

A smaller social history of ancient Ireland; treating the government, military system and law, religion, learning and art, trades, industries and ... and domestic life of the ancient Irish people

Patrick Weston Joyce

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1908 Excerpt: ...was plastered on the outside, and made brilliantly white with lime, or occasionally striped in various colours; leaving the white poles exposed to view. When the house was to be four-sided, the poles were set in two parallel rows, filled in with wickerwork. The height of the wall depended on the size of the house. In small houses it was low, so that often the thatch was within reach of the hand: in large dwellings it was usually high. The walls of the Banqueting-Hall at Tara were at least 45 feet high. In the large houses there were often two stories. When there was more than one apartment in a house, each had a separate wall and roof: except, of course, where one apartment was over another. Building in wickerwork was common to the Celtic people of Ireland, Scotland, and Britain. It is very often referred to in Irish writings of all kinds. In the Highlands of Scotland wattled or wicker houses were used, even among high-class people, down to the end of the eighteenth century; and it is prohable that they continued in use in Ireland to as late a period. In many superior houses, and in churches, a better plan of building was adopted, by forming the wall with sawed planks instead of wickerwork. In the houses of the higher classes the doorposts and other special parts of the dwelling and furniture were often made of yew, carved, and ornamented with gold, silver, bronze, and gems. We know this from the old records; and still more convincing evidence is afforded by the Brehon Law, which prescribes fines for scratching or otherwise disfiguring the posts or lintels of doors, the heads or posts of beds, or the ornamental parts of other furniture. The roof of the circular house was of a conical shape, brought to a point, with an opening in the centre for the smoke. It...



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