

Who Are The Irish?

Our nationalities

James Bonwick. F.R.G.S.

FELLOW OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, LONDON

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The Primitive Irish.

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Who were the first Irishmen ?

The western “ Isle of Beauty ” has given rise to lots of discussions, and not a few differences ; but the question of its primitive Inhabitants can hardly be settled now. We might, it is true, track backward on the track of new-comers. We could thus pass by English, Scotch, Normans, Danes, Saxons, Britons, till we come among the more or less mythical Milesians, Tuath-de-Danaans, Firbolgs, and Fomorians, without ever getting across the original men, the true aborigines.

Some think that if we realize the Bardic tale of Scota, the daughter of Pharaoh, on Tara’s sacred hill, we have got far enough. When that worthy man, Milesius, who was said to have kept a school near the Tower of Babel, teaching Hebrew and *Irish* there, came over to Ireland, he found Somebody there before him. When Noah’s niece, hearing of a coming Deluge, indulged a woman’s fears in running away beforehand, she very naturally got to the end of the world, in Ireland. She had, as reported, a retinue of three men, but old chroniclers had too much contempt for women to tell us of her lady companions. Those who doubt the universality of the Deluge have thus a famous argument on their side ; since, if the Irish had been all drowned at the Deluge, how should we know anything about Cesarea, the niece of Noah ?

The Irish Bards, therefore, coming to the rescue, establishing the fact of the settlement of Ireland in Noah’s time, we may venture on further in our march backward along the long line of Irish colonists. We pass by the *Great Stone Builders*, who put up stone circles and cromlechs ; pass by the *Mound Builders* ; and pass by the curious folks who lived, like New Guinea savages, a sort of amphibious life on their *Crannogs*, or Pile Dwellings.

It is quite clear that Ireland was inhabited by a fierce people, even when the *Crannog* strangers came so long, long ago, or the latter would not have been driven to the erection of rude homes on piles in the shallow water. In case of attack, they could retreat to lake or bay quarters, and break down a causeway to arrest the foe. Who were the rough settlers before the *Crannog* men ? And who were they before them ?

But how did the old races get there ?

When *bolgs*, or bags, of skin continued in use till Patrician days, they may have given a passage across the Irish Sea in remoter ages. The ancient ox, now gone from us, could have furnished a capacious skin for a boat. Those who require a very distant antediluvian date for early Irishmen have suggested a safer mode of travel. Geologists show that a rise of some 500 feet would connect Ireland with England, and England with Norway, Germany, and France.

How easily then would emigrants get over the border into the area of Ireland ! Any one may thus have reached Erin by an *Overland Route*.

We know that there was a very uncomfortable state of things once in Northern Europe, called the *Glacial Age*. Then, all Scotland, and the greater part of Ireland and England, looked just like Greenland does now. But that was before Erin was the *Green Isle*, and when the vegetarian system would have had considerable difficulties to encounter, since modern Esquimaux have to do without bread, cornflour, potatoes, and jellies. Yet, as men did exist in Britain before the glaciers retreated nearer the North Pole, one wonders what sort of creatures the *Glacial Irish* were, and whether temperament has changed with temperature.

How can we know anything about Primitive Irish ?

By the fruits of their industry we know something of them. There was a time, and when they were barbarians, that they used iron. There was a more ancient time, that they had more easily managed copper. There was a yet more remote time, when they had not learnt to smelt any metal, and so had to be content with stone tools and weapons. The first was the *Iron Age* ; the second, the *Bronze Age* ; and the third, the *Stone Age* or *Flint Age*.

It is not to be supposed that the old Irish relinquished the use of a stone knife when some one found out how to make a metal one. Bronzes were hard to be got in those days, and the many had to put up with the ancestral contrivance. Besides, the Irish have ever been remarkably conservative ; so, while some used stone because they could not get metal, it is not unlikely others refused to have anything to do with the modern invention, that was a standing reproach to the wisdom of their forefathers. Hence it is that we discover stone implements alongside of metal ones in the old monuments of the dead.

As the earliest known laws of Ireland proclaimed the heaven-sent distinction of families, teaching the dignity of *blue blood*, and the vast superiority of certain lines of birth, so that a Benjamin's mess descended to them, it is not altogether improbable that the recognized families of chiefs elected to have the sole use of the bronze, obliging the vulgar people to be content with their position as *stone-breakers*.

These *flints*, as they are commonly called, from the large employment of the silicious rock for its hardness and edge, have been found all over the world, and could not fail to be in Ireland, which is known as *Old Ireland* to this day. Though flints proper are confined to the north-eastern corner of the island, the site of the chalk formation, the rough commerce of the times might convey the useful material to other corners. Where this was not easy, quartz became the accepted substitute. Hard-pressed, isolated, or weak tribes had to put up with the rock at hand—slate, granite, basalt, or sandstone. In fact, flint might not be preferred for a stone hammer.

Antrim, Down, and Derry were the *Diggings* for flint. Vast manufactories were there established. The remains of these primitive workings are easily determined by the quantity of *chips* that remain, the pieces and failures left by the workmen. Many a stout fight must have taken place among the savages competing for possession of the coveted flints. Some, as in modern days, were not content with bartering skins for stones, but sought their end by the rude employment of shillelaghs. At Ballintoy, Antrim County, we note the ruins of a factory of flint-scrapers for skins.

The attractive Dublin Museum has a choice collection of these rough implements of an Irish Past. Some of these stone *celts*, as they are called, served as chisels, wedges, picks, hatchets, planes, punches, hammers, daggers, knives, mortars, grain-rubbers, querns, whet-

stones, spindle-wheels, anvils, borers, gouges, sink-stones, saw-flakes, drinking-cups, plates, scrapers, and arrow-heads. With the progress of civilization, the application of stone was extended to the growing wants of humanity.

There were, however, two distinct divisions of the *Stone Age*, even in Ireland. They mark two very different conditions of progress, and seem to indicate the slow and gradual development of human industry. Stone tools—for weapons were tools, as tools were weapons, in that hunting stage of being—were either prepared by percussion or flaking, or else by pressure or rubbing. It is everywhere found that the latter, requiring more labour and intelligence, are to be seen in formations denoting less age than the former.

The *celts* that were made by simply knocking off edges and flakes, by the aid of an extra hard stone, point out a lower state of society than that when men spent days and weeks rubbing down flints to an edge or point. The former are not only rougher, but larger. In that age, men had merely to contend with wild beasts, and never indulged in elaborate toilet and architecture, any more than in fanciful ornamentation. Clubs of wood, showers of stones, or massive stone axes, would provide weapons against animals long since extinct in Ireland. For domestic purposes, those cave-dwellers were satisfied with few wants. Their beds were leaves and skins. Their robes were, probably, the uncleansed and unscraped skins of animals. The fire was kindled by the rapid friction of two sticks. Stripped of its covering or not, the slain beast was cast on the live embers, and fingers served for carving-knives and forks.

Such were the Irishmen of the *Palæolithic* or *Early Stone* Period. But, as men advanced, their wants multiplied, and native ingenuity was exerted to supply the wants. The old celt was a very rough contrivance. It was a dragging rather than a cutting that was effected thereby. He was a bold innovator who first discovered how much better the stone cut when it was rubbed down to an edge upon some softer stone. Strange that so simple an idea had not entered the head of his Irish ancestors.

A lance that came to an elongated point would, of course, be more destructive to quadrupeds desired for food. The flint arrow-head was improved by the rubbing. Flakes were prepared for better knives. Saws, borers, chisels, gouges, hatchets, and daggers were equally improved. Woman's intelligence was awakened. She scraped the skin before using it for a cloak or blanket. Not content with a fastening by a fish-bone, she proceeded to puncture the skin, and run the sinew of a beast through the holes. Afterwards, a real bone needle, with a cavity for the sinew, gave the means of sewing her skin, and so giving dress a definite shape.

The progress went on. The hunter became a keeper of cattle. The herdsman grew into a farmer. The stone still served its purpose. It turned up the soil, it crushed or ground the corn, it fashioned implements of horn or wood. Plough-coulters of stone continued to far later times. Then, women plaited grass for utensils, made sun-dried pots, and cooked meat more decently on heated stones under a cover of leaves and earth. It was a grand discovery that water could be heated by casting hot stones into the vessel holding it ; but better still when the stone-boiling apparatus gave place to the now simple practice of putting a fire under the pot.

With more comforts around them, and leaving dark caves for outside huts, the primitive Irish turned their attention to adornment. As among all savage tribes, men were vainer than women, and kept all the ornaments to themselves. This neglect of the other sex was hardly due to Irish chivalry, that deemed the unadorned wife the more beautiful, as illustrating native charms alone ; it was rather from masculine vanity and masculine tyranny. But, as the ages rolled on, female power grew beside the hearth they made the more attractive ; and beads, armlets, bracelets, necklaces, and girdles were no longer monopolized by the stronger sex.

Sepulchral mounds, and stone cromlechs, as well as bogs, have led us to a knowledge of a remote Irish *Past*, while caves and river-drifts have taught us something of a more ancient time.

We find *Kitchen Middens* ;—heaps of rubbish containing the remnants of aboriginal feasts. There were vast piles of shells cast aside when the eatable was removed. Naturally, these are observed near the shore. On the islands of Cork harbour, some may still be seen. The very accumulation of shells attests to the lengthened abode. The date of that occupancy was varied, of course ; since successive swarms of Irish colonists added to the piles. But one *Kitchen Midden* in Ireland has been found 35 feet above the present rising of the tide there, and under a bed of peat. That must have been long ago when the folks left there those remnants of shells, with the bones of pigs and sheep.

The oldest *Flints* are *Palæolithic*, belonging to the *Drift Period*. At that time, the now extinct elephant, the cave bear, mammoth, woolly rhinoceros, &c., roamed at large, and gave sport to the hunter. But Ireland had fewer of these large and now extinct thick-skinned animals than Britain ; possibly, because longer submerged before their appearance. It must not be supposed that Ireland, when first inhabited by man, had the same boundaries and physical features now to be noticed. The sea and land have had many a battle since then. Even Irish tradition retains some remembrance of violent changes, described by men to their successive descendants. Hills have arisen ; large areas have sunk ; lakes have appeared, while others have been lost ; earthquakes have desolated places ; and the sea has invaded some parts, while retiring from others. Traditions are not all idle tales.

Irish exploration has not been carried on with the scientific energy and skill displayed in France ; though it is possible that different conditions in the two countries may have led to a difference of inhabitants. We have not yet found in Ireland, as in France, those curious skulls of a very remote age, having rounded perforations. We have not recovered horn or stone artistic remains, having sketches of now extinct animals scratched by the hunter after a fight with the mammoth. But we do see in Ireland the evidence of high antiquity in human residents, and their dwelling with the now fossil elk, fossil ox, &c.

Ireland was largely submerged during the glacial period, and rose late in geological life to be visited by man. Of it may be said, what Professor Broca says of his French home, that, “ Since the Quaternary (post-glacial) Period many centuries have elapsed ; numerous populations and *many races* have before and since the historic period clashed and supplanted each other on our soil.” Sir William Wilde thinks, however, that “ the reindeer and the elephant, and probably the musk ox, had become extinct before man’s arrival in Erin.” He adds, when referring to Milesians, &c. : “ That there were inhabitants in Ireland at the time of the arrival of these first recorded colonists I have but little doubt.”

Of the enormous space of time intervening between the *Drift* Period and that of the Surface Stone, some conception may be formed from a statement of Mr. Boyd Dawkins, that of 48 species of animals in the former, only 31 remained during the latter. Flints of the earlier are seen to have a glossy surface, with calcareous incrustations. They have, too, those dendritic or moss-like markings, resulting from the crystallization of manganese. This *Drift* Age was that in which most of the present valleys were formed. The ice erosions are plain enough in Ireland. The boulders dropped by passing icebergs on the then sunken land appear to have travelled from the north-west, coming south-east. The reindeer and Irish elk had gone very long before the Romans came, though the wolf did not disappear till 1710.

The next, the *Neolithic* (new-stoned), Age has the flints *rubbed*. As, however, in spite of the length of time, the polished flints of dolmens are like those of the reindeer men in France,

it may be assumed that there was no break between the Palæolithic and the Neolithic time, but that one insensibly glided into the other. Though reindeer were fewer in Ireland, there is reason to believe reindeer men may have, also, lived there. Worked flints were obtained at Port Stewart, Derry County, along with very coarse pottery, and the teeth of horse, ox, and dog. The bed in which they were found is now covered with sand from ten to thirty feet thick. They have been taken from a cave near Dungarvan, Waterford County, as well as bone pins, along with remains of a very large extinct deer, &c. Mammoth and cave bear bones were seen in that cave. Quatrefages and almost all other geologists and anthropologists admit the existence of man with the mammoth. He lived in Ireland certainly when the rhinoceros had its home there.

The pottery indicates the march of progress. From sundried to fire-dried clay vessels the change was for the better. Simple parallel lines' ornament gave place to excellent fictile ware, of good form and decoration. Yet capital urns are seen, as at Trallick, Tyrone County, in association with polished flint implements, and bones from which the marrow had been carefully removed. Sun-baked urns are known with remains of the rhinoceros, &c. Rude pottery was gathered from a two-storied log hut discovered beneath 14 feet of peat in Donegal.

Bodies of ancient Irish have been preserved by the peat, though no definite age can be given for the material, which is formed more rapidly under some circumstances than others. At the depth of 6 feet, a body was found clothed in rough cloth. But in 2 feet of gravel, lying below 11 feet of peat, a female person was discovered, having long black hair, and curious shoes and ornaments. At a depth of 11 feet of bog, in Down County, a skeleton was secured in 1780. Ancient crania have been taken from the bed of the river Nore, Queen's County, and the Blackwater of Armagh. Dr. Beddoe remarked that "the ancient Irish skulls, as well as the mediæval and modern ones, are long." In 1748, at Mullingar, Westmeath County, was detected a body with a clay cast round the head. Canoes or coracles have been taken from considerable depths a long way from any existing bay or river-course. Remains of man, along with elk bones, were seen at Curragh. In Cork County, a human corpse, in excellent preservation, was wrapped up in an elk skin, under 11 feet of peat. Though the peat preserved the body, the softer parts had gone into adipocere. The skull of a fossil ox, found with human relics, was a yard long, and had a space of 42 inches between its huge horns.

Though the Bronze Age of Ireland can be proved to have been older in Ireland than in Switzerland, it is not easy to account for the small cubes of white porcelain, with *very ancient* Chinese inscriptions, found several yards below the surface, near Kilmanham, Dublin County. We are well aware of remarkably old iron works, in Queen's County.

Mr. Boyd Dawkins considers the type of the ancient Irish to be a small oval face, regular features, swarthy complexion, and dark hair and eyes. Captain Thomas, who held the ancients to be Turanian and not Celtic-Aryan, writes: "In the short faces of some of our Connaught boys, we have nearly copies of the good-natured physiognomy of our earliest immigrants." Lord Dufferin, when among the Lapps, said: "There was a merry, half-timid, half-cunning twinkle in their eyes, which reminded me a little of the faces I had met with in the more neglected parts of Ireland." Dr. Carter Blake admits "an extremely ancient dolicho-cephalic (*long-headed*) form of skull" in Ireland. The forehead receded.

It may be taken as pretty well ascertained that the primitive Irish, forming the basis of the population, though receiving many successive colonizing races, were *not Celts*, were not Aryans, but of a kindred more like Fins, Lapps, and Siberians.

The Great Stone-Builders.

In Ireland, as in so many other places, huge stones have been set up in remote times. They may be isolated monoliths, blocks in the form of circles, Logan or Rocking Stones, and Cromlechs or Dolmens. The builders of these megalithic remains in that island have been usually called *Druids*, and the monuments themselves *Druidical*. Whether or not connected with religion is scarcely the object of this little work to discuss. It may be safely asserted that even if sepulchral in origin, the edifices may still have had a relation to religion.

Single stones may have stood as memorials of events and persons, or served the same purpose as the Indian Linga stones. Some had proximity to circles ; as that one, 11 feet high, in Cork County. At Kilbury, Shannon, Castledermot of Kildare, and Kilmalkedar of Kerry, they have been used to drive away rheumatism, when the sick walked, or were carried, round with proper prayers or charms. *Uladhs* or pillar stones are still believed to cure diseases ; especially at Mullimast Rath. One with its small end downwards, in Clunmany of Donegal, betrays its past history in its present name of the Magairle (phallus) of Finn Mac Cuill. *Tolmen* or holed stones are crawled through for luck, if the opening be large enough ; as at St. Declan's Stone. Cormac says these were erected by the *Galli* from Gaul, and hence called the Gall stones. But *gall* means *stranger*. These Galls may have been temporary sojourners, or belonging to one of the old races of Ireland.

Many Irish stones are inscribed ; as at Dalkey, and Tullagh of Dublin, Dundalk, Ballybaun of Cork, Gowran, Lennan of Monaghan, and Castlederg of Tyrone. The inscriptions are either of line characters, or cup-markings and circles. The cup-marks are, as in Scotland, France, Sweden, and Switzerland, being still revered by the peasants. With the rings they are seen in Kerry, Wicklow, Rathmichael of Dublin, Meath, Drummakilly, Donegal. Concentric circles exist on the lintel-stone of St. Kevin's church, near Ennis of Kerry, evidently placed there for superstitious reasons. There are cups with or without circles, a few curves and spirals, besides some zigzags and concentric circles. Near the Lough Crew are beautiful illustrations of various sorts. Occasionally the cross is inscribed, and not always of Christian age, as the cross was a symbol of faith thousands of years before the Christian era.

There are antiquarians, like Professor T. Y. Simpson, who esteem these cup-markings as peculiarly the mark of a very early stage of human development.

A curious tale is told of a cairn of stones. An old tradition spoke of a servant saving the life of a king when attacked by three enemies. The man perished, but a cairn of stones was raised over his grave by stones cast by every soldier. Tradition called it "The cairn of one man." An antiquary dug through the stones, and found a fine cinerary urn, with black earth about the burnt bones. The urn is now in the Dublin Museum, a witness to the truthfulness of an old tradition.

LOGAN OR ROCKING STONES are rarely seen in Ireland. Easily moved if touched in the right quarter, they were also associated with superstition, and termed *Divining* Stones. Often upset for sport, some were overturned by religious zeal. At Magee of Antrim, one is said to be 12 tons in weight.

STONE CIRCLES are not so numerous in that island as in Britain. A fine one, of a concentric character, at Ballynahatne near Dundalk, has some resemblance to Stonehenge ; but many of the best circles have been destroyed to furnish road-metal, gate-posts, &c. In 1810, one, at Rostrevor of Down, was distinctly to be traced, 120 feet in diameter. That at Templebrian of Cork consisted of nine large stones round a central one. There are three circles at Killballyowen of Limerick.

The largest known is at Carrowmore of Sligo. Near Belfast are the remains of one of very great diameter. A cist or buria-place at Carrick-a-Dhirra of Waterford has a circle around it. There are others at Drogheda, Eath-Hugh of King's County, New Grange, Druman Hill by Neath, Glanworth of Cork, and Ballrichan of Louth. At Mount Druid, by Dalkey, the diameter is 150 feet.

CROMLECHS are interesting. In a simple form, a cromlech is a huge stone or *cap* resting on three, four, five, or more upright stones. Mostly for sepulchral use, a few would appear distinctly religious. Some are called GIANT'S GRAVES, and are associated with Fenian or other heroes. There is a Giant's place, of Parrahbong Mac Shagjean, at Ballymascandlau near Dundalk. The cap is 12 feet long, and weighs 40 tons ; the inclosure or cell is 20 by 5 feet. The bones of the monster were *once* seen. At Brown's Town of Carlow, the top is 22 feet 10 inches by 18 feet 9 inches, weighing 89 tons, and resting on three supports, from 5 to 8 feet high. At Mount Vernes, Dublin County, the cap is 18 feet by 8 feet.

A cromlech or *Diomruck*, at Glanworth of Cork, is on 7 supports ; at Ballymascandlau on 3 ; Finvoy of Antrim on 5 ; Killala of Mayo on 4 ; Dundonald of Down on 5 ; Castle Wellan on 3. The cap at Headfort weighs 14 tons ; Gaulstown, 6 ; Ballynageeragh, $6\frac{3}{4}$; Ballyphillip, 12 ; Eath-Ivenny, 19 ; Knockeen, $10\frac{1}{2}$; Mount Brown, 110. One at Kiltarnan of Dublin is 23 feet long ; Castlehyde of Cork, 17 ; Grannie's Bed at Glanworth, 17 ; Finvoy, 10 ; Dundonald, $8\frac{1}{2}$; Headfort, $9\frac{1}{2}$; Rathkenny of Meath, $10\frac{3}{4}$; Ballylowra 12, and 9 feet from the ground.

On a hill known as *Sleigh-Grian*, or Hill of the Sun, in Kilkenny, stands a dolmen or cromlech. At Loughrey of Tyrone it is a Giant's Cave. Another Giant's Grave is at the Kempe Stones. A noble one is at Ballintoy, near the Giant's Causeway. There are others at Sliabh-croabb of Down, Dungarvan, Drumgoolan of Down, Fiddown of Kilkenny, Sugar-loaf of Waterford, Garry-Dulf of Kilkenny, Rinville of Galway, Innishshark Isle of Connaught, Lennan, Castlederg of Tyrone, Leaba Diarmuid of Cleggan Bay, Scariff and Burren of Clare, &c. One is called the bed of Dermot, or Diarmuid, and Graine the Princess. It was a year before the runaways were caught ; of course, as the word *graine* means the *sun*. Another bed, at Mayo, is 15 feet long inside, and 7 high. Druid's Grove, peninsula of Ballrichan, Louth County, has circles, pillars, and cairns, as well as the remains of a grove.

Some cromlechs or dolmens have several chambers, in or off passages of standing stones, covered by several flat stones. In these have been found bones, broken pottery, flints, beads, &c. There is a three-chambered one at Moytura, near Lough Corrib, connected with cairns and magnificent circles of immense stones, said to have been set up by the Firbolgs. Some caps are suspended, and others rest partly on the ground, being called *Primary*, or *Earthfast* ; as, the Leaba Diarmuid, Headfort, Carlow, Rathkelly, Rathkenny, &c. The top of one, between Carrick and Waterford, is 15 feet high. Some dolmens are free, others are under mounds or *Barrows*.

One of the most interesting and romantic is that on the beautiful Hill of Howth, Dublin Bay. Tradition says it was a memorial erected by Aideen, daughter of Angus, chief of Ben Edar or Hill of Howth, for the death of her husband Oscar, son of Ossian, who fell in the Battle of Gavra, near Tara, when the Irish destroyed their Fenian troublers.

By far the most celebrated Irish monument of a megalithic character is at New Grange, near Drogheda. At first only a mound, it attracted no attention till 1699, when the discovery of the interior took place. It is like the Calry giant's grave in Sligo, with its chambers 50 feet by 25.

One authority gave the hill a height of 150 feet ; but really it is 67. It occupies two acres of space ; while the diameter at the base is 319 feet, at the top it is 118. The remains of a foundation on the summit has induced a belief that a rude edifice was on the top. There is yet a huge stone, a sort of apex to the tumulus. It is calculated that there are 180,000 tons of stone therein, though afterwards covered with earth as a barrow.

At the entrance there are stones covered with spiral ornaments. Ten stones are round at the base, one down, which is 11 feet long, all the others being erect. Passing in, one enters a gallery 62 feet long, of stone uprights and roof, with side chambers leading to a central chamber, 17 feet wide and 20 feet in height. One thus refers to it : “ The interior dome is admirable, and the diminishing octagons of the massive horizontal unhewn stones, so ingeniously piled till they are finally capped by one broad slab, have a marvellously impressive effect.” The eastern side chamber is covered with spirals, zigzags, volutes, and other marks. Some stone basins have been called altars ; one was found in each of the two side chambers.

What race constructed the wonderful tumulus and dolmen of New Grange ? Were they Firbolgs or Danaans ?

The old name of the locality was Brugh ; and a MS. of the tenth century notices that “ the nobles of the Tuatha de Danaan were used to bury at Brugh.” Dr. Petrie thinks the mound was the tomb of Achadh Aldai and Dowth of Dubhad, kings of the Tuatha de Danaans. Two Roman gold coins found near the surface, at the top, give no indication of the age. Two skeletons were seen near one pillar.

Very similar monuments are to be observed in England, Scotland, France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Greece, Sweden, Palestine, Algeria, and India. Of the last, Colonel Forbes Leslie writes : “ It will not be disputed that the primitive Cyclopean monuments of the Dekhan were created prior to the arrival of the present dominant race—the Hindoos.” Prof. Benfey is of opinion, also, that they are pre-Aryan.

These mighty works were certainly not done by the Celts, as they never dwelt in India, and were never great builders any time. Fergusson, the architect, very reasonably credits Turanian people with the erection, and not an Aryan, whether Celt or Saxon. Bonstettin thinks them the *Tamhu*, or White, northern race, described in the ancient Egyptian sculptures as men of tattooed limbs, and wearing a leathern dress. Prof. Huxley identifies “ the ancient population of Ireland with the long barrow and river-bed elements of the population of England.” Belgæ of round barrows were few.

If not utterly destroyed or devoured by the Celtic or other incoming races, the blood of the *Great Stone Builders* still remains in the country, a portion of the ancestry of a modern Irishman.

The Crannog Race.

Among the many colonies of Irish, helping to form the singularly composite character of the nation, the Crannog men must not be forgotten. They were people who dwelt in houses raised on piles in shallow bays or lakes.

Herodotus, nearly twenty-four hundred years ago, visited the Pæonians of Thrace, not far from the site of modern Constantinople, and found them in huts on piles in the bed of Lake Prasias. He spoke thus : “ Platforms supported upon tall piles stand in the middle of the lake, which are approached from the land by a single narrow bridge. Each,” adds he, “ has his own

hut, wherein he dwells, upon one of the platforms ; and each has also a trap-door giving access to the lake beneath." But one statement has been thought the tale of a traveller, viz. : " They feed their horses and their other beasts upon fish."

It is not a little curious that a survival of the practice may be now observed. The fishermen of this very Lake Prusias still inhabit wooden cottages built over the water, as in the time of Herodotus. A Russian city, Tcherkask, stands over the river Don.

But it is in the Celebes and in New Guinea of the Indian Archipelago that these *Lake Dwellings* may be seen in perfection. Captain Cook, and voyagers before and since, have been much amused at these structures. There they are, lying off the shore, and often in deep water, connected by wooden causeways with the shore, having boats attached to the poles or piles. Even in those very countries the system is only followed by a few races, and those near the sea, who are quite unlike the tribes in the interior. This circumstance has led many persons to suspect that the *Lake Dwellers*, or *Pile Drivers*, were colonists of a maritime character, who adopted this plan of protecting themselves from the attack of barbarous neighbours on shore.

Switzerland had once its Lake Dwellings. These were first observed in 1863, owing to the great fall in a lake level revealing the stumps of the piles. A search in the lake mud has brought to light many curious illustrations of the life of the people at that time. It is not to be supposed that Lake Dwellings, whose remains have been discovered in France, Italy, Germany, Illyria, &c., belonged to one particular age. As we discover in Borneo and other Eastern islands individuals still pursuing the like custom, as Herodotus noticed it so long ago, the Pile Houses of Switzerland, ancient as they undoubtedly were, might have been erected hundreds if not thousands of years after those of Ireland. Some of them in Switzerland itself, as in Lakes Brienne and Neuchatel, were of the Iron Age, judging by the contents of *débris* ; others were clearly of the Bronze Age ; while the piles in the rest have evidently been cut by a stone weapon.

In Ireland it is probable that further examination may bring out a similar conclusion of relative dates. Leading authorities unite in the declaration of this pre-historic age. Implements both of iron and stone have been rescued from the mud. Even horse-shoes have been seen ; though these, and possibly other iron articles, may have been lost there long after the original dwellers had departed. As a rule, they may be esteemed as belonging to the Stone Age of Ireland. Assuredly both fauna and flora have changed since their day. Abundant remains of the *Bos longifrons*, or ancient Celtic ox, so called, give evidence of extreme antiquity.

The word *Crannog* or *Crannoge* is by some said to be derived from the Irish *crann*, a tree, being a wooden structure. Mr. Benn derives *cran* from *crieve*, a living branch. *Og* is a common terminus. An old kind of pulpit is known as *crannog*. *Craun* is also a ship's mast.

There are various kinds of the dwelling. Usually they are oval or circular in form. They look like conical hollows, or bees' nests. The platforms are spread over piles driven in the mud of the sheltered part of a bay or lake. Simple trees or branches are thus employed ; occasionally they were roughly hewn or rounded. Stones, as at Ardekillin of Roscommon, were at times placed outside the piles for additional protection ; and even stone walls have been seen raised upon the piles.

Other forms of erection appear. Instances occur where piles are used merely to keep in their places great beams, laid horizontally upon the mud bottom, into which posts are clumsily mortised, and the platforms more securely built up. This was a grand advance upon the early style. Cross-beams at the top presented a sort of circular enclosure, as a bulwark

against the waves. There was an arrangement by which a fence around afforded shelter from the spray in a storm.

Crannog remains exist in Lough Neagh, Lough Eyes of Fermanagh County, Lough Annagh of King's County, Lough Drumgag by Euniskillen, Ardmore, Ballydoolough, Lough Rea, Cornagall of Cavan County, Clonfinlough, Roughan-lake, and forty other places in Leitrim, Roscommon, Monaghan, Tyrone, Meath, Limerick, &c.

They may be called *Stockaded Islands*. The one at Lagore was 520 feet in diameter, but others were even larger. Ardmore had one in the form of a salmon weir. In another it was calculated that there were 30,000 piles of oak alone ; birch was more uncommon. The partitions were of wicker-work. Fascines or bundles of sticks now and then formed the base-ment, being kept in their places by piles outside. The very dwellings on the platform were in the rudest age of bundles of sticks or wickerwork. Double and even treble lines of piles were driven to maintain a safe front to sea-waves. Here and there these Crannogs or Wooden Islands were built on artificial mounds raised at a distance from shore, giving shallows for the piles, with deep water protection on the shore side. The platforms are variously fixed to the piles by wooden pins, or mortises. Some of these mortises betray signs of the blunt stone weapon used in the work.

The general style of Irish Crannogs is rougher than in Switzerland. The more rude they were the less they advanced into the water. The Bronze Age ones are better built and further out from land, in deeper water, than those of the Stone age. The stockade has been observed not more than twenty yards across. The bridges or causeways to the shore suited the village convenience.

The story of the Crannog men can be read at Lough Rea. There we detect evidence of the village home having been repeatedly burnt and rebuilt. The shore tribes had succeeded in their assault, and had consumed the huts of their foes. Or, it may be, that the inflammation arose from accident. Some had resided for a long period at one station, when from a Crannog in Meath county a farmer got 150 cartloads of bones, the remains of aboriginal feasts.

The folks lived well, judging by these bone relics. They fed upon the now extinct ox and stag, the red deer, sheep, goat, pig, horse, dog, and ass. In one place, under 16 feet of bog, there were the remains of the pig, ox, sheep, deer, dog, and ass. Limb-bones were always fractured for their marrow contents. Among other articles discovered, there were flints of various kinds, glass beads, horn handles, bone ornaments and tools, with rude pottery, quern stones, wooden swords, and some bronze pins, rings, &c. Some iron tools were recovered among the piles of Cornagall. The pottery marks are very simple, mostly of the saw pattern.

Who, then, were the Crannog men of Ireland ? It is highly probable that they were the remnants of some aboriginal tribes of Europe, driven by inroading peoples from one haunt to another, until they found shelter in that last home of European races, Ireland, with its western wall to the vast Atlantic. Here, pressed by necessity, or adopting the course by force of habit, they constructed their Crannogs as their forefathers had done.

And what became of the Crannog men ? As, from their love of the water and boats, they were certainly not Celts, they were either exterminated by the new comers of the Gaelic race, or they became absorbed in their tribes, and so forsook their ancient habits. It is by no means improbable that the wild coast of Connaught still harbours fishermen, called by the name of Irish, who hold in their veins some blood of the interesting Crannog tribes, whose earliest visitors may have preceded the advent of both Iberians and Celts.

The Iberian Irish.

Irish travellers have reminded us of certain centres of a slightly made and dark race, observed in out of the way parts of Ulster, Connaught, and Munster. Concerning these. Prof. Huxley echoes the general opinion of ethnologists when saying : “ I believe it is this Iberian blood which is the source of the so-called Black Celts in Ireland.” Again : “ The Iberian blood has remained, although all traces of the language may have been obliterated.”

It cannot be too often repeated that language is no certain test of race. Because Celtic Irish was the only language remaining on the island, it is no proof that the people were all Celts. The Celts of Great Britain and Ireland adopted the Saxon tongue, as the Celts of Gaul used to speak Latin, but it no more proved the first to be English than the last to be Roman. A strong conqueror may either adopt the language of the country or enforce his own. The Normans in England, as in France, accepted the dialects of the conquered. The Saxons in England and Scotland caused the tongue of the many to be forgotten. So it may have been in Ireland. The Celtic intruders, who came most probably from Britain, forced their own speech upon the original natives.

The dark Irish are now, as Prof. Boyd Dawkins says, Iberic islands in seas of Celts. They would naturally be more in the west, as driven thither by the strong Celtic invaders. They are nearly pure on the north shore of Galway Bay. The Lloegrians some thought Iberian,

Who were the Iberian Irish?

Some argue for their having been the Firbolgs, those reputed aborigines. One tradition makes Milesians a dark-haired, black-eyed people. If so, the Milesians were not Celts. Mr. Hector Maclean calls them Atlantean, with “ brown skins ; large, lustrous eyes, with long dark eyelashes ; a round head,” &c. Their beards are weaker than in the Celt. Mr. A. L. Lewis does not regard them as aborigines. They are clearly like the dark race of Wales ; for many, like Mr. Skene, have “ reason to suppose that a people possessing their physical characteristics had once spread over the whole of both of the British Isles.” The distinguished Dr. Latham held the same view. It has been contended by Mr. Glennie that the Firbolgs of Ireland were this “ dark-haired, pale-skinned, small or medium-statured, little-limbed race.” The Iberians had small hands and feet, being in that respect different to the Celt. The extreme delicacy of frame and colour among ladies in the far Irish West is due to Iberian blood.

If not the first Irish, Mr. Boyd Dawkins gives them a high antiquity, having “ proof that an Iberian or Basque population spread over the whole of Britain and Ireland in the Neolithic Age, inhabiting caves, and burying their dead in caves and chambered tombs, just as in the Iberian peninsula also in the Neolithic Age.” The sacred promontory of Ireland was called Jeronakron, an Iberian word.

Tradition brings the early colonists from Spain, and the nearest folks like the Iberians are the Basques of North Spain. These are an aboriginal race, or one before the Celts. Their primitive language, largely agglutinate, is unlike any in Europe, though supposed allied to that of the Dravidian Hill Tribes of India. In Strabo’s day a marked difference was observed between them and the Celts. Dr. Hyde Clarke detects the blood in Asia Minor, Italy, Greece, and Spain. Dionysius Periegetes, in the first century, wrote :

“ On Europe’s furthest western border dwell
Th’ Iberians, who in warlike might excel.”

Yet Varro thinks the *Iberi* of Spain were but immigrants. Many believed that they always occupied a higher stage of civilization than the Celts did. The Rev. W. Webster says : “ This Iberian population of Spain was almost cleft in two by another set of tribes, called by all ancient authors the ‘ Kelt-Iberi.’ ” But with the exception of the *Cynetæ*, the Iberi were thought the most remote inhabitants in the west of Europe. The Welsh Triads note the *Cynet*. Strabo was struck with the Aquitaini of South-western Gaul, who, said he, “ resemble the Iberi more than the Celts.” The Ligurians of South-eastern Gaul and Northern Italy have been allied with the Iberians. In North Africa, among the Berbers, some of this blood remains.

The Basques are believed to be of Turanian origin, while the Celts are Aryans, like most of the Europeans, as well as Persians, Hindoos, &c. Some Turkish and Finnish tribes, with ancient races in Greece, Italy, and Assyria, have been deemed Turanian, with Tartar sympathies. The Etruscans of Tuscany were leaning to the Iberian. Mr. J. W. Jackson deemed it probable that the dark race preceding the Xanthous varieties got its colour when there was an excess of carbon in the air. But no Irishmen flourished in the Carboniferous era, and the older Melanic Caucasians were scarcely produced “ under inferior telluric conditions.”

But if from Spain, how did the Iberians reach Ireland ? Was it in that remote age when the *Green Isle* was easier reached by land ? Did they reach it by way of Britain, instead of direct from Spain, as the Irish Bards indicate ?

Ireland undoubtedly had a so-called Iberian race. Isodore of Seville says so. Leland uses the word *Iberos*, when speaking of the Irish. Dr. Charnock, it is true, rather doubts the Iberian stock, though the theory is generally maintained by ethnologists, who distinguish it as non-Celtic. Mr. Huxley finds in Ireland, “ the dark stock predominates in the west and south, the fair in the east and north.”

For the Irish of the present day to proclaim themselves *Celts*, mainly in opposition to the supposed Saxon origin of England, is to ignore altogether a number of races, clearly not Celtic, who helped to build up the Irish nation. It is particularly unkind to ignore the earlier Iberians, since the far-famed ladies of Limerick and the distant west might trace their slightly made and delicate looking frames, their bewitching eyes, and the rich, dark red of cheek to such an un-Celtic origin. As so considerable an amount of the same blood exists in England and Wales, this is an additional reason why the Irish should not be pitted against English and Welsh as being of so different a race.

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