

Belgae a Cimbric People—The Empire of the Cimbri—Caesar's 'Belgica'—The 'Belgae' and Britain—The Cimbri as Builders—The 'Spatia' of the Cimbri—Cimbri in Britain—The Verterae Inscription—Ethnology of the Picts—Painting and Tattooing—Language of the Picts—The Picts late-comers to Scotland—Picts in Ireland—The Firbolgs and the Tuatha Dé Danann—Picts and Picards—Stone-circle of Pays de Lalloeu—The Danes in Procopius—Danes, Danaans, and Dé Danann—Picts the builders of the Aberdeenshire Circles—Their Civilisation—Extent of their Power—Pictish and Mycenæan Art—A Nation of Builders—The Legendary Empire of King Arthur.

In Homer's *Odyssey*¹ the Cimmerians are spoken of as a martial race, ἄνδρες Κιμμέριοι, dwelling on the shores of the River of Ocean,² in a land of mist and cloud, beyond which is that of darkness and the dead. In later Greek mythology the dead dwell *beneath* the earth, and to represent them as gathered into some land of *outer* darkness is a Nordic way of thinking.³ The incongruity of the appearance of such a trait in the *Odyssey* is not the least of the difficulties resolved by Sir W. Ridgeway's brilliant identification of the Homeric Achæans as a Nordic race who had brought with them into Greece much of their own mythology. The *Odyssey*, in fact, is 'a fragment of a northern saga transplanted to Greek soil,' and it is evidence that the temper of its sailor hero, who is

'become a name

For ever roaming with a hungry heart,'

was nothing strange to the Achæans. They had learnt it on the shores of some other sea—a sea of icebergs⁴ and of

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CIMBRI AND THEIR KINDRED.

Homeric Achæans identical with the Cimmerii—And with the Hyperboreans—Hecataeus' 'Isle of Hyperboreans' = Britain—Cimmerii = Cimbri—'Debâcle' of the Cimbri—Their 'sedes' in Jutland—Intercourse between Jutland and Ancient Greece—Later History of the Cimbri—The

¹ For the moot was the traditional scene of that justice whereof the Druids were the recognised interpreters. Father Smiddy asserts (*Essay on the Druids*, p. 265) that

the popular Irish name for the stone circles is *cuaire an Droí*, 'circles of the Druids.'

¹ *Odys.* xi, 14.

² cp. Tacitus, *Germ.* 37, *proximi Oceano Cimbri*.

³ Prof. J. B. Bury challenges (*Journal of Hellenic Studies*, xlii, p. 5) the popular view that Homer's Cimmerians were conceived of as dwelling in the West. Ulysses, he points out, sailed to the Cimmerians' land before a *north* wind (*Odys.* x, 507). Nevertheless, he sailed back *eastward* to Aæaea (*Odys.* xii, 3-4). More conclusive is the emphasis laid on the fact that on the Cimmerians 'the sun never looks, neither

when he marches up the starry heavens nor when he turns back thence to earth, but dreadful night broods over the miserable people.' Homeric thought could hardly apply such language to the East or to the South, so the choice lies between the North and the West. Sir W. Ridgeway argues in favour of the N. (*Early Age of Greece*, i, pp. 359, 390). The Cimmerians' land was *terra firma*, for Ulysses disembarks and walks along its shore (*Odys.* xi, 20-1) to the appointed spot.

⁴ *Odys.* x, 1-4.

midnight suns¹—long before they saw the Mediterranean and sailed with all the pirate-folk of the Aegean to the assault of Egypt; and that other sea can only have been the Baltic and the adjoining waters of the North Sea.

When all memory of the Homeric Achæans as a people had disappeared from historical Greece, that of the 'Warrior Cimmerians' lingered on, growing always vaguer and more remote. Herodotus had heard it said, and was himself inclined to believe, that the Cimmerians had once occupied the vast and vague region beyond the Danube which in his own century was known as Scythia²; and he cites Aristæas of Proconnesus as speaking of other Cimmerians 'dwelling on the shores of the southern sea (Mediterranean).'³ Pliny asserts⁴ that they had once dwelt near Lake Avernus by Cumæ in southern Italy. They were better remembered as having given a name to the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and as having ravaged all Western Asia in the seventh century B.C.; the records of Assyria name them as Gimirri; the Biblical ethnographers knew them by the eponym of Gomer; and their name abides to this day in those of the Crimea and the Crim Tartars. But the larger body of which these were merely raiding offsets came in classical Greece to be spoken of as Hyperboreans, the people dwelling 'at the back of the North Wind,' in a land of 'Cimmerian darkness' and eternal snow. The Hyperboreans long sent yearly offerings to Delos: they were doing so in the fifth century B.C. and so great was then their prestige that it could guarantee the safe transmission of such gifts 'from people to people' across large part of Europe without escort.⁵

Five hundred years later Pausanias found the same gifts still coming, although they came by a different route.⁶

¹ *Odyss.* x, 86.

² Herod. iv, 11.

³ *ibid.* iv, 13.

⁴ *H.N.* iii, 5: cp. Silius, *Punica*, xii, 132. Festus gives a rationalising explanation of the name: it denoted, he says, the people of a deep and secluded valley into which the sun never penetrated.

⁵ Herod. i, 163; iv, 33.

⁶ Pausanias, I, xxxi, 2. In Herodotus' time the route was from 'Scythia' to the head of the Adriatic, thence *via* Dodona and the Maliac Gulf to Carystus in Euboea, and

so by sea to Delos. In Pausanias' time the offerings came from Sinope by sea to Prasiæ in Attica, and were thence forwarded by the Athenians to Delos. There is more in this matter than the mere change of trade-route suggested by the commentators on Herod. iv, 33. Clearly the place of origin had changed. Sinope was the nearest seaport to the Asiatic Gauls (Galatians), whom both Appian and Diodorus Siculus style Cimbri; and these in their new home kept up the annual offering in which they had doubtless shared while living in 'Scythia,' i.e. some

The Delians paid high honours to five *Perpheres*, reputed to have been Hyperboreans who came with the maidens Hyperoche and Laodice to bring the first of these offerings¹; and on the maidens' tomb—it was apparently a barrow, for an olive-tree grew upon it—within the precinct of Artemis the Delian youths and girls made offerings of their hair.² Behind the same precinct was a second tomb of the Hyperboreans, said to be the grave of a yet earlier pair of maidens, Opis and Arge, who came 'by the same route' to Delos 'with the divinities themselves.'³ These facts plainly import that some part of the sanctity of Delos was directly due to a northern people who had there introduced the worship of some goddess later identified with Artemis, and a similar connexion of Apollo with the North was confessed in divers ways: in every nineteenth year the god left Greece to visit the Hyperboreans, and in their land was the 'Garden of Apollo.'⁴ Abaris the priest of Apollo was a Hyperborean,⁵ and that nation are 'the henchmen of Apollo,'⁶ in whose feasts and hymns the god 'takes exceptional delight.'⁷ Cicero mentions⁸ the tradition that 'Apollo came to Delphi from the Hyperboreans.' Hecataeus of Abdera⁹ wrote a *History of the Hyperboreans*, from which Diodorus Siculus quotes at some length. There was, said Hecataeus, a wondrous circular temple of Apollo in the Isle of the Hyperboreans, which lay 'over against Celtica,' i.e. off the coast of Gaul. Whether or no Stonehenge was meant, there is no reason to doubt that the 'Isle of the Hyperboreans' was Britain, and Hecataeus is therefore evidence that so early as 300 B.C. the Cimmerians were the dominant people of Britain, for they had given a name to the island. So some of them had already moved westward from the continent. But nearly two centuries later the main body was still on the mainland and still ranked as chief amongst the powers of the north-west under the Roman name of Cimbri. 'Cimmerians is the Greek name for the Cimbri,' declared Posidonius¹⁰ (c. 90 B.C.). 'Those

part of Central Europe. There were 'Cimmerian' elements in Sinope. Ridgeway, *Early Age of Greece*, i, 388; Herod. iv, 12.

¹ Herod. iv, 33.

² *ibid.* iv, 34. French excavators claim to have discovered (1923) these 'Tombs of the Hyperboreans.'

³ *ibid.* iv, 35.

⁴ Sophocles, *fragm. ap.* Strabo, § 295.

⁵ Herod. iv, 36.

⁶ Pindar, *Ol.* iii, 16.

⁷ Pindar, *Pyth.* x, 29.

⁸ *de Nat. Deor.* iii, xxiii, 57.

⁹ *Circa* 300 B.C.

¹⁰ *Apud* Strabo, § 293.

who were anciently called Cimmericians,' says Plutarch,¹ 'were afterwards known as Cimbri.' 'The evidence both historical and philological makes it as certain as the nature of the case will allow, that the Cimmericii and the Cimbri were identical.'² Posidonius³ calls the Cimmericians 'roamers and rievors,' and both Plutarch⁴ and Festus assert that 'Cimbri is a general German name for robbers.' This does not imply that etymologically the name had that meaning, but it illustrates the light in which their neighbours regarded these wreckers of three continents. That position they lost only in 113 B.C. when a vast horde of them abandoned their homes along the east bank of the middle and lower Rhine to seek new lands in the south.⁵ With them went a number of other tribes whom the Romans knew collectively as Teutones and Ambrones, and many of the Helvetii presently joined them. The host swept across southern Gaul and thence passed into Spain, but returning attempted (103 B.C.) to march by way of the western coast into Belgic Gaul. Checked on the Seine by the warlike Belgae,⁶ they wheeled about and made for Italy. The dread of such an issue had haunted the Romans for years, growing with every new collision between the legions and these huge-limbed fair-haired northerners⁷; so that of late, overriding the provisions of the *Lex Annalis*, they had for four successive years returned C. Marius as consul solely that he might deal with the expected peril. He justified their choice by annihilating the Cimbri and their Helvetic allies on the plains of Vercellae (101 B.C.). In the previous year (102 B.C.) he had dealt in like fashion at Aquae Sextiae (Aix-en-Provence) with the Teutones and Ambrones.

Marius had done more than save Italy: he had shattered the empire of the Cimbri. Plutarch asserts that, besides 60,000 taken prisoners, there died at Vercellae

¹ Marius, 11.

² *Early Age of Greece*, i, 391.

³ *Apud* Strabo, § 293, Ἀγορικὸν καὶ πλάνητες οἱ Κίμβριοι.

⁴ *Marius*, 11: cp. Cicero's pun, in speaking of C. Annius Cimber, who was accused of fratricide: *nisi forte iure (Cimber) Germanum occidit*. 'But possibly it was legitimate for a Cimbrian to kill his own cousin-german.' Cimber was an old cognomen of at least three Roman *gentes*

(*Annia*, *Gabinia*, *Tillia*), an agnomen of the *gens Metella*.

⁵ There was a story, at which Strabo (§§ 292-3) scoffs, that their migration was due to the encroachments of the sea. But recent researches make it very probable that the story is founded on fact.

⁶ Caesar, *B.G.* ii, 4, 2.

⁷ Plutarch is emphatic on this matter (*Marius* 11): cf. Tacitus, *German.* 4.

120,000 fighting men and the whole of their women and children. None remained to return to the lands they had vacated,¹ which were henceforth occupied by a new power, that of the Suebic League, which in its turn presently began thrusting westward across the Rhine.² On the east bank of the river there remained only a remnant, apparently those Cimbri whom Strabo (§ 291) mentions as still living west of the Elbe beside the Bructeri and the Chauci. Later still in the time of Pliny and Tacitus they had withdrawn into the peninsula now known as Denmark, which ancient authorities declare to have been their original *sedes*. Archaeology supplies abundant evidence for the existence of an ancient and active intercourse between Denmark and the Balkan peninsula by way of the Rhine and the Danube,³ or by the 'Amber route' from the Adriatic through Noricum to the shores of the Baltic.⁴ All the evidence suggests that as early as the sixth century B.C. the Cimmericii or Cimbri were the dominant power in central and NW. Europe. Du Chaillu quotes⁵ from the *Annals* of Witikind the assertion that he had heard it said that the Saxons were derived from the Greeks, and that the Saxons themselves had a tradition that they were a remnant of the Macedonian army which followed Alexander to the east. Such a story finds a parallel in the tradition that the Milesians of Ireland came thither from Greece, and both tales conceal the historical truth that the Nordic tribes had come and gone by *La Voie du Danube*⁶ for long years before they left the continent to find more settled homes over-seas. Indeed the route was only closed after the sixth century A.D. by the inflow of the Slav races into the Danube region.⁷

For centuries the Danish peninsula was known as the Promontorium Cimbrorum, the Cimbric Chersonese, and the name has been traced in that of Himmerland long applied to North Jutland. But the power of the Cimbri

¹ Paulus Diaconus mentions (iii, 30) a town of Cimbria, *oppidum Italiae superioris a Francis dirutum*, which may have owed its name and part of its population to some of those captured in the fight.

² In Strabo's time (§ 290) they occupied all between Rhine and Elbe, and part of the land beyond the Elbe. In the time of Tacitus (*German.* 38) they held 'most of Germany' (*maiorum Germaniae partem obtinent*).

³ Dognée, *Bulletin des Commissions Royales*, Brussels, 1870.

⁴ One of the results of this traffic is to be seen in the Northern runes, which derive direct from the Greek alphabet.

⁵ *Viking Age*, i, 18.

⁶ Bertrand, *La Gaule avant les Gaulois*.

⁷ For this view of the part played by the Cimbri in pre-history, cf. Marcellin Boule, *Fossil Men*, Eng. trans. (1923), pp. 344-5.

was now gone, and Caesar, who had much to do in securing the Rhine frontier against the Suebi, had no dealings with the Cimbri. It is with surprise that one finds Augustus taking the trouble to put it on record, in the *Monumentum Ancyranum*, that they had sent envoys and gifts to him¹ in the year 5. Clearly he felt it something to be proud of.

A century later, in the days of Plutarch and Tacitus, they were *magni nominis umbra*. Plutarch could gather no satisfactory account of them: some regarded them as Celts, while others held them to be a fraction of the greater Cimmerian people, a warlike race who dwelt 'in the extremities of the earth near the Northern Sea, in a land that is dark and woody, where the sun is seldom seen.' The language at once recalls Homer's words about the 'Warrior Cimmerians' and their home. Tacitus is more definite: 'the proofs of their old-time power and multitude' were still to be seen, he says,² 'broadcast on either bank of the river.' The river intended being without question the Rhine, his brief comment is evidence that at one period the Cimbri had been masters of all the Rhine-lands east and west. They had been masters equally of the adjoining seas, to which Claudian as late as the fourth century could still give the name of the 'Cimbric³ Sea.' So they were at one time as much at home in those waters as had been their kindred the Akaiwasha or Achæans in the Mediterranean (*circa* 1220 B.C.).

When setting out upon their fatal march in 113 B.C. the Cimbri and Teutones had deposited on the west bank of the Rhine such of their belongings as they could not carry with them, leaving a small force to guard them.⁴ At that date then their power was actually more secure in Belgica than in Germany, and the Belgæ were their friends,

if not members of the Cimbric League. From this small force, 6,000 in all, were directly descended¹ the Belgic tribe of the Aduatuci, who only 55 years later could put into the field 19,000 warriors.² The figures illustrate the amazing fecundity of the breed, for before they could win for themselves an acknowledged territory (about Tongres to the north of Liège) the tribe had 'for many years been hounded about by their neighbours.'³ Caesar names them⁴ amongst the fifteen Belgic tribes, whence Sir W. Ridgeway legitimately infers that all the Belgæ were of the same Cimbric stock.⁵

Caesar again remarks⁶ that, whereas in his own day the Gauls at large confessed themselves no match for the Germans, there had been a time when the relative positions of the two peoples were so far reversed that the Gauls held undisputed sway over all Germany up to the Hercynian Forest. Plutarch⁷ had seen or heard the same supremacy attributed to the Cimbri: they had been paramount from the Hercynian Forest to the outer sea (Atlantic). He had also⁸ seen it maintained that the name of Celtica rightfully embraced all Europe from the Atlantic and the north to the Lacus Maeotis. The terms 'Gaul' and 'German' having, as has been shown, little more than a topographical significance, these various statements bear out the view that the name of the Cimbri represents a great league of Nordic peoples which, long paramount in central and western Germany, the Rhine-lands and northern France, was gradually forced to give ground before the thrust of a new power, probably that of the Suebic League, upon its eastern borders. In the long run this pressure forced the Cimbri to evacuate most of what remained to them on the east bank of the Rhine. Such an evacuation was in itself a confession of weakness which must have proved fatal to their prestige. Their league at once broke up, the Belgæ stepping into the foremost place; and when the Cimbri themselves sought to find new homes in Belgica, they were beaten off by force. The fight at Vercellæ completed their ruin. For the next fifty years the Belgæ represented all of

¹ Strabo, § 293. The gifts included 'their most sacred cauldron,' mention of which at once recalls the prominence given to such 'cauldrons' alike in Homer, in the *Sagas*, and in the *Mabinogion*. They were, in fact, the rude originals of the artistic 'tripods' of Greek art. In Strabo, § 294, the Cimbric women-priests are described as sacrificing human victims over cauldrons of the capacity of 20 *amboræ*, precisely as such victims were sacrificed over the blood-bowl to Thor and Woden. If Strabo's *ambora* was of the Roman measure, the content of such a cauldron was 106 gallons;

if it was Greek measure, the content was 170 gallons.

² *Germ.* 39.

³ *Cimbrica Teibys* (*De Bell. Getico*, 355). A Greek writer of the fourth century B.C. (Philemon, *apud* Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* iv, 3) says the Cimbri themselves called it *Morimarusa*, '*boc est, mortuum mare.*' If this name represents the modern Welsh *môr marwaidd*, as is asserted (H. Martin, *Études d'Archéologie Celtique*, p. 140), it follows that the Cimbri used the Brythonic speech in Philemon's time.

⁴ *B.G.* ii, 29, 4.

¹ *ibid.*

² *ibid.* ii, 4, 9.

³ *ibid.* ii, 29, 5.

⁴ *ibid.* ii, 4, 9.

⁵ *Early Age of Greece*, i, 392.

⁶ *B.G.* vi, 24; cf. Tacitus, *Germ.* 28.

⁷ *Marius*, 11.

⁸ *ibid.*

importance that remained of the lost continental empire of the Cimbri.¹

In Caesar's time the Belgæ extended as far as the Seine,² and the most formidable of their fifteen tribes³ were the Bellovaci. Somewhat earlier this position had belonged to the Suessiones, some of whom had pushed across the Channel to carve out for themselves a kingdom in Britain.⁴ There is otherwise abundant evidence for the presence of Belgic, i.e. Germanic, invaders here before his time, and their inflow certainly went on after him and in spite of all that Rome could do to prevent it. The Roman frontier on the Rhine held good more or less until 412, but when the Franks and others then burst through it, the fact made no difference to the residue of the Nordic stream, for the Franks invited no further new-comers into their heritage. During all these centuries the westward thrust still continued: no longer free to pass by way of Gaul, it passed by way of the North Sea, and in consequence those new colonists who reached Great Britain and Ireland between the years 50 B.C.—A.D. 500 came for the most part in the unqualified savagery of 'Germans.' This, and the difference of idiom, were the essential differences between the Anglo-Saxons and the Celts who had been before them, the Jutes perhaps excepted. But all alike would pass through or near to Denmark, the ancient *sedes* of the Cimbri, and all alike would pick up something of the peculiar culture of the Cimbri, according as they dwelt for a longer or a shorter period in that vicinity, and according as they sojourned there while the memory of the Cimbri was more or less green; and one of the most notable characteristics of the Cimbri was their capacity in building.

Certain 'Cimmerian forts' to be seen in the Crimea in his day attracted the notice of Herodotus⁵: they must have been remarkable to arouse the interest of a cultivated

Greek who has little to say of the Cyclopean walls of Tiryns and Mycenæ. More than a century after Herodotus, Hecataeus of Abdera¹ (*circa* 300 B.C.) wrote of the wonderful circular temple of Apollo in the 'Isle of the Hyperboreans.' The attempt has been made to show that the Hyperboreans, their island, and its temple, are alike mythical; but it is difficult to prove a negative, and the balance of probability is with Hecataeus, whose description of the 'Isle of the Hyperboreans' can apply only to Britain.

The Hyperboreans being identical with the Cimmerii, and both with the Cimbri, here are two independent testimonies to the remarkable achievements of the Cimbri as builders. There is a yet better testimony in the matter-of-fact language of Tacitus: he saw 'the proofs of their old time power and numbers' in the *castra ac spatia* which they had left over a wide area on either bank of the Rhine. Of the meaning of the former term there can be no doubt: it means 'fortified camps' such as that which the Achæans had wrought before Troy, and such as Caesar found their descendants the Aduatuci still building in the Lowlands. The second term (*spatia*) has baffled the commentators. It probably means 'places of assembly,' and is so used by Cicero² when he defines an *urbs* as a settlement 'provided with ordered communal shrines and ordered communal *spatia*.' Even if this interpretation be disputed, there remains the fact that Tacitus, like Herodotus 500 years before him, was struck by the capacity of the Cimbri as builders; and both witnesses therefore confirm the conclusion of Sir W. Ridgeway, derived from wholly different evidence, that the Achæans who built the stone circle-moot in Scheria were themselves Cimbric. Caesar makes frequent mention of the capacity of the Belgæ as military builders, and in particular of that of the Aduatuci³ and the Suessiones.⁴

Hecataeus is evidence that at his date there had already been established a Cimbric, i.e. Belgic power. Authority is agreed that the Brythonic invasion of Britain commenced *circa* 400 B.C. and if it gives a later date for the coming of the first of the Belgic tribes, such a date is purely arbitrary:

¹ One Belgius or Bolgius (cf. the Irish Firbolgs) was leader of the Gallic horde which raided Macedonia in 280 B.C. (Pausanias, x, 19, 4; Justinus, xxiv, 5), while one Cimmerius captained a Suebic swarm who tried to enter the Treviran territories in 57 B.C. (*B.G.* ii, 37, 3). There is a village of Cairnbulg near Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire, and a ruined fort in St. Kilda bore the name of Dun-Firvolg (Martin, *Description of Western Isles*, p. 281).

² *B.G.* i, 1, 2.

³ Strabo, § 197; *B.G.* ii, 4.

⁴ *B.G.* ii, 4, 7.

⁵ *Κιμμέρια τείχεα*, Herod. iv, 2. In *Earthwork of England* (1908), p. 213, the present writer some years ago pointed out the close similarity between the fort of the Achæans before Troy, as described by Homer, and some of the numerous 'British camps' of England.

¹ *Apud* Diodorus Siculus.

² *de Repub.* i, 26, 41, *urbem . . . delubris distinctam spatiisque communibus*.

³ *B.G.* ii, 30, 2.

⁴ *op. cit.* ii, 12, 2.

they were coming hither before Caesar's time, possibly for many years before his time, and they were one and all Cimbric. Whether or no any of them were lineal descendants of the original mighty tribe, like the Gaulish Aduatuci, is of no great moment : Welsh tradition¹ declares that the Brythons, the first to colonise this island, were 'of the original stock of the Cymru,' and indubitably the Brythonic Celts of the island at an early date adopted the collective name of Cymru.² Professor Skeat saw their name in such place-names as Cemmerwood in Bradford-on-Avon, and others have recognised it in the term *Kimberlin* by which natives of the isle of Portland designate all strangers. The forged eighteenth-century treatise of Richard of Cirencester boldly places the Cimbri in the south-west of Britain beyond the Parrett,³ the same region which even so late as Alfred's time was styled 'land of the Wealhcyning.' There is earlier and better evidence of their presence in Britain in the famous inscription, found at Verterae (Brough under Stainmore, Westmorland), to the memory of one Hermes of Commagene, a legionary who died fighting against the Cimmerians. As he died in Britain, it is to be presumed that those who killed him were living in Britain ; and they can be no other than the Celts of Strathclyde or Cumbria.⁴ In the face of these facts it is absurd for the philologists to deny the identity of Cimbri with Cymru. Cumbria is precisely the form which the name would assume on other lips, and it remains with us still in that of Cumberland, where men still spoke the Cymric tongue until the twelfth century.⁵ The Cumbrians survived the passing of the Romans, to endure as the independent Celtic kingdom of Strathclyde until the middle of the tenth century. Clearly they were an indomitable breed with a marked individuality ; one suspects that they retreated into the waste places of Cumberland only as refugees who refused to submit to

¹ *Triads*.

² According to Sir John Rhys, in the seventh century, but Sir W. Ridgway thinks it was at a date much earlier (*Early Age of Greece*, i, 392).

³ *Ancient State of Britain*, i, vi, 16.

⁴ The inscription (*Inscript. Graecae*, 1890, p. 671 ; *Athenaeum*, Nov. 22, 1884) cannot

be later than A.D. 400, and is probably 200 years earlier. It is usually supposed to refer to the Caledones, and to date from the time of Septimius Severus (209).

⁵ In *Saga of Olaf Trygvason*, 31, Strathclyde is 'the land which is called of the Cymry.' Sir John Rhys maintained that the Cymru were established in Strathclyde before they made their way into Wales.

Roman domination (p. 218). They were closely akin to the Welsh and to the Celts of south-west Scotland, who are known as the South Picts¹ ; and these latter again were kinsmen of the North Picts of Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire was the headquarters of a Pictish kingdom, which reached its zenith in the eighth century and in 843 was merged in the rival kingdom of the Scots under Kenneth MacAlpin.

To Tacitus the northern portion of Scotland is Caledonia, a Brythonic name, but he makes no mention of any Caledones nor of any Picts. His general name for all the natives, at least as far north as the Grampians, is *Britanni*. The Welsh called them *Prydyn*. As *Prydyn* was also the Welsh name for the southern Britons, the inference is that the populations of southern and northern Britain were generally Brythonic and of one blood. The northern Britons, says Tacitus,² were wholly unlike the dark Silures ; they had the fair complexions and large limbs of the Germans—were merely a little more Germanic in type than were the southern Britons. Strabo³ makes the same remark of the Germans as compared with the Celts ; and Tacitus⁴ remarking that South Britons and Gauls were much the same in appearance, it is reasonable to suppose that there had crossed into northern Britain a number of settlers who came thither direct from the 'German' lands without passing through any 'Gallic' medium. So soon as the Romans had occupied Gaul and secured the Rhine-frontier, such immigrants would naturally start from points to the north and east of the Rhine's mouth, from Frisia, from the Cimbric Chersonese and the adjacent shores of southern Scandinavia, or from the Baltic shores of Germany ; and they would as naturally make for those remoter parts of the British Isles which were not yet occupied in force whether by Gallic tribes or by the Romans, that is, northern Britain and Ireland.

Two hundred and fifty years after Agricola's time Ammianus Marcellinus asserts that in 368 the term *Picti* denoted two distinct *gentes*, whose respective proper

¹ Skene notes that the earliest appearance of the name Cumbri is in *Aethelweard's Chronicle*, anno 875, where they are coupled with the Picts (of Strathclyde).

² *Agricola*, 11.

³ § 290.

⁴ *Agricola*, 11, *proximi Gallis et similes sunt*.

appellations were Dicalidonae and Vecturiones.¹ At that date then the term *Picti* was less an ethnic than a descriptive name. This may be the explanation of the otherwise puzzling language of Eumenius, who writes some sixty years earlier of 'the fens and forests of the Caledones and other Picts.'²

Picti is apparently a Latinisation of some native term unknown.³ According to one view its real meaning is 'robbers,' in which case *Picti* would be merely a synonym for *Cimbri*. To Roman ears it naturally suggested those practices of painting and tattooing which the Picts undoubtedly affected⁴; and Eumenius may have meant nothing more than 'Caledonians and other such painted savages (*picti*).'⁵ Claudian could still (369) play upon the double meaning of the name.⁶

The Gaelic equivalent of Prydyn is Cruithnig. Cruithnig therefore means merely Brythons, and is no synonym for Picti; and there is nothing odd in the appearance of Cruithnig at various points in Ireland such as Antrim and Down, Meath and Roscommon, precisely the regions where there is otherwise evidence of the intrusion of Brythonic peoples (Firbolgs). The Irish transliteration of Picti is Ffichti; the Welsh is Peithwyr, 'Pict-men.'

The term *Brython* is sometimes explained as meaning 'painted,' with an assumed reference to the old habit of dyeing the skin with woad; and some writers have endeavoured to stress the difference between painting and tattooing, contrasting the ugliness of the former with the beauty of the latter style of ornament, and insisting that tattooing was a peculiarly Pictish art.⁶ But Déchelette has remarked⁷ that the one practice is rarely to be distinguished from the other; Herodian explicitly says⁸

¹ Amm. Marcell. xxvii, 8-9. Sir John Rhys, amending *Veturiones* to *Verturiones*, found the name surviving in that of Fortrenn, a known Pictish stronghold in after years.

² *Paneg. Constant.* c. 7 (ante A.D. 306).

³ The *c* of the Latin form evidently represents a guttural, seen equally in the A.-S. forms *Pihta*, *Pehta*, *Peahta*, *Peohta*, and in the modern Scottish *Pecht*. The Norse form was *Pettir*.

⁴ Claudian, *Bell. Getico*, 417, etc.

⁵ *Cons. Hon.* iii, 43, *nec falso nomine Pictos Edomuit* (Theodosius). Nothing can be gathered from the mention of a victory of Constantius 'over the Picts' (in *Mon. Hist. Brit.* i, lxxv) before 306, as the name and date of the writer are unknown.

⁶ As e.g. does Bishop Browne, *Antiqs. of Duncecht*, p. 127, etc.

⁷ *Manuel d'Archéologie Préhistorique* (1908), p. 202.

⁸ *Hist.* iii, 14, 7, speaking of the Scottish tribes.

that the 'Britons' tattooed their bodies with figures of all sorts of animals; and Claudian himself represents Britannia as coming 'with tattooed cheeks'¹ to do homage for her deliverance from the Picts, and this in a passage where the poet certainly did not intend to represent Britannia as unbeautiful. Probably the precise way in which the decoration was applied varied with different tribes, much as did that of dressing the hair; for Tacitus tells us² that a peculiarity of *coiffure* was the distinctive badge of the members of the Suebic League. Tattooing was no peculiarity of the Picts, for the Anglo-Saxons continued to tattoo themselves until the practice was condemned as pagan in 787³; and the evidence on the whole suggests that the name of *Picti*, like that of the German *Suebi*, the Gallic *Belgae*, the Latin (*Gallia*) *Comata* and *Braccata*, and our own 'Saxons,' was not so much ethnic as collective, denoting the various members of a league whose sign visible was a rather unusually elaborate use of tattooing or painting.

The speech of the Picts was certainly Brythonic, of the same family as that of the Cymru, but widely different.⁴ The difference is to be explained partly as due to Gaelic surroundings, but possibly more to the rapidity with which any speech will change amongst a people by whom writing, if known at all, is little used. Under such circumstances a century may suffice to produce what is to all intents a new language. The Scottish Britons were more or less effectively sundered from their southern kinsmen by the Roman Wall from the year 120 onward (p. 224).

If St. Columba, himself of Brythonic descent, sometimes required an interpreter in his dealings with Brude, king of the Picts,⁵ this assertion of Adamnan presents no difficulty, for on the one hand the speech of the Irish Brythons must have been all but lost by that date, and on the other the Brythonic idiom of the Picts must have suffered almost as much change.⁶ Standardisation of speech is a doubtful blessing: the educated Englishman is lost outside Britain,

¹ *Laud. Stilichonis*, ii, 247, *ferro picta genas*.

² *Germania*, 38: cp. the *κρωβύλος* of the thorough-bred Athenians (Thuc. i, 6).

³ Haddan and Stubbs, *Concilia*, iii, 447.

⁴ The point has been hotly disputed, but the evidence appears to be conclusive.

⁵ Archibald Scott, *Pictish Nation*, p. 20.

⁶ This is explanation sufficient of Bede's assertion (*E.H.* i, i) that the speech of the Picts was different alike from that of the Britons, the Scoti, the Saxons, and Latin.

but an uneducated east-coast sailor can still make himself understood in the Lowland ports, and Wilfrid and Boniface needed no interpreter in Friesland.

There is an entire absence of evidence to support the view that the Picts were a people of immense antiquity in Britain, descendants—so it is assumed—of some tribe¹ which had entered the island from the south in the van of the Celtic invasion, and, driven gradually northward before later swarms of invaders, had at last found a secure retreat betwixt Don and Dee. Such a view is in direct conflict with all that is recorded of them by ancient writers, and also with the historical fact that from their first appearance in history the Picts are mostly hand and glove with those other pirate tribes of Baltic origin who harried South Britain from the fourth to the sixth centuries, and more particularly with the Scoti.² Picts and Scots, says Gildas,³ differed in manners, but were alike in their ferocity and in their dress or the lack of it; and Nennius preserves⁴ the tradition of their victims that, whereas the Britons had come into Britain in the third age of the world, the Scots occupied Ireland only in the succeeding (fourth) age.

Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of the Picts as ravaging the regions next to the Roman borders in conjunction with the Scots,⁵ here mentioned for the first time. This was in 360. Four years later (364), reinforced by Baltic Saxons and Scottish Attacotti, they 'worried Britain incessantly'⁶; and yet four years later still, when (368) Theodosius landed at Rutupiae and marched thence to Londinium, he seems to have engaged some of their raiding bands on the way.⁷ If Claudian is to be believed, Theodosius reduced them to a temporary inactivity,⁸ but in 382 it was again necessary for the usurper Maximus to take strong measures against them and their accustomed allies the Scots.⁹

¹ Often identified with the Pictones (Pectones) or Pictavi, whose name remains in that of Poitou.

² As, for example, in Claudian, *Laud. Stilichonis*, ii, 254; *Bell. Getico*, 417; *Cons. Hon.* iii, 54-5, iv, 31.

³ *History*, § 19.

⁴ § 16.

⁵ *Amm. Marcell.* xx, 1, *cum Scotorum*

Pictorumque gentium ferarum excursus . . . loca limitibus vicina vastarent.

⁶ *ibid.* xxvi, 4, *Picti Saxonesque et Scoti et Attacotti Britannos aerumnis vexavere continuis.*

⁷ *ibid.* xxvii, 8. Franks and Saxons, he adds, were doing the same thing in Gaul at the same date.

⁸ *Cons. Hon.* iii, 54, *edomuit.*

⁹ Prosper Tyro, in *Mon. Hist. Brit.* i, lxxxii, *strenue superavit.*

Giraldus Cambrensis says¹ that he had read that the Picts, who thus far seem to have been merely sporadic pirates, were first settled in Northern Britain in the brief reign of this same Maximus: when the usurper had crossed to the Continent² to embark upon an aggressive war against the joint emperors Valentinian II and Gratian these latter prompted the Picts to invade Britain and supplied them with ships, in the hope that their attack would compel Maximus to return. In this account, as in so many others, Giraldus explicitly endorses the narrative of Geoffrey of Monmouth, whom he repeatedly condemns as a liar; for Geoffrey tells³ precisely the same story, merely adding that the leaders of the invading forces were Guanius the Hun and Melga, king of the Picts. Both writers seem to have made use of the *Brut Tysilio*, or similar Welsh chronicles, which record⁴ that Gwnwas the Hun and Melwas king of the Pictavians came 'in ships from Germany' to the support of Gratianus, and after the deaths of Maximus (388) and the short-lived Gratianus Municeps, 'ravaged Britain from sea to sea' with a mixed force of 'Norwegians, Danes, Scots and Picts.' Even Gildas⁵ makes the coming of the Picts and the Scots to coincide with the departure of Maximus from Britain. The *Brut Tysilio* again declares that the Saxons of Hengist, thwarted by Constantine in their first effort to occupy Kent, retreated northward to Alclwyd (Dumbarton) in Southern Pictland.⁶

These various accounts all imply that there were Picts upon the Continent, and apparently in the trans-Rhenane area or near it, who, after harrying Britain for many years, found opportunity towards the close of the fourth century to make permanent settlements in the northern part of the island. It was, in fact, a rehearsal of the later performance of the Saxons.

Tradition is a thing to be respected, particularly when it is so demonstrably old and consistent as in this case. Moreover the reason alleged for the actual settlement of

¹ *de Instruct. Princ.* c. 18.

² He took with him the bulk of the troops then in Britain, thereby denuding the northern *limites* (the Roman Wall), and making the easier any aggression in that quarter.

³ *Hist. Brit.* v, 16.

⁴ Peter Roberts, *Chronicle of the Kings of Britain* (1811), p. 101.

⁵ *History*, § 14.

⁶ Peter Roberts, p. 124.

the Picts upon British soil is singularly convincing. Skene is quite justified in his remark that the natural inference from the language of Gildas—and Gildas was in the best position to know the facts—is that he considered them to be a foreign people who had first obtained a footing in the island at the beginning of the fifth century.¹

Bede distinguishes between the northern and the southern Picts, placing the dividing line at the Grampians. This means that the Celts of the area between the Grampians and the Wall had fallen under the control of the others. But the Lowland Celts were unquestionably Brythonic. Bede therefore knew nothing but a geographical distinction between the peoples north and south of the Grampians, and must have felt all alike to be Brythonic.

According to Bede² the Picts by all accounts came 'from Scythia,' by which it is usual to understand north-western Europe. Gildas says³ that they came 'from the North.' So does Nennius,⁴ adding that they had previously made a temporary settlement in the Orkneys. According to the Welsh *Triads* they came from Llychlyn (Lochlin, Lochlann), i.e. the coast-lands of southern Scandinavia; whence Giraldus Cambrensis⁵ identifies them with the Goths, i.e. the Geats of Scania.

Bede asserts positively⁶ that, finding South Britain already occupied by British tribes from Armorica (i.e. Belgic Gauls), the Picts attempted to make a settlement in the north of Ireland, and finally turned to Scotland. If this happened, as seems likely, in the fourth century, Ireland was at the time ruled by the Brythonic Firbolgs, whose name bespeaks them a Belgic people.

According to Irish tradition the Firbolgs were attacked, and for a time worsted, by another swarm of invaders called the Tuatha Dé Danann.⁷ This name is supposed to mean 'tribes of the god (or goddess) Danu.' It is a suggestive name: *tuatha*, a word in regular use in Erse, is the same as the Germanic *Deutsch* (= *theotisc*). The Firbolgs not having reached Ireland much before the first

century A.D. the invasion of the Tuatha Dé Danann must have fallen well within the historical period, possibly as late as the fourth century A.D.; and as they landed in the *north* of the island, it is likely that they came by way of the north of Scotland; and one account says explicitly that they had been for seven years settled in Dobhar, i.e. in the extreme north of Scotland. They must have come thither from the Continent, and one cannot but suspect that *Danann* in reality represents the famous name of the Danes. If so, they were merely an earlier swarm of the same people who harried and colonised Ireland between the eighth and the eleventh centuries.¹ Quite consistent with this view is the tradition that they also came, as did the Picts, from the land of Llychlyn. The description of them as being 'fair-haired, vengeful, large, plunderers, with a great aptitude for music, and great proficiency in magical arts,' might serve *verbatim* for the Picts. Even the legend of their ultimate disappearance into the mounds of the *Sidh* may but disguise the fact that the bulk of them voluntarily moved back to Scotland, and their Welsh name, Gwyddel Ffichti, may preserve the record of their migration from Ireland to Caledonia. It is noticeable that Irish tradition represents them as being of the same race as the Firbolgs and speaking a tongue which the Firbolgs could understand.² It is noticeable also that amongst the sepulchral monuments which cover the field of North Moytura (Carrowmore in NW. Mayo), the scene of their second triumph over the Firbolgs, are some of types scarcely to be found elsewhere except in Scandinavian lands.³ On the other hand the monuments of the fight at South Moytura (near Cong in S. Mayo) are of types which appear to be entirely Belgic, notably the immense Carn of Killower, the grave of the Firbolg king Eochy Mac Erc, which is merely an exaggerated disc-barrow.

¹ The first mention of their appearance in Ireland under the name of Danes is said to be anno 790 (*rectius* 795) of *Annals of the Four Masters* (Dublin, 1851), vol. i, p. 397. Thereafter the references to their activities are abundant. But anno 683 the same chronicle asserts that the churches and territories of Magbreagh (East Meath) were devastated by 'Saxons.'

² Fergusson, *Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 176.

The tradition that they 'set up in Tara the Cauldron of the Dagda' possibly contains a reference to the stone circle-moot: see the note on Banchor, p. 143.

³ W. P. Wood-Martin, *Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland*, p. 176. Sir W. R. Wilde (*Lough Corrib*, 1872) was amongst those who have emphatically identified the T. Dé Danann with Scandinavians, the Firbolgs with the Belgæ.

¹ *Celtic Scotland*, ii, 123.

⁵ *de Instruct. Princ.* c. 18.

² *E.H.* i, i.

⁶ *E.H.* i, i.

³ *History*, § 14.

⁷ It appears occasionally in the shorter form of *Tuatha Dé*, e.g. in the *Book of Ballymore*.

⁴ § 12.

It is not impossible also that the name of the Picts is related to that of the people whose name survives in that of Picardy. French ethnologists are agreed that Picardy derives from Picard, and that the Picards were in manners and in idiom distinct from the rest of the Frankish people, but the origin of the people and of their name remains to this day a problem.¹ A possible light on the matter is to be found in the mention (*anno* 729) of certain Piccardach or Piccardaig as making a piratical descent upon the Irish coast.² They kept their reputation as pirates (of Dunquerque, etc.) until at least Chaucer's time, and *picard* was in familiar use more than two centuries later for a large type of sailing ship.³ It is even possible that the Spanish *picaro*, 'thief,' Italian *piccaro*, may derive from the name of the same tribe,⁴ just as the term *Cimber* came in Latin to denote a 'robber' in general. Whatever the origin of the Picards, they inherited a large portion of the lands of Caesar's Belgica, and that portion in particular which had in his day been occupied by the paramount Belgic tribes of the Bellovaci and the Suessiones⁵; and the Belgae as has been shewn, were Cimbric. Some such ethnological connexion between Scotland and northern France would go a long way to explain the intimate relations between the two countries, so prominent a feature up to the fifteenth century.

If the Picards were verily of Cimbric blood⁶ we ought

¹ Du Cange discusses numerous suggested derivations, of which only that connecting it with *pique*, 'a pike,' is even plausible; for the Picards may as well have been named from their favourite weapon as were the Saxons and the Langobardi. Du Cange cites Lucan, *Pharsalia*, i, 423, *longisque leves Suessiones in armis*, to shew that the use of the pike in the Picard area was an ancient peculiarity; as Homer tells us it was with the Achæans. According to Matthew Paris the name was in common use in the thirteenth century, but it is gravely asserted by some that the name is not older than the twelfth century and arose from an academical joke, the reference being to the hot temper of the people of that region. See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall* (edit. Prof. J. B. Bury, 1898), vi, p. 259, note. The first syllable is long (*Picardi*).

² *Annals of the Four Masters*.

³ *N.E.D.* Bede (*E.H.* i, i) mentions the *longae naves* of the Picts.

⁴ *N.E.D.* cites, under date 1626, the phrase 'any lousy Spanish Picardo (*sic*).'

⁵ E. Chantriot in *Grande Encyclopédie* (Paris). Fergusson was mistaken when he argued (*Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 92) that 'no stone monuments are found' in Gallia Belgica, and that therefore 'it is unlikely that the Belgians should have done here [in Britain] what they did not do at home.'

⁶ The French archaeologist, H. Martin, was struck by the similarity of the Welsh and Picard characters (*Études d'Arch. Celtique*, p. 41). Pliny mentions (*N.H.* iv, 31) a tribe of Britanni living in his day between the Morini and the Ambiani (Amiens), 'probably between the Canche and the Authie' in Artois, says De Sœur (*Praef.* to Du Cange, *Hist. des Comtes de Pontieu*, p. v): cf. Sidon. Apoll. i, 7; ix, 9.

to find in Picardy some traces of the use of the stone circle-moot. Such is the fact (fig. 33). At La Gorgue in the Pas de Calais between Armentières (NE.), Neuve Chapelle (S.) and Estaires (SW.), 'se trouve le lieu où se tenaient au moyen-âge les *Plaids Généraux* du pays de Lalloeu. On l'appelait *Esmals* ou *Esmaux*; on le nomme aujourd'hui

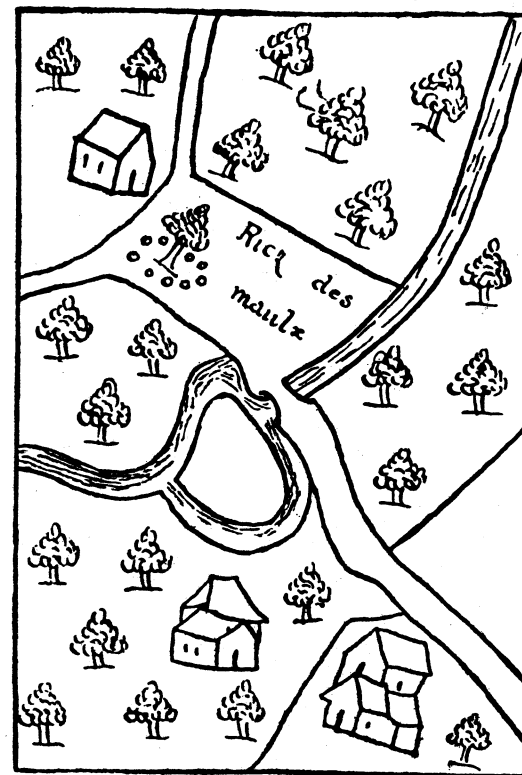


FIG. 33. STONE CIRCLE OF LA GORGUE IN 1612.
(From Depotter, *Le Pay de Lalloeu*.)

le *Rietz des Maux*, et plus ordinairement *Les Dix Cailloux*. C'était un champ de la contenance d'une mesure environ, en forme de motte de moulin [mill-ball], avec un tilleul au milieu, entouré de dix grosses pierres ou perrons que le peuple appelle Les Dix Cailloux. Ces cailloux sont d'une grosseur considérable; chaque échevin était assis sur sa pierre, et le greffier criminel sur la pierre en-dedans.'

Pendant longtemps on rendit en cet endroit les sentences portées dans les causes criminelles.¹ The Pays de Lalloeu (i.e. *allodium*) was demesne of the abbey of St. Vaast, Arras, and retained until a very late date its communal autonomy. The moot of that authority was a circle of stones, some 40 yards in diameter,² and we are told that it was used precisely as was used the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* in the *Shield of Achilles*. Its name bespoke its purpose, for *Esmals*, *Esmaux*, *Maulx* and *Maux* are derived all from the Teutonic *mal*, 'assembly,' with the Old French preposition *ès*. One of the stones yet survives, though no longer in its original position. It measures 2 m. 90 in length, 0 m. 36 in width, and 0 m. 25 in thickness, dimensions which correspond closely to those of the stones remaining at Pendine and in some of the medial circles in Aberdeenshire. Finally be it noticed that the Pays de Lalloeu was in the most Belgic area of Gaul, in the territories of the Atrebatas, and that the Gallo-Roman town of Minariacum stood at or close beside the *Rietz des Maux*.

Be this as it may, there is evidence enough for a ceaseless flow of raiding or invading tribes, all of one Nordic blood, from the mouth of the Baltic to the British Isles. According as this or that tribe, or coalition of tribes, took prominence, the intervening waters bore now this name, now that; but the *Tethys Cimbrica* of Claudian, the *mare Friesicum* of Nennius,³ both preserve the same historical truth, and the close affinity of all these various peoples is confirmed by the undeniable fact that from the outset Saxons and Picts appear to have been cordial allies.⁴ This may explain why Procopius does not mention the Dani amongst the three peoples of the Britain of his day, including them under the general term of Frisians (Phrissones). The other two were the Saxons and the Britons. The Saxons having occupied the east coast from the Border southwards, the Britons still retaining the west with much the same limits, his Frisians must have been in

the north and probably on the east coast, precisely where are found the headquarters of the Picts.¹

The name of the Danes is first mentioned by Procopius,² who says that the Heruli, passing (*circa* 500) from the lands about the Elbe to Thule (Sweden), traversed the country occupied by the Warni and the Dani. As the Warni (Varini) were already in or near north Schleswig in Tacitus' time,³ and the Danes regarded as their original home the isles of Zealand, Laaland, Falster and Moen, Procopius' account seems to suggest that they were already settled there, immediately next to the last *pied-à-terre* of the now fast-failing Cimbri, which they presently occupied, as also the southern extremity (Scania) of Sweden. Zealand remained the centre of government, Leire in Zealand the national sanctuary⁴; but it was the immemorial custom to inaugurate the Danish kings at the three several moots of Zealand (Ringsted), Jutland (Viborg), and Scania (Lund). About 810 the district of Westfold in Norway was part of their acknowledged kingdom, and before the end of the same century they were busy with the attempt to conquer Scotland and the Orkneys. Their royal house traced its descent from Skiöldr, identical with the Scyld of some of the Anglo-Saxon tribes.

Unable to expand in other directions the Dani turned more and more to the sea, and under the successive names of Vikings, Northmen, Danes and Normans, fully maintained the Cimbric reputation for 'roving and rieving.' Caesar had found the Belgic Veneti to be amongst the most capable seafarers of their age,⁵ and Saxons were already harrying the coasts of Britain in the fourth century.⁶

Is it only a strange coincidence that just as Danausha

¹ The Picts 'seized the regions on the left-hand (east) side of Britain, where they still remain' (Nennius, *Hist.* 12, writing in 858).

² *Germ.* 40.

³ Until the eleventh century (Thietmar of Merseburg, i, 9).

⁴ *B.G.* III, xii-xvi, and especially the chapter describing the build of their vessels (xiii).

⁵ Claudian, *Laud. Stilicbonis*, ii, 255; Amm. Marcell. xxvi, 4; Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* vii; *Epist.* viii, 6. They were raiding Gaul half a century earlier (287); see Eutropius ix, 21.

¹ *Hist.* 38.

² So Skene, *Celtic Scotland*. It is curious that Geoff. of Monmouth (v, 16; viii, 6, 14, 23; xii, 15) constantly calls the Saxons by the name of Ambrones (p. 320, above), as also does the *Brut Tysilio* (p. 137).

¹ Depotter, *Le Pays de Lalloeu* (Lille and Arras, 1910), p. 223, citing *Archives du Pas de Calais*, H. 1803, 60; *Coutumes Locales*, op. cit. p. 268.

² The area of the *mesure* in this region is 35 *ares* 46 *centiares*, or approximately 490 square yards (Depotter, op. cit.).

and Danai were the companions in arms of Akaiwasha and Achaei in their raids upon Egypt (1220 B.C.) and upon Asia (1000 B.C.), so the Dani are historically known to have been the intimate neighbours of the Cimbri in Jutland some 1,500 years later? If so, it is surely one of the oddest coincidences in ethnology. Writers of the seventeenth century regarded the Danes as identical with the Cimbri.¹

The Danes were heirs to the Cimbric habit of building circle-moots. They continued to build and use such moot-circles down to the year 1800. Some of these circles were so closely like those of Aberdeenshire that one is constrained to believe the two to be the work of kindred peoples; and the evidence shews that there is much reason to regard Picts, Tuatha Dé Danann, Picards and Danes as all of one stock, and all more or less closely associated with the Cimbric headquarters. The most complete of all the circles are found in that part of Scotland which is particularly associated with the Pictish power. The inference is irresistible that the Picts built these circles of Aberdeenshire, and the circles have yielded no solitary scrap of evidence to conflict with this view. They have yielded nothing whatever to contradict a comparatively late date in time. On the other hand there is no tradition of any other people in that part of the world who could be regarded as capable of raising such circles for the purpose for which it has been shewn they were raised—the moots of powerful and well-to-do communities. The Aberdeenshire circles, lying for the most part between Don and Dee, must be the work of the Picts, and must at earliest belong to a date little before A.D. 400.

If Roman writers represent the Picts as unredeemed savages, the libel, which is completely refuted by the evidence of archaeology, is easily explained by the ceaseless trouble they gave to the Caesars, who strove in vain to break their resistance, even occupying the heart of Pictland beyond the Grampians.² The occupation was short-lived, and in the fourth century the Picts had completely turned the tables and were ravaging Britain as far south as the *ora maritima* and up to the very gates of Augusta

(London). Their inherited familiarity with the sea enabled them to turn the futile fortifications of the Wall. It enabled them also to extend their power to the North; in the sixth century, so it is said, they took tribute of the Orkneys. When, at the close of that century, Columba essayed their conversion he found himself at issue with a powerful Druidism,¹ of which the last refuge was among the Picts. There is nothing in these facts which does not support the view that the so-called Picts were pure-bred Brythons, and specifically Cimmerians. When further it is found that their *sedes* is the particular home of a form of moot-circle which answers in every detail to those by Homer attributed to the Cimmerian Achæans, it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that, if not actually of the same stock as the Achæans, the Picts had at any rate for a long period lived in close contact with the Cimmerian polity, in Jutland and its vicinity. The strangely carved stones of the Pictish area can hardly be other than Pictish work, and shew that the Picts, like the Brythons elsewhere, had a high artistic sense, a gift by no means incompatible with a standard of life otherwise low. We shall meet with the same phenomenon in the Brythonised area of Ireland.² Amongst the motives carved upon a stone at Aberlemno, Forfar, are two discs shewing a spiral ornament hardly to be paralleled except by the famous golden discs of Mycenæ, which, declares Bishop Browne, 'no one could distinguish' therefrom.³ Such close similarity is explicable in one of two ways only: either the artists of the Aberlemno stone and of the Mycenaean discs were of the same race, or those who carved the stone had learnt the Mycenaean style, whether by loot or by commerce. To maintain that an artistry so intricate, and yet so closely similar, could have been separately evolved at spots so many hundreds of leagues apart, is to maintain the improbable. And the same argument applies with even greater force to the stone circles of Aberdeenshire.

The Picts, like the Cimbri elsewhere, were mighty builders; it is to the Picts that, to this day, Scottish

¹ Adamnan's *Life of Columba*, ii, 35.

² Below, ch. xviii.

³ *Antiqs. of Duncecht*, p. 28. He remarks

further the finding at Mycenæ of 'the very stag-hunts which the Picts sculptured on so many of the stones in Caledonia.'

¹ *Cimbri, iidem qui Dani, Danes'*

² Above, p. 140.

(Cambridge Dictionary of 1694).

tradition, from the Shetlands to the Border, attributes alike stone-circles, brochs, 'earth-houses,' and indeed every form of megalithic structure. It may be but a coincidence that the Mycenaeans displayed such an ability in building as to have given a name to a certain style of megalithic construction. It may be again another coincidence that the Mycenaeans practised the art of tattooing. But such coincidences are strange.

In the language of the Scots, says Bede,¹ the word *daal*² signified 'portion'; which means that so early that language contained words of recognised Germanic origin. At Borcovicium we have evidence that the characteristically Danish term *ting* was in use amongst the 'southern Picts' some six centuries before Bede's time.

The evidence all points to one and the same conclusion. 'Picts' was the collective name of a number of Nordic tribes, of whom the majority, and certainly the most important, were of Cimbric blood and culture. The coasts about the estuaries of the rivers Don and Dee offered a convenient landfall,³ and here therefore were the headquarters of the new league, precisely as others of the breed found their way into Ireland up the valley of the Boyne, and made their headquarters in Roscommon and Meath. In this way was the stone moot-circle introduced into Aberdeenshire, and there it is still found in greatest frequency and in most stereotyped form. If, as one goes further away from Aberdeenshire, the circles diminish in number and decline from the type, this is exactly what was to be expected.⁴

Whether the name of Picts ever belonged to any individual tribe is of no great moment. Tribal names have ever had a trick of passing into ethnic names with little regard to any reason now discoverable,⁵ and it is very possible that one small tribe of exceptional ferocity or vigour did bequeath to the various kindred peoples of North Britain the name which was destined to loom through history vague and great as those of Achæans and of Cimmerians.

¹ E.H. I, i.

² Familiar to modern ears in the form 'dole.'

³ As they did to other Norwegian raiders in historical times.

⁴ It is noteworthy that the Torhousekie

circle, near Wigtown (p. 216), which is the nearest analogue at present known to those of Aberdeenshire type, lies in just that part of Scotland in which Bede asserts that the Scoti gave to the Picti their first footing.

⁵ Above, p. 287: cp. Sir W. Ridgeway, *Early Age of Greece*, i, 351.

In Early English romance king Arthur figures as a mighty conqueror, whose empire embraces not only England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, but the Shetlands, the Orkneys, Iceland, Scandinavia, Denmark, and even France. It is usual to dismiss the matter as idle fiction, but another explanation is possible. Arthur was unquestionably a Brythonic hero, probably in particular a Cimbric hero, for the scenes of his chiefest activities are laid in Cumbria, in Cambria, and in Cornwall. It is arguable that his fabled empire is a faithful reflection of the actual distribution of the Cimbric peoples, who can be shewn to have been, at one or other date, paramount in all the areas assigned to king Arthur's crown, and *nowhere else* in the world-map as it was known to the Early English romancers.