

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

HISTORY AND LANGUAGE OF THE PEHTS*.

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READ TO THE SOCIETY, A. 1806.

THE earliest inhabitants of the British island, of which history or tradition have preserved any memorials, are the Britons, properly so called, the Belgae, the Celtae, and the Caledonians, or Picts. Of these, the Celtae have been reckoned the oldest colony which had passed from the continent; the Britons, in their own language called *Cymraeg*, the second; the Belgae, who were of German origin, the third; and the Caledonians, who arrived from Scandinavia, the last and most remarkable. The history of the respective emigrations of these tribes has been collected from minute notices (the only information that generally exists concerning rude nations), in the writings of the polished empire which they opposed or invaded, and from the traditional chronicles and legends compiled by their posterity. Accurate and severe investigation has enabled antiquaries to reason with considerable confidence on the

* Denominated in Anglo-Saxon, *Pyhtur*, *Peohtur*.

early parts of our history; and further inquiry may expect to add, to the knowledge already collected, all the confirmation which a subject so ancient and obscure can possibly attain.

We are indebted to Mr Pinkerton for the only inquiry into ancient Scotch history which deserves our notice. His work is an excellent specimen of keen and laborious investigation. It exhibits, more than any antiquarian treatise in existence, the true method of research; his information is collected from innumerable sources; and our thanks are not less due to him for the materials which he has assembled from every quarter, than for the great ingenuity with which he has applied them. But while we gratefully acknowledge these first-rate qualities in Mr Pinkerton's work, we are forced to observe others of a different tendency, which become of importance from this circumstance, that his *ENQUIRY* is at present the only text-book for our ancient national history.

His investigations are all conducted with an asperity of temper, which can only be equalled by the ignorant and selfish prejudices of Macnicol and the two Macphersons. He found Scotch antiquities in a deplorable situation. The forgeries of one of these ingenious gentlemen had not been confined to the world of taste, but were extended to the page of history, and already on the point of being adopted as genuine truth. He undertook the task of sweeping them at once from the ancient fabric which they were intended to decorate; and he has done so, with a hand which will long be feelingly remembered.

In the course of this operation, he seems to have confounded the Celtic tribes at large with the particular delinquents who had merited his contempt. In his inquiry, all things assume a Gothic hue, whenever they are excellent; on the contrary, whatever is false, barbarous, or presumptuous, appears to him to be Celtic.

This is exactly the very resource to which his feeble enemies have ever applied in the moment of distress. Without consulting a single document,—without any knowledge of their own language in its ancient state,—without any other literary advantage than that of speaking modern Erse, they forge poems for the third century, and defend their own productions with rage, equivocation, and abuse. Such arms as these might become a Celtic antiquist, when denying the existence of the Welsh kingdom of Strath Cluyd, of which it appears that the Highland Seanachies have never heard the name. The restorer of our ancient history required no such defence; and it is with regret that we must mention the influence which this unworthy prejudice has exerted on several passages in his inquiry.

As the Picts were of Teutonic origin, and immediately from Scandinavia, facts which Mr Pinkerton has established from various evidence, it is now generally supposed that the Scottish language was introduced by them into the kingdom, and that the dialect peculiar to this country is of Pictish, not of Anglo-Saxon origin. Some inquiries which I have lately made in the Celtic and Teutonic dialects, for a different purpose, enable me to state a few observations on this subject; and should I entertain any doubts with respect to generally received opinions, I hope to receive that indulgence which is generally extended to cautious, but perhaps unnecessary, scepticism.

The common opinion since Mr Pinkerton wrote is decidedly as follows. When the Romans abandoned South Britain, the greater part of its inhabitants were Belgic Germans, who, being afterwards united to the Saxons, gave them their own language, which forms at present the Anglo-Saxon. That the Anglo-Saxon is the very same dialect of the Teutonic as the ancient Low Dutch, is suffi-

ciently evident; and Mr Pinkerton naturally takes advantage of this and historical evidence, to shew that the language of the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles, was lost in that of the old Belgic inhabitants, who had settled in Britain before the time of the Romans. With regard to Scotland, he maintains that the Picts were a large Gothic nation; that most of the names of places in Peotland are purely Gothic; and that the present Scottish is the offspring of that Gothic dialect. He allows, indeed, that many names of places on the east and south of Scotland are Celtic, because the Celts were the aborigines of the country before they were expelled to Ireland by the Cymraeg, or British; and that several names also are Cymraeg, on account of the settlement which the Cymraeg made in the island before the Pictish invasion, and of the kingdom which they held to a late period in the region of Strathclyde. The benefit which these positions afforded to his theory is sufficiently obvious. They account, in a summary manner, for the prevalence of the Gothic language in Scotland; they favour his partiality to Gothic manners, origins, and history; and set at defiance the pretensions of his Celtic enemies.

But though this flattering solution of the difficulty, which, in the absence of all written evidence, attends on accounting for the first introduction of the Scottish dialect, may be plausible enough to those who consider only the presumptive proof, or who feel an improper interest in advancing a favourite theory, it ought not to be admitted without careful examination. Truth is equally inimical to Celtic and Gothic prejudices: and if the following remarks be unfavourable to a particular theory, they are at least dictated by no ambition to contradict received opinions; by no unwarrantable eagerness to depreciate the labours of former inquirers, or to set

up one particular race of barbarians in direct opposition to the merits of another.

The first Teutonic inhabitants of Scandinavia, that is, of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, are believed to have been a colony from the Basternae, a numerous and powerful Gothic tribe. Their language was a dialect very different from the Belgic and Moesogothic, as may be easily discovered from the remains of it in the modern Danish, Swedish, and Icelandic. The Icelandic and Swedish particularly shew the greatest deviation from the parent Gothic which this language had undergone in the course of time. The words are shortened; the inflexions of the nouns and verbs corrupted; most of the indeclinable parts of speech have assumed a different form; and, in short, the general appearance is such, as completely discriminates this northern dialect from all the other branches of that original tongue. Whatever might be the peculiar dialect of the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, in the days of Hengist, it is certain that the Anglo-Saxon of Bede is expressly similar to the Belgic; and every person acquainted with the subject knows, that of all the great dialects of the Gothic, the Anglo-Saxon approaches nearest to the language of Ulphilas. When the Danes gained a footing in England, the pure Anglo-Belgic began to be corrupted by their northern and peculiar dialect; words and terminations from Scandinavia began to prevail over the native Saxon; and it cannot be doubted that a continuance of the Danish power in England would have gradually effected a considerable change in the language of the country. If the Anglo-Saxon be really the language of Hengist and his northern invaders,—a position which Mr Pinkerton will by no means admit,—it requires little more than simple inspection to pronounce that the difference

existing between the Danish and Anglo-Saxon, indicates that Hengist and his followers were not of Danish or Scandinavian extraction. This characteristic difference between all the Scandinavian dialects and the Anglo-Saxon, has been unaccountably overlooked by Mr Pinkerton, who seems to think that all the Gothic nations considered one another as brethren, and understood the most separate dialects of the Gothic tongue as easily as a philologist who has studied their varieties.

But to apply these observations to the history of the Picts. Mr Pinkerton has shewn, from many authorities, that this was a Scandinavian nation, which invaded the north of Britain before the time of the Romans, and continued as a separate and principal power in the island till the middle of the ninth century. As they entered by the north, their progress was from the Orkneys, the common rendezvous of Danish invasion. They found the north of Britain in the possession of Cymraeg, who had formerly expelled the Celts, the aborigines of the country, to Ireland. Few memorials remain of their power; no specimen of their language has been preserved, and only a few fragments of their history. I am happy to have it in my power, from the ancient chronicles of the Pictish kings, published with great industry and attention by Mr Pinkerton, to confirm his theory of their Scandinavian origin, and, at the same time, to draw some particular conclusions with regard to the language of the nation, and the origin of certain names often found in Scottish history.

The names of the Pictish kings decidedly prove these monarchs to have been of Scandinavian extraction. Some of the most remarkable are Brudi, Hungust, Elfin, Vergust, Drust, Kiniod, Uven, or Eogan, and Domnald, which merit particular attention. These names are easily recognised in the history of Sweden and

Denmark. Brudi is the Danish Frodi, of which name there were five Danish Sovereigns. The word signifies "the Wise." Hungust, at present corrupted into Angus, Elfin into Alpin, Vergust into Fergus, Kiniod (the Knut of Denmark, and the Canute of England), now corrupted into Kenneth, Domnald, or Domanwald, a word signifying, in Danish, "powerful in judgment," now corrupted into Donald, shew that this dynasty of kings was of northern original, and that the words themselves are plainly of that dialect which is peculiar to Scandinavia. Whoever consults the lists of Swedish, Danish, and Pictish kings, in the second volume of Mr Pinkerton's ENQUIRY, after a moderate acquaintance with northern literature, will easily discover that the Picts were a colony from Denmark; that is, from the country from which they have been traced by Mr Pinkerton.

The conclusion which results from these remarks is, that the Pictish language must have been a Danish dialect. I call it Danish, not because it must have particularly resembled the modern language of that name, but because its relation to that great branch of the Gothic, of which the Icelandic is the best specimen, must have been close and characteristical; and since we know that this branch of the Gothic was exceedingly different from the Anglo-Saxon, the question naturally resolves itself in the following inquiries.

Are there any proofs that a Danish dialect existed in Scotland from the third century before the Christian æra, the time of the Pictish invasion, till the year 848, when the Pictish monarchy passed into the hands of Kenneth?

Does the Scottish dialect retain any traces of Danish or Icelandic origin?

With regard to the first of these inquiries, it may be observed, that the first Pictish invaders undoubtedly spoke a Scandinavian dialect; and Beda, an Anglo-Saxon who wrote in the northern language of England, assures us that the Britons, Scots, and Picts, had each a separate language in the year 731. The Pictish, according to this statement, should have been Danish-Gothic; and it is probable that such was the case for a long time after the first establishment of the Pictish government in Scotland. Mr Pinkerton, from these facts, ventures to declare that this dialect was the parent of the broad Scotch of later ages; and endeavours to support his argument by a long list of Gothic names of places generally reckoned of Celtic derivation. On a closer examination of the subject, I consider most of his etymologies as altogether imaginary and ill-founded; nor do I suppose that an *Index Villaris* of Scotland would prove any other position than the great prevalence of the Celtic, Cymraeg, and Anglo-Saxon, dialects. His method of establishing the presence of the Pictish or Scandinavian dialect, in the words which he has quoted, is both exceedingly unfair and unphilological. He seems to have looked into an Atlas; and wherever any Danish or Swedish name appeared to have the slightest resemblance to one found in a map of Scotland, he instantly declared their affinity, and set down the Scotch as a Gothic name. A specimen from his work is necessary, in order to justify this assertion; and none can be more remarkable than the following. After a very rough dissertation, in which he pronounces *Strath*, *Aber*, *Baile*, *Inver*, and *Cinn*, words which begin so many Scotch names of places, and evidently of Celtic origin,—to be Gothic; and, in the course of which, he inquires, with great earnestness, "how it comes to pass that in Ireland there is but one *kin*, namely, "Kinsale;" and even that, it is believed, says he, "was formerly

“Kingsale:” He adds (p. 153, vol. i. of his Enquiry), “I shall here beg leave to insert a list of names which occurred in turning over Bleau’s Atlas, and which are clearly related to names in Scotland.

“In Iceland *wick* and *ness* are frequent. In Norway is Skonland (Scoon),—Noard Bugden,—Skeen,—Mios-wand (Mouse rivulet, near Lanark),—Bouwe (Bowie),—Hoop (Hope). In Denmark, Medelby,—Almund and Almand (Almond river),—Haldum,—Struer (Anstruther),—Wym (Weems),—Oxenwath, Immerwath, Giordwath, Heldswath, &c. (Carnwath, &c.)—Kolding (Coldingham),—Aller,—Homoe (Home and Hume),—Todsleff, and other *leffs* (Lillyslef, &c.),—Glesmos (Glasford, &c.),—Falsbol,—Lundby,—Lille Fulde,—Alstede,—Fariltosta (Farintosh),—Frisel (old name of Fraser),—Arnum (Arnot),—Alkier,—Gamel, very frequent (real name of Campbell, its pretended genealogy is a mere dream of Irish genealogists),—Logum (“Logan),” &c.

A few remarks on this passage will tend to shew the extreme futility of deriving the names of places in Scotland from the Danish or Pictish, and the extreme weakness of all the etymological parts of Mr Pinkerton’s work. Many of the Danish words have no connexion whatsoever with the Scottish names; and such names as are radically Gothic, are evidently Anglo-Saxon, not Scandinavian. *Wick* and *ness* are as plain Anglo-Saxon as possibly can be. The Danish word is *vic*, a harbour, which Mr Pinkerton has clearly observed on a different occasion. In fact, the absurdity of deriving those Gothic names of places, which are found in the Lowlands of Scotland, from the Danish, seems to have struck Mr Pinkerton’s mind with oppressive conviction; and it may be proven against him, that the greatest dreamer in Celtic antiquities could

not surpass this passage in wild extravagance. To derive Weems, a place well known to be the Gaelic word *uaimh*, a cave or caves, from *wym*, Farintosh from *Fariltosta*, Home and Hume from *Homoe*, would have suited the genius of General Vallancey; but to deduce the French words Frisel and Campbell, from the Danish *Frisel* and *Gamel*, is too much even for the prince of Irish etymology. Certainly it was not necessary to go to Sweden for the names of Hope and Home, so evidently Anglo-Saxon; nor to tell us, as he does in the next page, that Tullegarn, in Sweden, is related to Tullochgorum, and that the Swedish rivers Lida and Uisk are of the same derivation with Leith and Esk in Scotland. He will not allow the Celts and Welch to enjoy the *llan*, *cill*, and *ach*, which are prefixed to many Scottish names. *Cill* is in Gothic, he assures us, “a spring or fountain;” *lan* occurs in German; and *agh* is the English *ack*. He cannot permit *Peanvahel*, a Pictish word mentioned by Beda, to signify the head of the wall, as the word *pean* is Welch for a head, and not Gothic; he rather chooses to derive it from *paena*, to extend, and *veal*, which, in Lye’s Dictionary, is one of the forms in which *wall* is written. Those who would examine further into the supposed relicts of the Pictish language in Scotland, may satisfy themselves in the second chapter of the third part of Mr Pinkerton’s Enquiry. It contains a memorable instance of a man of learning and industry sacrificing his judgment, his knowledge, and his reputation as an antiquary, at the shrine of idle and unprofitable prejudice.

We may then inquire, are there no remains of the Pictish dialect preserved in the names of places? The answer, as far as I have yet discovered, is very nearly, “none.” Great suspicion may be entertained that the Scandinavian dialect was lost, like that of the Normans in France, in the language of those whom

the Picts subdued. Such was actually the case in Ireland at a later period. If the Pictish dialect, that is, the Scandinavian, had continued in Scotland, as Mr Pinkerton supposes, from the third century before the birth of our Saviour till the present day, it would infallibly have left plain traces of Danish names and Danish terminations of words, which every person of sound judgment could have discovered and illustrated. In all the islands and places seized by the Danes, in the Orkneys, in Lewis, Harris, Caithness, &c. we observe traces of their language, which no intelligent antiquary can mistake. On the contrary, a majority of the names of places in the Lowlands and east of Scotland are evidently Celtic; and far too numerous indeed to be the relics of a language which has been expelled from those parts of the country for two thousand years. But Mr Pinkerton evidently, I shall not say intentionally, confounds the Danish and Anglo-Saxon together; and instead of deducing our Scottish dialect and Teutonic names of places from the Anglo-Saxon spoken in the north of England, and written by Beda, he has had recourse to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, in order to support a plausible theory. That some Pictish names are found in Scotland, is highly probable; but the greater number of places are Celtic; and many of the Saxon appellations, such as Dunbarton, Wigton, and the like, are coeval with the introduction of the Anglo-Saxon from the kingdom of Northumbria.

A plausible objection to this opinion is, that the Celtic names of places have remained since the first Pictish conquest, the era of the Gothic settlement in the country. But, according to Mr Pinkerton, the Celts had been expelled by the Cumraeg, or Welch, long before the Pictish invasion. The ancient names should, therefore, have been Welch, which is not the fact. They are chiefly Celtic; and occur in such numbers in all the hilly and

wilder tracts of the Lowlands, as to shew that Celts must have possessed these places at a far later period than the third century before our Saviour. Antiquaries seem not to consider how soon the names of small places are forgotten,—how a conquest sweeps away all the minute topography of a barbarous country at once, and leaves only the ancient names of considerable places, rivers, and mountains. Yet it would not be difficult to shew a genuine list of Celtic names, in the *Index Villaris* of the most central province of the Pictish monarchy, sufficient to create a suspicion that the Picts themselves spoke a mixed dialect of the Celtic language. In the Legend of St Regulus, written about the year 1140, and inserted in Mr Pinkerton's work, the story of the foundation of St Andrews by Hungus, *filius* Feilon, King of the Picts, is told at considerable length. It is of late antiquity; but it may be supposed to contain some Pictish words, as it gives the names of several places, and of the witnesses of the foundation. Righmont, or Rimont, is particularly translated in the Legends *Mons Regis*; and Muckros, *Nemus* or *Cursus Apri*. Both these words are through a Celtic medium, and some parts of them are found in the Celtic only.

Among the lands belonging to the Bishop and Priory of St Andrews, in the twelfth century, we find Balrimund, Strunuthum, Kinmunnins, Cast Dovenald, Rothmanan, Pettulum, Kinnastarsi, Balemacedunethin, Balloch, Sconin, Kinninmuneth, Lethim, Balle-gone, Peltindreich, Strathfatha, Galgille, &c. all evidently of Celtic origin. Hundreds more might be produced in Fife, and along the eastern coast, names of farms, which could no more have been preserved in the heart of a barbarous monarchy speaking a Gothic dialect, and totally destitute of literature, than the Welch names of places in the county of Kent, which are now totally forgotten. The proofs of this opinion can only be completed by making out

lists of all the names, however obscure and insignificant, which occur in that region where the Pictish monarchy existed. This, however, I will venture to maintain, that nearly a majority of these names appear to be of Celtic original, a few of Danish (evidently introduced by national intercourse, or rather invasion, as in the province of Murreff and other districts on the eastern coast), and the rest Anglo-Saxon, of that particular dialect which was introduced from Northumbria, which prevails in the English MSS. and which is evidently the parent of our ancient Scottish language.

We may therefore ask, whether the Scottish dialect retains any traces of Danish or Icelandic origin? Any unprejudiced person, who is acquainted with the Scandinavian dialects, with the Anglo-Saxon, and the writings of Barbour, Harry the Minstrel, James I., Gawin Douglas, &c. and, above all, has attended to the English of those ages, will answer this question in the negative. If the Pictish language had been the parent of the Scotch, surely it would at least have bequeathed a few mutilated nouns, a few peculiar terms, a Danish cast and arrangement, to the style of the earliest written books. This is not the case. The Danish words that are found in Scotch are few in number, and augmented only by ignorant etymologists, who seek in the Icelandic, terms easily found in Yorkshire. Mr Pinkerton attaches particular weight to the character of the Buchanshire dialect; and scruples not to affirm, that it is the genuine descendant of the Pictish language. After a rigid examination, I cannot confirm his assertion. It is evidently nothing but Lowland Scotch, corrupted by a Danish pronunciation, for the prevalence of which last it is totally unnecessary to recur to the Pictish period. The constant intercourse with Denmark and Norway, the vicinity of these nations, and the well known fact, that the Moravienses were Danes, sufficiently accounts

for it. Mr Pinkerton gives what he calls a specimen of the Lord's Prayer in the oldest Lowland Scotch that can be recovered (Enquiry, vol. i. p. 363), in which he inserts the lowest modern corruptions of our dialect, contrary to the authority of our ancient writers, all with an intention to make it similar to the Scandinavian languages. It is as follows: "Uor fader quhilk beest i hevin. " Hallowit weird thyne nam. Cum thyne kingrik. Be dune thyne " wull as is i hevin, sva po yerd. Uor dailie breid gif us thilk day. " And forleit us uor skaths, as we forleit tham quha skath us. " And leed us na intill temtation. Butan fre us fra evil." In this specimen, we observe the late corruptions of "i hevin," and "po yerd," introduced, instead of "in hevin," and "on" or "upon yerd," in order to resemble the Orkneyan *i-chimrie* and *o yurn*. In fact, many of the abbreviated words in the Scottish dialect are corruptions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and scarcely known in the classic writings of the ancient Scotch poets.

It would be easy, and perhaps not useless, in the present state of the controversy respecting the Pictish language, to trace every broad Scotch word from the corresponding Anglo-Saxon, and to shew that the form, nature, and character of each vocable, (a few foreign words being excepted), and of our whole dialect, has plainly originated from the Saxon language of the north of England. Mr Pinkerton, after all his attempts to shew that numerous vestiges still exist in Scotland of the Scandinavian or Pictish, is obliged to confess that the Belgic or Anglo-Saxon had prevailed in the eleventh century, scarcely three centuries after the union of the Pictish and Dalriad crowns, and that the Pictish language is lost. Almost in the same breath, he tells us that "we find in our old " Scottish poets, and in [the] provincial poetry of Scotland, that " nearly half the words are Scandinavian, not English." If we

may judge from his etymologies, he would not have found it difficult to prove them all of northern origin. But this attempt would have discovered at once the weakness of the theory.

But Mr Pinkerton having shewn, from good authority, that Galloway was a Pictish kingdom from the sixth to the twelfth century, under its native lords, asserts that the Pictish accent and dialect are probably still existing in that country. If any place in Scotland were likely to preserve that dialect, surely it must have been the last of all the Pictish independent districts. But this is by no means the case. The Lowland dialect of Wigtonshire, and of the hilly parts of the country, is broad Anglo-Belgic, or Saxon, without bearing the smallest resemblance to the Scandinavian. Many proofs exist of the ancient prevalence of the Celtic; and it is almost certain that the Lords of Galloway spoke a dialect of the Irish.

The time, which I have been able to spare for this paper, has not allowed me to pursue this discussion at greater length. My wishes, if any wishes should be entertained in Antiquarian researches, are decidedly in favour of Mr Pinkerton's theory; but the evidence which he has produced on the subject of the Pictish language is totally unsatisfactory; his manner of philologising is partial and incorrect; and his knowledge of the Celtic and Gothic dialects by far too limited, to warrant his particular conclusions. At present, I think it necessary to state my opinion, that the Scottish dialect is not descended from the Scandinavian or Pictish, but from the Anglo-Saxon of the north of England. This opinion is supported by the evident and close affinity between the two dialects, Scotch and English, and by the positive absence in the Scottish dialect of all those characteristics which discriminate the Scandinavian branches of the language from the Belgic and Moesogothic. In

the second place, I am led to believe, from various circumstances, particularly from the small number of REAL Gothic, and the prodigious quantity of Celtic, names of places in the heart of the Pictish dominions, that the Danish or Pictish Gothic was not spoken in its native purity in the kingdom founded by these Scandinavian invaders. If the language of Pechtland had been pure Norse, the Teutonic names of places would have been as numerous and as uniform in Fife, Lothian, and Galloway, as they are at present in the Orkneys and the western isles. Nothing in the world can be concluded from Mr Pinkerton's etymologies; they are evidently forced, and often ridiculously absurd.

I intended to have given, in the end of this paper, an analysis of the leading features of the Celtic language, as preserved in Irish writings; to have entered into a short examination of the names of the principal families of Ireland and Scotland, as far as these are derived from the Danish and Irish language; and to have shewn that the Pehts, or Scandinavian Goths, probably conquered the greater part of Ireland. The Celtic is evidently an ancient Gothic dialect, much corrupted by frequent invasion from the north; and it is exceedingly probable that it was the speech of the first Gothic tribe that moved into Europe from Asia. The Celts, or oldest Gothic colony, were driven from the Continent by the Cymbri, whose language was a middle dialect between Celtic and Gothic. Last of all, the Goths were forced into the west by the pressure of other barbarians; and as they were the latest, most numerous, and most powerful race of the original Teutonic stem, they became the parents of modern Europe. As time has not permitted me to fulfil my first intention with regard to this subject, I shall beg the indulgence of the Society, for that purpose, on a future occasion.

APPENDIX

to

OBSERVATIONS ON THE HISTORY AND LANGUAGE
OF THE PEHTS.

SINCE I wrote the preceding observations, which I consider as merely an outline of some of the arguments to be used on this subject, I have had an opportunity of examining many of the names of places in the districts formerly inhabited by the Picts. To enter into a detail of these at present, would be to encroach on the time and patience of the Society, without settling the question, which can be determined only by philological remarks on the whole *Index Villaris* of the country. I venture, however, to pledge myself as ready to shew, from incontrovertible facts, that the greater part of the names of places in Pictland are evidently of Celtic derivation; the number of which seems to put it beyond dispute, that they could not have been imposed before the Picts entered the country. In Galloway, which Mr Pinkerton proves to have been the last district in the hands of the Picts, this is still more remarkably the case. Indeed, nothing but a desire to exclude the

Celtic dialect from all credit or reputation with literary inquirers, could have forced Mr Pinkerton to the singular expedient of deriving the plainest Gaelic names from the Saxon and Icelandic.

It appears with equal clearness, from the form and character of the names derived from the Teutonic in all parts of Scotland, that these belong to the Anglo-Saxon, not to the Danish, and therefore not to the Pictish dialect. A few exceptions to be found in Murray, Buchan, Angus, and other north-eastern counties of Scotland, deserve not to be mentioned as proofs to the contrary. The immigration of Danes, and the intercourse with the north, established these names in those parts of the kingdom.

The Buchanshire dialect, in which there are several very excellent modern poems, is by no means a relic of the Pictish tongue. It is the Scotch of the lowlands, corrupted by a Danish accent, which has been acquired by intercourse and immigration; and this assertion may be proved in the clearest manner, by an attentive comparison of its peculiarities with those of the southern dialects. Writers of Scotch glossaries are accustomed to have recourse to the Icelandic for the origin of every word which they cannot find in the Anglo-Saxon. Because such words as *gar*, to cause, and *ette*, to aim or intend, are not found everywhere in Anglo-Saxon, they conclude that they have come from Denmark. All this is merely a proof of their own limited reading and understanding. They might as well affirm that a Scotch word came from Moesia, because it occurs only in that dialect, and in Ulphilas's translation of the Gospels.

Mr Pinkerton's attempts* to shew that *Agh*, *Aber*, *Dal*, *Inver*, *Cil*, *Dun*, and similar words in the names of places, are of Teuto-

* Enquiry, ch. ii. p. 147.—163.

nic, rather than Celtic derivation, are a very unjustifiable instance of the effects which a favourite theory can produce on the most inquisitive minds. Although it could be proved that these words actually existed in the Teutonic (a thing by no means impossible), yet the construction of the compound names ought to have convinced him that it came through the medium of the Celtic. The Teutonic nations put the word *ton* or *dun* after the principal word; the Celtic nations prefix it. What the Saxons would have called *Swinton-dale*, the Celts would have called *Dalswinton*. *Dun Donald*, in Gaelic, in Saxon would be *Donaldton*; as *Edwineburg* in Saxon is in Celtic *Duneadoin*. This is the case, taking the Celtic *dun* and the Saxon *ton* to be synonymous, which is by no means the case. In many compound words, the Celtic article *an* or *na* is still preserved in their orthography and pronunciation.

It is amusing to observe the manner in which Mr Pinkerton forms the etymology* of the word *Pean-vahel*, which Beda informs us was, in the Pictish language, the name of a town at the end of the Northern wall. *Pean-vahel* is evidently, in old British, "the head of the wall;" in Welsh, more commonly written *Penguaal*. Because the word *vahel*, a term of obvious origin, is not found *literatim* either in Davies or in Lhuyd's Dictionary, he pronounces both words to be of Teutonic origin; and derives them from *paena*, to extend, and *veal*, a wall, the one word Swedish, and the other Saxon; signifying together (as he pretends) the extent or end of the wall. Beda informs us that the Anglo-Saxon name was *Penwel-tun*, literally the town of Penwel; that is, the town at the head of the wall.

A minute inquiry into the Gaelic, Welsh, and Teutonic names

* Enquiry, vol. i. p. 147.

of places, in the south and south-east counties of Scotland, would lead to some important conclusions respecting the people who gave them, and the times in which they were imposed. In such an inquiry, it would not be sufficient to have only the names of towns, the principal rivers, and farms, but also the names of particular spots. These often throw great light on the adjacent places, and present a kind of context, without which it is impossible to give any interpretation of more distinguished appellations.

I intended to have added (as I mentioned above) to this paper an analysis of the names of the principal families in the north of Scotland. I fear that, whatever pride the modern Caledonians may have in their Celtic and aboriginal extraction, it will be found, from indisputable authority, that there is not an ancient name of any consequence in the north which has not come from Ireland; and that very few of these Irish names do not betray their Scandinavian extraction. The names of Macdonel and Macdonald, Maclean, Cameron, MacChailean or Campbell, Macleod, Macdugal, Macdiarmid, and numbers besides these, are either from Ireland, by the confession of their own histories, or from Denmark. That these names are derived from the Danish, and not from the Celtic, shall be shewn in a paper which I shall at some future period beg to submit to the attention of the Society.