

terminate here, after striking the Maiden Way, for that road would afterwards serve the purposes of the invaders. There is a difficulty, of course, in understanding or realising the condition of the country traversed by the Catrail, rendering so extensive and elaborate a work necessary. When we consider, however, that it would be largely filled with forest and morass, and that numerous swift-flowing rivers had to be crossed, there would be an absolute necessity for the construction of a road of some kind; and by following the water-shed, keeping, however, always well down on the eastern slope, the best route for steering clear both of bog and jungle would be taken. A manifest imitation of the Roman method of crossing the country would suggest that these redoubtable Picts and Scots of the fifth and sixth centuries were not disorganised hordes of savages, but that they had learned a great deal from the great Empire that had so long established itself in the southern half of the island, with which they had been at constant war, and against which they had finally maintained their independence. I have in my own mind another explanation of this famous half road, half dyke, that crosses southern Scotland, though I do not think it has been much noticed by writers on the subject. The work, I fancy, dates from the latter end of the fifth century, or even a little later—that is, after the departure of the Romans; and at that time, I believe, there are excellent grounds for stating that Saxon colonies had been established in the valleys of the Tweed and Tyne in anticipation of the more extensive invasion of the Angles both to the north and south of the wall, which took place nearly a century later. These Saxon colonies, I infer, from the allusions of the Roman writers themselves, had made a beginning of their occupation previous to the departure of the Romans from Britain, and that they sometimes were in conflict with the Picts of the north, and sometimes joined them in their attacks on the Roman defences and on the protected Britons. After the departure of the Romans, doubtless they extended their colonies as far as the dividing water-shed. I have never been able to understand the rapidity with which such districts as Dumfriesshire and West Lothian were apparently Saxonised, on the assumption that the Teutonic wave flowed out exclusively from the Anglian settlements in Northumbria. If, however, we take into account that there was an earlier Saxon occupation of the country to the north of the Cheviots, our difficulty on that point vanishes. And it seems to me also that a sufficient explanation is given of the defensive character of the military way which the northern Picts made through the Lowlands to reach the Romanised country. The Saxons were down in the valleys hewing down the forests and forming their wicks and crofts. The Picts had no wish to meddle with them, especially as they possessed little which was worth coveting. But they wanted a road across the country to get at their natural enemies, the Romans and Romanised Britons, and so they constructed their Catrail.

This is not altogether a digression, for it will render more intelligible what follows. Dawson Riggs is one of two places which are claimed as the site of the battle of Daegastan, fought in 603 between Eadelfrid, king of the Northumbrians and the Scots, or the Scots, as allies of the Cumbrian Britons, in which the

latter were signally defeated. The other claimant I am not in a position to discuss the question which of the two sites has the better case in its favour, though I think modern antiquarians are more partial to Dawson Riggs than to the other; and, in any case, most certainly a great early battle has been fought on Dawson Riggs; whilst, as already said, a halo of tradition has always surrounded the locality. Of this battle of Daegastan we know nothing whatever beyond what is contained in Bede's "Ecclesiastical History," and in the "Saxon Chronicle," which may very well have been borrowed on Bede's authority. The passage is as follows:—"A.D. 603—Eadelfrid, king of the Northumbrians, having vanquished the nation of Angles. At this time Eadelfrid, a most valiant king, and ambitious of glory, governed the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and ravaged the Britons more than all the great men of the Angles, inasmuch as he might be compared to Saul, once king of the Israelites, excepting only that he was ignorant of the true religion. For he conquered more victories from the Britons, either making them tributary, or expelling the inhabitants and planting Angles in their places, than any other king or prince. To him might justly be attributed the saying of the patriarch—'Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and in the evening he shall divide the spoil.' Hereupon Aidan, king of the Scots that inhabit Britain, being concerned at this success, came against him with a numerous and brave army, but was beaten by an inferior force and put to flight, escaping with only a few of his followers, for most all his army was slain at a famous place called Daegastan, that is Degestone. In that battle also Theobald, brother to Eadelfrid, was killed, with all the forces he commanded. To this war Eadelfrid put an end in the year 603 after the incarnation of our Lord, and in the eleventh of his reign, which lasted twenty-four years, and the first year of the reign of Phocas, who then governed the Roman Empire. From that time no King of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the Angles to this day (730)."

Bede, it will be seen from these dates, was writing a century and a quarter after the event he was recording, and may or may not have clearly known the facts. At all events, his account is open to more interpretations than one. It is not clear whether Eadelfrid's brother, Theobald, who is stated to have been killed in this war with his force, was in league with the Scots, and in rebellion against his brother; or whether he had been slain by the Scots in a previous encounter—Eadelfrid expresses it, by a final victory at Daegastan. Nor does Bede say whether Aidan, the king of the Scots, had come to the assistance of the Britons, whom Eadelfrid was ravaging, or whether he himself was a rival invader of the territory. We frequently find in subsequent history that the Scots of Dalriada and Galloway came to the assistance of the Strathclyde Britons, and that at last they exercised a suzerainty and protectorship over the Britons, but we never hear of their making any attempt on their own account to extend their dominions into the southern part of the island. Eadelfrid, one of the immediate successors of Ida