that was made for the Conversion of the *Irish*: *Palladius* engaged in a more ample and extensive Design than his Predecessors, yet he failed in the Execution of it, stay'd but a short Time in *Ireland*, and did little worth remembring; he converted, however, a few, and is said to have founded three Churches; but he had neither Courage to withstand the Fierceness of the heathen *Irish*, nor Abilities, for Want of the Language, proper for the Work.

*Nathi*, the Son of *Garcon*, an *Irish* Prince, opposed his preaching; upon which *Palladius* left the Kingdom, and died in the Land of the *Picts*, on the 15th of *December*, 431. This glorious Work was reserved for *St. Patrick*, to whose holy Life, divine Mission, and extraordinary Success, I refer the Reader. This great Apostle of the *Irish* founded and built the Cathedral Church of *Ardmagh*, about the Year 444, or 45, which, from that early Period to this, hath continued the Metropolitan Church of all *Ireland*. So that 1194 Years passed away from the Founding of the City of *Rome*, to that of *Ardmagh*.

The various and most signal Blessings derived to this Nation, from the salutary Mission of this illustrious Saint, require, in Gratitude, our giving the Reader yet a further Account of the Author of such Happiness and Glory to *Ireland*.

He was born in the extreme Bounds of *Britain*, (in that Part thereof which is now comprehended within the Limits of the modern *Scotland*) at a Village called *Banaven*, in the Territory of *Tabernia*, (as he himself saith in his Confession) in *Vico Banaven Taberniae*, &c. He tells us that he was born of a good Family. *Ingenuus fui secundum Carnem*. His Father was *Calphurnius*, a Deacon, who was the Son of *Potitus*, a Priest; from whence may be clearly inferred that the Clergy were not restrained from Matrimony in that Age. He was just advanced into his sixteenth Year, when he was taken Captive, the Manner of which is thus related by *St. Evin* and others: His Father, Mother, Brother, and five Sisters, undertook a Voyage to *Aremorick Gaul*, (now called *Bass Bretagne*) to visit the Relations of his Mother *Couchessa*. It happened about this Time, that the seven Sons of *Factmude*, a *British* Prince, were banished, and took to the Sea; that, making an Inroad into *Aremorick Gaul*, they took *Patrick* and his Sister, *Lupita*, (some say *Tigrida* also) Prisoners. They brought their Captives to the North of *Ireland*, and sold *Patrick* to *Milcho Mac Huanan*, a Prince of *Dalaradia*: Others tell the Story in a different Manner, and with a stronger Degree of Probability. That the *Romans* having deserted *Britain*, to preserve their own Country from the barbarous Incursions of the *Northern Hive*, the *Irish* made frequent Conquests, in *North Britain* especially, whence returning victorious, in one of those Expeditions among others brought *Patrick* Captive. But in this they all agree, and he himself confirms it, that he continued Prisoner in *Ireland* six Years; he was sold to *Milcho* and his three Brothers, which gave Occasion of his changing his Name into *Cathraigh*, or rather *Ceathir-Tigh*, because he served four Masters; *Ceathir* signifying four, and *Tigh* a House or Family. *Milcho* observing the Care and Diligence of his new Servant, bought out the Shares of his Brothers, and made him his own Property. He sent him to feed his Hogs on *Sliev-Mis*. And *St. Patrick* himself tells us his Behaviour in this Office.

“My constant Business was to feed the Hogs. I was frequent in Prayer; the Love and Fear of God more and more inflamed my Heart; my Faith was enlarged, and my Spirit augmented, so that I said an hundred Prayers by Day, and almost as many by Night. I arose before Day to my Prayers, in the Snow, in the Frost, and in the Rain, and yet I received no Damage; nor was I affected with Slothfulness; for then the Spirit of God was warm within me.” It was here he perfected himself in the *Irish* Language, the wonderful Providence of God visibly appearing in this Instance of his Captivity, that he should have the Opportunity in his tender Years of becoming well acquainted with the Language, Manners, and Dispositions of that People, to whom he was intended as a future Apostle. He continued six whole Years in Servitude, and in the seventh was released. There seems to have been a Law in *Ireland* for this Purpose, agreeable to the Institution of *Moses*, that a Servant should be released the seventh Year.

Having parted from his Master, after a great Variety of Distresses, he at length arrived to his Parents, who received him with extraordinary Joy; with these he remained two Years, and probably would much longer, had he not by a Vision been quickened to a more active and glorious Life. In this he thought he saw a Man coming to him from *Ireland*, whose Name was *Victoricus*, with a great Number of Letters; that he gave him one of them to read, in the Beginning of which were contained these Words, *Vox-Hiberionacum*, the Voice of the *Irish*: While he was reading this Letter, he thought the same Moment, that he heard the Voice of the Inhabitants who lived near the Wood of *Foclut*, in the Barony of *Tyr-Awley*, and County of *Mayo*, hard by the Western Sea, crying to him with an audible and distinct Voice, “We intreat thee, holy Youth, to come and walk among us.” He was

greatly amazed at this Vision, and awoke; it animated him, however, to his future Studies and heavenly Progress; so far even, that he tells us himself, he thanked God, that after many Years he had dealt with the *Irish*, according to their crying out.

These early Scenes of this great Saint's Life, should, among many others, serve as lessons of Charity, Consideration, and Humility, to the Rich, the Great, the Proud, and the Wanton; who may recollect that, altho' he was well born, he was nevertheless, in the most vigorous Season of Life, a Slave and a Swine-Herd: Happy, though wretched Servitude! In which, his leisure Hours, mostly employed in Christian Confidence and Prayer, made him so signally the Favourite of Heaven, that from those cloudy Dawnings, he in Process of Time became a learned Doctor, a sanctified Missioner, a venerable Prelate, an eminent Primate, a national Apostle, and the bright Instructor of Kings! Such were the fruitful Rewards of uninterrupted unshaken Devotion, Piety, and Zeal! From this Time he formed the steady Resolution of converting the *Irish*; and, the better to accomplish the heavenly Task, he undertook a laborious Journey to foreign Countries, to enrich his Mind with Learning and Experience.

He continued abroad thirty-five Years, pursuing his Studies under the Direction principally of his Mother's Uncle, St. *Martin*, Bishop of *Tours*, who had ordained him Deacon; and after his Death, partly with St. *German*, Bishop of *Auxerre*, (who ordained him a Priest, and called his Name *Magonius*, which was the third Name he was known by,) partly among a Colony of *Hermits* and *Monks*, in some Islands of the *Tuscan* Sea; and he employed a good Part of the Time in the City of *Rome*, among the Canons Regular of the *Lateran* Church: At length, having his Soul thoroughly tempered with religious Virtue, enlightened with the true Evangelical Faith, and his Understanding enlarged by the most profitable and edifying Studies, he arrived in *Ireland* about the 60th Year of his Age; and in the Year of our Lord 432, landed in the County of *Wicklow*, where he began his Ministry, by the Conversion of *Sinel*, a great Man in that Country, the Grandson of *Finchad*, who ought to be remembered, as he was the first Fruits of St. *Patrick's* Mission in *Ireland*; he was the 8th in lineal Descent from *Cormac*, King of *Leinster*, and came afterwards to be enumerated among the Saints of *Ireland*.

From this Country he sailed to an Island on the Coast of the County of *Dublin*, called after him *Inis Phadring*, and by the *English*, *Holm Patrick* at this Day, where he and his faithful Companions rested after their Fatigues. From *Inis Phadring*, he sailed Northward to that Part of *Ulster* called *Ulidia*, and put in at *Inbherslaying* Bay. When he and his Fellow Labourers landed, *Dichu*, the Son of *Trichem*, Lord of the County, being informed that they were Pirates, came out with armed Men in order to kill them: But being struck with the venerable Appearance of St. *Patrick*, he gave him Audience, and listened attentively to the Word of Life preached by him; he changed his wicked Purpose, believed, and was baptized, and brought over all his Family to the Faith: It is further observed of him, that he was the first Person in *Ulster*, who embraced Christianity. He dedicated the Land whereon his Conversion was wrought to the Service of God, where a Church was erected, changed after to an eminent Monastery. He travelled hence by Land to *Clunebois* in *Dalaradia*, to endeavour the Conversion of his old Master *Milcho*, whose Service he had left thirty-eight Years before; but this obstinate Prince, hearing of the great Success of St. *Patrick's* preaching, and ashamed to be persuaded in his old Age, to forsake the Religion of his Ancestors, (by one especially who had been his Servant, in a most inferior Station,) made a funeral Pile of his House and Goods, and by the Instigation of the Enemy of Mankind, burned himself therein: Thus ended *Milcho McHuanan*.

Hence St. *Patrick* returned to *Inis*, the Habitation of *Dichu*, and in his Journey converted great Numbers to the true Faith of *Christ*. In some time, he took his Leave of *Dichu*, and bent his course Southward by Sea, keeping the Coast on his Right-hand, and arrived at Port *Colbdi*, where he landed, and committed the Care of his Vessel to his Nephew *Luman*, desiring him to wait for him there forty Days, while he and his Disciples were travelling in the inner Parts of the Country to preach the Gospel. His Intention in this Journey was, to celebrate the Festival of *Easter* in the Plains of *Bregia*,

and to be in the Neighbourhood of the Great Triennial Convention at *Tarah*, which at this Season was held by King *Leogair*, and all his Tributary Princes, Nobles, *Druids*, *Annalists*, and *Fileas*. St. *Patrick* wisely foreseeing that whatever Impressions he should make on this august Assembly must have an Influence on the whole Kingdom, and therefore, being supported with invincible Christian Fortitude, resolved not to be absent from a Place where his Presence was so conducive to the Ends of his Holy Ministry.

Never did the Spirit of popular Freedom exert itself more powerfully or harmoniously, than in those truly parliamentary Triennial Conventions of *Ireland*, where the supreme Monarch, the Provincial Kings, the feudatory Lords, the Nobles, landed Men, *Druids*, &c. by the unbiased Suffrages of the People, convened for the Peace, good Government and Security of each particular Province, as well as those of the whole Kingdom. Many Centuries had this wise Constitution subsisted here, before our Neighbours, even of *South Britain*, knew any thing relative to Houses, or Raiment; it being notorious that so late as the Arrival of *Julius Cæsar* among them, they painted their Bodies, to render them terrible, and lived in the open Fields. It is really somewhat surprizing that People so near in Situation, should differ so essentially in Disposition, as the Inhabitants of those Islands have in all Ages; Hospitality having been the distinguishing Attribute of the *Irish*, and it's opposite Defect, that of the *Britons*; the Account given of them by *Horace* 1700 and odd Years ago, *Visam Britannes Hospitibus feros*, being as literally applicable to them at this Day, where the Force of Education doth not operate to mitigate their natural Ferocity.

But to return: St. *Patrick* in his Way to *Tarah*, took up his Lodgings at the House of the hospitable *Sesgnen* in *Meath*, who kindly received and welcomed him. St. *Patrick* preach'd Christ and his Gospel to him; he believed, and was baptized with his whole Family.

From the House of *Sesgnen*, he moved Westward, and arrived on *Easter Eve* at *Fierta-fir-feic*, on the Northern Banks of the River *Boyne*, where he rested, resolving there to prepare for the next Day's Solemnity. It was penal for any Person at the Time of the Celebration of this solemn Convention at *Tarah*, to kindle a Fire in the Province, before the King's Bonfire first appeared. I am of Opinion this was a religious Ceremony, as the chief Deity of the ancient Inhabitants, in exterior Worship especially, was *Bel*, or *Belus*; whence *Apollo* or *Ap-haul*, the Son of the Sun, whom they emblematically worshipped, by those fiery Offerings; whence the first Day of *May*, peculiarly dedicated to this *Bel*, is even now in *Irish*, called *Lha-Bel-Thinih*, and probably from the same Source may be derived the Custom of lighting up Bonfires, and Sops, on the Eve of the 24th Day of *June*. St. *Patrick* however, either not knowing or not minding this Ceremony, lighted up a Fire before his Booth, which altho' eight Miles distant from *Tarah*, was very visible. It was seen with Astonishment from Court, and the *Druids* informed the King, that if he did not immediately extinguish the Fire, he who kindled it, and his Successors, should for ever hold the Principality of *Ireland*; which hath hitherto turned out a true Prediction of those Heathen Priests, in a Primatial and Spiritual Principality.

The King dispatched Messengers to bring *Patrick* before him, and gave his positive Orders, that nobody should presume to rise out of his Seat, or pay him the least Honour: But *Ere*, the Son of *Dege*, ventured to disobey this Command; he arose, and offered the Holy Father his Seat. St. *Patrick* preached to him and converted him. He became a Person of eminent Sanctity, and after some Time was consecrated by St. *Patrick*, Bishop of *Slain*.

The Day following, when St. *Patrick* and two of his Disciples appeared unexpectedly at Court, and preached to the King and his Nobles, *Dubtach*, the King's Poet Laureat, payed Honour and Respect to the Saint, and was converted by his Preaching. *Fiech*, a young Poet, who was under the Tuition of *Dubtach*, was also converted, and afterwards made Bishop of *Sletty*, and is said to have been the Author of a celebrated Poem, composed in Praise of St. *Patrick*. *Anselm*, Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, relates the Conversion of *Tingar*, the Son of *Clito*, (one of the Nobles in this Assembly,) in the same Manner. The Queen also, and many others of the Court, became Christians; and altho' the King held out for a long Time with great Obstinacy, yet at last he submitted to be baptized. St. *Patrick*

is said here to have wrought many Miracles: There could not truly, even according to the Purposes of human Wisdom, have happened a more solemn or weighty Occasion, for God Almighty's supporting this Holy Preacher by Miracles, than when the collective Body of the whole Nation was assembled together; from whose Report and Conviction, the Influences of his blessed Works and Doctrine must of Course spread through the whole Kingdom.

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