

Pelagius And Patrick

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Introduction

In an earlier paper I discussed the important fourth century debate on the nature of man between Augustine and Pelagius.¹ There my emphasis was on the issues being contested. Here it is on the implications that debate has for our understanding of Patrick's mission and the history of the church in Ireland.

One fact about Pelagius' life that should not be ignored is that he was Celtic. More specifically he was Irish.² Thus, any prolonged contrasts between Celtic and Roman Christianity will be something we want to know about when studying the confrontation between Pelagius the Celtic heretic and Augustine the great champion of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. Below I argue that the debate between these two men was not merely a confrontation of individuals but that each, with or without realizing it, was speaking from a worldview shaped in part by his cultural heritage.³

The above model rests on a number of assumptions--e.g., that there are national characteristics having to do not with biology but with the way people grow up seeing their world, that Celts and Romans differ in respect to those characteristics,⁴ and that Pelagius himself rather than his disciple Celestius is the "Scot" (i.e., the Irishman) that Jerome derides in two passages.

First, by saying there are national characteristics what I mean is that a body of people is a body and, as such, will have certain characteristics uniquely its own.⁵ I reject the notion that groups are nothing more than agglomerations of individuals. Second, anyone who has studied the way the Celts engulfed Europe for a few centuries and then receded into virtual oblivion⁶ and who has also studied the disciplined and systematic manner in which Rome took most of their domains away from them is unlikely to confuse the one approach to conquest and government with the other.⁷ When a pattern such as this one unfolds consistently over many hundreds of years, there is a reason for it. And third, responsible scholars, such as Gerhard Herm, assert that Pelagius was indeed the object of Jerome's invective.⁸ Celestius, on the other hand, was a native of Campania or North Africa.⁹

If the debate between Pelagius and Augustine was shaped at all by the worldviews of its protagonists, that is one factor. Another is that regional loyalties might well have helped determine where these men's theories would be best received. Here is a setting in which we might hope to understand the unique character of Celtic as opposed to Roman Christianity during the next seven centuries after Pelagius--from the fifth century to the twelfth. Clearly there were differences between the two traditions, although with the hindsight that we both have access to and cannot avoid using we might see the contrast differently than someone living at the time.

In this paper I attempt to bring two lines of thought together. The first has been described above. It has to do with Pelagius, who is somewhat of a pariah in church history. The second has to do with Patrick, the great apostle to Ireland. While Pelagius and Augustine were carrying on their theological debate Patrick was still in Ireland as a young slave herding pigs.¹⁰

He was there approximately A.D. 389-96,¹¹ then escaped back to Britain. Another thirty-four years went by before he returned to Ireland to begin his apostleship. That was two years after Augustine's death (August 28, 430).¹² We do not know when Pelagius died.¹³ At any rate Patrick went to Ireland in A.D. 432.

We now turn our attention to Patrick's work and that of his successors. First, was Patrick Catholic? And what can the information we gain from answering this question (negatively) tell us about the form of Christianity later practiced in Ireland? More specifically, was Patrick in every way orthodox? Later in the paper I suggest that he and the people he ministered to may have had certain points of agreement with Pelagius.

What Was Patrick's Relationship to Rome?

There are many things about Patrick's mission to Ireland that we would like to know but do not. For example, we have little definite information about the state of Irish Christianity before Patrick's arrival. By all accounts, however, there were Christians there already and they were not Catholic in the sense of having any direct affiliation with Rome.

In A.D. 431, a year before the coming of Patrick on his Christian mission, Palladius (who, by one authority, John Sichard, is even said to have been himself an Irishman) was sent by the Pope "ad Scotos in Christum credente"--to the Irish believing in Christ--which words clearly show Rome to have been impressed with the fact that the Irish Christians then were of some numerical importance.¹⁴

Another thing the above words show is that in A.D. 431 those numerically important Irish Christians were not yet Catholic. Otherwise, why was a missionary needed to go and make them Catholic? Unresolved problems such as these have led some to speculate on the nature of Patrick's mission, which began the following year.

Communities of hermits were hard to reconcile with the picture they [the Roman popes] wanted to see of the church; these often self-appointed or elected abbots were not easy to categorize in juridical or hierarchical terms. Their attempt to meet sin by renouncing comfort and concentration on good works seemed to smack of the Pelagian heresy; and their constitution was too democratic. . . . The late Nora Chadwick, one of the greatest experts on early Christian Britain and Ireland, believed that both Palladius and Patrick were less concerned to convert heathens than to get converts back into the ways of the Roman church; the 'Celtic church' flourishing in the island was older than both Irish apostles, and different from what the pope desired.¹⁵

The mere presence of Christians in Ireland before Patrick--even large numbers of them--does not require us to assume that Patrick's main object was to convert such individuals to a different form of Christianity. In fifth century Ireland there were still plenty of pagans left.¹⁶ Thus, while Chadwick's argument should be taken seriously, it is not compelling. The fact that a sizable Christian community existed in Ireland before Patrick is entirely consistent with the state of affairs he left behind at his death, whatever his primary goals had been during his life.

Patrick started out on his own highly successful mission about the same time that Palladius was giving up in defeat. Thus, because the period of history in which they worked was the same, whereas the results were so different, it is hard to avoid making comparisons. It might be possible to account for the different responses these men got on the basis of their individual personalities alone. Chadwick would have to take this approach because in her view their goals were the same. But that is a shallow explanation. Accepting it does not teach us anything. It would be just as reasonable and more significant to assume that there was something systemic in the contrast between Palladius' failure and Patrick's success. A good candidate for the missing factor is that the two men set out with different purposes in view and that the purpose is what failed or succeeded rather than the man. I submit that Palladius failed because he tried to do what Chadwick incorrectly thinks Patrick tried to do, i.e., convert Ireland to Rome.¹⁷ It is not that Palladius did not find any response but that his objective did not find any response. It did not speak to the Irish mind. Whereas Palladius tried to convert Christian Ireland to Rome, Patrick converted Pagan Ireland to Christ.

Evidence for a link with Rome

Let us digress for a moment and consider the evidence on which some see Patrick as a loyal son of the church in Rome. First, "Patrick" is a Latin name. There is nothing Celtic about it. He himself was a Celt (from a P-Celtic or Brythonic community probably in western Britain) but his name would indicate that he came from a socially Romanized family.¹⁸ Some have turned this bit of family background into a papal commission, with Patrick receiving his name from Pope Celestine I (428-32).¹⁹ But popes are not the only ones capable of giving Latin names to children from Romanized families in the provinces.

More importantly, Patrick was a nephew of the widely revered St. Martin of Tours.²⁰ Martin's affiliation with Rome has never been questioned although it should at least be made an object of study. Christianity in Gaul during the fourth century was not at all the same thing as it would be during the fourteenth. I return to this point in a later section of the paper. In any event Martin is one of those people who had sufficient stature to appeal to people with widely differing views. Like Augustine, who provides a foundation for thought on both sides of the Reformation, Martin provides the monastic model both for the closely regimented system of Benedict²¹ and also for the unconventional and not easily classifiable system of Patrick.²² So Patrick's relationship to Martin is one factor.

Consider also the Canon of St. Patrick, "preserved in the old Book of Armagh--which was finished by the scribe Firdornach in 807."²³ It speaks of turning to Rome in difficult judicial cases. Because of its date and Irish provenience this document cannot be dismissed, but it should be taken only for what it is--i.e., one source among many. There was more than one Irish monk. If Patrick's connection with Rome had become a matter of debate by the beginning of the ninth century, as it is today, a person such as Firdornach could be expected to have an opinion and to cause the documents he produced to reflect it. If the Book of Armagh were our only source of information, there would of course be no reason to qualify what it says. We would simply conclude that Patrick was a Catholic and that would be the end of the matter. But nothing Irish is quite as simple as that.

There is a certain ambivalence toward Rome that runs throughout the historical record dealing with Patrick and his successors. This fact should not be avoided but embraced. It is an important fact about the course of Christianity in Ireland over the next several centuries. In my view neither Patrick nor those who followed him actively set about to oppose the pope or the

Roman system. Except when challenged, they merely went their own way. Rome was there but it was largely irrelevant to them.²⁴ Of course to the popes such an attitude was unacceptable and over time they tried to change it, with varying success. But my point is that the one state of affairs would be seen quite differently by the Roman pontiffs and those loyal to them on the one hand and by the Irish on the other. In the Irish willingness to live without reference to Rome--not obeying her but not generally bothering to oppose her either--and in the widely different way that such an attitude would be perceived by Catholics in Britain and Gaul and by the Irish themselves there is insight into the mixed nature of the historical record available to us. There might well have been some tampering with documents after Ireland finished becoming solidly Catholic in the twelfth century,²⁵ but at least some of what makes the facts of the case confusing can be accounted for without recourse to such explanations.

Evidence against a link with Rome

An exhaustive treatment of Ireland's relationship with Rome during the first centuries after Patrick is beyond the scope of this paper.²⁶ But there are three readily accessible lines of evidence which indicate that any such link to Rome was minimal: (1) Irish clergy were free to marry, (2) the synod of Whitby was a contest between two forms of Christianity--only one of which was Roman, and (3) as late as 1156 Pope Hadrian IV (1154-59) could speak of Ireland as a place still largely outside Rome's control. Hadrian of all people was in a position to know whether it was or not. Below we consider each of these factors in turn.

Irish clergy were free to marry. It is a simple fact of history that for many centuries Irish monks did not practice celibacy in any systematic manner.²⁷

Jules Michelet writes of Boniface, who was the pope's apostle to the Germans about two hundred years after Patrick: "His chief hatred is to the Scots [the name given equally to the Scotch and Irish], and he especially condemns their allowing priests to marry."²⁸

We do not have this on hearsay. It is possible to trace specific families over a long period of time: "The Mac Roartys or O'Roartys, comarbs (hereditary ecclesiastical successors) of Saint Columcille [Columba] on Tory Island, the Mac Graths of Termon Mac Grath, and the Mac Gonigles were distinguished ecclesiastical families."²⁹

Kinship within monastic communities allowed the religious elite to pass knowledge and responsibility, as well as property, to sons and other family members. One tenth-century poem suggests that abbots, like craftsmen and secular rulers, could most efficiently be succeeded by their sons. The process also promoted a permanent population within monastic settlements. Monasteries needed their families of administrators, their abbots and scribes, stewards and tutors, more urgently than the ideal of celibacy allowed.³⁰

In fifth-century Gaul even bishops still married, lived honorably with their wives, and raised families.³¹ Thus, although there is no evidence to suggest that Patrick himself was married, it would not have occurred to him to enforce celibacy on those of his converts who wished to become monks. As time passed the situation in Gaul changed, but in Ireland things moved more slowly. Long after the Gallic clergy had become strictly celibate Ireland was still maintaining the usage of an earlier day.

The synod of Whitby. At the synod of Whitby in A.D. 663 or 664 (the date is given differently in different sources)³² King Oswiu, successor to Oswald of Northumbria,³³ was forced

to choose between two contrasting forms of Christianity. One was Roman, the other was not. Colmán, who opposed Rome at this synod, was a Celt trained at Iona by the spiritual heirs and successors of Patrick, whose influence had spread by this time throughout Ireland, Scotland, and Northumbria. At the time of the above synod Colmán was the abbot of Lindisfarne, in Northumbria.³⁴

If men trained in Patrick's schools opposed Rome at Whitby, how can we claim that Patrick's goal in fostering those schools was to make Ireland Catholic? And if we do, how can we claim that his mission was successful? (On the other hand, how can anyone claim that it was not successful?) Let us ask the question a different way. If Patrick's followers in Scotland and Northumbria continued the work that he began and if that work was to make Ireland Catholic, why did someone else have to come along after them, undoing their influence, amid stout resistance in fact, so as to make all those same places Catholic at a later time? And if Patrick's followers did not carry on the work he began, whose work did they carry on? The synod of Whitby pitted Patrick against the reigning pope just as surely as if both men had been present to hear the proceedings.³⁵

It is curious that Bede (c. A.D. 673-735), who goes into great detail about the Celtic defeat at Whitby, should never once mention Patrick. His *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* was completed (in either 731 or 732) exactly three hundred years after Patrick's mission began. He mentions the otherwise obscure and abortive mission of Palladius, who went to Ireland one year before Patrick, but passes over the resoundingly successful labors of Patrick in silence. This is not due to any lack of information. Bede was surrounded by the evidences of Patrick's influence--as for example at Whitby. So why does he mention Palladius but not Patrick? Could it be that the circumstances surrounding Patrick's mission were such that Bede wished not to emphasize them? If they were, given Bede's Benedictine loyalties, the fact could be accounted for by assuming that Patrick did not share Bede's Augustinian (or Catholic) point of view. Perhaps he did not see Patrick's success as success but as something more on the order of sabotage, i.e., as something that set the cause of Rome in Ireland back rather than advancing it.

The bull of Pope Hadrian IV. There was no lasting or substantial change in Ireland's relationship to Rome over the next four centuries after Bede. We have this information on the authority of Hadrian IV (mentioned above), who in 1155 issued a bull authorizing the Norman king of England Henry II (1133-89) to invade Ireland for their mutual benefit.

Several things are clear from this bull. First, in specifying Ireland as an untaught and rude nation, it is evident that papal doctrines, rites, and clergy had not been dominant there. Second, in urging the king "to enlarge the limits of the church," the pope confesses that Ireland and its Christian inhabitants had not been under the dominant supremacy of the papacy. Third, in praising Henry's intent to decree the Christian faith of the Irish nation, Pope Adrian admits that papal missionaries had not carried the Romish faith to Ireland before this. In laying upon Henry II the command that he should annex the crown of Ireland upon condition that he secure a penny from every home in Ireland as the pope's revenue, it is clear that the papacy was not the ancient religion of Ireland and that no Roman ties had bound that land to it before the middle of the twelfth century.³⁶

Part of the background for the bull issued in 1155 is what happened at the synod of Kells three years earlier in 1152. There "the pope sent legates to assist at the bringing of the Irish church into conformity with the rest of western Christendom, and the synod of Kells (1152)

created four provinces with Armagh, Dublin, Cashel and Tuam as archbishoprics."³⁷ But evidently things did not go well at Kells. If they had, why would the pope's bull three years later be written in such bad temper? That is one factor. Consider also the synod of Cashel some nineteen years after the one at Kells:

The final step in the process of reform was taken at the synod of Cashel (1171), when obedience to Rome was accepted, there also regulations were made for marriage and baptism, tithes and papal tribute. The native liturgies were abandoned and the usage of the Church of England was adopted. With this began a period of subservience which was to last for 700 years.³⁸

Why was the synod of Cashel held in 1171? The reader will recall that Henry II was authorized by the pope to invade Ireland in 1155. But the expected invasion did not occur.³⁹ At least it did not occur then. It was delayed for sixteen years--until 1171. "[Henry] afterwards (1171) added Ireland by conquest, with the authority of Popes Adrian IV. and Alexander III."⁴⁰ Thus, it is not coincidental that "the final step in the process of reform was taken at the synod of Cashel, when obedience to Rome was accepted, . . ." We can now see under what conditions it was accepted. Patrick did not make Ireland Catholic.

Patrick's Attitudes Have Their Origin in Fifth-Century Gaul

I have tried to show that Patrick did not have a pro-Roman outlook. This, however, does not automatically mean that he was anti-Roman either. Instead he was simply a Christian led by the Holy Spirit to do a task that needed to be done. A lot of seemingly contradictory facts can be accounted for on the premise that Patrick and his followers simply ignored Rome.⁴¹

A recurring motif of the saints' lives deriving from 800 to 1200 is the idea of pilgrimage, which Irish monks came to view as a substitute for voluntary exile as practiced by earlier generations of Irish saints. In these stories Rome was always a popular pilgrimage site⁴² and yet as late as 1140, when a certain monk named Malachy came back from a pilgrimage to France and Rome and started building an oratory of stone rather than the traditional wood or earth, he was accused of frivolity and innovation.⁴³

The above anecdote shows how little attitudes had changed over the seven centuries since Patrick. The Irish did not build oratories of wood to protest against Rome (they had other reasons), nor on the other hand did they build oratories of stone because doing so was a Roman custom (they used other materials). They might have had a romantic interest in seeing Rome, but most were resolutely uninterested in following Roman practices on their return home. Some, such as Malachy, might have desired change, but most did not. Rome or no Rome, they wanted to continue doing things their own way.

Let us go back now to fifth-century Gaul, where Patrick in all likelihood took his priestly training,⁴⁴ and trace the above attitudes to their source. For this purpose consider R. P. C. Hanson's excellent paper entitled, "The Church in Fifth-Century Gaul: Evidence from Sidonius Apollinaris."⁴⁵ Sidonius (A.D. 430-480) was the bishop of a church in Gaul and an accomplished writer of Latin. One of the most striking facts about his career as a writer is that

He never once in the whole of his works mentions the pope of Rome; the nearest he gets to this is when, in describing a journey which he made from Gaul to Rome in 467, he tells us that he visited 'triumphalibus apostolorum liminibus' ["the thresholds of the apostles' triumphs"] in Rome and thereby rid himself of a fever. On the other hand, he sometimes applies to Gallic ecclesiastics titles which we to-day would associate with the bishop of Rome. . . . This is partly an indication of the lengths to which Sidonius's rhetorical fulsomeness will go and partly a sign of the isolation of Gaul from Italy that had been evident in other spheres of life also since the beginning of the fifth century. . . .⁴⁶

The facts that make Sidonius so interesting for our purposes in this paper go beyond the fact that something he said (or in this case did not say) shows that Gaul was not in close touch with Rome during the fifth century.⁴⁷ Beyond such generalities, there are a number of specific ways in which fifth-century Gaul is reminiscent of Ireland up until the twelfth century.

It is interesting to observe that there is plenty of evidence that bishops in Sidonius's time were married and lived openly and respectably with their wives. Sidonius himself certainly did so; indeed, his letters show great concern for his children's characters and careers. In his commendation of Simplicius he alludes to the eminent suitability of the candidate's wife to be the consort of a bishop, if only because she was the daughter of a bishop and was descended from other bishops. The couple are bringing up their two boys well.⁴⁸

He describes the elections of bishops and the dickering required to find and put forward well-qualified and successful candidates for such offices. One such election "illustrates the relatively free and almost democratic spirit that prevailed on such occasions."⁴⁹ Along with this statement consider another, which mentions Patrick in particular:

We also hear of monks singing psalms antiphonally with the secular clergy in the cathedral church at Lugdunum on the occasion of the festival of S. Justus. Both the clergy and the monks of Troyes respect bishop Lupus. The monks of the cathedral church of Bourges provide some of the candidates for the vacant see, and Sidonius contemplates the possibility of a monastic candidate being the kind of man who enjoys food and entertains (*eum qui prandendo pascit* ["he feeds those eating breakfast"]). It seems to me that in these monks who appear to be associated with the bishop's *familia*, whose ascetic practices seem to be less rigorous than those of the others, and who seem to be rather less strictly bound to their monastery, we have the type of monk with which the monasticism of Patrick most closely corresponds. The monks whom Patrick mentions are not easy to fit into any category, but they could fit into this one. Further, it seems to me that it was in such a monastic bishop's *familia*, or monastic group attached to a bishop's *familia*, that Patrick is most likely to have received his ecclesiastical formation in Britain about the years 420 to 430.⁵⁰

In Ireland also, as in Gaul, the church paid scant attention to Rome, allowed its clergy to marry, was more or less democratically constituted, and had a free type of monastic organization. These are significant parallels. The thing to notice from them is that the attitudes and practices characteristic of Ireland in later centuries were not products of some perverse Irish ingenuity. Instead they were vestiges of the way things were throughout Gaul at the time when Patrick left Gaul to go to Ireland. (I maintain he was trained there rather than Britain.) Then as Gaul gradually changed under papal influence Ireland did not and it became somewhat of a time capsule. But the unique features of Irish Christianity were not innovations. They were holdovers from the Gallic Christianity (or let us say the Celtic Christianity) of an earlier day.

What Was Patrick's Relationship to Pelagius?

So what does all this have to do with Pelagius? Pelagius was under no necessity to think as he did. Nothing in his Celtic heritage required it. His staunchest supporter Celestius was not a Celt. In fact he was probably a North African like Augustine.⁵¹ So there is nothing deterministic here. I merely point out that Pelagius did think as he did and that many other Celts joined him in thinking the same way, whereas few Romans did. On the Continent Pelagius had his greatest success in Gaul but he also had a large influence in Ireland.⁵² Some even speculate that Patrick went there to stop the Pelagian heresy from spreading any more widely than it already had.⁵³ Whether this hypothesis is correct or not, it does at least establish a useful context in which to study Patrick's mission. Clearly Palladius' efforts in Ireland were motivated by the need to combat Pelagianism.⁵⁴

Augustine of course was not Roman by blood but Punic. His ancestors were the Phoenicians who founded Carthage and caused Rome so much grief some six hundred years before. Philosophically, however, Augustine was seen as the great champion of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. He had his greatest success outside of Gaul.⁵⁵ And of course in time he overshadowed his opponent there also.⁵⁶

So far we have discussed Augustine, Palladius, and Patrick. The Irish people as a whole should be mentioned also. The Irish had an outlook on life which was widely different from that of the Romans. Rome was accustomed to seeing the world in terms of how to regiment and control it.⁵⁷ The Irish were always rather free spirits by comparison.⁵⁸ Theologically as well, these dispositions and characteristics of the Celts and Romans manifest themselves as the differences between the teachings of Pelagius and Augustine.

For Pelagius Christianity is something to experience individually. When God says to do something, we should not make simple things hard but just accept what He says and do it. For Augustine Christianity is an illustration of higher authority. Divine grace is irresistible and, although Adam does not tell us we must, all follow his lead and sin because he sinned. The destiny of Adam's children is not their own. Their actions are outside their control.

Thus, quite apart from any readiness by Celts to accept Pelagius because he was a fellow Celt and had managed to challenge the great Augustine (although this might well have been a factor), his teachings would appeal to a Celtic audience because of the substance of what he said. And, as it happens, there was a larger Celtic population in Gaul than elsewhere in Europe.

In view of the independent course followed by Patrick and his disciples, I find it difficult to imagine that Pelagius' views on individual responsibility would have offended Patrick very deeply. There is nothing in the facts we know that would require us to make such an assumption. The simple, almost naive, reforms contemplated by Pelagius would have been entirely at home in Patrick's Ireland.⁵⁹ Indeed, if the Pelagian heresy had gained a following among Irish Christians before Patrick arrived and if Patrick himself had leanings that way, these facts might help to explain his success.

Patrick himself was no theologian. In fact there is evidence to suggest that he was barely literate.⁶⁰ But he was a man who loved the Lord and felt a deep burden for his former captors.

Any Pelagianism he might have had would certainly not have taken a theoretical form but instead would have manifested itself as an attitude. When God says to do something you just do it--as for example when the Holy Spirit told Patrick to leave everything familiar behind and do pioneer labor in what was then still a largely heathen place. When thus confronted he did not respond that he was the victim of a fallen nature. He went to Ireland.

Conclusion

One fact that emerges from the present study is that, whatever their differences may have been, Pelagius and Patrick must be studied together. Or if "must" is too strong a word, it is at least the case that when we do study them together there is insight to be gained from taking such an approach.

Let me give one further example of this. In a note I pointed out above that the starting point for the entire Pelagian controversy was not divine grace but the possession of excessive wealth.⁶¹

An early medieval monk and historian who was given the title 'Venerabilis' by his contemporaries, Bede knew Irish monasteries very well. We can take him at his word when he writes in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* that they were 'poor settlements whose houses were hardly suited to civilized life. Their inhabitants had no money, only cattle; if a rich man gave them money they would at once give it to the poor, as they themselves had no cause to collect money or erect buildings for great lords. They and their like would go into their church to pray and listen to the Word of God.'⁶²

One is not a saint in the medieval sense of the word because of right thinking but because of right doing. Ireland was widely known for its saints--especially during the first two or three centuries after Patrick. Bitel's book, cited a number of times above, bears the title, *Isle of the Saints*. And one thing that made Irish saints saintly was their extreme asceticism.⁶³ Monastic discipline might have been loose and Irish monks might have married but Irish saints were known for their rigors in right doing. This is a Pelagian attitude whether or not it also implies an intellectual acceptance of Pelagian doctrine. My own feeling is that any Pelagian leanings the Irish might have exhibited during the first seven centuries after Patrick never took a very theoretical turn. The above saints held certain doctrines dear but were less concerned with right theorizing (Pelagianism does not make very good theory) than with right doing.

In this context it is historically inaccurate to speak of Pelagianism (or Semi-Pelagianism) being finally defeated at the second council of Orange in A.D. 529. A century after it had been laid to rest on the Continent, Pope John IV (640-42) found it necessary to send "an authoritative letter to certain Irish bishops and abbots censuring their custom of observing Easter on the day of the Jewish Passover and warning them against Pelagianism."⁶⁴ That was the mid-seventh century.

The influence of Pelagius in Ireland runs parallel to that of Patrick. Long after Pelagius' influence had faded in Gaul, it lived on in Ireland to become one of the salient characteristics of what we now know as Celtic Christianity.

¹See Hardy, "What Augustine Did Not Tell Us about the Nature of Man," *Historicism* No. 25/Jan 91, pp. 32-52.

²There is a question whether Jerome is attacking Pelagius himself or Celestius, the latter's disciple, but what he says is that the individual in question is a "stupid fellow, loaded with the porridge of the Scots,' and again, 'a huge and corpulent Alban dog who can do more with his claws than with his teeth, for he is by descent of the Scotie nation'" (Seumas MacManus, *The Story of the Irish Race: A Popular History of Ireland*, rev. ed. [Old Greenwich, CT: Devin-Adair, 1921], p. 105). "It is Dr. Douglas Hyde's conclusion that the Scot whom St. Jerome abuses is not Celestius, but his heresiarch master, Pelagius. He says: 'Pelagius was an Irishman, descended from an Irish colony in Britain'" (ibid., p. 106).

³Herein lies a paradox, because Pelagius' saw himself not as defending a provincial point of view but as appealing to old and long-forgotten Roman virtues: "We have already observed in the preceding chapter the simplicity and logic of his system, but there are other traits which would appeal especially to the Roman mind [*au caractère romain*]. The promise, though strongly suppressed, of eternal *praemia* [rewards] founded on merit kept this moral from being lost in a disinterested idealism which we [nevertheless] cannot exclude; the direct and continual appeal to the effort of the will restored through Christian discipline this ancient Roman virtue which was already known in the definitions of stoicism; . . ." (Georges de Plinval, *Pélagie: ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme* [Lausanne: Libraire Payot, 1943], p. 208). Thus, Pelagius saw himself as doing just the opposite of what I am suggesting. In his own mind what he was saying had nothing to do with the Celtic provinces. Instead, by endorsing traditional Roman virtues, he was appealing to those who still respected them.

⁴Augustine was not a Roman by blood but he was a Roman by inclination and upbringing. He spoke from a Roman point of view.

⁵"Human societies are natural systems in which all the parts of interdependent, each serving in a complex of necessary relations to maintain the whole" (E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "Social Anthropology: Past and Present," in Paul Bohannan and Mark Glazer, eds., *High Points in Anthropology* [New York: Knopf, 1973], p. 362). Evans-Pritchard opposes the above formulation. It is not "that societies are unintelligible or that they are not in some sense systems" (ibid., p. 364), but he wants to see social anthropology practiced as one of the humanities rather than as a natural science. His main point is that one cannot understand the way a society is without knowing how it got to be that way.

⁶"The Celts were the first European people north of the Alps to emerge into recorded history. At one time they dominated the ancient world from Ireland in the west to Turkey in the east, and from Belgium in the north, south to Spain and Italy. They even made their presence felt in the Egypt of the Ptolemy pharaohs, where they attempted, according to one ancient chronicler, a *coup d'état* to gain control of the country. They sacked Rome, invaded Greece and destroyed every army the Greek city states could throw at them. Their sophisticated weapons and sturdy war-chariots devastated all adversaries" (Peter Berresford Ellis, *The Celtic Empire: The First Millennium of Celtic History, c. 1000 BC-51 AD* [Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 1990], p. 1).

⁷"As Byrne has shown us, Early Christian Ireland was a country ruled over by a multitude of kings: he has suggested there were no less than 150 kings in the country at any given date between the fifth and twelfth centuries" (Lloyd and Jennifer Laing, *Celtic Britain and Ireland: The Myth of the Dark Ages* [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990], p. 172). Rome, on the other hand, had an entirely different concept of rulership. "The *Pax Romana* was reinforced by the *Pax Dei*. The unity of the Roman Empire was the reflection of the celestial unity, over which the One True God governed in perfect law and order, backed by a heavenly hierarchy and a standing army of invincible strength. It was God's Will, as His Son had explicitly stated, that the world should be similarly governed. Anyone who disagreed with this was God's enemy as well as Rome's. . . .

God's minister for the unification and pacification of this world was the Roman emperor, whom He himself elected and crowned, with the concurrence of the old Roman estates of senate, army and people, and the newer, though not indispensable, sanction of the Christian Church" (Romilly Jenkins, *Byzantium: The Imperial Centuries A.D. 610-1071*, Vintage Books [New York: Random House, 1969], pp. 4-5). "As well might one postulate two Christs in heaven as two emperors on earth" (*ibid.*, p. 113).

⁸Herm surmises that many "descendants of the old Druidical families . . . exploited their gifts to undertake a career in the clergy. They were of course soon involved in the first disputes over principle that the young church had to undergo: one of these was started by the theologian Pelagius, who came from Ireland; another by the Gallic monks" (*The Celts: The People who Came out of the Darkness* [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976], p. 259).

⁹"It is in that milieu that he gained Celestius, a Campanian or African by birth, the most decided of his partisans: . . ." (Plinval, *Pélage*, p. 212).

¹⁰"Patrick, the son of a Christian family living on or near the west coast of Britain, was abducted by pirates and spent six years in pagan Ireland as a slave before he contrived to escape. There is a tradition that he spent his years of slavery herding swine for a pagan chieftain on steep-sided Slemish Mountain, east of Ballymena in County Antrim, but this is discounted by modern scholars" (Brian de Breffny, *The Land of Ireland* [New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979], p. 28).

¹¹See MacManus, *Irish Race*, p. 109, 110.

¹²For the date of Augustine's death see Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, 8 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), vol. 3: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity from Constantine the Great to Gregory the Great, A.D. 311-600*, p. 995.

¹³"Of the subsequent life of Pelagius and Coelestius we have no account. The time and place of their death are entirely unknown" (*ibid.*, 3:801).

¹⁴MacManus, *Irish Race*, p. 103.

¹⁵Herm, *The Celts*, pp. 260, 261.

¹⁶Patrick's relationship toward pagan customs and literature is an inscrutable as many of the other things we know, or would like to know, about him. On the one hand, according to MacManus, "various accounts agree in stating that he committed to the flames a pile of old pagan volumes--some say up to two hundred" (*Irish Race*, p. 96). While on the other hand, "Patrick's choice of Armagh would certainly appear to have been dictated by its existing importance. In his missionary endeavors he did not attempt to disturb the contemporary societal patterns, limiting himself to preaching the divinity of Jesus Christ" (de Breffny, *Land of Ireland*, p. 29). Of less value, but still instructive, is the tradition that "At the end of the tale called 'The Fostering of the Houses of the Two Methers' it is said that St Patrick ordered 'that there should not be sleep or conversation during this story, and not to tell it except to a few good people so that it might be the better listened to, and Patrick ordained many other virtues for it . . .'" (Alwyn and Brinley Rees, *Celtic Heritage: Ancient Tradition in Ireland and Wales* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1961; reprinted 1990), pp. 17-18).

¹⁷Palladius was a deacon serving Pope Celestine I in Rome at the time he was sent on his abortive mission to Ireland. It was the Pelagian controversy that brought Palladius first to Britain and then to Ireland: "His [Celestine's] vigorous action succeeded in getting the leaders of Pelagianism expelled from the west, and in 429, influenced by his deacon Palladius, he sent a mission headed by Germanus of Auxerre (c. 378-448) to Britain to root out the heresy there; in 431 he consecrated Palladius and sent him to Ireland as its first bishop. In the same year, to counter Semi-Pelagianism (which allowed a place to free will in the first turning to grace), he wrote to the bishops of southern Gaul urging them, in general terms, to remain loyal to the revered Augustine" (*Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, s.v. Celestine I, St).

¹⁸"Later the Briton Patricius, called by the Irish 'Patrick', was sent across. By his own account St Patrick was a Latinized Celt of a land-owning family" (Herm, *The Celts*, p. 260). England itself had become a thoroughly Roman place by this time: "Within a century and a half of its first coming a Christian church surprisingly intellectual and literate, and surprisingly Mediterranean, Roman, and Gregorian in pattern, had been established in the island. . . . England, the most purely German part of the old empire, had in many ways become the most Roman, of the Rome of Gregory" (Robert Brentano, ed., *Early Middle Ages: 500-1000*, Sources in Western Civilization [New York: Free Press, 1964], pp. 26-27). Others urge caution: "The degree to which the Romano-British population was 'Celtic' or 'Roman' has never been properly resolved" (Laing and Laing, *Celtic Britain and Ireland*, p. 67).

¹⁹"In the year 430 St. Patrick turned up at Auxerre again, his age being now thirty-eight. He had long sought to be commissioned to Ireland. At this time again, backed by the influence of Germanus, he preferred his request to Rome--but was refused because Palladius had then been sent. When finally came the news of the failure and of the death of Palladius, Patrick journeyed to Rome, to Pope Celestine, carrying with him a letter from Germanus. Celestine now granted his request, and consecrated him Archbishop for the Irish mission. . . . Celestine also conferred upon him his new name, Patricius--an ancient title of the highest honour among the Romans" (MacManus, *Irish Race*, p. 112).

²⁰"The fact that St. Martin of Tours was his maternal uncle is one of the strong points in favour of his Continental origin" (ibid., p. 110). Most authorities place Patrick's home in Britain. But Martin was born in what we would now call Hungary. "Among the first in France to be gripped by a desire for a life of sanctity, in quiet and isolation, was a man who bore the belligerent-sounding name of Martinus. Martinus, who had indeed served as a soldier in his homeland, Hungary, before becoming a Christian and follower of Hilary of Poitiers - after Augustine, the most important Latin theorist - went from Italy to Gaul. There, probably following the advice of his spiritual father who well knew the eastern practices, he went with a few companions into the woods of the Loire and near Tours set up the first monastic community in the country" (Herm, *The Celts*, pp. 259-60).

²¹"Martin of Tours, the gentle fourth-century soldier who would not fight and who gave his half-cloak to shelter a poor beggar, the same Martin who leads the male saints of the sixth-century mosaics in Sant'Appollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, is the type, expanded into a community, of Benedict's monks" (Brentano, *Early Middle Ages*, p. 19).

²²"Despite these later honours, the Gallic bishops were not enthusiastic about Martin. Communities of hermits were hard to reconcile with the picture they wanted to see of the church; these often self-appointed or elected abbots were not easy to categorize in juridical or hierarchical terms. Their attempt to meet sin by renouncing comfort and concentration on good works seemed to smack of the Pelagian heresy; and their constitution was too democratic. They therefore received all the criticisms that solid citizens make nowadays when they come across social orders outside their own system: for these early monasteries were none other than communes. Their members, Pope Celestine I complained in 428: 'have not grown up in the church, they wear mere cowls with a string at the loins. . . . Why must they wear this garb and exchange . . . the habits of so many years' standing for others?' The letter containing this stiffly correct, conservative objection was sent to the bishops of Vienne and Arles. Gaul had developed into a centre of the monastic movement. But its most objectionable flowering occurred not among the continental Celts but among their Irish cousins" (Herm, *The Celts*, p. 260). More than this, "It is fairly clear that early Irish monastic foundations owe much to Martin's model. The rectilinear planning that characterizes Iona and Clonmacnois, for example, owes a direct debt to the fort-like plans of the monasteries of the East, which had been Martin's inspiration (Thomas, 1972, 32). Columba was a monk in the Eastern mould: Adamnan relates that Columba's bed was the bare rock, and a boulder provided him with a pillow. Like the desert fathers who had inspired Martin, Columba was known to retreat to a hut on a remote island to

fast for three days" (Laing and Laing, *Celtic Britain and Ireland*, p. 172). So Martin was the model for both the Benedictines and the Irish, a fact that Bede would have found the ultimate irony.

²³Moreover, if any case should arise of extreme difficulty, and beyond the knowledge of all the judges of the nations of the Scots, it is to be duly referred to the chair of the Archbishop of the Gaedhil, that is to say, of Patrick, and the jurisdiction of this bishop (of Armagh). But if such a case as aforesaid, of a matter at issue, cannot be easily disposed of (by him), with his counsellors in that (investigation), we have decreed that it be sent to the apostolic seat, that is to say, to the chair of the Apostle Peter, having the authority of the city of Rome" (quoted in MacManus, *Irish Race*, p. 127).

²⁴As the work progressed, the papal leaders and their converts [in Britain] encountered the primitive Christians. A striking contrast was presented. The latter were simple, humble, and Scriptural in character, doctrine, and manners, while the former manifested the superstition, pomp, and arrogance of popery. The emissary of Rome demanded that these Christian churches acknowledge the supremacy of the sovereign pontiff. The Britons meekly replied that they desired to love all men, but that the pope was not entitled to supremacy in the church, and they could render to him only that submission which was due to every follower of Christ. Repeated attempts were made to secure their allegiance to Rome; but these humble Christians, amazed at the pride displayed by her emissaries, steadfastly replied that they knew no other master than Christ" (Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy* [Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1950], p. 63).

²⁵Realizing that the evidence provided by Firdomnach is not above criticism, MacManus seeks to deflect the stroke before it comes: "Even if, by straining of the imagination, we should suppose this document to be forged by Firdomnach--without any conceivable reason for forging it then--it shows that, at the time Firdomnach wrote it, the See of Armagh, the centre of the church in Ireland, was subordinate to the Pontiff" (*Irish Race*, p. 127, n. 15). The real question is not whether Patrick relied on Rome but why Firdomnach would want to say he did.

²⁶See Herm, *The Celts*, pp. 260-61.

²⁷To monastic leaders, the most obvious method of ensuring the community's stability was to pass property and power to designated heirs. Although sex and the fathering or bearing of children were contrary to the ideal of celibacy, some monks let slip that ideal in order to perpetuate their communities. Of course, if the saints' lives are to be believed, most monks were chaste, living and working together as virtuously as Egyptian hermits. The annals also repeatedly mention *anchoritae*, ascetics, as members of major monastic communities. yet even when a core group of monks maintained themselves as a celibate elite within a community, their rulers and their associated lay brothers often provided the stock from which they drew recruits. Kathleen Hughes and John Kelleher have shown that major monasteries such as Sláine, Lusca, and Cluain Moccu Nóis contained monastic families that were bound by blood as well as by consciously created family-style ties. Abbots and officers openly supported wives, sons, and other kin. They sent their relatives to become officers in nearby monasteries, or they kept sons, brothers, and nephews within their own communities to succeed to offices there. Successive generations of the Maicc Cuinn na mBocht, for example, controlled major monastic offices at Cluain Moccu Nóis for about three centuries. Another family, the Uí Sinaich, battled for and won control of Ard Macha, remaining in power for generations. There is no reason to assume that other monks ignored the example of their abbots and officers" (Lisa M. Bitel, *Isle of the Saints: Monastic Settlement and Christian Community in Early Ireland* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990], p. 105).

²⁸Benjamin George Wilkinson, *Truth Triumphant: The Church in the Wilderness* (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1944; reprint ed., Payson, AZ: Leaves-Of-Autumn, 1988), p. 84.

²⁹de Breffny, *Land of Ireland*, p. 32.

³⁰Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, pp. 105-6.

³¹R. P. C. Hanson points out "that there is plenty of evidence that bishops in Sidonius's time [c. A.D. 430-80] were married and lived openly and respectably with their wives" ("The Church in Fifth-Century Gaul," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 21 [1970]:6). I return to this point below.

³²James Campbell, in his Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (New York: Washington Square, 1968), gives the date as 664 (see Table of Events, p. xl). Herm gives the date as 663: "There was a first encounter between representatives of the two sides [over the question of how to celebrate Easter] somewhere in the English Midlands. The British bishop Augustine had received seven delegates from the monastery of Bangor, founded by Irishmen, and these had been enjoined by an anchorite to give way to Augustine if he rose to greet them; if he did not, they were to keep to their standpoint. Augustine would not get up. The debate thus had to be decided at a council. Oswiu, successor of Oswald of Northumbria, summoned it in 663 at Whitby, a coastal town in Yorkshire. The Irish representative was Colmán, then abbot of Lindisfarne; the Roman, a bishop called Wilfred" (*The Celts*, pp. 268-69).

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., p. 167.

³⁵It also pitted him against Augustine. "Bede evidently thought of himself as a schoolteacher, bringing the Augustinian view of life, in various disciplines, to the English North. . . . Bede was in every way possible, except language, an Augustinian, and his history is a magnificent extension of Augustinian theory. Bede's single most fully realized hero in the history is the great Pope Gregory, and the Christianity that most clearly shines through his pages is specifically Gregorian in its emphasis upon the orthodoxy and centrality of Rome and in its preference for the active monastery, the social virtue, the contemplative mind in the ruler, rather than the retiring hermit" (Brentano, *Early Middle Ages*, p. 27). If Bede stands with Augustine and in doing so is the opposite counterpart of Patrick, what does that fact tell us about Patrick's standing relative to Pelagius? I return to this question later in the paper.

³⁶Wilkinson, *Truth Triumphant*, p. 98-99. There is a question about the date of this document (1156 or 1155?) and even whether it was sent from Hadrian to Henry or from Henry to Hadrian. Lord Acton seems to imply the latter: "Before this time, as early as 1155, Henry had notified to Pope Adrian his intention to invade Ireland, in order to subject the people to laws, of which they were considered to be destitute, and to extirpate at the same time the vices of which they were accused. When the Pope wrote thereupon that Ireland, and all islands which the Sun of Justice, Christ, shines upon, belonged to the rights of St Peter and the Roman Church, Henry promised to pay for each house in Ireland a denarius per annum to St Peter, and to guard the rights of the Church. Upon this Pope Adrian allowed the English king to undertake the expedition to Ireland, which established the sovereign authority of the Anglo-Saxons and Normans over the Celts" (*Essays on Church and State* [New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968], p. 133).

³⁷*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. Ireland, Church of.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹"A plan to conquer Ireland (allegedly 'given' to Henry by Pope Adrian IV in 1155) was temporarily dropped, . . ." (ibid., Henry II).

⁴⁰Schaff, *History of the Church*, vol. 5: *The Middle Ages, A.D. 1049-1294*, p. 125. According to Bitel, speaking of events a hundred years before this, "The Irish, who had long been proud of their allegiance to Rome and its bishops, hastened to obey the call for religious renewal. Although the initial impetus for structural reform came from the bishops of Hiberno-Norse urban centers and from the provincial kings of Munster, abbots and bishops across the land were quick to join the movement. In 1044 Irish clerics and kings had called an island-wide reform council; they held at least twenty-seven more provincial and national councils over the next 150 years" (*Isle of the Saints*, pp. 236-37). They were still hastening to obey that same call for "religious renewal" when the Normans landed in 1171. Afterward, King John--to

save his realm from becoming a French province--"transferred 'spontaneously, and upon the council of his nobles, the two kingdoms of England and Ireland to the Roman Church, to his master Pope Innocent III and his legitimate successors, in 1213. He paid for England 700, for Ireland 300 marks of silver; . . ." (Lord Acton, *Essays*, p. 134). Ireland was now not only under the pope's ecclesiastical control. It was his personal property.

⁴¹Herm states in passing that, "Their Celtic church produced no heresy worth mentioning. They were good Catholics; except they showed it not in cathedrals or elaborate hierarchies but instead, almost exclusively, in monastic communities great or small. Moreover, their church was accepted almost without a struggle" (*The Celts*, p. 261). They might actually have thought of themselves that way. And yet the same author can state a little farther down that, "The champions of Rome sought the real decision of this battle [between Irish and Roman Christianity] in another area: they reproached the Irish abbots because their followers did not, like Celtic Christians in France and north-west Spain, celebrate Easter on the Sunday following the first full moon of spring but, in accordance with Greek custom, only on the third day after this phase. This ran counter to an ecclesiastical ruling established after much debate and was regarded as heresy. The Irish defended it stubbornly" (*ibid.*, p. 268). Others regard the Irish Easter, which could fall on any day of the week (like Christmas), less as a heresy than as a doctrinal quirk. "Bede moves to his triumphs: to the council of Whitby where Roman order succeeds over Celtic eccentricity; to the conversion of the Celtic center of Iona to the Roman common dating of Easter (the heart of the liturgical calendar); . . ." (Brentano, *Early Middle Ages*, p. 28).

⁴²"While monks were rarely allowed to leave their communities in permanent exile unless forced out for their sins, both monks and laics attempted briefer journeys through the wild to important shrines abroad and in Ireland. Pilgrimage was attractive for two reasons: It offered the rewards of exile but brought the wanderer home again; and it allowed the traveler to pick up souvenirs along the way. Few of the saints neglected to make at least one trip to Rome, their favorite pilgrimage destination and shopping spot" (Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, p. 231). "The only other stops that won repeated mention by hagiographers were Tours and a few Welsh churches. Tours held a place high in Irish affection because of its warrior-healer saint; and the communities of David and other Welshmen played an actual historical role in the interrelations of Irish and British saints. Both were also on the way to Rome" (*ibid.*, p. 232).

⁴³"The saint's friend and biographer, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, related the building of a stone oratory by Malachy at Bangor in County Down. 'When he began to lay the foundations,' the biographer reported, 'the natives wondered because in that land no such buildings were yet to be found.' A local man reprimanded Malachy for the innovation and Saint Bernard recorded that his onlooker, clearly conservative, asked: '. . . why have you thought good to introduce this novelty into our regions? . . . What is this frivolity?' Stone churches with decorative elements were built in Ulster, nevertheless" (de Breffny, *Land of Ireland*, p. 30).

⁴⁴"Even once he [Patrick] got down to the work of conversion among the Irish he still longed for home, and would have been 'only too glad' to see his family in Britain and his fellow clerics in Gaul again. But God had, unfortunately, commanded his exile for the rest of his life" (Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, p. 225). The traditional site for Patrick's priestly training in Gaul is Auxerre. "Patrick must have spent at least fourteen years at Auxerre" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. Patrick, St.).

⁴⁵*Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 21 (1970): 1-10.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁷We read of Pope Celestine I (422-432) that, "In July 428 he reminded the bishops of southern Gaul that they were subject to his surveillance and sharply censured abuses (including the innovation of wearing a distinctive episcopal costume) of which he had heard" (*Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, s.v. Celestine I, St). What makes this statement so fascinating is that he would feel the need to issue such a reminder. What were the circumstances that made it

necessary to say such things to his bishops? This, incidentally, was the pope reigning at the time when Patrick went to Ireland and so these are the circumstances prevailing in Gaul when he went there.

⁴⁸Hanson, "Church in Gaul," p. 6.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 8. There is a question where Patrick got his training. I prefer to think that he was trained at Auxerre on the Yonne river almost due east of Orléans in central Gaul.

⁵¹See Plinval, *Pélage*, p. 212, quoted in n. 3 above.

⁵²"Whereas in the church of Carthage and later at Ephesus, then afterward at Constantinople, Celestius deployed his tenacity to make the main tenets of the doctrine prevail, taking his offensive against the doctrine of original sin, the teachings of Pelagius were diffused in other regions and of the written monuments our most impressive proof concerns southern Gaul; Provence and Aquitaine" (Plinval, *Pélage*, p. 293; see *ibid.*, pp. 239-42). Pelagius also enjoyed limited success in Africa and Sicily (Schaff, *History of the Church*, 3:793), Palestine (*ibid.*, pp. 794-97), Italy (pp. 797-800), and Constantinople (p. 800), but his influence did not endure in any of these latter places.

⁵³There was a resurgence of Pelagianism in Dalmatia late in the fifth century (opposed by Felix III [II] [483-92] and Gelasius I [492-96]), but it was in southern Gaul that the teaching held out longer than anywhere else in Europe through the formation of "a regular theological school within the Catholic church. The members of this school were first called 'remnants of the Pelagians,' but commonly Massilians, from Massilia (Marseilles), their chief centre, and afterwards Semi-Pelagians" (Schaff, *History of the Church*, 3:859). "At the head of the Semi-Pelagian party stood John Cassian, the founder and abbot of the monastery at Massilia, a man of thorough cultivation, rich experience, and unquestioned orthodoxy" (*ibid.*, p. 860). "In this work [*Collationes Patrum*], especially in the thirteenth Colloquy, he rejects decidedly the errors of Pelagius, and affirms the universal sinfulness of men, the introduction of it by the fall of Adam, and the necessity of divine grace to every individual act. But, with evident reference to Augustine, though without naming him, he combats the doctrines of election and of the irresistible and particular operation of grace, which were in conflict with the church tradition, especially the Oriental theology, and with his own earnest ascetic legalism" (*ibid.*, p. 861). "But the Semi-Pelagian doctrine was the more popular, and made great progress in France" (*ibid.*, p. 862), advocated by Vincentius, Faustus, Gennadius, and Arnobius the younger. "Semi-Pelagianism prevailed in Gaul for several decades. Under the lead of Faustus of Rhegium it gained the victory in two synods, at Arles in 472 and at Lyons in 475, where Augustine's doctrine of predestination was condemned, though without mention of his name" (*ibid.*, p. 865).

⁵⁴In July 428 he reminded the bishops of southern Gaul that they were subject to his surveillance [this is a fascinating statement] and sharply censured abuses (including the innovation of wearing a distinctive episcopal costume) of which he had heard. His vigorous action succeeded in getting the leaders of Pelagianism expelled from the west, and in 429, influenced by his deacon Palladius, he sent a mission headed by Germanus of Auxerre (c. 378-448) to Britain to root out the heresy there; in 431 he consecrated Palladius and sent him to Ireland as its first bishop. In the same year, to counter Semi-Pelagianism (which allowed a place to free will in the first turning to grace), he wrote to the bishops of southern Gaul urging them, in general terms, to remain loyal to the revered Augustine" (*Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, s.v. Celestine I, ST).

⁵⁵More important was his [Felix IV (III) (526-30)] support of Caesarius in his efforts to combat Semi-Pelagianism, then widespread in Gaul. When his Augustinian views on grace met with opposition at a synod at Valence in 528, Caesarius turned for help to Felix, who in early 529 sent him twenty-five propositions defining the church's teaching on grace and free-will, consisting mainly of texts of St Augustine assembled by Prosper of Aquitaine (c. 390-c. 463).

These were adopted by the second council of Orange (July 529), and when approved by Boniface II (25 Jan. 531) effectively put an end to the controversy over grace" (ibid., s.v. Felix IV [III]). "In Gregory [the Great, 590-604] the tradition of the cult of old Rome and of orthodox Christianity, now in the mold of Augustine, were clearly, and it would seem, finally joined" (Brentano, *Early Middle Ages*, p. 21). See also n. 54 above.

⁵⁶The controversy never went entirely away. "The Gottschalk controversy in the ninth century, the Reformation, the synergistic controversy in the Lutheran church, the Arminian in the Reformed, and the Jansenistic in the Roman Catholic, only reproduce the same great context in new and specific aspects" (Schaff, *History of the Church*, 3:787).

⁵⁷"From the very start of Roman history, powerful men had had free 'clients' attached to their persons and families. These men, though legally free, were by custom--and by the facts of power--obliged to obey and serve their patron in return for his protection. In a wider sense of the word, every *beneficium* created a relation of clientship, obliging the recipient to be prepared to render *officia*" (E. Badian, *Roman Imperialism in the Late Republic* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971], p. 14). "Rome was accustomed to loyal obedience, . . ." (ibid., p. 25).

⁵⁸"We can at least assert that the Irish were more strongly affected by the eastern notion of serving God in the wilderness than by the Roman concept of a strictly hierarchical church with bishops, presbyteries and the whole lower clergy. It may have suited the Celtic peasants and warriors better to carry out their religious practices where the old priests had worked: under the sacred ash-trees, in the sanctuaries depicted by Lucan" (Herm, *The Celts*, p. 261). "What strikes the later observer as so agreeable about the Celtic church--its pastoral way of life, its uncomplicated fervour, the dislike for all manner of officialdom and organization--was precisely what the men of Rome so disliked. The bishops had reluctantly had to accept that Scotland had been converted from Iona and not from Canterbury, the Catholic centre of Britain; but they fought hard to make sure that this was not repeated in Northumbria, the most northerly of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms which had meanwhile been established. They sent the priest Paulinus to King Edwin's court and won him round to their side. But the official church was to have only a short-lived success. Oswald, the next occupant of the Northumbrian throne, felt more strongly attracted to Irish piety and brought the abbot Aidan from Iona to England. He set up a new monastic community of Lindisfarne, now Holy Island, off the north-east coast. Its members converted the whole Germanic community settled south of Hadrian's Wall, with the result that there were now two ecclesiastical orders, Roman and Irish. Canterbury was not prepared to let this reverse continue" (ibid., p. 268).

⁵⁹"The first serious skirmish was engaged on the right [to own] riches. . . . He declared an incompatibility between being a Christian and being rich. . . . This condemnation of riches was not a new thing in the church, but it responded with such vivacity that in 414 the Syracusan Hilarius considered this point as one of the most important in the Pelagian programme" (Plinval, *Pélage*, p. 221). Anyone who tries to get rich people to give their wealth back to the people they got it from, keeping only enough for their private needs, is naive. But Pelagius was like that. He saw an abuse and attacked it.

⁶⁰"Various charges had been brought against him [Patrick] by his enemies, among them that of illiteracy, the truth of which is borne out by the crudeness of his style, and is admitted by Patrick himself" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. Patrick, St.).

⁶¹See n. 52 above.

⁶²Herm, *The Celts*, p. 263.

⁶³The heroes of hagiography were identifiable by their standard virtues and holy powers. They were missionaries and confessors, not the vulnerable martyrs of the Continent. 'Now there are three kinds of martyrdom,' wrote a seventh-century Irish scholar, 'white martyrdom, and green [*glas*] martyrdom, and red martyrdom.' By this he meant renunciation of the secular world, penance and self-mortification, and death. While the Irish saints never achieved red martyrdom, they excelled at the other two. Many were missionaries to the pagan

interior of the island and were renowned for their extreme asceticism. Most of them lived and worked during the sixth and seventh centuries, when there still converts to be won and room for new churches. All of them built ecclesiastical settlements, and all were bishops, abbots, or abbesses; some, such as Pátraic, were responsible for the creation of scores of churches and the recruitment of hundreds of monks and nuns. This is what made an Irish saint: He or she was a pioneer on the early Christian frontier" (Bitel, *Isle of the Saints*, p. 11).

⁶⁴*Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, s.v. John IV.